Rochford District Council
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Supplementary Planning Document

Regulation 17 Consultation Draft

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Rochford District Council – Head of Planning & Transportation –
Shaun Scrutton BSc (Hons), Dip TP, MRTPI, IHBC, MBA, MCMI

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out the Council's policies with regard to formal open space and playing pitches. The document is split into two sections. The first section provides advice and guidance in relation to proposed additional playing pitches and whether they are required. The second part examines the impact of new residential development on playing pitch demand.

1.2 Access to playing pitches can have a significant impact upon quality of life and this document aims to ensure there is adequate pitch provision throughout the district. The SPD is largely based upon the findings of a study entitled *An Assessment of Playing Pitches in the Rochford District*. This is included as an annex to the SPD itself.

1.3 This Supplementary Planning Document gives further clarification to Rochford District Replacement Local Plan Policy LT2.

PART A

2. ADDITIONAL PLAYING PITCHES

2.1 *An Assessment of Playing Pitches in the Rochford District* shows that the supply of pitches is currently meeting expressed demand. As a result of the findings of the study, new planning pitch provision standards for a number of sub areas have been established. The adoption of new standards is seen as beneficial because of the problems of setting standards on simply population intensity, such as with the National Playing Field Standard of 1.2Ha/1000 people. *An Assessment of Playing Pitches in the Rochford District* provides a more detailed study of the Rochford area taking into account factors such as:

- the age of the population within the sub areas;
- the level of likely demand;
- the suitability of the pitches;
- floodlighting;
- changing rooms and other support facilities; and
- travel distances to available facilities.

2.2 The new standards produced by the study reflect achievable aims for playing pitch provision within the plan period. They also serve to highlight areas of the district such as Hockley, which are relatively poorly provided for in comparison to other areas. The new standards are shown in Tables 1 and 2 below:

TABLE 1

SUB AREA	POPULATION	PITCHES / 000 (A, B1, B2)	NATIONAL PLAYING FIELD STANDARD
Rayleigh	31,410	0.99	1.20 hectares per thousand population
Hockley	17,164	0.7	
Hullbridge	7,425	1.34	
Canewdon	1,491	2.23	
Rochford	16,317	1.95	
Great Wakering	7,694	1.77	

SUB AREA	SUGGESTED STANDARD Ha / 000 POPULATION	NATIONAL PLAYING FIELD STANDARD
Rayleigh	1.15	1.20 hectares per thousand population
Hockley	0.7	
Hullbridge	1.34	
Canewdon	1.68	
Rochford	1.36	
Great Wakering	1.77	

Design

POLICY PP1

It is important that any facilities which are provided, whether as a result of developer contributions or otherwise, are of sufficient quality to ensure they are of maximum benefit to the community. Proposed schemes will be assessed against the Sport England design and technical guidelines in all but exceptional circumstances.

2.3 Planning applications for playing pitches or associated facilities will be expected to comply with the following design guidelines in all but exceptional circumstances. Proposed schemes will normally be assessed against the Sport England design and technical guidelines. These guidelines set out best practice for the design and development of sports facilities. The guidelines are available on the Sport England website at www.sportengland.org/design_guidelines.

2.4 It should be noted that the Rochford District is largely designated as Metropolitan Green Belt. The use of land as a sports pitch may be considered an appropriate land use within the green belt (subject to the criteria set out in policy LT2 of the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan). However, the construction of significant club houses or large scale car parks are likely to be considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. *Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts* (PPG2), as issued by the Office of the

Deputy Prime Minister, gives further information on what may or may not be appropriate within such areas.

Size of pitches

2.5 In order to maximum their possible use, pitches should be designed to the meet the recognised criteria set out in the sections that follow.

Association Football

2.6 For football pitches, the Football Association (FA) prescribes a minimum size for adult pitches. In general, football pitches within the Rochford District should be built to this standard. Although not currently an FA a requirement it is recommended that junior and youth teams play on smaller pitch. Under some circumstances, therefore, a smaller pitch may also be required. The recommended pitch sizes for different age groups are shown in the table below. More details are available from the FA's website.

POLICY PP2

Proposed football pitches in the Rochford District should comply with the following standards.

Suggested pitch size (metres)	Suggested size of goal posts (metres)	Pitch dimensions (metres)			
		Length		***Width***	
Length x Width	*Height x Width*	*Max*	*Min*	*Max*	*Min*
Youth U17 - U18 and Seniors					
101 x 64	2.44 x 7.32	120	90	90	45.5
Mini Soccer U7 - U8					
46 x 27	1.83 x 3.66	45.75	27.45	27.45	18.3
Mini Soccer U9 - U10					
55 x 37	1.83 x 3.66	54.9	45.75	36.6	27.45
Youth U11 – U12					
73 x 46	2.13 x 6.4	82	68.25	50.77	42
Youth U13 – U14					
82 x 50	2.13 x 6.4	91	72.8	56	45.5
Youth U15- U16					
91 x 55	2.44 x 7.32	100.6	82.3	64	45.5

Cricket

2.7 The English Cricket Board (ECB) and the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) state the pitch should be a rectangular area of the ground 22 yards/20.12m in length and

10ft/3.05m in width. It should be bounded at either end by the bowling creases. There is no defined law concerning the out-field area although most competitions require the boundary line to be between 50 and 90 yards from the centre of the pitch. Any proposed cricket pitch within the Rochford District should comply with these requirements.

POLICY PP3

Any proposed cricket pitch in Rochford District should be a rectangular area of 22 yards/20.12m in length and 10ft/3.05m in width, with the boundary line 50 to 90 yards (45.72 to 82.30 metres) from the centre of the pitch, in accordance with the England Cricket Board and the Marylebone Cricket Club.

Hockey

2.8 The English Hockey Association (EHA) defines full size and mini-hockey pitches as shown in table 4 below. It is important to note that synthetic turf pitches are now required for competitive level hockey. Proposals for synthetic turf pitches, as with conventional pitches, will be assessed against the criteria set out in Policy LT2 of the Replacement Local Plan.

POLICY PP4

A full size hockey pitch should measure 91.4 m in length and 55 m in width, with a mini hockey pitch measuring 55 m in length and 43 m in width in accordance with the England Hockey Association. However it is important to note that synthetic turf pitches are required for competitive level hockey.

	FULL SIZED PITCH	MINI-HOCKEY PITCH
Length	91.4m	55m
Width	55m	43m
Shooting Circles	Radius of 14.63m	Radius of 14.63m
Penalty Stroke Spot	6.4m from the goal line into the pitch	5m from the goal line into the pitch
Penalty Corner Markers	10m from each goalpost on the back-line	10m from each goalpost on the back-line
Corner Markers	5m from the corner of the pitch on the side-line	3m from the corner of the pitch on the side-line

Rugby

POLICY PP5

It is recommended that Rugby pitches be no more than 100m long and 70m wide, with the possibility that they may also be used for association football.

Changing Areas and Support Buildings

2.9 Guidelines for the layout and size of supporting buildings and changing facilities are set out in Sport England design and technical guidelines. It is important to note that in areas of the district designated as green belt, proposals for changing facilities or other support buildings should not exceed the minimum space requirements set out in the Sport England guidelines, other than in exceptional circumstances.

POLICY PP6

The use of land as a sports pitch may be considered as an appropriate land use within the Green Belt (subject to the criteria set out in policy LT2 of the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan). However, the construction of support buildings in excess of the sizes recommended below, or the construction of large scalecar parks,are likely to be considered inappropriate within the Green Belt.

Assessment of Playing Pitches – Changing Areas

In Areas of Green Belt, support buildings and changing facilities should not exceed the minimum space requirements set out in the Sport England Design and Technical Guidelines. This recommended space per pitch should allow for two sports teams, officials and storage:

Association Football - 40m²
Cricket - 38m²
Hockey - 40m²
Rugby (League & Union) - 48m²

Additional space for the provision of toilet and shower facilities may also be required.

2.10 The policies in PPG2 provide a general presumption against inappropriate development in the green belt. Therefore the design of such changing facilities should aim to minimise any potential impact on the openness of the green belt

Infrastructure

2.11 It is important that sufficient infrastructure should be in place surrounding the developments.

POLICY PP7

Any planning application for new playing pitch facilities should demonstrate an adequate level of accessibility to the site by sustainable forms of transport.

Drainage

2.12 Insufficient drainage is often a problem that renders facilities unavailable for use. This is a high priority for the improvement of pitches in the district. It is important that pitches and facilities are designed to include good drainage.

2.13 Well drained soil encourages grass growth and can make a significant contribution to the quality of the pitch. There are five main types of drainage systems currently used:

- Undrained pitches
- Pipe drained
- Silt drained
- Sand carpet
- Suspended water table

2.14 Whilst the installation of drainage can sometimes be costly it can significantly improve the match cancellation rate and avoid the need to supply a new pitch. Pitches with improved drainage are also able to accommodate matches more frequently before they become unplayable. Proper consideration of drainage at the planning stage is essential. As is set out in the next section of this SPD, developer contributions will also be required, when appropriate, in order to improve the drainage of existing pitches in the district.

POLICY PP8

Any new playing pitch facilities should be designed to include good drainage.

Developer contributions will also be required, when appropriate, to improve the drainage of existing pitches in the district. In order to address facilities with insufficient drainage, priority will be given to the facilities highlighted in Table 5.

PART B

3. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AND PLAYING PITCH PROVISION

3.1 New residential development has the potential to increase demand for leisure facilities, including demand for playing pitches.

3.2 Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 *Open Space, Sport and Recreation* (PPG17), states that local authorities need to ensure provision is made for local sports and recreation facilities either through an increase in the number of facilities or through improvements to existing facilities. It also states that planning obligations should be used to seek increased provision of open spaces including local sport and recreational facilities, together with the enhancement of existing facilities. In accordance with this, Policies HP5 and HP21 of the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan make it clear that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) will explore all means at their disposal to ensure sufficient infrastructure provision, including an adequate supply of formal open space.

3.3 In order to maintain and improve the levels of playing pitch provision in the district, developer contributions will be sought on new residential development to provide new facilities or to enhance existing ones.

POLICY PP9

The LPA will require contributions towards the provision of additional, or the enhancement of existing, playing pitches in all cases of residential development including both allocated and windfall sites. In some cases a contribution towards the improvement or maintenance of existing facilities may be considered in preference to the provision of a new facility. Developer contributions will not be required when the proposed development incorporates the adequate provision of leisure facilities or playing pitches, providing that such leisure facilities can be secured for community use. The level of contribution required will be dependent on the level of additional playing pitch demand generated, together with the current costs of providing such playing pitches at the time of the application.

3.4 The additional level of leisure facility demand will be calculated based on the size and type of dwellings proposed, cross-referenced with the standard of 1.20 hectares of playing pitch / 1000 people. In cases of the development of sheltered housing, contributions to playing pitch provision will not usually be required.

Ensuring Pitches are Secured for use by the Community

3.5 In order to ensure that playing pitches are available to the community it is important to secure as many pitches as possible for this use. Pitches that are not in secured community use can result in the level of provision changing unpredictably as there will be no guarantee of the pitch remaining available for public to use. **The local planning authority will, therefore, require pitches and formal space provided under policies HP5 or HP21 of the Replacement Local Plan, or provided by way of other developer contributions and obligations, to be secured for community use by way of legal agreement.**

Improvement of Existing Facilities

3.6 Even in areas of the district where there may appear to be adequate numbers of pitches *An Assessment of Playing Pitches in the Rochford District,* found that the pitches were often unusable due the poor quality of the facility.

3.7 Where contributions are required under policies HP5 (Infrastructure) and HP21 (Planning Obligations) of the Rochford District Replacement Local Plan, an equivalent contribution towards the improvement or maintenance of existing facilities may in some cases be considered in preference to the provision of a new facility. The Companion Guide to PPG17 suggests that even when the quantitative standards in the area are not exceeded, if there are below standard facilities, developer contributions may be sought to fund enhancements (paragraph 9.9, p.56). In Rochford District, these circumstances are likely to be found where the area already shows sufficient provision as set out in the annex, *An Assessment of Playing Pitches in the Rochford District,* and where the improvement of an existing facility would be sufficient to cope with the increased demand for formal open space.

3.8 Insufficient drainage is often a problem that renders facilities unavailable for use and hence this is a high priority for the improvement of the district's pitches. As part of the

research carried out in the *Assessment of Playing Pitches in the Rochford District (*shown as an appendix) seven sites were identified where improvements to pitch drainage were urgently required. The sites are listed below in Table 5 and also included in Table 6.4 of the Replacement Local Plan. Contributions intended to improve drainage will be required under Rochford District Replacement Local Plan Policies HP5 and HP21, and as set out by PPG17, even though there may otherwise be an adequate supply of playing pitches. Any improvements to drainage should follow the guidelines on drainage in the first part of this SPD.

Location	**Sub area(s)**	**Sector**	**Suggested improvement**	**Suggested priority**
Rawreth Recreation Ground	Rayleigh	Council / Club	Improve pitch drainage	High
John Fisher Playing Field	Rayleigh	Council	Improve pitch drainage	High
Grove Playing Field	Rayleigh	Council	Improve pitch drainage	High
Clements Hall Playing Field	Hockley	Council	Improve pitch drainage and carry out leveling	Medium
Ashingdon Recreation Ground	Rochford	Council	Improve pitch drainage	Medium
Hullbridge Playing Field	Hullbridge	Council	Improve pitch drainage	High
Fairview Playing Field	Rayleigh	Council	Improve drainage to pitch 4	High

ANNEX

AN ASSESSMENT OF PLAYING PITCHES IN THE ROCHFORD DISTRICT

An Assessment of Playing Pitches in Rochford District

October 2002

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

The project

1.1 Rochford District Council undertook a study of playing pitches and other recreational open space within the Council's administrative area, the findings published in October 2002.

1.2 The project was required to undertake the following:-

- An analysis of playing field need to include all the major pitch sports, and any other team pitch sports of local significance. The analysis was also to consider the potential contribution of artificial turf pitches (atp);

- An assessment of the number of pitches available for the sport. This would include the preparation of an inventory of pitches distinguishing between the sports, between the public, private and educational sectors and their availability on different times and days.

- An assessment of the adequacy or otherwise of existing provision, where the identified demand for pitches is compared with the supply of pitches and the adequacy, or otherwise of existing provision;

- The consideration of some policy options, to include:-

  – If there was excess provision, how can this be used to generate more activity, and where redevelopment is to be permitted;

  – If there were deficiencies, whether these could be rectified by dual use of schools, reprogramming of activities and development of new pitches (including atps);

  – If pitch numbers were adequate, but there was a qualitative deficiency, how this could be overcome by upgrading and improvement; and,

  – The production of a series of informed local standards for the provision of sports pitches, to be used in future Local Planning Policy.

1.3 This assessment of playing pitches was intended to guide the development of pitch sports and the provision of sports pitches in the Rochford District in the coming years.

1.4 This report presents the findings and conclusions resulting from the investigation of the study.

Background to study

1.5 The policy issues involved with the disposal of playing fields are dealt with in the next section. However, the following matters are especially relevant to this study:-

- The increasing government concern over the loss of playing fields, as signified by the designation of Sport England as a statutory designee, with additional powers of directing refusal of planning applications in certain circumstances, would have a detrimental effect on playing field provision;

- The requirement for local authorities to locate many of the new homes for the projected additional households by 2016 in existing urban areas is likely to increase the pressure for development on playing fields and other open spaces for housing. However, the Essex Structure Plan only has estimates for housing figures up to 2011, therefore, the study only projects demand up to this year. Locally, there was found to be one significant development proposed in Rayleigh which could affect the future of existing sports fields; and

- Sport England has adopted a playing fields policy (described in the next section), the key to the implementation of which is an accurate assessment of the supply of and demand for playing pitches.

This report

1.6 The remainder of the report deals with the following:-

- *Section 2* reviews some of the relevant national and local policy issues affecting playing pitches;

- *Section 3* explains the study method employed;

- *Section 4* assesses the overall supply of and demand for pitches in the study area using Sport England's recommended methodology; it makes an assessment of whether or not sufficient pitches exist within the study area to meet both existing and future needs;

- *Sections 5 to 10* identify findings, conclusions and key issues for individual sub areas;

- *Section 11* provides some guidance on the development of local standards for the provision of playing pitches that could, for example, be incorporated into future reviews of the local plan. It also emphasises the importance of developing an overall strategy for the planning and maintenance of pitches; and

- *Section 12* makes recommendations covering present and longer-term provision, protection and management of pitches within the sub areas.

Definitions and sports covered

1.7 Definitions of some of the terms used in this report are contained in Section 3. However, it is sufficient to say here that the study deals with the requirements of four sports in particular Association Football (referred to in this report as 'football'); Cricket; Rugby Union; and, Hockey. These are by far the most significant pitch sports in terms of participation. Other pitch sports are mentioned in this study although they do not figure prominently due to their minority status.

1.8 The study was concerned with the public (or community) demand for pitches; it therefore does not consider demand from other sectors, such as through curricular requirements, fully professional sport, university and higher educational activity.

The study area

1.9 The overall study area was defined as the Rochford District Council area. However, in recognition of the need to reflect a more detailed geographic demand for pitches,

the study area was further broken down and analysed according to discrete sub areas:- Rayleigh; Hockley; Hullbridge; Canewdon; Rochford; Great Wakering.

1.10 The above are fully defined in section three.

1.11 Teams 'travel', and the study has attempted to take into account any issues arising from teams:-

- travelling between sub areas; and,
- travelling into and out of the study area as a whole.

2 ISSUES, CONCERNS AND POLICY CONTEXT

Playing pitches and open space as an issue

2.1 Amongst all the issues dealt with by the planning system there are few more emotive than the disposal of playing fields. The concern is but part of a much wider public debate over how best to protect and manage urban open space.

2.2 At the outset, it is therefore worth re-iterating that this report deals largely with **playing pitches**. Accordingly, it does not concern itself with children's playgrounds; informal open space; ornamental and country parks; 'green lungs' or 'corridors' etc.

2.3 Playing pitches, (especially where they are in public parks) can be used for casual play, walking dogs, scenic short cuts and a myriad other activities that do not in themselves comprise formal organised sport. They can also provide for open views, natural habitats and green corridors. However, whilst the importance of these functions is acknowledged, they have no direct bearing on the value of a given site to sport itself.

2.4 It might be argued that access to informal space increases opportunities for healthy living and children's play. These may in turn encourage people to take up formal sporting activity. Although this potential relationship is acknowledged, it is again outside the scope of this report.

2.5 It is important to isolate the 'sporting' reasons for protecting and managing playing fields from these wider considerations because the needs of sport change. Sometimes a playing field may no longer sufficiently meet the needs of sport. Examples of this are manifold but can include circumstances where:-

- there has been technological innovation in the sport such as to render a facility obsolete. The prime example is the advent of artificial turf pitches, which have supplanted grass and shale pitches as the standard surface for competitive hockey;
- clubs grow to the extent that their 'home' facility cannot accommodate the number of teams and pitches required; and,
- ancillary facilities (changing, parking, floodlighting) are required to allow the club to progress, but cannot reasonably be provided on a given site.

2.6 There are other reasons why a playing field may no longer be used for sport. For example, where school rolls fall education authority pitches may be sold.

2.7 Similarly, structural changes in industry has meant the closure or rationalisation of many company sports/social club facilities.

