

# **Epping Forest District Council Built Facilities Strategy – Full Analysis**

**4 global Consulting**

December 2017

Draft Version: 4.0



## **Epping Forest District Council**

[www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

DRAFT



**Note: The EFDC Built Facility Strategy is currently in the final stages of consultation with the project steering group, including Sport England and the relevant National Governing bodies of Sport. The strategy is still to be finalised and is subject to change prior to Local Plan submission, following substantive comments being made on the draft strategy by Sport England and relevant national Governing Bodies of Sport.**

**Report prepared by 4 global  
Consulting**

4 global | tel: 0208 1234 693  
email: [enquiries@4global.com](mailto:enquiries@4global.com)  
[www.4global.com](http://www.4global.com)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b><u>INTRODUCTION .....</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>
<b>2</b>	<b><u>METHODOLOGY .....</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>
<b>3</b>	<b><u>STRATEGIC CONTEXT .....</u></b>	<b><u>6</u></b>
<b>4</b>	<b><u>BUILT SPORTS FACILITY SUPPLY ANALYSIS .....</u></b>	<b><u>27</u></b>
<b>5</b>	<b><u>NEEDS ASSESSMENT – SWIMMING POOLS.....</u></b>	<b><u>35</u></b>
<b>6</b>	<b><u>NEEDS ASSESSMENT – SPORTS HALLS .....</u></b>	<b><u>43</u></b>
<b>7</b>	<b><u>NEEDS ASSESSMENT – HEALTH &amp; FITNESS .....</u></b>	<b><u>50</u></b>
<b>8</b>	<b><u>KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</u></b>	<b><u>56</u></b>
<b>9</b>	<b><u>FUTURE INVESTMENT OPTIONS .....</u></b>	<b><u>66</u></b>

## 4 global Consulting Terms of Reference

It is not possible to guarantee the fulfilment of any estimates or forecasts contained within this report, although they have been conscientiously prepared on the basis of our research and information made available to us at the time of the study.

The author(s) will not be held liable to any party for any direct or indirect losses, financial or otherwise, associated with any contents of this report. We have relied on a number of areas of information provided by the client, and have not undertaken additional independent verification of this data.

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Epping Forest District Council has commissioned 4 global Consulting to prepare a Built Sports Facility Strategy, to provide the Council with a clear evidence base and set of recommendations for future sports facility development across the District.
- 1.1.2 A Built Facilities Strategy (hereafter referred to as 'BFS') is a strategic assessment that provides an up to data analysis of the supply and demand of built sports facilities across a local authority. Given the breadth of sports and physical activity undertaken in Epping Forest District (referred to interchangeably as Epping Forest District and the 'local authority' throughout this report), as well as the intention of the Council to incorporate as many types of sports and physical activity as possible, the assessment will focus on the following facility types;
- Indoor swimming pools
  - Sports halls (minimum of 2 badminton courts in size)
  - Health and fitness suits
- 1.1.3 The assessment will also consider squash facilities and gymnastics facilities as part of the recommendations and action plan section.
- 1.1.4 It should be noted that in parallel to the BFS, the Council has also commissioned 4 global Consulting to undertake a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS), to provide a strategic analysis of grass pitch supply and demand across the study area.
- 1.1.5 In conjunction with the PPS, the BFS will provide a holistic analysis of sports facilities across the study area, leading to a comprehensive set of recommendations for the future development of facilities, in line with the demands needs of local residents.

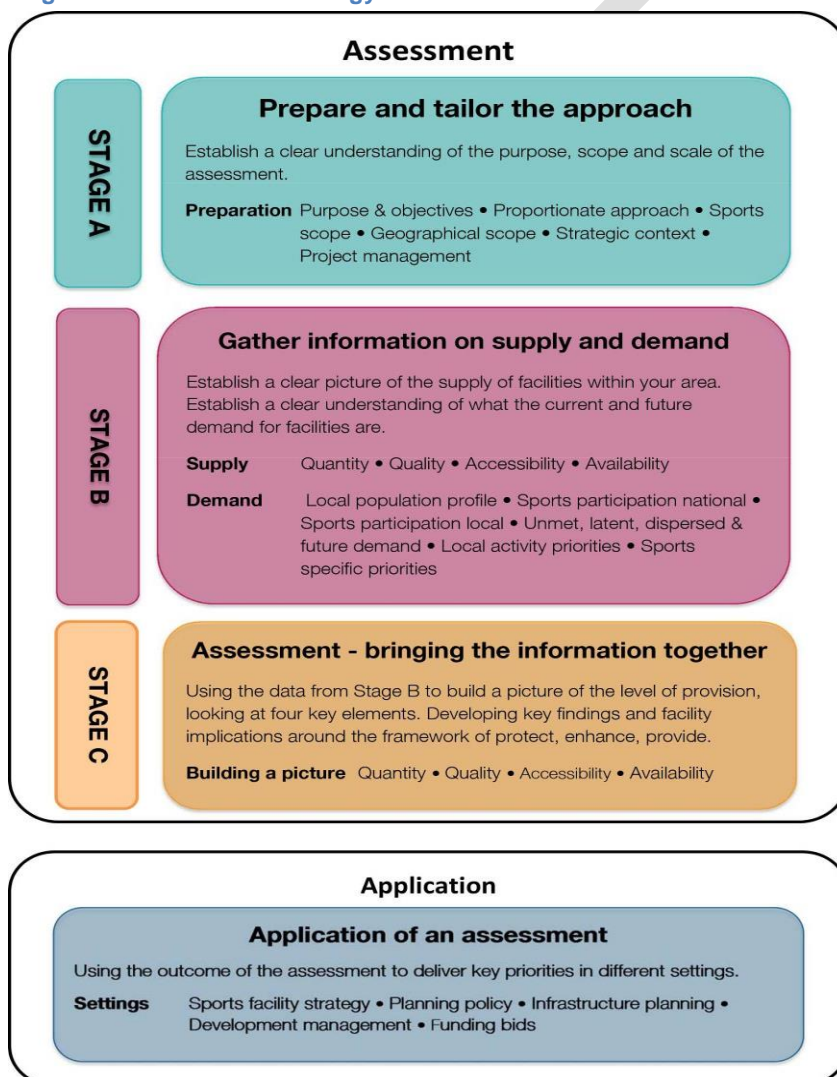
### 1.2 Project Scope and Objectives

- 1.2.1 To provide Epping Forest District Council (hereafter referred to as 'EFDC' or 'the Council') with a clear set of recommendations and a deliverable action plan, the BFS will provide the following high-level outputs:
- A clear understanding of the current and future supply and demand issues for key sporting facilities, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility;
  - Identification of recommendations and priorities to assist the Council and key stakeholders in the delivery of sporting outcomes for the area;
  - Identify local needs and aspirations through a series of consultations at a national, regional and local level; and
  - Recommend standards of provision (quantity, quality and accessibility) in accordance with NPPG and NPPF.
- 1.2.2 In addition to the purpose-built leisure facilities identified in the introduction, education facilities and community assets, such as community halls, will also be considered as part of the scope.

## 2 Methodology

- 2.1.1 To ensure that the BFS is in with industry best practice, the strategy has been developed using the Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities (ANOG)<sup>1</sup> guidance, published in 2014. In line with the ANOG guidance, a proven methodology has been used, as illustrated in Figure 2.1 overleaf.
- 2.1.2 The findings in this report are based on data collected from several credible sources, including but not limited to;
- Local authority and public policy strategic documentation;
  - Sport England tools, including the Facility Planning Model (FPM), Active Places Power, the Active People Survey, Market Segmentation and the Sports Facility Calculator;
  - Stakeholder consultation, including EFDC Officers and Members, Sport England, Active Essex, Relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport, key user clubs; and
  - Site visits, undertaken at all strategically important sites across the study area.

**Figure 2.1: ANOG methodology**



<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and-guidance/assessing-needs-and-opportunities-guidance/>

## Strategic Context

DRAFT

## 3 Strategic Context

### 3.1 Epping Forest District

- 3.1.1 Epping Forest District is located in West Essex, with the local authority sharing borders with Greater London to the south and south-west. The local authority is made up of a number of settlements, with large areas of open space and rural woodland spread across sections of the local authority
- 3.1.2 Areas around Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell, Waltham Abbey and Loughton are all part of the Greater London Built-up Area however the District is named after, and contains a large part of Epping Forest, labelled as “London’s largest open space”. To the north-west, the District borders Hertfordshire, Waltham Forest to the south-west and Havering to the south-east. On its west of the Local Authority sits the Lee Valley National Park, a park and waterway that also connects with London all the way down to the Thames. It is bisected north to south by the M11 and east to west by the M25 with junctions to connect with each. The Local Authority has excellent connections to London via 8 central line stations.
- 3.1.3 The major market town of Epping lies 19 miles north-east of the centre of London. The District also has two towns and four District centres – Loughton/Loughton Broadway and Buckhurst Hill in the south, Waltham Abbey to the west, and Chipping Ongar in the east.
- 3.1.4 The District boasts many green open spaces, including Lee Valley Park, a 10,000 acre 26-mile-long linear park running through the north-east of greater London and also Epping Forest, a historic woodland straddling the border between Greater London and Essex. Open spaces across the District are subject to a variety of planning designations, which support the protection of wildlife and landscape. More specifically, the Lee Valley Regional Park has a number of Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), as well as being designated as a Ramsar site. Additionally, Epping Forest is a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 3.1.5 Information on all of the statutorily protected sites (SAC, SSSI, Ramsar and SPA sites) can be found on the Natural England website <http://www.natureonthemap.org.uk/>.

### 3.2 Planning Policy Introduction

- 3.2.1 There are a number of key national and local strategies and policies which inform and influence the development of these strategies. These national policies inform the approach to current and future provision of sports facilities, linked to health improvement, increased participation, and the appropriate levels of provision of facilities to meet local needs. From a planning perspective, the national agenda makes the link between national planning policy, a Local Plan and population growth at local level, and the need to plan for increased demands for infrastructure and provision, linked to Protect, Enhance and Provide; these are the key elements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This will be explained further in the following sections.

### 3.3 National Planning Policy

#### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

- 3.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the requirement of local authorities to establish and provide adequate and proper leisure facilities to meet local needs. Paragraphs 73

and 74 outline the planning policies for the provision and protection of sport and recreation facilities:

3.3.2 *“Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required”.*

3.3.3 'Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.”

#### **PROTECTION, ENHANCEMENT AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES**

3.3.4 The key drivers for the production of the strategy as advocated by Sport England are to protect, enhance and built sports facilities, as follows:

- **Protect** sports from loss as a result of re-development
- **Enhance** existing facilities through improving their quality, accessibility and management
- **Provide** new facilities that are fit for purpose to meet demands for participation now and in the future.

### **3.4 Regional Planning Policy**

3.4.1 Essex County Council provides a series of strategies and policies for the region, setting out integrated economic, environmental and social objectives for the regions development for years to come. Notably, The Vision for Essex sets out long-term aspirations for the county till 2035.

3.4.2 Major aspirations and strategic aims for 2017-2021 can be filtered down to 3 main areas. All these areas are interlinked and closely related, many of which have overlapping underlying aims:

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH:**

- Support the community by helping to increase their skills and allow them to prosper
- Enable Essex to attract and grow large firms in high growth industries
- Limit cost and drive growth in revenue.

#### **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:**

- Help keep vulnerable children safer and enable them to fulfil their potential
- Enable more vulnerable adults to live independent of social care
- Help to secure stronger, safer and more neighbourly communities
- Facilitate growing communities and new homes in local areas.



## HEALTH:

- Reducing the gap in life expectancy
- Promoting independence in the elderly and vulnerable adults
- Reduce the need for hospital admissions or formal care services by delivering community based solutions
- Help people live longer, by ensuring targeted health checks and health programmes are available to those most at risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

3.4.3 Essex County Council benefits from working alongside and in partnership with many different organisations and plans. Some of these partnerships have shaped the type of council Essex are today and the strategies and plans they implement. Notably:

- Essex County Council supported the South East Local Enterprise Partnership in its submission in 2014 of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) to government with the hope of securing a share of the governments Single Local Growth Fund
- The Economic Plan for Essex (EPfE) has provided the county's content for the SEP. The EPfE is continuously revised and refreshed to ensure there is a consistent and relevant pipeline of economic growth projects that will support the delivery of economic growth across the county.
- The Essex Co-operation Framework describes the principles that guide the work from The Essex Partnership, a collaboration of representatives of the many organisations that deliver services to the people of Essex.

3.4.4 The Essex Sports Facility Strategy, currently in operation for the next 3 years, recognises the need for provision of appropriate quality and quantity of sports facilities in the area in order to increase participation. The aim is to ensure that opportunities for sport are offered through the planned provision, design and management of a full range of facilities to accommodate for the growing population. The Essex County Sports Partnership, *Active Essex*, are at the heart of the delivery system for community sport and for this strategy.

## LONDON STANSTEAD CAMBRIDGE CORRIDOR (LSCC)

3.4.5 The District Councils of Broxbourne, East Hertfordshire, Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford form the LSCC Core Area which lies at the heart of the LSCC. This corridor has, over the past decade or more, been the engine of UK growth with its world class industries and businesses.

- The vision for the LSCC going forward will be to build on its key strengths including its skilled workforce in sectors such as health, life sciences and pharmaceuticals, advanced engineering and aerospace, its high quality environment and educational opportunities. Together with London Stansted Airport, the local authorities will deliver sustainable growth which supports the economic ambitions of the LSCC and the UK through complementing and supporting the economic performance of the Corridor whilst maintaining and enhancing the special character of the area, including the locally distinctive historic character of its market towns and rural settlements such as Epping.
- Moving forward as a community, this strategic vision will continue to provide many job opportunities, as it currently responsible for 24,700 jobs in the life sciences sector contributing 11% of all national employment, which complements those strategic visions of Essex County Council in 'supporting the community by helping



to increase their skills and allowing them to prosper’.

### 3.5 Local Planning Policy – Epping Forest’s Local Plan

- 3.5.1 The Local Plan sets out a vision and framework for development in the District for the next 17 years (until 2033). It addresses needs and opportunities across a number of themes, including housing, the economy, infrastructure, transport and sustainability. The Local Plan for Epping Forest District is currently under construction and in draft edition, and is expected to be submitted and examined by November 2017.
- 3.5.2 The current Development Plan consists of a number of documents and pieces of evidence, however this document is being superseded by the Draft Local Plan that is currently under production. The Epping Forest District Council Draft Local Plan sets out the approach to bring forward the development of community facilities, and to balance the demand for housing and sporting facilities on prioritising land and development plans. The policy states;
- 3.5.3 *“While no comment is made on the principle of allocating sites around Harlow for residential, support is offered for section B of the policy in relation to the proposals for the developments to make provision for an appropriate level of community use and infrastructure that would be expected to include sport and recreation facilities”*
- 3.5.4 The Council will therefore ensure that a range of community facilities are provided to meet existing and forecast demand by;
- Ensuring development is supported by appropriate facilities to meet local demand
  - Ensuring all community facilities are located in places that are or will be accessible by a range of means of transport
  - Ensuring all new community facilities are inclusive and open and available to all members of the local community
  - Co-locating facilities and services
  - Entering into joint venture arrangements where co-funding is considered to be the best and most cost effective means of delivering services
  - Encouraging the provision of services by social enterprise and third sector organisations.
- 3.5.5 Community facilities are defined for the purposes of this policy as education (from pre-school to further and higher education) and training, health, social, leisure, places of worship, community cultural and civic uses (including criminal justice and court facilities) and emergency services.
- 3.5.6 An active and connected community is about ensuring that residents and businesses have the local infrastructure and services that give them greater choice about how they access services. It is important that people have access to community facilities and that they are inclusive and accessible to everyone. They should also be well managed and maintained and located in areas that are accessible to all.
- 3.5.7 With regards to housing; the Council emphasise the intent to protect the Green Belt wherever possible, prioritising brownfield sites to be developed on. The Plan is very much focused on retaining the rural, rustic feel of market towns and avoid being engulfed by London’s constant development and expansion, whilst still maintaining excellent transport links to the city. The plan contains detailed plans for each town in chapter 5, covering Chipping Ongar, Epping, Loughton, Waltham Abbey, Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell, North Weald and Theydon Bois notably.

### 3.6 Sports and Physical Activity Strategic Context

- 3.6.1 The Council has previously and continue to work with Sport England, as a statutory consultee on planning applications affecting playing fields and built sports facilities. To avoid potential objections and delays at a later date if such sites are allocated for development which may affect the delivery of the allocations, discussions are taking place prior to site allocations and policies being confirmed in the pre-submission version of the Local Plan. This, again, reiterates the Local Authority's aims to maintain and balance between urban and rural areas in the Epping Forest District.
- 3.6.2 In line with the commitment to provide high quality sport and leisure provision for residents across the Local Authority, in March 2017 Epping Forest District Council signed a 20-year leisure contract with Places for People Leisure Management (PfP). As part of this new contract, PfP will manage four local authority owned leisure facilities across the District; Ongar Leisure, Epping Sports Centre, Loughton Leisure Centre and Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool.
- 3.6.3 The contract will also see significant improvements to the delivery of leisure services within the district, with plans to invest £9.5m in a state of the art leisure centre in Waltham Abbey, to replace the existing provision.
- 3.6.4 In addition, extensive refurbishment of the three remaining council owned leisure facilities will be undertaken, all of which will be completed by Summer 2018. Further information can be found at [www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk).
- 3.6.5 While not all of the refurbishment was undertaken at the time of site assessments and strategy drafting, the proposed new and improved provision will be referenced and included within the need analysis for future provision across the local authority. This will be further detailed within the individual facility need assessments and recommendation sections.

### 3.7 Sports and Physical Activity Policy and Strategy Review

- 3.7.1 The following section provides a policy review of all strategic documentation that is relevant to this strategy, including the most recent national strategic documentation for sport and leisure, as well as relevant local government documentation and strategic planning work.

#### A NEW STRATEGY FOR SPORT – DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

- 3.7.2 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, following a consultation paper in 2015, launched the new strategy 'Sporting Future: A new Strategy for an Active Nation' in 2016. The development of the new strategy reflects a need to re-invigorate the nation's appetite for participation in sport following what appears to be a significant reduction in participation (highest profile being swimming), following the upsurge after the 2012 London Olympics.
- 3.7.3 The sport strategy is targeting five outcomes which each sports organisation, public or private sector, will be measured against:
- Physical wellbeing
  - Mental wellbeing
  - Individual development
  - Social and community development
  - Economic development.
- 3.7.4 Government funding will go toward organisations which can best demonstrate that they will deliver some or all the five outcomes.

3.7.5 The Delivery of the outcomes will be through three broad outputs;

- More people from every background regularly and meaningfully taking part in sport and physical activity, volunteering and experiencing live sport
- A more productive, sustainable and responsible sports sector
- Maximising international and domestic sporting success and the impact of major sporting events.

**SPORT ENGLAND STRATEGY 2016 - 'TOWARDS AN ACTIVE NATION'**

3.7.6 The Vision for this Strategy is: 'We want everyone in England regardless of age, background or level of ability to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. Some will be young, fit and talented, but most will not. We need a sport sector that welcomes everyone – meets their needs, treats them as individuals and values them as customers'.

3.7.7 The Sport England Strategy 'Towards an Active Nation' puts the policies set out in 'A new Strategy for an Active Nation' into practice. This will mean significant change for Sport England and for their partners.

3.7.8 This strategy sets out Sport England will deliver this task. The key changes Sport England will make are:

- Focusing more money and resources on tackling inactivity because this is where the gains for the individual and for society are greatest
- Investing more in children and young people from the age of five to build positive attitudes to sport and activity as the foundations of an active life
- Helping those who are active now to carry on, but at lower cost to the public purse over time. Sport England will work with those parts of the sector that serve the core market to help them identify ways in which they can become more sustainable and self-sufficient
- Putting customers at the heart of what we do, responding to how they organise their lives and helping the sector to be more welcoming and inclusive, especially of those groups currently under-represented in sport
- Helping sport to keep pace with the digital expectations of customers
- Working nationally where it makes sense to do so (for example on infrastructure and workforce) but encouraging stronger local collaboration to deliver a more joined-up experience of sport and activity for customers
- Working with a wider range of partners, including the private sector, using our expertise as well as our investment to help others align their resources
- Working with the sector to encourage innovation and share best practice particularly through applying the principles and practical learning of behaviour change

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT PROFILE**

3.7.9 Adult participation in sport and active recreation has increased from 20.3% in 2011 to 28.4% in 2016. This indicator is the percentage of the adult population participating in sport and active recreation, at moderate intensity, for at least 30 Minutes on at least 12 days out of the 4 weeks (Active People Survey, Sport England). The Council, along with Active Essex and Sport England, aim to continue to improve these statistics through:

- Maximising opportunities for sport and physical activity to work with commissioners of health, social care, young peoples service and community safety
- Developing a strategic approach for sports facilities and opportunities based on need and evidence
- Capitalise on opportunities to work with NGB's
- Provide opportunities for young people through Sportivate, School Games; and working with the HE and FE sectors.

### 3.8 Policy Review

- 3.8.1 The following sections summarise the key policies and strategies that are relevant to this project but do not fall under the previous planning policy review.

#### EPHING FOREST CORPORATE PLAN 2018-2023

- 3.8.2 At the time of writing this report Epping Forest District Council are developing an updated Corporate Plan, which is intended to be published in 2018. This updated plan builds on the themes identified within the previous issue (2015-2020). The key tenets of the new Corporate Plan are identified below:

- Stronger Communities: promoting healthy lifestyles and independence for the older or disabled community, supporting the population in times of need, enabling communities to achieve their full potential
- Stronger Place: delivering key services, provision of planning development priorities, ensuring infrastructure provision and supporting and attracting varied types of business and employment
- Stronger Council: aiming for the best customer satisfaction, engagement in local democracy, innovative and flexible workforce, efficient use of resources, buildings and assets.

#### EPHING FOREST CORPORATE PLAN 2015-2020

- 3.8.3 The Plan focusses on improving the services that Epping Forest District Council provides for residents, ensuring value for money, high performance and quality services. The council aims to make best use of existing infrastructure to meet the District's needs for development in the most sustainable locations with the least possible impact on the natural and historical environment. Mainly through protecting the Green Belt, Lee Valley Regional Park and Epping Forest itself, the Council aims to keep the individual character, identity and separateness of the towns and villages, all while still solidifying strong links with London. To ensure the Council remains on target, it is essential to monitor the progress of the aims and objectives. Performance monitoring allows the Council to see problems as they arise and intervene to bring them back on track. Progress is monitored against the Key Action Plan and progress reports are published every three months.
- 3.8.4 The key principles of Epping Forest District Council's approach are:
- To ensure that the Council has appropriate resources, on an ongoing basis, to fund its statutory duties and appropriate discretionary services whilst continuing to keep the Council Tax low.
  - To ensure that the Council has a sound and approved Local Plan and commences its delivery
  - To ensure that the Council adopts a modern approach to the delivery of its services

and that they are efficient, effective and fit for purpose.

