

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING PLAYING  
PITCH STRATEGY**

**January 2006**

**Final Draft**

PREPARED FOR:

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING**

**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

PREPARED BY:

**Joy Standeven  
Leisure & Tourism  
Research & Consultancy**

10 Trelvega  
36 Chaddesley Glen  
Canford Cliffs  
Poole BH13 7PF

Tel/Fax 01202-707969  
e-mail: [joystandeven@lcr.co.uk](mailto:joystandeven@lcr.co.uk)

**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**  
**Final Draft**  
**January 2006**

	<u>Page</u>
<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>10</b>
1.1 Objectives	10
1.2 Background	10
1.3 Why have a playing pitch strategy?	11
1.4 Study area	12
1.5 Sports pitches included	12
1.6 Structure of the strategy	13
<b>2. METHODS USED TO PRODUCE THE STRATEGY</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1 Desk research	15
2.2 Consultation	15
2.3 Provider Surveys	15
2.4 User Survey	16
2.5 Site visits	16
2.6 Data entry	17
<b>3. SUPPLY AND DEMAND ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 Supply	
3.1.1 Pitch stock	18
3.1.2 Adult pitches	18
3.1.3 Community pitches	19
3.1.6 Carrying capacity	20
3.1.7 Ratio of pitches to adults	20
3.1.8 Area of pitches	21
3.1.11 Location of pitches	22
3.1.13 Quality of pitches and ancillary facilities	24
3.1.23 Changing accommodation	27
3.1.26 Training facilities	27
3.2 Demand	
3.2.1 Current demand	28
3.2.8 Latent demand	30
3.2.13 Future demand	31
3.3 Key Issues	31
<b>4. THE PLAYING PITCH MODEL</b>	<b>33</b>
4.1 The 8 stage model	33
4.2 Borough-wide application	33
4.3 Key Issues from application of the model borough-wide	34
4.4 Mini soccer	34

4.5	Mini rugby	35
4.6	More detailed assessment by catchment area	35
	4.6.2 Catchment areas defined	36
	4.6.3 Surpluses and shortfalls by catchment area	36
4.7	Key issues by catchment area	37
4.8	Mini soccer and mini rugby in catchment areas	38
4.9	Shortage of junior football pitches	39
4.10	Surplus of pitches vis-à-vis quality issues	40
4.11	Quality of changing accommodation	40
4.12	Team Generation Rates	40
	4.12.1 TGRs explained	40
	4.12.2 Borough-wide TGRs	40
	4.12.3 Football TGR	40
	4.12.4 Rugby TGR	41
	4.12.5 Cricket TGR	41
	4.12.6 Hockey TGR	41
4.13	The implications	41
	4.13.1 What TGRs mean	41
	4.13.2 TGRs for Tonbridge & Malling	41
	4.13.3 Variation between sports	42
	4.13.6 TGRs for women and girls	42
4.14	Future projections for 2012	42
	4.14.2 Teams generated	42
	4.14.3 Matches generated	43
	4.14.4 Future pitch predictions	43
	4.14.5 Mini football	43
	4.14.6 Young people	44
	4.14.7 Girls and women's sports	44
	4.14.8 Catchment areas	44
4.15	Key Issues arising from the PPM	44
<b>5.</b>	<b>KEY ISSUES, POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS, LOCAL POLICIES, ACTION PLAN AND A LOCAL STANDARD</b>	<b>47</b>
5.1	Key Issues	
	5.1.1 Protection of existing provision	47
	5.1.2 Identification of quantitative deficiencies	48
	5.1.3 Identification of qualitative deficiencies	50
	5.1.4 Planning for new provision	50
	5.1.5 Underused/unused provision	53
5.2	Possible solutions	
	5.2.1 Overcoming quantitative and qualitative deficiencies	53
	5.2.2 In the north east of the borough	55
	5.2.3 In the north west of the borough	57
	5.2.4 In the central area of the borough	58
	5.2.5 In the south west of the borough	59
5.3	Local policies and strategic objectives	61
	5.3.1 Overall aim	61
	5.3.2 Local policies	61
	5.3.3 Strategic objectives	62

5.4	Action Plans	62
5.4.1	Action Plans	62
5.4.2	Protection of existing level of provision	63
5.4.3	Remedying quantitative and qualitative deficiencies	63
5.4.4	Providing for new developments	69
5.5	A local standard	70
<b>Tables</b>		
2.1	User Survey Response	16
3.1	Ratio of adults to pitch by sport	18
3.2	Definition of categories of pitches	19
3.3	All pitches and those in secured use by sport	20
3.4	Ratio of all pitches and secured use pitches by sport	21
3.5	Governing bodies of sport minimum pitch dimensions	21
3.6	Total area of secured pitches by sport	22
3.7	Total area of all pitches and community use pitches by ward	23
3.8	Quality assessment of pitches	25
3.9	Number of clubs and number of teams by sport	28
3.10	Pitches for community use by ward and sport	30
4.1	PPM calculations for the Borough 2004	33
4.2	Pitch surpluses and shortfalls by catchment area 2004	36
4.3	TGRs for men and women compared	42
4.4	Number of current teams and projected teams for 2012	43
4.5	Number of current matches and projected matches for 2012	43
4.6	Current pitch provision and prediction for 2012	43
4.7	Predicted pitch surpluses and shortfalls in 2012	44
5.1	Ways of overcoming pitch stock deficiencies	55
5.2	North east solutions	56
5.3	North west solutions	57
5.4	Central area solutions	58
5.5	South west solutions	59
5.6	Protection of the existing level of provision	63
5.7	Remedying deficiencies	64
5.8	Plans for new provision	69
5.9	The local standard	71
<b>Glossary of abbreviations</b>		72
<b>Annexes</b>		
Annex 1	Contact details of providers/owners	
Annex 2	Sports Club contact details	
Annex 3	Pitch Audit by Ward	
Annex 4	Pitch Quality Assessments by ward	
Annex 5	Reference documents	

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- § The aim of this strategy is to provide direction and set priorities that will care for, protect and enhance the playing pitch stock of the Borough. It is intended to ensure that residents and visitors can continue to play pitch sports for pleasure and enjoyment, and can benefit from the positive contribution that physical activity can make to improve the quality of life.
- § It is based on extensive research involving:
- document and internet searches
  - consultation with stakeholders
  - provider survey with 100% response (101 provider census)
  - user survey with 77% response (148 clubs)
  - visual quality assessments at 80 sites including 145 pitches
  - data analysis using Sport England's electronic tool kit
- § This strategy has been developed in the context of the Government's policy objectives for open space, sport and recreation as set out in PPG17. It will form part of the Council's overall Open Space Strategy, it is linked to the Borough's Community Strategy, Leisure Strategy, the Local Cultural Strategy, and to the Outdoor Leisure Best Value Review.
- § It adopts **Sport England's recommended methodology** (Playing Pitch Model/PPM) for the production of a Playing Pitch Strategy which is designed to be related directly to the local situation, at the same time providing benchmarking data that can be compared and shared with neighbouring authorities and with national norms.
- § The Playing Pitch model is designed to analyse pitches available per ward and relate this to a breakdown of active population age groups and future population projections for the area at ward level. Ward boundaries are seen as arbitrary in terms of the playing of pitch sports so the borough-wide calculations are amalgamated into catchment areas as recommended by Sport England. **Four geographical areas are used: the north east, the north west, central and south west.** These areas are shown on the map at the end of the Strategy.
- 
- § To obtain a comprehensive strategy it is necessary to take into account:
- pitches under the direct control of the Council
  - pitches under the control of town and parish councils,
  - pitches provided by the LEA in schools
  - pitches in private ownership
  - pitches on common land.
- § A total of **273** pitches were identified in the Borough of which 60% are available for community use.
- § Overall, the borough is not short of hectares designated as playing pitches with a total of 226 ha. but more than 90 ha. of these are based in schools and are not currently accessible for community use.

- § Whilst Sport England states that it is crucial to identify **all pitches** as part of the audit process, it is essential to establish actual pitch availability for public/ community use. Thus pitches at establishments, which are not, as a matter of policy or practice, available for hire by the public or that lack any formal user agreements are excluded from the assessment. The term **secured community use** is used to define pitches that are available; only these pitches are included in the model calculations as directed in Sport England's guidance.
- § Tonbridge and Malling has **164** pitches **secured for community use** and a land area of **132** hectares.
- § Playing pitches managed by the Council form less than 20% of playing pitches in the borough.
- § Compared with national averages, overall pitch supply in the Borough is good.
- § Football and cricket are favourably provided for in terms of pitches.
- § Hockey and rugby are much less well provided for than the country as a whole.
- § There will be a constraint on the growth of club rugby unless more pitches become accessible to the community; the shortage is in access rather than pitches per se.
- § Hockey at club level, played on STPs, is currently under provided and without the development of new STPs the game at club level in the borough cannot develop. (STP – synthetic turf pitches)
- § Research indicates **478 teams** (including mini teams) currently playing pitch sports in the Borough.
- § 97% of the teams are run for boys or men.
- § Pitch sports differ in popularity in the Borough:
  - 75% of the clubs and 76% of the identified teams play football
  - 22% of clubs and 15% of teams play cricket
  - 2% of clubs and 9% of teams play rugby (union)
  - 2% of clubs and 0.6% of teams play hockey
- § Not only are girls and women's interests under provided (3% of the teams), the girls who join the mixed mini-soccer and mini-rugby teams have very little opportunity to further their skills and interest above the age of 10 in soccer and 12 in rugby.
- § The location of the existing pitches in the borough has been examined by ward as required to fit the Sport England model. Wards are then combined to form more realistic catchment areas as recommended by Sport England.
  - There is a substantial variation between the wards and between the catchment areas.
  - Castle ward, in spite of being in the centre of Tonbridge, has the Racecourse Sportsground and Tonbridge Farm pitches located in the ward and

- compensates for its immediate neighbour Trench that has no playing pitches in the ward.
- Higham and Vauxhall wards have no playing pitches currently available for community use, only pitches on education sites.
  - All other wards have some secured use pitches available to the community.
  - The north east and central catchment areas currently have a limited pitch surplus, the north west has a very low surplus and the south west a shortfall.
- § The PPM model shows current provision across the Borough with:
- a surplus of adult football pitches of +9
  - a shortfall of junior football pitches of **-12**
  - demand for adult rugby just being met by supply (0)
  - a shortfall of junior rugby pitches of **-1.5**
  - surplus of cricket pitches at +7
  - surplus of hockey pitches (STPs) +1[not available for general use]
  - overall a surplus of +4.5 pitches
- § The issue of counting pitches as surplus to requirements grows in importance when overall quality is taken into account. The combined quantitative and qualitative assessments suggest very limited scope for regarding surpluses as unnecessary pitches.
- § Across the Borough the emphasis tends towards pitches that are not up to a good standard.
- 19% were assessed to be 'good'
  - 57% of pitches rated average
  - 17% below average
  - 7% poor
- § Poor quality pitches and ancillary facilities may restrict new players from being attracted to a sport or result in low retention levels.
- § Changing accommodation is an equally important issue
- there is no changing accommodation at 28 sites (20 of which are school sites)
  - it was rated 'good' at 18 sites
  - average at 11 sites
  - poor at 8 sites
- § The shortage of training facilities is the key issue noted by the clubs. Most current pitches are used to the full extent of their carrying capacity and 'on pitch' training is discouraged or disallowed. The result is a lack of suitable training facilities both in and out of season.
- 20 clubs (10 football and 10 cricket) train outside the borough
  - 30 football clubs recorded 'no training' due to lack of suitable and available facilities at appropriate times.
- § There is a significant lack of floodlit training areas in the borough.

- § Team generation rates (TGRs) indicate how many people in a specified age group are required to generate one team. TGRs are derived by dividing the appropriate population age band in an area by the number of teams in that area in that age band. They are used to indicate likely demand for new teams as population increases.
- § The following examples help to clarify what TGRs mean.
- |         |          |                                      |
|---------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| 1:100   | high TGR | relatively low latent (unmet) demand |
| 1:1,000 | low TGR  | relatively high (unmet) demand       |
- § For Tonbridge & Malling this means:
- the TGR for football is high (1:202) – it is predicted there will be only a low demand to start new football teams
  - the TGR for cricket is mid level (1:912) – probably a mid level demand to start new cricket teams
  - the TGR for rugby is low (1:1,785) suggesting a higher demand for more rugby teams
  - for hockey it is extremely low (1:16,538) suggesting a high demand for more hockey teams
- § It is not unreasonable to counter Sport England’s assumption that a high TGR (e.g. for football) indicates that latent demand has been met. A contrary argument can be advanced that a popular sport (e.g. football) may continue to have a large unmet demand.
- § Based on the forecast population increase, sports development plans, new housing estates and the ripple effect whereby mini-teams move up to junior teams the PPM calculates that there will be 561 teams playing in the Borough in 2012 compared with the 457 teams playing pitch sports now.
- § The PPM model predicts that by 2012, without new pitch provision and improved maintenance there will be an overall shortfall of pitches across the borough **-33.0**.
- § A comparison of the current and predicted future pitch provision shows:
- The surplus of adult football pitches decreasing from 9 to a deficiency of **-6**
  - The shortfall of junior football pitches increasing from **-12** to **-25**
  - Adult rugby pitches now meeting demand decreasing to a deficiency of **-2**
  - The shortfall of junior rugby pitches increasing from **-1.5** to **-6**
  - The surplus of cricket pitches will decrease from 7 to 4
  - The surplus of hockey pitches will decrease from 2 to 1
- § Mini-soccer and mini-rugby, often currently accommodated on adapted adult pitches, will increase in demand and require greater use of adult pitches thereby decreasing pitch surpluses and increasing deficiencies.
- § The TGRs for pitch sports for women and girls clearly demonstrate a low TGR and therefore potentially a high latent (unmet) demand. The comparison between current opportunities for men and for women to play pitch sports in the borough is significant.



## Key Issues

- § The findings of this study demonstrate that there is **no scope to lose** playing fields.
- § The contribution made by sites on private land or sites vested in other ownership (e.g. schools) emphasise the necessity **to protect** all the areas of playing pitch land and open space in public, private and educational ownership.
- § Currently there is a **low overall surplus** of 4.5 pitches across the borough; this is forecast to reverse to an **overall shortfall** that could be as high as **- 33** pitches by 2012 if current trends are maintained.
- § This issue assumes increased importance when consideration is given to the forecast population increase and new residential developments, as the shortfall of pitches is predicted to impact most on provision for **young people's sports**.
- § Without increased access to pitches and appropriate changing accommodation **girls and women teams** are unlikely to be formed.
- § The level of pitch provision is such that all new housing developments of requisite size need **Section 106 planning agreements** with developers for the purpose of securing pitch provision in conjunction with new housing.
- § A quarter of the pitches currently used by the community have **qualitative issues**.
- § The **quality of the grass** playing surfaces is generally **average or below average**, and some pitches are being overplayed.
- § There is a **lack of suitable off pitch grass and multi use training** facilities both in and out of season.
- § Multi use areas and artificial pitches are maximised when **floodlit**.
- § The **lack of quality changing accommodation**.
- § There is **no directory** of pitch provision.
- § **Hockey** at club level, played on STPs, is currently under provided and without the development of new STPs the game at club level in the borough **cannot develop**.
- § The future growth of **club rugby will be constrained** unless more pitches become accessible to the community.
- § The need to adopt **strategic local policies** to direct, care for, protect, and enhance the playing pitch stock of the Borough.
- § The need to **establish a hierarchy of sites** and identify **priorities for action**.
- § The need **to regularly review** the progress made in addressing the key issues identified in this strategy.

- § In accordance with Sport England advice **apply a local standard** for playing pitch provision derived directly from this strategic assessment of local needs of **1.2 ha. per 1,000 population.**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This strategy assesses the extent to which the number and quality of playing pitches in Tonbridge & Malling is adequate to meet the current and predicted future needs of local players. The strategy includes the development of policy options, recommendations and the establishment of local standards.

### **1.1 Objectives**

The playing pitch study was established in order to fulfil the following objectives: -

- to provide the Council with an audit and assessment of playing pitches and their current use.
- to determine whether there is sufficient provision to meet current and changing (future) demand.
- to develop a local standard of provision that can be assessed against national planning policies.
- to help deliver government policies for social inclusion, environmental protection, community involvement and healthy living.
- to provide the Council with a policy framework and evidence to assist planning either for new pitches or to protect the use of current provision.
- to assist improvements identified in the Outdoor Leisure Best Value Review with respect to reviewing and managing sports pitch provision.
- to provide a base of information appropriate to the preparation of an Open Space Audit.
- to link with wider strategies, including PPG17 and the Borough Leisure Strategy, for the future provision and maintenance of open space and outdoor sports facilities.
- to deliver best value and encourage continuous improvement of playing pitches through monitoring, auditing and benchmarking
- to link with the Community Strategy theme to promote sustainable public access to, and recreational use of, the borough's countryside and natural heritage

### **1.2 Background**

In 1991 the Sports Council, now Sport England, identified that playing pitches were being lost to the community for a variety of reasons including pressure on land resources, pressures on local authority finances and legislative change. Since then these pressures have increased and the Government has expressed national concern that playing pitches, an important recreational resource, have continued to be

developed for purposes other than recreation (*DCMS Playing Fields Monitoring Group*). This has resulted in increasing pressure on the remaining playing pitches, a reduction in open space amenity together with the visual impact created by the loss of open space. In 2002, the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce report (*Green Spaces, Better Places*) stressed the importance of looking comprehensively at all open space in terms of accessibility, quality and quantity. Formal sport is just one use of open space that needs to be seen within a holistic provision of open space; as such, this strategy will form an integral part of the Council's developing response to PPG17.

