



Dacorum Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy

Annual Update 2023

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Abbreviations

3G	Third generation turf
AC	Athletics Club
AGP	Artificial grass pitch
BC	Bowls Club
B&HHHC	Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead Hockey club
CC	Cricket Club
DBC	Dacorum Borough Council
DPD	Development Plan Document
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
LFFP	Local Football Facility Plan
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NGB	National Governing Body
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RLFC	Rugby League Football Club
TC	Tennis Club
THC	Tring Hockey Club

1. Introduction

1.1 This is the Council's second annual update of the Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report April 2019¹ and Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan June 2019 (PPS),² following the Annual Update 2021.³ These reports form part of the Council's technical evidence base for local plan preparation and were developed in accordance with Sport England guidance.

1.2 Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance, *An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy*,⁴ also sets out the purpose of undertaking an annual review.

1.3 'An annual review should highlight:

- How the delivery of the recommendations and action plan has progressed, and any changes required to the priority afforded to each action (e.g. the priority of some may increase following the delivery of others).
- How the PPS has been applied and the lessons learnt.
- Any changes to particularly important sites and/or clubs in the area (e.g. the most used or high-quality sites for a particular sport) and other supply and demand information, what this may mean for the overall assessment work and the key findings and issues.
- Any development of a specific sport or format of a sport.
- Any new or emerging issues and opportunities.'

1.4 This annual update aims to follow this approach. For completeness of understanding, it should be read alongside the 2019 PPS documents and the 2021 Annual Update.

1.5 The first annual update did not take place during 2020 when participation rates were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and was instead deferred until 2021 when participation rates became more representative. However, for some sports and groups of participants in 2021 there remained some residual and ongoing impacts from the pandemic, although reports generally indicated most sports had recovered.

1.6 The data for this update was collected from late 2023 onwards in advance of the update's publication in 2024.

1.7 Partner organisations have a vested interest in ensuring existing playing fields, pitches and ancillary facilities can be protected and enhanced. As such, many of the objectives and actions within this document need to be delivered and implemented by sports organisations, education establishments, community sports networks and parish/town councils. In many instances, the Council will not be a key partner in delivering these actions or recommendations, meaning the PPS is not just for the Council to act upon, but for all the stakeholders and partners involved within the project.

¹ https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/playing-pitch-strategy-assessment-report.pdf?sfvrsn=14cd0a9e_8

² https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/playing-pitch-strategy-and-action-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=33cd0a9e_8

³ https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/playing-pitch-strategy-annual-update-2021.pdf?sfvrsn=dca079e_0

⁴ https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/pps-guidance-october-2013-updated.pdf?VersionId=afnAz9cYWu47InVNn_t3QCSem9.uRnwg

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The 2019 Playing Pitch Strategy focused on the following types of outdoor sports facilities: **football, rugby league, hockey, cricket, bowls, tennis, athletics (including road running), netball, golf, others as appropriate (i.e water sports facilities, archery, cycling)**
- 2.2 For this annual update, as in 2021, baseball has been included as an appropriate additional sport that is particularly relevant to Dacorum Borough.
- 2.3 To identify any changes implemented since the 2019 Strategy, national governing bodies (NGBs) and other key stakeholders were asked to complete a survey explaining any changes to demand and supply. The following sports/organisations were contacted:

Sport/Provision	Organisation	Rationale
Football	Hertfordshire FA	Governing body of football in Hertfordshire
Third Generation (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPS)	Everyone Active Hertfordshire FA England Athletics	Operator of Berkhamsted Leisure Centre, Hemel Hempstead Leisure Centre, Hemel Hempstead School Courts, Jarman Park Athletics track and Longdean Sports Centre. Sport specific information also provided by NGBs.
Cricket	Herts Cricket	Governing body of cricket in Hertfordshire
Rugby Union	Rugby Football Union Herts Rugby	National governing body Local constituent body on RFU Council
Hockey	England Hockey	National governing body
Golf	England Golf	National governing body
Bowls	Herts Bowls Kitcheners Bowls Club	County bowling association Club within Borough
Tennis	Lawn Tennis Association	National governing body
Netball	England Netball Flamstead Netball Club	National governing body Defunct club within Borough
Athletics	England Athletics Dacorum AC Gade Valley Harriers Athletics Club Dacorum Triathlon Club PEVH Seven:Ten Runworks	National governing body Only athletics club within Borough One of several running clubs within Borough " " " "
Rugby League	Hemel Stags Rugby League Club	Only club operating in Dacorum.
Baseball	Herts Baseball Club	Not included in 2019 strategy, however strong sport within Dacorum, represented by single club.
Football, AGP	Dacorum Borough Council	Provider of sports facilities

2.4 For each sport the following approach was taken:

Supply Update

This captures changes in supply identified by the sports organisations with each activity linked back to the three overarching aims of the Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan:

- Aim 1: to **protect** the existing supply of outdoor sports facilities where it is needed to meet current and future needs.
- Aim 2: to **enhance** outdoor sports provision and ancillary facilities through improving quality and management of sites.
- Aim 3: to **provide** new outdoor sports facilities where feasible and where there is current or future demand to do so.
-

Demand Update

This compares participation data from 2019, 2021 and 2023. Where a direct comparison is not possible, it presents the data that is available.

Significant Issues by Sport

Each sport was asked to identify any significant issues from their perspective and if there had been any further changes to the information presented in the 2019 and 2021 documents.

Summary and Conclusions by Sport

The information collated above was then used to determine if any changes were needed to the recommendations for each sport in the Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan 2019 and the Annual Update 2021.

2.5 A copy of the survey can be found at Appendix 1.

3. Football

3.1 Supply Update

Table 3.1 Changes in football pitch supply and quality

Site ID	Site	Sport	Analysis Area	Update	Aim
3	Ashlyns School	Football	Berkhamsted	3G resurface completed in 2021.	Protect
59	Kings Langley Secondary School	Football/cricket/ rugby union/ tennis/netball	Southern	11v11 3G pitch completed March 2024, funded by Football Foundation. Three grass pitches remain.	Provide
86	Longdean Sports Centre	Football/hockey/ tennis/netball	Hemel	5v5 3G pitch installed to replace an existing Astro, with support from Football Foundation and Hertfordshire FA.	Enhance

As these updates all relate to 3G facilities, they are also included in the 3G section.

