

APPENDIX 4: STRATEGIC CONTEXT FOR FACILITY PROVISION

Introduction

- 1.1 This appendix summarises the influence of relevant policies and priorities on sports facilities provision in Harborough, including the impact of national policies. It covers
- Harborough District Council's 'Corporate Plan 2019-2021' and 'Corporate Delivery Plan 2019-2021'.
 - The Harborough Local Plan
 - Neighbouring local authority sports facilities strategies.
 - Neighbouring local authority housing proposals.
 - Leicester-shire and Rutland Physical Activity and Sport Strategy
 - Government planning policies
 - Government sports policies
 - Sport England policies
 - Governing bodies of sport strategies

Harborough District Council's Corporate Plan

- 1.2 HDC's 'Corporate Plan 2019-2021' and the related 'Corporate Delivery Plan 2019-2021' set out the Council's aspirations for the district over the next three years, what its priorities are and how it will deliver them.
- 1.3 There are three priorities:
- ***The place:*** An enterprising and vibrant place.
 - ***The people:*** A healthy, inclusive and vibrant community.
 - ***The council:*** Innovative, proactive and efficient.
- 1.4 The 'Corporate Delivery Plan 2019-2021' contains the following initiatives to support the identified priorities:
- Procure new and refurbished leisure facilities and their management for 2019/20 onwards.

- Deliver and commission a range of sport and physical activities through securing funding from the Public Health Service and other sources.
- Promote an appropriate mix of leisure and recreational infrastructure to meet identified needs.

Harborough District Council's Local Plan

1.5 **Introduction:** The 'Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031 Submission' (2018) has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. Whilst the document has therefore yet to be formally adopted, the key material of relevance to sports facilities provision is set out below.

1.6 **Vision:** The Local Plan vision for the district in 2031 includes the statement that 'communities will have access to improved social, recreational, sports, health and educational facilities. Existing valued community services will have been retained and necessary new ones delivered to keep pace with development'.

1.7 **Objectives:** The Local Plan objectives include:

- 'Objective 4. Infrastructure: Support local communities and maintain a high quality of life by ensuring that new development delivers the necessary infrastructure including that relating to health, education, security, culture, transport, open space and recreation'.
- 'Objective 5. Protection of local services: Protect, enhance and, where appropriate, secure the provision of additional accessible community services and local facilities, supporting innovation in their delivery across the District'.

1.8 **Housing provision:** The Local Plan makes provision for at least 12,800 dwellings:

- 7,915 have already been completed or committed through planning consents.
- About 1,500 dwellings in a strategic development area (SDA) on land east of Lutterworth.
- About 1,200 dwellings in an SDA at Scraftoft North.
- About 1,170 dwellings on other sites allocated in the Local Plan.
- About 790 dwellings on non-allocated sites or sites to be allocated in neighbourhood plans for Rural Centres and Selected Rural Villages.
- About 225 dwellings on windfall sites outside Rural Centres and Selected Rural Villages.

1.9 **Policy G12: Open space, sport and recreation:** The policy is as follows.

- 'The District's open space, sport and recreation facilities and any future additional facilities provided as part of new development will be safeguarded and enhanced through improvements to their quality and use.
- Development resulting in the loss of or reduction in public and private open spaces and recreation spaces will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:
 - A robust assessment clearly demonstrates that the space or recreational facility is surplus to local requirements and will not be needed in the-long term in accordance with local standards; or
 - Replacement areas will be at least equivalent in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility, and there will be no overall negative impact on the provision of open space in accordance with local standards; or
 - The proposal is for alternative recreational provision which meets evidence of local need in such a way as to outweigh the loss.
- Developments of more than 10 dwellings which would result in deficiencies in the quantity, accessibility and/or quality of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities should contribute towards:
 - The provision of specific new open space, sport and recreation facilities in accordance with local standards; and/or
 - The enhancement of identified existing facilities to meet the relevant local standards.
- New open space, sport and recreation facilities should be provided within residential development sites (unless otherwise agreed by the Council) and should:
 - Be accessible, usable, of high quality and good design, visible and safe and include facilities for a range of ages;
 - Enable links to be created between new development and surrounding recreational networks and facilities (including Public Rights of Way);
 - Provide an appropriate landscaping and landscape maintenance scheme; and
 - Specify, prior to the commencement of development, the responsibilities for management and maintenance in-perpetuity of the open space, sport and recreation facility'.