To assist local authorities, Sport England revised its first prescribed methodology for the development of a playing pitch strategy (*Playing Pitch Strategy 1991*), and in February 2003 published revised guidance (*Towards a Level Playing Field*) together with an accompanying electronic toolkit. Instead of using crude measures such as land area per head of population as the basic unit (the 1991 methodology), new guidance measures demand (at peak times) in terms of teams requiring pitches and then compares this with the pitches available, thus enabling a realistic local measure of the adequacy of provision.

This strategy has been developed in accordance with Sports England's recommended methodology, and in the context of the Government's policy objectives for open space, sport and recreation as set out in PPG17; it will form part of the Council's overall open space strategy and fits with the local Community Strategy. It is closely linked to the Borough Leisure Strategy and the Local Cultural Strategy and relates directly to the Outdoor Leisure Best Value Review and the management and maintenance of publicly owned pitches in the borough.

### **1.3 Why have a playing pitch strategy?**

A number of benefits can be identified from having a playing pitch strategy. First it ensures a corporate and strategic approach to playing pitch provision, and in the context of change provides direction and sets priorities for pitch sports in the borough. The strategy is a tool to protect and enhance current pitch provision, it will form a basis on which to establish new pitch requirements arising from new housing developments and assist in proving the need for developer and other external funding contributions.

The strategy will help to deliver the Council's priorities for healthy living, social inclusion, community involvement, and caring for the environment. In particular, it will contribute towards provision for young people, as increased participation is a forecast national trend with more children involved in out of school football, kwik cricket and mini-rugby. Sport England have welcomed the Government's recently announced increased budget for sport (from £126m in 05/06 to £155m in 07/08). The funding for sport comes with an expectation of a minimum of two hours physical education within the curriculum and a further two hours of sport outside school hours. Benefits from sports' participation link directly to the themes and key policies of the Local Cultural Strategy and the Borough Leisure Strategy and support the recommendations for physical activity in the Government White Paper "Choosing Health Making Healthy Choices Easier".

The adoption of Sport England's recommended methodology is beneficial as it is designed to be related directly to the local situation whilst at the same time providing benchmarking data that can be compared and shared with neighbouring authorities and with national norms.

#### **1.4 Study area**

The study boundary comprises the administrative area of Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. It is acknowledged that local pitch sports are not organised in such a way that they fit an area administered by a local authority; players and teams frequently travel into and out of the study area and play in neighbouring areas. Due to local circumstances it was not possible to develop a West Kent strategy that would fit more coherently with some of the patterns of play, but issues of wider significance have been covered by reference to Sevenoaks, Gravesham, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils.

Sevenoaks policy is to outsource the management of all pitches and there is no plan to produce a Playing Pitch Strategy for the district. Gravesham completed their strategy early in 2002 following the 1991 Sport England guidance; no cross-boundary issues were identified. Maidstone's strategy was completed in 2002 following the new guidance with no cross-boundary issues identified. Tunbridge Wells are completing their strategy in parallel with Tonbridge & Malling.

Use of the Sport England model requires data to be gathered and processed at ward level, but travel patterns of individuals and teams are not normally confined within wards. In order to identify where shortfalls and surpluses occur in a more useful way within the borough, Sport England recommend data is amalgamated into a number of sub-areas/catchment areas that take more account of wider patterns of travel, and travel times of around 20 minutes within the area. Four geographical areas are used: the north east, the north west, central and south west. These areas are shown on the map at the end of the Strategy.

#### **1.5 Sports pitches included**

Playing pitches managed by the Council form less than 20% of playing pitches in the borough, therefore to obtain a comprehensive plan it is necessary to take into account pitches under the control of town and parish councils, those provided by the LEA in schools, pitches in private ownership and on common land.

In line with Sport England's model, this playing pitch strategy focuses on pitch provision for football, rugby union, hockey and cricket. Minimal reference is made to baseball and stoolball as minor sports in the area. Other pitch sports have been excluded for the following reasons: -

- Rugby League – no teams/pitches in the borough
- Lacrosse – no teams/pitches in the borough
- American Football – the Maidstone Pumas played in the borough but have disbanded

- Softball – no teams in the borough
- Croquet – only one team playing on privately owned land

All natural grass and artificial turf pitches complying with the relevant governing bodies of sport specified minimum dimensions are included in this strategy irrespective of ownership.

## **1.6 Structure of the strategy**

The strategy is presented in four sections following this introduction, namely: -

2. Methodology – a summary of the research process and response obtained
3. Supply and demand – an overview of the playing pitch stock and pitch sport activity in the borough
4. An application of Sport England's Playing Pitch Model
5. Key issues, recommendations and priorities for the future

## 2. METHODS USED TO PRODUCE THE STRATEGY

The methods used to assess the adequacy of existing and proposed pitch provision and demand for use is summarised below:

<b>Method</b>	<b>Source of information</b>	<b>Information required</b>
<b>1. Desk research</b>	Internet and documents	National legislation, County organisation and other local policies, strategies, reports etc.
<b>2. Consultation</b>	Internal consultation Leisure Planning Sports development	Strategies, sites, plans, demographic information, etc.
	External Sport England Kent Sports Development Governing Bodies Football Foundation/REFF Neighbouring authorities	Strategies, development plans, confirmation of the range of facilities. Information related to demand/need for existing/ additional facilities etc.
<b>3. Provider Surveys</b> Postal followed up by telephone calls	Council Officers	Information relating to provision, quality and use of current facilities
	Parishes	Information relating to provision, quality and use of current facilities
	All Schools – including private	Information relating to provision, quality and use of current facilities
	Private owners of pitches	Information relating to provision, quality and use of current facilities
<b>4. User Survey</b> Postal followed up by telephone calls	Clubs	Identification of teams, facilities used and assessment of quality of provision. Priorities for improvement and additional facility needs
<b>5. Site visits</b>	Visual inspection of pitches available for community use	Quality assessment of pitches and ancillary facilities
<b>6. Data entry</b> Into Sport England's electronic toolkit model	Provider and User surveys, and consultation	Number and description of teams in each ward Ratio of home games to total matches Temporal split during the week Number and type of pitches per ward Population breakdown

The results of the above methods have been used to inform this strategy.

## **2.1 Desk research**

2.1.1 The desk research undertaken incorporated a review of background documentation and data sources including relevant Council strategies/plans and reports, governing body handbooks and plans, league handbooks and plans, other playing pitch strategies.

2.1.2 Key documents included:

The Borough Leisure Strategy

The Local Cultural Strategy

Towards a Level Playing Field

Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG 17

Green Spaces, Better Places

Game Plan – A strategy for delivering the Government’s objectives for sport

Relevant NGB Facility Strategies

## **2.2 Consultation**

2.2.1 A comprehensive consultation exercise was undertaken through face-to-face discussion and by telephone with internal and external consultees. These ranged from Regional Officers of Sport England, officers in Kent County Council and the Sports Development Unit, League representatives, secretaries and development officers, Governing body regional development officers, the Football Foundation, Parish and Town Clerks, Local sports association officers, club secretaries and similar.

## **2.3 Provider Surveys**

2.3.1 Council officers completed similar survey forms to those sent to other providers and existing records were scrutinised.

2.3.2 Parish Clerks completed a survey.

2.3.3 All colleges and schools (primary, secondary and private) completed a similar survey.

2.3.4 Data was collected from owners/administrators of pitches in private ownership.

2.3.5 In order to prepare a reliable strategy, the playing pitch model depends on obtaining a 100% accurate audit of the number and types of pitches available in the borough, therefore all non-responding contacts were telephoned, some many times, until the 100% response was obtained. Annex 1 highlights contact details of all providers/owners.



	TONBRIDGE & MALLING		
	Circulated	Returned	
Parish	27	100%	27
Schools	59	100%	59
Private	15	100%	15

## 2.4 User Survey

- 2.4.1 The club survey was complicated by the lack of a comprehensive database of sports clubs in the borough, and the short lifespan of many clubs and their officers. The database available was extended by responses from the Provider Surveys that identified clubs using their facilities, and by reference to County and League handbooks, websites, consultation with governing bodies/league secretaries etc.
- 2.4.2 It is recognised that the current database, though extensive, is not complete. Some clubs could not be contacted, some disbanded during the research process, others were established.
- 2.4.3 Annex 2 contains the contact details of the **148** clubs circulated with the questionnaire. (More clubs were originally circulated but subsequent information revealed amalgamations and closures). All non-responding clubs were sent a reminder survey that resulted in a total of 93 clubs (62%) return. (A 25% return is generally considered good for this type of survey). The majority of the residual non-responding clubs were then telephoned to produce a final tally of **114** clubs responding (**77%**).
- 2.4.4 Comparing the club response in Tonbridge & Malling with an equivalent exercise in two other Kent authorities shows that local clubs produced a far higher return thus adding to the reliability of the research.

**Table 2.1 User Survey Response**

	TONBRIDGE & MALLING			MAIDSTONE			DOVER		
	Circ.	Ret.	%	Circ.	Ret.	%	Circ.	Ret.	%
Clubs	148	114	<b>77%</b>	197	96	<b>49%</b>	118	58	<b>49%</b>

## 2.5 Site Visits

- 2.5.1 Quantity is not the only measure of availability since pitches are a natural resource and their capacity to accommodate games is determined by their physical quality. Visual quality assessments as prescribed by Sport England in the electronic toolkit have been undertaken on 80 sites and comprised assessments of 145 pitches.
- 2.5.2 These on-site assessments are supported by information received from the User Survey where clubs were asked to give their opinion of the quality of pitch(es) they used and the Provider Surveys that asked a similar question in relation to the pitch(es) they provided

## **2.6 Data entry**

2.6.1 Application of the playing pitch methodology involved preparation of the information for data entry into the electronic toolkit. Extensive checking and collating of information from various sources and surveys included:

- borough population (male and female) by specified age groups (e.g. 11-15; 13-17 etc to fit the defined age groups x sport)
- the active population of the study area
- demographic breakdown by ward
- projections of future population change
- the impact of sports development programmes
- the number and description of teams in each ward
- the ratio of home games to total matches per season
- the temporal split during the week
- the ratio of senior to junior teams
- and the precise number and type of pitches per ward.

Through undertaking the data collection and analysis the exact areas of shortfall and surplus for each sport were identified leading to the development of policy options to deal with the local situation.

### 3. ASSESSMENT OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND

The current situation in the Borough in terms of pitch supply and the demand for pitch use is detailed in this section. Of the neighbouring authorities only Maidstone has produced figures that can be used for comparative purposes; Tunbridge Wells strategy is not yet complete and Sevenoaks have no plans to produce a pitch strategy.

#### 3.1 Supply

##### Pitch stock

3.1.1 Overall, the research methods outlined above identified **273 pitches in the Borough**. This figure includes **all** known public, private, educational and other pitches whether or not they are in secured public use. (Maidstone identified a total of 243 pitches). The full audit of pitches can be seen in Annex 3. They comprise: -

- 74 adult football pitches
- 67 junior football pitches
- 29 mini football pitches
- 27 adult rugby pitches
- 7 mini rugby pitches
- 44 adult cricket pitches
- 5 junior cricket pitches
- 17 hockey pitches (including 2 full-size synthetic turf pitches + 2 junior pitches)
- 3 other pitches (2 baseball, 1 stoolball)

##### Adult pitches

3.1.2 Of these pitches, 163 (60%) are full-size adult football, rugby, cricket and hockey pitches (Maidstone 156/64%). This equates to circa one pitch for every 518 adults in the borough (Maidstone 1:734). This ratio compares favourably with the estimated equivalent national figure of one pitch for every 989 adults. Figures for some other authorities show a wide variation with Kennett at 1:365 and Portsmouth at 1:1,100.

The local ratio for specific sports by comparison with the national averages and with Maidstone is shown in the Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1 All pitches - ratio of adults to pitch by sport**

	<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling (pitches:adults)</b>	<b>England (pitches:adults)</b>	<b>Maidstone (pitches:adults)</b>
Football	1: 1,142	1: 1,840	1: 1, 513
Rugby	1: 3,130	1: 8,271	1: 6,764
Hockey	1: 5,633	1: 8,968	1: 10,651
Cricket	1: 1,920	1: 4,243	1; 2,169

A favourable comparison is evident for all pitch sports in Tonbridge and Malling.

## Community pitches

3.1.3 While **all pitches** form part of the audit process (see above), an important aspect of assessing total pitch availability is establishing pitches that are **accessible for public use**. Sport England defines **community pitches** as those pitches with ‘**secured community use**’ recognising that this is significant in terms of availability and access to the community. Many schools have pitches, but due to the use they make of them for PE lessons, sport and school fixtures, further use by the community would render the pitch overused. Secured community use implies a formal written agreement. Pitches in schools subject to a written agreement from the school to the current community team/s using the pitch/es is counted as secured use.

Sport England defines categories of pitches as shown in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2 Definition of categories of pitches**

Category	Definition	Supplementary information
A (i)	Secured community pitches	Pitches in local authority or other public ownership or management
A (ii)		Pitches in the voluntary, private or commercial sector that are open to members of the public
A (iii)		Pitches at education sites that are available for use by the public through formal community use agreements
B	Used by the community but not secured	Pitches not included above, that are nevertheless available for community use, e.g. school/college pitches without formal user agreements
C	Not open for community use	Pitches at establishments which are not, as a matter of policy or practice, available for hire by the public

3.1.4 Applying this categorisation to pitches in Tonbridge and Malling significantly reduces the pitches available for **community use** to less than two thirds (164 of the total 273 - 60%) of the total pitches. (Maidstone 61%) (See Table 3.3 below)

3.1.5 Whilst Sport England states that it is crucial to identify **all pitches** as part of the audit process, it is essential to establish actual pitch availability for public/ community use. Thus pitches at establishments, which are not, as a matter of policy or practice, available for hire by the public or that lack any formal user agreements are excluded from the electronic calculations. The term **secured community use** is used to define pitches that are available; these are the pitches referred to in this strategy except where otherwise stated.

**Table 3.3 Tonbridge & Malling – A comparison of all pitches and those in secured use by sport**

Sport	Type	T& M	T& M
		All pitches	Secured Use pitches
		Total	
Football	Adult/Senior	74	60 (81%)
	Junior	67	35 (52%)
	Mini	29	20 (69%)
<b>TOTAL FOOTBALL PITCHES</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>115 (68%)</b>
Rugby	Adult/Senior	27	6 (17%)
	Mini	7	7 (50%)
<b>TOTAL RUGBY PITCHES</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>13 (38%)</b>
Cricket	Adult/Senior	44	29 (66%)
	Junior	5	0 (0%)
<b>TOTAL CRICKET PITCHES</b>		<b>49</b>	<b>29 (59%)</b>
Hockey	Adult/Senior	15 inc. 2 stp	4 inc 2 stp
	Junior	2	
<b>TOTAL HOCKEY PITCHES</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>4 (23%)</b>
<b>OTHER PITCHES</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Baseball	Overlap other pitches	2	2
Stoolball		1	1
<b>TOTAL PITCHES</b>		<b>273</b>	<b>164 (60%)</b>

### Carrying capacity

3.1.6 Carrying capacity relates to the number of matches a grass pitch can absorb; it is a function of the needs of other users (e.g. school pitches/pupils) the quality of the pitch, and the limitations imposed by the owners. Some Council owned pitches are restricted to one match per week compared with the standard two matches per week. This reduces the number of matches that can be played. The formula applied by Sport England counts one use per week as 0.5 of a pitch compared with 1.0 for two matches per week. The carrying capacity formula reduces the pitches available for **community use** in the borough to 155 of the total 273 – 57% (Maidstone 61%).

### Ratio of Total pitches and Secured use pitches to adults

3.1.7 Table 3.4 below demonstrates that football and cricket are favourably provided for, whilst hockey and rugby are much less well provided for than the country as a whole. There will be a constraint on the future growth of club rugby unless more pitches become accessible to the community; the shortage is in access rather than pitches per se. Given that only 2 of the currently available hockey pitches are synthetic turf (provided by Tonbridge School with limited access to the local club), and since STPs are now almost a prerequisite for club hockey, this suggests that the future of the game in the area may be jeopardised unless further STPs become available. Grass pitches are still an important component of the game, especially in schools, but the capacity of STPs is far greater than grass pitches and new developments in football may further the demand for access to STPs. (see 3.2.6)

**Table 3.4 Ratio of all pitches and secured use pitches by sport**

	<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling (pitches:adults) ALL PITCHES</b>	<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling (pitches:adults) SECURED USE</b>	<b>England (pitches:adults)</b>
Football	1: 1,142	1: 1,408	1: 1,840
Rugby	1: 3,130	1: 14,083	1: 8,271
Hockey	1: 5,633	1: 21,125	1: 8,968
Cricket	1: 1,920	1: 2,914	1: 4,243

### Area of pitches

3.1.8 Although the parish council clerks and the schools were asked to state the exact size of their playing fields, the majority did not know and simply placed a question mark in the box on the questionnaire. Therefore, in common with the Maidstone strategy, standard sizes and areas for playing pitches published by the NPFA have been applied. It has been assumed that pitches throughout the borough are consistent with standard measurements.