Policy context

2.8 National policies on planning for and protecting playing pitches attempt to strike the balance between the general desire to protect playing fields, and a pragmatic recognition that there may sometimes be justification for sanctioning disposal of all or part of a given facility.

National Government Planning Policy (PPG 17: Sport and Recreation)

2.9 The government's planning guidance is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, an up-to-date document, published in July 2002.

2.10 The guidance begins by stating that:

> *"Open spaces, sport and recreation all underpin people's quality of life. Well designed and implemented policies for open space, sport and recreation are therefore fundamental to delivering broader Government objectives. These include:*
>
> - *Supporting an urban renaissance*
> - *Supporting a rural renewal*
> - *Promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion*
> - *Health and well being*
> - *Promoting more sustainable development."*

2.11 The guidance sets out that:

- local authorities should undertake robust assessments of existing and future needs for open space, sports and recreation in order to effectively plan for future community needs (paragraph 1);
- local authorities should also carry out audits of existing facilities to identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space or recreational facilities (paragraph 3) and that open space standards should be set locally in order to take account of local circumstances and population profiles (paragraph 6).

2.12 In terms of the protection of existing open space and facilities, paragraph 10 states:

> *"Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land should not be built upon unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space or the buildings and land to be surplus to requirements. For open space 'surplus to requirements' should include consideration of all of the functions that open space can perform. Not all open space, sport and recreational land and buildings are of equal merit and some may be available for alternative purposes…"*

2.13 Paragraph 11 sets out that:

> *"Open space and sports and recreational facilities that are of high quality, or of particular value to a local community, should be recognised and given protection by local authorities through appropriate policies in plans."*

2.14 Paragraph 12 sets out that:

> *"Development of open space, sports or recreational facilities may provide an opportunity for local authorities to remedy deficiencies in provision. For example, where a local authority has identified a surplus in one type of open space or sports or recreational facility but a deficit in another type, planning conditions or obligations may be used to secure part of the development site for the type of open space or sports and recreational facility that is in deficit."*

2.15 In terms of the potential development of existing open spaces, paragraph 16 also states:

> *"…In considering planning applications within or adjoining open space, local authorities should weigh any benefits being offered to the community against the loss of open space that will occur."*

2.16 In terms of considering new open space and sports facilities, paragraph 20 sets out a number of general principles. These generally follow the government's broad agenda to promote accessibility and sustainable development, reduce car use/promote walking and the use of public transport, support town centre vitality and viability, meet regeneration needs, limit greenfield land take, etc.

2.17 Key to the government's stance in PPG17 then, is that existing open space and facilities should generally be protected, but that there should be a degree of flexibility and pragmatism to accept alternative arrangements in cases where the facilities to be lost are 'surplus to requirements' or where the existing facilities are outweighed both in terms of their quantity and quality by replacement facilities that are better located or better tailored in terms of the facilities they provide to meet the needs of the local community.

2.18 Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing is also pertinent to this assessment. This PPG provides the government's guidance on new housing provision, and provides a sequential approach to underpin the allocation of land for housing purposes. This sets out that land within existing urban areas should generally be developed ahead of land immediately adjacent to existing urban areas which, in turn, should be developed ahead of land which is physically divorced from existing settlements. The guidance sets a further test, that 'previously developed land' (in the first instance within urban areas) should generally be developed ahead of greenfield (previously undeveloped) sites. The definition of previously developed land provided in Annex C to PPG3 specifically excludes parks and recreation grounds.

2.19 The relevance of PPG3 is clear when one considers that the boundaries of all the major settlements within Rochford District abut the Metropolitan Green Belt, wherein there is a presumption against new residential development. The local authority is content that there is sufficient land within the existing settlements to provide for housing demand for the period 1996-2011. However, during this period, there will clearly be pressure from developers to develop areas of existing open space, etc. Such proposals must be considered having due regard to PPG3, PPG17 and, indeed, the conclusions of this assessment and the planning policies that flow from it.

Government policy on sport

2.20 Government policy on sport and recreation is largely promoted through the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. However, curricular sport is dealt with by the Department of Education and Employment. There has been a conscious attempt in recent years to effect greater co-ordination between these two departments in an attempt to encourage more young people into sport (in particular), and also to persuade them to stay with sport once they have left school or further education.

2.21 The government sports policy was published in 2000.[1] Many of its proposed initiatives may have implications for the use of and demand for playing pitches. For example the proposed strengthening of relationships between schools and local clubs may lead to greater and more imaginative use of school playing fields.

Department for Education and Employment (DfEE)

2.22 There has been particular concern in recent years over the disposal of education playing fields deemed to be surplus to school requirements. Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 empowers the Secretary of State to protect school playing fields in England from disposal or change of use. The provisions of this section were interpreted in detail by the DfEE Circular 3/99.[2] This circular explains the powers contained in the act, offers guidance on them and describes the criteria against which the Secretary of State expects normally to make decisions on relevant applications from local authorities, governing bodies and foundation bodies.

2.23 The Circular has introduced the need for widespread consultation within the community (including potential sporting users), before a decision can be made to dispose of all or part of a school playing field, when no longer required for curricular requirements. The Circular was introduced in the context of a general concern that many school playing fields were being lost without first establishing whether the community at large could make use of such sites.

Sport England policy

2.24 Sport England's National Policy statement on the disposal of playing fields is:-

> *'The English Sports Council (now Sport England)[3] will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of, all or any part of the playing field, or land last used as a playing field or land allocated for use as a playing field in an adopted or draft deposit local plan, unless, in the judgement of the English Sports Council, one of the (following relevant) specific circumstances applies:-*
>
> - *the proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field or playing fields, and does not affect the quantity or quality of pitches or adversely affect their use;*
> - *the proposed development affects only land incapable of forming, or forming part of a playing pitch, and does not result in the loss or inability to make use of any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins), a reduction in the size of the playing area*

[1] 'A Sporting Future for All'. Department for Culture, Media and Sport. (April 2000).

[2] The Protection of School Playing Fields. Circular 3/99. Department for Education and Employment. (June 1999).

[3] Author's insert

of any pitch, or the loss of any other sporting ancillary facilities on the site;

- *the proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field or playing field;*

- *a carefully quantified and documented assessment of current and future needs has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the English Sports Council that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport; and,*

- *the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced by a playing fields or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality, and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to commencement of development.'*

Local policy

2.25 Council policy on the disposal of playing fields is contained in the Rochford District Local Plan First Review (1995).

2.26 In terms of assessing the adequacy of open space provision (including playing fields), the Local Plan First Review (1995) contains an assessment of provision based on a version of the National Playing Fields Association's 'Six Acre Standard' (discussed in the next section). The Local Plan First Review (1995) goes on to assert the following policy (LT2):-

"The local planning authority will encourage the retention of existing private playing fields, sports grounds and open spaces".

2.27 Although the Local Plan mirrors national policy on the protection of playing fields, it does not quantify the need for playing pitches as opposed to recreational open space in general. Shortcomings with the 'Six Acre Standard' as a tool for assessing local needs for sports pitches are discussed in the next section. However, the main concern with use of the standard is that it is not necessarily sensitive to local needs, being a national standard as opposed to one derived from an investigation of local circumstances.

3 METHOD

The overall study process

3.1 The study of playing pitches and other recreational open space involved essentially a two-staged process:-

- Stage One: data collection; and,
- Stage Two: data analysis.

Data collation

3.2 An audit was conducted of all known pitches and other relevant recreational facilities within the study area. This audit also examined their use. The audit was based upon the following components:-

- an inspection of relevant league handbooks, along with phone conversations with local league representatives; and,
- where appropriate, site inspections of pitches and potential sites within the study area.

Data analysis

3.3 A central component of the analysis was an examination of the extent to which pitches identified are available for use by 'the community', recognising that this has a considerable bearing upon the value of facilities both individually and collectively to the community at large.

3.4 The following categorisation of pitches was employed.

Table 3.1: Categorisation of pitches by availability

A	All pitches that are in '**Secured** Community Use' and are available for use at most times.	These will largely be facilities in council ownership, and may be located on Public Open Space. They may be managed by a club/trust on a secure lease from the Council. Their availability for community use must be assured.
B1	Pitches that do no fall within the above category, but nevertheless are in '**Secured** Community Use' and are available for use during times of peak demand.	This category will cover those schools which have pitches and other facilities available to the public through formal 'community use' agreements.

Category	Definition	Examples
B2	Pitches not included in categories A or B1 that are nevertheless available for use by the community (free or for a charge) at times of peak demand.	This category includes any facilities owned by schools, clubs, commercial organisations etc. which as a matter of policy or practice are available for use by large sections of the public through membership of a club or admission fee. In either case the 'cost of use' must be reasonable and affordable for the majority of the community.
C	Pitches not presently considered to be available for community use.	This category mainly covers schools and other establishments which do not as a matter of policy or practice hire pitches to outside teams

3.5 The above categorisation is central to the assessment of the supply of pitches and should therefore be fully assimilated before reading on.

Method of assessment

3.6 The supply of and demand for pitches was assessed largely using the Sport England 'Playing Pitch Methodology'[4]. This methodology (summarised in Appendix A) differs from more widely used techniques for assessing the local provision of pitches and open space such as, for example, the National Playing Fields Association's 'Six Acre Standard'.

3.7 The Six Acre Standard is representative of a basic approach used by many local authorities to assess the adequacy of local sports and recreational provision, through prescribing a minimum level of provision which local authorities should seek to obtain and preserve. Application of the Six Acre Standard involves a simple calculation using an accepted ratio of space required per capita. The relevant part of the Standard (i.e. that part dealing with sports pitches) is summarised below.

Table 3.2: The 'Six Acre Standard' (component covering sports pitches)

Facilities such as pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts and, putting greens	1.6 - 1.8 ha per 1000 people (4 - 4.45 acres)
Facilities described in (1) within the education sector, which as a matter of practice and policy, are available for public use	The above includes a specific allocation of 1.20 ha (3.0 acres) per 1000 people for pitch sports.
Facilities described in (1) which are within the voluntary, industrial and commercial sectors, and serve the needs for outdoor recreation for their members, or the public	

[4] Playing Pitch Strategy (unpublished technical report). The Sports Council, The Central Council for Physical Recreation, The National Playing Field Association. April 1991.

3.8 Although the Six Acre Standard has served its purpose well over the years, it has been increasingly criticised of late as not being especially relevant to some local circumstances. One such example of this would be where there is a relatively 'old' population that may not require as many sports pitches, compared to where there is a relatively young and physically active population. Strict adherence to the Six Acre Standard will mean that these varied needs may not be reflected in decisions and policies.

3.9 The Sport England method can be contrasted with the Six Acre Standard in that it seeks to assess the specific requirements of individual teams. It then translates these requirements into an assessment of 'peak-demand' for pitches. Sport England suggests that a study based upon their method can be used to develop locally derived standards for incorporation in policy documents.

The study area as six sub-areas

3.10 The overall study area has been defined to coincide with the Council administrative area. The study area has been further divided into the following sub-areas to reflect as far as possible the geographical distribution of demand, and the availability of detailed information on the present and future population.

Table 3.3: The study sub areas

Rayleigh	Grange & Rawreth, Lodge, Rayleigh Central, Trinity, Wheatley, Whitehouse
Hockley	Hockley East, Hockley West, Hawkwell West
Hullbridge	Hullbridge Riverside, Hullbridge South
Canewdon	Canewdon
Rochford	Ashingdon, Rochford Eastwood, Rochford Roche, Rochford St Andrews
Great Wakering	Barling & Sutton, Foulness & Great Wakering East, Great Wakering Central, Great Wakering West

3.11 The geographical extent of these sub-areas is shown on **Plan 3.1**.

Plan 1: the study sub areas

3.12 As mentioned in the Section 1, there may be instances of clubs travelling between sub areas, and even between different local authority areas. Ideally, the study area should reflect this cross border travel.

3.13 The extent to which players and teams are prepared to travel to play matches varies greatly depending on factors such as the standard of competition, the age group concerned, income etc. Junior leagues (in particular) can draw their clubs from a very small area. On the other hand adult teams, especially those of a higher standard, may be prepared to travel further to play opponents or secure use of better standard facilities. The catchments upon which individual clubs draw can be large if specialist and relatively expensive facilities are required for competition (as in the case of artificial surfaces for hockey).

The importance of qualitative factors

3.14 Due regard in analyses has been paid to qualitative factors, such as the existence or otherwise of ancillary facilities (changing rooms, parking, floodlighting etc); general access (by foot and vehicle) and other considerations. As discussed later, such factors can influence the use and popularity of pitches amongst local clubs. For example, many football leagues require clubs to have access to changing and showering facilities at their home ground. The quality of drainage and playing surface will influence how many games can be played, and how many have to be postponed due to conditions. The extent to which pitches are also used for informal recreation (such as dog walking and casual bike riding) also bears heavily on the quality of the playing surface. Rutting of the surface caused through misuse can produce both farcical and dangerous conditions, whilst playing on a pitch subjected to regular fouling by dogs is both unpleasant and a health hazard.

How were pitches counted?

3.15 Establishing precisely how many pitches can prove difficult for several reasons:-

- the number of pitches at a given site can fluctuate over short periods of time for reasons of management and husbandry. This means that the findings of a count conducted in one season may differ from the results of a similar exercise conducted the following season;

- site inspections may occasionally fail to identify existing pitches because goals may only be erected on match days;

- the time at which site surveys are conducted will greatly influence the number of pitches identified through site investigation where these are conducted;

- sometimes winter and summer sports use the same space, and this has to be taken into account to account as appropriate: especially when developing local standards; and,

- Football matches involving younger children may use portable goals and small-sided pitches, and these may be difficult to identify through site inspection. Furthermore, the majority of mini-soccer matches are not played on dedicated surfaces, but rather on part of a larger pitch.

3.16 Because of these problems, it was important that the study did not become a rigid 'snap shot in time' counting exercise. The aim instead was to estimate the overall capacity of the available playing field stock to provide pitches given what was known about current and estimated future needs. Accordingly, the study attempted to include those pitches currently unused, but which could be used in the future.

3.17 Although there is a minimum size for adult pitches, the Football Association prescribes no maximum or minimum dimensions for junior or youth pitches; neither do they stipulate that junior/youth teams *must* play on junior/youth-size pitches. In practice many youth teams may play on full-size (adult) pitches. The extent to which this practice occurs depends on how rigidly local league rules are enforced.

3.18 However both the NPFA and the English Schools' Football Association (ESFA) recommend different minimum and maximum dimensions for various junior and youth age groups. For example, the ESFA have strongly recommend for players of middle school age that:-

> *'…wherever possible, the playing area should have a length of no more than 90 yards (82 metres), nor less than 75 yards (70 metres) with its breadth no more than 60 yards (56 metres) nor less than 45 yards (42 metres).'*

3.19 Primary school age teams are covered by the Football Association's new 'Mini-Soccer' regulations. Mini-Soccer is discussed more fully later in this report. However, the Football Association now stipulates that children must play upon the following size pitches.

Table 3.4: Pitch dimensions for mini-soccer as prescribed by the Football Association

Over 6 And Under 8s	4 v 4 and 5 v 5	Min. Length 27.5 m Max. Length 36.6 m Min. Width 18.3 m Max. Width 27.5 m
Over 8 And Under 10s	6 v 6 and 7 v 7	Min. Length 45 m Max. length 55 m Min. Width 27.5 m Max. Width 36.6 m

3.20 It is too early to establish how rigidly or otherwise these new regulations will be interpreted, and the extent to which they will result in an increased demand for pitch space. However, evidence from elsewhere, as well as this study, suggests that many mini-soccer games are in fact being played on part of a larger pitch with portable goals being used. As already mentioned, this practice can add to the difficulty experienced in counting pitches.

How were pitch areas calculated?

3.21 For the purpose of this study it was necessary to convert the number of pitches into an overall 'hectarage'. Time and resource limitations meant that it was impossible to go out and measure each and every pitch. Accordingly, some assumptions had to be made about the sizes of pitches and their run off areas. The Six Acre Standard provides guidance on such matters, as detailed in Appendix A.

How were teams counted?

3.22 Teams were counted from current local league handbooks, information provided from the club survey, and league and club representatives. All teams identified in the league handbooks were included in the assessment, even though information provided by league representatives suggested that a small number had folded.

3.23 Teams were categorised as far as possible into individual age groups, based on their need for different sizes of pitch. For the purpose of assessing local needs, three age groups were identified:- 5 to 9 years, 10 to 15 years, and 16 to 44.

Participation outside the scope of this study

3.24 This study excluded demand for sports pitches generated through:-

- Fully professional sport; and,
- curricular requirements.

3.25 In the case of the first category, provision for such activity tends to be made at specialist and dedicated facilities. In the case of the latter, where education facilities are shared with the public, the peak-demand emanating from curricular requirements does not generally coincide with that of community teams.

The study area population

3.26 The population data used in this study was provided by Rochford District Council, as well as from the 1991 census. Data was provided on a settlement basis with estimates for the years 2001 and 2011. The data was broken down by male and female into the following age groups:- 0-4, 5-9, 10-15, 16-44, 45+. Breaking down the population in this way allowed for a detailed assessment to be made of the potential impact of demographic change on participation in pitch sports. This will be explained further later in this report.

3.27 The estimated overall study area population in 2001 according to data provided was 81,600. It is understood that this data is based upon the **resident population**. The estimated total population for 2011 did not show any increase, nor was there an increase for the three individual age groups.

3.28 As a starting point for estimating the future demand for pitches it was necessary to divide the number of teams generated in a given area into that section of the population yielding the players.

3.29 The Team Generations Rates (TGRs) resulting from this exercise are considered further in the next section. The calculation of accurate TGRs depends upon the existence of fairly detailed population data for the study area and its constituent sub-areas.

Other sports facilities covered by this study

3.30 The Sport England method is concerned solely with the demand for and supply of playing pitches. The study of other relevant outdoor sports facilities was therefore based on alternative methods explained in Appendix B, which covers these other sports.

Definition of key terms used in this report

3.31 **Definition of the 'pitch'** - 'The term 'pitch' used in this study has been defined by planning regulations as a delineated area, together with any run-off area of 0.4 ha or more, and which is used for association football, American football, rugby, cricket, hockey, lacrosse, rounders, baseball, softball, Australian football, Gaelic football, shinty, hurling, polo or cycle polo. It should be noted though that this definition was produced before the advent of mini-soccer, and it is possible therefore to have a 'standalone' mini-soccer pitch less than the minimum size prescribed by the above planning regulation. This study has therefore attempted to take this point into account.

3.32 **Definition of 'playing field'** - The term 'playing field' is used to describe the whole of a site that includes at least one playing pitch.

4 THE OVERALL SUPPLY OF AND DEMAND FOR PITCHES

Key findings

4.1 The detailed findings on the supply of and demand for pitches within the individual sub areas are considered in Sections 5 to 13 of this report. This section, however, presents some general conclusions, and compares these findings with what is known about circumstances elsewhere, and in the country as a whole.

4.2 There were 81 full-size pitches within the study area. Of these pitches 71 could be interpreted as being in Community Use (i.e. categories A, B1 or B2). However, only 43 of these pitches could be categorised as being in **Secured** Community Use (i.e. within categories A and B1).

4.3 In addition, there were known to be 40 junior and 18 dedicated mini-soccer pitches. Of these 29 and 18 respectively were interpreted as being in Community Use and 5 junior and 6 of the mini soccer pitches could be defined as being in **Secured** Community Use.