1.10 **Specific references to sports facilities provision:** The Local Plan includes the following specific references to sports facilities needs relating to proposed new housing developments:

- **Scraptoft North Strategic Development Area:** The Masterplan for the development will include the provision of a neighbourhood centre including a Community Hall or an upgrade of existing facilities.
- **Lutterworth:** 'The existing leisure centre in Lutterworth will reach the end of its life during the plan period and would in any event be unlikely to be adequate to serve the expanded population. A contribution will therefore be sought towards a new leisure centre, which could be, in full or in part, in the form of land within the community park or elsewhere'.

Draft Harborough District Council Sport and Physical Activity Strategy

1.11 **Introduction:** HDC has produced a draft 'Physical Activity Strategy 2019-2029' for consultation, that sets out the roles that the Council and other local providers might play in delivering sport and physical activity opportunities over the next ten years.

1.12 The draft strategy states that 'the Council has a key role in promoting healthy lifestyles and we should therefore have a coherent strategy that engages the public, private and voluntary sector so that we can guide important decisions around:

- Communicating the benefits of physical activity in reducing obesity, preventing disease, improving mental health, and rehabilitating many long-term health conditions.
- Support to independent instructors and clubs who provide affordable sport, physical activity and wellbeing sessions throughout the District.
- Future provision of leisure centres and the facilities that will be offered.
- Improving and extending community buildings and schools and encouraging greater use of these facilities.
- The Council's specialist services such as exercise referral, cardiac rehabilitation, and fall prevention classes.
- The design and maintenance of parks and open spaces including outdoor gyms, multi-use games areas, and play areas.
- Responsible development that ensures footpaths, cycling infrastructure, and other design issues are considered throughout the planning process.

1.13 **Leisure centres:** The draft strategy states that:

- ‘The leisure needs of residents of Harborough District are mostly catered for by Lutterworth Sports Centre and Harborough Leisure Centre. The facilities available include sports halls, swimming pools, and fitness centres – with indoor tennis and bowls also provided at Market Harborough’.
- ‘Lutterworth Sport Centre was built in 2004 and is the newer of the two centres. It has an overall rating of ‘good’ for all of its sports facilities yet we still believe there is room for improvement. One example would be that the café is currently unoccupied with the Centre being served only by vending machines, which makes for a less inviting social atmosphere’.
- ‘Harborough Leisure Centre was built in 1991 and the vast majority of its facilities have not been refurbished since this date - minor improvements were made to the fitness centre and swimming pool early in 2017 yet the need for significant renewal by 2019 remains. Recent facility reviews suggest that the swimming pool, sports hall and indoor tennis airhall are in the greatest need of attention’.
- ‘Developing a vision of future provision at Harborough Leisure Centre is therefore a key objective of this strategy – we also hope to make improvements to Lutterworth Sports Centre’.
- ‘Nationally, local authority owned leisure centres remain popular, they continue to attract new membership due to their perceived focus on affordability and public health – this is especially the case in our District due to the absence of a large commercial provider. We feel strongly that there is a role for local authority leisure provision in the future, which has a large array of facilities and gym equipment offered at affordable prices to local residents’.