**Table 3.5 Governing bodies of sport specified minimum dimensions.**

<b>Pitch Type</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Width</b>
Senior football	Max. 120m/Min. 90m	Max. 90m/Min. 45m
Junior football	Max. 91m/Min. 73m	Max. 59m/Min. 40m
Mini-soccer	73m	40m
Cricket pitch	20m	3m
Full-sized rugby	100m	69m
Mini-rugby	75m	46m
Grass hockey	91.4m	55m
STP full-sized	100m	69m

3.1.9 Pitches are required to allow adequate safety margins for run offs and side movement, thus the total area for pitches exceeds the pitches themselves. Comparison between wards and boroughs is more accurate where areas are the measure used rather than simply the number of pitches, given the varied dimensions and layouts. For the purposes of this strategy the table below shows the area of the borough with pitches **secured for community use** excluding the minor sports of baseball and stoolball (3 pitches). However, this calculation is based on the assumption that every pitch is located on a dedicated footprint of land. Since some football pitches use cricket outfield the total area may be an over estimate from some double counting; conversely, some parish clerks did give exact hectares and these exceeded the standard measurements. Therefore Table 3.6 should be considered an estimate within reasonable tolerances.

**Table 3.6 Total area of Secured pitches by sport in Tonbridge & Malling**

Pitch Type	NPFA pitch areas (hectares)	Areas assumed for this strategy (hectares)	Number of pitches	Area of pitches (hectares)
Senior football	0.82-0.9	0.86	60	51.06
Junior football	0.4-0.6	0.5	35	17.5
Mini-soccer	0.22	0.22	20	4.4
Cricket pitch	1.4-1.6	1.5	29	43.5
Full-sized rugby	1.26	1.26	6	7.56
Mini-rugby	0.8	0.8	7	5.6
Grass hockey	0.6	0.6	2	1.2
STP hockey	0.6	0.6	2	1.2
Total			161 <sup>1</sup>	132.02

<sup>1</sup> The 3 pitches for baseball/stoolball are omitted being on the same footprint as other pitches

3.1.10 Tonbridge and Malling has 132 hectares of **secured use** playing pitches available for community use and more pitches secured for the community to use than Maidstone (157 pitches compared with 140) but a lesser land area (132 hectares compared with 140.6 hectares). This greater number of pitches but lesser land area indicates that there are more junior/mini pitches secured for community use in Tonbridge & Malling.

#### Location of pitches

3.1.11 The location of the existing pitches in the borough has been examined by ward to fit the Sport England model. Returns submitted by parish and town clerks, schools, private owners and council officers have been located within their respective ward boundaries; twenty-four wards and the Snodland wards.

3.1.12 It is accepted that ward boundaries are essentially arbitrary and do not confine players, but the location of the existing pitches in the borough has been examined by ward as required to fit the Sport England model. Wards are then combined to form more realistic catchment areas as recommended by Sport England (see Section 4.6).

Table 3.7 below shows the total area of playing pitches and those available for **community use by ward**.

**Table 3.7 Total area of all pitches and community use pitches by ward**

	<b>WARD</b>	<b>Total ALL playing pitches (hectares)</b>	<b>Total Community use pitches (hectares)</b>
1	Aylesford	20.12	19.74
2	Blue Bell Hill	3.36	3.36
3	Borough Green	11.02	11.02
4	Burham	5.3	3.94
5	Cage Green	7.52	1.72
6	Castle	75.36	25.06
7	Ditton	5.3	4.58
8	Downs	8.94	6.44
9	East Malling	9.06	7.8
10	East Peckham	3.94	3.94
11	Hadlow	8.84	7.34
12	Higham	0.44	0.0
13	Hildenborough	4.96	2.36
14	Ightham	2.86	2.86
15	Judd	12.16	4.12
16	Kings Hill	2.86	1.86
17	Larkfield N	2.58	2.58
18	Larkfield S	0.5	0.5
19	Medway	8.82	3.66
20	Snodland	11.7	8.08
21	Trench	0.0	0.0
22	Vauxhall	1.8	0.0
23	Wateringbury	3.08	3.08
24	West Malling	6.08	6.08
25	Wrotham	9.44	1.72
	Total	226.04	131.84

As shown in Table 3.7 above

- 132 hectares of playing pitches are available for community use
- There is a substantial variation between the wards
- Castle ward, in spite of being in the centre of Tonbridge, has the Racecourse Sportsground and Tonbridge Farm Sportsground and Tonbridge School pitches located in the ward and compensates for its immediate neighbour Trench that has no playing pitches in the ward although it is immediately adjacent to the Tonbridge Farm pitches.
- Higham and Vauxhall wards have no playing pitches currently available for community use only pitches on education sites.
- All other wards have some secured use pitches available to the community.



## Quality of pitches

- 3.1.13 Pitches are a natural resource and their capacity to accommodate games over a given period is determined by their physical quality. The quality of a pitch includes drainage, grass cover (the presence of weeds can significantly reduce the performance of a grass pitch), wear and tear, slope, safety margins, evenness of pitch, quality of maintenance, dog fouling, markings, and equipment (e.g. goals), and the range of ancillary facilities such as changing, floodlighting, car parking, spectator facilities, social provision, practice areas etc.
- 3.1.14 School pitches are used for P.E. lessons, school team training and matches, as well as break time kick-about activity; together these reduce the amount of time school pitches can be made available to the community. Without good maintenance these pitches will be under considerable pressure and it is not surprising that a number of school pitches in the Borough demonstrate below average characteristics with some schools indicating that their pitches cannot be made available for community use. (In addition schools experience problems with security of facilities). Generally, pitches on school sites were not maintained as well as other pitches with a total of 9 schools where pitches were rated below average and 4 where they were rated poor. Currently only 4 of these are let for community use, a number of others would like their pitch/es used by the community. Publicly and privately owned pitches will not be under so much pressure for general day-to-day usage, but the issue of maintenance applies equally.
- 3.1.15 The purpose of the quality assessments is to help identify pitches that are being over-used for the level of maintenance provided, help to explain why some pitches are being under-used, and assist prioritisation when developing an action plan. **Assessments included some pitches not currently in community use in an attempt to determine the quality of pitches within the total stock that could potentially be made available for community use.**

Visual quality assessments were undertaken on a sample of 80 sites that included the assessment of 145 pitches following criteria prescribed by Sport England. The site visits included a mix of sports, pitch owners and geographical spread. The sites included: -

- 90 football pitches
- 13 rugby pitches
- 9 hockey pitches
- 33 cricket pitches

The scoring system adopts the following Sport England classification: -

- Over 90% = an excellent pitch
- 65-90% = a good pitch
- 55-64% = an average pitch
- 30 -54% = a below average pitch
- Less than 30% = a poor pitch

- 3.1.16 Visits occurred at the end of the cricket season and the beginning of the football season. It is recognised that single visits can only be a snapshot; pitches vary by time within the season and prevailing weather conditions. Consultant assessments have therefore been supplemented by reference to the Users and Providers own quality assessments with the final score mediated between the different assessments. Mediating the User and Provider's assessments has scored pitches not covered in the consultant's assessment.
- 3.1.17 Full scores are given in Annex 4 and include pitches rated 'good', 'average', 'below average' and 'poor'. Very few mini football pitches were included in the assessment, and on sites with multiple pitches not every individual pitch was necessarily included.

**Table 3.8 Quality assessment of pitches**

Sport	Good	Average	Below average	Poor
Football	23	85	21	8
Rugby	6	7	3	2
Hockey	0	9	5	0
Cricket	11	22	8	4
Total	40	123	37	14

The majority of sites/pitches were rated average (123/57%). With 19% of pitches assessed to be 'good', and no pitch rated excellent, but with 24% below average/poor the emphasis is towards pitches that are not up to a good standard.

- 3.1.18 The 'good' pitches were at the following sites: -

Football pitches

- Forstal Road Aylesford
- Cobdown Sports Club, Aylesford
- Ditton Community Centre
- East Peckham Recreation Ground
- Ryarsh Recreation Ground
- Hadlow Agriculture College
- Tonbridge Farm (Pitch B, C, E, F) and Longmead Stadium

Rugby pitches

- Aylesford Rugby Club
- Hadlow Agriculture College
- Tonbridge Racecourse pitches R1 and R2

Cricket pitches

- Addington Cricket Ground
- Bluebell Hill Cricket Ground
- Ditton Community Centre (currently unused)
- East Malling Cricket Ground (Bradbourne House)
- Eccles Sports Ground

- Holborough Sportsground
- Ightham Cricket Ground
- Offham Cricket Field
- Plaxtol Cricket Ground
- Shipbourne Cricket Ground
- Tonbridge Cricket Ground

3.1.19 A total of 21 football pitches used by the community were rated below average. Apart from those in schools, these included pitches at Eccles Recreation Ground, Burham Recreation Ground, Ightham Recreation Ground and West Malling Cricket Ground.

3.1.20 Fourteen pitches used by the community were rated as poor these included: -

- 8 football pitches, 6 in schools and one each at Tonbridge Farm (pitch A) and Snodland Recreation Ground (mini football pitch)
- 2 rugby pitches at Tonbridge Racecourse (R6 and R7)
- 4 cricket pitches at Potters Mede (Borough Green ward), Snodland Rectory Meadow, Stonehouse Field (Borough Green ward) and Tonbridge Racecourse. (C5)

3.1.21 A number of respondents commented on the quality of the pitches they used. Typical comments below demonstrate the variation experienced by the players.

“In general we regard our pitch as one of the best we find. However over the past couple of years it has become clear that some renewal is needed” (Football club, playing on Council owned pitches)

“Pitch marking is poor and maintenance can cause problems” (Football club, playing on Council owned mini pitches)

“For football, the pitches are good” (Football club, playing on Council owned pitches)

“Too much dog excrement on pitches, pitches not levelled enough and holes not filled in” (Football club, playing on Council owned pitches)

“The pitches in general are of excellent standard” (Football club, playing on Parish maintained pitches)

“The pitches used to be excellent when the Parish looked after them, but since the cricket club took over the football pitch has steadily got worse” (Football club playing on a Parish owned pitch)

“The pitches are overplayed” (Rugby club playing on leased pitches)

“Have been playing rugby for 20 years in Tonbridge and the pitches are in the worst condition ever.” (Rugby club playing on Council owned pitches)

“They vary greatly, much depends on the time and effort put in by club members and volunteers” (Cricket club playing on leased land).

“The school look after the outfield (the school field) which is in poor condition” (Cricket club playing on dual use field).

“At the Council grounds there used to be good grounds maintenance” (Cricket club playing on Council owned pitches)

“We play on overall good pitches; ‘home’ pitch is wonderful” (Club maintained, Parish owned pitch)

3.1.22 Overall, the surplus of cricket pitches across the borough – particularly in the north east and south west areas - suggests that teams could avoid playing on the poor pitches if they could arrange their matches elsewhere.

### Changing accommodation

3.1.23 Changing accommodation is separately rated. At a number of sites it was not possible to access the changing areas and assessment has therefore taken the Users views where the consultant could not view the accommodation.

3.1.24 Whilst changing accommodation is rated as ‘good’ at 18 sites, there is no changing accommodation at 28 sites used by the community (20 of which are school sites), and changing accommodation available at 8 other sites needs upgrading. In addition, clubs that use some sites where changing accommodation is available cannot afford to use it, and others find too many teams needing to use facilities at the same time for the number of changing rooms available (Tonbridge Farm was particularly identified).

3.1.25 Sites, other than schools, where changing accommodation needs upgrading include: -

- Forstal Road, Aylesford
- Hildenborough Recreation Ground
- Holborough Cricket Ground
- Potters Mede
- Swanmead
- Smurfit Townsend Hook (subject of planning permission for redevelopment)
- William’s Field, Hadlow
- Frogbridge

### Training facilities

3.1.26 The shortage of training facilities is the key issue noted by the clubs. Restrictions placed on the use of pitches to avoid over-use, the few grass training areas separate from the main pitch/es, and the shortage of all-weather floodlit surfaces for winter training were all identified. One typical comment from a football club stated:

“We are not allowed to train on the pitch, we have to use a small area at the end of the pitch if conditions allow”

3.1.27 The football and cricket clubs that do train tend to use sports halls and MUGAS, some of which do not conform to recommended dimensions.

3.1.28 The all-weather area (MUGA) at Tonbridge Farm (synthetic grass and floodlit) was used by 7 of the football clubs but it was reported that it was “difficult to book training sessions due to over demand and the pitch being fully booked”. Comments such as this tend to confirm the shortage of training facilities in the area. Two further floodlit MUGAS (tarmac surface) are available in the borough, one at Ditton and the other at Potyns Sportsground (Snodland).

3.1.29 Eleven football clubs recorded using school and community halls in the borough as training venues, and two of the cricket clubs use Larkfield Leisure Centre. Twenty clubs (10 football and 10 cricket) train outside the borough in Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone, Rochester and Chislehurst.

3.1.30 Thirty football clubs recorded ‘no training’ due to lack of suitable and available facilities at appropriate times. One respondent summarised the views of many others: -

“The area desperately needs either an expanded all-weather area available to clubs for midweek practice, or co-ordinated liaison with local schools so that their facilities could be made more available to local club use”.

### 3.1 Demand

#### Current demand

3.2.1 Table 3.9 illustrates the number of football, rugby, hockey and cricket clubs estimated to be playing on pitches in the borough. Given that 25% of clubs (predominantly football clubs) failed to return their questionnaire, the final figure is an estimate, but considered to be accurate by reference to League handbooks. Both hockey clubs made a response and only 1 cricket club failed to return.

**Table 3.9 Number of clubs and number of teams by sport**

	Football	Rugby	Hockey	Cricket	Total
<b>Number of clubs</b>	90	2	2	26	120
<b>Total number of teams incl. mini</b>	361	43	3	71	478

<b>Breakdown of teams</b>					
Number of junior male teams	112	9	0	20	141
Number of junior female teams	5	3	0	0	8
Number of adult male teams	138	13	2	51	204
Number of adult female teams	1	1	1	0	3

Mini football 105 Mini rugby 17

- 3.2.2 75% of the clubs and 76% of the identified teams play football. The second most popular sport is cricket (22% of clubs and 15% of teams), followed by rugby (2% of clubs and 9% of teams) and hockey (2% of clubs and 0.6% of teams).
- 3.2.3 Football is by far the most popular pitch sport of the four major games dealt with in this strategy. National participation figures of those who play pitch sports show approximately 66% overall play football. Maidstone closely matches this figure with 67% of clubs and 58% of teams identified in that borough playing football. The game appears to be even more popular in Tonbridge & Malling with 75% of clubs and 76% of teams engaged.
- 3.2.4 Cricket is the second most popular pitch sport nationally; available figures for national participation are fairly closely matched in Tonbridge with 22% of the borough's clubs playing the game and a 22% participation figure nationally. (Maidstone 29%).
- 3.2.5 Nationally, rugby has an 8% participation level compared with the other three sports. Previous national figures show a decline in the men's game, but this trend has recently been reversing as a result of the World Cup win, and there is a significant increase in participation by women. Opportunities for club rugby within the borough are limited to 2 clubs that between them field 26 teams including one for women; neighbouring Maidstone has just 7 teams, all for men and boys; Tunbridge Wells has 34/35 teams including two for women.
- 3.2.6 Opportunities to participate in club hockey are very limited with two men's teams - one a vet's team - and one ladies team playing in the borough. There are more opportunities in the borough of Maidstone with 36 teams (23 adult teams and 13 junior teams). Tunbridge Wells has only one club but it runs 23 teams including 4 for women and 10 for juniors. Hockey is one of the most popular pitch games in school, especially for girls, although national participation declined and enjoyment dropped between 1994 and 1999 (the most recent figures available). Hockey shows 3% participation level compared to football, cricket and rugby nationally, but only 2% of clubs and less than 1% of teams in the borough play hockey. The lack of clubs could be related to the lack of suitable facilities. As noted above in paragraph 3.1.6, only 2 STP hockey pitches are available in the borough with a third being developed concurrent with the writing of this strategy; all 3 are located in Castle ward at Tonbridge School, but only one is made available to the Black Knights Hockey club. With most competitive and club hockey matches now being played on synthetic turf, the shortage of adequate pitches may jeopardise the development and playing of the game in the area, and in particular restrict the opportunities available to girls to continue at club level any interest they develop in the sport whilst at school.
- 3.2.7 Table 3.9 above clearly illustrates the limited club opportunities for girls and women in the borough to participate in any pitch sport. If the mixed mini games are disregarded, 97% of the teams are run for boys or men (Maidstone 94%). Not only are junior girls and women's interests under provided, the girls who join

the mixed mini-soccer and mini-rugby teams have very little opportunity to further their skills and interest above the age of 10 in soccer and 12 in rugby. The same applies to cricket, where kwik cricket – a game played in 90% of the country’s primary schools and almost equally as popular with girls as with boys – shows limited further opportunities for development at club/team level for girls in the borough due to the lack of any female (adult or junior) teams.

### Latent demand

3.2.8 In analysing the adequacy of current provision, latent demand needs to be considered. This is defined as the demand that cannot be expressed due to a lack of access to suitable pitches and ancillary facilities.

3.2.9 The application of the Playing Pitch Model, overall, across the borough, shows that there is a general surplus of pitches (see Section 4). However, pitches need to be accessible in locations and at times when teams can use them. Table 3.10 below shows community pitches by ward, and identifies that availability in some wards, for some sports, is limited or nil.