4.4 At the time of the report, there were estimated to be 101.74 ha of pitches in Community Use within the study area, or 1.25 ha for every 1000 people. If the category B2 pitches are excluded from this calculation the corresponding figures are 48 ha, or 0.59 ha for every 1000 people.[5]

4.5 The above can be compared with a recommended level of provision of 1.20 ha /000 using the NPFA standard for pitch sports.

4.6 This council-wide ratio however conceals wide variations between the various sub areas as follows:-

Table 4.1: Provision of pitches per head of population for the sub areas based on all pitches in community use (A,B1,B2), <u>all</u> pitches in Secured Community Use (A,B1), and the NPFA standard

Rayleigh	31,410	35	23	0.99	0.67
Hockley	17,164	17	4	0.7	0.25
Hullbridge	7,425	9	8	1.34	1.23
Canewdon	1,491	3	2	2.23	1.68
Rochford	16,317	35	11	1.95	1.36
Great Wakering	7,694	16	5	1.77	0.49
Recommended NPFA standard of provision:- 1.20 ha/000					

[5] Pitches whose surfaces double-up for different sports have been excluded from this calculation, in order to avoid double-counting for the purpose of calculating both the overall areas, the per capita ratios. All of the pitches available for community use have been counted.

[6] For the purpose of this table, the population estimates for the sub areas are based on the 1991 census ward figures. The total population of the District has been divided into natural settlement areas identified in the study as the sub areas,

4.7 As can be seen from the above table, there is variation in the level of provision between the individual sub areas. Areas like Hockley are poorly provided for, compared with Rochford in particular. However, perhaps the most significant characteristic is the extent to which local community provision in some parts of the District is comprised of 'B2' sector pitches (which will include most schools, club and private sports grounds). This point will be discussed further later in this report.

4.8 Overall pitch provision in the study area can be broken down as follows.

Table 4.2: Summary of pitch provision by type and public availability

Adult football	35	0	11	0	**46**
Junior football	5	0	24	11	**40**
Mini-soccer	6	0	12	0	**18**
Cricket	6	0	7	4	**17**
Rugby	1	0	8	3	**12**
Hockey (grass)	1	0	3	3	**7**
ATPs	0	0	0	0	**0**
Total	**54**	**0**	**65**	**21**	**140**

Ratio of pitches per person

4.9 The total number of pitches in the study area equates to 1 pitch for every 1006 people. Only full size pitches have been included in this calculation to enable comparison with other areas. However, there is great variance in the level of provision between the various sub areas. As will be seen, these ratios compare fairly favourably with those derived from other similar studies conducted elsewhere.

Comparison with other local ratios

4.10 The estimated local pitch/person ratio for the study area as a whole can be can be compared with those yielded from similar studies conducted elsewhere.

Table 4.3: Comparison of local pitch/person ratios with the results of studies conducted elsewhere

Kennet District Council	1: 365
London Borough of Bromley	1: 602
Cambridge and Environs	1: 621
London Borough of Hounslow	1: 625
Daventry Town	1: 658
Lincolnshire	1: 684
Leicestershire	1: 747
St. Helens	1: 970

Local Authority/Area	Ratio Pitches/Person
Rochford District	*1: 1006*
Portsmouth	1: 1,087
Redcar & Cleveland	1: 1269
London Borough of Southwark	1: 2,842
Average	**1: 956**

4.11 The above figures cover a range of local authority areas, from rural areas (such as Kennet District in Wiltshire), to heavily urbanised areas (the London Boroughs and St. Helens). The ratio for the study area lies towards the bottom of the table. It is to be noted though that the figures provided in the above table are based upon studies that will have been conducted at different times, spanning almost two decades.

Local pitch/person ratios for individual sports

4.12 The local ratios for specific (full-size) sports pitches in comparison with what is known about the national picture are as follows.

Table 4.4: Comparison of local pitch/person ratios for individual sports with the estimated national average[7]

Senior Football	1: 1,771	1: 1,840
Cricket	1: 4,794	1: 4,243
Hockey/ATP	1:11,643	1: 8,968
Rugby	1: 7,409	1: 8,271

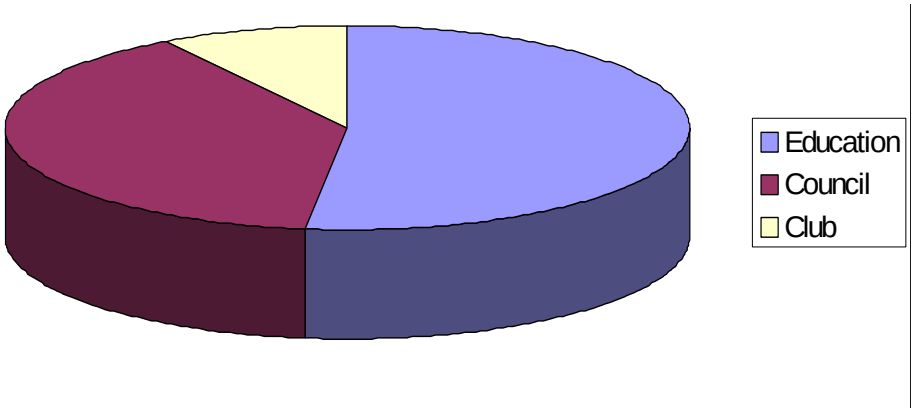
Ownership

4.13 The pattern of ownership for all pitches within the study area is shown in the following table

[7] ????????

[8] These figures are taken from an unpublished Sports Council Technical report prepared before 1990, and are therefore based on a series of studies conducted some time ago.

Table 4.5: Breakdown of pitch ownership in the study area by sector



4.14 From the above it can be seen that:-

- 40% of all pitches were controlled by the Council. This is lower than the estimated national average of about 43%;
- 51% of all pitches were controlled by the education sector, compared with the estimated national average of 29%; and,
- Clubs (9%) controlled the remaining pitches.

4.15 Analysis of total pitch provision by ownership alone conceals an interesting contrast with the general pattern of provision for individual sports. The fact that the large majority of football teams play on Council owned/controlled pitches mirrors the national pattern. A similar reliance by cricket and rugby teams on club and private sites (or else council sites managed by clubs) also tends to reflect national patterns. Private clubs, as well as public schools and universities have tended to be the main providers of opportunities for these sports over the years. Traditionally, rugby, cricket and hockey clubs have acquired and developed their own facilities in contrast to football clubs, the majority of whom rely heavily on the public sector. However, hockey clubs are becoming increasingly dependent on councils and education authorities to provide pitches. This is because of the sport's move to relatively expensive artificial surfaces in preference to grass or shale.

Ancillary facilities (e.g. changing rooms, car parking etc.)

4.16 The study highlighted a considerable variation in the quality of ancillary facilities. The most significant findings and problems identified in this respect are dealt with on a sport-by-sport basis later in this section. However, some more general comments can be made here, namely that:-

- the best facilities tend to be those controlled and or managed by clubs, having been able to develop their own facilities over a number of years, confident in their security of tenure;
- the worst facilities tend to be council controlled. Some clubs and sports representatives have complained about the quality of ancillary accommodation. Other problems associated with such facilities are vandalism, wear and tear, and abuse of the playing surface resulting from unfettered public access, and poor quality of the playing surfaces;

- drainage of pitches, especially in the east of the study area where pitches tend to lie of soil with a clay composition. This contrasts with pitches in the west of the study area, many of which lie on well drained soil; and

- only a few pitches in community use benefit from floodlighting, and these again tend to be on sites where clubs have had the security of tenure to develop facilities over the years.

Participation in pitch sports

4.17 **The National Picture -** The following table sets out national figures on participation in pitch sports from the General Household Survey (GHS), whilst a discussion of local trends for individual sports is contained in the relevant sub-section in this section.

Table 4.6: Figures from General Household Surveys on participation in sport and other recreational activities (percentage of persons participating 4 weeks before the interview)

	37.0	40.7	40.8	44.5
	13.0	14.8	15.4	14.8
	8.6	11.6	15.4	14.8
	15.0	13.6	12.2	11.3
	8.4	9.3	10.2	11.0
	4.5	4.8	5.5	5.6
				1.3
	4.8	4.6	4.5	4.8
	3.9	5.0	4.6	4.5
	5.2	5.0	4.6	4.5
	1.8	3.8	4.0	3.4
	3.4	3.3	2.7	2.4
	1.8	2.0	2.1	2.0
	1.7	2.1	2.0	1.9
	1.9	2.0	2.0	1.7
	2.4	2.0	1.7	1.5
	2.6	2.5	1.9	1.3
	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0

4.18 Of the pitch sports, it is therefore only football that appears in the 'top ten' participation sports for either gender. Of the other pitch sports the corresponding percentages for 1996 GHS (where they could be measured with any reliability) were cricket (0.9%), rugby (0.6%), and hockey (0.3%).

4.19 However, the above statistics should be used with caution. Trend analysis is difficult as figures are sometimes presented slightly differently within individual GHSs.

4.20 Assessments from Sport England, based upon the GHS suggest that participation in senior football will remain static. However, evidence from several local playing pitch surveys across the country suggests that participation in mini-soccer is thriving.

4.21 Data supplied by the Football Association suggests there are over 40,000 affiliated football teams (senior and junior) playing in England. In terms of annual participation rates, the English Football Association figures stand at around 1.5 million adult football players, and 5 million junior players of school age.

4.22 Although football is played predominantly by males, there has been some growth in participation amongst females in recent years. It is possible that interest in playing ladies/girls football locally will grow further, as a result of local sports development campaigns and enhanced media interest (such as in the 1999 Women's World Cup). The picture at the national level is encouraging. In 1990, there were estimated to be only 80 girls' teams, whilst in 1998 there were an estimated 1000. The number of female players (girls and women) has also grown, from 21,500 as recently as 1996, to 34,000 in 1998.[9] There have been claims that girls 'football is the "fastest growing sport in the world"[10]. Figures released for the 2001/2 season show that women's participation in football had already outstripped netball.

4.23 There have been forecasts that participation in hockey will increase due to the provision of more artificial turf pitches (atp). Surveys conducted by English Hockey have indicated that half a million adults participate in hockey at least once year and there are in the order of 100,000 regular adult players, of which the balance are men. The study appeared to show however that women's participation has shown significant growth up to 1990. The number of clubs is decreasing but clubs are now running more teams (50% of clubs run more than 4 teams). Women's clubs still tend to run fewer numbers of teams. Survey results indicated that for the majority of clubs, membership is either increasing or static. Nearly half of all children have participated in hockey at least once in the previous 12 months. Outside school lessons, however, hockey ranks only 26th alongside other sports.

4.24 Future participation in rugby and cricket is more difficult to predict. The exposed media coverage of rugby allied to the development of forms of non-contact rugby to encourage children into the game suggests that levels of participation will, at least, not decline in a significant way. The Rugby Football Union have stated on their official web-site that Rugby Union is "a mass participation sport with over 500,000 playing the game regularly each weekend." The same web-site declares that women's Rugby Union is "one of the fastest growing women's sports..", with over 230 clubs and 8,000 participants. The governing body has also placed great emphasis on the development of the small-sided 'mini-rugby' version of the game in encouraging participation amongst the young.

4.25 Before England's recent cricket success in the Ashes 2005, the dire performances of the national cricket side, allied to the decline in cricket as a curriculum sport had been thought to not auger well for the future of the game at the grass roots level. However, on a recent interview on national radio, the Chairman of the English Cricket Board claimed that there are more people playing cricket in England than at any time[11]. The governing body is hoping its 'Kwik Cricket' and 'Inter Cricket' initiatives will encourage more people into the sport before they are introduced to the full, hard ball game. After the recent success of the national side, it would seem Cricket may well see an increased level of interest and participation.

[9] 'Females in Tuition'. Katherine Knight, in Leisure Management. February 1999.

[10] On one popular national radio programme a representative of the Football Association claimed that women's football was the fastest growing sport in the world. On the same programme two week later, an expert practitioner of 'extreme sports' claimed similar status for 'para-surfing'!.

[11] Lord Maclaurin on 'Steve Payne in the Afternoon. BBC Radio 5 Live'

4.26 As with the other main pitch sports, cricket is also seeking to encourage the development of female participation. The official governing body web-site claims that, "the number of primary school girls involved has increased from 354,000 to 433,000, and the secondary schools have increased from 139,000 to 174,400". The majority of ladies teams are incorporated into male clubs.

4.27 Pitch sports (as with other sports activities with a high club membership) have a high proportion of participants who take part in organised competitions.

Participation by children

4.28 The GHS results are based upon responses from adults aged between 16 and 44 years of age. Importantly, because the GHS concentrates on adult participation it provides no information on participation by children and youths. Although no firm evidence exists, it would appear from discussions with relevant governing body representatives that participation within these age groups is growing for some sports. The most notable example of this is football, especially with the advent of the 'mini soccer' initiative which will be discussed further later in this section.

The local picture

4.29 The findings of the study with regard to the individual sub-areas are dealt with in the following five sections of this report. However, some overall findings with respect to individual pitch sports are provided in the remainder of this section.

Football

4.30 **Players and teams** - Based on the number of actual teams and clubs playing in the District, there were estimated to be over around 3,000 regular footballers within the study area. The vast majority of these were male. Approximately half of these players are adult players. With the remainder being composed of children and youth players. The situation is summarised in the following table.

Table 4.7: Estimated numbers of local footballers

2,963	**2,858**	**105**	**531**	**784**	**1,648**

4.31 The situation in terms of the numbers of teams is summarised in the following table.

Table 4.8: A summary of teams and playing numbers

	103	49	59
	1648	784	531

4.32 The study therefore identified a grand total of 103 adult teams, and 112 teams covering the age range 5 to 15 years.

4.33 Club membership varied greatly, between 15 to 250 members. The larger clubs are obviously those running multiple teams, including youth and children's teams.

Team Generation Rates (TGRs)

4.34 A TGR is the ratio between the number of teams within a defined area and the total population within a given age group for that area. TGRs for football have in the past tended to be calculated for the age group 10 - 44 years, as this tends to be the 'football team generating' section of the population.

4.35 Identifying TGRs provides the means to:-

- compare participation in competitive football between the study area and other parts of the country where similar studies have been undertaken; and,
- assist modelling future demand for pitches.

4.36 Caution is advised in using TGRs, as over-reliance on them at the expense of drawing upon qualitative evidence can lead to an under-estimation of demand. Essentially, TGRs reflect the current status quo as they are based on **existing teams** and may therefore ignore the needs of 'potential' clubs that cannot join a league because they lack a home ground. Other deficiencies with TGRs reflect their:-

- Inability to by themselves differentiate between 'local demand', and that generated by teams travelling into an area to play their home games;
- Inability to help project demand in some areas of very rapid growth. (For example major housing development may be planned in an area where there is little or no existing housing, and where there is therefore currently little by way of 'team generation'; and,
- Inability to help model demand in situations where team generation may be constrained simply through a shortage of facilities.

4.37 The importance of taking into account 'latent demand' is considered more fully later in this section.

4.38 Dividing the estimated number of football teams catering for 10 years plus within the study area by the estimated number of males in the study area between 10 - 44 years (19,342) gives a **TGR of 1:124**. This ratio can be compared with those estimated through similar studies conducted elsewhere.

Table 4.9: comparison of local team generation rates for football with the results of studies conducted elsewhere

Rochford District	*1:124*
Daventry Town	1: 150
Cambridge City and environs	1: 158
Ellesmere Port	1: 182
Kennet District	1: 183
Crawley, Horsham, Hastings, Bexhill and Maidstone	1: 183
Portsmouth	1: 236
Tyne and Wear	1: 290
Redcar and Cleveland	1: 434

Local Authority/Area	TGR
Average	**1: 215**

4.39 As can be seen, the estimated TGR for the study area as a whole was much lower (i.e. better) than the average rate.

4.40 The difference between the individual TGRs will be as a result of several factors that might include:-

- contrasting demographic characteristics, (populations dominated by the very old or the very young may not generate as many teams as those dominated by children and young adults);
- varied sports development campaigns, (local authorities and others running active sports development initiatives will probably encourage increased levels of participation); and,
- the existence of an adequate supply of playing pitches.

4.41 Previous studies of pitch supply and demand using the Sport England method have concentrated on the needs of males in the 10 - 44 year's age group, given that this age group has tended to provide the vast majority of players. The development of 'mini-soccer' has however led to a greater demand to play football amongst the under 10s.

4.42 Young children are now actively discouraged by the Football Association from playing 11-a-side games on marked-out pitches, and their pitch requirements are dictated by the recently introduced of the F.A. mini-soccer rules governing pitch sizes (detailed in Section 3).

4.43 In order to plan effectively to meet estimated demand it would be desirable to identify three respective TGRs:-

- 5 to 9 years (to cater for the future demand for 'mini-soccer' (discussed later in this section);
- 10 -15 years (to cater for future demand for junior football); and,
- 16-44 years (to cater for future demand for senior football).

4.44 The following figure shows the TGRs for the three age groups, for the study area as a whole, as well as for the individual sub-areas.

Table 4.10: Football team generation rates for male football in the sub areas[12]

	Pop = 16,131 **Teams = 102** ***TGR = 1:159***	**Pop = 3,211** **Teams = 54** ***TGR = 1:60***	**Pop = 2,639** **Teams = 58** ***TGR = 1:46***

[12] For the purpose of this table, the population estimates for the sub areas are based on the 1991 census ward figures. The total population of the District has been divided into natural settlement areas identified in this study as the sub areas.

Areas	Adult (16 - 44)	10 - 15s	5 to 9
Rayleigh	**Pop = 6,101** **Teams = 33** ***TGR = 1:185***	**Pop = 1,309** **Teams = 14** ***TGR = 1:94***	**Pop = 1,025** **Teams = 19** ***TGR = 1:54***
	Pop = 63,472 **Teams = 7** ***TGR = 1:496***	**Pop = 614** **Teams = 14** ***TGR = 1:44***	**Pop = 542** **Teams = 9** ***TGR = 1:60***
	Pop = 1,524 **Teams = 11** ***TGR = 1:139***	**Pop = 330** **Teams = 6** ***TGR = 1:55***	**Pop = 251** **Teams = 5** ***TGR = 1:50***
	Pop = 311 **Teams = 1** ***TGR = 1:311***	**Pop = 72** **Teams = 0** ***TGR = 0***	**Pop = 66** **Teams = 0** ***TGR = 0***
	Pop = 3,121 **Teams = 18** ***TGR = 1:174***	**Pop = 563** **Teams = 12** ***TGR = 1:47***	**Pop = 465** **Teams = 15** ***TGR = 1:31***
	Pop = 1,602 **Teams = 32** ***TGR = 1:50***	**Pop = 323** **Teams = 8** ***TGR = 1:40***	**Pop = 290** **Teams = 6** ***TGR = 1:48***

4.45 Several interesting points emerge from studying the above table. The most obvious point is the contrasts that exist between the TGRs for the different sub areas. Another interesting feature is the comparative popularity of football within the study area amongst young males, compared to adult males. Overall, there is a lower rate of participation in the adult age group compared with the younger age groups. This might be explained in part from the tendency for adults to give up playing with the advent of other commitments, (families, careers etc.); declining interest in sport once compulsory education is left; or, because older age and physical decline means that playing is no longer enjoyable.