1.14 **Community spaces and schools:** The draft strategy states that:

- ‘Community spaces and schools provide many opportunities for residents to lead healthy, active lifestyles. Community halls are located throughout the District and present opportunities for rural communities to be active without requiring any travel and they can be configured to host a variety of activities. Community halls tend to be underutilized and we hope to develop ways to increase their usage in partnership with residents, local committees and Parish Councils’.
- ‘Similarly, there are a number of sports halls, artificial grass pitches and fitness stations located in the District’s many schools. All schools are operating under the maximum community hours available and there is considerable spare capacity. Increasing usage of school sites alleviates overcapacity elsewhere (such as at leisure centres) and we look forward to discussing ways to overcome the current availability issues with school facilities’.

Neighbouring local authority sports facilities strategies

1.15 **Introduction:** Harborough shares borders with ten other local authorities, whose sports facilities needs will impact upon provision within the district. The table below summarises the implications of the sports facilities strategies and assessments in neighbouring areas:

Local Authority	Facilities priorities	Implications for Harborough
Blaby District Council	The council does not have a current sports facilities strategy so there is no detailed analysis of facility needs.	Unknown
Charnwood Borough Council	The ' <i>Charnwood Borough Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy</i> ' (2010) is the most recent published assessment of needs and concludes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports halls: Provision meets all current and projected future needs. • Swimming pools: Provision meets all current and projected future needs. • Health and fitness: Provision meets all current needs, but future demand may require further provision. • Indoor bowls: Provision meets all current and projected future needs. 	With good levels of provision of most types of facilities, there is no evidence any exported demand to Harborough.
Corby District Council	The ' <i>Corby Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Strategy</i> ' (2017) concludes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports halls: Usage is currently close to capacity, with limited daytime access. Additional provision will be required to meet future needs. • Swimming pools: Provision meets all current and projected future needs. • Health and fitness: Supply and demand are currently balanced, so additional provision will be required to meet future needs. 	Apart from the swimming provision, there is no current spare capacity at indoor facilities in Corby, which may lead to exported demand to Harborough.

Local Authority	Facilities priorities	Implications for Harborough
<p>Daventry District Council</p>	<p>‘Planning the Future of Open Space, Sport and Recreation in West Northamptonshire’ (2017) concludes the following in relation to Daventry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports halls: Provision meets current and future needs, although a further sports hall will be required in Daventry if access to existing education facilities cannot be extended. • Swimming pools: Provision meets current needs, although a further pool will be required to meet future needs as part of a shared project with Northampton BC and South Northants DC. • Health and fitness: Provision meets current needs, although a further 331 fitness stations will be required to meet future needs • Indoor bowls: There is a current spare capacity, which should also be sufficient to meet all future needs. • Indoor tennis: Current needs in Daventry are met in part by the covered courts at Harborough Leisure Centre. Two indoor courts will be required in Daventry to meet future needs. • Squash courts: Provision meets all current and projected future needs. • Village and community halls: Current needs are met but additional provision should be made in conjunction with new housing developments. 	<p>The location of the Harborough LC means that much of its drive time catchment area is in Daventry district. Feedback from clubs confirms this import of users.</p> <p>The main sports facilities in Daventry district are generally too far away from Harborough to be able to meet demand arising from within Harborough.</p>
<p>Hinckley and Bosworth District Council</p>	<p>The most recent assessment of playing pitch needs in the borough was ‘The Hinckley and Bosworth Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy’ (2011), which concluded the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports halls: Provision meets all current needs, although the sports hall at Hinckley Leisure Centre should be updated and a new sports hall provided to meet future needs. • Swimming pools: Provision meets all current needs, although the pool at Hinckley Leisure Centre should be updated and a new pool provided to meet future needs. • Indoor bowls: Provision meets all current and projected future needs. • Indoor tennis: Current needs are met by facilities outside the district, including the covered courts at Harborough Leisure Centre. Provision will be required in Hinckley and Bosworth to meet future needs. • Community halls: Provision meets all current needs, but future demand may require further provision. 	<p>Most of the facilities in Hinckley and Bosworth are located in the east of the district, close to but not immediately adjacent to Harborough district. There is likely to be cross boundary movement between the two authorities as the catchments for the leisure centres overlap.</p>

