



**THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**OPEN SPACE STRATEGY, PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY AND SPORTS FACILITY  
STRATEGY 2017**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**JUNE 2018**

# THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL

## OPEN SPACE STRATEGY, PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY AND SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY 2017

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Thanet District, comprising 103 sq. km, is located at the eastern end of Kent, in close proximity to continental Europe. It is the fourth most populated district in Kent, with the second highest population density. Thanet has the highest number of over 65-year olds in the county whilst having a lower proportion (59.6%) of 16-64-year olds than the county (62.6%).
- 1.2. The urban area (30% of the District), is very densely populated, and forms an almost continuous belt around the North - East coast.
- 1.3. Alongside the attractive coastal and rural villages, there are three main towns, where 95% of the population lives:
  - **Margate**
  - **Ramsgate**
  - **Broadstairs**
- 1.4. The District has very good road and rail links to the M25, M2 and A299.

#### CONTEXT

- 1.5. Thanet District Council (TDC) is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan to guide new development and land use up to 2031. This report summarises three related studies ie the Sports Facility Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and the Open Space Strategy comprising the evidence base for the protection of existing provision and the allocation of new open space, sport and recreational facilities within the Local Plan over this timeframe.
- 1.6. In 2006, Thanet's PPG17 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study was completed based on surveys and data and used population estimates and projections from 2004. It was also based on growth assumptions contained in the South-East Plan. These have now changed and policies relating to Thanet District in the South-East Plan have now been revoked.
- 1.7. The PPG17 study is out of date and needs to be updated in the context of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), to inform the new and emerging Thanet Local Plan to 2031. TDC's most recently adopted local plan is the Thanet Local Plan 2006.
- 1.8. A new local plan is currently being prepared to span 2011-2031, and consultations have been carried out relating to Issues and Options and Preferred Options.
- 1.9. In addition, the District Council has re-focussed its sport development resources on public health and physical activity to reflect the priorities and outcomes highlighted in the Government's 'Sporting Future: A new Strategy for an Active Nation' (2016) and that of Sport England 'Towards an Active Nation 2016-2021'. The priorities for the District are to improve local community health and reduce health inequalities associated with obesity, smoking, and inactivity.

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**Table 1.1: Summary of Thanet District Demographic Characteristics**

RELEVANT LOCAL FACTORS	KEY ISSUE	NARRATIVE ON KEY ISSUE
<b>CURRENT POPULATION 2016 (2014 – BASED SNPP)</b>	134,402 (2011) 140,937 (2016)	Population growing since 2011; growth of 7000 since 2011
<b>FUTURE POPULATION BY 2031 (RE-BASED 2014 SNPP)</b>	161,527	7000 growth already realised; 20,590 growth to 2031
<b>POPULATION GROWTH 2011-2016</b>	27,100 (1,356 per annum population growth)	Growth of 20,590 used in facility calculations, as based on 2016 population base
<b>NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION</b>	56,619 households 2011	75,269 households by 2031  17,140 new homes during the Local Plan period; 1,555 new homes delivered by March 2016  Main areas (strategic sites) of new housing are Westwood – 1450; Birchington on Sea - 1,600; Westgate on Sea – 2,000; Manston Green – 785; Land north and south of Shottendane Road (550) and Land at Manston Court/Haine Road (1,200); Non-Strategic sites include Westwood 1405; Margate and Cliftonville 816; Ramsgate 793; and a range of smaller sites across the District
<b>KEY PROFILE/DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS - CURRENT</b>	High levels of deprivation Large % of older people Population concentrated in urban areas	Thanet is in east Kent; there are three main coastal towns – Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs; dense urban population, in a belt around the North-East coast. There are areas of countryside between the towns, and smaller coastal and rural villages.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30% of the District is urban; 95% of the population live in the urban area.</li> <li>• Highest number of 65+ in Kent; lower numbers of 16-64-year olds (59.6%) than the rest of Kent (62.6%)</li> <li>• 35<sup>th</sup> most deprived District in the UK; highest average proportion of households in poverty in Kent</li> <li>• 26.7% of <b>children live in poverty.</b></li> <li>• <b>BME</b> groups; 95.4% White, 1.5% Asian, 1.1% Black, 1.1% mixed race. Our census figures showed a 2.2% increase in BME between 2001 and 2011</li> </ul>

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RELEVANT LOCAL FACTORS	KEY ISSUE	NARRATIVE ON KEY ISSUE
		<p>from 2.3% to 4.5%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life expectancy for both men and women is lower than the England average. Life expectancy is 10.9 years lower for men and 6.2 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Thanet.</li> <li>• 51% of the population do not meet physical activity guidelines. Thanet is in the bottom 5% least active districts in the UK.</li> <li>• 68.4% of Thanet residents are classified as obese or carrying excess weight. 28.70% of the Thanet population do not have a car i.e. nearly a third of the population</li> </ul>
<b>KEY DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS - FUTURE</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ageing population</li> <li>• Increasing numbers of 65+</li> <li>• 9000 additional aged 75+ by 2031</li> <li>• Also, significant increases in those aged 5-9, 10-14, 24-29, 30-34, 35-39</li> </ul>

Source: All statistics quoted in Table 1.1 are taken from local context documents referenced in Appendix 3 of the 2017 Sports Facilities Strategy.

## PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIES

### OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

1.10. The purpose of the study is to inform, provide evidence for, and make recommendations in relation to:

- **An analysis of the value of provision in terms of environment, economy, health, people and community;**
- **A determination of appropriately locally-derived quantity, quality and accessibility standards in accordance with the guidance for new development and future populations;**
- **An identification of surpluses and deficiencies in the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space facilities as well as an identification of the spatial distribution of unmet needs and a forecasting of future needs for the Council's settlement areas. This will**

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include a summary schedule and supportive mapping;

- A range of creative solutions which will meet identified deficits, including more effective recommendations for the setting of accessibility, quantitative and qualitative use of existing open space and recreational facilities;
- An updating of the schedule of open space facilities (including site mapping and digitalisation); and
- The production of site-specific action plans identifying individual improvements.

1.11. The rationale for this Open Spaces Review is underpinned by the preparation of a new Local Plan to guide development and land use. This Review will provide the evidence base for protecting existing provision and allocating new open space within the Local Plan.

1.12. A qualitative and quantitative assessment of the existing and future needs and demands for:

- **Amenity Greenspace;**
- **Public Parks and Gardens;**
- **Provision for Children and Young People;**
- **Allotments and Community Gardens;**
- **Cemeteries;**
- **Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces; and**
- **Outdoor Sports Facilities** has been undertaken.

1.13. Thanet's **beaches** and **seafont** are not included in the open space typology. However, they are an essential feature contributing to the attractiveness of the District to visitors, whether residents or tourists. No national standards have been defined for this type of asset, and yet they contribute significantly in providing outdoor recreational activities, and in attracting secondary spend on local accommodation, catering facilities (restaurants, etc.), and other leisure pursuits in Thanet. These attractions are also essential in mitigating shortfalls in terms of quantitative provision and accessibility to open spaces in the District.

1.14. The methodology adopted which is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and its predecessor, planning policy guidance and PPG17. Some very small spaces (less than 0.2 ha and of limited amenity value) were excluded.

1.15. In addition, consultation was conducted with parishes throughout the district. This sought views on the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space in those parishes. Some anecdotal information was also obtained relating to the desire for additional facilities in each parish's open spaces.

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1.16. The qualitative audit and assessment identifies the following:

**Table 1.2: Quality Issues in Thanet District**

OPEN SPACE TYPE	ISSUE
<b>AMENITY GREENSPACE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bad graffiti in places</li> <li>• Standards variable dependent upon care taken by local parish or town council</li> <li>• Absence of welcoming signage/information/bins</li> <li>• Grass maintenance only average</li> <li>• Absence or shortage of benches</li> </ul>
<b>PUBLIC PARKS AND GARDENS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More information needed</li> <li>• Bad graffiti in places</li> <li>• Landscaping necessary to enhance biodiversity/enhance interest</li> </ul>
<b>CHILDREN'S PLAY AREAS AND FACILITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very variable standards</li> <li>• Lack of signage</li> <li>• Poor access in some places</li> <li>• More exciting equipment needed in places</li> <li>• Some shortfall in terms of benches and bins</li> </ul>
<b>CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cemeteries average or good</li> <li>• Inadequate signage</li> <li>• Bins and seats in short supply</li> <li>• Some memorials are leaning and may need testing</li> </ul>
<b>GREEN CORRIDORS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More seating needed</li> <li>• Standards of maintenance good</li> <li>• Inadequate signage</li> </ul>
<b>NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL GREENSPACES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More seating needed</li> </ul>

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OPEN SPACE TYPE	ISSUE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance standards variable</li> </ul>
<b>ALLOTMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly poor or average</li> <li>Very difficult to find, and unwelcoming</li> <li>Modest facilities</li> <li>Poor boundaries in places</li> </ul>
<b>OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More seating needed</li> <li>Signage poor</li> <li>Landscaping necessary around perimeters</li> </ul>
<b>CLIFFTOP SITES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signage poor in places</li> <li>More landscaping needed</li> <li>More trees needed (salt-resistant species)</li> </ul>

1.17. A number of key findings have strong potential implications for future strategy in relation to both the provision of the green space service, and also the planning service as it relates to green space and countryside provision in Thanet.

1.18. These findings have been identified using the following sources:

- **Quality audit;**
- **Client observations;**
- **Consultation findings; and**
- **Local and national planning, countryside and green space guidelines.**

**FINDINGS RELATING TO SERVICE PROVISION**



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1.19. These findings as they relate to service provision are as follows:

- **There is a shortage of Amenity Greenspace, in Manston, Minster, Monkton, St Nicholas at Wade and Sarre. It should however be noted that Minster is one of Thanet's best-served villages for sports provision (covered in the 2017 Thanet Playing Pitch Strategy);**
- **There is a deficiency in Public Parks and Gardens, particularly at Westgate on Sea, Acol, St Nicholas at Wade, Sarre, Monkton, Minster and Cliffs End;**
- **Large – scale facilities (NEAPS) for Children and Young People are relatively under-provided in Westgate on Sea, and in the west of Margate. Some upgrading of smaller facilities (LEAP's) such as at Hartsdown Park, Lymington Road Play Area and Caxton Road Play Area would offset this shortfall;**
- **Because of the variability in provision for children and young people, an upgrade is necessary in a number of communities. This should include the provision of safer surfaces in places, and the installation of challenging and exciting pieces of equipment;**
- **Adventurous play provision such as iplay should be considered in urban settlements;**
- **“Green” play provision would be desirable and suitable for all areas, but in particular in rural locations;**
- **The rich heritage and history of Thanet should be interpreted in the larger Amenity Greenspaces as well as in Cemeteries and Churchyards across the district;**
- **All open space types throughout the district should have improvements made to entrances in line with Green Flag criteria in order to make them more welcoming, and to attract more visitors;**
- **Greater use should be made of open space by using more informal landscape methods to encourage biodiversity and habitat creation. This is particularly important given the shortage of significant formal areas of Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace in the District; and**
- **Green corridors should be upgraded or created to link settlements, encourage wildlife, and increase green transportation (walking and cycling).**