4.46 It is also likely to be explained in part by the introduction of small-sided soccer. Not only is there evidence of this initiative increasing participation in the sport; it also means that more teams are likely to be generated per head of population compared with the 'full-sided' game.

4.47 However, another possible explanation may be that there are simply not enough opportunities to play adult football due to a lack of pitches for teams to use, or insufficient clubs and teams existing to join. If it is assumed that those eleven-a-side teams existing in the study area have an average of 15 players/squad, then it can be deduced that:-

- 1 in 4 males between the ages of 11 and 15 belong to a team; compared with,
- 1 in 11 males between the ages of 16 and 44 years.

4.48 This suggests participation between youth and adult male football has more than halved which could be attributed to “other commitments”.

4.49 It is inappropriate to calculate TGRs for the equivalent female age group. The minority status of female football means that its future needs are better dealt with on a club-by-club basis, and these will be addressed later in this section.

Estimated demand for football pitches

4.50 In order to identify the weekly demand for football the total number of known teams is multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half will play 'at home' each week.

4.51 Discussions with league representatives suggested that the temporal demand for soccer occurs largely over the weekend, with only a small percentage of matches being played during the week. Nationally, there has been a trend towards Sunday as the most popular day for playing football, reflected in an approximate 20/80% split of matches between Saturday and Sunday respectively. Local findings suggested that the overall temporal demand within the study area over the weekend largely reflects this national pattern. The local split for junior level adult football is in fact estimated to be 84% on Sunday (am) and 16% on Sunday (pm) However, for the purpose of the study it was seen as more appropriate to examine this temporal demand based on the individual sub-areas, as considered over the following 9 sections.

4.52 These percentages were applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the individual sub areas considered in later sections of this report. The basic calculation employed to achieve these results was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

4.53 Clearly the resultant figures for individual sub areas were rounded up or down as appropriate, and are detailed in the relevant sub sections.

4.54 The results of the above calculation were then used to assess the peak-time demand for pitches in the various sub areas (considered in the following nine sections).

4.55 Because of the limited time that was available for this study it was not possible to check booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday were matched up with their 'home' pitches it tended to confirm the pattern of demand identified. Furthermore the booking records for Council pitches (which have been checked for the last complete season), also tended to confirm the pattern of demand for pitches over the week.

Supply of pitches

4.56 The supply of pitches for the individual sub areas is summarised in the relevant sections of this report. However, the overall provision of pitches (by category of availability: A, B1, B2 and C) was as follows.

Table 4.11: Football pitches in the study area

	35	5	6
	0	0	0
	11	24	12
	0	11	0
	46	**40**	**18**

Supply compared with demand

4.57 Discussions with local league representatives as well as Council staff suggest that pitches in the 'Local Authority' and 'Club' sectors should be able to accommodate at least two adult matches **by adult community teams** each week on a regular basis before they deteriorate to an unacceptable standard. Research elsewhere suggests that even un-drained pitches should be able to accommodate at least two adult games per week each season before they deteriorate to an unacceptable standard.[13]

4.58 The situation for pitches in the LEA sector may be different. School and college pitches used by outside teams may accommodate higher levels of use, when curricular activity is taken into account. Any additional wear and tear which combined school and community use may entail will be partly offset by the fact that most school games will involve lighter-weight juniors and youths. Nevertheless, for the purposes of assessing the availability of these pitches for outside teams, it is assumed that pitches in the LEA sector are capable of accommodating only one game by a community team each week.

4.59 Because younger children will not churn up pitches as much as adult players, mini soccer pitches (especially where they are dedicated pitches) will be able to accommodate much more usage than adult pitches where the surface is not shared. This is an important point because where clubs operate multiple mini soccer teams, the practice is frequently to play mini soccer matches covering the different age groups consecutively. For example if a minisoccer game lasts 30 minutes, four games could be accommodated between 10 am and 1 pm on a weekend morning.

4.60 These notional pitch capacities may not wholly accord with what is known about the actual level of usage on some sites. As will be discussed later, it is clear that some pitches do in fact accommodate at least three community games each week on a regular basis. This is probably a less than ideal state of affairs, given that very few local pitches benefit from proper drainage systems. Accordingly, a theoretical capacity of 2 community games/week is felt to be an appropriate basis for assessing the availability of pitches.

4.61 Detailed comments for the individual sub areas are made in the relevant sections. However, taking the above factors into consideration, the following overall comments can be made with regard to the adequacy of supply of full-size pitches relative to demand. Comments on the situation for mini-soccer are provided in the sub area sections.

4.62 Given that the temporal demand for pitches is concentrated over the weekend it appears that generally speaking the supply of pitches of all sizes at the time of this report was, at best, only just satisfying currently expressed demand, and at worst suppressing demand. More specifically the following comments can be made for each of the sub areas.

4.63 **Findings for the Rayleigh sub area -** There were 17 full-size pitches in the sub area that can be classified as being in Community Use. These could support up to 34 matches in a week. This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult and youth teams of 22 matches, with the peak time demand of 15 matches on Sunday am (mainly for senior football). 15 of the pitches are in **Secured** Community Use (A and B1). The expressed demand for pitches found therefore was within the theoretical playing capacity.

[13] The 'Playing Pitch Strategy' (Sports Council, 1991) identified the following match carrying capacities for various types of pitch based upon a 35 week season:- undrained <85 games, pipe drained <105, slit drained <95-105, sand carpet 105-180, suspended water table 180-120.

4.64 **Findings for the Hockley sub area -** There were 2 full-size pitches in the sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. These could support up to 4 matches. This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult and youth teams of 4 matches, with the peak time demand of 3 matches on Sunday am (mainly for senior football). All of these pitches were in **Secured** Community Use (A and B1).

4.65 **Findings for the Hullbridge sub area -** There were 5 full-size pitches in the sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. These could support up to 10 matches in a week. This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult and youth teams of 7 matches, with the peak time demand of 6 matches on Sunday am. The demand for pitches would therefore appear to be within the theoretical capacity at the time of the study.

4.66 **Findings for the Canewdon sub area -** There was 1 full-size pitch in the sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. The pitch could support up to 2 matches in a week. This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult and youth teams of 1 match. The demand for pitches would therefore appear to be within the theoretical capacity.

4.67 **Findings for the Rochford sub area -** There were 12 full-size pitches in the sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. These could support up to 24 matches in a week. This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult teams of 5 matches. However, if only those pitches in **Secured** Community Use (A and B1) were taken into account, it would leave a theoretical capacity of 8 full-size pitches (or 16 games per week). Therefore the expressed weekly demand for pitches would appear to be within the theoretical playing capacity.

4.68 **Findings for the Great Wakering sub area -** There were 10 full-size pitches in the sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. These could support up to 20 matches in a week. This compares with an expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult and youth teams of 13 matches, with the peak time demand of 6 matches on Saturday pm (for adults). However, if only those pitches in **Secured** Community Use (A and B1) were taken into account, it would leave a theoretical capacity of 4 full-size pitches (or 8 games per week). Therefore the expressed weekly demand for pitches would again appear to be within the theoretical playing capacity.

4.69 At the time of this report (2002) no existing teams appeared to experience difficulties in securing access to pitches on the appropriate day. The more popular pitches in the District seem to have plenty of spare capacity. A check of booking records and discussions with the Essex County FA and local league officials support this statement.

4.70 It was seen as doubtful if the existing supply of pitches would be sufficient if there if there were to be a sudden increase in demand, or if some pitches can no longer be used. Clearly, the risk of pitches becoming unavailable is higher for those in category B2. Pitches in this latter category cover a range of management regimes, including club and school owned facilities. Although in the majority of cases continued community use of such facilities can be predicted with some confidence there is no guarantee that this will be the case. For example, access to pitches on school sites where there is no formal 'dual use agreement' really depends on the attitude of the head teacher, school governors, and (ultimately) the caretaker.

4.71 What is also notable was the provision of junior and mini size pitches available for community use on a secured basis. There was also a considerable reliance on pitches managed by the education sector.

4.72 Not all clubs responding to the questionnaire survey expressed any particular concern over their home facilities. However, respondent clubs, in addition to league representatives suggested a number of recurrent themes, detailed in the individual sections for the sub areas, and summarised below.

4.73 **Changing -** There were particular concerns about the water temperature of the showers in some changing areas.

4.74 **Surfaces and maintenance -** A number of regular users of council pitches complained about the quality of playing surfaces, mainly that the grass should be cut more often. However, at the time of the study, we had experienced an extremely wet and mild winter.

4.75 **General public access -** Most Council pitches are situated on Statutory Open Space, which means that pitches are also used for other recreational activity. This inevitably leads to damage to the playing surface. Illicit activities such as dog fouling contributes to making playing conditions unpleasant and unhygienic.

4.76 'Park teams' tend to share council pitches with members of the public who use the playing surface for a variety of other informal recreational pursuits. In other parts of the country where similar studies have been conducted, teams playing on council parks have often complained about damage to playing surfaces resulting from illegal motorcycling. Concerns are also expressed about broken glass and drink cans left on the playing surface, which is clearly very dangerous. It must be said that such problems did not appear to be experienced by teams consulted through this study. However, complaints were raised about dog fouling of the playing surface, which is both unpleasant and a health hazard.

4.77 On a general point, similar studies conducted elsewhere have suggested that clubs enjoying security of tenure are more willing to invest in the improvement of both playing surfaces and ancillary facilities.

4.78 Discussions with league representatives identified that many clubs may be experiencing problems in generating sufficient revenue to meet all the costs associated with staying 'in business'. The costs of equipment, pitch hire, administration and affiliation costs, will add up to well over £1000 a year for the 'average' football club. Some league representatives have attributed the folding of several local clubs this season to an inability to meet these costs. The cost of Council pitches had in particular become a particular source of concern.

Girls'/ladies' football

4.79 Although football is played predominantly by males, there has been some growth in participation amongst females in recent years.

4.80 The picture at the national level was discussed earlier. County development plans are seen as part of the strategy to develop women's football around the country. A number of such plans have already been approved by the Football Association's Women's Football Committee, with each plan funding projects for three years at the County level. Within the County girls and ladies football appears to be developing well. The Essex County Girls League (catering for 15 years plus) had more than 100 teams. The Essex Ladies League had has 14 teams. Farther afield, the London Ladies League now has four divisions.

4.81 Locally, there was known to be one dedicated female football club; Southend Ladies FC, which supports two teams. In addition, a few of the multi-team clubs run female mini-soccer teams, or have female adult teams.

4.82 Although the development of girls'/ladies football should be encouraged, its likely contribution to overall levels of demand is likely to be small, a point which must be borne in mind when planning to meet future demand for playing pitches. For example:-

- There would appear to be no more than a handful of female teams in the study area. This compares with over 200 male teams; and,
- although there are estimated to be 34,000 female footballers in England, there could be around 1.2 million regular male footballers.[14]

4.83 Newly established female teams can often be restricted to playing friendlies and the occasional cup competitions, as the lack of other local teams of comparable standard can often make membership of a league extremely difficult to sustain. Another common problem was found to be the distances teams are required to travel to away games. This is because girls' leagues cover a bigger geographical area than their male counterparts to sustain a viable league structure.

Cricket

4.84 The 2002 annual report of the Secretary of the Essex County RFU expressed concern over the decline in the number of clubs within the County. "The number of teams is declining. Attempts are being made to arrest this decline, but there are no easy solutions". It is not clear however, whether this problem is also prevalent within the study area.

4.85 **Players and teams** - There were estimated to be 556 regularly playing cricketers within the study area as a whole, the majority of these being adult males.

4.86 Based upon the returns from the club questionnaire, there would appear to have been a general increase in club membership in the most established clubs over recent years. However, more detailed inspection suggests that the larger (multi-team) clubs have increased their membership, but the small clubs have generally lost members.

4.87 As with football, the majority of cricket clubs tend to draw their membership from within 5 miles of the home facility, and few players appear to live more than 10 miles away.

4.88 The following details categorise the estimated number of local cricketers

Table 4.12: Estimated numbers of local cricketers

556	**536**	**20**	**146**	**411**

4.89 At the time of the study, there were known to be an overall total of 42 cricket teams within the study area.

[14] This is figure is based on the percentage of the local population estimated to be in a male football team extrapolated to the national level (i.e. the estimated population for England).

Team Generation Rates (TGRs)

4.90 TGRs and their role in assessing future demand in particular have been explained under para 4.56.

4.91 Cricket teams of different age groups tend to use the same pitch, but vary the size of the outfield. Accordingly, it is not necessary to calculate TGRs for the various age groups. A single TGR for cricket is calculated by dividing the number of teams into the estimated male population within study area between the ages of 10-44 years (19,371). This gives a **TGR of 1:461.**

4.92 Comparison can be made with TGRs generated through similar studies elsewhere.

Table 4.13: comparison of local team generation rates for cricket with the results of studies conducted elsewhere

Mid Devon	1: 271
North Devon	1: 298
Kennet District	1: 407
Torbay	1:463
Rochford	*1:461*
Redacr & Cleveland	1:629
Daventry Town sub area	1: 875
Cambridge and environs	1: 908
Portsmouth	1: 2,808
Average	**1: 791**

4.93 The local TGR, therefore, appeared to be lower (i.e. better) than the average. However, there are fewer comparable TGRs than for football. The difference in TGRs will be as a result of the kind of influences identified at para. 4.56 onwards.

4.94 The following table shows the estimated TGRs for the individual sub areas.

Table 4.13: Team Generation Rates for cricket in the sub areas

	Pop = 19,371 **Teams = 42** ***TGR = 1:461***
	Pop = 7,410 **Teams = 12** ***TGR = 1:618***
	Pop = 4,086 **Teams = 7** ***TGR = 1:584***
	Pop = 1,883 **Teams = 2** ***TGR = 1:942***

Areas	Adult (11 - 44)
Canewdon	**Pop = 383** **Teams = 2** ***TGR = 1:192***
	Pop = 3,684 **Teams = 4** ***TGR = 1:921***
	Pop =1,925 **Teams = 15** ***TGR = 1:128***

4.95 As with football, it will be seen that the TGRs for the various sub areas differ greatly.

Estimated demand for cricket pitches

4.96 In order to identify the weekly demand for cricket, the total number of teams has to be multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play 'at home' each week.

4.97 The findings of the club survey suggested that the period of peak demand occurs over the weekend, although a significant number will be played mid-week (including adult matches in the height of summer, and children's games where there is close co-operation between schools and local clubs). Of matches played over the weekend, there appears to be an even spread of demand between Saturday and Sunday. The adult games tend to be played on weekend and evenings, leaving the mornings free for junior teams, which may include development work with schools.

4.98 For the purpose of the study it was seen as more appropriate to examine this temporal demand based on the individual sub-areas, as considered over the following sections.

4.99 These percentages were applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the individual sub areas considered in later sections of this report. The basic calculation employed to achieve these results was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

4.100 Clearly the resultant figures for individual sub areas were rounded up or down as appropriate, and are detailed in the relevant sub sections.

4.101 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not possible to check the booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand identified. The above estimates are therefore considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

4.102 The following summarises the number of cricket pitches within the various sub areas, and categorises them by availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Cricket pitches in the study area

4.103 The supply of pitches for the individual sub areas is summarised in the relevant sections of this report. However, the overall provision of pitches (by category of availability: A, B1, B2 and C) is as follows.

Table 4.14: Cricket pitches in the study area

	6
	0
	7
	4
	17

4.104 Cricket can accommodate many more 'game days' per week/season than football pitches because individual wickets can be rotated and 'rested' on the cricket table. Activity is spread over a bigger area and is therefore less intensive. Furthermore, as cricket takes place in the summer months pitches are less susceptible to being churned up. Artificial wickets also help to reduce wear and tear. Junior teams will use reduced sized pitches.

4.105 Most local matches will be limited over games, usually lasting no more than an afternoon. On this basis many pitches can absorb two games in a day in the summer months over the weekends, if the wickets are rotated. The tendency in many cases is for juniors to play in the mornings with senior teams playing in the afternoons. For the youngest teams a cricket pitch can be divided up in to more than one pitch and used concurrently with the help of artificial wickets.

4.106 Therefore, the ability of a pitch to meet peak time demand is very much down to local management. The response of the clubs to the questionnaire survey was therefore an important indicator of whether current provision can meet demand.

4.107 Detailed comments for the individual sub areas are made in the relevant sections. However, taking the above factors into consideration, the following overall comments can be made with regard to the adequacy of supply relative to demand.

4.108 At the present time few if any teams appear to experience difficulties in securing access to pitches on the appropriate day. The fact that only a majority of pitches are in **Secured** Community Use, would not appear to cause any immediate problems in that those clubs owning their own pitches are well established and will continue to operate into the foreseeable future.

Other issues raised by clubs

4.109 The views of league representatives and local clubs suggested a general satisfaction with facilities, although there are some particular issues worthy of note, with particular regard to those pitches in the ownership of the Council. These issues are detailed in the sections covering the individual sub areas. However, it is sufficient to mention here that some clubs expressed a particular concern with the quality of playing surfaces and their maintenance, as well as the general cost of hiring Council pitches which was considered to be high, and detrimental to the continued development of the sport within the area.

4.110 Some of the clubs indicated a desire to expand and/or improve their facilities in various ways, and these are detailed under the relevant sub-area sections.

Rugby

4.111 **Players and teams -** There was one rugby club based within the study area. Because of its comparative minority status (compared with football for example), rugby clubs tend to be centred on the population centres within a given area. The club generates 485 regular players, of which 455 are male. There are 354 senior and youth players, and 131 mini-rugby players. These figures produce a total of 15 senior/youth teams, and 4 mini-rugby teams. The study also identified one ladies' and one girl's team.

4.112 The details of the club are considered in the relevant sections of this report.

Table 4.15: Membership of local club

4.113 The overall number of playing members appears to have remained fairly constant over the decade prior to this study.

Team Generation Rates (TGRs)

4.114 The approximate TGR for adult and youth rugby (both of whom require full-size pitches) is **1: 246.**

4.115 There are few examples of other TGRs for rugby with which to compare the above ratio. The TGR for rugby does not take into account the many juniors who regularly play mini-rugby.

4.116 Given the small number of rugby clubs within the study area, it was felt more appropriate to assess the future requirements of the sport within the study area by focusing upon the aspirations of the clubs, rather than TGRs.

Supply of pitches

4.117 The following summarises the number of rugby pitches within the various sub areas, and categorises them by availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Rugby pitches in the study area

4.118 The supply of pitches found for the individual sub areas is summarised in the relevant sections of this report. However, the overall provision of pitches (by category of availability: A, B1, B2 and C) was as follows.

Table 4.16: Rugby pitches in the study area

	1
	0
	8

C	3
	12

4.119 There were, therefore, 12 rugby pitches in the study area, of which 7 had been defined as being in community use. Only 1 could be defined as being in **Secured** Community Use.

4.120 **Estimated demand for rugby -**The adult/youth teams play on Saturday. Juniors playing mini-rugby play on Sunday mornings.

4.121 In order to identify the weekly demand for rugby the number of teams is multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play 'at home' each week.

4.122 The responses from the club survey indicated that existing pitches could accommodate up to two adult matches a week before they suffer from undue wear and tear. Mini-soccer matches can be played on adult pitches divided up into four sections. Young players do not cause substantial damage to the playing surface compared with adult players. The adequacy of supply in the individual sub areas is discussed in the relevant sections. However, in overall terms the findings of this study suggest that the existing pitches could accommodate the existing demand at the time of the study; and no clubs had indicated a concern over meeting expressed demand.