### **EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL'S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY (2010–2031)**

- 3.8.5 The Council's ambition to create a District that is a great place to live, work, study and do business is again reiterated in this document, the main aim lies as follows;

*“Making the most of our proximity to the capital while dealing with the challenges this poses to the protection of our green and unique environmental heritage. Building thriving, growing, cohesive and sustainable communities where improving quality of life, aspiration and attainment are achievable for all residents. A place where the different villages, towns and communities that make up our District are cherished and the public services that support them, work together as ONE, committed to excellence and efficiency”.*

- 3.8.6 The Council focuses on seven main areas to analyse and develop plans for. The key issues in these 7 areas that are relevant to this strategy are identified as:

- **Housing and Development** - Pressure for development has always been intense and the demand for more sustainable homes, jobs and leisure has never been greater. Levels of demand have contributed to high house prices pushing them beyond the means of many people on average and low incomes
- **Transport** - Epping Forest is the only District in Essex to enjoy the benefits of London Underground services, although these are extremely crowded at peak times. Travelling to and from work in London is part of the daily routine for a large number of resident commuters. Despite rail and road links, many people struggle to travel in and around our District. High levels of car ownership leads to congestion which is in the top 25% nationally
- **Health and Wellbeing** - generally a healthy place to be but there are also profound health inequalities, with parts of the District showing some of the highest life expectancies in Essex, and some among the lowest, including one area in Waltham Abbey recording the second worst outcome on this measure in the county. The District recorded the 3rd highest variation in areas with the highest and lowest life expectancy in Essex

## **3.9 Population and Demographic Analysis**

- 3.9.1 The current and future population profile within Epping Forest District and the locations of population growth are important to understand in planning for the future provision of sport and physical activity.

### **POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

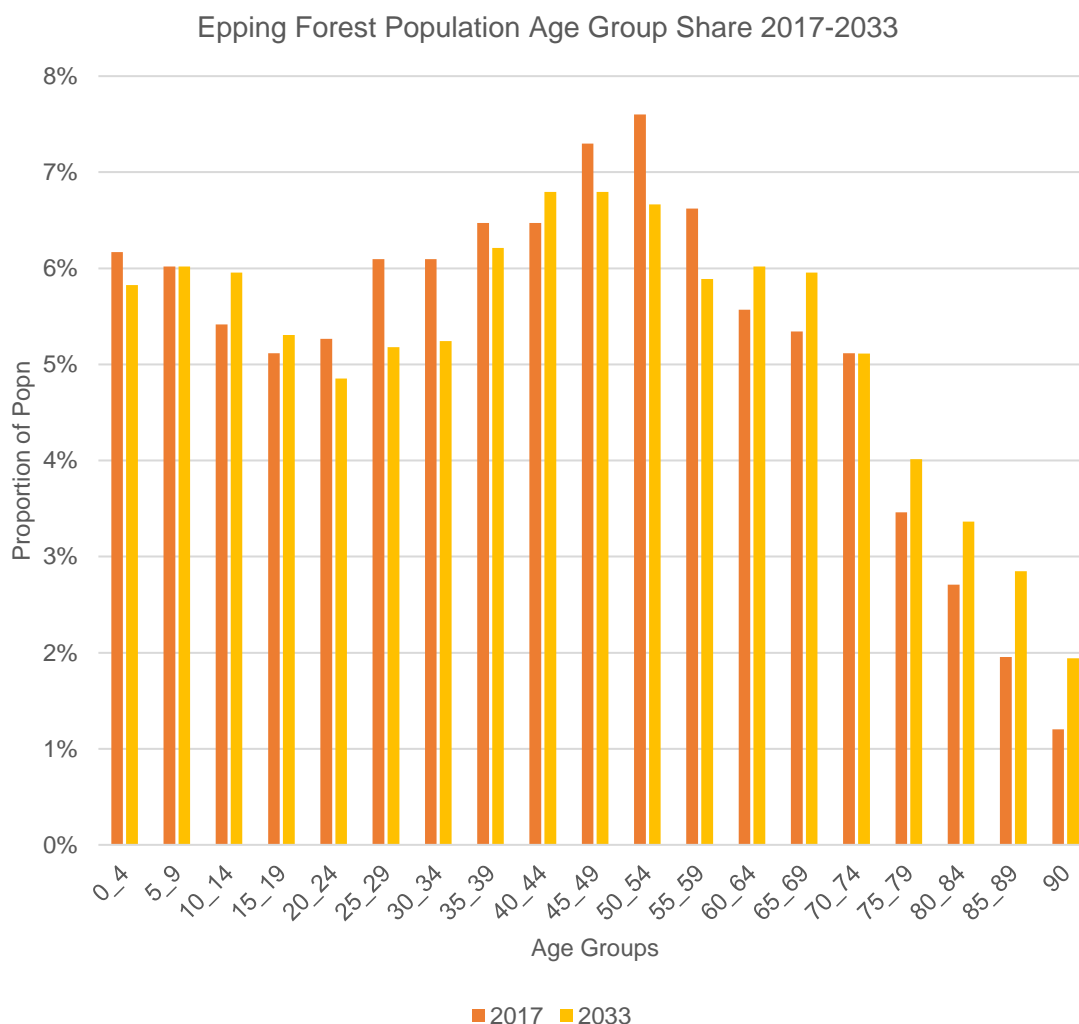
- 3.9.2 Table 3.2 below provides a summary of the key population and demographic trends for Epping Forest District. It should be noted that this data is consistent with that used across the Built Facilities Strategy and Open Spaces Strategy, as well as the wider strategic planning work currently being undertaken by the Council.

**Table 3.2: Population and demographics analysis for EFDC**

Epping Forest District Demographic Summary	Data
<b>Current population</b>	132,900 (2017 estimate)
<b>Future population-2033</b>	154,500
<b>Age profile</b>	The number of residents aged 0-59 is reducing, while the 60+ population is projected to grow Older people will make up an increasing proportion of the population, as the number of people aged 60 or above significantly increases throughout the next 10 years. This is the only age group forecast to have very significant changes in size.

3.9.3 Figure 3.1 below provides a graphical representation of these population trends, illustrating the projected change in proportion of population, between 2017 and 2033.

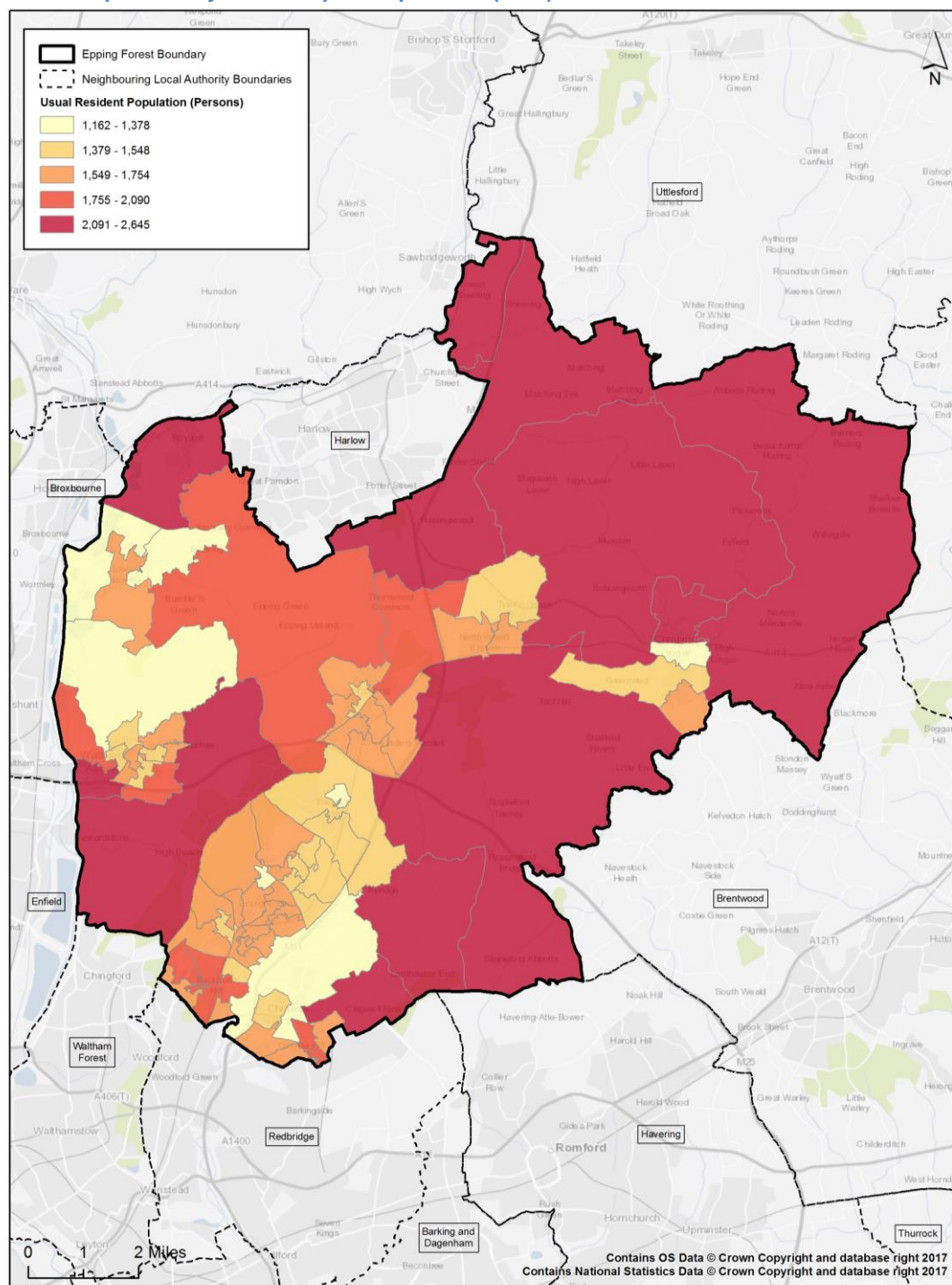
**Figure 3.1 – Epping Forest District Population Share by Age Group**



3.9.4 To provide greater insight into the current and projected population trends across the District, Figure 3.2 to 3.4 below show the overall 2017 population per Lower Super Output Area (LSOA), the 2017 population density and the projected change in population to 2033.



**Figure 3.2 – Population by Lower Super Output Area (2017)**



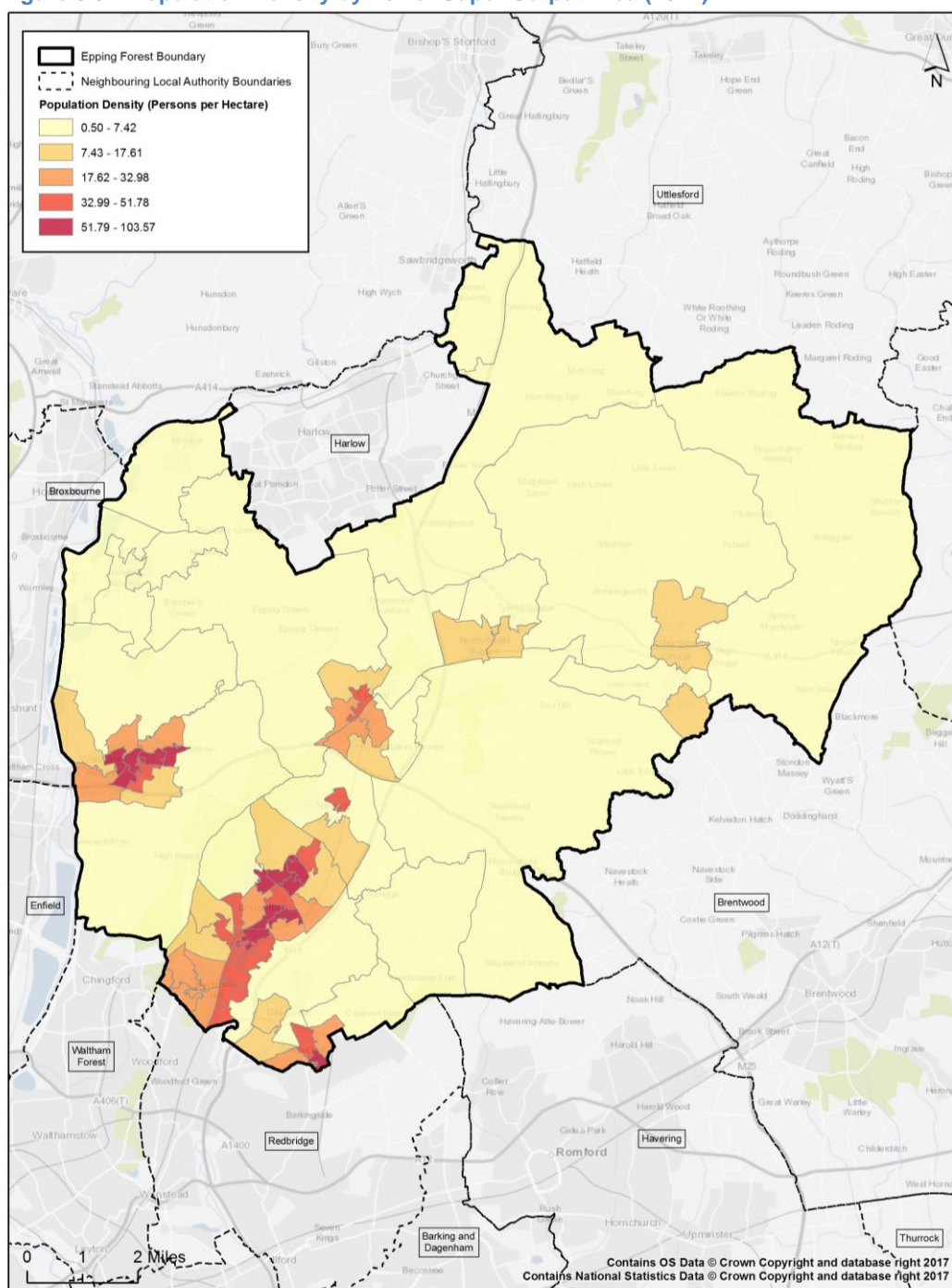
**Usual resident population by lower super output area in Epping Forest (2017)**



3.9.5 Figure 3.2 illustrates the total number of residents per super output area, therefore the darker red areas show the highest number of residents. It should be noted that while the more rural areas are typically more sparse in terms of population, they are also significantly bigger, therefore they typically have a greater overall volume of residents. The population density map shown as Figure 3.3 overleaf shows this in more clarity.



**Figure 3.3 – Population Density by Lower Super Output Area (2017)**

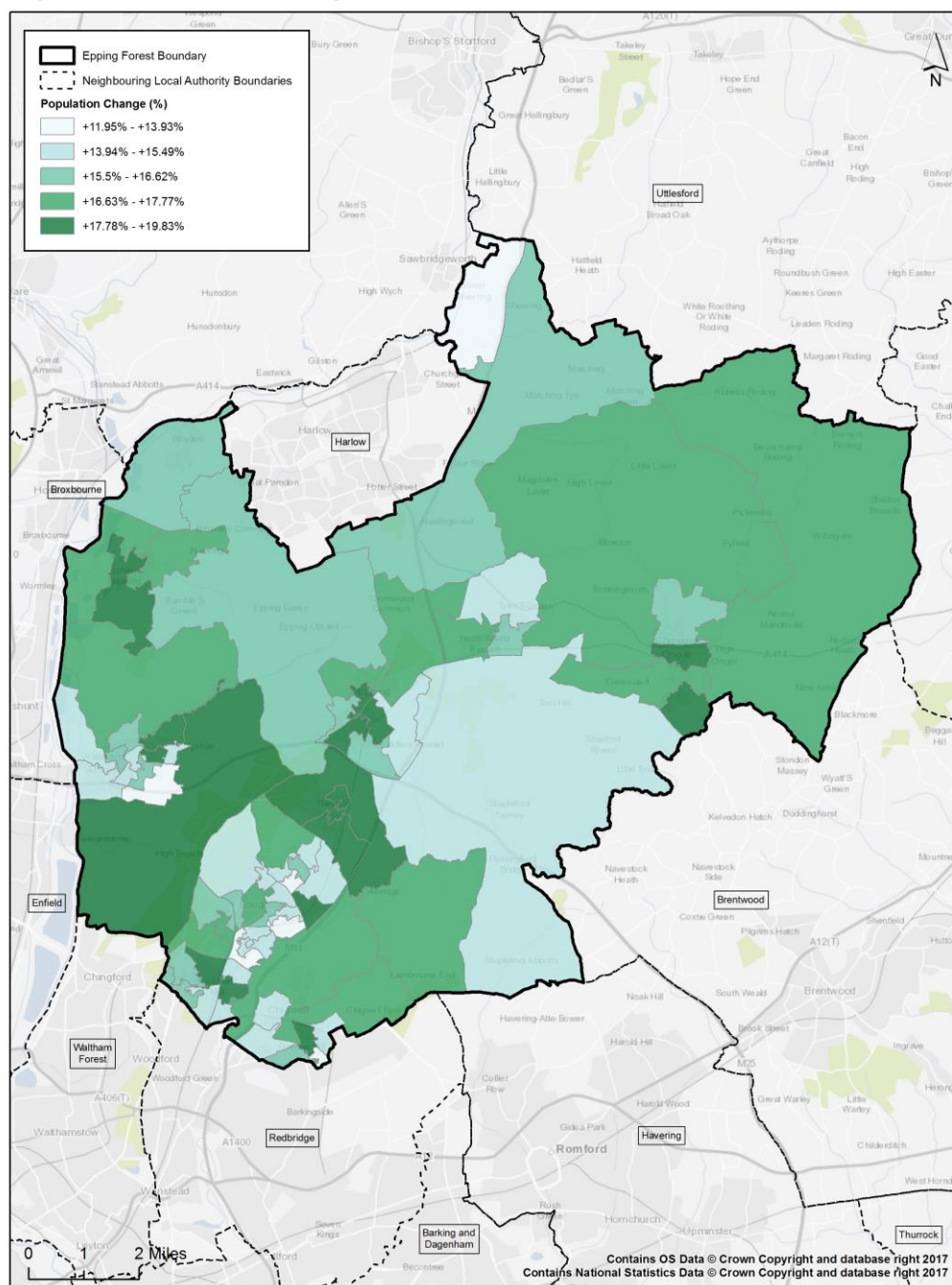


**Usual resident population density by lower super output area in Epping Forest (2017)**



3.9.6 As expected, Figure 3.3 indicates that main settlements of Epping, Waltham Abbey and Chigwell have the highest population density, with pockets of relatively high density in smaller settlements, such as Chipping Ongar. Figure 3.3 illustrates the low density of population that exists across the majority of the District, which coincides with high levels of rurality and large areas of open space and woodland.

**Figure 3.4 – Population Change 2017 - 2033**



**Percentage change in population by lower super output area in Epping Forest (2017 - 2033)**



- 3.9.7 Figure 3.4 illustrates the expected population change, which is largely projected to occur in South Epping, Waltham Abbey and in Chipping Ongar and surrounding areas. This analysis should be taken into consideration as part of future development plans across the District.
- 3.9.8 It should also be noted that significant developments are planned within the neighbouring local authority of Harlow, which will have a significant impact on the demand for housing and services in Harlow, East Herts and Epping Forest District. The Garden Town project will see approximately 16,500 new homes built in Harlow and the surrounding area by 2033. Epping Forest District

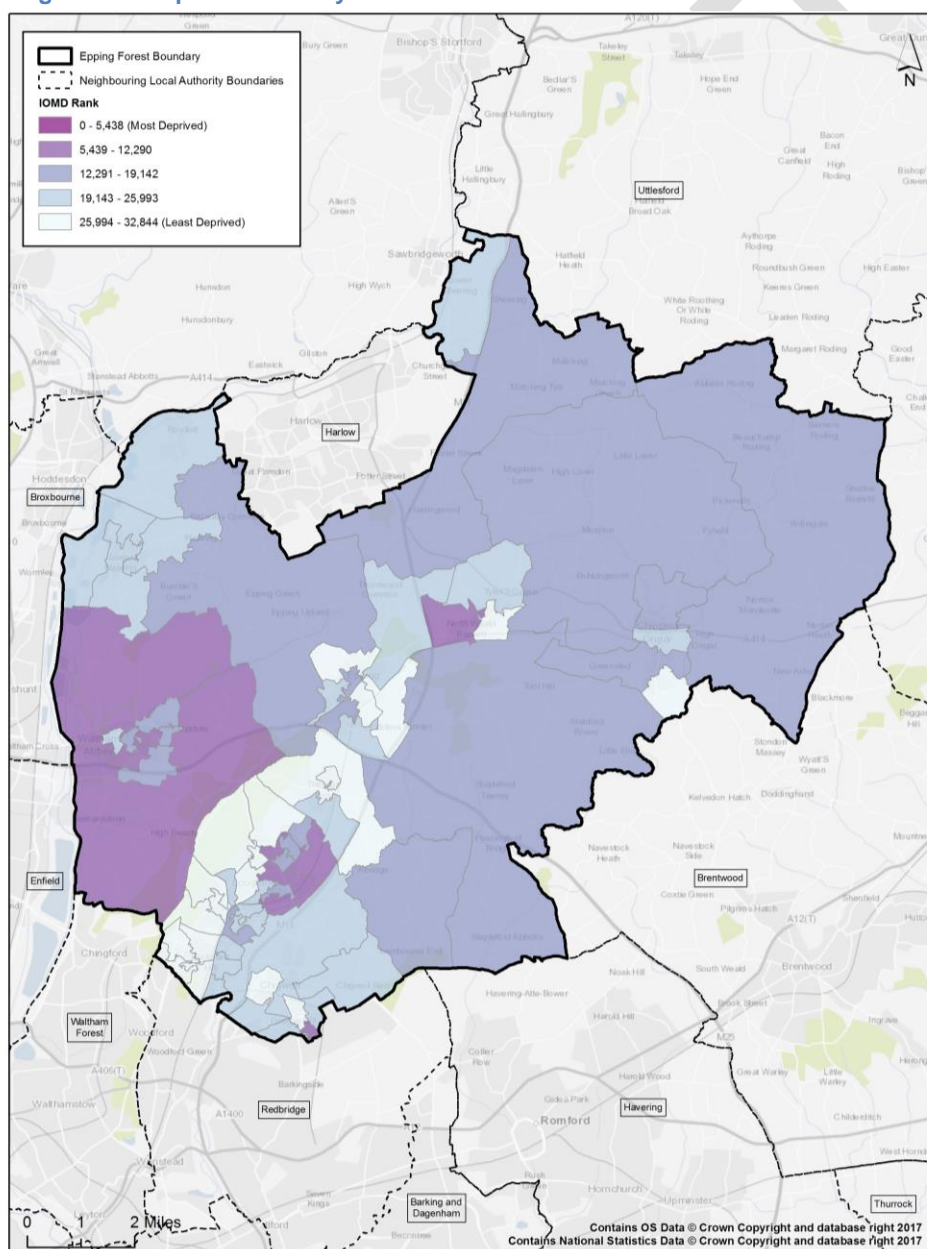
Council is currently working with East Herts Council and Harlow Council to plan this development effectively and efficiently, through to the target completion date of 2033.

- 3.9.9 In addition, this this, there is a significant housing allocation within EFDC, proposed as part of the developing Local Plan, that is helping to meet Harlow's housing need and that of the wider Harlow Metropolitan Area. There is also projected to be significant growth both inside and outside of Epping Forest District, all of which will influence the requirement for sport and leisure provision over the life time of this strategy.

### DEPRIVATION ANALYSIS

- 3.9.10 It is key that any future sporting developments meet the specific needs of their residents and it therefore important to consider deprivation trends for the local authority. Geographical areas with high level of deprivation will typically have lower levels of health, standard or living and car ownership, which all contribute to a lower overall level of participation.