3.2 Hertfordshire FA is not supportive of the Astro at Tring School being resurfaced to a 3G football pitch whilst there is demand for hockey use at the site. Hertfordshire FA continues to explore other sites within Tring for a suitable location for a 3G pitch.

3.3 Planning applications were expected on Cow Lane (Tring) and Durrants Lane (Berkhamsted) for buildings within early 2024, to support the provision of youth football and enable more women's football. Berkhamsted Raiders' application for a pavilion at Durrants Lane has been approved.

3.4 Demand Update

Table 3.2 Comparison of number of competitive football teams

Demand data 2019		Demand data 2021		Demand data 2023	
Football teams	Number of teams per age group*	Football teams	Number of teams per age group	Football teams	Number of teams per age group
Adult	53	Men 11v11 (16-45yrs)	72	Men 11v11 (16-45yrs)	81
		Women 11v11 (16-45yrs)	5	Women 11v11 (16-45yrs)	5
Youth 11v11	85	Boys 11v11 (12-15yrs)	78	Boys 11v11 (12-15yrs)	87
		Girls 11v11 (12-15yrs)	14	Girls 11v11 (12-15yrs)	15
Youth 9v9	58	Boys 9v9 (10-11yrs)	60	Boys 9v9 (10-11yrs)	57
		Girls 9v9 (10-11yrs)	11	Girls 9v9 (10-11yrs)	19

Mini 7v7	71	Mixed 7v7 (8-9yrs)	71	Mixed 7v7 (8-9yrs)	78
Mini 5v5	61	Mixed 5v5 (6-7yrs)	68	Mixed 5v5 (6-7yrs)	93
		5v5 (adults)	3	5v5 (adults)	17
Total	328	Total	382	Total	452

*a male/female breakdown is not available for 2019 to allow for direct comparison

3.5 Significant Issues for Football

- There has been an increase of 70 teams across the Borough (18%) since 2021, with many youth clubs having waiting lists across multiple age groups.
- A further site for a 3G pitch is required in Berkhamsted, in addition to the pitch proposed alongside the potential Berkhamsted Leisure Centre scheme.
- Berkhamsted Raiders CFC have asked to reactivate the option of an Asset Transfer of the Council run playing fields and changing rooms at Velvet Lawn to enable the club to enhance and expand the existing playing facilities.
- There is a significant and fast-growing shortfall of junior grass pitches across Dacorum.

3.6 Football Grass Pitch Summary and Conclusions

- There has been a significant growth in the number of teams. This is most notable among:
 - adult 5v5 teams: from 3 teams to 17; and
 - children's 5v5 teams, ages 6-7: from 68 teams to 93.
- There is also significant growth in:
 - men's 11v11 teams;
 - boys 11v11 teams, ages 12-15; and
 - girls 9v9 teams, ages 10-11.
- Given the significant increase in teams, playing numbers, and waiting lists since 2019 (in all age groups), the deficiencies apparent in 2019 will now be much greater and are likely to be exacerbated by planned growth.
- Hertfordshire FA have also reported increased waiting lists for youth teams at several clubs.
- There has not been any substantive change in the supply of football pitches for community use.
- The demand for football and number of teams has significantly increased and is now greater than the 17-year highest growth scenario anticipated in the 2019 study. As a result the recommendations from that study need revising and a new PPS is recommended, to include strategic solutions for new sites for football pitches in the Borough's main settlements.
- In the interim period every effort should be made to identify site opportunities and support development proposals for new grass pitches and especially sports hubs, where multiple pitches can be provided. In addition, the development of further full-size 3G pitches would greatly improve supply and help to alleviate some shortfalls.

4. Third Generation Turf (3G) Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs)

4.1 Supply Update

Table 4.1 Changes in 3G and AGP supply and quality

Site ID	Site	Analysis Area	Update	Aim
3	Ashlyns School	Berkhamsted	3G resurface completed in 2021.	Protect
5	Astley Cooper School	Hemel	Planning permission granted for a 3G AGP.	Provide
35	Dorian Williams Sports Centre	Tring	An application, due for submission in March 2024, has been prepared by Tornadoes Sports Education & Leisure (TSEL) for a new 3G pitch in Cow Lane.	Provide
59	Kings Langley Secondary School	Southern	11v11 3G pitch completed March 2024, with funding from the Football Foundation.	Provide
84	Berkhamsted Leisure Centre	Berkhamsted	Two 7-a-side pitches have deteriorated and require full replacement of playing surface and surrounding infrastructure. Investigating the feasibility of replacing the 3G facility.	Protect/ Enhance
85	Hemel Hempstead Leisure Centre	Hemel	Outdoor 5-a-side football pitch permanently closed. Planning permission granted for the two MUGAs to be refurbished and resurfaced with new lighting for football and netball.	Protect
86	Longdean Sports Centre	Hemel	5v5 3G pitch installed to replace existing Astro, with support from Football Foundation and Hertfordshire FA.	Enhance
-	Bennetts End Adventure Playground	Hemel	3G pitch to be resurfaced before the end of the financial year (March 2024).	Protect
-	Chaulden Adventure Playground	Hemel	Surface upgraded from all-weather carpet to a grassier style (note not 3G).	Enhance

- Astley Cooper School are currently consulting on the requirements and developing a funding application for a 3G pitch on site. Subject to funding approval, completion is expected in late 2024/early 2025.
- Conversations continue with regards to the development of a 3G pitch alongside the development of Berkhamsted Leisure Centre. The delay of the decision on the redevelopment of the leisure centre means that an interim short-term solution or new permanent location may be needed for this 3G facility.
- In Tring, sites other than Tring School are being considered for development of a full-size 3G football pitch.
- Planning permission is being sought for the redevelopment of Laureate Academy facilities. This would introduce an extension to the existing 3-court MUGA. The existing playing fields,

including AGP and MUGAs will be retained. To the south, an extension to the playfield and soft outdoor area would also be provided between the AGP and new Sports block.