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**KEY PLANNING FINDINGS**

1.20. Findings relating to the future direction of countryside and green space planning in Thanet are:

- **The countryside needs to be protected to offset shortfalls in the quality, quantity and accessibility of more formal open space provision throughout the District;**
- **Measures need to be enhanced to improve biodiversity by using open space through the introduction of meadow, native tree planting and other conservation methods, particularly in the light of shortages of Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace. It is accepted, however, that residents have proximity to accessible countryside, particularly in the west of the District;**
- **More green corridors should be considered, or existing Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace upgraded in order to improve biodiversity, encourage sustainable travel, and connect isolated communities;**
- **Developer contributions should be encouraged to meet shortfalls in quality. In particular improvements should be made to open spaces to make them more welcoming, and to interpret the diverse history and heritage of the district in order to increase residents’ “sense of place”;**
- **A developer contribution model to fund improvements to the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space should be developed, using best practice models from other local authorities;**
- **Shortfalls in the quality, quantity and accessibility of facilities for children and youth should be addressed by seeking contributions for innovative play (iplay, “green’ Play, etc.), and for specific facilities such as “low ropes” adventures; and**
- **Need to provide open space “buffer zone” planting between new development and established communities in order to meet shortfalls in open space provision in future, and to buffer surrounding countryside and existing communities.**

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**TACKLING KEY SERVICE ISSUES**

1.21. Some guidance is provided in the following sections relating to how service issues might be tackled in order to meet the immediate future needs and demands of the green space service. These are:

- S1:** Creation of Parks and Gardens, possibly by upgrading Amenity Greenspace or Outdoor Facilities for Sport, particularly in Westgate on Sea and in outlying areas to the west of the District;
- S2:** Creation of challenging and exciting play areas using concepts such as “iplay”;
- S3:** More teenage and youth provision in areas of need (e.g. Teen shelters);
- S4:** The use of “green play” in suitable rural locations;
- S5:** Interpretation of the heritage and history of the area for residents and visitors to the green spaces of Thanet in both urban and rural settlements/ Improved and welcoming entrances. This is crucial across all types of open space; and
- S6:** Use of more “naturalesque” landscape methods in open spaces. This is particularly important around the edges of Outdoor Sports Facilities, and in larger expanses of Amenity Greenspaces Improvements to “Green Corridors” need to be made and existing links in the four sites already in the District need to be improved with better access footpaths and cycle routes, improved signage, better landscaping and better seating.
- S7:** Greater use of open spaces for events and activities.

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## TACKLING PLANNING ISSUES

1.22. Actions which are appropriate to tackling the planning issues identified in this study include:

- P1: Enhancement of biodiversity;**
- P2: Plans to upgrade and create green corridors should be considered in order to improve biodiversity, encourage sustainable travel, and connect isolated communities;**
- P3: Developer contributions should be encouraged to meet shortfalls in quality. In particular improvements should be made to open spaces to make them more welcoming, and to interpret the diverse history and heritage of the district in order to increase residents' "sense of place";**
- P4: A developer contribution model to fund improvements to the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space should be developed, using best practice models from other local authorities. In addition, local communities should be encouraged to include appropriate open spaces using the local green space designation in neighbourhood and local plans in order to protect valuable existing open space;**
- P5: Shortfalls in the quality, quantity and accessibility of facilities for children and youth should be addressed by seeking contributions for innovative play (iplay, "green" Play, etc.), and for specific facilities such as "low ropes" adventures and pump tracks;**
- P6: Measures should be taken to introduce flood alleviation measures, including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, to reduce the risk of flash flooding around some coastal communities; and**
- P7: Ensure that open space buffer zones are built in to new development.**

## ACTION PLAN

1.23. The actions outlined in previous sections are included in the Action Plan. This is divided into the following:

- **Short-term actions – within the next three years;**
- **Medium-term actions – three to five years; and**
- **Long-term actions – up to ten years.**

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**PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY (PPS)**