3.2.10 Of equal importance, is awareness of pitch provision for which there is no directory and no co-ordination in the borough.

**Table 3.10 Secured use pitches by ward and by sport**

	WARD	Football <sup>1</sup>	Rugby	Cricket <sup>1</sup>	Hockey
1	Aylesford	7+6	3	3+1	2
2	Blue Bell Hill	1+2	0	1	0
3	Borough Green	3+4	0	4	0
4	Burham	2+1	0	1	0
5	Cage Green	1+0	0	0	0
6	Castle	8.5+4.5 <sup>2</sup>	1.5 <sup>2</sup>	3	2
7	Ditton	3+1	0	1	0
8	Downs	2+0	0	3 + 1	0
9	East Malling	5+1	0	2	0
10	East Peckham	4+1	0	0	0
11	Hadlow	3+1	0	3	0
12	Higham	0	0	0	0
13	Hildenborough	1+0	0	1	0
14	Ightham	1+1	0	1	0
15	Judd	1+1	1	1	0
16	Kings Hill	1+2	0	0	0
17	Larkfield N	3+0	0	0	0
18	Larkfield S	0+1	0	0	0
19	Medway	2+0	0	1	0
20	Snodland	3+5	0	2	0
21	Trench	0	0	0	0
22	Vauxhall	0	0	0	0
23	Wateringbury	1+1	0	1	0
24	West Malling	3+1	0	2	0
25	Wrotham	2+0	0	0	0
	Total	57.5+33.5 <sup>2</sup>	4.5 <sup>2</sup>	30+2	4

<sup>1</sup> Adult + Junior pitches. Mini pitches excluded

<sup>2</sup> .5 of a pitch results from allowing only 1 game per week instead of the standard 2 games.

3.2.11 Poor quality pitches and ancillary facilities may restrict new players from being attracted to a sport or result in low retention levels. (See paragraphs 3.1.15/18/19 and Table 3.8 where these are identified).

3.2.12 The local sports development programme has not set quantifiable targets for increasing participation; this is not particularly unusual since sport development is difficult to quantify. It would be possible to achieve increased numbers but at the expense of quality of experience and this would be contrary to corporate aims in the borough. There are no local numerical targets of any sort for sports development, but rather an emphasis on coach education and the adoption of a sustainable child protection policy. Clubs are encouraged to achieve the 'Club mark', accredited by Sport England, that is based on safe, effective, child friendly sports clubs and does not take account of size. Two local clubs – Addington Village Cricket Club and Tonbridge Invicta Football Club – have achieved Club Mark status and some other clubs are working towards it. However, the compilation of the documentation and the necessary assessment is time-consuming and places a burden on club volunteers. Clubs that attain Club Mark status can be seen as potentially more attractive to new players, but the award carries no obvious funding implications.

### Future demand

3.2.13 The Playing Pitch Model takes estimated future demand into consideration. This will be influenced by estimated future changes in the local population and includes planned housing developments. By breaking down population estimates into age groups, future demand among team-generating age groups is identified by the model. Whilst the current position has been carefully researched and reflects the status quo, revised/assumed participation rates are predicted by factoring in a robust 10% increase for sports development (Sport England trend forecasts), a general population increase for the borough (2001-2011 4.9%), known developments in terms of housing sites, and changes to current facilities.

### **3.3 Key issues arising in this section are:**

- Compared with national averages, overall pitch supply in the Borough at 273 pitches is good.
- While all pitches form part of the audit process, an important aspect of assessing total pitch availability is establishing pitches that are **accessible for public use**.
- When inaccessible pitches are excluded and the carrying capacity formula applied, the **pitches available for community use** are reduced to 157 of the total 273 or **58% of the pitch stock** in the borough.



- Rugby and hockey are both underprovided in terms of community use for club level play compared with national averages.
- Hockey, particularly at club level, lacks provision with only 1STP made available at any one time.
- There is a substantial variation between the wards. Castle ward, in spite of being in the centre of Tonbridge, has the Racecourse Sportsground and Tonbridge Farm Sportsground and Tonbridge School pitches located in the ward and compensates for its immediate neighbour Trench that has no playing pitches in the ward although it is immediately adjacent to the Tonbridge Farm pitches. Higham and Vauxhall wards have no playing pitches currently available for community use only pitches on education sites. All other wards have some secured use pitches available to the community.
- The quality of pitches is predominantly average (57%) but with 24% rated below average/poor. Just 19% of the pitches available to the community are rated good and none excellent.
- Changing accommodation is limited in provision; some sites/teams with no access at all. Whilst changing accommodation is rated as 'good' at 18 sites, there is no changing accommodation at 28 sites used by the community (20 of which are school sites), and changing accommodation that is available at 8 other sites is rated 'poor'. Overall, there is a lack of quality changing accommodation.
- The shortage of training facilities is the key issue noted by the clubs. Restrictions placed on the use of pitches to avoid over-use, the lack of any grass training areas separate from the main pitch/es, and the shortage of all-weather floodlit surfaces for winter use were all identified
- 75% of the clubs and 76% of the identified teams play football. The second most popular sport is cricket (22% of clubs and 15% of teams), followed by rugby (2% of clubs and 9% of teams) and hockey (2% of clubs and 0.6% of teams). Opportunities to participate in hockey are very limited with two men's teams - one a vet's team - and one ladies team playing in the borough.
- The club opportunities for girls and women in the borough to participate in any pitch sports are severely limited with 3% of all known clubs run for girls/women (Maidstone 6%).

## 4. THE PLAYING PITCH MODEL

### 4.1 The Eight Stage model

4.1.1 The Playing Pitch Model comprises eight stages. Stages 1-6 involve numerical calculations; whilst Stages 7 and 8 assess the findings, identify issues, policy options and solutions. The model uses data on existing teams and pitches, it analyses the adequacy of current provision, and predicts possible future situations. Borough-wide calculations, Sections 4.2 – 4.5, are followed at Section 4.6 by catchment area analysis.

### 4.2 Borough-wide calculations

4.2.1 Implicit to the model is that each sport is dealt with individually since they differ in their pitch requirements (e.g. adult, junior and mini teams for the different sports see 3.1.9) and exhibit different patterns of play (e.g. peak demand for some sports/teams will be on Saturday afternoons, others on Sunday morning). The following Table brings together the various numerical calculations identified in Section 3 and fed into the electronic model.

**Table 4.1 PPM calculations for the Borough (2004)**

		Football	Cricket	Rugby	Hockey	
STAGE ONE Identifying teams	Adult teams	137	71	12	3	
	Junior teams <sup>1</sup>	116		12		
STAGE TWO Calculate home games x week <sup>2</sup>	Adult games	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.5	
	Junior games	0.5		0.5		
STAGE THREE (S1xS2) Assess total home games x wk	Adult games	69	50	6	2	
	Junior games	58		6		
STAGE FOUR Establish temporal demand for pitches <sup>3</sup>	Saturday	Adult teams	70%	45%	50%	100%
		Junior teams	20%			
	Sunday	Adult teams	30%	50%	50%	0%
		Junior teams	80%			
	Midweek	Adult teams		5%		
		Junior teams				
STAGE FIVE (S3xS4) Defining pitches used each day	Saturday	Adult games	49	23	3	2
		Junior games	12		0	
	Sunday	Adult games	20	25	3	0
		Junior games	46		6	
	Midweek	Adult games		2		
		Junior games				
STAGE SIX Establish current pitch avail.	Adult pitches	57.5 <sup>4</sup>	32	4.5 <sup>4</sup>	4 (2STPs)	
	Junior pitches	33.5 <sup>4</sup>		0 <sup>5</sup>		
STAGE SEVEN (S6-S5) Identifying shortfall (-) and surplus (+)	Saturday	Adult pitches	9	9	1.5	2
		Junior pitches	21		0 <sup>5</sup>	
	Sunday	Adult pitches	37	7	1.5 <sup>5</sup>	4
		Junior pitches	-12		-1.5 <sup>5</sup>	
	Midweek	Adult pitches		30		
		Junior pitches				

**Notes:**

1. Excludes mini-soccer and mini-rugby (as per PPM guidance). See 4.4 and 4.5 below.
2. As per PPM guidance, it is assumed that all football, cricket and rugby teams play a home match every fortnight
3. Determined by a combination of questionnaire responses, telephone interviews and league information
4. 0.5 of a pitch is produced where a pitch may be used for only one match per week instead of the standard 2
5. The junior game is played on adult pitches.
6. Surplus is theoretical since junior games are played on the pitches

### 4.3 Key issues arising from the application of the PPM across the borough

4.3.1 Key issues applied across the borough identified in Table 4.1 above are:

- **the surplus of full-size adult football pitches (9)** on peak days (Saturdays) indicates that senior football is currently well provided for in the Borough generally, although some wards have no senior football pitches accessible to the community . Some of the surplus pitches will be taken up by mini-soccer (see 4.4 below)
- **the shortfall of junior football pitches (-12)** is significant and suggests that some junior teams have to be accommodated on adult pitches thus putting the adult pitches to greater capacity. In addition, mini-soccer teams are also playing on adapted adult pitches.
- **there is a surplus of cricket pitches (7)** on peak days (Sunday) which should be sufficient to allow for the expected expansion of kwik-cricket
- **there is a theoretical surplus of adult rugby pitches (1.5)** at peak times (Saturdays) but this surplus is taken up by additional adult matches, some junior/mini games that are played on adult pitches on Sundays and team training resulting in pitches in the north east being overplayed.
- **there is a shortfall of junior rugby pitches (-1.5)** at the peak time on Sundays overall in the borough. There is limited spare capacity of adult pitches (1.5) to accommodate the junior game which is putting the senior pitches under pressure and is a theoretical calculation that takes no account of where the teams are based. Table 4.2 below shows catchment area analysis.
- **there is a surplus of hockey pitches (2)(1 grass + 1 STP)** at peak times on Saturdays but given only 2 STPs currently in the borough with availability to only one of the two clubs, and that at very limited times, indicates that provision for club hockey is sparse and any development of the game may be inhibited.

### 4.4 Mini-soccer in the borough

4.4.1 Mini-soccer involves short games with small teams of players under 10 years of age. It is widely played in primary schools, and increasingly in the wider community. Tonbridge and Malling has a total of 29 dedicated pitches of which 19 are available for community use. Alternatively, the game is played across adult pitches that are specially marked out. Sport England calculate that 28 mini-soccer teams are equivalent to 1 adult team (i.e. 28 teams would fit their matches onto 1 adult football pitch and in total take the same time as it would take 1 adult team to complete a full match). This is not a realistic calculation since it is unlikely that the 28 teams could follow their matches consecutively one after the other without allowing gaps in between; it also presupposes that 28 teams would all be present on one site at one time.

- 4.4.2 105 teams currently play in the borough with numbers forecast to increase significantly in the future. The majority of mini games are played on Saturday mornings.
- 4.4.3 The Tonbridge & Malling Mini Soccer Alliance is recognised by the Football Foundation as a Centre of Excellence and has recently obtained its own dedicated mini-soccer pavilion.
- 4.4.4 The PPM model shows an estimated current shortfall of -63 dedicated mini - pitches on Saturday mornings, given that there are 19 dedicated pitches in use. In Sport England's terms this is the equivalent of 2¼ adult football pitches.
- 4.4.5 However, with 19 dedicated mini-soccer pitches available and the possibility of adapting mini-games to the full adult size pitch, no excess of demand over supply has been identified. Some of the larger clubs (e.g. Borough Green Junior Football Club with 9 mini teams) however, have to distribute their games across several sites (3 in the case of BGFC) and this places greater strain on the organisation of fixtures and on coaches and other adult personnel. Furthermore, the extended usage of adult and junior pitches to accommodate the mini game indicates that currently those pitches may be overused.
- 4.4.6 Given the expected increase in popularity of mini-soccer and the current shortage of dedicated pitches, there is likely to be a need for access to further pitches in the future.

#### **4.5 Mini-rugby in the borough**

- 4.5.1 Like the development of mini-soccer, a simplified game of rugby has been devised for younger children and there are currently 12 teams in the borough. Three matches, normally of 10 minutes each, can be played concurrently across 1 adult pitch. There are now 7 dedicated mini-rugby pitches; all are on the Racecourse sportsground and are limited to 1 game on each pitch each week making the equivalent 3½ mini-rugby pitches in the borough according to the Sport England model, this is currently adequate for the teams based in the south west. Five teams in the north east have no similar provision.

#### **4.6 More detailed analysis by catchment area**

- 4.6.1 The above analysis, which relates to the whole Borough, fails to take account of precisely where surpluses and shortfalls occur. On the other hand, ward level analysis is unrealistic since ward boundaries are essentially arbitrary and they do not confine accepted travel patterns for players of pitch sports. In order to address specific needs and issues relating to neighbourhoods or community areas within the borough, sub-areas have been defined by the amalgamation of wards to reflect larger, more realistic catchment areas as recommended by Sport England. Catchment areas can identify the link between demand and supply.

## Catchment areas defined

### 4.6.2 Four geographical catchment areas defined

- North east comprising the wards of Blue Bell Hill; Burham, Eccles and Wouldham; Aylesford; Ditton; East Malling; Larkfield North; Larkfield South and Snodland
- North west comprising the wards of Downs, Wrotham, Ightham; Borough Green & Long Mill
- Central comprising the wards of West Malling & Leybourne; Kings Hill; Wateringbury; East Peckham; Hadlow, Mereworth & West Peckham.
- South west comprising Hildenborough; Judd; Vauxhall; Medway; Castle; Trench; Higham; and Cage Green wards.

These catchment areas reflect different areas in the Borough with the north east and the south west the more urbanised with higher concentrations of population (north east 37% of the borough population; the south west 34%) compared with the north west with 11% of the population and the more rural central area with 18% over a larger square mileage.

## Surpluses and shortfalls by catchment area

4.6.3 Table 4.2 below reveals shortfalls and surpluses by catchment area. (The Table demonstrates the 'worst' scenario for each area).

**Table 4.2 Surpluses and shortfalls by catchment area**

	Surplus/shortfall of adult football	Surplus/shortfall of junior football	Surplus/shortfall of cricket	Surplus of adult rugby	Surplus/shortfall of junior rugby	Surplus/shortfall of hockey	Total surplus/shortfall of pitches
North east	6	-2.0	5	0	0	1	10
North west	2	0	-1.0	N/a	N/a	N/a	1
Central	4	0	1	0	N/a	N/a	5
South west	-3.0	-10.0	2	0	-1.5	1	-11.5
Total	9	-12.0	7	0 <sup>1</sup>	-1.5	2	4.5

<sup>1</sup> Total figure differs from Table 4.1 as the notional surplus pitch is taken up by junior/mini games Mini-soccer and mini-rugby are excluded and dealt with separately (as per PPM guidance) – see 4.8

#### 4.7 The key issues arising from the above analysis are:

- The overall surplus of 4.5 pitches is very low and masks significant differences between catchment areas – the north east, north west and the central areas with overall surpluses, whilst the south west has a large shortfall (-11.5).
- The **north east** catchment area has an overall pitch surplus (+10), but this surplus – in adult football (6) and cricket (5) – masks shortfalls in junior football (-2.0). In addition, some of the junior/mini football games are being accommodated on the adult pitches thus putting the adult pitches to greater capacity and reducing the apparent adult surplus. There is no spare capacity for rugby in this area, in fact the club reports the pitches being overplayed, the mini and junior teams often having to play away from home. The area has the greatest spare capacity of cricket pitches (+5). The surplus hockey pitch is a grass pitch at Cobdown Sports Club. With 37% of the borough's population, this area has 40% of the community use pitches.
- The **north west** has a very low overall surplus (+1). Junior football pitches are just sufficient to meet current demand and there is a shortfall of cricket pitches at peak times at -1.0. This area has a higher percentage of the community use pitches at 16% compared with its population of 11% of the total borough.
- The **central** area has an overall pitch surplus (+5), largely arising from a surplus of adult football pitches (+4). Demand for junior football pitches just matches current provision, and there is a low overall surplus in cricket (+1). There is an adult rugby pitch at Hadlow Agricultural College which is used only for training by Tonbridge Juddians Rugby Club and lacks permanent community users for matches, currently there is no community use agreement on this pitch and for this reason it is excluded from the model. With 18% of the borough's population this area has 16% of the community use pitches.
- The **south west** has a high overall shortfall (-11.5). Council owned and managed pitches form the bulk of pitch provision for the community in this area, and recent changes to pitch layout have been undertaken to accommodate demand, in particular increased participation by children and youth. The FA forecast the growth that has taken place in mini-soccer which has resulted in the ripple effect and the need for more junior pitches. With 41 junior teams in this area and only 5 dedicated junior pitches, most junior games have to be accommodated on adult pitches. The changed layout has significantly reduced the number of adult football pitches and results in a theoretical shortfall at peak times. Adult rugby pitches are adequate to meet demand but there is a shortfall of -1.5 junior rugby pitches. There is a low surplus in cricket pitches (+2.0). The surplus hockey pitch is a privately owned STP with controlled access. The 34% of the borough's population living in this catchment area have 28% of the community use pitches.