4.123 **Other key findings for rugby** - Respondent clubs previously using council pitches had complained about pitch quality.

Hockey

4.124 **Players and teams -** The study identified one club (Rochford Casuals) which had an association with the study area, but plays outside the area (using an atps at Thundersley) due to the lack of an artificial pitch within the study area. The club has the following membership

Table 4.17: Membership of local clubs

4.125 The overall number of playing members had increased over the decade prior to the study. The membership yields a total of 1 senior male team and 2 senior female teams.

4.126 The majority of members lived between 5 and 10 miles from their home facilities. Members, therefore, travelled a lot further to their home pitch than was the case for most other football, cricket and rugby clubs. This could be attributed to the lack of appropriate facilities within the study area.

4.127 **Demand for hockey pitches** -The club played adult matches on Saturday. Governing Body requirements dictate that most serious competitive hockey now must be played on artificial turf pitches of an appropriate specification.

Team Generation Rates (TGRs)

4.128 The very small number of hockey clubs and teams associated with the study area suggested that it would be inappropriate to use a TGR for assessing future demand; the views and aspirations of the existing club will be far more relevant to this task.

4.129 **Supply compared with demand for hockey pitches -** Most competitive hockey has now to be played on artificial surfaces of a specification appropriate to the standard of competition. Grass and 'redgra' (shale) pitches are now largely obsolete accept for training and casual matches. The basic requirement now is for 'sand-based' atps. The governing body of hockey specifies that national league clubs must play on more expensive 'water-based' atps.

4.130 Although Rochford Casuals Hockley Club did not appear to experience undue difficulties in securing access to appropriate facilities, it undoubtedly incurs greater costs (in terms of travel and 'external' user charges), than would be the case if there were a local ATP at the time of this study.

4.131 Throughout the country clubs unable to develop ATPs of their own have to use facilities controlled by others. Historically, hockey (as with rugby and, to an extent, cricket) has tended to be a 'self-sufficient' sport in that many clubs have acquired and managed their own facilities. The requirement for clubs now to use atps means that most now resort to education or council-owned pitches. ATPs are discussed further later in this section.

4.132 **Other key findings for Hockey -** Rochford Casuals Hockey Club were particularly concerned that the lack of appropriate facilities within the study area is hampering the development of the sport within Rochford.

4.133 The club intended to develop a junior side, however the extent to which this may happen could rest solely on the provision of an ATP within convenient travel distance for potential membership. The Club is keen to discuss with schools the possibility of establishing an ATP in the District.

Other pitch sports

4.134 Football, rugby, cricket and hockey are by far the most popular pitch sports, both within the study area and nationally. Indeed, the study has identified little if any evidence of other pitch sports other than the 'big four', taking place.

4.135 It is possible that some sports enjoying minority status could suddenly grow in popularity. In the past American football and baseball have enjoyed surges in popularity in some parts of the country. However, this increased level of interest is rarely sustained to the extent that it impacts significantly upon the overall demand for pitches. Although there use to be an American football team within the study area, this has now disbanded.

4.136 Rounders is a popular sport within curriculum time, and is therefore outside the scope of this study.

The role of artificial turf pitches (ATPs) in meeting local need

4.137 ATPs are essential for competitive league hockey. They also represent an important training resource for many sports (notably football) as they offer a robust and even surface, playable in all conditions, and which can theoretically be used 24 hours/day if floodlights are provided.

4.138 Because ATPs can be used intensively for football and rugby training this can reduce wear and tear on grass pitches, which can therefore be maintained in a better state for formal matches.

4.139 ATPs are also acceptable media for competitive mini-soccer.

Existing provision of ATPs

4.140 As already mentioned, at the time of this study in 2002 there were no ATPs within the study area, which means that those who require access to such facilities had to travel to outside the Borough.

4.141 However, Sport England has announced its own recommended planning guidance for such facilities which is 1 per 60,000 population within a 30 minute drive-time catchment. Sport England will be guided by this figure in identifying projects for Lottery Sports Fund investment.

4.142 Sport England accepts that smaller populations may be able to support ATPs; especially where potential club users already exist. For example, research conducted in the Southern Region, suggested that such facilities can be sustained by a population of 20,000.

Adequacy of existing provision of ATPs

4.143 Based on 1:60,000 and the Sport England Facilities Planning Model Analysis of Synthetic Turf Provision in Essex during March 2000,a need of 2-3 pitches has been identified for the Rochford and Castle Point area.

Other factors affecting additional provision of ATPs

4.144 Because ATPs are expensive to construct and have to be replaced roughly every ten years, it is very important to locate them where they will be well used, both to help recoup initial capital outlay and to maximise contributions to the necessary ‘sinking fund’ to replace the worn out surface.

4.145 The viability of ATPs is also underpinned by the existence of ready and willing users, such as large hockey and football clubs that could block-book sessions. It also helps if off-peak time can be utilised by schools. The optimal locations for such facilities will therefore frequently be school sites located within the larger population centres, and also where community use agreements exist. At the time of the study there was known to be an application to the New Opportunities Fund, Places for PE and Sport programme for an ATP in the study area at Sweyne Park School in Rayleigh.

Latent and Future Demand

4.146 It is important to recognise that demand can change and may therefore increase over time. This is for a variety of reasons that will now be considered.

The influence of sports development campaigns, media exposure, and new facilities upon participation

4.147 Demand to take part in sport fluctuates for a variety of reasons including the following.

4.148 **The influence of sports development campaigns -** Initiatives taken by the governing bodies of sport, schools and local authorities may lead to an increased demand to take part in a given sport. Of particular importance is the Football

Association's mini soccer initiative. The target date for the implementation of the planned mini soccer programme at under 10 level was the season 1999-2000. A national facilities plan has also been prepared by the Football Association, which will be complemented by County Association Action Plans.

4.149 Strategically, Sport England have an aim of trying to promote an increase in participation of around 20% amongst the general public; success in achieving this goal would obviously have large impact upon levels of participation for the pitch sports, with a consequent increase in demand for facilities. This strategic aim will be returned to later.

4.150 Mini-soccer has been developed to help children develop basic footballing skills in a 'friendly' environment. The success of mini-soccer may lead to more children playing into their adult years. Conceivably, other sports may experience similar increases in participation amongst children, if initiatives such as mini-hockey, mini-rugby and kwik cricket prove to be successful.

4.151 The Sports Council has long-promoted 'school-community-club' sports initiatives, with the aim of encouraging more young people to continue to play sport beyond school hours and years. This ethos also underpins many of the facility and sports development programmes financed by Lottery Sports Fund money.

4.152 It is difficult to predict the long-term effect of such initiatives on future demand for pitches. Neither is it easy to predict the effect that an increased focus on PE within the school curriculum may have upon young people's longer-term fidelity with sport once they have left formal full-time education. The government policy encouraging links between schools and clubs, with a particular focus on primary schools may have some positive effect on mass participation if present and future governments invest sufficient time and commitment to the policy.

4.153 **The influence of new facilities in encouraging new teams to form -** New or improved facilities by themselves can generate demand that may not hitherto have been evident. For example, when local authorities first began to build leisure centres, relatively little prior consumer research was conducted to establish whether such facilities would be well used. The ultimate success of most of these facilities illustrates how demand to participate may not be articulated until opportunities to participate are actually made available.

4.154 One possible example of the effect of facilities on participation is evidenced through discussions with local football league representatives. It appears that at least some of the local leagues are managing potential 'surplus' demand through limiting the number of league places. The inference is that there are at least some potential clubs who cannot form due to lack of a league place. The reason for limiting the number of league places is generally to keep the number of teams in balance with pitches available.

4.155 **Media exposure of individual sports -** For example, national success at events such as the football and rugby World Cups will invariably attract young people into these sports.

4.156 The impact of such factors on short and long-term demand is almost impossible to gauge with any precision. Their influence, and how they should be taken into account in planning for future provision, is discussed further in the next section.

The influence of population changes on participation

4.157 The main potential determinants of demand will be as a result of changing local population. At the time of this study, the estimated population within the study area was 81,500. Over the coming years it is anticipated that this population will decrease to an estimated 80,400 by 2011[15].

4.158 However, for the purposes of calculating the future demand for pitches, it is not so much the overall change in population that will impact upon demand, but rather the changes within the specific age groups generating teams, as well where the population change is likely to occur. Accordingly, the TGRs for individual sports explained earlier in this section, can be applied to the predicted populations for given age groups in future years to provide an indication in the change in the number of teams.

4.159 The influence of population change on the number of teams (and therefore demand for pitches), within the individual sub areas is dealt with in the following sections. However, in overall terms the following comments can be made:-

- According to the estimates provided, the character of the population is unlikely to change in the study area.
- Any small increases in population resulting from the limited amount of planned residential development envisaged, will be offset by general ageing trends. Accordingly, none of the areas indicate increases in population therefore the team playing age groups are not expected to increase.
- Changes in the very long term (ie. 20 years plus) are more difficult to predict, as much will depend on the nature and scale of future residential development permitted outside current planning horizons; and, migration out of the area (as perhaps young people move to find jobs);

4.160 As already mentioned, sports development campaigns, media exposure and the availability of new facilities can influence participation. Although it would be desirable for the above estimates to reflect such factors, it is clearly impossible to assess their precise effect on future participation.

4.161 One possible approach is to add a 'weighting' factor to the various Team Generation Rates (TGRs) to reflect a 'worst/best' participation scenario. For example, Sport England are committed to promoting a 20 % increase in participation in sport and active recreation amongst the general population. Clearly, if this were achieved it would have a dramatic effect on the demand for sports pitches. By way of example if the relevant TGR for football in the study area were adjusted to reflect this assumption, it would mean that a further 33 teams in the 16 to 44 age group would have to be catered for based on the current population. In those areas where the supply of pitches relative to demand is especially tenuous, a 20% increase in demand may cause problems.

4.162 On the other hand it must be recognised existing participation levels have probably already been influenced upwards by for example:-

- the World Cup;
- the media exposure of the Premier League;

[15] Based on projections provided by Rochford Council.

- the emergence of 'role models' like David Beckham or Michael Owen; and,
- the promotion of mini-soccer.

4.163 Playing the Devil's advocate, it is quite possible that demand resulting from such factors has peaked and will now begin to fall as interest naturally begins to wane to some degree.

4.164 Only one thing can be guaranteed, and that is that participation in pitch sports will continue go up and down as it always has done. This point is made because whilst "providing enough" is very important, providing "too much" is ineffectual use of scare resources.

4.165 A locally derived standard, if it is to be effective, must include a tolerance to cater for unpredictable upswings in demand, but yet be sufficiently realistic so as not to result in the provision of vast swathes of unused prairie land.

4.166 As explained earlier in the report the future demand for pitches by hockey and rugby are probably best assessed on a club-by-club basis.

4.167 Taking rugby first, the existing club has outlined plans to acquire additional land to use as pitches.

4.168 A significant increase in participation in Hockey could be envisaged if an artificial turf pitch were to be provided within the District.

5 FINDINGS FOR THE RAYLEIGH SUB AREA

Analysis of the local supply of and demand for pitches

A Football

5.1 **Number of clubs and teams -** The following football clubs and teams were known to play within the sub area.

Table 5.1: Football clubs and teams in the sub area

5.2 This number of teams produces the following TGRs for the sub area.

Table 5.2: TGRs for male football in the Rayleigh sub area

Pop = 1025 Teams = 22 *TGR = 1:47*	Pop = 1309 Teams = 17 *TGR = 1:77*	Pop = 6101 Teams = 33 *TGR = 1:185*

Estimated demand for football pitches in the sub area

5.3 In order to identify the weekly demand for football in the sub area, the total number of known teams was multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half will play 'at home' each week.

5.4 The following table indicates the estimated temporal demand for pitches within the sub area.

Table 5.3: Temporal demand for football pitches by sub-area

	6%	94%				38%	62%			21%	79%

5.5 These percentages were applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the sub area.

5.6 The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 5.4 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

5.7 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate. The results of this calculation provide the estimated level of peak time demand for football pitches within the sub area.

Table 5.4: Calculation of peak-time demand for football pitches in the sub area

	1	15				2	4			2	8

5.8 Booking records for all pitches in community use were inspected.

5.9 The following football pitches have been identified in the Rayleigh sub area.

Table 5.5: Football pitches in the sub area

Private/B2	TXU Energy Ground	1	0	0	Yes
Private/B2	Trenders Avenue	0	1	2	Yes

Findings

5.10 From comparing supply against demand, the following conclusions can be drawn for the sub area.

5.11 There were 17 full-size pitches in the sub areas that can be classified as being in Community Use. These could support up to 34 matches in a week (based on the assumptions given in paras 4.72 – 4.78. This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult and youth teams of 22 matches, with the peak time demand of 15 matches on Sunday am (for senior football). Of these, 15 pitches are in **Secured** Community Use (A and B1). This means that at the time of this study the expressed demand for pitches was within the theoretical playing capacity.

5.12 There were 5 dedicated mini-soccer pitches within the sub area in Community Use. The mini-soccer pitches are able to absorb many more games than full size pitches, due to the lightness of the players and the short playing times. Therefore, this provision is able to support 80 matches in a weekend.

5.13 The above provision compares with the expressed weekly demand found to be 8 matches/week (on Sunday pm). The general practice was that where a club runs several mini-soccer teams, they will play there games in sequence using the same pitch. In this way, one mini-soccer grid could accommodate ate least 4 mini-soccer matches on a Sunday morning. It is also be the case that mini-soccer teams could also share the playing surface of full-size pitches. However, the best practice is to provide a dedicated mini-soccer grid for the sole use of young teams.

Other issues raised by clubs

5.14 Discussions with league representatives and local clubs suggested some particular problems worthy of mention, highlighted below. Specifically, eight clubs made comment in respect of particular sites.

Table 5.6: Problems associated with specific sites

Future plans

5.15 Only one of the clubs responding to the questionnaire survey indicated any plans for their further development.

Table 5.7: Future plans of football clubs

B Cricket

5.16 **The number of clubs and teams**. The clubs and teams which were known to be based in the sub area are summarised below.

Table 5.8: Cricket clubs and teams in the sub area

5.17 TGRs and their role in assessing future demand in particular have been explained under para 4.53 onwards.

5.18 Cricket teams of different age groups tend to use the same pitch, but vary the size of the outfield. Accordingly, it is not necessary to calculate TGRs for the various age groups. A single TGR for cricket is calculated by dividing the number of teams into the estimated male population within study area between the ages of 10-44 years.

5.19 The estimated TGRs for the sub area were, therefore, as follows.

Table 5.9: Team Generation Rates for cricket in the sub area

Pop = 7,410 Teams = 12 *TGR = 1:618*

Estimated demand for cricket pitches

5.20 In order to identify the weekly demand for cricket total number of teams has to be multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play 'at home' each week.

5.21 In terms of this sub area the distribution of demand over the week is as follows.

Table 5.10: Temporal demand for cricket pitches in the Rayleigh sub area

8%	50%	42%

5.22 These percentages were then applied to calculate the total demand for pitches within the sub area. The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 5.11 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

5.23 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate.

Table 5.11: Calculation of peak-time demand for cricket pitches in the sub area

1	2	2

5.24 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not possible to undertake comprehensive checks of booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. The above estimates were therefore considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

5.25 The following summarises the number of cricket pitches within the various sub areas, and categorises them by availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 5.12: Cricket pitches in the Rayleigh sub area

5.26 Cricket can accommodate many more 'game days' per week/season than football pitches because individual wickets can be rotated and 'rested' on the cricket table. Activity is spread over a bigger area and is therefore less intensive. Furthermore, as cricket takes place in the summer months pitches are less susceptible to being churned up. Artificial wickets also help to reduce wear and tear. Junior teams will use reduced sized pitches.

5.27 Most local matches will be limited over games, usually lasting no more than an afternoon. On this basis many pitches can absorb two games in a day in the summer months over the weekends, if the wickets are rotated. The tendency in many cases is for juniors to play in the mornings with senior teams playing in the afternoons. For the youngest teams a cricket pitch can be divided up in to more than one pitch and used concurrently with the help of artificial wickets.

5.28 Therefore, the ability of a pitch to meet peak time demand is very much down to local management. The response of the clubs to the questionnaire survey was therefore an important indicator of whether current provision can meet demand.

5.29 Taking into account the above factors, the following comments can be made in terms of the supply of pitches relative to demand at the time of this study.

Findings

5.30 There were 3 cricket pitches in the sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. This compares with the expressed peak time demand of 4 matches apiece on Saturday and Sunday, with an additional two matches during the week.

5.31 There were 2 pitches that could be classified as being in **Secured** Community Use.

5.32 Based on the assumptions given in paras 4.128 to 4.144 existing provision would appear adequate for current needs.

5.33 As with football, those clubs based on public open space suffer from the normal problems associated with unrestricted public access.

Future plans

5.34 Two clubs responding to the questionnaire provided details on their future development plans.

Table 5.13: Future development plans

C Rugby

5.35 Number of clubs and teams. There was one rugby club identified that now plays outside the sub area.

Supply of pitches

5.36 The supply of rugby pitches in the sub area is as follows.

Table 5.14: Rugby pitches is the sub area

		1	
Total		**1**	

The Future

5.37 It is not anticipated that the population of the sub area will increase in the foreseeable future. Population projections available for 2011 indicate that there is expected to be no increase. However, other factors influencing 'latent' demand (as discussed earlier in this report) may have some impact on demand, which should be reflected in the development of appropriate local standards of provision (discussed in Section 14 of this report).

Major issues in the Rayleigh sub area

5.38 The study, therefore, identified the following issues in the sub area:-

Football

5.39 Discussions with local league representatives and the local Essex County FA Field Officer revealed there were sufficient pitches in the area to meet demand. There was no knowledge of teams being unable to secure pitches in the sub area.

5.40 How can maintenance and pitch quality at council pitches be improved?

5.41 During winter months many of the pitches in this area suffer from being water logged. Analysis of pitch booking records highlighted Rawreth and John Fisher Playing Fields as being affected most with problems also being experienced at Fairview and Grove Playing Fields.

5.42 The proposed development at the former Park School site would result in an additional 2.424ha of pitches coming into **Secured** Community Use thus alleviating some of the problems experienced during winter months. It is envisaged that in order to maximise use of this additional land, an additional 2 senior pitches and 3 mini pitches will be provided. This would result in a total surplus of 4 full size pitches in the sub area, if the development goes ahead.

5.43 Investigations into pitch hire costs in Castle Point and Southend Councils has identified that it is cheaper to hire pitches in the Rochford District. This would account for the number of teams from outside the District playing on Rayleigh pitches. Closer examination of pitch bookings has identified that 5 of the teams playing on pitches in Rayleigh during the peak time of Sunday am, come from surrounding Districts. Three of these teams are senior. If these teams were excluded from the calculations, there would be an excess of 3 pitches, based on the current number of senior pitches available in the sub area.

Rugby

5.44 The rugby club identified moved out of the sub area due to the pitch being waterlogged during winter months. How can this situation be improved?

6 FINDINGS FOR THE HOCKLEY SUB AREA

Analysis of the local supply of and demand for pitches

A Football

6.1 **Number of clubs and teams** - The following football clubs and teams were known to play within the sub area.