**Figure 3.5: Deprivation Analysis - 2017**



**Index of multiple deprivation by lower super output area in Epping Forest (2015)**



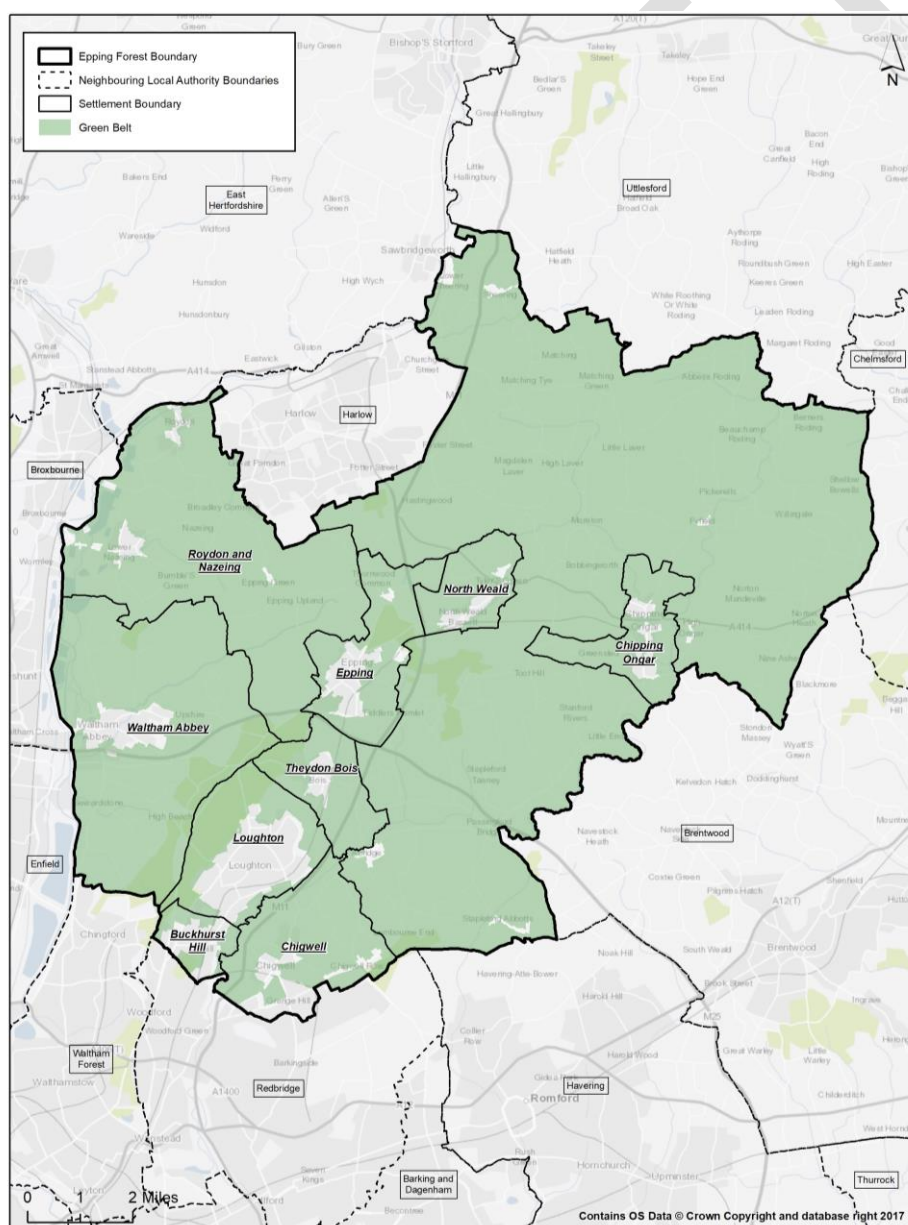
3.9.11 Figure 3.5 shows the levels of deprivation across the study area, with the most deprived areas being located on the western side of the local authority. It should be noted that the overall deprivation analysis indicates that there is a low general level of deprivation in the study area.

### SETTLEMENT ANALYSIS

3.9.12 In line with the Local Plan and previous analysis undertaken for site selection and allocation, this strategy will look to assess the provision of sports and physical activity facilities at a settlement level.

3.9.13 As it would not be expected that every settlement within a local authority has its own sport and leisure facilities, only the larger settlements will be specifically identified as part of this analysis. Those that have been selected, due to their population size, have been identified in Figure 3.6 below. Whilst Roydon and Nazeing have traditionally been treated as separate settlements, they are small in size and closely located, meaning that there are overlapping built facility accessibility catchments. They have therefore been joined for the purposes of this study.

**Figure 3.6 – Settlement analysis for Epping Forest District**

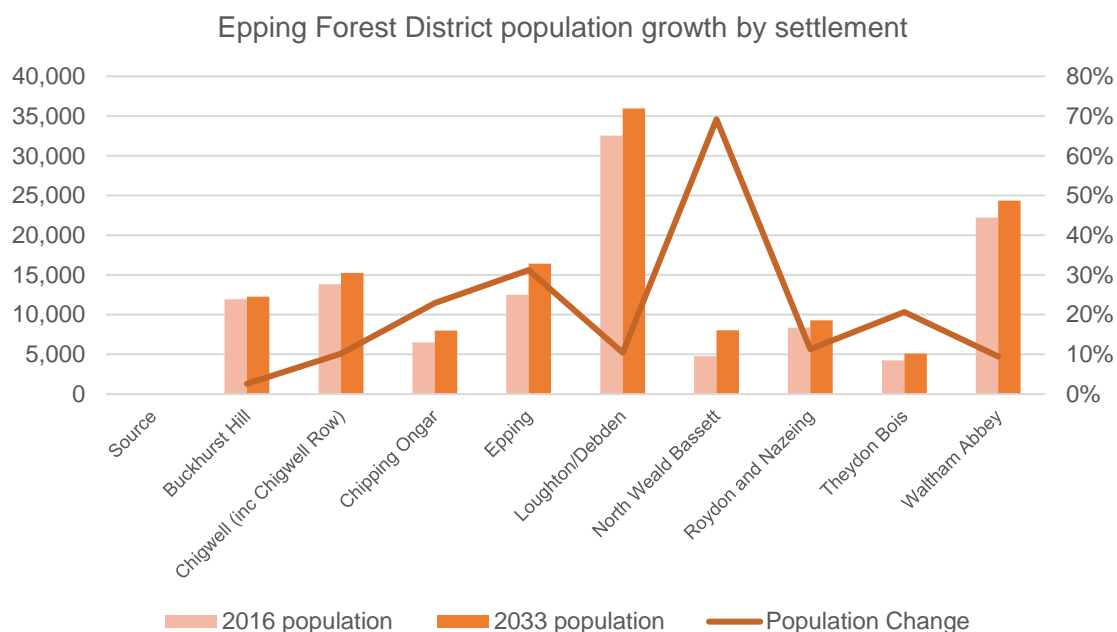


**Major settlements in Epping Forest**

3.9.14 To understand the population trends for each of the settlements identified in Figure 3.6, the graph below shows the projected population change for each of the specific areas. This analysis illustrates that all large settlements across the District are projected to grow throughout the lifetime of the strategy, with significant growth areas being North Weald Bassett, Epping and Chipping Ongar.

3.9.15 This population growth and the trends across the District will inform the future recommendations and action plan identified within this strategy.

**Figure 3.7 – Population trends by Epping Forest District settlement**



## 3.10 Physical Activity and Participation

### THE VALUE OF PARTICIPATION

3.10.1 The value of participation in sport and physical activity is significant, and its contribution to individual and community quality of life should not be underestimated. This is true for both younger and older people; participation in sport and physical activity delivers:

- Opportunities for physical activity, and therefore more 'active living'
- Health benefits – cardio vascular, stronger bones, mobility
- Health improvement
- Mental health benefits
- Social benefits – socialisation, communication, inter-action, regular contact, stimulation

3.10.2 In addition, participation in sport and physical activity can facilitate the learning of new skills, development of individual and team ability / performance, and provide a 'disciplined' environment in which participants can 'grow' and develop.

3.10.3 The benefits of regular and active participation in sport and physical activity will be important to promote in relation to future sport, leisure and physical activity in Epping Forest District. There is an existing audience in the District, which already recognizes the advantages of participation, and a latent community who are ready to take part. The sport, physical activity and leisure offer in the

District can support the delivery of the desired outcomes across a number of District priorities and objectives.

### CURRENT PARTICIPATION RATES

- 3.10.4 In terms of the Public Health England definition for physical activity (150 minutes or equivalent of at least moderate intensity activity per week) 21.8% of adults are doing enough physical activity to benefit their health (i.e. exercising three or more times per week), the second highest in the county and above the national average of 17.6%.

**Table 3.4: Physically active and inactive adults**

Rate	Epping Forest	Essex	England
% Active	60.5 %	57.0 %	57.0 %
% Inactive	25.3 %	28.3 %	28.7 %

Source: Public Health England (based on Active People Survey source data) 2015.

- 3.10.5 The Sport England Active People Survey (APS), now Active Lives, show us that Essex shows no statistical significant change in participation rates since 2008/09 APS for once a week participation in sport for adults age 16+ years. The figures for Essex are as follows; 36.7% in 2008/09, and 35.7% in 2015/16. There is a slight increase for rates in Epping Forest District, increasing from 37.8% in 2008/09 to 43.0% in 2015/16, however these rates fluctuate throughout the years. Albeit, the participation rates for Epping Forest District have consistently been above the average for the region (37.2% in 2015/16) however the rates for Essex are largely in line with the regional baseline level. This data is shown in table 3.5 below.

**Table 3.5: APS Participation Rates in Epping Forest, Essex, Regionally (East) and Nationally - Adult (16+) Participation in Sport (at least once a week), by year**

Year	Epping Forest	Essex	East	England
2008/09	37.8 %	36.7 %	36.5 %	36.5 %
2009/10	36.5 %	35.7 %	35.9 %	36.2 %
2010/11	39.6 %	36.1 %	35.6 %	35.6 %
2011/12	42.5 %	38.7 %	36.9 %	36.9 %
2012/13	41.2 %	36.8 %	35.9 %	36.6 %
2013/14	39.0 %	35.7 %	35.6 %	36.1 %
2014/15	38.4 %	34.8 %	35.6 %	35.8 %
2015/16	43.0 %	35.7 %	36.2 %	36.1 %

Source: Active People Survey. Measure: Adult (16+) participation in sport (at least once a week) by year, one session per week (at least 4 sessions of at least moderate intensity for at least 30 minutes in the previous 28 days). Time period(s): 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16

Source: Sport England Local Sports Profile January 2017

- 3.10.6 The percentage of those physically inactive in Epping Forest District is 45.7%, below the national level of 52.5% and also below the regional level of 51.3%. In Epping Forest District, male participation (gender breakdown not shown in table able) increases from 41.3% in 2008/09 to 45.3% in 2015/16, whilst in the same time period, female participation also increases from 34.6% in 2008/09 to 40.8% in 2015/16.
- 3.10.7 The number of adults wanting to do more sport in Epping Forest District is 48.1% (2014/15), which is lower than the Essex average (53.9%) and national figures (58%).

## ACTIVE LIVES

3.10.8 In 2016, Sport England launched the Active Lives monitoring system, to measure sport and physical activity in with the objectives set out by the recent DCMS and Sport England strategies.

3.10.9 Although the project is still in its 1<sup>st</sup> year and therefore providing a consistent and reliable benchmark is difficult, Data for the study area identifies that:

- 27.2% of Epping Forest District residents aged 16+ are inactive (2014/15), in line with the national level at 27.7%
- 22.8% of Epping Forest District residents aged 16+ took part in sport and physical activity 3 (or more) times a week, compared to 17% in Essex and 17.5% in England.

## SPORT ENGLAND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

3.10.10 Sport England, the Government's agency for sport, measures 3 key areas in relation to sport and physical activity. Table 3.7 overleaf sets out the performance of LBN, compared with the London region and the rest of England.

**Table 3.7: Participation frequency in physical activity – comparison with Sport England KPI's (all figures are %)**

Indicator	Epping Forest				Essex				England			
	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
KPI3 Club Membership	33.7	29	30.1	29.9	24.6	22.7	22.8	22.8	21.5	21.6	21.8	22.2
KPI4 Received tuition or coaching in last 12 months	24.8	20	21.4	27.2	17.8	16.7	16.6	15.1	16.1	16.4	15.6	15.6
KPI5 Took part in organised competition in last 12 months	15.6	17.9	*	14.9	15.1	13.2	14.3	13.9	12.6	13.3	13.3	13.3

\* Data unavailable, question not asked or insufficient sample size

Source: Active People Survey. Measure: Key Performance Indicators 3,4,5. Time Period(s): 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16



## SPORTS ACTIVITY

3.10.11 The Active People Survey identifies that gym sessions (14.3%), swimming (9.71%) and cycling (8.76%) are the top sports in which people participate at least once a month in the District. Top sports by local area are based on the assumption that these are aligned to those sports which have the highest participation nationally, so data has only been run for those sports which have the highest participation at national level.

## MARKET SEGMENTATION

3.10.12 Sport England's market segmentation model comprises of 19 'sporting' segments. It is designed to assist understanding of attitudes, motivations and perceived barriers to sports participation and to assist agencies involved in the delivery of sport and recreation to develop tailored interventions, communicate more effectively with the target market and to better understand participation in the context of life stages and cycles.

3.10.13 The market segmentation illustrates, in sports participation terms, the diversity of the District, and therefore the need to ensure that future provision addresses local needs, based on population age, structure, health inequalities, and current participation levels, as well as interest, and existing facility infrastructure.

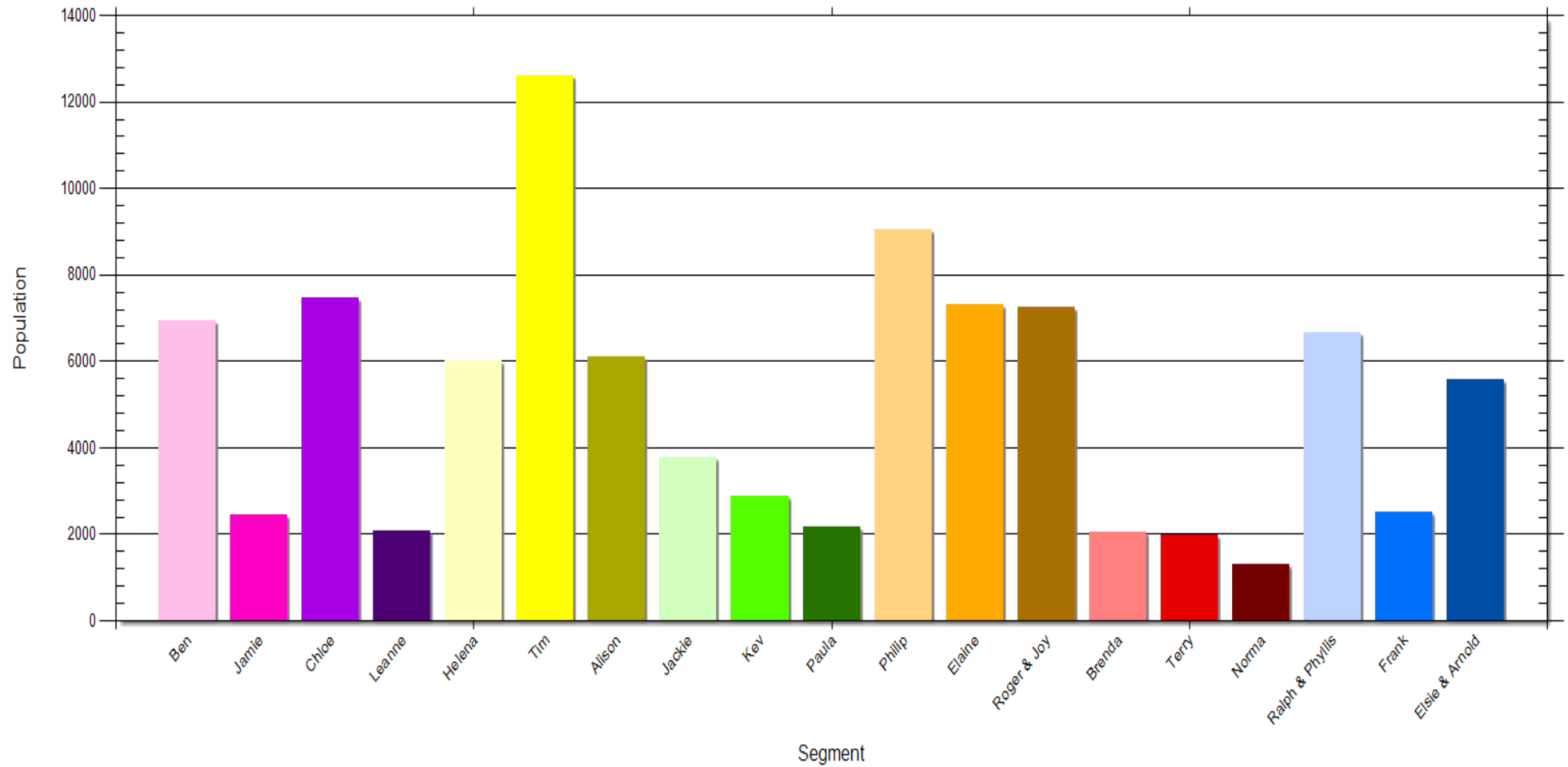
3.10.14 In Epping Forest District, the dominant segments are: Kev, Jamie, Paula, Brenda, and Leanne.

**Table 3.8: Summary of Market Segmentation for Epping Forest District**

Market Segment	Key Characteristics	% Epping Forest	Activities / Sports that appeal to segment
Tim - Settling Down Males	Sporty male professionals (aged 26-45), buying a house and settling down with partner	13.1%	Keep fit/gym, Football, Cycling, Swimming
Philip – Comfortable Mid-Life Males	Mid-life professional (aged 46-55), sporty males with older children and more time for themselves	9.4%	Cycling, Keep fit/gym, Swimming
Chloe – Fitness Class Friend	Young graduate professionals (aged 18-25) image-conscious females keeping fit and trim	7.8%	Keep fit/gym, Swimming, Athletics
Elaine – Empty Nest Career Ladies	Mid-life professionals (aged 46-55) who have more time for themselves since their children left home	7.6%	Keep fit/gym, Swimming, Cycling
Roger & Joy – Early Retirement Couples	Free-time couples (aged 56-65) nearing the end of their careers	7.5%	Keep fit/gym, Swimming, Cycling

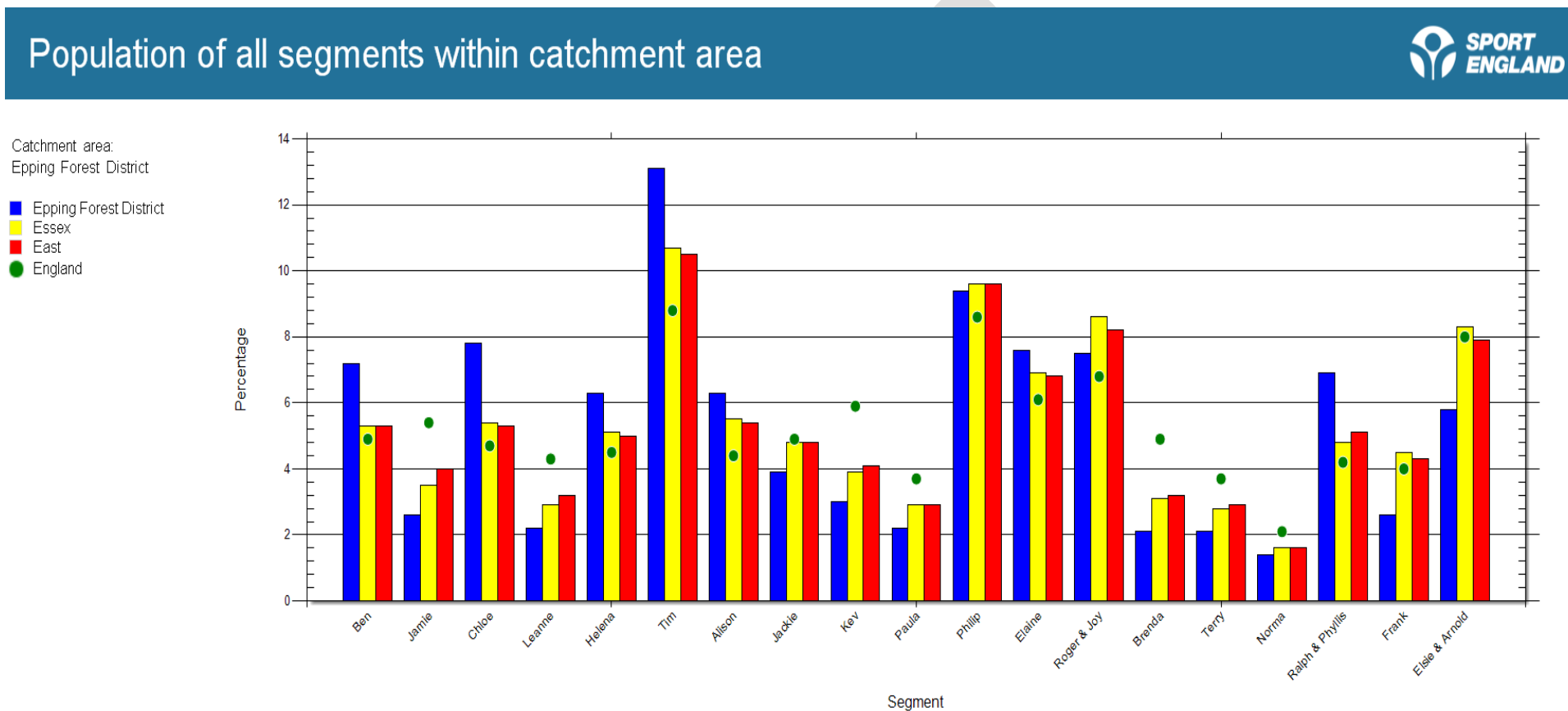
3.10.15 The overall market segmentation is:

**Figure 3.8: Market Segmentation for Epping Forest District**



3.10.16 Figure 3.9 compares the dominant market segments as a percentage of the population with Essex and national percentages.

Figure 3.9: Market Segmentation in Epping Forest District– comparison with Essex and National percentages



## **Evidence Base and Needs Assessment**

DRAFT

## 4 Built Sports Facility Supply Analysis

4.1.1 This section of the report provides an audit of all facilities considered within the Leisure Facility Needs assessment, as well as summarising the visual assessments, undertaken at strategic facilities throughout the District. Information within this section has been collected through site assessments and consultations, as well as being supplemented by local officer knowledge.

### 4.2 Facility Audit

4.2.1 The audit of facility supply includes an assessment of the following indoor facilities;

- Indoor swimming pools
- Sports Halls (with 3 badminton courts or more)
- Health and fitness suites

4.2.2 Where facilities are accessible, audits have been undertaken in the presence of management staff from the facilities. This provides excellent context and further detail on the facility, as the site assessment can only be seen as a point in time.

4.2.3 Table 4.1 overleaf provides a summary of facility provision for each of the different facility types assessed across the study area. Further detail on the size of each of the facilities is provided in the specific facility quality assessment summaries.