- 1.24. The PPS provides a framework for future provision and management of sports pitches to serve existing and new communities across the district.
- 1.25. In line with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, the PPS sets out to assess existing sports pitches, the future need for sports pitches, and opportunities for new provision.
- 1.26. The PPS will run to 2022 (five years based on Sport England recommendations) but should be reviewed on an annual basis to keep it up-to-date and robust. However future demand is taken into account to 2031 (in line with the draft new Local Plan) and should be reviewed in accordance with Stage E of the Sport England PPS guidance (see Part 7).
- 1.27. The PPS has been developed in partnership with a range of agencies including Thanet District Council, Town and Parish Council's, Sport England, national governing bodies of sport including football, cricket, rugby union and hockey and local football, hockey, rugby union, and cricket clubs.
- 1.28. This PPS is based on a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch facilities in accordance with Sport England's PPS Guidance: An Approach to Developing and Delivering a PPS 2013:<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-andguidance/playing-pitch-strategy-guidance/>
- 1.29. The development of the PPS has been overseen by a Steering Group made up of representatives from:
- **Sport England;**
  - **England Hockey;**
  - **Thanet District Council Planning Department;**
  - **Thanet District Council Parks and Leisure;**
  - **England and Wales Cricket Board;**
  - **Football Association; and**
  - **Rugby Football Union.**

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1.30. It will be important for the Steering Group to continue once the PPS has been adopted; by Thanet District Council. The reasons for this are:

- **To implement the PPS recommendations and action plan;**
- **Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of the PPS; and**
- **Ensure that the PPS is kept up to date.**

1.31. The purpose of the PPS is to:

- **Detail an understanding of current and future needs for playing pitches and playing pitch ancillary facilities, driven by increased population, and identification of any gaps in the existing facility network;**
- **Enable Thanet District Council and other local providers to shape their future playing pitch facilities offer; this may comprise of direct Council provision and that undertaken by education, voluntary, community, private sectors and National Governing Bodies’;**
- **Set out a strategic vision for future provision of playing pitch facilities, based on robust evidence and a needs assessment; and**
- **Help protect playing fields from loss and make sure the right type, and quantity, of new pitches are provided as part of new developments and future growth sites.**
- **Provide the evidence base for the following:**
  - The Council’s New Local Plan-2031;
  - Identification of projects for which contributions can be sought as part of new development; and
  - Funding bids from National Sports bodies like Sport England and the National Governing Bodies (NGB’s) of sport, additionally, the PPS will focus on revenue and capital spending in the medium term.

1.32. The PPS will underpin the contribution that sport makes to Thanet District Council’s Corporate Plan, priority objectives and will also help provide a rationale to enable National Governing Bodies to further invest and deliver their working outcomes as outlined in their Whole Sport Plans. The PPS will also provide evidence to support funding bids from other funders, whilst also supporting requests for S106 developer contributions following building developments subject to viability considerations. Additionally, the strategies will help focus internal revenue and capital spending in the medium term.

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1.33. The PPS is for playing pitches and outdoor facilities in scope for the whole district not just the Council's own playing pitches and outdoor facilities. However, the Council has a role to play but at the same time the PPS has to be considered in the context of reducing budgets for local authorities and savings that mean a reduction in the resources available for the Council to maintain playing pitches and ancillary facilities.

1.34. The aim of the PPS is:

***'to provide an assessment of the "fit for purpose" of the sports pitches and facilities, whilst identifying opportunities for retaining, reducing or removing this provision and prospects for new provision and partnerships. The assessment should identify specific needs and quantitative and/or qualitative deficits or surpluses of sports pitches and facilities in Thanet.'***

1.35. Table 1.3 shows the quantitative findings from the PPS Stage C Assessment Report.

**Table 1.3: Headline Findings Football Grass Pitches, 3G Rubber Crumb pitches, Cricket, Hockey & Rugby Union.**

SPORT	CURRENT DEMAND SHORTFALL 2017	FUTURE DEMAND SHORTFALL 2031 USING ONS SUB NATIONAL POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2016 -2031
<b>FOOTBALL (GRASS PITCHES)</b>	Adult 11 v 11 - Demand is being met for adult match equivalent sessions.  Junior 11 v 11 – Shortfall 13 match equivalent sessions.  Junior 9 v 9 - Shortfall 6 match equivalent sessions.  Mini Soccer 7 v 7 -Demand is being met for mini 7 v 7 matches  Mini Soccer 5 v 5 - Demand is being met for mini 5 v 5 matches	Adult 11 v 11 - Demand can be met from current supply with community use agreements on school sites, use of unused sites and 3 pitches provided from new housing development.  Junior 11 v 11 shortfall of 22 junior 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions  Junior 9 v 9 – Shortfall 14 match equivalent sessions.  Mini Soccer 7 v 7 – Demand can be met from current supply.  Mini soccer 5 v 5 – Demand can be met from current supply
<b>FOOTBALL 3G RUBBER CRUMB PITCHES</b>	Shortfall of 2 full size 3 G rubber crumb pitches based upon the FA training model.	Shortfall of 3 full size 3 G rubber crumb pitches based upon the FA training model.

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SPORT	CURRENT DEMAND SHORTFALL 2017	FUTURE DEMAND SHORTFALL 2031 USING ONS SUB NATIONAL POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2016 -2031
<b>CRICKET</b>	Demand is being met with over play at Broadstairs Cricket Club.	Future demand can be met from current supply. However, there is a need to improve existing cricket facilities in Thanet for use by new residents.
<b>HOCKEY</b>	Current demand is being met.	Future demand can be met from current supply.
<b>RUGBY UNION</b>	Current demand is being met at peak time of play. There is over play when training and matches are included	Future demand is met at peak time of play. There is demand for additional floodlit pitches to meet training needs and improvements to quality of existing pitches.