- **Adult football** pitches show a high overall surplus across the borough (+9), but some of the surplus will be required to absorb the shortfall in junior and mini pitches and put the adult surplus pitches to greater capacity. The surplus pitches are predominantly in two catchment areas – the north east and the central area, whilst the south west shows a shortfall (-3.0).
- **Junior football** has the highest shortfall (-12.0), especially in the south west where some changes have been made to pitch layouts to try and accommodate the situation. In the north east the adult surplus can accommodate the junior shortfall, but the shortfall in the south west is an absolute shortfall since there is no other pitch (e.g. rugby) which, if use was changed, could help to alleviate the situation.
- In **rugby**, as in football, there is a shortage of dedicated junior pitches which is currently being partially accommodated by using adult pitches for junior games, but adult pitches are reported being overplayed.
- **Cricket**, which tends to use the same pitches for adult and for junior games, is adequately provided, but the surplus is primarily located in one catchment area.
- **Hockey**, widely played in schools, especially by girls, now depends heavily on STPs at club level and is poorly provided in the borough.

4.7.1 The above analysis highlights the concentration of teams and identifies where action may be needed. This is a purely quantitative analysis of adult and junior pitches and it fails to take the needs of mini-soccer and mini-rugby and the quality of pitches into account.

#### 4.8 Mini soccer and mini rugby in the catchment areas

4.8.1 Paragraphs 4.4 and 4.5 above addressed the borough's current overall position in respect to mini soccer and mini rugby pitches and demonstrated that these games have comparatively few dedicated pitches. Accommodating these games is therefore placing additional pressure on the capacity of adult and junior pitches. When the needs of the mini games are superimposed on the catchment areas the following key issues arise:

- The **north east** has 41 mini-soccer teams with 3 dedicated pitches. At peak times there is a surplus of 6 adult football pitches and a shortfall of -2.0 junior pitches. Since most of the mini games are played on Saturday mornings, the 6 surplus adult pitches can therefore accommodate the mini teams; and on Sunday (peak time for junior matches) the junior matches. Football pitches will be under pressure, but by accommodating times of games there will not be an overall shortfall.

Mini rugby has 5 teams but no dedicated pitches, and, in addition, 5 junior teams also have to play on the same adult pitches putting these under

pressure and making any growth in the number of mini teams in the area difficult. Both junior and mini teams currently play most of their matches away from home.

- The **north west** has 7 mini soccer teams and 2 dedicated mini soccer pitches. Mini soccer in this catchment area is not currently placing adult pitches under pressure. There is no adult, junior or mini rugby in this area.
- The **central** area has 9 mini soccer teams and 1 dedicated pitch. Demand for junior pitches precisely matches provision in this area but the surplus of adult football pitches can accommodate the mini game. There is no adult, junior or mini rugby in this area.
- With 48 mini soccer teams and 15 dedicated pitches the **south west** can currently accommodate the needs of the mini game. However, with a current shortfall of **-10** junior football pitches, and **-3** adult football pitches, any expansion of football, at any level, will put the pitches under pressure.

Mini-rugby has 3.5 dedicated pitches in the south west and 7 teams that want to play on them. Currently, supply meets demand but expansion of the game will be restricted unless more pitches are provided.

#### 4.9 Shortfall of junior pitches

- 4.9.1 There is a significant boundary issue in the north east since Maidstone's highest pitch shortfall is currently in junior football pitches (overall **-22.2**) and highest in the Urban Fringe catchment area (**- 11.8**) that adjoins the north east of Tonbridge & Malling (junior football pitches **-2.0**). Two football clubs with junior teams in the area commented:

"Generally not enough pitches"

"Although we represent Maidstone, we have much difficulty in finding suitable pitches"

- 4.9.2 Junior rugby pitches are also under pressure in the north east with the Urban Fringe of Maidstone showing a (**-0.5**) shortfall and many junior matches in the adjoining area of Tonbridge & Malling being played away from home.

- 4.9.3 In the central area where demand just meets supply, one club with junior teams commented:

"We have to pay high costs to rent private pitches due to the lack of Council pitches; there is also a lack of decent training facilities"

- 4.9.4 The south west of Tonbridge & Malling (with wards adjoining the boroughs of Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells) has the greatest number of teams and the highest shortfall in junior pitches, both football (**-10**) and rugby (**-1.5**). In the adjoining borough of Tunbridge Wells, the Sports Facilities Study noted a



“shortage of pitches in Paddock Wood and Pembury where there are large numbers of junior players”.

#### 4.10 Surplus pitches vis-à-vis quality

4.10.1 The issue of defining pitches as surplus pitches grows in importance when overall quality is taken into account. Pitch quality is a key issue, and given that the quality ratings placed most pitches average/below average (see Table 3.8) caution is necessary. The combined quantitative and qualitative assessments suggest very limited scope for regarding surpluses as unnecessary pitches.

#### 4.11 Quality of changing accommodation

4.11.1 On the whole changing accommodation did not rate well, with 28 sites that provided no accommodation, and 8 further sites rated poor. Poor quality changing accommodation is identified as a potential restriction for new players being attracted to sport, or result in low retention levels. Even where changing accommodation is available at sites in the Borough, it was often very limited in size and lacked provision of quality facilities such as good hot and cold showers. Separate provision for girls and women was rare and cited by clubs as a handicap to the development of girls and women’s teams.

#### 4.12 Team Generation Rates (TGRs)

4.12.1 Team generation rates (TGRs) indicate how many people in a specified age group are required to generate one team. TGRs are derived by dividing the appropriate population age band in an area by the number of teams in that area in that age band. Calculating TGRs enables fair comparison to be made between different areas where similar studies have been undertaken. The 10-45 age group yields the majority of pitch sport players.

4.12.2 In line with NPFA guidelines, dividing the total number of male teams (men and boys but not mini teams) playing each sport within Tonbridge & Malling (345 teams) by the estimated number of males between 10-45 years of age (25,608) gives an overall borough TGR of men/boys 1:74 (Maidstone 1:103) for men’s pitch sports. This means that there is one pitch sport team for every 74 male residents in Tonbridge & Malling aged 10-45.

A similar calculation can now be applied to the separate sports. For comparison purposes the figures use combined male and female populations.

#### 4.12.3 Football TGR (male + female)

Local authority area	TGR football
Maidstone	1:167
<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling</b>	<b>1:202</b>

#### 4.12.4 Rugby TGR (male + female)

Local authority area	TGR rugby
<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling</b>	<b>1:1,785</b>
Maidstone	1:4,630

#### 4.12.5 Cricket TGR (male + female)

Local authority area	TGR cricket
Maidstone	1:331
<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling</b>	<b>1:912</b>

#### 4.12.6 Hockey TGR (male + female)

Local authority area	TGR hockey
Maidstone	1:900
<b>Tonbridge &amp; Malling</b>	<b>1:16,538</b>

### 4.13 The implications

4.13.1 TGRs enable the benchmarking of sports opportunities against other authorities, they help to determine priorities for sports development and identify pitch considerations, and also assist in predicting future levels of demand.

The following examples help to clarify what TGRs mean.

1:100	high TGR	relatively low latent (unmet) demand
1:1,000	low TGR	relatively high (unmet) demand

4.13.2 For Tonbridge & Malling this means:

Football		
1:202	high TGR	low latent (unmet) demand

Cricket		
1: 912	low TGR	high latent (unmet) demand

Rugby		
1:1,785	low TGR	high latent (unmet) demand

Hockey		
1:16,538	low TGR	high latent (unmet) demand

Mini football		
1: 58	high TGR	low latent (unmet) demand

- 4.13.3 The overall TGR is high (1:198) but this masks considerable variation between sports and between men and women; it is largely derived from the high number of football teams for men and boys.
- 4.13.4 The TGR for football is high, and by comparison the TGR for cricket and for rugby is low and for hockey it is extremely low. Sport England suggest that this means there will be only a low demand to start new football teams, but potentially a higher demand for more cricket, rugby and hockey teams in the future.
- 4.13.5 Conversely, these assumptions may be considered to be over simplistic. Whilst high TGRs show that a sport is popular, and that this popularity has led to a high level of provision, it may not necessarily indicate that latent demand has been met. Given the popularity of soccer in the borough, it may be just as likely that there is a larger unmet demand for soccer pitches than for say rugby or hockey pitches.
- 4.13.6 The TGRs for pitch sports for women and girls clearly demonstrate a low TGR and therefore potentially a high latent (unmet) demand. The comparison between opportunities for men and for women to play pitch sports in the borough is great and indicates that girls and women may be disadvantaged.

**Table 4.3 TGRs for men and women compared**

	Current	
	Male	Female
All sports, male + female	1:198	
Football - adult	1:154	1:21,326
Football - junior	1:42	1:842
Cricket – senior	1:528	
Cricket - junior	1: 272	
Rugby – senior	1:1,612	1: 20,007
Rugby – junior b.13-17 g.16-17	1: 438	1: 440
Hockey	1:10,467	1:21,326
Mini football - mixed	1:58	

#### **4.14 Future projections for 2012**

- 4.14.1 In predicting the possible future position it is necessary to take account of population projections, sports development plans, new housing estates, and the ripple effect that has seen the recent expansion of mini-teams that will continue to move up to junior teams.
- 4.14.2 The PPM model applies TGRs to population projections for 2012, and calculates the theoretical number of teams that would be generated over the next decade. (Information supplied in October 2004 estimated the population increase by 2012 would be 4.9%. It may become necessary to revisit the projections when future new build development rates become clearer).

**Table 4.4 Number of current teams and projected teams for 2012**

	<b>Current number of teams 2004</b>	<b>Projected number of teams in 2012</b>
Football – senior	137	180
Football – junior	116	147
Football - mini	105	115
Cricket – senior	51	55
Cricket – junior	20	23
Rugby – senior	13	20
Rugby – junior	12	17
Hockey	3	4
Total number of teams	457	561

4.14.3 Estimated rises in the number of teams playing each sport necessarily generates more matches per week, pro rata to the current popularity of that sport.

**Table 4.5 Number of current matches per week and projected for 2012**

	<b>Current number of games per week 2004</b>	<b>Projected number of games per week 2012</b>
Football – senior+ junior	127	164
Football - mini	105	115
Cricket – senior + junior	50	55
Rugby – senior + junior	13	19
Hockey	2	2

If the number of pitches remains the same, there will be increased pressure on current pitches.

4.14.4 Assuming that no new pitches are developed the model predicts the possible future position with respect to the demand for pitches in 2012 as follows:

**Table 4.6 Current pitch position and predicted position for 2012**

	<b>Current pitch position</b>	<b>Pitches in 2012</b>
Football - adults	<b>9.0</b>	<b>-6.0</b>
Football - juniors	<b>-12.0</b>	<b>-25.0</b>
Football – mini	<b>-64.0</b> [theoretical]	<b>-72.0</b> [theoretical]
Rugby - senior	<b>1</b>	<b>-2.0</b>
Rugby - junior	<b>-1.5</b>	<b>-6.0</b>
Cricket	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
Hockey	<b>2 (1g+1STP)</b>	<b>2</b>

Figures in black indicate surpluses, those in red shortfalls.

4.14.5 The shortfall of mini football pitches is currently absorbed by playing the game on adapted senior/junior pitches, the deficiency should be regarded as theoretical. However, adult pitches may have less ability to absorb the mini game in future.

4.14.6 Overall, the model predicts the borough is likely to suffer some serious shortfalls of pitches by 2012, especially for young people's football, if no new pitches are developed or brought into community use. Whereas the current position allows some scope for surplus adult football and rugby pitches to absorb junior and mini games, in 2012 there is likely to be an absolute shortfall of pitches which means that changing pitch layouts to accommodate young people will only act to disadvantage adult games.

4.14.7 Given the current lack of opportunities for girls and women to play pitch sports in the borough, increases in all sports could potentially generate more new teams than are forecast and result in a further deficiency of pitches.

4.14.8 With the prediction applied to the catchment area analysis, and assuming the proportion of new teams generated are pro rata to current teams (TGRs):

(a) by the ripple effect from current teams

(b) by new start-ups

an estimated catchment area analysis for 2012 using the PPM model predictions shows the following:

**Table 4.7 Predicted surpluses and shortfalls in 2012**

	Surplus/shortfall of adult football	Surplus/shortfall of junior football	Surplus/shortfall of cricket	Surplus of adult rugby	Surplus/shortfall of junior rugby	Surplus/shortfall of hockey	Total surplus/shortfall of pitches
North east	1	-7.0	5	-1.0	-2.0	1	-3.0
North west	0	-1.0	-2.0	N/a	N/a	N/a	-3.0
Central	1	-2.0	0	0	N/a	N/a	-1.0
South west	-8.0	-15.0	1	-1.0	-4.0	1	-26.0
Total	-6.0	-25.0	4	-2.0	-6.0	2	-33.0

**4.15 Key issues arising from the above analysis are: -**

- The need to protect existing pitch provision.
- By 2012, without new pitch provision, or securing access for the community to pitches that are currently inaccessible, and improved maintenance of all pitches, there is likely to be a serious overall shortfall of pitches across the borough.

- Forecasts are based on theoretical statistics and due to the constantly changing number of teams playing pitch sports, with new teams established each season and some folding, **the forecast for 2012 must necessarily be treated with caution.** Regular biennial review is needed to ensure that the Strategy will still be addressing relevant local demand and provision and related demographic changes.
- Predicted future demand will be influenced by sports development plans, estimated changes in the population (linked to planned housing areas) and a range of other trends such as growth in youth and girls' and women's soccer, patterns of league play, community use of school pitches and vice versa and others. The dominance of Saturday afternoons/Sunday mornings as peak periods for pitch usage may change, and the use of Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons could even out demand. Whilst evening out demand would assist match scheduling, the fact remains that pitches are a natural resource that have a finite capacity; few grass pitches are of sufficient quality to absorb more than 3 adult matches per week, many can only absorb 2, and without enhanced maintenance some can only permit 1 match per week.
- The Sport England model predicts that the overall current surplus of 4 pitches will be eroded by 2012 to a possible overall absolute shortfall of **-33.0** pitches, if no new pitches are developed, or inaccessible ones brought into community use, and assuming estimated changes occur as forecast. The model predicts the worst scenario, but even if this is an exaggeration, the issue is whether the existing pitch stock can cope with all or some of the known trends.
- This situation increases in importance when it is recognised that pitch provision designed for children and young people will be particularly affected. This is a group the Council is committed to target for provision of facilities.
- The shortfalls identified above take no account of the predicted needs for mini football and mini rugby pitches; their needs should be kept under review.
- Teams in the **north east**, where there is a shortfall of junior pitches, about the borough of Maidstone which also has an overall shortfall of junior football (**-23.0**) and junior rugby pitches (**-1.0**). New provision is planned through Section 106 agreements currently in progress in this area (Holborough Quarry and Peter's Pit), but the predictions indicate that any loss of pitches to development must be resisted.
- The **south west** is particularly short of football pitches (adult and junior) and in the adjacent area of Tunbridge Wells a "serious shortfall" of 16 games per week was identified in the consultants report (2001). In the closest eleven wards (Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough) a separate analysis showed a shortfall of 25 pitch games per week. The report concludes,

“There is a serious shortage of pitches in Royal Tunbridge Wells.” The south west area of Tonbridge & Malling must be a priority as the area of greatest need where, for example, work with the education sector and improvement works could bring into community use pitches that exist but are currently not accessible.

- The **north west** may need more provision for cricket, but this is likely to be available in close neighbouring communities just to the east of the area.
- The **central** area, the least populated part of the borough, is adequately provided.
- **Football** is the most popular pitch sport and there is little sign of any decline. Indeed any reduction in the adult game is likely to be more than compensated by growth in the youth and girls’ and women’s game. The FA also notes a huge increase in informal five-a-side football with more midweek fixtures and the need for additional floodlit synthetic turf pitches/MUGAS.
- **Cricket** will maintain the highest surplus in the borough, but the quality of 4 of the current pitches is rated poor and without considerable renewal and maintenance these pitches may well fall into disuse altogether. Results of the Tunbridge Wells assessment showed “that all areas had a good surplus of pitches”.
- **Rugby** is tending to show a recovery of interest following England’s World Cup victory with more young children playing and increased participation by women. More dedicated junior and mini-rugby pitches and ‘child-friendly’ changing facilities will be required.
- **Hockey** has few regular players in the area but this may be due to the lack of provision for the game at club level. It is still one of the popular games in school and emphasis could be placed on promoting the game towards young people. However, the future of the game depends on access to STPs and improved clubhouse facilities to meet players’ requirements and encourage club/team formation.

## 5. KEY ISSUES, POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS, LOCAL POLICIES, ACTION PLAN AND A LOCAL STANDARD

This study demonstrates that delivering the some of the objectives set out in PPG17 can be achieved by improving and enhancing the accessibility and quality of existing provision to meet the existing and predicted deficiencies. Currently overall, the borough is adequately provided with grass playing pitches but a significant deficit is predicted by 2012. Of the existing provision, there is an imbalance in the distribution of pitches across the borough; a proportion is not accessible to the local community; and a number need improvement to playing surfaces and ancillary facilities. There is therefore a need for new provision to correct the geographical imbalance; to cater for some of the new housing development; and to pick up key trends such as increased participation by young people and by women. There is also a need for additional synthetic turf pitches, almost a prerequisite now for hockey, and which, when floodlit, can serve the need for midweek training for football.