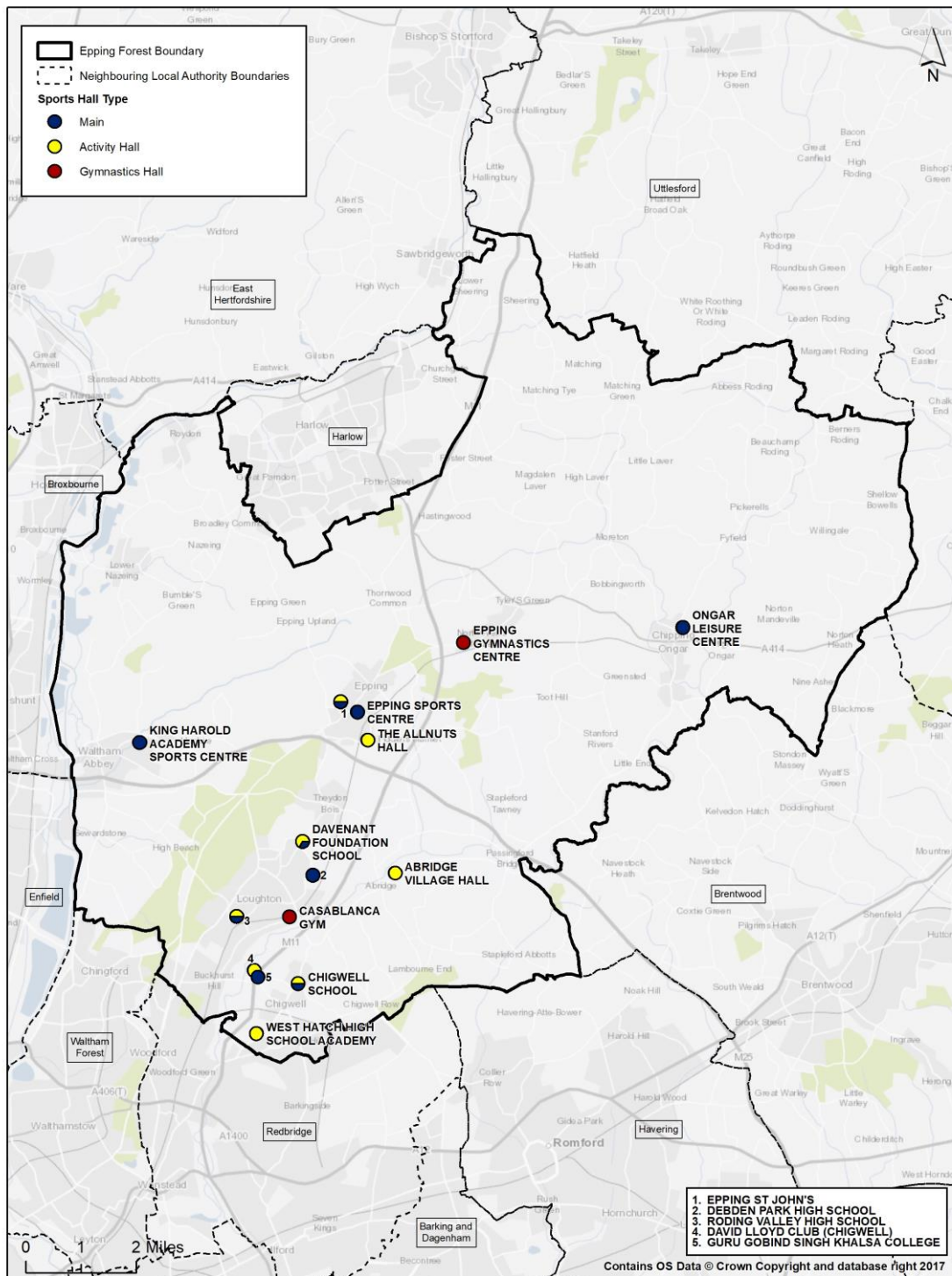
4.2.4 Following this, Figure 4.1 – 4.3 show the location of facilities by type. The element of location and accessibility will be further expanded upon as part of the catchment area accessibility section of this report.

**Table 4.1 Facility Summary Epping Forest District**

Facility	Sports Halls (3BC+)	Sports Halls (2BC+)	Studio	Health & Fitness Suites	Indoor Swimming Pools
Chigwell School	1			1	
Davenant Foundation School	1			1	1
David Lloyd Club (Chigwell)		1	2	1	1
Debden Park High School	1		1		
Epping Forest College				1	
Epping Sports Centre	1		1	1	
Epping St John's	1				
Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College	1				
King Harold Academy Sports Centre	1		1	1	
Krunch Gym			1	1	
Loughton Leisure Centre			2	1	2
Marriott Leisure Club (Waltham Abbey)				1	2
Metropolitan Police (Chigwell Sports Club)				1	
Nuffield Health Chigwell Fitness & Wellbeing Gym			3	1	2
Ongar Leisure Centre	1		2	1	1
Pro SW Gym			1	1	
Roding Valley High School	1	1			
Waltham Abbey Swimming			1	1	2

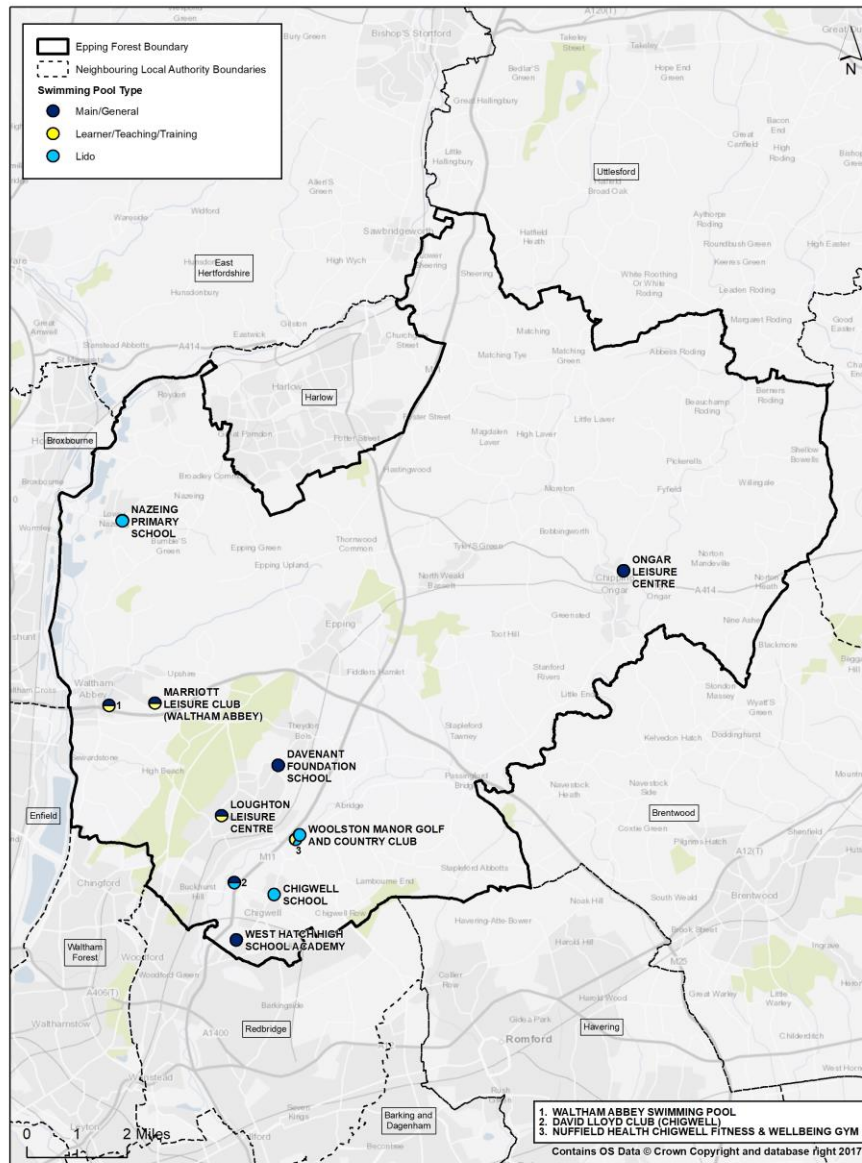
Facility	Sports Halls (3BC+)	Sports Halls (2BC+)	Studio	Health & Fitness Suites	Indoor Swimming Pools
Pool					
West Hatch High School Academy	1				1
Woolston Manor Golf and Country Club				1	1

Figure 4.1 Sports Hall provision in Epping Forest District

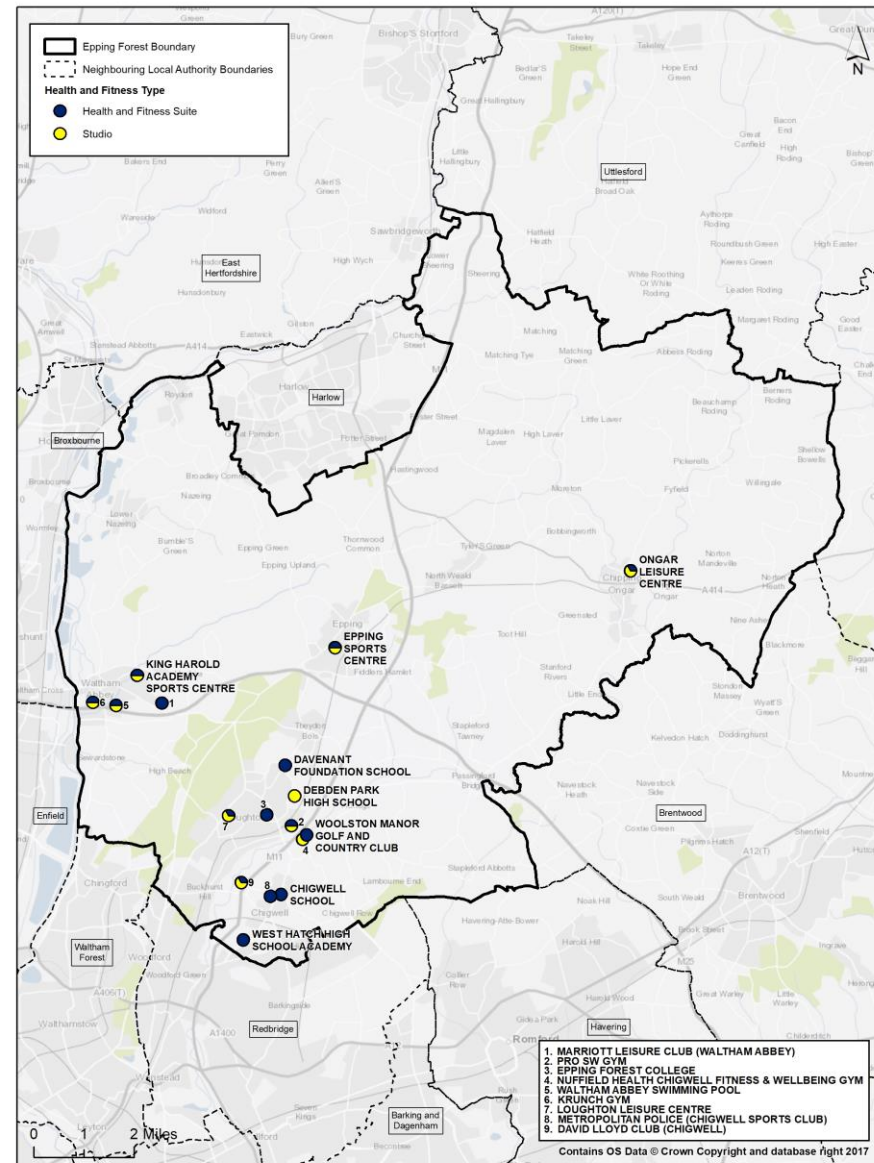


Sports Halls by type in Epping Forest

Figure 4.2 and 4.3 Swimming Pool and Health Fitness provision in Epping Forest District



Swimming Pools by type in Epping Forest



Health and Fitness facilities by type in Epping Forest



### 4.3 Facility Quality Assessment

- 4.3.1 Detailed quality assessments have been undertaken on all strategic sports facilities in the study area<sup>2</sup>. All facilities were scored from 1 to 5, for each facility type. based on the age, quality, changing provision and general appeal of the facility, with the key questions being whether the facility is pleasant to use and if it meets the needs and expectations of users. It should be noted that none of these criteria are weighted, with the final score for each facility type representing a total rating for the quality of the facility.
- 4.3.2 Table 4.2 below provides a summary of the average scores for each of the facilities across the Local Authority. This table provides an average of all facility types, combined to give a overall quality score for each of the strategic leisure facilities in Epping Forest District.
- 4.3.3 Table 4.3 presents a summary of the same data, split by facility type, to show the overall standard of each aspect of built sports facilities across Epping Forest District. It should be noted that changing facilities have been specifically identified due to their importance to the overall feel of a facility.
- 4.3.4 The facilities were scored out of 5, with each of the ratings assigned to the following levels of quality
- 5 – Excellent
  - 4 – Good
  - 3 – Adequate
  - 2 – Poor
  - 1 – Very poor

**Table 4.2 Facility Summary in Epping Forest District by leisure centre**

Facility	Average Quality Score (Out of 5)
<b>Epping Sports Centre</b>	3.0
<b>Loughton Leisure Centre</b>	3.6
<b>Ongar Leisure Centre</b>	3.0
<b>Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool</b>	2.4

**Table 4.3 Facility Summary in Epping Forest District by facility type**

Facility Type	Average Quality Score (Out of 5)
<b>Reception area</b>	3.3
<b>Health and fitness suite</b>	3.8
<b>Sports Hall</b>	2.0
<b>Swimming Pool – Main Pool</b>	2.3
<b>Swimming Pool – Learner Pool</b>	2.5
<b>Studios</b>	3.0
<b>Changing rooms – Dry</b>	3.5
<b>Changing rooms – Wet</b>	3.0

- 4.3.5 The site assessment scores illustrate that in general, current facility provision is adequate across Epping Forest District. It should be noted, however, that none of the strategic local authority owned facilities have a GOOD overall facility rating.

<sup>2</sup> Sports halls of 3 Badminton Courts or greater and Swimming Pools of 6 x 25m are defined by Sport England as 'strategic' built facilities

- 4.3.6 In terms of facilities, the current provision of health & fitness across the local authority is of a relatively high standard, however provision at Waltham Abbey Pools reduces the average quality rating to the high end of ADEQUATE.
- 4.3.7 Dry changing rooms across the Local Authority were also identified as being above average, while not being seen as GOOD.
- 4.3.8 On the other hand, the current provision of sports halls across the Local Authority is seen to be POOR, while the average quality of Swimming Pools is also between POOR and ADEQUATE.
- 4.3.9 To provide further detail on the supply of key sports facilities in Epping Forest District, the following site summaries show the key findings from the site assessments undertaken as part of the project. Further detail is provided within Appendix 2 – Site Assessment Summaries.

### **EPPING SPORTS CENTRE**

- 4.3.10 Built in 1975, the centre has small footprint and is located in the town centre, 5 minutes away from the Epping Central Line Station by foot. The entrance is away from the road and the car park is very small and insufficient. The car park is also misused by local commuters and by those travelling into the town centre, which exacerbates the issues with space.
- 4.3.11 The welcome area has been refurbished and has a reception, staffed with 2 Places for People employees. The 4-court sports hall is well used but nearing end of life, with the detailed condition survey indicating there is water ingress, caused by the facility being below ground level.
- 4.3.12 The Health & Fitness facilities have been recently refurbished and are now in good condition, with plans to expand the H&F suite to allow for the high demand at peak times. The facility currently has a large studio, however there are plans to use this as space for the extension of the H&F facilities.
- 4.3.13 The centre has 4 squash courts, which are of good quality, however there are plans to turn two of these courts into studios, for H&F and 'spinning'.
- 4.3.14 There is also a small bar and function area, which is minimally used and is no longer used as a licensed bar. There are plans to convert this area into a 'spin studio'.
- 4.3.15 Access routes within the facility are generally poor, with no disabled access to the sports hall, narrow corridors and a convoluted design.
- 4.3.16 Table 2.1 below summarises the facility mix and indicates the quality score for each individual aspect of the facility.

**Table 2.1 Epping Sports Centre Facility Summary**

<b>Facility Type</b>	<b>Level of provision</b>	<b>Quality (out of 5)</b>
Reception area	Small but modern with barriers. Issues with crowding and access issues during peak time.	3
Health and fitness suite	40 stations (developing to 70 as part of the imminent refurbishment)	4
Sports Hall	4 court sports hall with a high ceiling, which is approaching end of life and suffering from water ingress. The facility has poor accessibility, with no disabled access	2
Swimming Pool	None	NA
Studios	1 x aerobic studio (no spinning). This is 'tired' however will shortly be converted to an extended H&F suite. 3 more studios are being added as part of imminent refurbishment.	3
Changing rooms	2 x dry. There are plans to refurbish these fully in 2017.	3

## LOUGHTON LEISURE CENTRE

- 4.3.17 The newest and most modern facility in the Places for People portfolio, built in 2003, this leisure centre provides a large and modern leisure complex with a range of provision. The reception area is large and welcoming, with a coffee shop located within the atrium.
- 4.3.18 At the time of visit, Places for People were planning a significant refurbishment, especially to the Health & Fitness facilities, studio space and changing areas. This development will take 9 months, from September 2017 onwards. The existing H&F suite is large and open, with good quality equipment and dedicated free weight section. There are plans to extend this provision into the northern side of the facility, including studio space and a larger free-weight section. Once this development has been made, it is envisaged that the H&F and studio space will be of a very high quality and welcoming for members.
- 4.3.19 The swimming provision is split into a 6 lane 25 metre pool and a learner pool, both of which are well-used throughout peak and off-peak times. Both facilities are of a good quality and have a viewing gallery. The learner pool is especially busy, with 2500 children registered on the learn to swim scheme.
- 4.3.20 Consultation with the operator indicated that the pool timetable is not as efficient as it could be for general public access, due to the need to provide peak time availability to the Epping Forest Swimming Club, who are a major user of the facility and key to the development of competitive swimming in the area.
- 4.3.21 The changing rooms across the facility are of an adequate quality and well-maintained.
- 4.3.22 Access to the facility and routeways within the centre are both good, however the car park is currently pay and display for users. This is likely to be a barrier to entry for some residents and represents a potential risk for future participation, although free parking is available at weekends.

**Table 2.2 Loughton Leisure Centre Facility Summary**

Facility Type	Level of provision	Quality (out of 5)
Reception area	Large and modern with barriers, with access to a café	4
Health and fitness suite	60 stations – high quality and with plans for further expansion – 150 stations	4
Sports Hall	N/A	2
Swimming Pool	1 x 6 lane 25 m pool 1 x learner pool	Main pool – 4 Learner pool – 4
Studios	2 x studios, one of which is the 'octagon', used for community events	3
Changing rooms	2 x dry and 1 x wet	Dry – 4 Wet – 3

## ONGAR LEISURE CENTRE

- 4.3.23 Overall, this is a facility of adequate facility that is well used by local residents and has a strong community feel. At the time of the visit, the facility was sharing the car park with the neighbouring school, causing severe issues with congestion. Consultation has indicated that this is a common issue with the facility, especially during periods of peak demand. This is likely to be eased when the new school facilities open in late 2017.
- 4.3.24 The reception area is small and feels dated, with a reception desk and barriers leading into the main facility.
- 4.3.25 The health and fitness provision is of good quality, however there is limited free-weights provision and the H&F suite gets congested at periods of peak demand. The facility has two studios on the first floor, which have been recently updated, one of which now provides virtual spinning.

- 4.3.26 The swimming provision is well used but is at end of life, leading to a significant maintenance requirement and a tired, outdated feel.
- 4.3.27 Changing provision throughout the centre is of a good quality, with both wet and dry facilities appearing to be clean and modern on inspection.
- 4.3.28 The 4-court sports hall is outdated and nearing end of life. It is used for community activities, football, and other ad-hoc sports bookings.
- 4.3.29 Overall, consultation with the centre management team indicated that maintenance costs for the facility are significant, with the infrastructure generally ageing and inefficient.

**Table 2.3 Ongar Leisure Centre Facility Summary**

Facility Type	Level of provision	Quality (out of 5)
Reception area	Large and modern with barriers, with access to a café	4
Health and fitness suite	42 stations – adequate quality but room is small and disjointed	4
Sports Hall	None	3
Swimming Pool	1 x 6 lane 25 m pool 1 x learner pool	2
Studios	2 x studios, one of which is the 'octagon', used for community events	3
Changing rooms	2 x dry and 1 x wet	Dry – 4 Wet – 3

#### **WALTHAM ABBEY SWIMMING POOL**

- 4.3.30 This is the oldest facility in Epping Forest District, having been built in the 1960's. The entrance hall is small; however, it is welcoming and large enough to avoid congestion at peak time. Overall the centre has a strong sense of community, with staff knowing members by name and delivering a high level of service during both peak and off-peak periods.
- 4.3.31 Given the age and condition of the facility, it has reached end of life, however plans have been agreed to replace the current facility with a new leisure centre, located within a new development at Hillhouse, on the Ninefields Estate. There are plans to build a first-class modern swimming pool and leisure centre with links to the health centre and community facilities.
- 4.3.32 The health and fitness provision at the existing facility is of a poor quality, with a small free weights section and limited open floor space. The swimming provision, made up of a 6 lane 25 m pool and a learner pool, is also at end of life. Given the age of the facility, maintenance issues are common and it is accepted that staff are 'keeping the centre going' until the new facility is developed.

**Table 2.4 Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool**

Facility Type	Level of provision	Quality (out of 5)
Reception area	Small but adequate	3
Health and fitness suite	47 stations – poor quality and small	2
Sports Hall	None	0
Swimming Pool	1 x 6 lane 25 m pool 1 x learner pool	Main pool – 1 Learner pool – 1
Studios	2 x studio, one of which is the 'octagon', used for community events	3
Changing rooms	2 x dry and 1 x wet	Dry – 4 Wet – 3

## 4.4 Facility Accessibility

- 4.4.1 As identified in the strategic context, car ownership across Epping Forest District is relatively high, with the Local Authority ranked 254<sup>th</sup> (out of 348) for households that don't have access to a car or van.
- 4.4.2 This high car ownership is likely to lead to the majority of residents using cars to access sport and leisure facilities across the Local Authority. As a result, the needs assessment sections for each of the specific facility types include a catchment area map, based on a 20-minute drive time.
- 4.4.3 Catchment areas for different types of provision illustrate the areas currently not served by existing indoor sports facilities. It should be noted, however, that the distance that people are willing to travel will vary depending on additional parameters such as the quality of the facility. To provide a consistent analysis of travel time and catchment areas, the concept of 'effective catchment' will be used, defined as the distance travelled by 75-80% of users. The catchment analysis for each of the facility types will be explained within each of the relevant following needs assessment sections.

DRAFT

## 5 Needs Assessment – Swimming Pools

- 5.1.1 This section contains a summary of the findings from the needs assessment study for swimming pools in Epping Forest District. Swimming pool facilities are defined as ‘an enclosed area of water, specifically maintained for all forms of water-based sport and recreation, covering indoor pools and specific diving tanks for swimming, teaching, training and diving’ (Sport England Active Places).
- 5.1.2 There are currently 17 swimming pools spread across 11 sites across the Local Authority. Places for People operate swimming pools at Loughton Leisure Centre, Ongar Leisure Centre and Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool, with the remaining sites owned and managed by a combination of private operators and education establishments.
- 5.1.3 Only those facilities managed by Places for People have ‘pay and play’ access types, which is defined as the ability for a resident to pay for a single session without pre-booking and without the need for a monthly membership. While all of these sites are accessible to the community, not all of the water space in Epping Forest District is considered to be available to the public for the full peak period. The amount of water space available at peak times is considered to be circa 1,483sqm, which equates to a reduction of 5% of the total community accessible water space in the District<sup>3</sup>.
- 5.1.4 Table 5.1 below provides a summary of the audit for swimming pools in the local authority. A more detailed supply analysis can be found within Appendix D – Epping Forest BFS Supply Data. A summary of the school survey is also included within Appendix C – School Survey Summary, which provides further detail on the utilisation of education facilities and any plans by the management team to increase community use.