**FOOTBALL HEADLINES**

- 1.36. The requirement in 2031 for adult 11 v 11 is 22 match equivalent sessions at peak time of play. There will be a shortfall of 2 secure community use match equivalent sessions.
- 1.37. Population growth indicates that there is a need for 3 additional match equivalent sessions per week at peak time which equates to 3 adult 11 v 11 pitches by 2031. This provision should come from new housing development funding.
- 1.38. The 3 match equivalent sessions provided by population growth and the 20 current secured match equivalent sessions provide 23 match equivalent sessions. This shows a surplus of 1 adult secured match equivalent sessions in 2031 with 6 unsecured community use match equivalent sessions spare. In total there will be 7 adult match equivalent sessions spare in 2031.
- 1.39. The current shortfall in junior 11 v 11 match sessions is due to overplay of junior 11 v 11 games on adult pitches. There is a need to provide for 28 match equivalent sessions in 2031. Population growth demands 4 match equivalent sessions. There are currently 6 secured community use match equivalent sessions. With the 4 provided from population growth this equals 10 match equivalent sessions. This leaves a shortfall of 18 junior 11 v 11 secured community use match equivalent sessions in 2031.
- 1.40. There is a need to seek formal community use agreements for the 6 current unsecured community use match equivalent sessions and to reconfigure the 7 adult spare match equivalent sessions into junior 11 v 11. This totals 13 match equivalent sessions leaving a shortfall of 15 junior 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions.



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- 1.41. There are 4 adult 11 v 11 match equivalent sessions that are currently not in use. These are Birchington Recreation Ground – 2 adult match equivalent sessions, Lymington Recreation Ground – 1 match equivalent session and Warre Recreation Ground - 1 adult match equivalent session. These 4 sites should be considered for reconfiguration to junior 11 v 11 pitches. This would reduce the shortfall to 1 junior 11 v 11 match equivalent session in 2031. This could be met by use of land adjacent to Garlinge Playing Fields or pitches at the Royal Harbour Academy School.
- 1.42. Population growth indicates that there is a need for 1 additional 7 v 7 and 1 additional 5 v 5 match equivalent session per week at peak time which equates to 1 7 v 7 and 1 5 v 5 pitches by 2031. This provision should come from new housing development.
- 1.43. There will be sufficient 7 v 7 match equivalent sessions in 2031. If the new 5 v 5 pitch provided by housing is of good quality 6 match equivalent sessions could be played per week. This would meet the shortfall of 4 x 5 v 5 match equivalent sessions in 2031.

### 3G RUBBER CRUMB HEADLINES

- 1.44. There are 3 x 3G rubber crumb full size pitches across Thanet (Margate FC, Minster Recreation Ground and Hartsdown Academy). Margate FC and Minster Recreation Ground are accredited to the FA 3G pitch register. This means that competitive league games as well as training can take place on these 3G pitches.
- 1.45. There is current demand for 4 3G rubber crumb pitches to meet football training demand and 5 3G rubber crumb pitches to meet football training demand in the future.
- 1.46. Seeking FA registration at Hartsdown would provide 3 registered FA pitches.
- 1.47. The development of a 3G pitch at Jackey Bakers would assist in meeting the shortfall and other Section 106 funding from new developments could fund a second pitch.

### CRICKET HEADLINES

- 1.48. The total capacity for cricket pitches across the district is 353 match equivalents per season. The demand is 217 match equivalents per season with a theoretical underplay of 136 match equivalent games per season. Larger cricket clubs' pitches such as Broadstairs Cricket Club are constantly used.
- 1.49. Peak demand is on a Saturday and this needs to be considered as only one game can be played on 1 square. Some clubs have to play at other sites other than their preferred home ground.
- 1.50. Chatham House Grammar School requires a formal community use agreement to protect the use of the cricket facilities for Pegasus Cricket Club, Nelson Cricket Club and Ramsgate Corinthians cricket Club.

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#### HOCKEY HEADLINES

1.51. The current and future demand for hockey can be met with the continued use of the water based and AGP hockey pitches at St Lawrence College. There is a need to safeguard usage by Cliftonville Hockey Club with the introduction of a community use agreement between the club and the college.

#### RUGBY UNION HEADLINES

1.52. There is a need to address drainage issues on Thanet Wanderers Rugby Club pitches and a need for the club to have access to two floodlit pitches for training.

#### THE PPS OBJECTIVES

1.53. The PPS Objectives follow the following three principles:

- **PROTECT:** The strategy seeks to make sure that the right amount of playing pitches and ancillary facilities of the right quality are in the right place. It promotes the protection of existing provision and recognises the benefits of multi pitch sites by:
  - Highlighting sites which have a particular significance for sport and seeks to protect them as a local recreational space through the Development Plan process (see NPPF paragraphs 76 and 77);
  - Securing tenure and access for development minded clubs, through a range of solutions and partnerships; and
  - Seeking formal community use agreements with schools where there is a need.
- **ENHANCE:** Key partners such as Thanet District Council, Town and Parish Council's, local schools, Private and Voluntary Sector Sports Clubs, and NGBs must work together to maximise the full potential of playing pitch assets and the long-term sustainability of these assets and recognise that an improvement in quality and ongoing maintenance can have an impact on the capacity of use. The strategy will do this by setting out where improvements to the quality of playing pitches and ancillary facilities are required. The PPS looks at:
  - Improving quality;
  - Working in partnership with stakeholders to provide funding; and
  - Securing developer contributions