This section of the Strategy:

- 5.1 Identifies the **key issues** arising from the application of the Playing Pitch model
- 5.2 Identifies **possible solutions**
- 5.3 Recommends **local policy and strategic objectives**
- 5.4 Proposes an **action plan**
- 5.5 Establishes a **local standard**

### 5.1 The following key issues are identified:

- 5.1.1 Protection of existing provision
- 5.1.2 Identified quantitative deficiencies
- 5.1.3 Identified qualitative deficiencies
- 5.1.4 Planning for new provision to provide for the expansion of population and accommodate the latent and future demand for pitch sports
- 5.1.5 Consideration of underused/unused provision

#### 5.1.1 Protection of existing provision

- 5.1.1.1 Increasing pressure on land resources and on local authority finances threatens playing fields throughout the country. The findings of this study demonstrate that there is no scope to lose playing fields in Tonbridge & Malling if the playing of pitch sports is to thrive in the borough and the expectations of PPG 17 are to be met (*see PPG 17 paragraphs 10, 11, 15 and 17*).
- 5.1.1.2 The contribution made by sites on private land or sites vested in other ownership (e.g. schools) emphasise the necessity to protect all the areas of playing pitch land and open space in public, private and educational ownership.
- 5.1.1.3 This issue assumes increased importance when consideration is given to the forecast population increase and new residential developments, together with



the shortfall of pitches, especially for young people's sports, predicted over the next decade.

5.1.1.4 Agreements for teams to use pitches on private land, and school playing fields, are rarely secured long term, some are merely annual, and some teams play on sites with no security of tenure whatsoever. These sites play a vital role in the facilitation of pitch sports in the area, and securing long-term formally written commitments is essential if the current provision of community use pitches is not to be threatened.

5.1.1.5 Pitches soon deteriorate in quality if they lack adequate maintenance (e.g. proper rolling for cricket, or the presence of a high proportion of common weeds that reduce the performance of a grass pitch). Bumpy, rutted or uneven pitches can be a safety hazard; those that have poor drainage lead to the cancellation of games. Once pitches have deteriorated and fallen into disuse renewal is disproportionately costly.

## 5.1.2 Identified quantitative deficiencies

5.1.2.1 Quantitative deficiencies arise when there is an absolute shortage of pitches and/or existing pitches cannot accommodate existing demand particularly at peak times. In addition some spare capacity is identified as an integral part of playing pitch provision, necessary to allow for latent and future demand, the development or expansion of other pitch sports not widely played in the area (e.g. baseball and stoolball) and to accommodate reduced capacity for any pitches currently over played.

5.1.2.2 Current surpluses identified in this study indicate that some pitches may not be being used to their full capacity (i.e. twice a week). This surplus masks the fact that some pitches (25% used by the community) have qualitative issues, and that restrictions are applied on some other pitches to allow only one game per week as a management policy to protect quality by lessening the intensity of use/reducing wear and tear.

5.1.2.3 A comparison of current and predicted future provision calculated by the model shows:

- The surplus of adult football pitches decreasing from 9 to **-6.0**
- The shortfall of junior football pitches increasing from **-12** to **-25**
- The surplus in adult rugby pitches decreasing from 1 to a shortfall of **-2.0**
- The shortfall of junior rugby pitches increasing from **-1.5** to **-6.0**
- The surplus of cricket pitches will decrease from 7 to 4
- The surplus of hockey pitches will decrease from 2 (1 grass) to 1

5.1.2.4 Mini-soccer and mini-rugby, often currently accommodated on adapted adult pitches, will increase in demand and require use of adult pitches thereby increasing deficiencies.

5.1.2.5 Hockey at club level, played on STPs, is currently under provided and without the development of new STPs the game at club level in the borough cannot

develop. The hockey clubs identified the shortage of STPs for hockey matches and none of the teams in the borough train, as there is no convenient access to STPs. The lack of a recognised surface to play on is making it difficult for the Cobdown hockey club to maintain a vibrant club. Tonbridge Black Knights, the other hockey club in the borough, state that the times they have access to the STP at Tonbridge School is frequently inconvenient for their opposition, they have no clubhouse or changing facilities, and when the pitch at the school is unavailable they have found it impossible to locate another suitable pitch.

- 5.1.2.6 The opportunities for girls/ women to play pitch sports are limited. Whilst there is no differentiation between the sexes in terms of the pitch dimensions, pitch sports have been traditionally dominated by boys and men. More recently, growth in interest and increasing participation by girls/women is handicapped by lack of access. Boys and men's teams grow naturally by the ripple effect and as the numbers in a club increase gradually another team emerges. For girls and women the first hurdle is to secure a large enough group in an area to make a team viable and then to find an available pitch. The lack of suitable changing facilities is a further deterrent (see 5.1.35 below).
- 5.1.2.7 Cricket clubs did not identify the issue of training, but for football, rugby in the north east, and hockey clubs it is a key issue (see 3.1.29). Football clubs with access to MUGAs or sports halls are generally able to train, but 30 clubs do not currently train due to a lack of suitable facilities. (The Maidstone playing pitch assessment showed 50% of football clubs in that borough not training due to lack of appropriate facilities).
- 5.1.2.8 On pitch training is discouraged due to wear and tear on a pitch, and few providers identified separate spare land available for team training. The result is a lack of suitable off pitch grass training facilities both in and out of season, and rugby pitches in the north east are being overplayed.
- 5.1.2.9 There is also a shortage of synthetic surfaced and floodlit training areas (currently only 1 at Tonbridge Farm, plus the tarmac areas at Ditton and at Potyns Sportsground, Snodland). This deficiency has also been identified as a shortcoming of existing facilities in the neighbouring boroughs of Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone and Gravesham.
- 5.1.2.10 Many pitches lack changing accommodation, those on school sites often due to security issues, but a further 8 sites in community use have no on-site facilities.
- 5.1.2.11 Access and quality are the issues more than the land per se. Nevertheless there is a need to protect existing stock since although currently there is a low overall surplus of 4.5 pitches across the borough; this is forecast to reverse to an overall shortage that could be as high as - 33 pitches by 2012 if current trends are maintained.

### **5.1.3 Identified qualitative deficiencies**

5.1.3.1 One in four sites (25%) had pitches that scored below average, of which 6% were rated poor in the qualitative assessments.

5.1.3.2 The quality of the grass playing surfaces is generally average or below average. In some instances this is due to soils that drain poorly, in others the lack of good grass coverage or the predominance of weeds leads to reduced performance. Although the majority of pitches are flat or have a slight slope, a few suffer from a moderate to severe gradient and/or cross fall.

5.1.3.3 The quality and range of ancillary facilities – changing, car parking, practice areas, spectator facilities, and social provision – determine whether a facility can contribute to meeting the demand from various groups for different levels of play. Over a third of the sites used by the community (many on education premises) do not provide any changing accommodation.

5.1.3.4 Almost one in five of the sites that provided changing accommodation were rated poor. With the predicted increase in children's pitch sports Sport England expects local authorities to ensure child-friendly ancillary facilities are available (such as good changing) and that pitches are close to residential areas.

5.1.3.5 There is a significant lack of suitable changing facilities for girls and women's teams.

5.1.3.6 Lack of floodlighting restricts pitch use, and forces games to be concentrated into weekend daylight hours. The provision of floodlighting can enable play to be spread throughout the week although it is rarely cost-effective on grass pitches. However, floodlighting is a requirement for some levels of league match play. Aylesford Rugby Club have two floodlit pitches, one proposed development on Deaconsfield (Tonbridge Racecourse sportsground) awaits final agreement and another pitch is partially floodlit (Larkfield Sports Club).

5.1.3.7 Off pitch grassed areas, suitable for training, are identified as a quantitative deficiency (see 5.1.2.7). Multi use areas and artificial pitches are maximised when floodlit, enabling off pitch winter training for football throughout the week.

5.1.3.8 There is no directory of pitch provision and no co-ordination for booking.

### **5.1.4 Planning for new provision**

5.1.4.1 One way of meeting the growth in demand, particularly from junior teams, is to continue the development of dual-use of school playing fields and securing currently unsecured sites for community use.

5.1.4.2 Given the forecast increase in population, the PP model indicates that current small surpluses in playing pitch provision will become an overall deficiency in provision by 2012. In order that deficiencies do not increase, any sizable new residential developments are required to include the provision of appropriate areas of public open space; and these should include the provision of playing pitches as a basic element that meets local standards and the needs generated by the development.

5.1.4.3 The Council will apply TMBLP policy 8/4 which states:

“Development proposals which might result in the net loss of public or private open playing space (including educational land) will not be permitted unless the need or proposed development is overriding and:

1. the open space makes no significant contribution to the quality of the local environment;
2. there is no existing deficiency of open playing space in the vicinity and
3. alternative recreation provision of equivalent community benefit whether public or private is provided in the locality to the commence of development”.

5.1.4.4 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East produced by SEERA states that there is no strategic need for development within the borough for any major sports facilities to meet the sporting needs of the region; concentration will therefore be on local needs.

5.1.4.5 An Open Playing Space strategy for the borough in response to PPG17 will be produced in the context of the emerging Local Development Framework, and this will define local standards for open space, based on local needs. Until this work is complete current standards set out in the Borough Local Plan, TMBLP Policy 8/2, are used:

- 60m<sup>2</sup> per dwelling is the equivalent to the NPFA ‘Six Acre Standard’ (2.4 hectares) which is, in practice, disaggregated into provision of,
- 45m<sup>2</sup> per dwelling for outdoor sport and
- 15m<sup>2</sup> per dwelling for ‘other children’s play space’.

The current NPFA breakdown of the standard is ‘Outdoor Sport’ 1.6 ha (4 acres), Children’s Playing Space 0.8 ha (2 acres). The ‘Outdoor Sport’ breakdown is 1.2 ha for pitch sports, 0.4 ha for non-pitch sports (NPFA 2001).

5.1.4.6 Based on the research completed for this strategy the ‘new’ local standard for playing pitch provision (as per the application of the Sport England model) is defined as 1.2 hectares per 1000 population (see paragraph 5.5.4 below), identical to the NPFA standard. The application of this standard through the PPG 17 study and the LDF process will need to be subject to statutory consultation, through planning procedures, in due course.

5.1.4.7 Careful consideration has to be given to the location of new or replacement provision. The geographical distribution of catchment areas within the borough (see Section 4.6) clearly identifies meaningful sub-areas for provision. Sport England recommends new provision is best made where it is accessible by public transport.

### The north east

5.1.4.8 TMBLP identifies extensive new residential developments are planned at Holborough Quarry (1000 houses), and Peters Pit (1,000). A Section 106 agreement supporting the Holborough Quarry residential development is being progressed and includes land for playing pitch/es which meets the standard specified in TMBLP Policy 8/2. The site at Peters Pit, Wouldham is subject to a planning application for 1000 houses. In the event that planning permission is granted this development will be required to comply with TMBLP Policy 8/3 in terms of formal pitch provision (children's play).

5.1.4.9 TMBLP policy 8/3 indicates that additional land adjacent to Potyns Recreation Ground is considered a suitable opportunity to meet deficiencies in sports pitch provision. This will require the acquisition of additional land currently in private ownership and is the land which will be brought forward by the Holborough Quarry S106.

5.1.4.10 Further opportunities for additional land purchase, for sports pitch use, should also be investigated to assist in alleviating future predicted deficiencies especially in Junior football.

### North west

5.1.4.11 According to TMLP policy 8/3 additional sports pitches at Stonehouse Field has been considered a suitable opportunity to enhance existing provision. This would require the purchase of land currently in private ownership.

### Central area

5.1.4.12 Leybourne Grange (700 houses) and Kings Hill (Phases 1 and 2 a total of some 2500 houses) have clear agreements in place under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) to ensure the provision of playing pitches. These sites are either in development or expected to be in development soon. Priority should be given to d between TMBC, the relevant, and the relevant Parish Councils, as, to define 2, or if feasible 3, junior pitches on each site.

### South west

5.1.4.13 Numerous windfall sites (rated de minimus) are identified for potential/ development in the Tonbridge area; together these would add approximately 700 dwellings over a dispersed area. Of these, in the order of 500 dwellings have been granted planning permission. A further 100, in Quarry Hill Road, await a Section 106 agreement. Section 106 agreements have yet to be resolved on some of the other developments.

5.1.4.14 According to TMLP policy 8/3 additional sports pitches at Tonbridge Farm has been considered a suitable opportunity to enhance existing provision. This would require the purchase of land currently in private ownership.

### **5.1.5 Underused/unused provision**

5.1.5.1 Underused or unused provision is when the number of pitches exceeds the current and projected demand, both throughout the week and, more particularly, on peak days. True excess only occurs when laid out pitches are unused by any team, even on an occasional basis throughout the season. What becomes an 'unused' cricket pitch, may not be a genuinely underused pitch in that the outfield may double as a football pitch at other times of the year (e.g. this currently applies to cricket pitches in Ditton and at Potters Mede).

5.1.5.2 No totally unused pitch was identified in the study, therefore the current 4.5 surplus resulting from the application of the numerical model is theoretical rather than actual. The failure of some clubs to respond to the survey may account for this. Some clubs are known to play out of the borough (East Peckham Rugby Club at Paddock Wood; Tonbridge Eagles FC at Paddock Wood; Tonbridge Town FC at Horsmoden) and some providers report unmet demand on a regular seasonal basis (e.g. Snodland Town Council). 'Surplus' pitches therefore are a theoretical concept. Where only one club has sole use of a facility (e.g. Farthingfield Recreation Ground at Wrotham or the Cricket Ground at Wrotham) and the club reports difficulty in raising teams on a regular basis, such a pitch may fall into disuse. (Neither of these pitches has a current community use agreement).

5.1.5.3 New teams (e.g. for girls and women) can only be accommodated or new sports developed where there is underused/unused provision.

## **5.2 Possible solutions**

### **5.2.1 Overcoming quantitative and qualitative deficiencies**

5.2.1.1 As identified in Table 3.3 there are currently many pitches throughout the borough that are not currently accessible to the community. Some of these sites, most on educational premises, play a vital role in accommodating the playing of pitch sports in the area and consideration must be given to securing their future use.

5.2.1.2 The potential to meet any growth in demand, particularly for the use of junior pitches and for providing artificial surfaces (STPs), should consider the possibility for more education site pitches being brought into community use through the development of more dual use/community agreements with schools. To make this feasible, many pitches would need enhanced maintenance as well as the provision of secure and improved changing accommodation.

5.2.1.3 Improving the quality of existing pitches and their ancillary facilities will ensure they are sustainable and potentially improve carrying capacity of those pitches

that currently accommodate only one match per week. This is a crucial aspect, since although the numerical modelling shows a surplus of pitches there is a need to improve the existing stock to protect and maximise the playing potential of pitch sports in the borough. PPG17 states, “Local authorities should seek opportunities to improve the value of existing facilities. Usage might be improved by better management or by capital investment to secure improvements” (*Paragraph 18*).

- 5.2.1.4 The quality of facilities in respect to playing surfaces, changing pavilions, cricket pitch maintenance, pitch drainage and dog fouling at Council owned sportsgrounds in Tonbridge is being addressed through the improvement options detailed in the Outdoor Leisure Best Value Review – March 2002 (see Key Issues Paper No.1).
- 5.2.1.5 The possible option of changing the use of a pitch from one sport to another (where there are unused pitches for a particular sport and no latent demand) or from say adult to junior use (where there are underused pitches) may be a cost-effective solution. However, pitches must be in the right location to meet the needs of existing or unmet demand.
- 5.2.1.6 Usually a more complex solution, but one to be considered, involves moving a team/s from one site to another to even out demand.
- 5.2.1.7 If there is an absolute shortfall, developing new pitches is the only solution. Where population growth is expected, particularly through the housing development process, Section 106 agreements provide the strategic guidance for securing sport and recreation, including pitch, provision. (See 5.1.4)
- 5.2.1.8 The capacity of STPs is much greater than grass pitches and multiple sessions can be accommodated on one STP provided evening opening hours and floodlighting are available. STPs that meet minimum standards for hockey can double-up as training facilities for football. Sport England’s Facilities Planning Model is a means of devising the likely demand for sports facilities and full application of the model is chargeable. But Sport England’s ‘norm’ suggests a minimum of 1 STP per 60,000 population within a 20-minute drive time. Current provision in Tunbridge Wells (1 STP in the Borough) is considered inadequate and the consultant’s report supports the case for an additional STP. A similar shortage is noted in Maidstone and Gravesham.
- 5.2.1.9 Provision of STPs at schools has the potential to be the most efficient and cost-effective in terms of dual use, school during the day and community in the evenings. However, from the point of view of training facilities for winter games, floodlighting is essential. Cobdown, the hockey club in the north east, is in the process of preparing a club development plan – building links with Aylesford School where it is hoped an STP may be developed. Further proposals may include STPs at other educational sites.
- 5.2.1.10 With respect to non-Council owned pitches, assistance may be available through advice and shared expertise on maintenance regimes and changing facility provision and improvement. Other possible solutions include facilitating

liaison between users and providers (for example by the creation of a directory of pitch provision through the Council’s website), and in certain circumstances through the provision of grants to assist improvements or advise on external funding sources. However due to the multitude of providers, a co-ordinated booking approach is unlikely to be practical at the current time.

5.2.1.11 Pitch stock deficiencies have been identified in football (adult, junior and mini), in rugby (adult and junior), in STPs (for hockey and football training) and in ancillary provision, as well the need for improved playing surfaces through maintenance.

5.2.1.12 Table 5.1 below summarises the pitch stock shortfalls arising from the application of the model (see Tables 4.2 and 4.7) and includes a summary of additions that may be feasible. The possible solutions are defined by catchment area below and included in the prioritised Action Plans at Section 5.4. A bi-annual review of data, as recommended by Sport England, will help to identify whether more or less pitches are required.