4.2 Significant Issues for 3G and AGP

- Severe deterioration of pitches at Berkhamsted Leisure Centre now necessitates full replacement of surface and infrastructure.

4.3 3G and AGP Summary and Conclusions

- DBC Leisure Services are planning to resurface the facility at Bennetts End Adventure Playground before April 2024.
- A further site for a 3G pitch is required in Berkhamsted, in addition to the pitch proposed alongside the potential Berkhamsted Leisure Centre scheme.
- Hertfordshire FA is not supportive of the Astro at Tring School being resurfaced to a 3G pitch whilst there is demand for hockey use at the site. Hertfordshire FA continues to explore other sites within Tring for a suitable location for a 3G pitch.
- Demand has significantly increased and the supply of both grass pitches and AGP/3G facilities has failed to keep pace with the increases in demand since 2019. Therefore, the shortfall in facilities is increasing and the pace of this increase will be exacerbated by housing growth. With their higher usage capabilities, new 3G pitch development should be pursued and encouraged wherever possible.
- A full new assessment is recommended in order to determine the current supply and capacity of 3G/AGP facilities and to identify any shortfalls.

5. Cricket

5.1 Supply Update

- No reported changes to supply of cricket facilities.

5.2 Demand Update

Table 5.1 Comparison of number of teams

Demand data 2019		Demand data 2021		Demand data 2023	
Men (18-55yrs)	51	Men (18-55yrs)	62	Men (18-55yrs)	60
Women (18-55yrs)	2	Women (18-55yrs)	3	Women (18-55yrs)	5
Boys (7-18yrs)	81	Boys (7-18yrs)	79	Boys (7-18yrs)	65
Girls (7-18yrs)	3	Girls (7-18yrs)	12	Girls (7-18yrs)	13
Total	137	Total	159	Total	143

5.3 Significant Issues for Cricket

- There is a lack of cricket-specific facilities around Hertfordshire, as a result there is a need for cricket provision in any new sports centre.
- The lack of good quality indoor sports halls, particularly cricket-specific facilities, is a major risk for Herts Cricket in accommodating the increasing number of juniors in Dacorum.
- Junior numbers are increasing due to National Programmes, which will impact junior teams in coming years.
- Tring Park CC are seeking an extra pitch and indoor facilities to cope with increased demand for junior, girls', and women's teams. Land south east of the clubhouse forms part of a site proposed for allocation in the draft Dacorum Borough Council Local Plan (Regulation 18) and Tring Park CC has expressed an interest in expanding into this area.

5.4 Cricket Summary and Conclusions

- Although men's and particularly boys' teams are decreasing, women's and girls' teams are on the increase and overall junior team numbers are reported as increasing.
- Herts Cricket is tasked by the English Cricket Board with creating a County Facilities Strategy to manage all indoor and outdoor cricket facilities, which will be shared in due course.
- Provision of indoor cricket is considered within the Indoor Leisure Facilities Needs Assessment March 2019⁵ and Leisure Facilities Strategy May 2019⁶ which notes that there are few indoor cricket facilities in Dacorum (Ashlyns School, Berkhamsted School, and Lockers Park).
- The recommendations for cricket within the Playing Pitch Strategy 2019 include 'protect both cricket provision currently in use and pitches that are no longer in use due to the potential that they may offer for meeting current and future needs (unless replacement provision is agreed upon and provided)'.
- While the recommendations from the 2019 study remain valid, there is greater need to protect all existing cricket provision (including both those actively used and no longer in use) as there is now a deficit of pitches at peak times.
- A further recommendation is added for the Council to support the development and improvement of facilities wherever needed and that Tring Park CC be included in the list of

⁵ https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/indoor-leisure-facilities-needs-assessment-march-2019.pdf?sfvrsn=b76e0c9e_4

⁶ https://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/strategic-planning/leisure-facilities-strategy-may-2019.pdf?sfvrsn=e26e0c9e_4

existing locations (Boxmoor CC, Potten End CC, and Flamstead CC) identified in the 2019 Action Plan as needing support for ancillary provision.

6. Rugby union

6.1 Supply Update

Table 6.1 Changes in Rugby Union pitch supply and quality

Site ID	Site	Sport	Analysis Area	Update	Aim
9	Berkhamsted & Hemel Hempstead Hockey Club	Rugby Union/ Hockey/ Football	Berkhamsted	Construction of new hockey AGP and access caused minor relocation of rugby pitch, but with no operational or quality issues resulting.	Protect

6.2 Demand Update

Table 6.2 Comparison of number of teams

Demand data 2019		Demand data 2021		Demand data 2023	
Rugby Union teams	Number of teams per age group	Rugby Union teams	Number of teams per age group	Rugby Union teams	Number of teams per age group
Senior (19+)	7	Men (18+)	7	Men (18+)	9
		Women (18+)	1	Women (18+)	1**
Colts (17-19)	3	Boys (U13-U18)	12	Boys (U13-U18)	10
Junior (13-16)	12	Girls (U13-U18)	1*	Girls (U12-U18)	2
Mini (6-12)	13	Mixed (7-12)	12	Mixed (7-12)	12

*One group of mixed-age girls.

** Hemel Hempstead (Camelot) RFC have a regular women's training group, but it is not yet playing fixtures.

6.3 Significant Issues for Rugby Union

- Constituent Body Facility Audit (November 2023) indicates Huel Tring RFC and Hemel Hempstead (Camelot) RFC are prioritising upgrades to their existing sports lighting and upgrades to ancillary facilities.
 - Floodlight upgrades at Huel Tring RFC would improve capacity for midweek training. Upgrading of changing room provision is needed to cater adequately for concurrent mixed gender and/or age grade activity.