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- **PROVIDE:** In times of public sector austerity, investment needs to be directed at sites which will provide the best impact and highest increase in participation. It is the policy of Thanet District Council to support projects and sports clubs that are able to; demonstrate sustainable long-term development, increase participation and have achieved the appropriate accreditations e.g. Clubmark and / or Charter Standard providing player and sports development pathways. The strategy looks at:
  - Addressing capacity in junior 11 v 11 and 9 v 9 football by providing secured pitches through community use agreements on existing and new school sites and ensuring new pitches or contributions for new pitches through new housing development;
  - Addressing the need for 3G artificial grass pitches to meet increasing and changing demand for AGP surfaces for both training and competition in football;
  - Looking at the development of Jackey Bakers Sports Ground to ensure continued sustainability as a minimum for cricket and football; and
  - Providing the required number and type of pitches on-site, or appropriate provision off-site, to meet the specific needs of residential development proposals.

1.54. The strategy framework focuses on the following three principles:

- **Protect:** The strategy seeks to make sure that the right amount of playing pitches and ancillary facilities of the right quality are in the right place. It promotes the protection of existing provision and recognises the benefits of multi pitch sites by:
  - Highlighting sites which have a particular significance for sport and seek to designate them as a local recreational space through the Development Plan process (see NPPF paragraphs 76 and 77); and
  - Negotiate security of tenure for clubs at sites that are leased.
- **Enhance:** Key partners such as Thanet District Council, Town and Parish Council's, local schools, Private and Voluntary Sector Sports Clubs, and NGBs must work together to maximise the full potential of playing pitch assets and the long-term sustainability of these assets and recognise that an improvement in quality and ongoing maintenance can have an impact on the capacity of use. The strategy will do this by:
  - Improving the quality of the playing surface by providing improved maintenance and as a last resort drainage, by undertaking and supporting improvements and enhancement at sites that do not meet required quality standards, supporting clubs that require improved facilities in order to play at a higher standard, ensuring that pitches have a period of rest and recovery where appropriate.;
  - Provision of enhanced ancillary facilities where they are required – floodlighting and changing;
  - Ensure that clubs have access to sufficient training facilities; and
  - Identification of sites for further development.

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- **Provide:** In times of public sector austerity, investment needs to be directed at sites which will provide the best impact and highest increase in participation. It is the policy of Thanet District Council to support projects and sports clubs that are able to demonstrate sustainable long term development, increase participation and support those clubs that have achieved the appropriate accreditations e.g. Clubmark and or Charter Standard and provide player and sports development pathways. The strategy looks at:
  - Addressing capacity in junior and mini football by designating under played adult football pitches to junior and mini sites to ensure that all teams are playing on pitches of the right size;
  - Addressing the need for artificial grass pitches to meet increasing and changing demand for AGP surfaces for both training and competition in football, hockey and rugby and other pitch sports; and
  - Providing the required number and type of pitches on-site, or appropriate provision off-site, to meet the specific needs of residential development proposals.

### PRIORITY SPORT SPECIFIC ACTIONS

- 1.55. All existing playing field land is protected by the new Local Plan for the District 2011 – 2031, Sport England policies and the NPPF. These playing fields are protected to deliver current and future needs.
- 1.56. As a priority for all partners on the Steering Group there is a need for Thanet District Council, Parish Council's, Football Association, Kent Football, England Hockey, ECB and Kent Cricket, Rugby Football Union and Sport England to work together to provide a local investment plan to ensure the successful implementation of this PPS.
- 1.57. The Football, Cricket, Rugby and Hockey individual Sport Specific actions are shown in Table 4.1 in the 2017 PPS report.
- 1.58. The action plans are given a priority:
- **Priority 1.** Delivered against or worked towards within three years (ahead of the first full review of the PPS)
  - **Priority 2.** Delivered within 6 years
  - **Priority 3.** No specific date – In many instances the action is a general support for clubs or other bodies to progress with ground improvements and is not necessarily an action the Council or the Playing Pitch Steering Group have control over.
- 1.59. Table 1.4 provides general Planning Policy recommendations and PPS Development recommendations.

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**Table 1.4: General Recommendations**

<b>GENERAL PLANNING &amp; PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLANNING TO BE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE PLANNING PROCESS</b>	<p>Agree the following Actions for the Local Plan. Appropriate Allocations for playing fields should be set out within the new Local Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The policies within the new Local Plan, should be in accordance with the NPPF, which seeks to protect playing pitches unless 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.</b></li> <li>• <b>Planning consent should include appropriate conditions and/or be subject to developer contributions. Sport England’s New Development Calculator for New Developments should be used to identify new need from a development and will guide on development, maintenance and sink fund costs.</b></li> <li>• <b>Where new pitches are provided changing rooms should be located on site as a minimum for adult use including provision for women and girls or as a minimum, toilet facilities should be provided for junior and mini football use including toilets for women and girls.</b></li> <li>• <b>Where schools or higher education establishments seek planning permission for outdoor playing pitches and/or artificial grass pitches the planning conditions must stipulate a formal community use agreement is put in place with the School and the Local Authority to provide for community use of the facility.</b></li> </ul>
<b>GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS PPS DEVELOPMENT</b>	<p>Thanet District Council will work in partnership with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Football Association Regional Investment and Facilities manager Kent Football Association.</b></li> <li>• <b>England and Wales Cricket Board Facilities and Investment Manager and Kent Community Cricket</b></li> <li>• <b>Rugby Football Union Investment and Facilities Manager</b></li> <li>• <b>England Hockey Relationship Manager for Kent / England Hockey Facilities Relationship Manager</b></li> <li>• <b>Sport England</b></li> </ul>