**Table 5.1 Ways of overcoming pitch stock deficiencies**

		2005	2012	Propose	How to achieve further pitches
Football	Adult	9	-6	+ 9	3 x Securing use
					6 x Dual use for school and community
	Junior	-12	-25	+22-27	9-14 x new development (S106 etc.)
					13 x Dual use for school and community
	Mini	-64	-72	0	Unnecessary if adult pitches are available
Rugby	Adult	1	-2	6	6 x Dual use for school and community
	Junior	-1.5	-6		Use adult pitches
STPs		2 <sup>1</sup>	2 <sup>1</sup>	3	New dual use

<sup>1</sup> Privately owned, restricted access

Possible solutions for each catchment area are detailed below; liaison with providers and users is essential.

## 5.2.2 The north east

5.2.2.1 The area has a surplus of adult football (+6) and cricket pitches (+5) but deficiencies of junior football (-2). There is no surplus of adult rugby pitches which are tending to be overplayed by use for the junior teams, who otherwise have to play away from home. In addition the mini-rugby game has to be accommodated on the adult pitches or play away from home. There is a surplus grass hockey pitch, but the local club needs access to an STP. Possible solutions include:



**Table 5.2 Possible solutions - north east area**

Issue	Possible solutions
<p><b>Adult football</b> Current surplus 6 predicted to reduce to 1</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish 'secured use' of the pitch at Wouldham Recreation Ground.</li> <li>2. Progress Section 106 agreement for the Holborough Quarry development to provide for additional pitches</li> <li>3. Provide adult/junior pitch/es at Peter's Pit through a Section 106 Agreement, should that development be granted planning permission.</li> <li>4. Establish community use of 1 adult pitch at Holmesdale Technology College.</li> <li>5. Retain all current pitches to combat the predicted increase in demand and allow for rest and recovery, sports development and latent demand.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Junior football</b> Current shortfall -2.0 predicted to increase to -7.0</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As per TMBLP 8/3, provide additional junior pitches adjoining Potyns Sportsground.</li> <li>2. Establish community use of 2 junior pitches at Holmesdale Technology College.</li> <li>3. Progress Section 106 agreement for the Holborough Quarry development to provide for 2-3 junior pitches.</li> <li>4. Provide adult/junior pitch/es at Peter's Pit through a Section 106 Agreement should that development be granted planning permission.</li> <li>5. Establish community use of pitches at Aylesford County Primary School (1 JP) and Snodland County Primary School (3JP) who would both like their pitches used/used more.</li> <li>6. Further opportunities for additional land purchase for sports pitch use in Snodland should be investigated to enable the highest quality and diversity of pitch provision.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Adult rugby</b> Current supply meets demand. Forecast deficiency -1.0</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish community use of rugby pitches at Holmesdale and The Malling Schools if there is identified demand.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Junior rugby</b> Current supply meets demand predicted deficiency of -2.0</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide additional junior rugby pitches on public open space land adjoining Aylesford Rugby Club.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Cricket</b> Current surplus 5 no change predicted</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secure improved playing facilities for Snodland Cricket Club.</li> <li>2. Retain Holborough Valley Cricket pitch.</li> <li>3. Review level of cricket pitch provision in the area.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Hockey</b> Current surplus 1 grass pitch</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Retain the privately owned grass pitch at Cobdown Sports Club.</li> <li>2. Replace the grass hockey pitch at Aylesford School with a floodlit STP.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Improve quality</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improvement of the changing facilities at Forstal Road Recreation Ground.</li> <li>2. Improve playing surface of 3 junior football pitches at local schools. (Mill Stream CP School (1), and Holmesdale Technology College (2))</li> <li>3. Provision of changing accommodation at Blue Bell Hill Recreation Ground and Eccles Recreation Ground.</li> <li>4. Provision of changing accommodation for Burham Football Club in the Old Community Centre (if required).</li> </ol>

	5. Improvement of changing facilities for Holborough Cricket Club
--	---

5.2.2.2A planning application has recently been considered for the redevelopment of a privately owned football pitch in Snodland (Smurfitt Townsend Hook). The loss of this pitch will create a deficit of pitches in Snodland if arrangements are not put in place to secure a permanent replacement. Temporarily another pitch is to be provided on the cricket outfield at Holborough Park, but the planning consent for the development of the pitch is subject to the provision of permanent replacement pitch facilities elsewhere in Snodland. There could be space for an additional pitch at the land provided under S106 for the Holborough Valley development – the Townsend Hook Smurfit permission is subject to a planning condition requiring the submission and approval of a scheme to secure the permanent replacement sports pitch facilities (and to meet needs arising from the then new dwellings on that site).

### 5.2.3 The north west area

5.2.3.1 The north west has a low surplus of adult football (+2) predicted to reduce to a situation where demand will meet supply. Junior football provision meets current demand but a deficiency is predicted in the future (-1.0). The current shortfall of cricket (-1.0) will increase (-2.0) although there is a pitch at Potters Mede that has fallen into disuse. There is an adult rugby pitch sited in a school but currently there is no community use. There is no club hockey in the area and just 1 grass pitch in a school.

**Table 5.3 Possible solutions - north west area**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Possible solutions</b>
<b>Adult football</b> Current surplus 2 predicted to change to 0	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Retain surplus pitches to combat the predicted increase in demand and allow for rest and recovery, sports development and latent demand.</li> <li>2. Establish 'secured use' of pitch at Farthingfield Recreation Ground, Wrotham.</li> <li>3. Establish community use of 2 football pitches at Wrotham School, if required</li> </ol>
<b>Junior football</b> Current demand meets supply predicted to become -1.0 deficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As per TMBLP 8/3 provide an additional junior football pitch on land adjoining Stonehouse Field, Platt (if demand identified)</li> <li>2. Establish community use of junior pitch at Ryarsh County Primary School including access to changing accommodation.</li> </ol>
<b>Adult rugby</b> Absence of current identified demand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish community use of rugby pitch at Wrotham School, if demand dictates.</li> </ol>
<b>Junior rugby</b> Absence of current identified demand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish community use of junior rugby pitch at Wrotham School, if demand arises.</li> </ol>
<b>Cricket</b> There is a current shortfall of -1.0 forecast to increase to -2.0	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Retain all used cricket pitches and seek means of improving quality of maintenance to ensure sustainment of the game in the area.</li> <li>2. Establish 'secured use' of cricket ground at Wrotham.</li> <li>3. Develop a cricket pitch at Potters Mede Sportsground, Borough</li> </ol>

	Green subject to demand.
<b>Hockey</b> Absence of current identified demand	1. Establish community use of grass hockey pitch at Wrotham School if demand arises.
<b>Improve quality</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve adult football pitch at Ightham Recreation Ground</li> <li>2. Improve the quality of the cricket square and outfield at Stonehouse Field to bring it from below average to at least average.</li> <li>3. Access changing accommodation at Stonehouse Field for junior teams</li> <li>4. Improve Potters Mede changing accommodation</li> <li>5. Provide changing accommodation at King George's Field</li> <li>6. Continue planned improvements to Addington Village Recreation Ground changing accommodation</li> </ol>

## 5.2.4 The central area

5.2.4.1 The central area has a low overall surplus in adult football (+4), predicted to reduce to one surplus pitch. The demand for junior football pitches currently matches provision but a shortfall of **-2.0** is predicted. Two Section 106 agreements covering new housing developments at Leybourne Grange and Kings Hill phase 2 are in place, these are essential, and if possible negotiations should take place to increase provision to 3 junior football pitches at each new site to overcome the predicted deficiency. There is a good adult rugby pitch at Hadlow Agricultural College used by the community for training. It may be possible for a local club to use the pitch for adult/junior rugby matches. The current surplus of 1 cricket pitch is predicted to change to a position where demand meets supply. With less population in this area it is better placed to accommodate predicted increases although the impact will still affect junior football.

**Table 5.4 Possible solutions - central area.**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Possible solutions</b>
<b>Adult football</b> Current surplus 4 predicted to reduce to 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Retain surplus pitches to combat the predicted increase in demand and allow for rest and recovery, sports development and latent demand.</li> <li>2. Develop further community use of pitches at Hadlow Agricultural College possibly for training sessions.</li> <li>3. Provide additional pitches at Leybourne Grange and Kings Hill to meet the needs of the new developments. Include ancillary accommodation. – see below</li> </ol>
<b>Junior football</b> Current demand meets supply shortfall predicted of <b>-2.0</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide a minimum of 2 good quality junior pitches at each of the Leybourne Grange and Kings Hill developments, within the planning approvals, to replace the 2 existing pitches at Leybourne Grange and the 2 temporary pitches at Kings Hill.</li> <li>2. Provide additional pitches within these developments to meet the needs of the new developments. Include ancillary accommodation – see below.</li> <li>3. Establish community use of pitch at Leybourne C of E Primary School.</li> </ol>
<b>Adult rugby</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish further community use of the rugby pitch at Hadlow</li> </ol>

Current surplus 1	Agricultural College if demand dictates.
<b>Junior rugby</b> Absence of current identified demand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish further community use of the rugby pitch at Hadlow Agricultural College if demand dictates.</li> <li>2. Develop pitches at Kings Hill (Heath Farm) if demand dictates</li> </ol>
<b>Cricket</b> Current surplus of 1 predicted for demand to meet supply	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Retain all cricket pitches and encourage high quality maintenance to ensure sustainment of the game in the area.</li> </ol>
<b>Hockey</b> No identified demand.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No action proposed.</li> </ol>
<b>Improve quality</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve the changing accommodation at Williams Field.</li> <li>2. Require changing accommodation to appropriate standards to be provided as part of the sports facilities provision associated with the developments at Leybourne Grange and Kings Hill.</li> <li>3. Improve drainage of pitch at Leybourne C of E Primary School (St. Peter &amp; St. Paul) and establish community use and enhance maintenance of the cricket pitch (pitches overlap)</li> <li>4. Improve maintenance standards to the leased football pitch at West Malling.</li> </ol>

## 5.2.5 The South west

5.2.5.1 The south west is the priority area as it has the greatest pitch deficiencies in both football and rugby. Many pitches exist in this catchment in the education sector that are not currently accessible to the community. A modelled deficiency of **-3.0** is predicted to increase to **-8.0** adult football pitches, and although some Council owned pitch layouts have recently been changed the current shortfall of junior football **-10.0** is predicted to increase to **-15.0**. Adult pitches absorb some of the deficiencies in junior provision, but demand from both adults and juniors is forecast to increase. Rugby is not as widely played as soccer and the current pitch situation appears to meet demand for the adult game but with a shortfall of **-1.5** pitches for the junior game. The model predicts this will change and there will be a deficiency of adult **-1.0** and junior pitches **-4.0**. The current surplus of 2 cricket pitches is forecast to reduce to 1. The only two STPs for hockey are both sited at Tonbridge School. Community access is limited and in any case a floodlit STP is needed for football training purposes. Some Section 106 agreements applicable to the new housing developments in the area are not yet clearly defined.

**Table 5.5 Possible solutions - south west area**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Possible solutions</b>
<b>Adult football</b> Current deficiency <b>-3.0</b> predicted to increase to <b>-8.0</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As per TMBLP 8/3 provide additional football pitches on land adjoining Tonbridge Farm Sportsground. This will require purchase of land currently in private ownership.</li> <li>2. Install drainage to the 2 football pitches at Frogbridge to permit a minimum of 2 adult / junior matches per week.</li> <li>3. Permit 2 games per week on the 3 adult football pitches at the Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground.</li> <li>4. Regularly review the pitch layout at the Racecourse Sportsground to reflect demand.</li> <li>5. Establish community use of the adult football pitch at Hayesbrook Sports College.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Develop an STP in Tonbridge on a dual use / joint provision basis with one of the local schools (Hayesbrook School?)</li> <li>7. Establish community use of the adult football pitch at Hugh Christie Technology College, following completion of the rebuild (due to re-open in 2007/8)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Junior football</b> Current shortfall -10.0 predicted to increase to -15.0</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As per TMBLP 8/3 provide additional junior football pitches on land adjoining Tonbridge Farm Sportsground. This will require purchase of land currently in private ownership.</li> <li>2. Permit 2 games per week on the Junior pitches at The Racecourse Sportsground.</li> <li>3. Establish community use of junior pitches at Longmead County Primary School.</li> <li>4. Establish community use of junior pitch at Fosse Bank New School (private).</li> <li>5. Establish community use of the junior football pitch at Hugh Christie Technology College, following completion of the rebuild (due to re-open in 2007/8)</li> <li>6. Establish community use of 2 junior pitches at Weald of Kent Grammar School.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Adult rugby</b> Current demand meets supply predicted deficiency of -1.0</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regularly review the pitch layout at the Racecourse Sportsground to reflect demand.</li> <li>2. Establish community use of adult pitch at Hayesbrook Sports College.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Junior rugby</b> Current deficiency of -1.5 predicted to increase to -4.0</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regularly review the pitch layout at the Racecourse Sportsground to reflect demand, incorporating additional land recently acquired by the borough council</li> <li>2. Establish community use of The Judd School pitches for junior use</li> <li>3. Investigate additional pitch at Fosse Bank New School.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Cricket</b> Current surplus 2 predicted to reduce to 1</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduce the number of pitches from 2 to 1 at the Racecourse Sportsground (completed)</li> <li>2. Retain remaining surplus pitch to combat the predicted increase in demand, sports development and latent demand.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Hockey</b> Current surplus 2 (1STP) no change predicted</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Renegotiate a community use agreement with Tonbridge School to permit use of the new water-based astro-turf pitch at times more convenient to club players and include the use of changing accommodation. Alternatively use of the current STP at more convenient times.</li> <li>2. Develop an STP on a joint provision / dual use basis at Hugh Christie Technology College following the rebuild programme (due to re-open in 2007/8).</li> </ol>
<p><b>Improve quality</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhance the quality of Pitch A at Tonbridge Farm and devise a way to prevent it being misused.</li> <li>2. Improve level of maintenance of the cricket pitches at the Racecourse Sportsground, Swanmead Sportsground and Tonbridge Farm Sportsground.</li> <li>3. Enforce existing legislation more strongly at Council owned sportsgrounds regarding fouling by dogs</li> <li>4. Improve pitch maintenance to 4 junior football pitches (Longmead CP School (2); Weald of Kent GS (2)).</li> <li>5. Complete Floodlighting scheme for Tonbridge Juddians 1st pitch at The Racecourse Sportsground.</li> <li>6. Improve changing facilities at Frogbridge (currently poor)</li> <li>7. Improve changing facilities at Swanmead (currently poor).</li> <li>8. Improve changing facility at The Hayesbrook Sports College.</li> <li>9. Improve changing facilities at Hildenborough Recreation Ground</li> </ol>

5.2.5.2 Overall, the borough is not short of hectares designated as playing pitches with a total of 226 ha. (See Table 3.1.11), but more than 90 ha. are based in schools and are not currently available for community access.

5.2.5.3 Utilising pitches for community use that are already provided in schools should lead to more efficient use of current resources without the need to designate more land for playing pitches. However community use agreements would be needed, together with improved maintenance and on-site security. The costs involved in bringing pitches and ancillary provision up to a standard that can accommodate both community and school use would be a key issue to be resolved if such pitches were to be brought into community use.

### **5.3 Local policies and strategic objectives**

#### Overall Aim

5.3.1 The aim of this strategy is to provide direction and set priorities that will care for, protect and enhance the playing pitch stock of the Borough. It is intended to ensure that residents and visitors can continue to play pitch sports for pleasure and enjoyment and can benefit from the positive contribution physical activity can make to improved quality of life.

#### Local policies

5.3.2 This playing pitch strategy is based on a comprehensive assessment of local needs and an audit of existing facilities. It recommends the adoption of the following policies: -

- A strategic approach to local playing pitch provision, protection and maintenance that ensures the existing level of public pitch provision is not reduced
- If surplus pitches are identified the first alternative use considered is for other recreational space usage.
- Require any developments on pitch areas to replace the pitch/es and ancillary facilities with equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable and readily accessible location and provide additional pitches to cover the needs of the development
- Adoption of a local standard of 1.2 ha per 1,000 population for pitch provision.
- Deliver continuous improvement in the quality of pitches and ancillary facilities
- Support greater community use of school playing pitches where appropriate
- Establish a hierarchy of sites and identify priorities for action
- Deliver the government's social policy agenda, corporate policies and service strategies through efficient use of pitch resources
- Provide better information to residents and other users of sports pitches

### Strategic objectives

- 5.3.3 Work in partnership with other providers and build links to help maintain the local playing pitch stock and secure community use of pitches presently owned by others.
- 5.3.4 Work jointly with the Council's planning service to deliver the policies and actions set out in this strategy.
- 5.3.5 Consult with neighbouring authorities and where feasible adopt joint plans to meet identified deficiencies of playing pitches.
- 5.3.6 Manage the Council owned playing pitches in accordance with all legislative, and health and safety requirements and best value.
- 5.3.7 Establish prioritised actions that will place greater emphasis on improving the quality of local playing pitch surfaces and ancillary facilities.
- 5.3.8 Target resources to areas of greatest need with particular emphasis on providing pitch sport opportunities to young people, girls and women, lower socio-economic groups and any others at risk from lack of accessible provision.
- 5.3.9 Set local standards for current and future provision of pitch sports taking quantity, quality and accessibility into account.
- 5.3.10 Monitor the implementation and impact of this strategy against agreed standards and benchmarks to ensure compliance with minimum standards and continuous improvement to targets.
- 5.3.11 Co-ordinate a directory of local playing pitches based on the audit to assist local clubs identify availability and access to pitches and facilitate efficient use of resources.
- 5.3.12 Consult local providers and users of playing pitches and respond to expressed demands and expectations in accordance with this strategy, identified resources and budgets.
- 5.3.13 Help identify new sites to meet identified needs for new playing pitches and ensure that whenever possible these are sited in locations which are accessible by public transport.