6.4 Rugby Union Summary and Conclusions

- Girls' age grades have changed from three age bands (U13/U15/U18) to four (U12/U14/U16/U18) to standardise the two-year bands and better support this growing area.
- Huel Tring RFC are growing their offer for girls, particularly in the new U12 category, and clustering with other clubs to fulfil fixtures. HTRFC's current girls' teams are U14 and U16.
- England will be hosting the Women's Rugby World Cup in 2025. Therefore, capital and revenue funding streams are available as part of RFU's Impact25 programme.
- Security of tenure position of Hemel Hempstead (Camelot) RFC across both Chaulden Lane Playing Fields and Box Moor Trust sites has evolved.
- Though the supply and demand trends have remained static since 2021, it is anticipated that some growth will be seen in female participation because of programmes associated with England hosting the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025. Increased demand is expected to be more likely in Hemel Hempstead and Tring, where elements of female rugby union activity have already been established. Therefore an additional recommendation to target

opportunities to improve provision for female rugby union arising from the rugby world cup is now also included.

7. Hockey

7.1 Supply Update

Table 7.1 Changes in hockey pitch supply and quality

Site ID	Site	Sport	Analysis Area	Update	Aim
9	Berkhamsted & Hemel Hempstead Hockey Club	Hockey (AGP)	Berkhamsted	New pitch is now built and operational.	Provide

7.2 Demand Update

Table 7.2 Comparison of number of teams

Demand data 2019		Demand data 2021		Demand data 2023	
Hockey teams	Number of teams per age group	Hockey teams	Number of teams per age group	Hockey teams	Number of teams per age group
Men (17-55yrs)	5 (B&HHHC) 4 (THC)	Men (17-55yrs)	5 (B&HHHC) 2 (THC)	Men (17-55yrs)	5 (B&HHHC) 2 (THC)
Women (17-55yrs)	2 (B&HHHC) 3 (THC)	Women (17-55yrs)	4 (B&HHHC) 3 (THC)	Women (17-55yrs)	4 (B&HHHC)
		Boys (14-16yrs)	1	Boys (14-16yrs)	1 (B&HHHC) 1 (THC)
		Girls (14-16yrs)	2	Girls (14-16yrs)	1 (B&HHHC)
				Boys (11-13yrs)	1 (B&HHHC) 1 (THC)
				Girls (11-13yrs)	1 (B&HHHC)
		Mixed (Adult)	1	Mixed (Adult)	1 (B&HHHC)
				Mixed (U16)	1 (B&HHHC)
		Masters (Male)	1	Masters (Male)	1 (B&HHHC) 1 (THC)
				Masters (Fem.)	2 (B&HHHC)
Junior membership	122 (B&HHHC) 66 (THC)	Junior membership	86 (B&HHHC) 107 (THC)	Junior membership	102 (B&HHHC) 16 (THC)

7.3 Significant Issues for Hockey

- England Hockey reports that Tring School has requested that their pitch be converted to a 3G surface (unsuitable for hockey), as it is currently in poor condition, with funding through the Football Foundation. If so, Tring Hockey Club would no longer have a base. It is unclear whether Tring School would accept a like-for-like sand-based resurface if funds could be found.
 - England Hockey report they are under pressure from Tring School to release the pitch and have informed them that Tring HC is looking to access RAF Halton.
 - Tring HC would prefer to remain in Tring but is negotiating the possibility of moving out of Borough to RAF Halton. This is yet to be confirmed, and the move would only take place if the pitch at Tring School was converted to football use.
 - Tring HC have reported that they believe the reduction in their playing numbers is directly related to the deteriorating quality and availability of playing and practice facilities at Tring School.

- Buckinghamshire Council is currently consulting on a draft RAF Halton Supplementary Planning Document, which proposes retaining the base's existing AstroTurf hockey pitch after the site is released in 2027.
- England Hockey expect access to Tring School will be lost but are resisting Tring HC's displacement until a future for Tring HC is secured elsewhere.
- Hertfordshire FA reports that it is not supportive of the Astro at Tring School being resurfaced to a 3G pitch whilst there is demand for hockey use at the site.
- Hertfordshire FA continues to explore other sites within Tring for a suitable location for a 3G pitch.
- Berkhamsted & Hemel Hempstead Hockey Club also reports that its new pitch at Cow Roast is nearing capacity due to its growing membership, and that peak time use is at its maximum.

7.4 Hockey Summary and Conclusions

- The level of overall demand for hockey across the Borough has grown in the number of junior teams, with B&HHHC recovering towards pre-pandemic membership levels. Tring Hockey Club membership appears however to have declined dramatically.
- While the situation regarding Tring Hockey Club's future access to facilities remains unclear, the recommendation from 2019 to resurface the pitch at Tring Sports Centre is retained.
- The recommendation to deliver a secondary full size hockey pitch has been delivered, however there is still the need to continue to monitor and plan for future hockey needs given the increasing demand at Cow Roast and the uncertain position at Tring Sports Centre. The previous recommendation which focussed on delivery is therefore adjusted to cover this ongoing need.

8. Golf

8.1 Supply Update

- Growing membership numbers and the waiting list at Berkhamsted Golf Club suggest the clubs are very close to full capacity, despite a reported decline since 2021. This decline is cancelled out by a concomitant increase in membership at Ashridge.
- England Golf no longer shares specific details per club but provides an average across affiliated facilities.
- The current average of 493 members per club in Dacorum is significantly higher than the national average of 407.
- Overall the post-pandemic increase in golf has been maintained despite economic strains, with only a slight decline from the 2021 average of 497 members per club.