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GENERAL PLANNING & PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT	ACTION
	<p><b>Short Term Action By December 2018</b></p> <p>Thanet District Council will continue working with the PPS Steering Group. The Steering Group will monitor and review the PPS and site action plans on a six-monthly basis.</p> <p><b>Short Term Action December 2018 - Long Term December 2021:</b></p> <p>The action plan from the PPS should be implemented by Thanet District Council with the assistance of the Steering Group.</p> <p>It is important that the PPS Steering group keep the PPS alive. This will be achieved by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Working together to seek investment appropriate to deliver the PPS in Partnership.</b></li> <li>• <b>Monitoring the delivery of the recommendations and actions.</b></li> <li>• <b>Providing up to date annual supply and demand for pitch stock.</b></li> <li>• <b>Addressing changing trends and formats for the different pitch sports as they develop and monitoring participation of these changes and trends.</b></li> </ul> <p>The on-going monitoring of the PPS will be led by Thanet District Council and will be linked to the PPS Steering Group. The PPS will be updated every 3-5 years.</p>

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**SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY**

- 1.60. The purpose of the Sports Facility Strategy is to provide a robust future action plan for indoor sports facilities in Thanet and to support the preparation of the Local Plan. The work will enable the Council to adopt a clear vision and priorities for the future (based on local need) and a direction for the allocation of resources. The study will help to ensure that the current and future demand for sports and recreation facilities are planned for holistically, and that the needs of the current and growing population of Thanet District can be fully addressed.
- 1.61. The purpose of developing this Sports Facilities Strategy is identified by TDC as:
- 1.62. To inform, provide evidence for and make recommendations in relation to:
- **Planning policies on: a. Locally derived green space, playing pitch and sports provision standards b. Protection of existing open space, indoor and outdoor sports and recreation sites c. Allocation of sites for new and/or improved open space, sports and recreation facilities, if necessary;**
  - **The infrastructure required to support development set out in an updated Infrastructure Delivery Schedule;**
  - **The list of infrastructure likely to be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy under Regulation 123 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, as amended;**
  - **Development management decisions, including assisting in negotiations for financial contributions and/or direct provision on site;**
  - **The allocation of existing money collected through financial contributions from developers towards the provision of open space, indoor and outdoor sport facilities;**
  - **Applications for external funding for improvements to existing facilities and new projects; and**
  - **A strategy and prioritised action plan, including a vision, objectives and recommendations on future provision, funding and management of open space, indoor and sports and recreation facilities in the district.**



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1.63. The study:

- Provides evidence to justify the provision of new open space, sport and recreation provision or enhancement of existing;
- Helps assess the merits of planning applications and guide planning obligations;
- Helps direct expenditure of any future Community Infrastructure levy monies and Section 106 planning contributions for sport;
- Supports the development of sport and physical activity in the District by ensuring a high-quality facility infrastructure exists; and
- Supports the strategic case for applications to funding organisations.

1.64. Key elements addressed by the Indoor Sports Facility Strategy include:

- **QUANTITY** - Are there enough facilities with sufficient capacity to meet needs up to 2031 (in line with the Thanet Local Plan until 2031).
- **QUALITY** - Are the facilities fit for purpose for the users? Do the facilities provide the level of play needed, and does the quality meet the users' and NGBs' expectations?
- **ACCESSIBILITY** - Are the facilities in the right physical location for users?
- **AVAILABILITY** - Are the facilities available at the right time to users who want to use them?

#### STRATEGY SCOPE

1.65. In terms of geographical scope, the assessment covers the whole District of Thanet. In terms of provision, the assessment includes the following:

- **Indoor sports facilities**
  - For indoor sports, the audit considers indoor swimming pools, indoor tennis facilities, sports halls and appropriate school and local community facilities and health and fitness facilities. bowls; tennis and gymnastics.

#### STRATEGY STRUCTURE

1.66. The Strategy and its structure has been developed using the Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities guidance (ANOG), published in 2014.



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**STRATEGY ANALYSIS**

1.67. Based on the findings and analysis undertaken to develop this Strategy, the key issues in terms of future provision are:

- **The need to provide for the population growth in the District;**
- **The need for sport and leisure facilities to continue to contribute to healthy and active lifestyles in the District;**
- **The need to increase existing levels of participation;**
- **The need to address unmet demand for sports hall provision;**
- **The need to address existing unmet demand for swimming pool provision;**
- **The need to ensure there is access to sufficient pay and play accessible fitness suites and studios in the District;**
- **The need to consider the need for additional purpose-built gymnastics and indoor bowls provision in the District; and**
- **The need to consider how best to replace ageing facilities, which are poorer quality, and less effective operationally.**

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**PRIORITY INVESTMENT NEEDS**