Table 6.1: Football clubs and teams in the sub area

6.2 The above number of teams produces the following TGRs for the sub area.

Table 6.2: Football team generation rates for male football in the sub a area

Pop = 542 Teams = 9 *TGR = 1:60*	Pop = 614 Teams = 14 *TGR = 1:44*	Pop = 3,472 Teams = 7 *TGR = 1:496*

Estimated demand for football pitches

6.3 The following table indicates the temporal demand for football pitches within the sub area.

Table 6.3: Temporal demand for football pitches in the sub-area

	28%	72%				100%				100%	

6.4 These percentages have been applied to calculate the total demand for football pitches in the sub area at the time of this study.

6.5 The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 6.4 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

6.6 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate.

Table 6.4: Calculation of peak-time demand for pitches in the sub area

	1	3				7				5	

6.7 Because of the limited time available for this study it has not been possible to undertake check booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. Furthermore the booking records for Council pitches (which have been checked for the last complete season), also tend to confirm this pattern of demand for pitches over the week.

6.8 The above estimates were, therefore, considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also for modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

6.9 The following table summarises the number of football pitches within the various sub areas by pitch size and, importantly, the categories of availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 6.5: Football pitches in the sub area

Findings

6.10 From comparing supply against demand, the following conclusions can be drawn for the sub area.

6.11 There were 2 full-size pitches in the sub areas that could be classified as being in Community Use. These could support up to 4 matches in a week (based on the assumptions given in paras 4.72 to 4.78. This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult teams of 4 matches, with the peak time demand of 3 matches on Sunday am. At the time of this study, therefore, there appears to be a shortfall of full-size pitches.

6.12 There were 6 dedicated mini-soccer pitches within the sub area in Community Use that should be able to support 24 matches in a half day period. This provision compares with the expressed weekly demand of 5 matches/week (on Sunday am). Therefore the supply of pitches for this age group can be said to satisfy demand at the time of this study.

Other issues raised by clubs

6.13 Discussions with league representatives and local clubs suggested some particular problems worthy of mention. Specifically, 2 clubs raised issues in respect of individual sites, highlighted below.

Table 6.6: Problems associated with specific sites

Future plans

6.14 Hawkwell Athletic F.C. were discussing with Greensward College the establishment of another junior pitch.

B Cricket

6.15 **The number of clubs and teams**. There was one cricket club within the sub area summarised in the following table.

Table 6.7: Cricket clubs and teams in the sub area

6.16 TGRs and their role in assessing future demand in particular have been explained under para 4.53 onwards.

6.17 Cricket teams of different age groups tend to use the same pitch, but vary the size of the outfield. Accordingly, it is not necessary to calculate TGRs for the various age groups. A single TGR for cricket is calculated by dividing the number of teams into the estimated male population within study area between the ages of 10-44 years.

6.18 The estimated TGRs for the sub area were, therefore, as follows.

Table 6.8: Team Generation Rates for cricket in the sub areas

Pop = 4,086 Teams = 7 *TGR = 1:*

Estimated demand for cricket pitches

6.19 In order to identify the weekly demand for cricket total number of teams has to be multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play 'at home' each week.

6.20 The findings of the club survey suggested that the period of peak demand occurs over the weekend, although a small number of matches are played mid week. Of matches played over the weekend, Saturday is the preferred day. This pattern can be contrasted with what is known about the national picture where there seems to be a fairly even distribution over the weekend period. The deviation from the national pattern can be explained in part by the junior teams playing on Saturday mornings.

6.21 In terms of the Hockley sub area the distribution of demand over the peak weekend period is as follows.

Table 6.9: Temporal demand for cricket pitches in the sub area

42%	29%	29%

6.22 These percentages were then applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the sub areas. The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 6.10 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).
- Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate. They also include provision for the existing ladies' team.

Table 6.10: Calculation of peak-time demand for pitches in the sub area

1	1	1

6.23 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not possible to undertake comprehensive checks of booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. The above estimates can, therefore, considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

6.24 The following summarises the number of cricket pitches within the sub area at the time of this study, and categorises them by availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 6.11: Cricket pitches in the Hockley sub area

		1	
		1	
		2	
		2	

6.25 Cricket can accommodate many more 'game days' per week/season than football pitches because individual wickets can be rotated and 'rested' on the cricket table. Activity is spread over a bigger area and is therefore less intensive. Furthermore, as cricket takes place in the summer months pitches are less susceptible to being churned up. Artificial wickets also help to reduce wear and tear. Junior teams will use reduced sized pitches.

6.26 Most local matches will be limited over games, usually lasting no more than an afternoon. On this basis many pitches can absorb two games in a day in the summer months over the weekends, if the wickets are rotated. The tendency in many cases is for juniors to play in the mornings with senior teams playing in the afternoons. For the youngest teams a cricket pitch can be divided up in to more than one pitch and used concurrently with the help of artificial wickets.

6.27 Therefore, the ability of a pitch to meet peak time demand is very much down to local management. The response of the clubs to the questionnaire survey was therefore an important indicator of whether current provision can meet demand.

6.28 Taking into account the above factors, the following comments can be made in terms of the current supply of pitches relative to demand at the time of the study.

Findings

6.29 There were 2 pitches in the sub area that can be classified as being in Community Use. This would appear to be sufficient to accommodate the level of demand found at the time of the study.

Other Issues and Future plans

6.30 The club also identified their longer term development plans.

Table 6.12: Future plans of cricket club

C Rugby

6.31 There are no rugby clubs based within the sub area, and no rugby pitches have been identified.

The Future

6.32 It is not anticipated that the population of the sub area will increase in the foreseeable future. Accordingly, it is not anticipated that population change alone will lead to an increase in the number of local teams (and therefore demand for pitches) in the foreseeable future (i.e. 2011). However, other factors influencing 'latent' demand (as discussed earlier in this report) may have some impact on demand, which should be reflected in the development of appropriate local standards of provision (discussed in Section 14 of this report)

Major issues in the Hockley sub area

6.33 The study has identified the following issues in the sub area:-

Football and Cricket

6.34 If Clements Hall Playing Field were to be levelled, this would enable another 1 senior pitch to be provided.

Rugby

6.35 Given the non-existence of facilities or teams for this sport within this sub area, would it be better to channel potential players through to existing clubs outside the sub area? Team generation rates for other parts of the study area suggest that the Hockley sub area would support a rugby team, and facilities (if they were available) would therefore be used. How feasible would be such additional provision?

7 FINDINGS FOR THE HULLBRIDGE SUB AREA

Analysis of the local supply of and demand for pitches

A Football

7.1 **Number of clubs and teams** - The following football clubs and teams were known to play within the sub area.

Table 7.1: Football clubs and teams in the sub area

7.2 This number of teams produces the following TGRs for the sub area.

Table 7.2: Football team generation rates for male football in the sub area

Pop = 251 Teams = 6 *TGR = 1:42*	Pop = 330 Teams = 5 *TGR = 1:66*	Pop = 1524 Teams = 11 *TGR = 1:139*

Estimated demand for football pitches

7.3 In order to identify the weekly demand for football the total number of known teams was multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half will play 'at home' each week.

7.4 The following table indicates the estimated temporal demand for pitches in the sub area at the time of the study.

Table 7.3: Temporal demand for football pitches in the sub-area

	36%	64%				100%				17%	83%

7.5 These percentages have been applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the individual sub areas considered in later sections of this report.

7.6 The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 7.4 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

7.7 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate. The results of this calculation provide the estimated level of peak time demand for football pitches within the sub area.

Table 7.4: Calculation of peak-time demand for football pitches in the sub area

	1	3				3				1	3

7.8 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not possible to undertake a check booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. Furthermore the booking records for Council pitches (which have been checked for the last complete season), also tends to confirm this pattern of demand for pitches over the week.

7.9 The above estimates were therefore considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also for modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

7.10 The following table summarises the number of football pitches within the sub area by pitch size and, importantly, the categories of availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 7.5: Football pitches in the sub area

Findings

7.11 From comparing supply against demand, the following conclusions were drawn for the sub area.

7.12 There were 5 full-size pitches in the sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. These could support up to 10 matches in a week (based on the assumptions given in paras 4.72 to 4.78. This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult teams of 4 matches, and with the peak time demand of 3 matches on Sunday am. This level of expressed demand for pitches at the time of the study, therefore, was within the theoretical playing capacity.

7.13 There were 2 junior size pitches in the sub area that could be classified as being in community use. These could support up to 4 matches in a week. This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by youth teams of 3 matches on a Sunday morning. The supply of junior size pitches, at the time of the study, did not meet the expressed demand. However, youth teams can play on full-size pitches. The combined supply of pitches (7) meets the combined expressed weekly demand of 6 pitches at peak time.

7.14 There was found to be one dedicated mini-soccer pitch within the sub area in Community Use that should be able to support 4 matches in a half-day period. There is a peak time demand of 3 matches on a Sunday afternoon. The supply of mini soccer pitches therefore satisfies demand at the time of the study.

Other issues raised by clubs

7.15 Discussions with league representatives and local clubs suggest some particular problems worthy of mention, highlighted below. Specifically, one club has commented on an individual playing field.

Table 7.6: Problems associated with specific sites

Future plans

7.16 No clubs identified plans for their future development.

Cricket

7.17 The number of clubs and teams. The clubs and teams known to be based in the sub area at the time of the study are summarised in the following table.

Table 7.7: Cricket clubs and teams in the sub area

7.18 TGRs and their role in assessing future demand in particular have been explained under para 4.53.

7.19 Cricket teams of different age groups tend to use the same pitch, but vary the size of the outfield. Accordingly, it is not necessary to calculate TGRs for the various age groups. A single TGR for cricket is calculated by dividing the number of teams into the estimated male population within study area between the ages of 10-44 years.

7.20 The estimated TGRs for the sub area were, therefore, as follows.

Table 7.8: Team Generation Rates for cricket in the sub area

Pop = 1,883 Teams = 2 *TGR = 1:942*

Estimated demand for cricket pitches

7.21 In order to identify the weekly demand for cricket, the total number of teams has to be multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play 'at home' each week.

7.22 The distribution of demand over the peak weekend period is as follows.

Table 7.9: Temporal demand for cricket pitches in the sub area

	100%	

7.23 These percentages were then applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the sub area. The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 7.10 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

7.24 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate.

Table 7.10: Calculation of peak-time demand for pitches in the sub area

	2	

7.25 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not been possible to undertake comprehensive checks of booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. The above estimates were, therefore, considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

7.26 The following summarises the number of cricket pitches within the sub area at the time of the study, and categorises them by availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 7.11: Cricket pitches in the Hullbridge sub area

Findings

7.27 There was found to be 1 pitch in this sub area that can be classified as being in **Secured** Community Use. This compares with the expressed peak time demand of 2 matches on Saturdays. Respondent teams did not express any particular concern over the ability of their pitches to absorb demand.

Other issues raised by clubs

7.28 There were no issues raised by clubs.

C Rugby

7.29 There were found to be no rugby teams based within the sub area, and no known pitches in community use.

The Future

7.30 It is not anticipated that the population of the sub area will change significantly in the foreseeable future. Accordingly, it is not anticipated that population change alone will lead to an increase in the number of local teams (and therefore demand for pitches) in the foreseeable future (i.e. 2011). However, other factors influencing 'latent' demand (as discussed earlier in this report) may have some impact on demand, which should be reflected in the development of appropriate local standards of provision (discussed in Section 14 of this report)

Major issues in the Hullbridge sub area

7.31 The study has identified the following issue in the sub area:-

Football

7.32 How can the pitch maintenance at Hullbridge Playing Field be improved?

8 FINDINGS FOR THE CANEWDON SUB AREA

Analysis of the local supply of and demand for pitches

A Football

8.1 **Number of clubs and teams** - The following football clubs and teams were known to play within the sub area.

Table 8.1: Football clubs and teams in the sub area

8.2 This number of teams produces the following TGRs for the sub area,

Table 8.2: Football team generation rates for male football in the sub area

Pop = 66 Teams = 0 *TGR = 1:000*	Pop = 72 Teams = 0 *TGR = 1:000*	Pop = 311 Teams = 1 *TGR = 1:311*

Estimated demand for football pitches

8.3 In order to identify the weekly demand for football the total number of known teams was multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half will play 'at home' each week.

8.4 The following table indicates the estimated temporal demand for pitches in the sub area.

Table 8.3: Temporal demand for football pitches in the sub-area

		50%									

8.5 These percentages were then applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the individual sub areas considered in later sections of this report.

8.6 The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 8.4 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

8.7 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate. The results of this calculation provide the estimated level of peak time demand for football pitches within the sub area.

Table 8.4: Calculation of peak-time demand for football pitches in the sub area

		1									

8.8 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not possible to undertake a check of booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. Furthermore the booking records for Council pitches (which have been checked for the last complete season), also tends to confirm this pattern of demand for pitches over the week.

8.9 The above estimates were, therefore, considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also for modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

8.10 The following football pitches have been identified within the sub area.

Table 8.5: Football pitches in the sub area

Findings

8.11 From comparing supply against demand, the following conclusions can be drawn for the sub area.

8.12 There was 1 full-size pitch in the sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. This could support up to 2 matches in a week (based on the assumptions given in paras 4.72 to 4.78. This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult and youth teams of 1 match. The expressed demand for pitches was, therefore, within the theoretical playing capacity at the time of this study.

Other issues raised by clubs

8.13 There were no issues raised by clubs.

B Cricket

8.14 **The number of clubs and teams** - The clubs and teams known to be based in the sub area at the time of this study are summarised in the following table.

Table 8.6: Cricket clubs and teams in the sub area

8.15 TGRs and their role in assessing future demand in particular have been explained under para 4.53.

8.16 Cricket teams of different age groups tend to use the same pitch, but vary the size of the outfield. Accordingly, it is not necessary to calculate TGRs for the various age groups. A single TGR for cricket is calculated by dividing the number of teams into the estimated male population within study area between the ages of 10-44 years.

8.17 The estimated TGRs for the sub area were, therefore, as follows.

Table 8.7: Team Generation Rates for cricket in the sub area

Pop = 383 Teams = 2 *TGR = 1:192*

Estimated demand for cricket pitches

8.18 In order to identify the weekly demand for cricket total number of teams was multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play 'at home' each week.

8.19 The distribution of demand over the peak weekend period is as follows.

Table 8.8: Temporal demand for cricket pitches in the sub area

50%		50%

8.20 These percentages will now be applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the sub area. The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 8.9 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

8.21 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate.

Table 8.9: Calculation of peak-time demand for pitches in the sub area

1		1

8.22 Because of the limited time available for this study it has not been possible to undertake comprehensive checks of booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. The above estimates are therefore considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

8.23 The following summarises the number of cricket pitches within the sub area, and categorises them by availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 8.10: Cricket pitches in the Canewdon sub area

Findings

8.24 There was found to be 1 pitch in this sub area that could be classified as being in **Secured** Community Use. This compares with the expressed peak time demand of 1 match apiece on Saturdays and mid-week. The respondent team did not express any particular concern over the ability of their pitches to absorb demand.

Other issues raised by the club

8.25 Respondent club identified problems with grass cutting..

8.26 As with football, those clubs based on public open space suffer from the normal problems associated with unrestricted public access.

Future plans

8.27 Of those responding to the questionnaire survey the following clubs provided details on their plans for the future development of their clubs.

Table 8.12: Future development plans

8.28 None of the respondent clubs identified any future development plans.

Rugby

8.29 There are no rugby clubs based within the sub area, and no rugby pitches have been identified.

The Future

8.30 It is not anticipated that the population of the sub area will change in the foreseeable future. Accordingly, it is not anticipated that population change alone will lead to an increase in the number of local teams (and therefore demand for pitches) in the foreseeable future (i.e. 2011). However, other factors influencing 'latent' demand (as discussed earlier in this report) may have some impact on demand, which should be reflected in the development of appropriate local standards of provision (discussed in Section 14 of this report)

Major issues in the Canewdon sub area

8.31 The study has identified no issues in the sub area.

9 FINDINGS FOR THE ROCHFORD SUB AREA

Analysis of the local supply of and demand for pitches

A Football

9.1 **Number of clubs and teams** - The following football clubs and teams were known to play within the Sub area.

Table 9.1: Football clubs and teams in the sub area

9.2 This number of teams produces the following TGRs for the sub area.

Table 9.2: Football team generation rates for male football in the sub area

Pop = 465 Teams = 1 *TGR = 1:39*	Pop = 563 Teams = 3 *TGR = 1:38*	Pop = 3121 Teams = 8 *TGR = 1:174*

Estimated demand for football pitches

9.3 In order to identify the weekly demand for football the total number of known teams was multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half will play 'at home' each week.

9.4 The following table indicates the estimated temporal demand for pitches in the sub area.

Table 9.3: Temporal demand for football pitches in the sub-area

	32%	68%				73%	27%				100%

9.5 These percentages were then applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the individual sub areas. The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 9.4 was as follows:-

9.6 Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

9.7 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate.

Table 9.4: Calculation of peak-time demand for pitches in the sub area

	1	5				4	1				6

9.8 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not possible to undertake a check of booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. Furthermore the booking records for Council pitches (which have been checked for the last complete season), also tends to confirm this pattern of demand for pitches over the week.

9.9 The above estimates were, therefore, considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also for modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

9.10 The following table summarises the number of football pitches within the various sub areas by pitch size and, importantly, the categories of availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 9.5: Football pitches in the sub area

Findings

9.11 From comparing supply against demand, the following conclusions could be drawn for the sub area.

9.12 There were 12 full-size pitches in the sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. These could support up to 24 matches in a week (based on the assumptions given in paras 4.72 to 4.78). This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult teams of 5 matches. However, if only those pitches in **Secured** Community Use (A and B1) were taken into account, it would leave a theoretical capacity of 8 full-size pitch (or 16 games per week). Therefore, the expressed weekly demand for pitches was found to be within the theoretical playing capacity at the time of this study.

9.13 There were 3 dedicated mini-soccer pitches within the sub area in **Secured** Community Use providing a playing capacity of 12 matches in a half day period. This compares to the expressed weekly demand of 6 matches on a Sunday afternoon. Therefore, the supply of mini soccer pitches can be said to meet demand at the time of this study.

Other issues raised by clubs

9.14 Only one club has suggested a problem with their facilities worthy of note.

Table 9.6: Problems associated with specific sites

B Cricket

9.15 **The number of clubs and teams -** The clubs and teams known to be based in the sub area at the time of the study are summarised in the following table.

Table 9.7: Cricket clubs and teams in the sub area

9.16 TGRs and their role in assessing future demand in particular have been explained under para 4.53.

9.17 Cricket teams of different age groups tend to use the same pitch, but vary the size of the outfield. Accordingly, it is not necessary to calculate TGRs for the various age groups. A single TGR for cricket is calculated by dividing the number of teams into the estimated male population within study area between the ages of 10-44 years.

9.18 The estimated TGRs for the sub area were, therefore, as follows.

Table 9.8: Team Generation Rates for cricket in the sub area

Pop = 3,684 Teams = 4 *TGR = 1:921*

Estimated demand for cricket pitches

9.19 In order to identify the weekly demand for cricket, the total number of teams has to be multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play 'at home' each week.