### **5.4 Action Plans**

- 5.4.1 The following charts identify actions that comply with the recommended policies and strategic objectives (Section 5.3 above) and define the actions required to address the key issues raised by the application of the Playing Pitch Model (see Section 5.1). The Action Plans include the issues and solutions detailed in

Section 5.2 and define a priority level (1,2 or 3) for each action and a target. Plans based on the Key Issues deal with:

- Protection of the existing level of provision
- Remedying identified deficiencies
- Planning new provision

#### 5.4.2 Protection of the existing level of provision

**Table 5.6 Protection of the existing level of provision**

Action	To be action by (lead partner in bold)	Priority	Target	Resources/ Implications for lead Partner
1. Within the proposed LDF adopt a planning policy that ensures the existing level of public pitch provision is not reduced and deficiencies are addressed.	TMBC Planning Services. TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Oct '07	No additional resources – existing staff time.
2. Advise other providers and attempt to ensure pitches used by the community are secured by written agreements between providers and hirers [Model agreement to be made available]	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> Parish/Town Councils. Schools/LEA. Private owners.	1	Mar '10	No additional resources – existing staff time.
3. Initiate a Review of the Playing Pitch Strategy	<b>TMBC Leisure Services</b>	2	Sep '10	£3,000 - £4,000 ?
4. Liaise with the TMBC Planning Services and assist in the preparation of policies applicable to PPG17	<b>TMBC Planning Services.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Oct '07	No additional resources – existing staff time.
5. Adopt the local standard for playing pitch space and apply it to any proposals to develop playing pitches for non-recreational uses	<b>TMBC Planning Services.</b> TMBC Leisure Services. Sport England.	1	Oct '07	No additional resources – existing staff time.

#### 5.4.3 Remedying quantitative and qualitative deficiencies

**Table 5.7 Remedying deficiencies**

Action	To be action by (lead partner in bold)	Priority	Target	Resources/ Implications for lead Partner
1. Through consultation/ dissemination seminar/ documents involve all providers in the implementation of the Playing Pitch Strategy where applicable	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> Parish/Town Councils. Schools/LEA. Private owner. TMBC Planning Services.	1	Ongoing	No additional resources – existing staff time.



2. Review pitch layout at the Council Sportsgrounds with a view to reflecting demand and in keeping with this strategy	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> TSA. Grounds maintenance contractors.	2	Annually	No additional resources – existing staff time.
3. Apply existing legislation more rigorously at publicly owned sportsgrounds with respect to dog fouling through publicity, education and enforcement.	<b>Parish Councils.</b> <b>TMBC Environmental Health.</b> <b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b>	2	Ongoing	Increased funding may be required.
4. Assist Snodland Town Council, and Snodland Cricket Club to explore options to overcome problems at Rectory Meadow	<b>Snodland Town Council.</b> Snodland Cricket Club. TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Mar '07	Not known
5. Platt Parish Council to investigate ways of permitting junior teams to access changing accommodation at Stonehouse Field	<b>Platt Parish Council.</b>	1	Apr '07	Not Known
6. Liase with Platt Parish Council to investigate means of the provision of higher maintenance standards at Stonehouse Field cricket pitch	<b>Platt Parish Council.</b> Cricket Club TMBC Leisure Services	2	Apr '07 and ongoing	Not Known
7. Investigate means of raising the level of maintenance of the cricket pitches at the Racecourse Sportsground and Swanmead	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> Grounds maintenance contractors. User club/s.	1	Summer season 2006 and on-going	Not Known
8. Support Burham Football Club with the development of changing accommodation	<b>Burham Football Club.</b> TMBC Leisure Services	1	Aug '07	Not Known
9. Work with Tonbridge Juddians RFC to help them complete the floodlighting project at the Racecourse Sportsground	<b>Tonbridge Juddians.</b> TSA. TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Sep '05	No additional resources – existing staff time.
10. Investigate improvements to the quality of Pitch A at Tonbridge Farm Sportsground	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> Grounds maintenance contractors. TSA & clubs.	2	Aug '07	Not Known
11. Review policy for junior football pitches at the Racecourse Sportsground to carry 2 games per week	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> Grounds maintenance contractors. TSA & clubs.	1	Aug '07	No additional resources – existing staff time.
12. Investigate the establishment of liaison arrangements for community use of all sports facilities at Tonbridge School	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> Tonbridge School. TSA.	1	Aug '06	No additional resources – existing staff time.

13. Liaise with Hadlow Agricultural College regarding permitting football training sessions on their pitch	<b>Hadlow Agricultural College.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Sep '06	
14. Facilitate negotiations and progress community use agreements with the following schools to permit use of their junior football pitches - Fosse Bank New School - Aylesford County Primary School	TMBC Leisure Services.  <b>Fosse Bank New School.</b> <b>Aylesford County Primary School.</b>	1	Mar '07	No additional resources – existing staff time.
15. Support the provision of 1 floodlit STP hockey pitch with community use for football training at Aylesford School on their existing hockey pitch.	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> KCC. Kent FA. Cobdown Ladies' Hockey Club, Aylesford School and local football clubs. Bryanston Square – Extended use consultants for PFI school sites.	1	Sep '07	Yes  £300,000 - £500,000
16. Provide a playing pitch directory of pitches and providers on the Borough website	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> IT.	1	Sep '06	Not Known
17. Support Holborough Cricket Club with improvements to their changing facilities	<b>Holborough Cricket Club.</b> Snodland Town Council. TMBC Leisure Service.	1	Apr '07	Not Known
18. Liaise with Borough Green Parish Council to consider improvements to Potters Mede cricket pitch	<b>Borough Green Parish Council.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Apr '07	Not Known
19. Liaise with Aylesford Parish Council to explore possible ways of improving the junior football pitch at Eccles Recreation Ground	<b>Aylesford Parish Council/ Burham &amp; Eccles PC.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '07	Not Known
20. Liaise with Platt CP School to explore ways of improving the junior football pitch used by the community	<b>Platt CP School.</b> TMBC Leisure Services. KCC.	1	Aug '07	Not Known
21. Liaise with Mill Stream CP School on ways of improving the junior football pitch used by the community	<b>Mill Stream CP School.</b> TMBC Leisure Services. KCC.	1	Aug '07	Not Known

22. Facilitate negotiations and progress community use agreements with the following schools to permit community use of their junior football pitches - Longmead County Primary School (advise on improvements to pitches)  - Ryarsh County Primary School  - Snodland County Primary School	<b>Longmead County Primary School.</b>  <b>Ryarsh County Primary School.</b>  <b>Snodland County Primary School.</b>	2  2  2	Aug '07  Aug '08  Aug '08	No additional resources – existing staff time.
23. Liaise with Aylesford Parish Council and Aylesford Rugby Club to consider opportunities for additional pitches in the Aylesford area.	<b>Aylesford Parish Council.</b> Aylesford Rugby Club. TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '07	No additional resources – existing staff time.
24. Liaise with Borough Green Parish Council to consider improvement of Potters Mede changing accommodation	<b>Borough Green Parish Council.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '08	Not Known
25. Investigate improvements to the quality of the football pitches at Frogbridge to carry 2 games per week and Support improvements to the changing facilities	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> Grounds maintenance contractors. TSA & clubs.	1	Aug '07	Not Known
26. Liaise with The Hayesbrook School regarding community use of their football pitch	<b>Hayesbrook School.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '07	No additional resources – existing staff time.
27. In partnership with The Hayesbrook School investigate the development of an STP on their site with access to the community for football training purposes.	<b>Hayesbrook School.</b> TMBC Leisure Services. TSA	2	Aug '08	Not Known
28. Work with Ightham Parish Council to investigate ways of improving their adult football pitch	<b>Ightham Parish Council.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '08	Not Known
29. Liaise with Leybourne School to bring forward improvements to the drainage of the junior football pitch.	<b>St Peter &amp; St Paul School, Leybourne.</b> Leybourne Parish Council. TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '07	Not Known
30. Explore a community use agreement with Holmesdale Technology College to permit community use of their junior football pitches and investigate possible pitch improvements.	<b>Holmesdale Technology College.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '07	No additional resources – existing staff time.

31. Liaise with East Malling Parish Council to consider designating and re-marking one adult football pitch at the East Malling Recreation Ground as a junior football pitch	<b>East Malling Parish Council.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '08	Not Known
32. Seek agreement with Hugh Christie Technology College to permit community use of their adult and/or junior football pitches	<b>Hugh Christie Technology College.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '08	No additional resources – existing staff time.
33. Support the development of a floodlit STP at Hugh Christie Technology College subject to a community use agreement.	<b>Hugh Christie Technology College.</b> PFI Partner. TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '08	No additional resources – existing staff time.
34. Seek agreement with Holmesdale Technology College to permit community use of their adult rugby pitch	<b>Holmesdale Technology college.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '08	No additional resources – existing staff time.
35. Investigate ways of assisting Weald of Kent GS to bring 2 junior football pitches to an acceptable standard and negotiate a community use agreement for their use	<b>Weald of Kent Grammar School.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '08	Not Known
36. Support Swanmead Sports Association with the improvement of changing accommodation at Swanmead	<b>Swanmead Sports Association.</b> TMBC Leisure Services	2	Aug '07	Not Known
37 Support Aylesford Parish Council with improvements to changing accommodation at Forstal Road Recreation Ground	<b>Aylesford Parish Council.</b> TMBC Leisure Services	2	Aug '08	Not Known
38. Support Hadlow Parish Council with improvements to the changing accommodation at Williams Field	<b>Hadlow Parish Council.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '08	Not Known
39. Liaise with West Malling Parish Council and Town Malling Cricket Club to seek higher standards of maintenance to the football pitch.	<b>West Malling Parish Council.</b> Town Malling Cricket Club Existing Football Club. TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '08	Not Known
40. Support the planned improvements to Addington Village Recreation Ground changing accommodation if required	<b>Addington Cricket Club.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '08	Not Known

41. Investigate ways of helping Aylesford Parish Council and Blue Bell Hill Cricket Club with the provision of changing accommodation at Blue Bell Hill Recreation Ground	<b>Aylesford Parish Council.</b> Blue Bell Hill Cricket Club. TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '09	Not Known
42. Investigate ways of helping Platt Parish Council with the provision of changing accommodation at King George's Field	<b>Platt Parish Council.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '09	Not known
43. Investigate ways of helping Aylesford Parish Council with the provision of changing accommodation at Eccles Recreation Ground	<b>Aylesford Parish Council.</b> Burham, Eccles & Wouldham PC. TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Aug '09	Not Known
44. Investigate ways of helping Hildenborough Parish Council with the improvement of the changing accommodation at Hildenborough Recreation Ground	<b>Hildenborough Parish Council.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '09	Not Known
45. If sufficient demand, facilitate negotiations and progress community use agreements with The Judd School to permit community use of their adult rugby pitch for junior use	<b>The Judd School.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '09	No additional resources – existing staff time.
46. If sufficient demand, facilitate negotiations and progress dual-use agreements with The Malling School to permit community use of their adult rugby pitch	<b>The Malling School.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '09	No additional resources – existing staff time.
47. If sufficient demand, investigate improvements to the quality of the adult football and rugby pitches at the Racecourse Sportsground to increase their carrying capacity for adult or junior games	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> Grounds maintenance contractors. TSA & clubs.	2	Aug '09	Not Known
48. If sufficient demand, facilitate negotiations and progress a community use agreement with Holmesdale Technology College for their adult football pitch	<b>Holmesdale Technology College.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '09	No additional resources – existing staff time.
49. If sufficient demand, facilitate negotiations and progress community use agreement with Wrotham School for the use of 1 or 2 football pitches and/or rugby pitch	<b>Wrotham School.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	2	Aug '09	No additional resources – existing staff time.

#### 5.4.4 Providing for new developments

**Table 5.8 Planning for new provision**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Key Partners</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Resources</b>
1. Within the proposed LDF adopt a planning policy that requires proposed new developments to replace the playing pitch/es and ancillary facilities with equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable and readily accessible location and provides for the needs of new developments	<b>TMBC Planning Services.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Oct '07	No additional resources – existing staff time.
2. Under Section 106 agreements include developer contributions that ensure facilities are provided commensurate with the local standard together with appropriate ancillary facilities.	<b>TMBC Planning Services.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	Ongoing	No additional resources – existing staff time.
3. Investigate the provision of an additional playing pitch/es adjacent to Potyns Recreation Ground (TMBLP 8/3)	<b>TMBC Planning Services.</b> TMBC Leisure Services. Snodland Town Council	1	Sep '07	No additional resources – existing staff time.
4. Investigate the provision of an additional playing pitch/es at Tonbridge Farm (TMBLP 8/3). This will require the purchase of land currently in private ownership.	<b>TMBC Leisure Services.</b> TMBC Planning Services.	1	Sep '07	Not Known
5. Under the Section 106 agreement for pitch and ancillary provision at Holborough Quarry, assist Snodland Town Council with the development of an extension to Potyns Recreation Ground to provide 2/3 junior football pitches and ancillary facilities.	<b>Snodland Town Council</b> TMBC Planning Services. TMBC Leisure Services. Developer.	1	Sep '07 or as required	No additional resources – existing staff time.
6. Under the Section 106 agreement for pitch and ancillary provision at Leybourne Grange, seek provision for playing pitches and ancillary facilities to meet the needs of the new development	<b>TMBC Planning Services.</b> TMBC Leisure Services. Developer Leybourne Parish Council	1	Sep '07 or as required	No additional resources – existing staff time.
7. Under Section 106 agreements for pitch and ancillary provision at Kings Hill, seek provision for playing pitches and ancillary facilities to meet the needs of the new development	<b>TMBC Planning Services.</b> TMBC Leisure Services. Developer Kings Hill Parish Council	1	Ongoing	No additional resources – existing staff time.

8. Progress Section 106 agreement at Peter's Pit to ensure the appropriate level of pitch provision for the development	<b>TMBC Planning Services.</b> TMBC Leisure Services.	1	As required	No additional resources – existing staff time.
9. Investigate opportunities for additional land purchase for sports pitch use in Snodland.	<b>Snodland Town Council</b> TMBC Leisure Services TMBC Planning Services	1	Ongoing and as required.	Not Known
10. Support Platt Parish Council with the provision of an additional playing pitch/es at Stonehouse Field (TMBLP 8/3) This will require the purchase of land currently in private ownership.	<b>TMBC Planning Services.</b> TMBC Leisure Services. Platt Parish Council	2	Sep '08 or as required	Not Known

## 5.5 A local standard

5.5.1 An important outcome from a playing pitch strategy is the development of local standards of provision, in accordance with national planning policy. Such a standard will:

- underpin negotiations with developers over their contributions for new pitch provision to meet the needs of new residential developments
- provide an additional overview of the general supply of pitches/level of provision
- assist in protecting land in playing field use
- assist in benchmarking with other authorities

5.5.2 The NPFAs *Six Acre Standard* states that for every 1000 people 1.2 hectares of playing pitches should be provided. This is a useful national benchmark and has been widely adopted in the absence of any detailed local assessment.

5.5.3 However, PPG17 now requires local authorities to undertake detailed local assessments to provide evidence as a basis for developing a local standard. Only those pitches with secured community use are to be included (Sport England directive)

5.5.4 The research undertaken for this strategy provides the basis for the Tonbridge & Malling local standard:

**Table 5.9 The local standard**

<b>Developing a local standard for the Borough of Tonbridge &amp; Malling</b>		
<b>(a) Current situation 2004</b>		
Hectares per 1000 population of accessible pitches		
Playing pitch area (hectares) See Table 3.6	=	132
Tonbridge & Malling population 2001 Census	=	107,600
<b>Hectares per 1000 population</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>1.20 ha/ 1000</b>
<b>(b) Additional pitches needed by 2012 <sup>(1)</sup></b> See Calculations in Table 5.1		
9 adult football pitches	=	7.74 hectares
24 junior football pitches	=	12 hectares
6 adult rugby pitches	=	7.56 hectares
Total	=	27.3 hectares
<b>(c) Recommended standard for 2012</b> (Taking into account additional needs and increases in population)		
Playing Pitch area (hectares)	=	159
Tonbridge & Malling Borough population (Estimate)	=	112,900
<b>Hectares per 1000 population</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>1.40 ha 1000</b>

*<sup>(1)</sup>Future provision will need to be kept under regular review in the light of the actual level of new build that occurs.*

The current and predicted Tonbridge & Malling local standard is identical to the NPFA *Six Acre Standard* which states that for every 1000 people 1.2 hectares of playing pitches should be provided.

(Maidstone 1.01 current 1.08 (2012))



## **Glossary of abbreviations**

MUGA	Multi-use games area
NPFA	National Playing Fields Association
PPM	Playing Pitch Model
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency
SEERA	South East England Regional Assembly
STP	Synthetic turf pitch
TGR	Team generation rate