8.2 Demand Update

Table 8.1 Comparison of golf club membership

Demand data 2019		Demand data 2021		Demand data 2023	
Club name	Membership	Club name	Membership	Club name	Membership
Ashridge Golf Club	657	Ashridge Golf Club	730	Ashridge Golf Club	Increased. Waiting list*
Ashridge Golf Club (Artisans)	30	Ashridge Golf Club (Artisans)	30	Ashridge Golf Club (Artisans)	-
Berkhamsted Golf Club	650	Berkhamsted Golf Club	823	Berkhamsted Golf Club	Decreased, but nearing full capacity, with a waitlist. *
Little Hay Golf Club	184	Little Hay Golf Club	172	Little Hay Golf Club	-
Shendish Manor Golf Club	142	Shendish Manor Golf Club	234	Shendish Manor Golf Club	-
Average	416	Average	497	Average	493

*Approximately 180 people on both waiting lists combined.

8.3 Significant Issues for Golf

- There is a lack of facilities catering for entry-level golfers, with only one driving range at Little Hay Golf Complex.
- There is an undersupply of driving ranges, adventure golf and pitch & putt courses, among other off-course and starter-focussed facilities.

8.4 Golf Summary and Conclusions

- Given the golf participation rates within the Borough, a further recommendation is added at England Golf's request to provide a level of protection to the current facilities.

9. Bowls

9.1 Supply Update

- No reported changes to supply and quality.

9.2 Demand Update

Table 9.1 Comparison of number of bowling club members

Bowls Club	Demand data 2019			Demand data 2020			Demand data 2023		
	Senior male	Senior female	Junior	Senior male	Senior female	Junior	Senior male	Senior female	Junior
Hemel Hempstead BC	55	26	-	52	21	-	58	23	2
Little Gaddesden BC	25	11	-	12	4	-	14	8	0
Kings Langley BC	49	34	1	26	19	-	35	20	0
Kitcheners BC	45	20	-	19 (40 in 2021)	14 (22 in 2021)	-	19	10	0
Tring BC	43	22	1	35	14	-	42	18	0
Bovingdon BC	40	10		30	8	-	26	11	0
Potten End BC	47	24	2	39	18	-	56	19	1
Berkhamsted BC	60	41	10	56	36	-	58	34	4

9.3 Significant Issues for Bowls

- The major issue for bowls remains to attract more people into the sport. Although membership across all clubs in the Borough has grown by an average of 6% in the past year and by 12% in the last three years, with only Bovingdon BC seeing a decline in that period, overall membership over the past 10 years has fallen by 23%. Recruitment efforts will continue with the annual Big Bash in May.

9.4 Bowls Summary and Conclusions

- Growth in membership figures is reported across almost all clubs, indicating some recovery towards pre-pandemic numbers although not completely.
- Figures for 2023 are still being captured due to a delay in reporting, but the figures in table 9.1 above are accurate at time of data collection.
- As the situation regarding demand and supply has not significantly changed since 2019 the recommendations of the Playing Pitch Strategy continue to be taken forward.

10. Tennis

10.1 Supply Update

Table 10.1 Changes in tennis court supply and quality

Site ID	Site	Sport	Analysis Area	Update	Aim
30	Chipperfield Clarendon Cricket Club	Tennis/cricket	Southern	Chipperfield Tennis Club now has 2 floodlit courts.	Enhance
34	Cupid Green Sports Field	Tennis/football	Hemel	Cupid Green Tennis Courts were refurbished in April 2021 and are set to have a smart access control gate, linked to online court booking.	Enhance
33	Coronation Fields	Tennis	Hemel	Tennis court refurbishment underway in partnership with LTA, due for completion in early 2024. Set to have a smart access control gate, linked to online court booking.	Enhance
79	Reith Fields	Tennis/football	Hemel		Enhance
107	Bovingdon and Flaunden Tennis Club	Tennis	Southern	Bovingdon and Flaunden Tennis Club now has 5 floodlit courts.	Enhance

- The LTA are now the governing body for Padel tennis and are looking to increase the number of Padel facilities.
- Leverstock Green LTC are no longer looking to relocate and are seeking investment into their current site to provide indoor courts and potentially Padel.
- Tring LTC are developing plans to build a new Padel court and in the longer term are interested in indoor courts.
- Bovingdon and Flaunden LTC are looking to change the floodlighting across 5 courts to LED and are also keen on indoor courts.
- Discussions have taken place with Berkhamsted & Hemel Hempstead Hockey Club who are keen to build Padel courts at their Cow Roast site.

10.2 Demand Update

Table 10.2 Comparison of tennis club membership

Tennis Club	Demand data 2019		Demand data 2021				Demand data 2023			
	Adult	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult NMs*	Junior NMs	Adult	Junior	Adult NMs	Junior NMs
Chipperfield TC	165	60	165	60	10	0	230	60	0	0
Langley TC	100	250	65	338	123	133	65	388	238	191
Little Gaddesden TC	110	60	156	81	0	0	121	89	0	0

Berkhamsted LTC	650	350	424	241	38	51	534	330	100	135
Leverstock Green TC	201	88	204	55	19	32	244	124	35	116
Bovingdon & Flaunden TC	100	80	No data	82	97	1	158	56	100	1
Tring LTC	131	68	149	67	9	49	170	54	9	49
Long Marston TC	69	22	No data	17	60	20	60	10	50	0

*non-members

10.3 Significant Issues for Tennis

- Notably, like-for-like club membership has increased by 17% for adults and 18% for juniors since 2021, and non-member access by 49% adult and 72% junior. However, this information is self-declared by clubs, and the data (in most cases) will be from approximately 1 year prior. This is due to timings with the LTA registration renewal window in November and December which is when clubs supply member details to the LTA.
- Pound Meadow Tennis Courts in Tring remain in poor condition. They were identified for refurbishment works but match funding was not available as the project did not meet the LTA funding criteria. The site remains on a reserve list of projects as part of the LTA parks investment project.
- Tring TC have expressed an interest in expanding their facility (ideally with indoor courts) into the adjacent land which is part of a proposed site within the draft Dacorum Borough Council Local Plan.
- The LTA remain committed to working with partners to build a new Community Indoor Tennis and Padel Centre in the Hemel Hempstead area. Initial conversations have taken place to see if this could be achieved as part of the Hemel Garden Communities Project. (Note, this falls within the remit of the separate Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy.)