**Table 5.1: Swimming pool supply summary**

Facility	Facility Type	Ownership Type	Management Type	Access
Chigwell School	1 Lido	Private Education	Private Education	Private Member
Davenant Foundation School	1 Main	Academy Trust	Academy Trust	Yes
David Lloyd Club (Chigwell)	1 Main 1 Lido	Private Operator	Private Operator	Private Member
Loughton Leisure Centre	1 Main 1 Learner	Epping Forest DC	Trust	Pay and Play
Marriott Leisure Club (Waltham Abbey)	1 Main 1 Learner	Private Operator	Private Operator	Private Member
Nazeing Primary School	1 Lido	Essex CC	LEA	No
Nuffield Health Chigwell Fitness & Wellbeing Gym	1 Main 1 Lido 1 Learner	Private Operator	Private Operator	Private Member
Ongar Leisure Centre	1 Main	Epping Forest DC	Trust	Pay and Play
Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool	1 Main 1 Learner	Epping Forest DC	Trust	Pay and Play
West Hatch High School Academy	1 Main	Academy Trust	Academy Trust	No
Woolston Manor Golf and Country Club	1 Lido	Private Operator	Private Operator	Private Member

<sup>3</sup> Epping Forest District Swimming Pools Facility Planning Mode (Sport England: 2017)

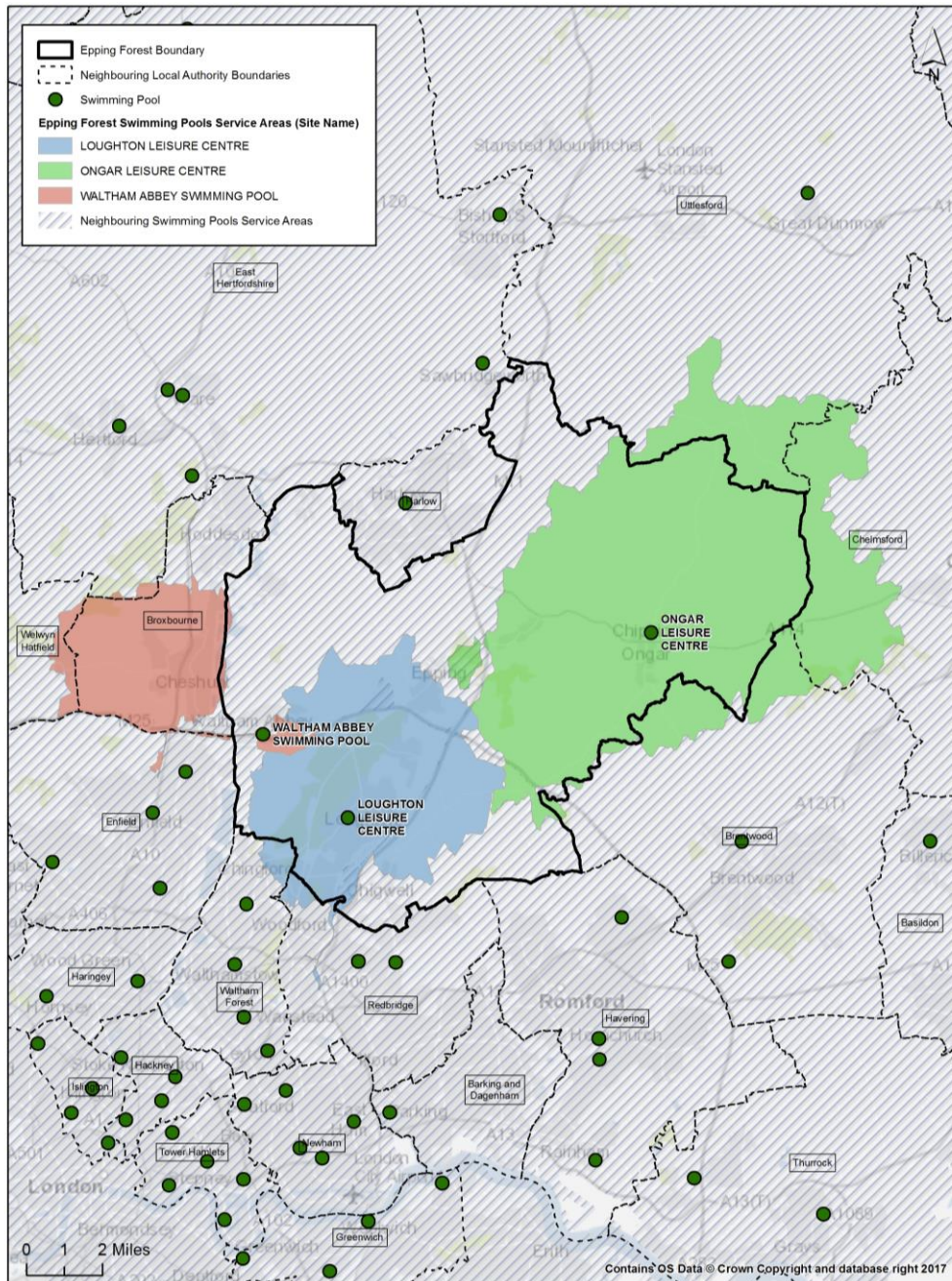


## 5.2 Swimming Pool Accessibility

### DRIVE TIME ANALYSIS

- 5.2.1 Figure 5.1 overleaf shows the catchment analysis for all pay and play pools in the study area. The graphic illustrates the unique catchment areas for each facility, with the shaded areas showing the 20-minute drive time catchment.
- 5.2.2 The map indicates that a significant proportion of the local authority, in the northern area towards Harlow, is not within a 20-minute drive time catchment of a pay and play swimming pool.

**Figure 5.1- Swimming pool drive-time catchment analysis**



**Swimming Pools with community use availability service areas in Epping Forest (up to 20 minute drive time)**



- 5.2.3 The map indicates that a significant proportion of the local authority, in the northern area towards Harlow, is not within a 20-minute drive time catchment of a pay and play swimming pool. This is a



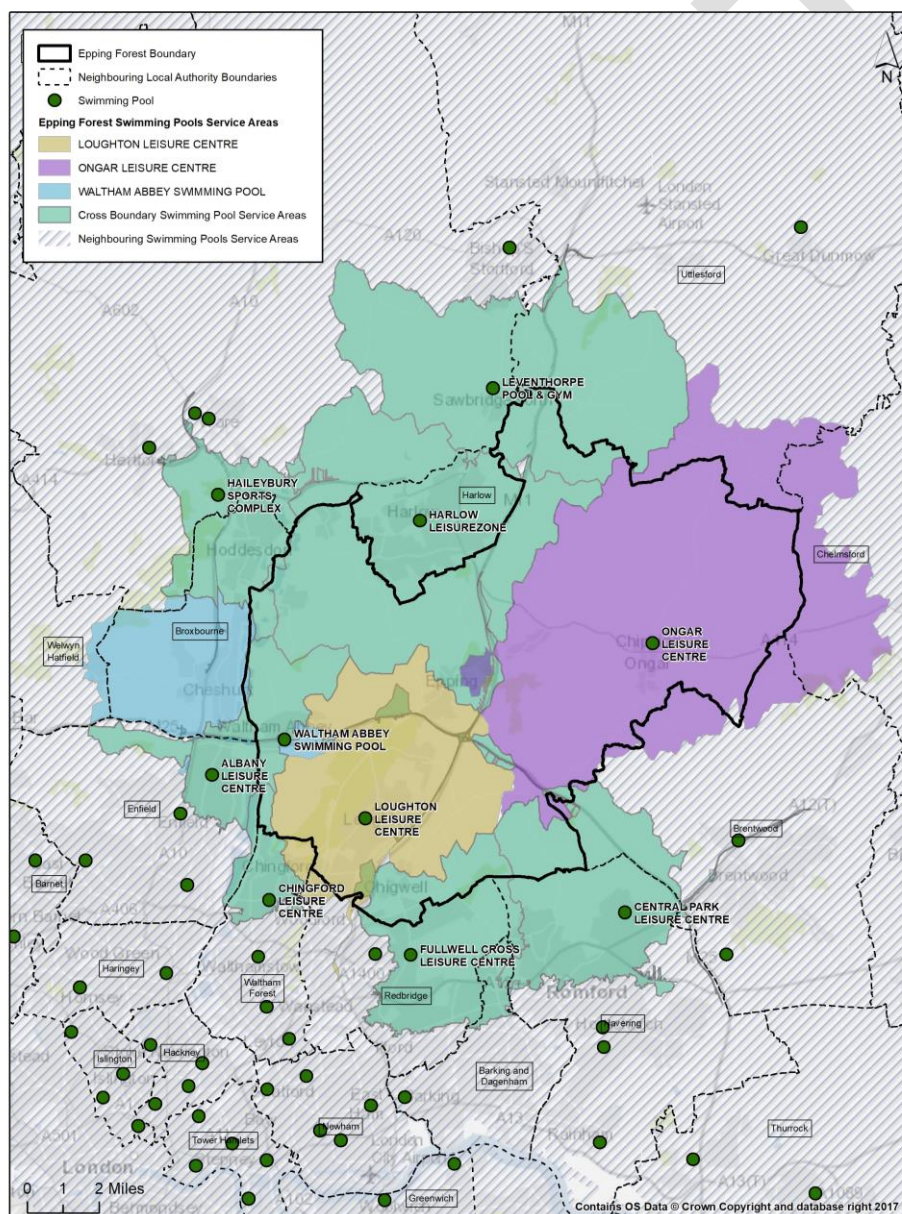
significant piece of analysis as this area of the local authority is unlikely to be within reach of facilities in neighbouring authorities, such as those in Harlow. This analysis will be examined further in the following section.

- 5.2.4 Furthermore, the area to the south-east of Loughton also falls outside of the catchment for Epping Forest District pay and play facilities, however this is likely to fall within facilities in Redbridge and Havering.

### CROSS-BOUNDARY ACCESSIBILITY

- 5.2.5 As referenced in the previous section, residents typically do not allow local authority boundary lines to impact on their use of sport and leisure facilities, choosing instead to use facilities that are accessible, affordable and of a high quality. With this in mind, it is important to consider facilities from neighbouring local authorities that impact the overall supply and demand of facilities within Epping Forest District. Figure 5.2 below therefore shows the catchment analysis, including facilities in neighbouring local authorities (Green shading).

**Figure 5.2- Swimming pool cross-boundary catchment analysis**



**Swimming Pools with community use availability service areas in Epping Forest (up to 20 minute drive time)**

- 5.2.6 Figure 5.2 illustrates that while a large proportion of those residents who fell outside of the Epping Forest District fall within the drive time catchment of the Harlow Leisurezone, there are areas of the local authority that fall into the service areas of other leisure facilities in neighbouring local authorities. These facilities include Leventhorpe Pool and Gym, Central Park Leisure Centre, Fullwell Cross Leisure Centre, Chingford Leisure Centre, Albany Leisure Centre and Haileybury Sports Complex
- 5.2.7 This accessibility analysis provides a starting point for considering whether there is sufficient quality, quantity and accessibility of swimming pool provision in Epping Forest District, however this is further expanded upon within the following supply and demand analysis.

### 5.3 Swimming Pool Supply and Demand Analysis

- 5.3.1 Sport England's Facility Planning Model (FPM) provides an assessment of the demand for swimming in the study area, including authorities that border Epping Forest District. This part of the assessment can then be considered alongside the supply audit to answer the following key questions;
- To what extent does the existing supply of swimming pools meet the current levels of demand from the resident population?
  - To what extent does the existing supply of swimming pools meet the future demand, taking into account population increases in the District and the surrounding areas?
- 5.3.2 The key findings from the FPM analysis are identified below, with the detailed report available as Appendix 7 – Swimming Pools Facility Planning Model;

#### SUPPLY

- The average age of a pool in Epping Forest District is over 28 years old. The age and condition of a facility will impact significantly on its attractiveness to customers and its ability to drive income and participation. With facilities ranging in age from 50 years at Waltham Abbey which was built in 1967, with no recorded refurbishment through to the newest, Nuffield, built in 2004. In general, the stock is ageing and is likely to require significant investment to ensure it continues to remain attractive to users
- The model attributes an attractiveness score to each site based on its characteristics in terms of management, location, scale and key is its age and any refurbishment that has been undertaken. The older the facility, in general, the less attractive it becomes and as a result less users are pushed to that facility within the modelling. The modelling shows that Waltham has a score of just 28%, and Ongar 41%. This is mainly due to their age, whereas the Councils newer facility at Loughton has a score of 93%
- Three of the sites are provided by the Council and managed by outside agencies on their behalf. The remaining two are provided by private health club operators, and whilst they have a role to play in the landscape, these facilities are unlikely to be available to all within the community due to the costs to join
- A total of 1,560sqm of water space is available in Epping Forest District, but once peak time access is considered this drops to 1,483sqm. This equates to the provision of up to 12,855 visits per week in the peak period (vpwpp)
- Of this total 8,019, or just over 63%, are available at Council owned sites. This is currently a positive in that well over half of the swimming offer is within the control of the local authority, albeit, pre-dominantly in ageing facilities

- Epping Forest District has 12sqm of water space per 1,000 residents, based on the level of identified supply. This is the same as the national average. It is important to note that no judgement is made here that the national average is enough for the supply to meet demands it is purely a comparison. A number of neighbouring authorities have far higher figures (Brentwood (25), Chelmsford (15), but others have far lower – Harlow (7) and Waltham Forest (10). The impact of neighbouring provision can have a significant impact on the quality of access for Epping Forest District residents as users often look at the best, most appropriate offer to swim as opposed to whether it is located in their own District. This can result in significant import and export issues which will be explored later in this report
- As referenced in the Sports and Physical Activity strategic context section of this report, Places for People are currently working with the Council to deliver new and refurbished facilities across the District. As part of this improvement programme, a new £9.5 million leisure centre is to be developed in Waltham Abbey, which will replace the existing Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool. This new facility will provide a new 25m 6 lane swimming pool and a 15m learner pool, acting as a direct replacement to the existing provision at Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool
- As a result of this development, the overall quality of facilities will improve, however the quantity across the District will stay consistent.

## DEMAND

- With its current population (132,578) and demographic Epping Forest District has a weekly peak demand of 8,467 swims. This equates to a total water space requirement of 1,406sqm
- This equates to approximately 27 lanes or 4.5 six lane 25m pools
- It is estimated that 14.5% of the population currently do not have access to a car. Whilst this figure is low when compared to the national average, for a relatively rural District it is quite high
- Of the current visits that are met to pools by Epping Forest District residents over 85% of these are made by those travelling by car which highlights the reliance people have on car access to take part in swimming

## SUPPLY AND DEMAND

- There is a total water supply of 1,483sqm in Epping Forest District but when its availability in the peak period is considered this drops to 1,406sqm
- When looking at a very simplistic picture of the overall supply and demand across Epping Forest District the resident population is estimated to generate a demand for a minimum of 1,406 square metres (sqm) of water space. This compares to a current available supply of 1,483 sqm of water space, giving a supply/demand balance of 77 sqm of water space
- However, this oversupply is low and pools are likely to have capacity issues if it were any lower in the peak period
- It is important to note if there were any significant changes in participation rates and / or population the current pool supply is unlikely to be in a position to cope with this if the demand were to be met within Epping Forest District based facilities
- A further issue that is likely to impact significantly on the quality of access Epping Forest District residents do or do not enjoy is the scale of provision in neighbouring authorities. All but one have undersupplies, with Waltham Forests as high as 801sqm and Havering's 610sqm. Only Chelmsford has an oversupply of 310sqm.

This is suggesting that as a wider area there are significant levels of undersupply which is likely to place pressure on existing facilities, which may have an impact on the quality of access and experience enjoyed at those facilities

- However, it is important to note a number of issues. Firstly, this is purely a measure of supply and demand viewing Epping Forest District as an island. In reality people do not see borders and participation will cross borders. Secondly, these figures are making no judgement on the geographical distribution, quality of, or access to, any facilities

## **SATISFIED DEMAND**

- Of the 8,467 vpwpp demanded by Epping Forest District residents currently 7,890, or 93.2% are met by facilities either based in Epping Forest District or in neighbouring authorities
- This figure is higher than the national (91%) average but lower than most neighbours with Brentwood residents having the highest figure at 96.8%. This is no real surprise with the indicated levels of oversupply in Brentwood
- Of the visits that are met only 56% are met by facilities based within Epping Forest District. This figure is considered to be low and indicates the reliance residents have on neighbouring authority facilities for their swimming participation. This indicates the need for cross border dialogue and planning with regards to pool provision and access
- In comparison only Waltham Forest retains less with 53.5% of visits met by visits in the local authority area and Chelmsford is the highest with 88% retained
- This means that some 3,456, or 43.8%, of peak time visits are undertaken at facilities outside of Epping Forest District. This is likely to be as a result of a combination of the following issues – proximity of offer, quality of offer, cost of offer and age of facility
- The reliance of neighbouring local authorities to provide swimming pool provision is likely to reduce following the development of new facilities in Waltham Abbey. Given the improved quality of provision at the new leisure facility, a smaller number of visits are likely to be exported outside of the study area, with a greater amount of satisfied demand from Epping Forest District facilities.

## **UNMET DEMAND**

- There is a total of 577 vpwpp that are not currently met by facilities either based within Epping Forest District or in neighbouring authorities
- This level of unmet demand equates to 6.8% of the total demand. In comparison Harlow has an unmet demand of 11.2% but Chelmsford's is as low as 4.2%
- Of the unmet demand 92.2% of this is due to residents living outside the drive time and / or walk time of a facility. For a District like Epping it is always going to be difficult to ensure all residents are within an appropriate catchment but it can have a significant impact on somebody's ability to participate
- Of the 92.2% of visits not met due to being outside a catchment 73.8% of this is due to residents not having access to a car.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

- Whilst the overall level of supply that is Epping Forest District based residents enjoy in line with national averages (note this is not a judgement that the supply is, as a result good), the quality of the offer is relatively poor. The average age of



facilities is 28 years old and a number are far older. This is likely to have a significant impact on people's desire to use those facilities and in doing so their propensity to be active

- The issue with quality of facilities will be addressed to an extent by the development of the new leisure centre at Hillhouse in Waltham Abbey. This facility will provide a new high-quality main pool and learner pool, to replace the existing Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool, which is at end of life
- The scale of the facilities on offer is also relatively weak. Although the level of supply is slightly more than demanded by residents when Epping Forest District is viewed as an island there is only two 6 lane 25m pools, one of which (Loughton), is actually under the recommended minimum width for a 6-lane pool
- Currently 93.2% of the swims demanded in the peak period are being met. However, only 56% of the swims that are met are met by facilities based in Epping Forest District. This identifies the major reliance residents currently have on facilities based in neighbouring authorities for their offer. This identifies a key requirement for Epping Forest District to co-ordinate access and the planning of any new provision with its neighbours to ensure access and sustainability of offer
- This means that 3,456 vpwpp are exported. This is a huge amount of swimming demand which equates to 10 lanes of a 25m pool
- Although the overall data suggest that there is a slight oversupply of water space (77sqm) when Epping Forest District is viewed as an island this does not consider the spatial issues associated with provision and access. As a result, there is unmet demand across the area. Chigwell has the highest levels of unmet demand, which is relatively significant, at 171sqm (a 4 lane 25m pool is 212.5sqm) down to just 30sqm at Chipping Ongar.

## 5.4 Key Stakeholder Consultation – Amateur Swimming Association (ASA)

5.4.1 The headline objectives from the ASA Strategic Plan – 2013-2017 are:

- More people learning to swim
- More people swimming regularly
- More medals on the world stage.

5.4.2 There is currently a more specific facility strategy in development. The ASA will shortly have a structure in place in which there is a Strategic Partnership Manager in every region of the country working with the major pools/organisations in that region, to increase aquatic participation and operator return on investment. This is in addition to the existing network of both National & Regional Club Development Officers – who ensure that all county and regions are covered by an ASA representative. Any facilities issues are connected either straight to the National Facilities Team in the first instances or via the appropriate ASM/Club Development Officer.

## 5.5 Club Consultation

5.5.1 As part of the demand assessment, all clubs who utilise swimming pool facilities across the District were invited to take part in a consultation, to provide their views on the quality, quantity and accessibility of facilities across Epping Forest District.

5.5.2 Unfortunately, no responses were received from clubs who utilise water space and therefore it is not possible to summarise club views as part of this section.

5.5.3 Consultation with operators has indicated that Epping Forest District Swimming Club are the major user of swimming facilities across the District, with their home facility being Loughton Leisure

Centre. The club would like access to further availability, especially during peak time, however this has proven difficult for the operator as it reduces the available water space for other residents during periods of peak demand.

## 5.6 Future Needs Assessment

- 5.6.1 Using the Sport England Facility Calculator (SFC), the future demand for swimming pools can be estimated using projected population increase in a given area. More information on the SFC, including details on how the model calculates the demand for facilities, can be found on the Sport England website; <http://www.sportengland.org/sfc>
- 5.6.2 The SFC provides a quantitative estimate of future need, however unlike the FPM the SPC does not identify specific locations for future provision. This will need to be informed by consultation with key stakeholders, catchment analyses of existing facilities and an analysis of the location of new housing development.
- 5.6.3 Table 5.2 illustrates how the additional projected population is likely to increase the overall need for swimming pool facilities across the local authority during the lifetime of this strategy,

**Figure 5.2: Swimming pool projected demand**

Analysis Sub-section	Popn	Peak Availability (metres <sup>2</sup> )	Peak Demand (metres <sup>2</sup> )	Over/ under supply (metres <sup>2</sup> )	VPWPP
<b>2017 Total Population</b>	132,900	1,483	1,406	77	8,467
<b>Additional Population Growth</b>	21,600	N/A	133.6	NA	805
<b>Total 2033 Population</b>	154,500	1,483	1,638	-155	9,867

- 5.6.4 Table 5.2 illustrates that although there is calculated to be sufficient supply in the District to meet the existing need for swimming pools in the Local Authority, the additional population growth that is projected for the District is predicted to generate a shortfall of swimming pool provision by the end of the strategy timeframe in 2033. The shortfall of 155 sqm by the end of the strategy represents 1 x 6 lane 25 swimming pool, therefore the deficit is projected to be significant.
- 5.6.5 It should be noted that this future supply and demand assessment includes the new facilities at Waltham Abbey, as the new provision will replace the same quantity of availability that currently exists.
- 5.6.6 This projected shortfall should be considered alongside the FPM analysis and catchment analysis, which indicates that there is a shortfall of swimming provision in some areas of the local authority.