Local Authority	Facilities priorities	Implications for Harborough
Kettering Borough Council	<p>The most recent assessment of sports facilities needs in the borough was 'The Kettering Sports Facilities Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2021' (2011) which identifies the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports halls: There is sufficient provision at present, but Desborough Leisure Centre should be replaced. Additional provision will be required to meet future needs. • Swimming pools: There is a shortfall of swimming provision in the borough, which should be addressed through expanded pool space at Kettering Swimming Pool. • Community halls: Six improvement or expansion projects were identified to add capacity to existing provision. 	Shortfalls in swimming provision might lead to exported demand to the Harborough Leisure Centre pool as it is within the 20-minute drive time catchment..
Leicester City Council	The council does not have a current sports facilities strategy so there is no detailed analysis of facility needs.	Unknown
Melton District Council	The council does not have a current sports facilities strategy so there is no detailed analysis of facility needs.	Unknown
Oadby and Wigston District Council	<p>The most recent assessment of sports facilities needs in the borough was 'The Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Study' (2011) which identifies the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports halls: Based upon the identified standard of provision, there is a current shortfall. • Swimming pools: Based upon the identified standard of provision, there is a current shortfall. <p>Community halls: Existing levels of provision are adequate and current per capita standards should be replicated to meet future needs.</p>	Shortfalls in sports halls and swimming pools provision have been identified. Leicester Grammar school attracts high user numbers from this authority area.
Rugby District Council	<p>'Rugby Sports Facilities Strategy' (2016) concludes the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports halls: Provision meets all current and future needs. • Swimming pools: Provision meets all current and future needs. • Health and fitness: Provision meets current needs, although a further 185-260 fitness stations will be required to meet future needs • Indoor bowls: Provision meets all current and future needs. • Indoor tennis: Two indoor courts are required in Rugby to meet current and future needs. • Squash courts: Provision meets current needs, but an additional two courts will be required for future needs. • Village and community halls: Current needs are met but additional provision should be made in conjunction with new housing developments. 	With good levels of provision of most types of facilities, there is no evidence any exported demand to Harborough. Conversely there appears to be some import of Harborough demand from the Lutterworth area.

Local Authority	Facilities priorities	Implications for Harborough
Rutland Council	<p>'Rutland Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy 2015-2036' (2015) concludes the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports halls: Provision meets all current and future needs. • Swimming pools: Additional pool provision is needed in Oakham to meet current and future needs. • Health and fitness: Provision meets all current and projected future needs. • Indoor bowls: Provision meets all current and future needs. • Indoor tennis: Current needs in Rutland are met in part by the covered courts at Harborough Leisure Centre and there is insufficient future local demand to justify providing an indoor tennis centre in Rutland. • Squash courts: Provision meets all current and future needs. 	There is limited spare capacity at most facility types to meet any current demand from Harborough.

Neighbouring local authority housing proposals

1.16 **Introduction:** Harborough shares borders with ten other local authorities, whose housing growth proposals may impact upon provision within the district. The table below summarises the implications of the relevant development proposals in neighbouring areas:

Local Authority	Major development proposals	Implications for Harborough
Blaby District Council	The 'Whetstone Pastures Garden Village' development is proposed for 3,500 houses alongside the M1 motorway west of Countesthorpe and straddling the boundary with Harborough. A new motorway junction is proposed to serve the development, but here are no detailed proposals at this stage for sports facilities provision to meet the needs of the new population.	A population of around 8,500 new residents will require infrastructure including sports facilities provision to meet their needs.
Charnwood Borough Council	Charnwood Borough Council's 'Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment' (2018) identifies the potential to develop up to 2,420 new homes in the settlements of Syston and Queniborough, close to the boundary with Harborough.	Given the location of, and transport links with, the two settlements' residents are most likely to access sports facilities either locally or in Leicester.
Corby District Council	Proposals for the West Corby Urban Extension involve the provision of 4,500+ homes and associated infrastructure including a secondary and three primary schools. There are no specific proposals for additional sports facilities, although it is likely that the sports provision on the school sites will be available for community use.	The proposed development is close to the border with Harborough, although it is likely that the new residents will access sports facilities locally in Corby, subject to addressing current shortfalls in sports hall and health and fitness provision.