9.20 The distribution of demand over the peak weekend period is as follows.

Table 9.9: Temporal demand for cricket pitches in the sub area

0	75%	25%

9.21 These percentages were then applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the sub area. The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 9.10 was as follows:-

9.22 Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

9.23 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate.

Table 9.10: Calculation of peak-time demand for pitches in the sub area

0	2	1

9.24 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not possible to undertake comprehensive checks of booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. The above estimates were therefore considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

9.25 The following summarises the number of cricket pitches within the sub area, and categorises them by availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 9.11: Cricket pitches in the Rochford sub area

Findings

9.26 There were 3 pitches in this sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. This compares with the expressed peak time demand of 6 matches played mid-week. Respondent teams did not express any particular concern over the ability of their pitches to absorb demand.

9.27 One of the above pitches could be defined as being in **Secured** Community Use (A and B1).

Other issues raised by clubs

9.28 Respondent clubs did not identify any problems with home facilities.

Future plans

9.29 None of the clubs responding provided details of future plans.

B Rugby

9.30 **The number of clubs and teams -** The clubs and teams which were known to be based in the sub area are summarised in the following table.

Table 9.12: Rugby clubs and teams in the sub area

9.31 TGRs and their role in assessing future demand in particular has been explained under para 4.53

9.32 The estimated TGRs for the sub area were, therefore, as follows.

Table 9.13: Team Generation Rates for rugby in the sub area

Pop = 465 Teams = 4 *TGR = 1:117*	Pop = 563 Teams = 7 *TGR = 1:81*	Pop = 3121 Teams = 8 *TGR = 1:390*

Estimated demand for rugby pitches

9.33 In order to identify the weekly demand for rugby, the total number of teams was multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play 'at home' each week.

9.34 The distribution of demand over the peak weekend period is as follows.

Table 9.14: Temporal demand for rugby pitches in the sub area

50%	37%	13%				57%	43%				100%

9.35 These percentages were then applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the sub area. The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 9.15 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

9.36 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate.

Table 9.15: Calculation of peak-time demand for pitches in the sub area

1	1	1				2	1				2

9.37 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not possible to undertake comprehensive checks of booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. The above estimates were, therefore, considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

9.38 The following summarises the number of cricket pitches within the sub area, and categorises them by availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 9.11: Rugby pitches in the Rochford sub area

Findings

9.39 There were found to be 5 pitches in this sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. This compares with the expressed peak time demand of 2 matches

played Sunday (am). Respondent teams did not express any particular concern over the ability of their pitches to absorb demand.

9.40 None of the above pitches can be defined as being in **Secured** Community Use (A and B1).

Other issues raised by clubs

9.41 Respondent clubs did not identify any problems with home facilities.

Future plans

9.42 Rochford Hundred Rugby Club had recently revealed plans to acquire land to use as additional pitches at the time of this study.

The Future

9.43 It is not anticipated that the population of the sub area will change in the foreseeable future. Accordingly, it is not anticipated that population change alone will lead to an increase in the number of local teams (and therefore demand for pitches) in the foreseeable future (i.e. 2011). However, other factors influencing 'latent' demand (as discussed earlier in this report) may have some impact on demand, which should be reflected in the development of appropriate local standards of provision (discussed in Section 14 of this report)

Major issues in the Rochford

9.44 The study identified the following issues in the sub area:-

Football

9.45 Drainage could be improved on the pitches in Ashingdon.

10 FINDINGS FOR THE GREAT WAKERING SUB AREA

Analysis of the local supply of and demand for pitches

A Football

10.1 **Number of clubs and teams** - The following football clubs and teams were known to play within the sub area.

Table 10.1: Football clubs and teams in the sub area

10.2 This number of teams produces the following TGRs for the sub area.

Table 10.2: Football team generation rates for male football in the sub area

Pop = 290 Teams = 8 *TGR = 1:37*	Pop = 323 Teams =6 *TGR = 1:54*	Pop = 1,602 Teams = 32 *TGR = 1:50*

Estimated demand for football pitches

10.3 In order to identify the weekly demand for football the total number of known teams was multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half will play 'at home' each week.

10.4 The following table indicates the estimated temporal demand for pitches in the sub area.

Table 10.3: Temporal demand for football pitches in the sub area

	56%	38%	6%				100%	100%			

10.5 These percentages were then applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the sub area. The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 10.4 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

10.6 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate.

Table 10.4: Calculation of peak-time demand for pitches in the sub area

	6	3	1				3	4			

10.7 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not possible to undertake a check of booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. Furthermore the booking records for Council pitches (which have been checked for the last complete season), also tend to confirm this pattern of demand for pitches over the week.

10.8 The above estimates were, therefore, considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also for modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

10.9 The following table summarises the number of football pitches within the sub area by pitch size and, importantly, the categories of availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 10.5: Football pitches in the sub area

Findings

10.10 From comparing supply against demand, the following conclusions were drawn for the sub area.

10.11 There were 10 full-size pitches in the sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. These could support up to 20 matches in a week (based on the assumptions given in paras 4.72 to 4.78). This compares with the expressed weekly demand for pitches by adult and youth teams of 13 matches, with the peak time demand of 6 matches on Saturday pm (for adult football). However, if only those pitches in **Secured** Community Use (A and B1) were taken into account, it would leave a theoretical capacity of 4 full-size pitch (or 8 games per week). The expressed weekly demand for pitches, therefore, would appear to be within the theoretical playing capacity at the time of this study.

10.12 There were 3 dedicated mini-soccer pitches within the sub area in Community Use. The mini-soccer teams in the sub area were therefore likely to share the same playing surface as the larger teams. The mini-soccer pitches should be able to absorb many more games than full size pitches, due to the lightness of the players and the short playing times.

10.13 The above provision compares with the expressed weekly demand of 4 matches/week (on Sunday am). The general practice is that where a club runs several mini-soccer teams, they will play there games in sequence using the same pitch. In this way, one mini-soccer grid could accommodate at least 4 mini-soccer matches on a Sunday morning. On this basis, the supply of pitches for these age groups therefore currently satisfies demand. Mini-soccer teams will share the playing surface of full-size pitches. However, the best practice is to provide a dedicated mini-soccer grid for the sole use of young teams.

Other issues raised by clubs

10.14 Discussions with local clubs suggest some particular problems worthy of mention, highlighted below.

Table 10.6: Problems associated with specific sites

Future Plans

10.15 The following clubs responding to the questionnaire survey indicated any plans for their further development.

Cricket

10.16 The number of clubs and teams. The clubs and teams known to be based in the sub area at the time of the study are summarised in the following table.

Table 10.7: Cricket clubs and teams in the sub area

10.17 TGRs and their role in assessing future demand in particular have been explained under para 4.53.

10.18 Cricket teams of different age groups tend to use the same pitch, but vary the size of the outfield. Accordingly, it is not necessary to calculate TGRs for the various age groups. A single TGR for cricket is calculated by dividing the number of teams into the estimated male population within study area between the ages of 10-44 years.

10.19 The estimated TGRs for the sub area were, therefore, as follows.

Table 10.8: Team Generation Rates for cricket in the sub area

Pop = 1,925 Teams = 15
TGR = 1:257

Estimated demand for cricket pitches

10.20 In order to identify the weekly demand for cricket total number of teams was multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play ‘at home’ each week.

10.21 The distribution of demand over the peak weekend period was as follows.

Table 10.9: Temporal demand for cricket pitches in the sub area

73%	7%	20%

10.22 These percentages were then applied to calculate the total demand for pitches in the sub area. The basic calculation employed to achieve the results tabulated in Table 10.10 was as follows:-

- Number of teams (by age group) x % demand for a given time x 50% (to reflect away matches).

10.23 Clearly the resultant figures have been rounded up or down as appropriate.

Table 10.10: Calculation of peak-time demand for pitches in the sub area

6	1	2

10.24 Because of the limited time available for this study it was not been possible to undertake comprehensive checks of booking records for each and every pitch available for community use. However, when individual teams playing on Saturday and Sunday are matched up with their 'home' pitches it tends to confirm this pattern of demand. The above estimates were, therefore, considered to be a reasonable starting point for assessing the adequacy of existing provision, but also modelling future situations.

Supply of pitches

10.25 The following table summarises the number of cricket pitches within the sub area, and categorises them by availability (A, B1, B2 and C) as explained in Section 3.

Table 10.11: Cricket pitches in the Great Wakering sub area

Findings

10.26 There were 3 pitches in this sub area that could be classified as being in Community Use. This compares with the expressed peak time demand of 6 matches played mid-week. Respondent teams did not express any particular concern over the ability of their pitches to absorb demand.

10.27 None of the above pitches can be defined as being in **Secured** Community Use (A and B1).

Other issues raised by clubs

10.28 Respondent clubs identified the following problems with home facilities, as described below.

Future plans

10.29 None of the clubs responding provided details of future plans.

C Rugby

10.30 There are no rugby clubs identified in this area and there are no rugby pitches identified in this area.

The Future

10.31 Based upon population projections and the TGRs identified earlier, it is calculated that there will be no increase in the population in the forseeable future (2011).

11 TOWARDS A STANDARD AND OVERALL STRATEGY FOR PLAYING PITCHES IN ROCHFORD

A standard for playing pitch provision in the study area

11.1 The findings of this study suggest that within the study area as a whole the current amount of pitch space in community use satisfies current expressed demand. However, in two areas of the study (Hockley and Canewdon) the demand is only just met.

11.2 Overall, the current level of provision in half of the Study Area (Rayleigh, Hockley and Hullbridge), was significantly below the suggested NPFA standard for playing pitches of 1.2 ha/000 at the time of this study (as detailed in section 3).

11.3 One of the objectives of this study was, therefore, to research and recommend appropriate standards of provision for playing pitches to inform Council planning and investment decisions. Clearly, it may be necessary to recommend not one, but several standards to reflect the characteristics of and needs arising from the different sub areas.

- dis-aggregating the required standard(s) of provision for pitch sports from those relating to other forms of open space; and,

- adopting a standard (or set of standards) that more accurately reflects existing and potential demand within the individual sub areas.

11.4 Revised local standards should embrace provision of all pitches in community use. If they are to be effective, they must include a tolerance to cater for unpredictable upswings in demand (or, perhaps, the loss of access to pitches not in **Secured** Community Use). However, they should not set too high a target, as this will risk wasteful over-provision. It is felt appropriate to build in a tolerance of 20% above the existing level of provision for pitches within community use (i.e. A, B1 and B2). By way of example, if an additional 20% was added to the per capita supply of playing pitches within the Great Wakering sub area at the time of the study, (i.e. from 1.77 ha/000 to 2.12 ha/000), it would result in an increase in the level of provision from around 13 hectares within the sub area, to about 16 hectares. If this additional space were properly designed, it would result in the equivalent of an extra 3 football pitches within the sub area. Similarly, an increase of 20% above the per capita level of provision in the smallest sub area in population terms at the time of the study (Canewdon), would result in an increase in the level of provision from around 3.3 hectares of pitch space, to around 4 hectares- which does not equate to an additional football pitch.

11.5 The most obvious problem with the application of this '20% margin' is that it would not make any meaningful difference to worse off areas in terms of current provision, and with relatively low populations. Accessibility within the District should also be taken into consideration. It would not be unreasonable for a team from Rayleigh, for instance, to travel six miles to use a pitch in Rochford. Also, any standard should be realistic in that it should be achievable. For instance, an increase in provision of 20% in Hockley would be unachievable as no land has been identified that could be converted for playing field use.

Table 11.1: Suggestions local standards

Rayleigh	1.15
Hockley	0.7
Hullbridge	1.34
Canewdon	1.68
Rochford	1.36
Great Wakering	1.77

11.6 However, achieving a simple standard of provision will by itself not ensure an adequate supply of pitches of the right type. For example, the size and shape of a given playing field dictates the extent to which it can be used for different sports as the need arises. Similarly, the quality of playing surface and drainage will also influence which teams and sports can use a given facility. The existence or absence of changing rooms and other ancillary facilities (such as floodlighting) dictates whether a pitch can be used for higher level games, or whether its value is restricted only to local Sunday league matches. Finally, the number of matches that a pitch can accommodate over a given period will also influence its general utility. Some general principles of playing pitch and facility design are provided in Appendix B. This guidance should help in locating suitable venues for additional playing pitch provision within the study area.

11.7 Perhaps more fundamentally, developing a relevant set of standards, although important, must go hand-in-hand with a wider strategy for planning and managing playing pitches. This point will be considered again later.

The role of 'B2' category pitches in meeting demand

11.8 The study identified various education and club pitches available for community use, and these make an important contribution to the overall supply of pitches. Furthermore, club managed facilities (in particular) tend to complement council pitches through catering for teams and players performing at higher levels. The availability of such pitches to meet the needs of the better clubs is important as it takes pressure off council pitches, and reduces the need for the Council itself to upgrade its own facilities to meet the needs of higher standard teams.

11.9 It might be argued that sports pitches can be placed in a hierarchy of provision, and this will be discussed further later in this section.

11.10 The continued availability to outside teams of 'B2' pitches is something over which the Council presently has little influence. Clearly, the managers and owners of these facilities have their own priorities, dictating how much community use (if any) will be allowed. Foremost amongst these will be the needs of those groups that the pitches are primarily intended to serve.

11.11 However, money raised through hiring pitches to outside users is a useful supplementary income to schools in particular, and can help to maintain facilities. This continued incentive to raise extra income suggests the level of community access to B2 pitches may not change significantly in the foreseeable future.

11.12 Conversely, although many schools allow outside teams to hire pitches, the terms of use are sometimes vague. The risk is that games involving outside teams may have to be called off because of the needs of the school taking priority. There would appear to be no schools within the study area operating a formal dual use policy that guarantees community use of the pitches for a minimum period and over peak demand times.

11.13 Given that 'schools' and the 'community' tend to require access to sports pitches at different times of the week, there may be scope for better temporal management of school based pitches, *providing* that the pitches themselves are of sufficient quality to accommodate the extra use. The responses from the school/college questionnaire survey indicated a willingness on the part of some to co-operate with the Council in sports/facility development initiatives of mutual benefit.

11.14 The capacity of pitches can be improved by upgrading to ATPs, but also by improving drainage. Evidence based on tests conducted by Nottingham and Cheshire County Councils suggests that un-drained and pipe-drained pitches tend to be able to absorb only 4-5 hours of adult team use each week without detriment to the playing quality of the surface, especially towards the end of the season. The same tests suggested that pitches constructed to a superior standard (such as slit drained, sand carpet or suspended water table), were capable of absorbing almost twice this level of use (between 5 and 10 hours).

11.15 When the time comes for the Council to consider the provision of additional public sports pitches, It would seem both sensible and logical to examine whether better access to school facilities can be negotiated as at least a partial alternative to providing entirely new sports pitches. Effective working of this arrangement would probably require drastic improvements to school pitch quality in many cases.

11.16 It would also be necessary to consider improvements to school-based ancillary facilities; notably changing rooms and showers which are often unavailable or totally unsuited to community use.

The benefits of pursuing a strategy for pitch provision

General

11.17 The study has made clear that it is not simply the overall *quantity* of pitches that is critical to meeting demand, but also the *quality* of pitches and ancillary facilities. If cost is ignored, teams will prefer to use local facilities of good quality in preference to others of lesser standard. It is also evident that local clubs may be frustrated in their efforts to develop and improve because they lack access to good quality facilities and security of tenure. The implications for the planning and management of pitches are two-fold:-

- if council-controlled pitches are to continue to prove attractive, many will require major improvements and overhaul of both playing surfaces and ancillary facilities; and,

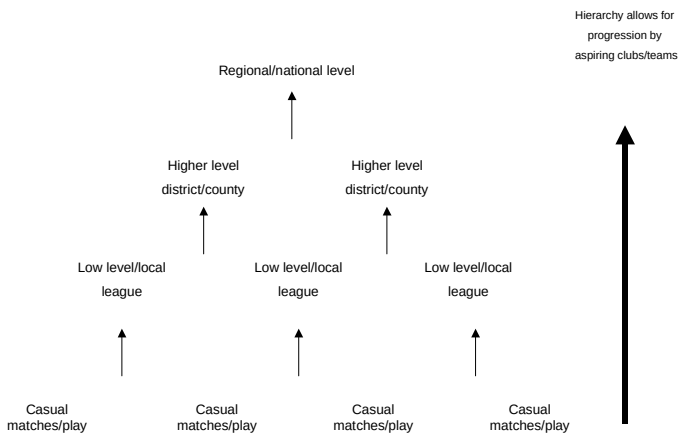
- aspiring clubs may require access to better quality facilities if they are to improve their performance and compete in higher standard leagues.

11.18 In terms of the first of above points, physical improvement of Council pitches and facilities will need to be considered.

11.19 In terms of the second point, there may be benefit in developing a conceptual hierarchy to guide any further investment in the improvement of pitches. This could recognise the role of both public and private pitches, as well as the need to provide facilities enabling progression through various standards of competitive play. It is recognised that the Council is subject to considerable financial constraints limiting its own ability to finance the pursuit of such a strategy. However, the existence of a strategy may encourage funding from other sources, such as the Lottery Sports Fund, governing bodies, the Football Foundation, local clubs and education authorities. Importantly, the report of the Football Task Force, carried out shortly before this study, recommended that a proportion of the money received by clubs and governing bodies for granting rights to televised football should be invested in improving council and other community pitches. Should this recommendation be acted upon, it could lead to a valuable additional fund available to councils (and others) seeking to improve the quality of their pitch stock.

11.20 Should the Council see value in pursuing such a strategy it might reflect the following categorisation of and relationship between pitches.

Figure 11.2: Possible categorisation of pitches to act as a basis for a hierarchical strategy



11.21 Within this diagram:-

- the casual (or *'foundation level'*) level of the hierarchy (casual matches/play) would include kick-a-bout areas, 5-a-side pitches, and 'rough' pitches for casual use which cannot be used for competitive matches but nevertheless serve to encourage initial participation;

- the local league (or *'participation level'*) offers facilities for those clubs on the lowest rungs of regular competitive play, where there will normally be a requirement for changing accommodation and a preference for well-drained, 'true' playing surfaces;

- the district/county (or *'performance level'*) offers facilities for those teams which have reached a fairly high standard of play and are playing regular league matches where there may be requirements in respect of playing surface, changing facilities etc.; and,

- the regional/national (or *'excellence level'*) represents the peak of the hierarchy and might cater for clubs in regional and national leagues at an amateur, professional and semi-professional level. Once again, facility requirements will be commensurate with the standard of play and might include spectator facilities, floodlighting etc.

11.22 This hierarchy can be developed for facilities for both juniors and seniors, and might recognise the value of pitches not in community use. It could be further developed for individual sports in conjunction with the Sport England and the relevant governing bodies.

11.23 The Council should consider applying this conceptual hierarchy to its local stock of pitches.

Planning for the 'cycle of demand' and re-marking pitches

11.24 The study has shown that demand for pitches will remain stable. Given that sports pitches take a long-time to plan for and provide, sufficient pitches should be available to meet peak demand into the foreseeable future. On the evidence available, there are already enough pitches to satisfy peak demand so long as B2 pitches continue to be made available. The Council may wish to consider whether it would be more appropriate to seek developer contributions to improve **existing** pitches, in tandem with seeking new provision in those areas where demand is only just met, according to a revised and adopted local standard.