## 6 Needs Assessment – Sports Halls

- 6.1.1 This section contains a summary of the findings from the needs assessment work for sports halls. Sports halls are purpose built indoor facilities that can be used for numerous formal and informal sports, as well as a significant range of informal physical activity.
- 6.1.2 This assessment considered all sports hall facilities in Epping Forest District, however it focusses on 'strategic' facilities that are a minimum of four badminton courts. Four-court sports halls provide far greater flexibility to operators and users as they can accommodate the majority of indoor sports such as football (5-a-side and training), volleyball, basketball and netball. A court of this size also provides sufficient run-up space to accommodate indoor cricket nets.
- 6.1.3 Many 4 court sports halls have a dividing net that allows them to be divided into several sub-areas, which can then be used for alternative sports and physical activities that do not require a large area, such as table tennis or martial arts.
- 6.1.4 In line with Sport England's Facility Planning model (2017 National Run), there are considered to be 8 halls across Epping Forest District, that meet the eligibility criteria for the facilities planning model. All of these sites are defined as having some level of community use, with residents being able to book the facilities at some point during the week.
- 6.1.5 It should be noted that this does not necessarily mean they are 'pay and play' facilities, with many of the facilities having limited availability for informal or non-booked use.
- 6.1.6 Table 6.1 below provides a summary of the audit for sports halls in the local authority. A more detailed supply analysis can be seen in the previous supply audit section or Technical Appendix 6 – Supply Assessments. A summary of the school survey is also included within Appendix C – School Survey Summary, which provides further detail on the utilisation of education facilities and any plans by the management team to increase community use.

**Table 6.1: Sports Hall supply summary (Source: Facility Planning Model and 4 global site assessments)**

<b>Site</b>	<b>Type of Hall</b>	<b>Size of Hall (square metres)</b>	<b>Year Built</b>	<b>Year Refurbished</b>
Chigwell School	Main	486	1989	
Chigwell School	Activity Hall	180		
Davenant Foundation School	Main	486	1999	
Davenant Foundation School	Activity Hall	180		
Davenant Foundation School	Activity Hall	180		
Debden Park High School	Main	594	2001	2006
Epping Sports Centre	Main	594	1970	
Epping St John's	Main	690	1921	2013
Epping St John's	Activity Hall	153		
Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College	Main	486	1938	
King Harold Business & Enterprise Academy	Main	486	Unknown	
Ongar Leisure Centre	Main	594	1977	
Roding Valley High School	Main	561	1993	
Roding Valley High School	Activity Hall	306		

- 6.1.7 It should be noted that new sports hall provision is currently in development or has recently been completed at Ongar Academy. The refurbishment of Ongar Academy will include sports hall provision, which will be available to the community and managed by the academy administration

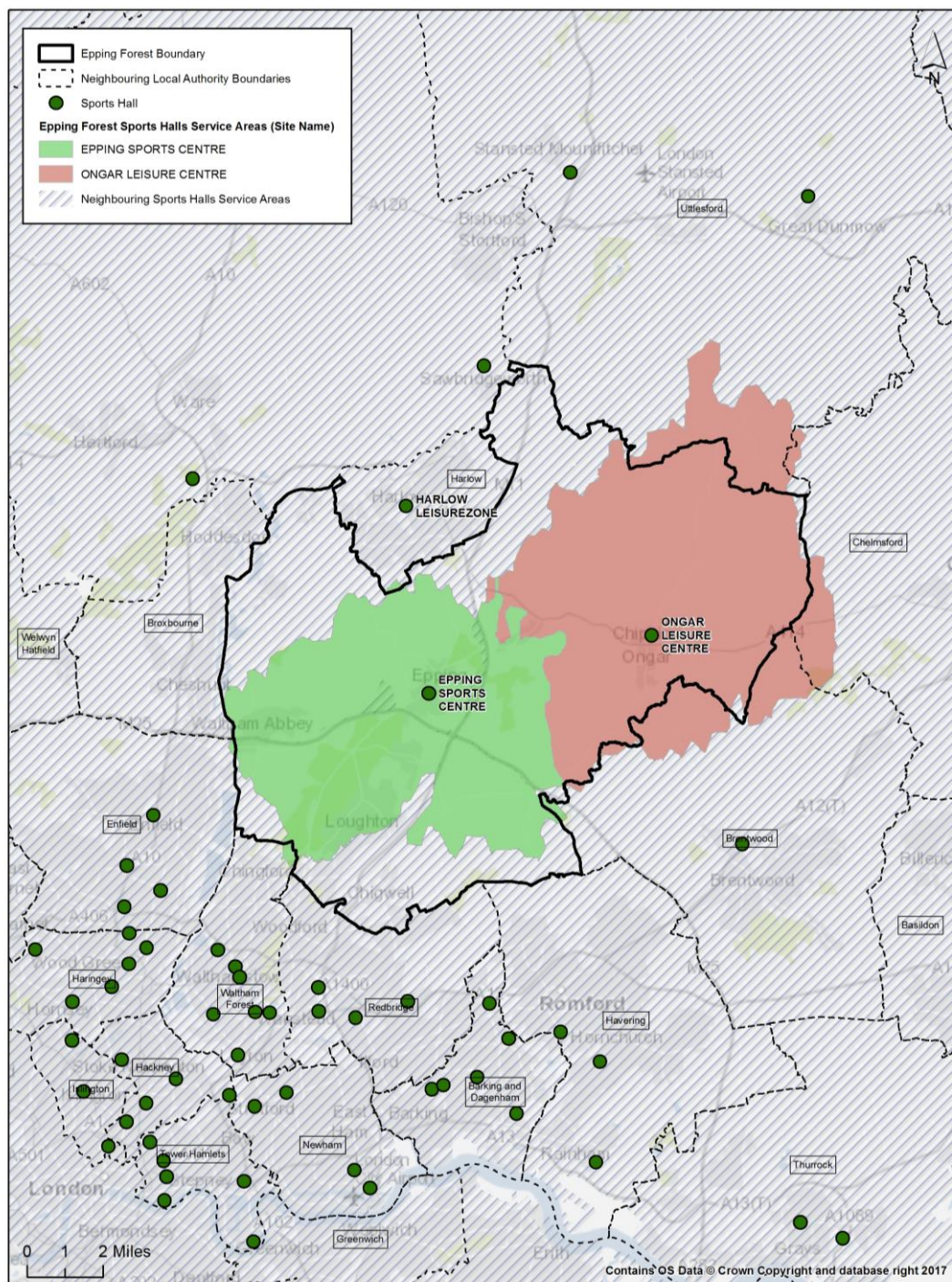
team. This facility did not exist at the time of assessment and therefore has not been included within the facility audit.

## 6.2 Sports Hall Accessibility

### DRIVE TIME ANALYSIS

- 6.2.1 The volume of sports hall space (expressed in courts) is 3.30 courts per 10,000 residents (2016 data), which is lower than the England Average and lower than the same figure for every neighbouring local authority apart from Broxbourne. While this is important, it is also key to understand the accessibility of facilities that have regular and secure community use.
- 6.2.2 Figure 6.1 overleaf shows the catchment analysis for all sports halls in the Local Authority that have been identified as having pay and play community use.
- 6.2.3 The shaded areas show the 20-minute drive-time catchment and illustrate that there are large areas of the local authority that are not served by a pay and play accessible sports hall, situated within Epping Forest District. These areas are predominantly located in the South and North-west of the District, in the areas of Chigwell, Nazeing and Sheering. It should be noted that these are largely rural areas and therefore the unmet demand (as identified in the FPM findings) is not projected to be significant.

**Figure 6.1 – Epping Forest District Sports Hall Catchment Analysis**



**Sports Halls with community use availability service areas  
in Epping Forest (up to 20 minute drive time)**

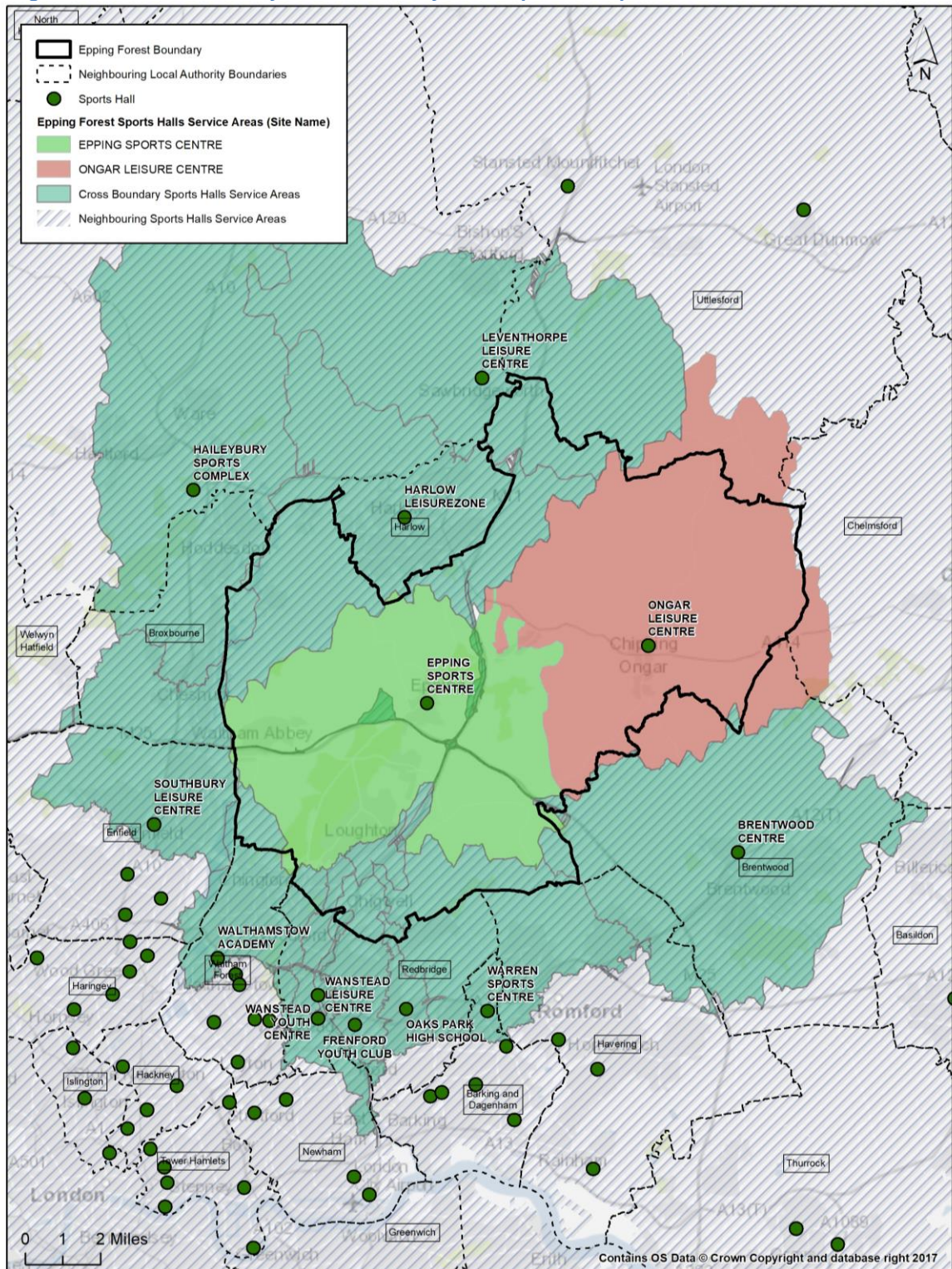


- 6.2.4 The analysis on the previous page and referenced within Figure 6.1 only considers facilities within the Epping Forest District Local Authority. It should be noted, however, that residents and participants typically do not choose to use facilities based on the local authority they fall within. Rather, they look to use facilities for reasons such as affordability, accessibility and overall experience. This means that, while it is important to understand the access to facilities within the Local Authority, we should undertake analysis where Epping Forest District is not treated as an Island.



6.2.5 With this in mind, Figure 6.2 below shows the catchment analysis for all pay and play facilities identified within the Active Places facility report, in each of the neighbouring facilities. This analysis illustrates that while the two Epping Forest District facilities cover approximately 80% of the local authority, those areas that do not fall under these catchment areas are covered by 20-minute drive time catchments from leisure facilities in neighbouring local authorities.

**Figure 6.2 – Cross-boundary catchment analysis for Sports Hall provision**



## 6.3 Sports Hall Supply and Demand Analysis

6.3.1 Sport England's Facility Planning Model (FPM) provides an assessment of the demand for sports halls in the study area, including authorities which border Epping Forest District, as shown in the strategic context section of this report. This part of the assessment can then be considered alongside the supply audit to answer the following key questions;

- To what extent does the existing supply of sports halls meet the current levels of demand from the resident population?
- To what extent does the existing supply of sports halls meet the future demand, taking into account population increases in the District and the surrounding areas?

6.3.2 The key findings from the FPM analysis are identified below;

### DEMAND

- The current population of Epping Forest District, alongside its demographic, creates a demand for 8,017 visits per week in the peak period (VPWPP). This equates to a demand for 36.8 courts
- 14.5% of the current population do not have access to a car. This figure is low when compared to the national figure but it is important to note that this is not necessarily a reflection of relative affluence but may also be a reflection of the rural nature of significant parts of the District.

### SUPPLY

- In general, the facilities in the District are old and ageing. This can have a significant impact on the quality of the environment and as a result the likelihood of people wishing to use the site for activity. Guru Gobind was built in 1938 and the local authority facilities of Ongar (1977) and Epping (1970) are 40+ years of age
- The majority of the provision is in the southern and central areas of the District in Chigwell, Loughton and Epping. The northern, north eastern and western parts of the District are poorly served by facilities directly located in Epping Forest District
- There are significant numbers of sports halls on the southern borders of the District with the London Boroughs. This does not mean they are accessible but large numbers will be within catchments of Epping Forest District residents. Broxbourne to the west offers some facility access in Cheshunt. For those in the northern part of the District Harlow has potential to offer access but for those in the North East and East there appears to be limited access to neighbouring authority facilities due to the likely drive times involved
- Only 2 of the 8 sites are within the control of the local authority – Epping LC and Ongar LC. The remaining 6 sites are all educational sites which has implications for guaranteed community access and likely issues for day time access which should be explored further in the wider strategy work

### SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS

- Once community access hours are taken in to account with sports hall supply an estimated 30.2 courts are available in the peak period for community activity. This compares to a demand of 36.8 courts. This figure takes in to account the comfort factor which is applied in the model. The comfort factor makes the assumption that when a sports hall gets to 80% full in the peak period it is considered full. This is because it becomes difficult for people to book a facility once it gets to this stage



- and it is likely that the sites quality of offer will reduce once it gets beyond this level
- This level of undersupply equates to 6.6 courts or 22% of the current supply
  - Of the neighbouring authorities Broxbourne (-10.1) and Waltham Forest (-17.4) have significant levels of undersupply. Uttlesford has a small undersupply (-3.1) but Chelmsford (+18.9) has a large oversupply and Harlow (+3.1) and Havering (+2.2) have small oversupplies

#### **SATISFIED DEMAND**

- Epping Forest District currently meets 7,465 of the 8,017 vpwpp demanded by its residents. This equates to 93.1 of the demand being met. This is higher than the national average (90.7) but lower than most of its neighbours other than Waltham Forest (88) and Harlow (90.7)
- Of the visits that are met over 85% of the visits are made by car. This indicates that car ownership for Epping Forest District residents is a key factor in their ability / desire to participate. Only 8.9% of visits are made by those walking to the sites and just 5.3% via public transport
- Just 3,702 of the 7,465 vpwpp that are met are met by facilities based in Epping Forest District. This equates to a very low 49.6%. This is likely down to a number of factors such as location of neighbouring facilities but also the age of the stock in Epping Forest District. The model will move people away from older facilities to newer as we know the experience is likely to be better

#### **UNMET DEMAND**

- Of the total 8,017 vpwpp demanded 552 are not met by facilities either within Epping Forest District or in neighbouring areas. This equates to nearly 7% of the total sports hall demand. Only Harlow (9.3) and Waltham Forest (12) have higher figures than Epping Forest District. This equates to 2.5 courts
- Of this unmet demand 93.9% of it (518 vpwpp) are as a result of people living outside the catchment of an existing facility. Just 6.1% (34 vpwpp) are down to lack of capacity at existing facilities. For an area like Epping Forest District this is not unusual as it is almost impossible for all residents to be within an appropriate drive or walk time from a facility
- What is more stark is the fact that of the 518 visits not met due to people being outside of a catchment, 86.1% of these do not have access to a car and therefore their catchment is currently limited to walk time access
- The aggregated unmet demand map in Appendix 1 identifies where the unmet demand is across the District. In general, the levels of unmet demand are not high and that which does exist is spread across the District so there is no real hotspot which could assist in alleviating the access issues if further supply were provided.
- Currently the Waltham Abbey area at 1.3 courts has the highest levels of unmet demand, with Chipping Ongar next at 1.2, then Loughton 1.1 and Chigwell at just 0.3. Even though the supply in the North East of the District is at its lowest it is also the area with the lowest level of unmet demand at just 0.2 of a court likely linked to the population levels currently in these areas
- It should be noted that the King Harold Business and Enterprise Academy sports hall provision was not included in the Sport England Facility Planning national 'run' and therefore the level of unmet demand identified in the Waltham Abbey area is likely to reduce, given the availability of the Academy facility at periods of peak demand.



## 6.4 Key Stakeholder Consultation

### SPORTS CLUB CONSULTATION

- 6.4.1 As part of the demand assessment, all clubs who utilise sports hall facilities across the District were invited to take part in a consultation, to provide their views on the quality, quantity and accessibility of facilities across the District.
- 6.4.2 Six clubs participated in the survey, which use a combination of sports hall, netball and gymnastics facilities. Namely, the clubs who participated were Epping Forest Sportability Club, Loughton Taekwondo, Casablanca CGT, Epping Blazers Netball Club, Epping Gymnastics Club, and Epping Forest Netball Club.
- 6.4.3 All of the clubs used education facilities from across the District, with the exception of Epping Gymnastics Club (Epping Sports Centre) and Casablanca CGT, who have their own facility.
- 6.4.4 The consultation identified a number of key themes as identified below. The detailed survey response summary is included as Appendix B – Sports Club Survey Summary.
- There is a deficit of sports hall space that can be used for Gymnastics. Both the Casablanca and Epping Gymnastics Clubs have cited extremely long waiting lists and a deficit of facilities to be used within the District
  - Epping Blazers Netball Club utilise Upper Clacton RFC, which is not fit for purpose. Access to an indoor facility is sought after
  - There is a shortage of hall availability for martial arts, with Loughton Taekwondo citing an issue of equipment storage a key problem.

## 6.5 Future Needs Assessment

- 6.5.1 Using the Sport England Facility Calculator (SFC), the future demand for sports halls can be estimated using projected population increase in a given area. More information on the SFC, including details on how the model calculates the demand for facilities, can be found on the Sport England website; <http://www.sportengland.org/sfc>.
- 6.5.2 The SFC provides a quantitative estimate of future need, however unlike the FPM the SFC does not identify specific locations for future provision. This will need to be informed by consultation with key stakeholders, catchment analyses of existing facilities and an analysis of the location of new housing development.
- 6.5.3 Table 6.2 illustrates how the additional projected population is likely to increase the overall need for sports hall facilities across the study area.

**Figure 6.2: Sports Hall projected demand**

Analysis Sub-section	Popn	Peak Availability (courts)	Peak Demand (courts)	Over/ under supply (courts)	VPWPP
<b>2017 Total Population</b>	132,900	30.2	36.8	-6.6	8,017
<b>Additional Population Growth</b>	21,600	N/A	5.98	NA	762
<b>Total 2033 Population</b>	154,500	30.2	42.78	-12.58	9,343

- 6.5.4 Table 6.2 illustrates that when the peak supply figure of 30.2 courts is utilised, there is currently a deficit of hall space across the District, which is projected to increase throughout the life time of the study.

- 6.5.5 The deficit of almost thirteen badminton courts by the end of the strategy is stark, as this illustrates the need for significant sports hall development. This will be addressed as part of the recommendations and action plan section of this report.
- 6.5.6 This projected shortfall should be considered alongside the FPM analysis, which indicates that the existing stock of hall provision is dominated by education facilities, which has varying levels of availability and security.

## 7 Needs Assessment – Health & Fitness

- 7.1.1 This section contains a summary of the findings from the needs assessment work for Health and Fitness facilities. For the purpose of this study, Health and Fitness (H&F) facilities are dedicated areas with equipment and machines used for physical activity. They are made up of a number of 'stations' which is an area that typically houses a piece of equipment. For the purpose of this study a station is defined as 1.5 m<sup>2</sup>.
- 7.1.2 This assessment considers H&F facilities with 20 stations or more. Where possible this includes all facilities across the study area, including budget' gym's, however due to the volatility of the market and the likelihood of new facilities opening and closing during the delivery of this project, the audit is unlikely to be fully comprehensive.

### 7.2 Supply Assessment

#### QUANTITY ASSESSMENT

- 7.2.1 There are currently 16 H&F facilities across the study area, consisting of local authority, education and privately-operated facilities.

**Table 7.1 – Health & Fitness Facility Audit**

Facility	No. of Stations	Ownership Type	Management Type	Access
Chigwell School	8	Private Education	Private Education	Registered Membership use
Davenant Foundation School	16	Academy Trust	Academy Trust	Private Use
David Lloyd Club (Chigwell)	145	Commercial	Commercial	Registered Membership use
Epping Forest College	15	Further Education	Further Education	Private Use
Epping Sports Centre	70	Local Authority	Trust – P4P	Pay and Play
King Harold Academy Sports Centre	20	Academy Education	Academy Education	Private Use
Krunch Gym	91	Commercial	Commercial	Registered Membership use
Loughton Leisure Centre	90	Local Authority	Trust – P4P	Pay and Play
Marriott Leisure Club (Waltham Abbey)	18	Commercial	Commercial	Registered Membership use
Metropolitan Police (Chigwell Sports Club)	11	Trust	Commercial	Registered Membership use

Facility	No. of Stations	Ownership Type	Management Type	Access
Nuffield Health Chigwell Fitness & Wellbeing Gym	150	Commercial	Commercial	Registered Membership use
Ongar Leisure Centre	40	Local Authority	Trust – P4P	Pay and Play
Pro Sw Gym	24	Commercial	Commercial	Registered Membership use
Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool	47	Local Authority	Trust – P4P	Pay and Play
West Hatch High School Academy	6	Academy Education	Academy Education	Private Use
Woolston Manor Golf and Country Club	6	Commercial	Commercial	Registered Membership use

## FUTURE SUPPLY ASSESSMENT

7.2.2 The health and fitness assessment undertaken for this project provides an audit of all facilities that existed and were available at the time of assessment (May 2017). In line with the Council's long-term strategy to improve the quality of sport and leisure provision across the District, there are a number of ongoing facility development projects that also need to be considered as part of the future supply assessment;

- Loughton Leisure Centre will grow from 90 stations to approximately 150 stations, following the health & fitness refurbishment
- The existing, poor quality, H&F provision at Waltham Abbey Swimming Pools will be replaced by an 80-station fitness suite, provided as part of the new leisure centre at Hillhouse
- The H&F suite at Epping Forest Sports Centre will be extended, with the addition of at least two new studios for spinning and classes

## QUALITY ASSESSMENT

7.2.3 Non-technical visual assessments were carried out of all pay and play facilities as part of the project. Generally, health and fitness suite provision in Epping Forest District is of good quality, especially among facilities managed by Places for People.

7.2.4 The facilities in the worst condition were located at Waltham Abbey Pools, a facility which will be replaced as part of the proposed leisure centre relocation to the Ninefields site. Facilities at Ongar Leisure Centre, while being of adequate quality, were located in a small area and did not represent a best-practice design for H&F provision.