1.68. Priority investment needs and the options to deliver these are set out in Table 1.5.

**Table 1.5: Priorities for Future Provision of Sport and Leisure Facilities in Thanet District**

<b>FACILITY TYPE</b>	<b>PRIORITY FOR FUTURE PROVISION</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>PLANNING IMPACT</b>
<b>SPORTS HALLS</b>	Better use of existing available capacity if possible in existing education facilities; increasing club use of these could release some space in pay and play sports halls	At identified schools- one identified in consultation response St George's School, plus Ursuline College, The Royal Harbour Academy (Upper Site), St Lawrence College, St George's C of E School, King Ethelbert School.	<b>ENHANCE AND PROTECT</b>
	Securing of formal CUAs, including pay and play where possible	All 9 schools offering community access	<b>ENHANCE</b>
	Opening up of facilities which are currently not available for any form of community use	One school identified in consultation response St Anthony's School	<b>ENHANCE</b>
	Replacement of ageing facilities Need for 6.5 additional badminton courts by 2031.	Hartdown Leisure Centre,	<b>PROVIDE</b>
<b>SWIMMING POOLS</b>	Increased pay and play accessible water space, equivalent to just under a 6-lane x 25m pool by 2031	TBC dependent on decisions on Hartdown Leisure Centre	<b>PROVIDE</b>
	Replacement of ageing facilities	Hartdown Leisure Centre (medium to longer term),	<b>PROVIDE</b>
<b>HEALTH AND FITNESS</b>	Increased provision of 365 fitness stations by 2031	Districtwide	<b>PROVIDE</b>
<b>GYMNASTICS</b>	Potential to explore club-led provision/partnership provision given high number of young people on waiting lists	No specific location	<b>ENHANCE AND PROVIDE</b>
<b>BOXING</b>	Additional capacity in multi-purpose halls for boxing clubs, where membership is growing	No specific location	<b>ENHANCE AND PROVIDE</b>

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FACILITY TYPE	PRIORITY FOR FUTURE PROVISION	LOCATION	PLANNING IMPACT
INDOOR BOWLS	Potential opportunity to consider club-led provision of indoor bowls facilities (increased demand for additional 1.58 rinks by 2031)	No specific location	<b>PROVIDE</b>
GENERAL PROVISION	Overall, and specifically through the housing growth agenda, provision of more active environments, reflecting active travel, safe cycle routes to school, the need to link existing and new communities with walking / cycling / jogging routes.	Districtwide	

**VISION**

1.69. The suggested Vision for future provision of sport and leisure in Thanet is:

**‘A range of high quality, strategically-located, accessible and sustainable sport and leisure facilities to facilitate increased regular participation in sport and physical activity, to contribute to a reduction in health inequalities in the District’.**

1.70. As a minimum, TDC wishes to see accessible community sport and leisure facilities, places and spaces for swimming, fitness and sports hall sports/activities available for all residents. This includes both formal and informal spaces e.g. community halls in which to play sport and be physically active, opportunities for participation in open space, along the coast, and in outdoor recreation.

**AIMS**

1.71. The aim of providing sufficient high quality, fit for purpose and accessible provision, places and spaces is to:

- **Grow and increase the regular amount of physical activity undertaken by individuals, and particularly by those who are currently inactive;**
- **Develop additional facility provision where need is evidenced e.g. as a result of population growth;**
- **Develop multi-purpose provision where possible, reflecting changing participation trends and opportunities;**

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- **Encourage new participants to start taking part in physical activity;**
- **Enable opportunities for participation to be provided in a wider range of places and spaces, and particularly at a very local level, using e.g. community centres/halls;**
- **Facilitate the continued development of healthier lifestyles across Thanet's communities;**
- **Contribute to a reduction in health inequalities, and specifically obesity, inactivity, across Thanet;**
- **Create active environments where the opportunity to be more physically active is an integral part of everyday life; and**
- **Support and provide opportunities for local community groups.**

1.72. The provision of high quality and accessible facilities, the opening up of other informal places, and spaces, as well as the development of new provision, will contribute to the overall priority for the development of healthier lifestyles in Thanet, across all age groups.

1.73. Facilitating opportunities to be more physically active, more often is also important, to contribute to a reduction in the health inequalities in and across Thanet, to help people to live and age better.

1.74. Sustainability of high quality, and critically, accessible (on foot and by public transport), facility provision is key to maintaining these opportunities; TDC needs to plan for the investment requirements of its existing facilities, and work in partnership with other providers and stakeholders to address the other priorities identified through this Strategy.

### **PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE PROVISION**

1.75. Analysis of existing provision also identifies the principles that should underpin all future sport and leisure facility development in Thanet. These are to:

- **Ensure residents in all areas of Thanet have pay and play access to good quality, local, accessible and affordable provision, whether it is a formal sports hall or a community hall, or other informal provision;**
- **Aim to ensure that any new, sports facilities on education sites provide a balance of opportunities (through a formal agreement) for community access – both pay and play and club use;**

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- **Replace / refurbish ageing facilities where new provision is needed; all new and refurbished provision should be designed and developed based on Sport England and (National Governing Body) NGB guidance, and be fully inclusive;**
- **Rationalise existing provision where new fit for purpose facilities can replace/improve existing buildings (but existing levels of provision need to be maintained as a minimum, given the levels of existing facility under-supply, and the fact that only TDC facilities provide for pay and play access);**
- **Improve the quality of existing facilities where needed; priority is older sports halls, particularly on education sites; and**
- **Invest strategically to ensure economic viability and sustainability of provision.**