Local Authority	Major development proposals	Implications for Harborough
Daventry District Council	The Council's 'Core Strategy' (2016) identifies that the main focus of housing growth in the period to 2029 will be in Daventry Town (4,620 dwellings) with the balance of growth (2,360 dwellings) being in rural settlements.	Given the location of the majority of development, residents are most likely to access sports facilities in Daventry.
Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	The Council's 'Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment' (2017) identifies the need for an additional 471 dwellings per annum to 2031. The Council is currently consulting on its Local Plan review, which is expected to be concluded in 2021, so there is no detail currently on the proposed location for the additional development.	The main focus of recent growth has been in Hinckley and if this is reflected in future trends then residents are most likely to access sports facilities there.
Kettering Borough Council	The 'Joint Cote Strategy' (2016) identifies the need by 2031 for 6,190 new houses in Kettering, 1,360 in Desborough, 1,190 in Rothwell, 1,180 in Burton Latimer and 480 in the rural areas.	Housing growth in Desborough may impact on demand in Market Harborough given the proximity of the two settlements and the identified need to replace the existing sports hall in Desborough.
Leicester City Council	The Council's 'Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment' (2017 update) identifies that 1,280 dwellings per annum need to be delivered to 2031. The majority of this (61%) is projected to be delivered on the central Strategic Regeneration Area.	Given the location of the majority of development, residents are most likely to access sports facilities in Leicester.
Melton District Council	The 'Melton Local Plan' (2018) makes provision for 6,125 new homes in the period to 2036, 65% of which will be provided in two new neighbourhoods in Melton Mowbray.	Given the concentration of development in Melton Mowbray, there is unlikely to be any impact on sports facilities needs in Harborough.
Oadby and Wigston District Council	The 'Oadby and Wigston Housing Implementation Strategy' (2018) identifies a need for 2,960 dwellings by 2031. These will be provided in a number of medium sized 'Direction of Growth Areas'.	The relatively small-scale nature of the housing developments is unlikely to impact on sports facilities needs in Harborough.
Rugby District Council	The submission draft of the 'Rugby Local Plan' (2018) identifies the needs for an additional 12,400 homes by 2031, including 2,800 dwellings to meet Coventry's unmet needs. Two major developments are proposed, the Rugby Radio Station with 6,200 homes and South-West Rugby with 5,000 homes.	The proximity of the major developments to Lutterworth may lead to additional demand at the leisure centre, although existing levels of sports facilities provision in Rugby have been assessed as adequate to meet all future needs.
Rutland Council	Rutland Council's draft 'Local Plan' (2018) identifies a need for 3,200 new houses by 2036. The Plan includes proposals for a Garden Village development on the St. George's Barracks site, comprising 1,500 to 3,000 homes. A subsequent proposal has been submitted for 10,000 new homes at the 'Woolfox Garden Village' on a former RAF base close to the A1 road.	The focus on growth in areas away from the boundary with Harborough means that the proposed housing development is unlikely to impact on sports facilities needs in the district.

Leicester-shire and Rutland Physical Activity and Sport Strategy

1.17 **Introduction:** Leicester-shire and Rutland Sport (the County Sports Partnership) has produced the 'Leicester-shire and Rutland Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2017-2021'.

1.18 **Vision:** The vision is for 'Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland to be the most physically active and sporting place in England'.

1.19 **Ambitions:** The ambitions are as follows.