7.2.5 The quality of facilities at the Loughton Leisure Centre were good, and with plans to extend the H&F and specialist studio space, the provision is likely to improve in the short and medium term.

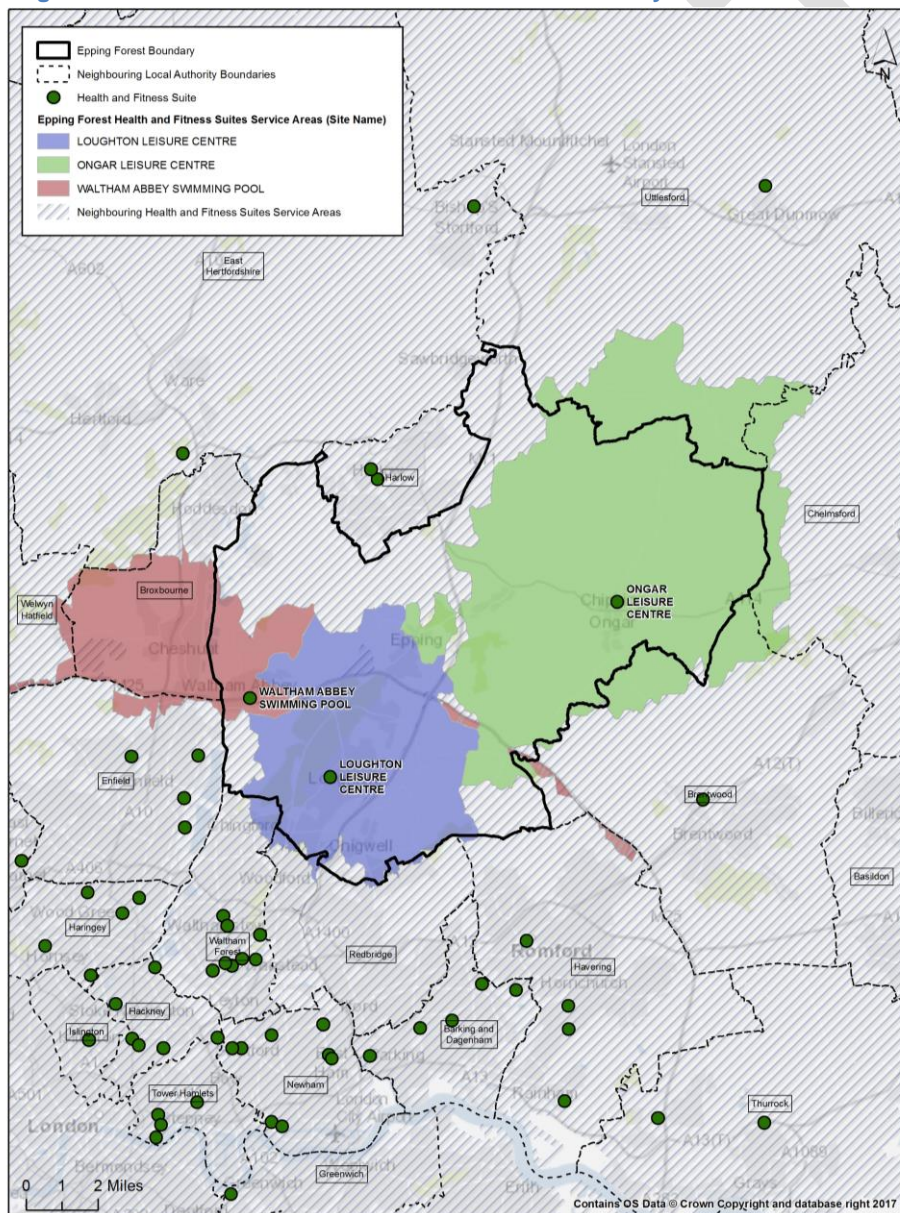
7.2.6 Although there are three adequate facilities at Epping Sports Centre, Loughton Leisure Centre and Ongar Leisure Centre, there are no excellent modern facilities, with large areas for classes and a feeling of extremely high quality, across the District. Industry analysis has indicated that these high quality major H&F facilities attract residents from a large catchment area and are consistently well utilised. This should therefore be explored as part of any future facility development in this area.

## 7.3 Health and Fitness Accessibility

### DRIVE TIME ANALYSIS

- 7.3.1 The Sport England Facility Planning Model is not available to use for Health & Fitness facilities, however supply and demand modelling has been undertaken by the Consultancy Team, alongside catchment area mapping for relevant facilities across the study area.
- 7.3.2 Figure 7.1 below shows the catchment analysis for H&F facilities in the local authority. The graphic illustrates the unique catchment areas for each of the publically available facilities in the study area. The catchment area analysis indicates that while the majority of the local authority falls within the catchment area of a H&F facility in Epping Forest District, there is an area to the north-west of the District, in the areas of Nazeing and towards Sheering and Sawbridgeworth.
- 7.3.3 It should be noted, however, that residents in these areas are likely to travel to commercial H&F facilities if they fall outside of the catchment of a pay and play facility. A more detailed analysis of the supply and demand for H&F facilities will be provided in the following section.

**Figure 7.1: Health and fitness drive-time catchment analysis**



Health and Fitness Suites with community use availability service areas  
in Epping Forest (up to 20 minute drive time)



## 7.4 Health and Fitness Supply and Demand Analysis

7.4.1 The supply and demand modelling used as part of this project provides an assessment of the demand for H&F in the study area, including authorities which Epping Forest District, as shown in the strategic context section of this report. This part of the assessment can then be considered alongside the supply audit to answer the following key questions;

- To what extent does the existing supply of Health and Fitness facilities meet the current levels of demand from the resident population?
- To what extent does the existing supply of Health and Fitness facilities meet the future demand, taking into account population increases in the District and the surrounding areas?

7.4.2 Figure 7.3 provides a spatial analysis of the supply and demand of Health & Fitness facilities in Epping Forest District, which should be considered alongside the headline figures below;

- There is a met demand of +0.29 stations per output area. This translates into a total met demand of 120 stations. This means that when all supply and demand across the study area is considered, there is theoretically enough capacity for H&F, given the existing availability of facilities
- 75% of all health and fitness suites in London and neighbouring local authorities have 100 stations, therefore if this used as an assumed facility size, there is an oversupply of 2 H&F suites to meet the demand from the current population
- Although there is overall spare capacity, the spatial analysis shows that certain areas near the western and east boundary have a deficit of H&F provision. This is largely influenced the centres of population in Epping and Chipping Ongar, as well as the relative lack of H&F facilities.

## 7.5 Future Needs Assessment

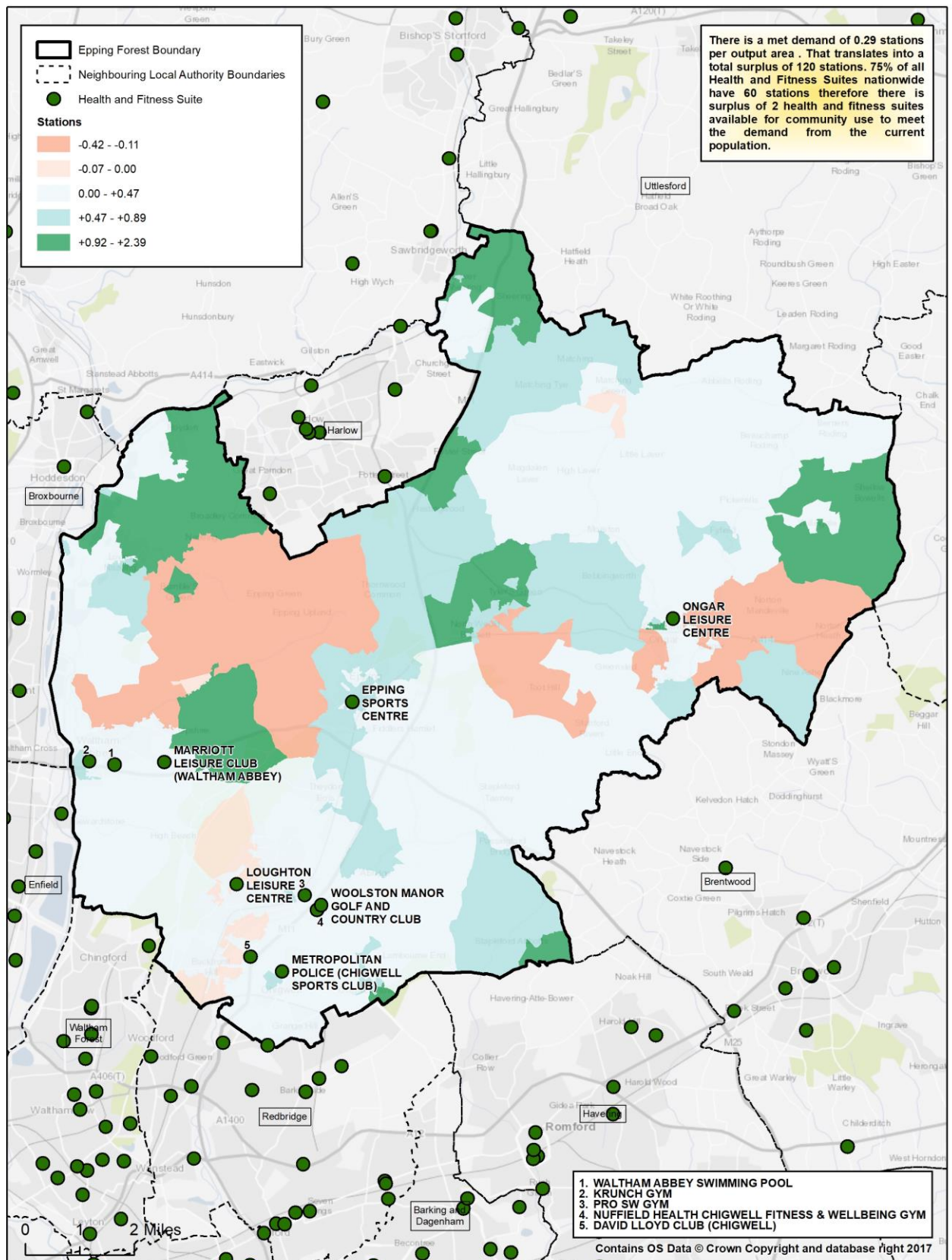
7.5.1 To understand the future needs for Health & Fitness in Epping Forest District, the supply and demand modelling has also been undertaken utilising the projected population figures for 2033.

7.5.2 This analysis assumes that all supply remains static, but takes into consideration the projected change in demand, caused by the predicted population growth.

7.5.3 Following the analysis for 2017, Figure 7.4 illustrates this analysis spatially, which should be considered alongside the accompanying key findings;

- There is a met demand of 0.12 stations per output area. This translates into a total met demand of 53 stations. This means that when all supply across the study area is considered and this is compared to the projected demand for 2033, there is a small surplus of Health & Fitness provision
- The deficit identified in the 2017 modelling for the West and East areas of the District are projected to slightly worsen. There is also projected to be a deficit of H&F provision in the south of the District, towards Chigwell and Loughton, should supply stay consistent.

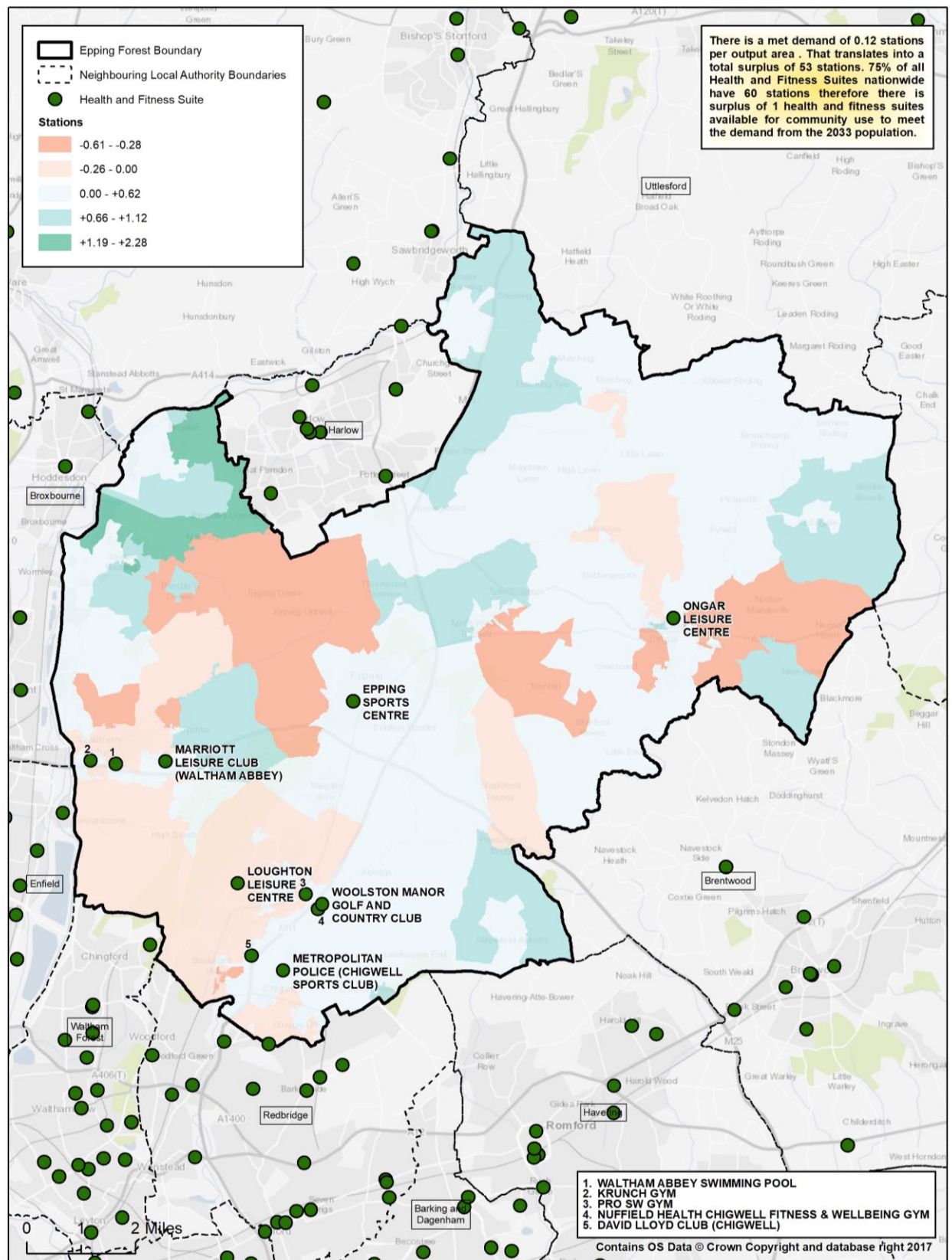
Figure 7.3: H&F Supply & Demand assessment – 2017



Health and Fitness Suites latent demand in stations per output area in Epping Forest (2017)



Figure 7.4: H&F Supply & Demand assessment – 2033



Health and Fitness Suites latent demand in stations per output area in Epping Forest (2033)

## 8 Key Issues and Recommendations

- 8.1.1 This section brings together the needs analysis for each of the key facility types, to set out the key issues and recommended approach for Epping Forest District Council and partners,
- 8.1.2 To achieve its planning aims, Sport England has established a number of planning objectives, which seek to;
- **Protect** sports facilities from loss as a result of redevelopment
  - **Enhance** existing facilities through improving their quality, accessibility and management
  - **Provide** new facilities that are fit for purpose and meet demands for participation now and in the future
- 8.1.3 The following sections summarise the key findings for each of the facility types, as well identifying what this means, using the Protect, Enhance, Provide framework.

### 8.2 Swimming Pools

- 8.2.1 The key findings from the Swimming Pools section have been identified below;
- The needs assessment has identified that as a whole District, the **quantity** of water space is adequate to meet the demand of residents. This does, however, take into consideration spatial analysis and accessibility of facilities
  - Whilst there is enough water space in the District to meet demand, not all of the water space is located in the right place and therefore not all of the demand from Epping Forest District residents can be satisfied
  - The estimated increase in population between 2017 and 2033 is projected to generate a 9.5% increase in demand for swimming pools in the weekly peak periods of weekday evenings and weekend days
  - The quality of facilities is mixed, with good quality provision at Loughton Leisure Centre contrasting with swimming provision at Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool and Ongar Leisure Centre that is at end-of-life
  - Two of the three 'pay and play' facilities in the District are 40 years old or older, with Ongar Leisure Centre and Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool built in 1977 and 1967 respectively
  - The Council and Places for People have commenced work with the development of a new leisure centre at Hillhouse Road, Waltham Abbey. This new facility will replace the existing facility at Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool and provide high quality provision in the form of one main pool and one learner pool, greatly improving the quality of swimming provision across the District
  - A spatial analysis of the coverage of swimming provision illustrates that large areas of the study area do not have access to pool facilities within Epping Forest District
  - A significant amount of demand is exported to neighbouring authorities. An estimated 3,456 vpwpp (visits per week in the peak period) are exported outside of Epping Forest District, which equates to 10 lanes of a 25m pool. This means that only 56% of the demand for swimming is met by facilities based in Epping Forest District

#### PROTECT, ENHANCE AND PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.2.2 Taking into consideration the key findings, the following swimming provision is recommended to be **PROTECTED**;

- The supply for swimming provision is near to balancing, however this is projected to become a deficit by 2033. There is a need to maintain at least existing quantity of water space to meet the projected demand for swimming up to 2033 and beyond
- This may however lead to re-provision of some swimming pools based on their age, condition and location. It should be noted that it is the quantity of water space that needs to be protected and not necessarily the individual pools themselves, as it may be decided that facilities are better provided elsewhere and within high quality new or refurbished leisure centres.

8.2.3 The site assessment and analysis, along with operator and user consultation ensures that the following facilities should be **ENHANCED**;

- Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool was built in the 1960's and the swimming provision is therefore dated and causes issues operationally on a day-to-day basis. Plans have been agreed to re-locate the facility to Hillhouse, on the Ninefields estate. It is recommended that swimming provision is enhanced as part of this development, with high quality water space of at least a 6 lane 25 metre main pool and a fit for purpose learner pool
- Swimming Pool provision at Ongar Leisure Centre is at end of life and requires modernisation or replacement. The decision as to whether this provision is maintained at the existing site should be dependent on the catchment analysis and accessibility calculations for the facility.

8.2.4 The study has identified that the local authority, in collaboration with key stakeholder, should look to **PROVIDE** the following swimming pool provision;

- The supply and demand analysis has illustrated that no further provision is required for Swimming Pools, over and above the existing level of provision. The focus should instead be on improving the quality and accessibility of the existing facility stock and ensuring that swimming pool provision is located in areas ensure the greatest possible number of residents can access the facilities.

## 8.3 Sports Halls

8.3.1 The key findings from the Sports Hall needs assessment have been identified below;

- The volume of sports hall space (expressed in courts) is 3.3 courts per 10,000 residents, which is far lower than the England Average of 4.3. There are also only five 4-court halls, and no halls larger than this
- When all supply and demand is taken into consideration (including education facilities that are available to the community), there is a deficit of sports hall provision
- The estimated increase in population between 2017 and 2033 is projected to generate a 9.5% increase in demand for sports halls in the weekly peak periods of weekday evenings and weekend days. This will worsen the deficit of sports hall provision by 2033
- Education facilities (such as Debden Park High School and the Davenant Foundation School) are key facilities within supply and demand analysis, however long-term security at education facilities is generally low
- There are only two facilities in the District that offer pay and play sports provision, located Epping Sports Centre and Ongar Leisure Centre. Both of these facilities require modernisation in order to make them an attractive venue for clubs and residents to take part in sport and physical activity

- Only 50% of demand is currently met by Epping Forest District Facilities, with the rest exported to sports hall facilities outside of the District. This means that the Council has little control over the sports hall provision that is used by its residents
- There is an estimated 552 vpwpp (2.5 courts) of unmet demand, the vast majority of which is a result of people living outside of the catchment of an existing facility
- The Waltham Abbey area at 1.3 courts, has the highest level of unmet demand, with Chipping Ongar next at 1.2 and Loughton at 1.1. These findings are supported by the catchment area analysis shown in Figure 3.3 overleaf, which provides the catchment areas (20-minute drive time) for all pay and play facilities in the District
- The FPM analysis indicates that Epping Forest District based facilities are only 58% full, based on the identified available peak use hours. This is supported by consultations undertaken as part of the project, which indicate that there is spare capacity at both Epping Sports Centre and Ongar Leisure Centre
- Consultation with sports clubs has indicated that access to sports hall provision is adequate, with limited issues booking facilities at the times that are needed
- Although detailed usage figures are not available, consultation has indicated that sports hall facilities have significant spare capacity during off-peak hours.

8.3.2 Taking into consideration the key findings, the following sports hall provision is recommended to be **PROTECTED**;

- The supply for sports hall for community use is at a deficit when compared with demand, for both 2017 and 2033, therefore there is a need to, at the very least, protect this quantity of supply. It should be noted that this does not necessarily mean the provision at the existing sites should be protected, as this re-location of facilities is not discouraged, to ensure the residents of the District have improved accessibility to high quality facility provision
- Education provision at sites such as Epping St Johns, the proposed facilities at Epping Forest College and the existing facilities King Harold Academy are critical to the overall supply and demand of sports hall provision in the District. It is therefore important that community use is protected through secured Community Use Agreements (CUA's). Where CUA's are not possible (in the case of schools being owned by Essex County Council or Private Trusts), it is important that the Local Authority work with local clubs to support them in their pursuit of long-term security of tenure at sites
- Through the development of the new 3 badminton court sports hall at Ongar Academy and the new sports hall provision at West Hatch, the supply of sports hall provision is likely to increase. It is key that access to this provision is protected via CUA's, as without these agreements the deficit of hall provision is likely to continue.

8.3.3 The site assessment and analysis, along with operator and user consultation ensures that the following facilities should be **ENHANCED**;

- Sports hall provision across the local authority requires significant modernisation, with existing facilities at Ongar Leisure Centre and Epping Sports Centre nearing end-of-life
- To ensure that the supply of education facilities is secure for the full period of the strategy, it is key that where possible, CUA's are in place with Chigwell School, Davenant Foundation School, Debden Park High School, Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College and Roding Valley High School. The security of tenure at these



sites must be enhanced, with operational considerations for clubs who access the facility at evening and weekends

8.3.4 The study has identified that the local authority, in collaboration with key stakeholders, should look to **PROVIDE** the following sports hall provision;

- Sports hall provision requires significant modernisation or replacement, in order to meet the need of residents over the period the strategy. It is recommended that high quality sports hall facilities are provided in the north of the District, in a location that is accessible by areas such as North Weald, Epping and Chipping Ongar, as well to the west of the District, towards Harlow.
- Pay and Play sports hall provision is also required in the south of the District, which is accessible by residents from Loughton, Chigwell, Waltham Abbey and the surrounding areas
- To meet the projected needs of Epping Forest District residents over the period of this strategy, it is recommended that options are explored to increase the provision of pay and play facilities by 12 badminton courts across the Local Authority. This should be pursued through a combination of the development of new facilities, alongside the increased supply of 3<sup>rd</sup> party facilities (education facilities), through formal community use agreements. This should include the agreement of CUA's for new education facilities currently under construction, especially at Ongar Academy and West Hatch High School
- As part of any new development, it is key that Gymnastics facilities are prioritised, to meet the growing needs of residents and reduce the waiting lists of the two major clubs in the area. Further consultation is required to confirm the facility mix and equipment that would be required to meet the needs of these thriving clubs
- The exact locations of these proposed facilities should be determined by a detailed feasibility study.