10.4 Tennis Summary and Conclusions

- Tennis membership has grown notably across the Borough, as has non-member participation. Clubs are responding by providing greater accessibility and facilitating online booking and automated access.
- The recommendation in bullet point 4 of part 4 of the PPS Strategy & Action Plan is amended at the LTA's request to reflect the improvement works undertaken to tennis courts in Dacorum's parks, as follows:
 - "For park venues ensure there is a sustainable model in place to support the operation, management, and long-term maintenance of the sites to ensure tennis in parks can remain relevant, accessible, and welcoming to all residents. Work with the LTA to maximise opportunities to grow participation and engagement of tennis in parks."

11. Netball

11.1 Supply Update

Table 11.1 Changes in netball court supply and quality

Site ID	Site	Sport	Analysis Area	Update	Aim
6	Beechwood Park School	Netball	Eastern Villages	Flamstead Netball Club longer operates here, having closed due to lack of umpires.	Protect
34	Cupid Green Sports Fields	Netball/football/tennis	Hemel	Now has 2 netball courts.	Provide
125	Knox Johnston Sports Centre	Netball/football/rugby/tennis	Berkhamsted	Now has 6 outdoor netball courts (up from 4).	Provide

11.2 Demand Update

- England Netball has delivered a netball tournament at Cupid Green Playing Fields.
- The 'Netball Nights' commercial league operates from Longdean Sports Centre.
- 'Hemel Hempstead & District Netball League' has moved from the Adeyfield School to Longdean Sports Centre.
- The 'PowerPlay' commercial league now operates at the Adeyfield School.
- 'Back to Netball' is no longer held at Longdean Sports Centre, Astley Cooper School or Adeyfield School, but is now held at Berkhamsted Leisure Centre and Hemel Hempstead Leisure Centre.
- Berkhamsted Netball League based at Ashlyns School on Sundays is now in its 3rd season and has 39 teams from 8 clubs. The courts it uses at Ashlyns School require significant maintenance and enhancement due to the substantial increase in use.
- PHOENIX Berkhamsted Netball Club at Ashlyns School started in 2022 and in Season 2023/24 now has over 100 playing members across school Years 5-10, with a waiting list in every age group.
- 'Walking Netball' is now also held at Berkhamsted Leisure Centre and Hemel Hempstead Leisure Centre.
- Netball in Tring and the surrounding area is growing rapidly. Tornadoes Sports Education & Leisure (TSEL) at Tring School is already at its capacity of 160 girls (12 teams) across Years 3-9 with a waiting list for each age group.
- GiANTS Netball is a new club formed in Tring by TSEL in 2023 for girls of Years 10-13 and has an initial playing membership of 39 (4 teams). This is forecast to grow at 50 per year for the next 3 years but currently has nowhere to train indoors or during weeknights.
- Mighty Netball now offers a programme of netball classes for 3–12-year-olds at Ashlyns School.
- Tring Athletic is now defunct, having moved to Tring Netball Club.
- Kings Langley Netball Club is included with Kings Langley Aces and Diamonds Netball Club. They were listed as distinct clubs in previous updates.

Table 11.2 Comparison of number of teams

Netball club	Demand 2019		Demand 2021	Demand 2023	
	19/20 Number of teams	19/20 Members	21/22 Members	23/24 Number of teams	23/24 Members
Berkhamsted Royals Netball Club	2 senior teams	40	10	1 senior team	12
Berko Belles	2 senior teams	93	102	1 senior team 1 junior team	88
Camelot Netball Club	3 senior teams	42	24	1 senior team	59
Connexions (Herts) Netball Club	4 senior teams	77	81	4 senior teams 1 junior team	138
Dacorum Netball Club	5 junior teams 1 senior team	70	37	1 senior team	18
Flamstead Netball Club	2 senior teams	17	14	Defunct	0
Hemel Skies	-	15	9	1 senior team	13
Horizons Netball Club	-	5	0	1 senior team	26
Kings Langley Aces and Diamonds	2 senior teams	28	34	1 senior team	13
Shelley Netball Club	3 senior teams 1 U14 team	88	15	Defunct	0
Tring Athletic	-	1	0	Defunct	0
Tring Netball Club	-	36	0	-	51
Tring Tornadoes Netball Club	8 junior teams	159	160	1 junior team	160
KORU Netball Club	New entry 21/22		28	1 senior team	22
Kodak Alaris (formerly Haven Netball Club)	New entry 23/24			1 senior team	13
Old Berkhamstedians Hares	New Entry 23/24			1 senior team	52
Phoenix Berkhamsted Netball Club	New Entry 23/24			1 junior team	114

(affiliated to Tring Tornadoes)			
Hemel Diamonds	New Entry 23/24	1 senior team (non-affiliated)	-
GiANTS Netball	New Entry 23/24	4 senior teams	39
EN Back to Netball Berkhamsted	New Entry 23/24	1 senior team (non-affiliated)	10
EN Back to Netball Hemel Hempstead	New Entry 23/24	1 senior team (non-affiliated)	10
EN Walking Netball Berkhamsted	New Entry 23/24	1 senior team (non-affiliated)	10
EN Walking Netball (Hemel Hempstead)	New Entry 23/24	1 senior team (non-affiliated)	10
St Alberts	New Entry 23/24	Adults	14
Ashridge Allstars	New Entry 23/24	Adults	14

11.3 Significant Issues for Netball

- Tring Tornadoes is a very popular junior club and has a waiting list for most age groups.
- A lack of umpires led to the closure of Flamstead Netball Club which used to operate at Beechwood Park School facilities in Markyate.
- Phoenix Netball Club has an extensive waiting list.