The role of local clubs in managing and improving council pitches

11.25 Even a perfunctory analysis reveals the high cost of maintaining Council pitches relative to the income received. The total financial cost to the Council in maintaining their stock of pitches is considerable, far greater than the revenue generated from pitch bookings. Even so, the study has still highlighted the concern of many clubs over the quality of pitches (aside from any problems experienced with ancillary facilities).

11.26 Such financial and quality issues are commonplace in the management of local authority pitches, and incidences of such pitches being operated at anything other than a significant loss are, (with the exception of artificial turf pitches), very rare.

11.27 Given the concerns of some of the regular users of Council pitches, it is clear that any reduction in the level and quality of maintenance in an attempt to further reduce costs would be unacceptable. However, it is also clear that any attempt to significantly increase booking costs may also be problematic, especially given the complaints made by some clubs about the increasing costs associated with pitch/facility hire, and the concern that it may be at least a partial cause of some clubs folding.

11.28 A significant increase in hire costs in an attempt to offset council costs could have two effects:-

- It may lead to some teams becoming unable to afford increased match subs (especially where they draw on areas of low income and high unemployment). The combination of pitch hire, the cost of kit; referees fees, and other on-going costs means that the cost of running a football club is not insignificant:- perhaps at least £1500 per team for most clubs.

- It may lead to some clubs seeking to use cheaper pitches in adjacent local authority areas.

11.29 The study has identified a willingness of some teams to 'improve their lot' through further developing facilities, and promoting participation. However, many clubs cannot even begin to think in these terms because they lack secure tenure. This is especially the case with teams playing on Council pitches booked on a short-term (seasonal) basis.

11.30 The Council may care to consider the feasibility of granting longer-term security of tenure to selected clubs, and empowering them to develop and maintain their own facilities (subject to appropriate controls). It is understood that the Council has already adopted this approach with regard cricket and bowls. It may now be appropriate to invite other well-established clubs to join this body. The clubs that already enjoy security of tenure display an ambition that justifies the Council's original decision to grant long-term security. However, even these clubs can struggle to find the necessary funding to achieve their longer-term development aspirations.

Planning ahead and securing finance

11.31 Money (or the lack of it) is inevitably a major obstacle to clubs achieving their 'wish lists'. Money (or lack of it) is also the reason why the Council cannot help these clubs as much as either party would like.

11.32 Other than direct Council assistance, there are of course the various external sources of grant aid- Football Foundation, Sport England Lottery Fund, Awards For All, Foundation for Sports and Arts, Landfill Tax Credits.

11.33 The Football Foundation is the distributing body for a grants initiative between Sport England, The FA and Government to improve grass roots football. Grants are available for pitch and changing room improvements, social inclusion initiatives, community coaching schemes and study support centres.

11.34 As already mentioned, the development of a strategy for playing pitch provision may help to improve local success in securing external grants.

11.35 However, there are two other sources of funding.

11.36 Firstly, there is the prospect of securing developer contributions arising from major new residential development through the imposition of planning obligations.

11.37 Planning law defines clearly when it is appropriate for councils to seek contributions from developers. However, it is clear that, in principle, recreation facilities can be financed through such means. There is no reason why these contributions cannot be used to help upgrade existing facilities. Indeed, as this report has suggested, there may be circumstances where such an approach may be desirable as a partial alternative to financing completely new facilities.

11.38 Developers do not give money away without a fight and will only yield in the face of persuasive argument backed up by evidence of need. Hopefully, this study will help 'build up the case'. Issues surrounding the improvement of existing pitches and ancillary facilities have been identified for the individual sub areas, and are summarised and prioritised in the final section.

11.39 Secondly, few clubs benefit from social accommodation. This is unfortunate as such facilities can serve as a 'revenue generator', and sometimes make the difference between a club surviving or not. Although 'club houses' can sometime prove contentious in planning terms, it may be appropriate for the Council to consider whether, at the very least, a 'pooled facility' could be supported, which would service and benefit a number of clubs.

12 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

12.1 This study was based on the Sport England Playing Field Assessment Method. The analysis of pitches according to their availability used the categorisation of pitches detailed in table 3.1. The categorisation includes four levels of availability:- A, B1, B2, and C. The first three categories of pitches can all be interpreted as being in community use. However, only category A and B1 pitches can be interpreted as being in **Secured** Community Use.

12.2 There were 81 full-size pitches within the study area. Of these pitches 68 were interpreted as being in Community Use (i.e. categories A, B1 or B2). However, only 43 of these pitches could be categorised as being in **Secured** Community Use (i.e. within categories A and B1).

12.3 In addition, there were known to be 40 youth/junior-size and 18 dedicated mini-soccer pitches. Of these 29 and 18 respectively could be interpreted as being in Community Use, with 5 and 6 respectively being defined as being in **Secured** Community Use.

12.4 At the time of the study, there were estimated to be 101.74 ha of pitches in Community Use within the study area, or 1.25 ha for every 1000 people. If the category B2 pitches were excluded from this calculation the corresponding figures would be 48 ha, or 0.59 ha for every 1000 people. [16]

12.5 The above can be compared with a recommended level of provision of 1.20ha/000 using the NPFA standard for pitch sports.

12.6 This council-wide ratio, however, conceals wide variations between the various sub areas as follows: -

Table 12.1: Provision of pitches per head of population for the sub areas based on <u>all</u> pitches in community use (A,B1,B2), <u>all</u> pitches in Secured Community Use (A,B1), and the NPFA standard

Rayleigh	31,410	35	23	0.99	0.67
Hockley	17,164	17	4	0.7	0.25
Hullbridge	7,425	9	8	1.34	1.23
Canewdon	1,491	3	2	2.23	1.68
Rochford	16,317	35	11	1.95	1.36
Great Wakering	7,694	16	5	1.77	0.49
Recommended NPFA standard of provision:- 1.20 ha/000					

[16] Pitches whose surfaces double-up for different sports have been excluded from this calculation, in order to avoid double-counting for the purpose of calculating both the overall areas, the per capita ratios. All pitches available for community use have been included

[17] For the purpose of this draft report, the population estimates for the sub areas are based on the 1991 census ward figures, until such time as more recent figures are available for the sub areas

12.7 As can be seen from the above table, there was found to be variation in the level of provision between the individual sub areas. Areas like Hockley were relatively poorly provided for, compared with Great Wakering and Rochford in particular. However, perhaps the most significant characteristic is the extent to which local community provision in some parts of the District was comprised of 'B2' sector pitches (which includes most schools and clubs). Although the value of such pitches in the overall 'tapestry' of provision has been recognised, the study has highlighted the danger in assuming their long-term availability, as there can be no guarantee that the managers of these pitches will continue to make them available for public use.

12.8 The study has identified that the supply of pitches at the time of this study was meeting the expressed demand, but in two parts of the study area (Hockley and Canewdon) there was little spare capacity to cater for any upturn in demand. However, as the population is not anticipated to increase in the foreseeable future, this should not create any major issues. Also, as the District is fairly small and these areas are within 5 miles of the study area that appear to have a surplus of provision, it would not be unreasonable to expect any additional clubs to travel to play matches.

12.9 Discussions with Essex County FA and local league representatives revealed there was a perception that supply of pitches in the District was more than adequate. There was no knowledge of teams either having difficulty or failing to secure pitches.

12.10 Users of council pitches also identified problems in terms of the quality of playing surfaces and ancillary accommodation.

12.11 The findings of this study suggest that the Council may wish to re-examine its local plan standard for open spaces with a view to:-

- dis-aggregating the required standard(s) of provision for pitch sports from those relating to other forms of open space; and,

- adopting the following standards for the individual sub areas.

Table 12.2: Suggestions local standards

Rayleigh	1.15
Hockley	0.7
Hullbridge	1.34
Canewdon	1.68
Rochford	1.36
Great Wakering	1.77

12.12 ***R1****. The Council should consider the desirability of adopting revised standards for the provision of pitches in community use based on the above suggestions*

12.13 Adoption of these standards would probably meet any long-term structural changes in demand, as well as short- term fluctuations.

12.14 Until the (suggested) standards are met it is recommended that **all** pitches should be protected unless appropriate compensatory provision is offered. How "appropriate compensatory provision" is interpreted is something that the Council should properly determine for itself. However, one possible approach may be to adopt the principles embedded in the Sport England policy covering the protection of playing fields. This policy, explained fully in section 3, takes a pragmatic approach to the conservation of the playing field stock. On the one hand, the policy recognises the importance of protecting such facilities. However, on the other hand the policy also accepts that there may be occasions when disposal of either all or part of a site may be justified. Such circumstances include situations where:-

- only part of a site would be lost, and it would not affect the provision of existing pitches/facilities on site;
- alternative pitches and facilities of at least equivalent community benefit are to be provided elsewhere; and,
- other forms of sports facilities (either indoor or outdoor) are to be provided on the site, which, in the opinion of the Council would outweigh the loss of the original pitches.

12.15 ***R2****. The value in the Council developing a hierarchical approach to the planning and management of pitches has also been emphasised. This would not only help to direct and encourage investment in pitches and facilities; but also assist in meeting the varied needs of local clubs competing at and aspiring to different standards. This 'strategy' should also reflect other considerations such as:-*

- 'planning for the cycle of demand';
- the role of clubs in developing and managing council facilities and the scope for the Council to grant secure tenure;
- protection of playing surfaces; and
- sources of finance.

Specific

Findings for football

12.16 **The current situation –** At the time of the study, there appeared to be sufficient provision of football pitches in community use to satisfy existing demand. In all parts of the study area there were surplus pitches available to absorb any sudden upturn in demand.

12.17 **The future situation -** It is unlikely that the level of demand for pitches will change in the foreseeable future.

12.18 ***R3****. Future emphasis should be placed largely on protecting and improving the quality of existing pitches and ancillary facilities (club houses, changing facilities, drainage etc.). Adoption of the recommended standards will probably ensure that sufficient pitches continue to be made available in order to meet changing demand*.

Findings for cricket

12.19 **The current situation –** At the time of the study, there were sufficient cricket pitches in community use to satisfy existing demand. However one club in the Rayleigh sub area had ambitious expansion plans which included the development of new pitches/fields.

12.20 **The future situation -** It is unlikely that the level of demand for pitches will increase in the foreseeable future.

12.21 ***R4****. As with football, future emphasis should be placed on assisting cricket clubs to improve the quality of the playing surface and ancillary facilities to make them more attractive.*

Hockey and Rugby

12.22 **The current situation –** At the time of the study, the development of local Hockey seemed impaired by the lack of an artificial turf pitch within the study area. There did not appear to be any significant problems with the overall supply of rugby pitches at the time of the study. However, once again there were issues identified surrounding ancillary facilities and pitch quality.

12.23 **The future situation -** It is unlikely the level of demand for pitches will increase in the foreseeable future.

12.24 ***R5****. The Council should consider how it could support the improvement of ancillary provision for both these sports*.

ATPs

12.25 **The current situation –** At the time of the study, it was found there may be a case for providing an artificial turf pitch within the study area, primarily to encourage the further development of local hockey. However, the facility would also be a valuable training resource for other sports.

12.26 ***R6****. The Council should consider the desirability of providing one full-size artificial turf pitch within the District, if the bid for Sweyne Park School in Rayleigh is unsuccessful*.

Future provision of sports pitches: - a general point

12.27 ***R7****. The Council should consider whether future developer contributions arising from planning obligations and unilateral undertakings associated with major residential development may be better utilised in improving existing sports pitches and ancillary facilities, rather than simply providing entirely new sports fields. All local circumstances should be evaluated before determining requirements. However, the following list identifies some suggested priorities for improving existing pitches and ancillary facilities, which are also located on the accompanying Plan 12.1*

Table 12.3: Suggested priorities for improvements to existing pitch facilities

Rawreth Rec	Rayleigh	Council/club	Improve pitch drainage	High

Location	Sub area(s)	Sector	Suggested improvement	Suggested priority
John Fisher P F	Rayleigh	Council	Improve pitch drainage	High
Grove P F	Rayleigh	Council	Improve pitch drainage	High
Clements Hall P F	Hockley	Council	Improve pitch drainage and carry out levelling	Medium
Ashingdon Rec	Rochford	Council	Improve pitch drainage	Medium
Hullbridge PF	Hullbridge	Council	Improve pitch drainage	High
Fairview	Rayleigh	Council	Improve drainage to pitch 4	High

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF THE SPORT ENGLAND METHOD

Summary of the Sports Council Method

The method used in this study was based in part on an approach endorsed by Sport England.

A local assessment of supply and need is undertaken using the methodology that Sport England have developed over a number of years. The method can be summarised as follows:-

Stage 1 - Identifying teams;
Stage 2 - Home Games per Team per Week;
Stage 3 - Total Home Games per Week;
Stage 4 - Temporal Demand for Games;
Stage 5 - Pitches Used/ Required on Each Day;
Stage 6 - Pitches Available;
Stage 7 - Discussion of any Problems and Issues; and,
Stage 8 - Discussion of Options.

The method can be tailored to meet local circumstances as well as budgetary and time-scale constraints.

One of the possible options arising out of this exercise is the production of local standards for the provision of pitches. Such standards need to be based on notional areas for individual pitch types, together with an allowance for the desired pitch surrounds. The following are based primarily on NPFA guidance.

Pitch Type	Area (ha)
Adult Football	0.9
Junior Football	0.82
Mini-Soccer	0.2
Rugby	1.2
Cricket	1.6
Hockey	0.6

Within these overall areas can be incorporated the dimensions of the pitch surface proper (i.e excluding pitch surrounds):-

Adult football:- The NPFA recommend dimensions for adult football at regional, county or lesser levels is 96-100 metres x 55-64 metres

Junior football:- there are no regulation dimensions for junior size pitches. However both the NPFA and the English Schools' Football Association (ESFA) recommend different minimum and maximum dimensions for various junior and youth age groups. For example, the ESFA have strongly recommend for players of middle school age that:- *'…wherever possible, the playing area should have a length of no more than 90 yards (82 metres), nor less than 75 yards (70 metres) with its breadth no more than 60 yards (56 metres) nor less than 45 yards (42 metres).'*

Rugby:- from each dead ball line the maximum length of a Rugby Union pitch is 144 metres and the maximum width should be no more than 69 metres

Hockey:- the specification of 91.44 x 54.86 metres at least for club/county levels

APPENDIX B: INDICATIVE COSTS AND DESIGN GUIDANCE

General unit process for pavilions, clubhouses and changing rooms

	Mean	Sample	Spread of rates				
	£/m2	No	Lowest	25%	50%	75%	Highest
ITEM				Quartile	Median	Quartile	
Pavilions, clubhouses, and changing rooms- generally	672	259	187	496	638	799	1564
Up to 500 m^2	761	3	450		635		1199
500m^2 to 2000 m^2	692	9	350	512	594	935	1096
Over 2000 m^2	666	6	446	506	581	672	1207

Based on 1998 figures (2nd quarter) form the Sport England Facilities Development Unit

Artificial Turf Pitches

Artificial Turf Pitch (assuming full-size, sand-based and floodlit) in the order of £300-£350K, although the actual price very much depends upon the detailed specification of the facility, and the local physical circumstances.

Location and Layout of Sports Pitches

The precise value of individual playing fields and pitches to individual sports teams will be dictated by the requirements of the league of which they are a member. The higher the standard of play, the greater the requirements in respect of the pitch(es) and ancillary facilities. The needs of the football clubs playing in the 'semi-professional' Ryeman League (with requirements for floodlighting, pitch barriers, enclosures, and changing accommodation etc), will be much greater than those of the local Sunday league teams. However, the following notes and accompanying illustrations might be considered to represent sound general principles of design. The principles will include the following:-

Location
Accessibility
Playing surface
Floodlighting
Availability of changing rooms/toilets
Social facilities
Site suitability and security
Parking

Location: the NPFA suggest that most active members of the public want facilities for informal training and home games in their own neighbourhood, and consider that 20 minutes travelling time, or three quarters of a mile distance from home is a reasonable yardstick. For specialist facilities, such as artificial turf pitches, or higher level league grounds, the preparedness for travel may be greater. On the other hand, junior teams would probably prefer home pitches and training facilities could be located within easy and safe walking distance to young players.

When considering the location of new pitches, the potential for conflict between recreation activities and other land uses in the area, particularly residential, must be taken into consideration. Proximity to housing makes a site more accessible, although nuisance can arise from noise, parking, traffic generation etc.

Accessibility: for team sports it is probable that at least half of the players will be coming from out of the immediate area, and will therefore rely on some form of transport. The provision of convenient space for parking, preferably off-road and within the site, and a location near to public transport will make the site more accessible, and therefore more attractive to users.

Playing surface: pitches that are not drained and otherwise maintained cannot be used as frequently as those that are. Open pitches are vulnerable to dog fouling and other abuse. Guidance on the increase to playing capacity brought about through drainage improvements are detailed in the footnotes elsewhere in the main report.

Floodlighting: this can increase levels of usage of facilities, including for training. Floodlighting is essential for higher level clubs, and highly desirable for artificial turf pitches.

Sport England offer the following guidance on floodlighting levels for association football:-

Class	**LUX**
Class 1: national and international football	500
Class 2: medium level football	200
Class 3: low level football and training	75

Additional specific guidance is provided in relevant Sport England fact sheets.

Availability of changing rooms and toilets: the provision of changing facilities is desirable for all local sports teams, and essential for some. The detailed specifications for changing accommodation really depend on the nature of the sports played at a given site. Changing accommodation for senior teams will need to provide space for teams and reserves. For football teams, this will normally mean 15 spaces. For rugby teams, it may be 20 spaces. A two pitch complex would call for two home and two away team changing rooms. There will also be a requirement for separate match officials rooms (1 per game). The requirement for special facilities for junior and or female teams really depends on the specific circumstances. Specific guidance on these matters plus considerations such as disabled facilities, toilets, security etc. are provided in the Sport England fact sheets.

Social facilities: local sports teams value social facilities highly, particularly when hosting matches to visiting players. Such facilities make sites more attractive to players and spectators alike. Social facilities, especially where they include bar facilities and function rooms, can also be an important revenue generator for clubs. However, the development of such facilities may become a sensitive issue as they will generate additional noise, traffic for local residents. Such facilities (as well as other ancillary accommodation can also be a sensitive issue in the open countryside and the green belt.

Site suitability and security: for multi-sport community pitches, the accompanying illustrations show the type of facility that would serve a wide range of sporting needs. The key features of the layout are as follows:-

- A site big enough to accommodate multiples of at least two football/rugby pitches, with a cricket table in between. The cricket outfield is therefore shared with the other pitch sports on a seasonal basis.

- Planting around the site edge provides shelter.
- The residue grass can be used for training and/or mini-soccer. Floodlighting is shown to enable midweek training, during the winter.
- Floodlighting of one or both of the main pitches is not shown as this would be difficult to install on 'shared space' layouts such as shown here.
- The changing block is located close to both pitches to quick access at half time.
- Vehicle access and parking is available.
- A secure equipment shed (for goals, flags, mower etc.) is provided.

PREPARED BY THE ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL PLANNING POLICY TEAM

☎ 01702 318002
E-mail planning.policy@rochford.gov.uk
Website http://www.rochford.gov.uk

Rochford District Council, Council Offices, South Street, Rochford, Essex SS4 1BW