## 8.4 Health and Fitness

8.4.1 The key findings from the Health and Fitness needs assessment have been identified below;

- Health & Fitness suites that are owned by the local authority or community organisations are generally of an adequate quality, with Loughton Leisure Centre an example of good quality equipment and studio space
- In terms of those facilities managed by Places for People, Ongar Leisure Centre, Epping Sports Centre and Waltham Abbey Pool are all currently adequate, however all will require modernisation over the period of the strategy
- There is a small amount of private and commercial H&F provision across the District, although there are no large scale 'budget gyms'
- The majority of demand for Health and Fitness is met by facilities within Epping Forest District
- There is a total met demand of 0.29 stations per output area, which translates into a total spare capacity of 120 stations
- If all supply remains consistent over the period of the strategy, then the projected increase in demand from population growth is predicted to reduce the met demand to 0.12 stations per output area in 2033, which equates to a total spare capacity of 53 stations
- Planned improvements to provision at Loughton Leisure Centre, Ongar Leisure Centre and Epping Sports Centre, as well as the replacement of the existing facility



in Waltham Abbey, will further increase the total met demand for Health & Fitness provision, representing a high quality and quantity across the District.

8.4.2 Taking into consideration the key findings, the following Health & Fitness provision is recommended to be **PROTECTED**;

- The supply for sports hall for health and fitness indicates a small met demand in 2017, which is projected to change to a small deficit by 2033. It is therefore recommended that all facilities within local authority control are protected
- The H&F suites at Ongar and Epping Sports Centre are key facilities to meet the demands of residents, therefore any future development will need to provide the scale and accessibility of facilities that ensure residents in the central and north-eastern areas of the District meet the local demand for health and fitness.

8.4.3 The site assessment and analysis, along with operator and user consultation ensures that the following facilities should be **ENHANCED**;

- H&F provision at Waltham Abbey Pool requires modernisation or replacement, to ensure that facilities and equipment meet the need of residents. It is envisaged that this will be provided through the proposed replacement facility at Hillhouse
- H&F provision at Epping Sports Centre and Ongar Leisure Centre is vital to the overall supply and demand of H&F across the District. Over the period of the strategy these facilities will need to be modernised and improved, with any future facility being accessible to residents throughout the central and north-eastern areas of the District.

8.4.4 The study has identified that the local authority, in collaboration with key stakeholder, should look to **PROVIDE** the following H&F provision;

- The existing quantity and quality of health and fitness provision meets the needs of residents and therefore no additional provision is required, over and above the existing supply.

## 8.5 Scenario Testing

8.5.1 Following consultation with the Council and the operator throughout the project, it is clear that plans have been developed to undertake a 'spend-to-save' approach to built leisure facilities across the Local Authority, in the medium to long term.

8.5.2 The plans currently being developed by the Council include the development of a new leisure centre in the Waltham Abbey area at the Ninefields site (as referenced throughout this document). In addition to this, there are also initial plans to utilise planning contributions to develop a new facility in the North Weald area. A new facility in this area would service the need of a significant amount of population growth in the area, as well as reducing the pressure on the Ongar Leisure Centre and Epping Sports Centre.

8.5.3 To analyse whether the proposed developments provide a more complete coverage of the District, Figure 8.1 and 8.2 provide catchment analysis for pay and play swimming pools and health and fitness suites, showing the new facility in the North Weald area and the new facility at the Ninefields Site.

8.5.4 This scenario does not include Epping Sports Centre and Ongar Leisure Centre facilities, as there are initial plans to rationalise these sites as part of the wider spend-to-save initiative.

8.5.5 It should be noted that this study has provided an evidence base and set of recommendations that suggest an optimal quality, quantity and accessibility of built sports facilities across the District.

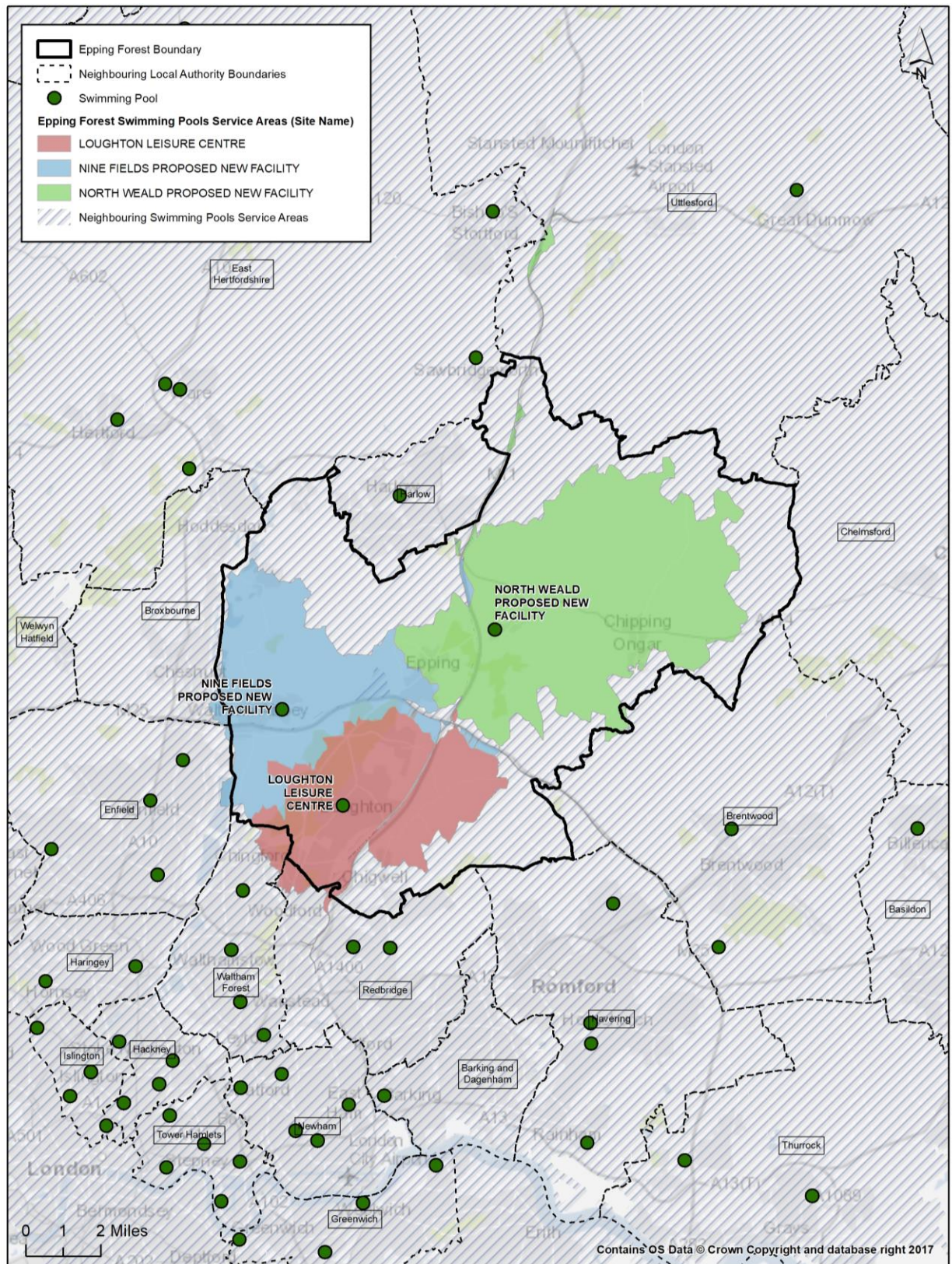
The inclusion of this scenario do not, therefore, represent a recommendation to reduce the overall level of water space and sports hall provision within the District.

- 8.5.6 It is recommended that any future development across the Local Authority references the findings from this report and provides high quality facilities that are accessible by the greatest possible proportion of residents.
- 8.5.7 To assess the overall impact of each of the scenario below, a more detailed local supply and demand analysis will be required, utilising supply and demand information based on the new facilities and parameters such as age, quality and accessibility.
- 8.5.8 Anecdotally, it is expected that the overall supply and demand picture for swimming provision is likely to be improved by the scenario illustrated in figure 8.1. This is likely to be influenced by the relocation of Ongar Leisure Centre to a location at North Weald that has a larger unique catchment. Additionally, the development of new high-quality facilities at Hillhouse (Ninefields) and North Weald will increase the attractiveness of swimming provision across the District and therefore reduce the amount of demand that is exported to neighbouring local authorities.

DRAFT



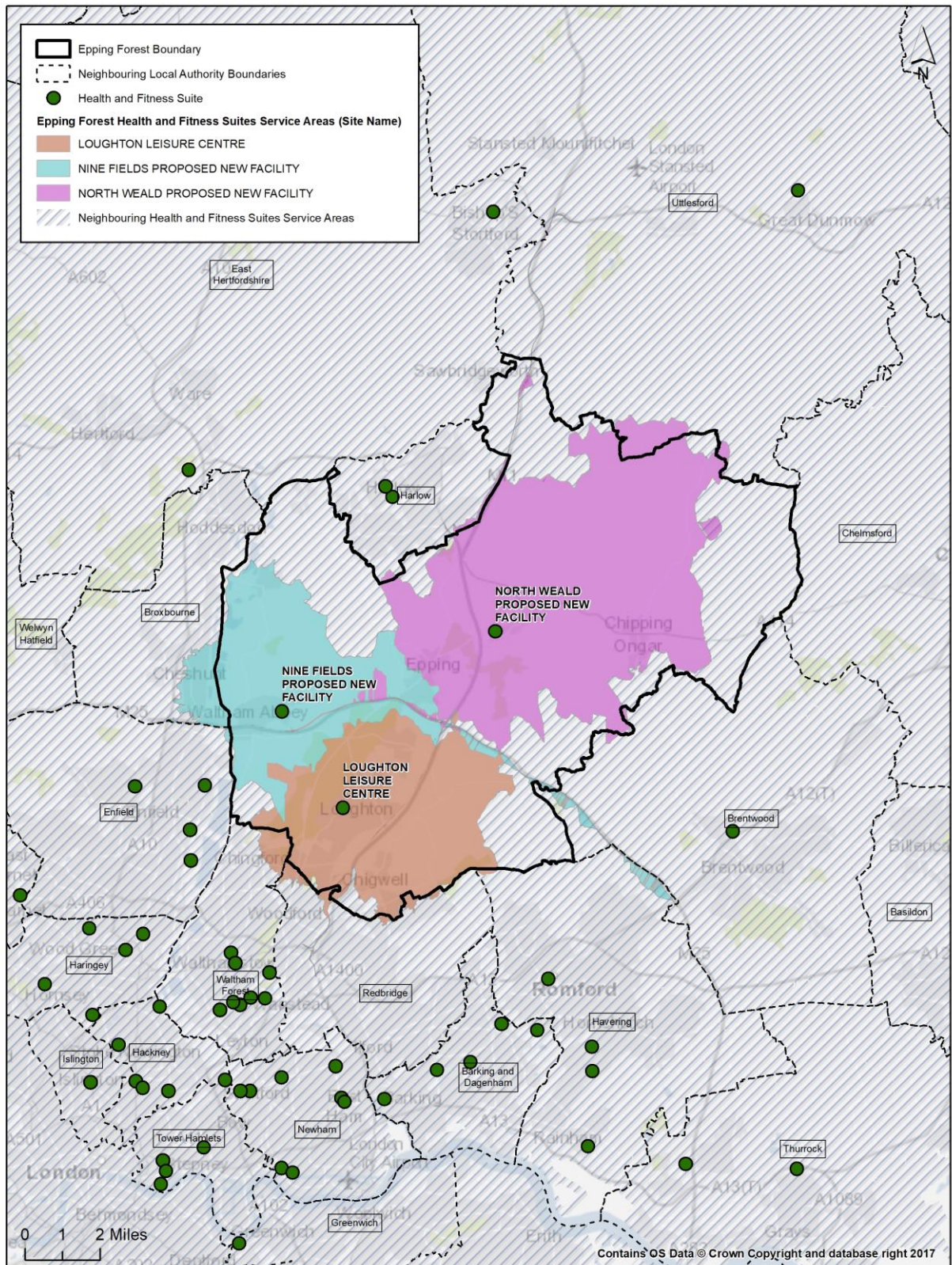
**Figure 8.1 – Swimming Pool Scenario**



**Swimming Pools with community use availability service areas  
in Epping Forest (up to 20 minute drive time)  
North Weald and Nine Fields Proposed New Facilities**



**Figure 8.2 – Health and Fitness Scenario**



**Health and Fitness Suites with community use availability service areas  
in Epping Forest (up to 20 minute drive time)  
North Weald and Nine Fields Proposed New Facilities**



## 8.6 Overall Recommendations

- 8.6.1 In addition to the specific recommendations identified above, there is also a need to address a small number of more general recommendations, which will improve the overall provision of built sports facilities across the Local Authority;

### **RECOMMENDATION 1: WORK WITH RELEVANT EDUCATION PARTNERS TO REVIEW, REVISE AND IMPLEMENT COMMUNITY USE AGREEMENTS (CUA'S), TO INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF SPORTS FACILITIES BASED AT EDUCATION SITES**

- 8.6.2 The study has identified that while there are a significant number of facilities located at education sites across the District, there is limited community use and where this does occur, it is not secured by a long-term CUA. The trend across the sector in this area is worsening, with education facilities become less available. It is therefore imperative that the Local Authority works with education partners to address this.
- 8.6.3 If this is not achievable, then further Local Authority and NGB investment will be required, to create facilities that are available for the community use during periods of peak demand.

### **RECOMMENDATION 2: SEEK TO SECURE S106 CONTRIBUTIONS THAT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FACILITIES, AS WELL AS THE REFURBISHMENT OF EXISTING FACILITIES.**

- 8.6.4 Given the scale of the proposed development (housing, retail and industrial) across the Local Authority, there is a significant opportunity to negotiate developer contributions, to be allocated to new sports facility development, as well as the improvement of existing facilities.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3: ENSURE THAT ALL FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT IS UNDERTAKEN IN LINE WITH THE WIDER INDUSTRY PRIORITIES OF ADDRESSING INACTIVITY AND ENGAGING WITH HARD-TO-REACH GROUPS**

- 8.6.5 Ensure all facility development meets the industry requirements associated with the 2015 DCMS 'Sporting Future' Strategy and the 2016 Sport England 'Towards an Active Nation' Strategy. In line with this strategic direction, facilities should be welcoming to hard-to-reach groups, be accessible for those that are currently inactive and meet the requirements of wider stakeholders such as Public Health England.
- 8.6.6 In addition, facility development should take into consideration the priorities and investment strategies of National Governing Bodies, as well as utilising funding streams available from these organisations.

### **RECOMMENDATION 4: DEVELOP A ROBUST MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS FOR NEW AND EXISTING FACILITIES**

- 8.6.7 It is imperative that, to demonstrate how sports facilities are performing and meeting local and national objectives, Epping Forest District Council and associated stakeholders establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework process for strategic built facilities.
- 8.6.8 This process should include capture of throughput data, the analysis of overall impact and a clear understanding of who is participating, when they are using facilities and what parts of the facility they are using.
- 8.6.9 As part of this process, evidence of impact can then be utilised to demonstrate to wider stakeholders, such as Sport England and DCMS, how facilities are performing and how the Council is engaging with hard-to-reach groups and 'inactives'.



**RECOMMENDATION 5: UNDERTAKE A DETAILED SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS FOR SWIMMING POOL, SPORTS HALL AND HEALTH & FITNESS PROVISION, BASED ON THE SCENARIOS CURRENTLY BEING ASSESSED BY THE COUNCIL**

- 8.6.10 Before coming to a final decision on the future location and facility mix of leisure centres within the District, it is important that a detailed options appraisal and feasibility study is undertaken, to assess the potential scenarios and provide clear recommendations on future provision in the District.
- 8.6.11 As part of this options appraisal, bespoke supply and demand analysis will be required, utilising the latest audit data provided as part of this report, as well as industry-agreed algorithms for demand and accessibility. This supply and demand analysis will then influence a clear set of recommendations for where leisure facilities should be located and what facility mix they should look to include.

**RECOMMENDATION 6: UNDERTAKE A SUB-REGIONAL SPORTS FACILITY STUDY FOR THE WIDER STUDY AREA, INCLUDING A DETAILED NEEDS ASSESSMENT ASSOCIATED WITH MAJOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SCHEME'S SUCH AS THE GARDEN TOWN PROJECT**

- 8.6.12 Working at a sub-regional level with neighbouring Harlow and East Herts District Council's, commission a strategic study that looks at all sports provision and how the supply and demand for facilities will be influenced by major population growth in the area.
- 8.6.13 Ensure that this study incorporates all typologies of sports provision, including the Playing Pitch Strategy that has been delivered in parallel to the BFS.

## 9 Future Investment Options

- 9.1.1 Having presented the recommended framework for future facility provision, this section provides an overview of the options emerging for Epping Forest District Council, all of which need to be considered in the context of the strategic context identified at the start of the report, as well as the corporate objectives of the Council.
- 9.1.2 This evaluation of potential options and facility developments will require further analysis through detailed feasibility reviews and options appraisal for chosen facilities.

### 9.2 Emerging Options

#### OPERATOR DELIVERY MODEL

- 9.2.1 The existing management model for built sports facilities in Epping Forest District is a combination of Places for People, various Education organisations and a number of private operators.
- 9.2.2 A key focus of this study has been the delivery of facilities by Places for People, due to the overall ownership of the Local Authority and the relationship between the operator and Epping Forest District Council.
- 9.2.3 In 2016 Epping Forest District Council commissioned Places for People to deliver their local authority owned leisure facilities, as part of a long term contract that involved commitments to develop facilities in the Waltham Abbey Area.
- 9.2.4 Throughout this contract, it is recommended that further analysis is undertaken to appraise the performance of the operator and gauge whether the outcomes have met the overall objectives of the Council.

#### FACILITY INVESTMENT

- 9.2.5 Throughout the needs assessment, recommendation and action plan, an evidence base has been developed, to be used to support future development proposals, both in terms of new build and refurbishment.
- 9.2.6 Table 9.1 below identifies the key facility investment opportunities and recommendations, which have been evaluated throughout this study and through consultation with key stakeholders. It therefore does not constitute an exhaustive list of all potentially needed investment opportunities across the District, but highlights some key suggested improvements based on this report's findings.
- 9.2.7 Further evaluation is required to define aspects such as facility mix, business plan and design, as referenced in the table.
- 9.2.8 The table has been split into the District's aforementioned settlements, to identify the requirements for specific spatial areas.
- 9.2.9 It should be noted that this table looks at strategic recommendations for major development and does not provide a site-by-site action plan. There are likely to be further, more basic developments and facility improvements that will need to be made to facilities. Further detail is provided as part of the site assessment and quality outputs in Section 4.

**Table 9.1: Facility Investment by Settlement**

Settlement	LA owned Strategic Facilities	Facility Issues	Investment Opportunities	Strategic Recommendations
Buckhurst Hill	None	No significant issues due to access to facilities in neighbouring Loughton. Deficit	N/A	N/A

Settlement	LA owned Strategic Facilities	Facility Issues	Investment Opportunities	Strategic Recommendations
		of sports hall provision in South of District, with limited provision in neighbouring Chigwell, Loughton and Waltham Abbey. Low population growth forecast		
Chigwell	None – significant commercial provision and education facilities	Generally low security of access to facilities given the academy trust or independent nature of ownership.	N/A	Engage with West Hatch High School Academy and Chigwell School to establish long-term community use agreements with security of tenure for local clubs
Chipping Ongar	Ongar Leisure Centre	Swimming pool provision is at end of life and sports hall requires refurbishment.	Invest in leisure facility with wet and dry provision, servicing the needs of Chipping Ongar and North Weald residents	Ensure that high quality community leisure provision is retained within Chipping Ongar, to service the needs of local residents. Undertake a detailed options appraisal to assess whether the existing leisure facility should be retained or re-located to nearby North Weald
Epping	Epping Sports Centre Epping Gymnastics Centre	Small site footprint with limited car parking or room for site expansion or improvement. Existing sports hall is at end of life.	Re-furbish existing provision in Epping Forest District, utilising a facility mix that appeals to local residents and increases local activity	Identify long-term solutions for the replacement of Epping Sports Centre at a site that is accessible to Epping residents, with high quality wet and dry provision.
Loughton/ Debden	Loughton Leisure Centre	High quality leisure facility that is in the process of further refurbishment and improvement.	N/A	N/A
North Weald Bassett	None	No strategic leisure facilities within the settlement, with residents closest to facilities in Epping and Chipping Ongar. Settlement has the highest projected population growth, approaching 70% by 2033	Major long-term opportunity to create high quality multi-sport leisure hub in North Weald, to meet demand of growing population and service the needs of the rest of the District.	Undertake detailed options appraisal and feasibility study, to identify the recommended facility mix and viability of a new facility in North Weald.
Roydon and Nazeing	None	No strategic leisure facilities within the settlements however residents will have access to the new facility at Waltham Abbey, as well as facilities in Epping.	N/A	N/A
Theydon Bois	None	No strategic leisure facilities within the settlement, with residents having good access to facilities in Loughton, Epping and Waltham Abbey	N/A	N/A
Waltham Abbey	Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool	The settlement currently has a facility that is at end of life, with the leisure centre due to be replaced by a new facility at Hill House. This new facility will be a high quality wet and dry leisure centre that will service the Waltham Abbey settlement and wider catchment area.	N/A	N/A

- 9.2.10 It is important to have a strategic approach when considering the supply and demand of sports provision in Epping Forest District up to 2031.
- 9.2.11 As summarised in Section 3, the Garden Town project in Harlow will see the development of 16,500 new homes by 2033, 4,000 of which will be provided in Epping Forest District as set out in the Draft Local Plan. This therefore constitutes considerable population growth, focussed in the part of the District that borders Harlow.
- 9.2.12 To estimate the new facilities that will be required to meet the needs if this significant number of new residents, Sport England's Sport Facility Calculator<sup>4</sup> (SFC) has been utilised, taking into consideration the estimated population growth (only in the Epping District area), based on 2.33 residents per dwelling.
- 9.2.13 This calculation generates a requirement for 0.7 new sports halls (2.58 badminton courts) and 0.5 new swimming pools (1.9 new lanes or 99 metres<sup>2</sup> of pool space).
- 9.2.14 While the SFC is a valuable tool to estimate requirements for new provision, there are a number of key considerations in relation to a major project such as this;
- With the changing nature of sport and physical activity, the Garden Town development is likely to generate demand for a wide-ranging facility mix, to meet the needs of residents of different demographic groups and ages. It is therefore important to consider sports facilities other than swimming pools and sports halls
  - In line with Recommendation 6, further cross-boundary analysis is required to identify how the growing demand can be catered for and where facility investment should be allocated
  - The specific facility mix of any new sport and leisure facilities should be subject to detailed feasibility studies, considering aspects such as Active Design<sup>5</sup>, multi-sport hub site development, generating maximum social benefit and targeting hard to reach and inactive residents.
- 9.2.15 Provision on the strategic allocations bordering Harlow would seek to service residents currently falling outside of the catchment area for facilities such as in Roydon, Nazeing and the north east of the District.

---

<sup>4</sup> Sport Facility Calculator [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org) (Sport England: 2017)

<sup>5</sup> Sport England Active Design Guidance – [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org) (Sport England: 2017)