11.4 Netball Summary and Conclusions

- The introduction of new commercial leagues ('PowerPlay' and 'Netball Nights') has seen increasing demand, with new teams forming to join. The number of formally affiliated clubs has increased from 9 in 2019 to 14 (with 6 non-affiliated clubs).
- New participation programmes ('Back to Netball' and 'Walking Netball') have also encouraged new people to play.
- With significant changes to clubs and the development of new leagues and teams, there is a significant increase in playing numbers and demand since the 2019 study. This is especially true in Berkhamsted and Tring where there are rapidly growing needs for additional facilities.
- Whilst the recommendations of the PPS from 2019 generally remain in place, the increase in participation objective from that time has been achieved and now the emphasis needs to be on improving and finding new facilities to accommodate the growing demand.
- A further recommendation is added to secure additional courts or improve the quality of existing courts in order to increase the supply and capacity for netball.

12. Athletics

12.1 Supply Update

Table 12.1 Changes in athletics supply and quality

Site ID	Site	Sport	Analysis Area	Update	Aim
-	Gadebridge Park	Recreational running	Hemel	Toilets are closed (until further notice) making parkruns less attractive.	Protect
83	Sportspace Athletics Track (Jarman Park)	Athletics/football	Hemel	Track requires re-laying as it is at the end of its serviceable life. Floodlighting is poor with several lights no longer working. Upgrade to LED necessary. Toilet provision is poor, needing major work, especially male toilets.	Protect

12.2 Demand Update

- Dacorum and Tring Athletics Club was renamed in Autumn 2021 to Dacorum AC and is now running:
 - bi-annual 'Couch 2 5k' courses.
- Weekly 'parkrun' events take place:
 - Saturday's in Gadebridge Park.
 - 'Junior parkrun' events occur on Sunday's in Gadebridge Park and at Ashlyns School (site 3).
- Meanwhile the following events have ceased:
 - Annual Hemel 10k run.
 - Bovingdon 10k and 3k fun runs.
 - The parkrun in Tring Park.
- There has been no progress in developing a local running event in Hemel Hempstead, although Dacorum AC are keen to do so and have proposals ready to put forward.

Table 12.2 Changes in number of club members

Demand data 2019		Demand data 2021		Demand data 2023	
Club	Number of members	Club	No. of members	Club	Number of members
Dacorum Athletics Club (now Dacorum AC)	600	Dacorum AC:	679	Dacorum AC:	766
		Under 17	300	Under 17	358
		Over 17	334	Over 17	408
		Volunteers/Coaches	45	Volunteers	30
				Coaches	22
		(Male)	334	(Male)	401
		(Female)	345	(Female)	365

Gade Valley Harriers Athletics Club	170	Gade Valley Harriers Athletics Club	148	Gade Valley Harriers Athletics Club:*	133
				Volunteers	15
				Coaches	3
				(Male)	71
				(Female)	62

*Data as of 20 March 2024.

12.3 Significant Issues for Athletics

- Dacorum AC is operating at capacity with over 750 members and a waiting list of approximately 25 juniors unable to be accommodated.
- Severe quality issues at Jarman Park threaten usage of the track and current club membership.
- Lack of toilet access at Gadebridge Park also discourages parkrun attendance.
- There has been a decline in RunBritain events, with the Hemel 10k and Bovingdon 10k and 3k runs no longer taking place.
- Overall, there has been no progress in developing a local running event for Hemel Hempstead.

12.4 Athletics Summary and Conclusions

- Dacorum AC has recovered from the pandemic with full competitive programmes taking place in 2022 and 2023.
- Dacorum AC has exclusive use of Jarman Park track on Monday 5:30-6:45pm with Tuesday and Thursday sessions 5:30-9:00pm. The track is no longer used on Saturdays but is exclusive to Dacorum AC Sundays 10am-1pm.
- Dacorum AC no longer aspires to own and manage its own facility.
 - Rather, the club is committed to working with the Council and the service provider (Everyone Active) to improve the facilities at Jarman Park through engagement and cooperation with management and the Council.
- Several other running groups use Jarman Park, including: Dacorum Triathlon Club, PEVH Tri Club, Seven:Ten, and Runworks, all independently of Dacorum AC. These clubs were contacted with the survey, but no response was received.
- Many issues and recommendations raised as urgent in the 2019 study, regarding the capacity of Dacorum AC and the poor quality of Jarman Park remain severe and unaddressed. Therefore, urgent repairs to Jarman Park are strongly recommended to enable Dacorum AC and other clubs to continue and expand their use of the facility.

13. Rugby League

13.1 Supply Update

Table 13.1 Changes in rugby league pitch supply and quality

Site ID	Site	Sport	Analysis Area	Update	Aim
50	Hemel Stags RLFC	Rugby League	Hemel	Existing two changing rooms modernised, two new unisex changing rooms added with showers and toilets.	Enhance

13.2 Demand Update

Table 13.2 Comparison of number of rugby league teams

Demand data 2019		Demand data 2021		Demand data 2023	
Rugby League teams	Number of teams per age group	Rugby League teams	Number of teams per age group	Rugby League teams	Number of teams per age group
Senior	3	Open age	3/24	Men (19-45yrs)	2
				Women (19-45yrs)	0
Youth	4	Under 18s	1/26	Boys (12-18yrs)	4
		Under 16s	1/30	Girls (12-18yrs)	1
		Under 14s	1/21		
Mini	3	Under 12s	1/26	Mixed (7-11yrs)	2
		Minis (U7, U9, U11)	3/24	Mixed (7-11yrs)	2

13.3 Significant Issues for Rugby League

- None reported.

13.4 Rugby League Summary and Conclusions

- Hemel Stags is in advanced discussions with Sport England, Football Foundation and Rugby Football League re upgrading the main grass pitch at Pennine Way for multi-sports.
- As the situation regarding demand and supply has not significantly changed since 2019 the recommendations of the Playing Pitch Strategy remain in place.