- **Get Active:** Everyone, of all ages, has the opportunity to start participating in physical activity and sport.
- **Stay Active:** Support people to develop a resilient physical activity and sport habit to ensure lifelong participation.
- **Active Places:** Facilities, playing pitches and informal spaces, that encourage physical activity and sport are high quality and accessible.
- **Active Economy:** Promote Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland as a premier, high performing location for undertaking the business of physical activity and sport.

1.20 **Priorities for action:** The following relate to sports facilities provision.

- Ensuring physical activity and sport is a priority within the planning system, utilising the Active Design principles for new developments.
- Secure investment into both our traditional and non-traditional facilities, formal and informal spaces, based on strategic need, for physical activity and sport (for example from Section 106, CIL and Lottery funds).
- Realise the potential that schools and colleges can offer their communities through high quality accessible facilities.
- Promote the use of formal and informal local community facilities and open spaces for physical activity and sport, supporting a more active everyday lifestyle.
- Ensure the current network of local sport facilities are maintained to a high standard and have a diverse and inclusive approach to their programming.
- Increase the levels of active travel (e.g. cycling and walking) therefore integrating physical activity into daily lives.

- Promote active communities, encouraging stakeholders across the voluntary and public sector to use physical activity and sport to strengthen neighbourhoods and to support communities to work together.

Government planning policies

1.21 **National Planning Policy Framework:** In July 2018, the Government published revisions to the '*National Planning Policy Framework*' (2018), setting out its economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government's vision of sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally to meet local aspirations. The policies of greatest relevance to sports facilities provision and retention are as follows:

- **Sustainable development:** 'The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' and there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- **Promoting healthy and safe communities:** 'Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:
 - Promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other - for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages.
 - Are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion - for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high-quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.
 - Enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs - for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.
- To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:
 - Enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs - for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local

shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

- Plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
- Take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community.
- Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.
- Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community.
- Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services'.

1.22 **National Planning Practice Guidance:** The Government also issued '*National Planning Practice Guidance*' in 2014 and the following is of particular relevance to sports facilities:

- **Sport and recreation provision:** 'Open space should be taken into account in planning for new development and considering proposals that may affect existing open space. It can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby'.
 - 'Authorities and developers may refer to Sport England's guidance on how to assess the need for sports and recreation facilities'.
 - 'Where there is no requirement to consult, local planning authorities are advised to consult Sport England in cases where development might lead to loss of, or loss of use for sport, of any major sports facility, the creation of a site for one or more playing pitches, artificial lighting of a major outdoor sports facility or a residential development of 300 dwellings or more'.
- **Health and well-being:** 'Local planning authorities should ensure that health and wellbeing, and health infrastructure are considered in local and neighbourhood plans and in planning decision making'.
 - 'Development proposals should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and help create healthy living environments which should, where possible, include making physical activity easy to do'.

- ‘Opportunities for healthy lifestyles must be considered (e.g. planning for an environment that supports people of all ages in making healthy choices, helps to promote active travel and physical activity and promotes high quality open spaces and opportunities for play, sport and recreation)’.
- Ensuring physical activity and sport is a priority within the planning system, utilising the Active Design principles for new developments.

The Government’s Sports Strategy

1.23 The Government’s sports strategy ‘*Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*’ (2015) sets the context for a national policy shift. It contains the following material of relevance to sports facilities provision in Harborough:

- The Strategy seeks to ‘redefine what success looks like in sport’ by concentrating on five key outcomes: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and economic development.
- The benefit of engaging those groups that typically do little or no activity is immense. Future funding will therefore focus on those people who tend not to take part in sport, including women and girls, disabled people, those in lower socio-economic groups and older people.

Sport England Strategy

1.24 Sport England’s strategy ‘*Towards an Active Nation*’ (2016) contains a significant policy shift to encourage more currently inactive people to become active, with a relative move away from support for programmes aimed at existing participants.