14. Baseball (data not collected in 2019)

14.1 Supply Update

Table 14.1 Baseball pitch supply and quality

Site ID	Site	Sport	Analysis Area	Update	Aim
43	Grovehill Playing Fields	Baseball	Hemel	Two pitchers' mounds of the two diamonds rebuilt with clay blocks. Grass playing service of two diamonds improved. DBC repainted walls of Pavilion changing room and toilets, installed new sanitary ware in toilets, and allocated a new changing room and storage room. New line-marking machine.	Enhance

14.2 Demand Update

Table 14.2 Baseball team data 2021

Demand data 2021		Demand data 2021	
Baseball teams	Number of teams per age group	Baseball teams	Number of teams per age group
Adult teams (ages 17 and over)	Overall: 5 teams 113 members Of which, in Dacorum: 3 teams 67 members	Adult teams (ages 17 and over)	Overall: 7 teams 149 members Of which, in Dacorum: 3 teams 66 members
Non-roster adult members	21 members Of which, in Dacorum: 15 members	Non-roster adult members	24 members Of which, in Dacorum: 14 members
Youth teams (ages 15 – 17)	1 team 10 members (some also play in the adult leagues) Of which, in Dacorum: 8 members	Youth teams (ages 15 – 17)	1 team 15 members (some also play in the adult leagues) Of which, in Dacorum: 8 members
Youth teams (ages 6 -14)	Overall: 9 teams (U11s play in a 6-a-side league) 65 members Of which, in Dacorum: 5 teams 41 members	Youth teams (ages 6 -14)	Overall: 7 teams (U11s play in a 6-a-side league) 66 members Of which, in Dacorum: 5 teams 45 members
Total	15 teams 209 members Of which, in Dacorum: 8 teams 131 members	Total	15 teams 254 members Of which, in Dacorum: 8 teams 133 members

14.3 Significant Issues for Baseball

- A number of adult players had to be put on a waiting list halfway through the season as many joined without there being room to join the Hemel Hempstead league teams.
- Herts Baseball Club received one-off partial funding from the national baseball governing body for annual field maintenance but cannot sustainably afford to fund this themselves.
- The expected growth around Grovehill provided by Hemel Garden Communities may require further upgrades to the facility to deal with demand.

14.4 Baseball Summary and Conclusions

- Youth (15-17) and particularly adult teams of Herts Baseball Club have grown. In 2021-22, this growth was primarily in users of the NW London venue, outside of Dacorum, but 2022-23 has seen growth in Dacorum slightly outstrip that in NW London, recovering from a brief decline in 2022.
- Meanwhile, the promotion of Herts Falcons to the National Baseball League saw greater attendance than expected.
- Youth (6-14) teams have reduced but only at the NW London venue.
- While the club is growing, it remains unable to maintain its fields sustainably without external support. Meanwhile, the club is in discussions with external contractors for higher quality and more frequent maintenance.
- The club is considering adding a batting lane if funding can be secured, to increase participation.
- The club is also exploring opportunities to install more permanent spectator seating and will require guidance from DBC.
- Since the previous annual update some improvements have been made to the changing facilities and interest in baseball has continued to grow. Along with the previous recommendations the need to support Herts Baseball Club in maintaining the facility at Grovehill is noted.

Appendix 1. Dacorum Playing Pitch Strategy Annual Update Survey

Current Demand Data

1a. How many teams/members [sport dependent] currently play [sport] in Dacorum? Please list out as below:

Football Teams	Number of teams (members for junior hockey) per age group
Men 11v11 (16-45yrs)	
Women 11v11 (16-45yrs)	
Boys 11v11 (12-15yrs)	
Girls 11v11 (12-15yrs)	
Boys 9v9 (10-11yrs)	
Girls 9v9 (10-11yrs)	
Mixed 7v7 (8-9yrs)	
Mixed 5v5 (6-7yrs)	
5v5 adults	
Cricket Teams	
Men (18-55yrs)	
Women (18-55yrs)	
Boys (7-18yrs)	
Girls (7-18yrs)	
Rugby Union Teams	
Men (19-45yrs)	
Women (19-45yrs)	
Boys (13-18yrs)	
Girls (13-18yrs)	
Mixed (7-12yrs)	
Rugby League Teams	
Men (19-45yrs)	
Women (19-45yrs)	
Boys (12-18yrs)	
Girls (12-18yrs)	
Mixed (7-11yrs)	
Hockey Teams	
Men (17-55yrs)	
Women (17-55yrs)	
Masters (Male)	
Masters (Female)	
Mixed (Adult)	
Mixed (U16)	
Boys (14-16yrs)	
Girls (14-16yrs)	
Boys (11-13yrs)	
Girls (11-13yrs)	

Football Teams	Number of teams (members for junior hockey) per age group
Mixed (5-10yrs)	
Hockey Junior Members	
Boys (14-16yrs)	
Girls (14-16yrs)	
Boys (11-13yrs)	
Girls (11-13yrs)	
Mixed (5-10yrs)	

For other sports, please add your team information broken down into categories (e.g. age range/gender) relevant to your sport below:

Sport _____

Team categories:	Number of teams/members

1b. As far as you are aware, do any of the clubs have waiting lists and if so for which sections of the clubs?

2. Changes Since 2021

This section refers specifically to the [Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan 2019](#), [Playing Pitch Assessment Report 2019](#) and [Playing Pitch Strategy Annual Update 2021](#). Please could I refer you specifically to the sections in the following table: -

	Relevant pages in PPS and Action Plan document - Sport specific issues, scenarios, and recommendations	Relevant pages in PPS and Action Plan document - likely future sport by sport demand trends	Relevant parts of the Action Plan	Playing Pitch Assessment Report	Playing Pitch Strategy Annual Update
[sport]	pages -	table on pages -	pages -	Part - (pages -)	Part - (pages -)

2a. Please advise of any key changes that you are aware of in relation to the supply of facilities since 2021, in relation to new/enhanced facilities, facilities that have closed or changes to the quality or access to facilities?

2b. Have there been any other significant changes for your sport not listed above? Please give details.

2c. Have future plans for facility development been identified/progressed since 2021? If so, please give details.

2d. Will any of the changes detailed above need to be reflected in amendments to the recommendations set out in part 4 of the PPS Strategy & Action Plan for your sport?