1.25 Elements of particular relevance to sports facilities provision in Harborough are as follows:

- More money and resources will be focused on tackling inactivity because this is where the gains for the individual and for society are greatest.
- There will be greater investment in children and young people from the age of five to build positive attitudes to sport and activity as the foundations of an active life.
- Sport England will work with those parts of the sector that serve existing participants to help them identify ways in which they can become more sustainable and self-sufficient.

Governing bodies of sport facilities strategies

1.26 Several of the governing bodies of sport that use the types of facilities featured in the Harborough Sports Facilities Strategy have their own strategies for facilities provision. The material of relevance to provision in Harborough is summarised below, along with any specific observations submitted by the governing bodies:

Sport	Facilities priorities	Implications for Harborough
Athletics	<p>England Athletics' <i>'Facilities Strategy 2018 - 2025'</i> (2018) recognises a hierarchy of facilities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club Training Venue - Track and field facilities (indoor and outdoor) that have a strong anchor club with 100+ track and field members. To support site sustainability, Club Venues should have excellent social and ancillary provision and facilities that actively encourage multi-sport usage. • Compact Athletics Facility - A new generation of affordable and sustainable indoor and outdoor athletics satellite facilities that provide a stepping stone into Club Venues. They are designed to fit available spaces and budgets and provide functional, inspiring, facilities at which people of all ages and abilities can improve their fitness and confidence and develop the fundamental athletics movement skills. <p>The strategy notes that 'England Athletics has adopted UKA's strategic position that we should concentrate on preserving and improving the existing stock of 400m tracks rather than seeking to build additional ones. However, there are areas in the country where journey time to the nearest full-size outdoor track is greater than ideal and there are places where good coaching has created significant demand despite the lack of a local athletics facility. The Compact Athletics concept is intended to fill this gap, providing training facilities in places where there is insufficient demand, funding or land to accommodate a full-size track'.</p>	Harborough district is not a priority area for facilities provision for England Athletics, although it acknowledges that the three clubs in the district have growth potential.
Badminton	<p>Badminton England's <i>'National Facilities Strategy</i> (2012) lists the specific requirements of facilities used for badminton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hall should have a sprung floor as a minimum. • The lighting must be suitable (no lights above courts and no natural light). • There should be appropriate space around the court for safety. • The walls must be the right colour (green or blue). • The ceiling must be the appropriate height (6.7m). <p>Local authority priority areas are identified for 'Community Badminton Networks', but Harborough is not included.</p>	Harborough District is an area where Badminton England would like to support the growth of activity, as the district services both Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

Sport	Facilities priorities	Implications for Harborough
Basketball	<p>The British Basketball Federation's <i>'Transforming Basketball Together in Britain 2016 - 2028'</i> (2016) contains objectives to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Develop a clear facilities strategy for basketball, creating community hubs including, where appropriate, arenas that sit at the heart of communities and are homes for the leading elite and community clubs'. • 'Become the second largest and fastest growing team sport in Britain for both men and women, by strengthening the links between clubs, schools and local basketball programmes and promoting basketball's value in increasing the health and wellbeing of the nation'. 	<p>British Basketball confirmed that it has one affiliated club based at Harborough Leisure Centre and that local facilities provision will be adequate to meet needs to 2027.</p>
Bowls	<p>The English Indoor Bowling Association (EIBA) confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It does not have a facility strategy, The EIBA and Bowls England are in discussion with Sport England regarding its 'sports facility interventions'. • It is seeking to develop 'effective partnerships with local authorities/leisure providers', from which will 'develop an overall facility strategy/action plan. 	<p>The EIBA confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'We consider the Indoor Bowls facility at the Harborough Leisure Centre, and the facilities in adjoining areas are sufficient to meet present and future needs'. • Membership of Harborough and District IBC increased from 122 in 2015 to 156 in 2018 (a 27.9% increase).
Fencing	<p>British Fencing confirmed that it does not have a current facilities strategy. The sport generally utilises non-specialist space within sports halls.</p>	<p>British Fencing confirmed that Harborough is not a priority area and it is not aware of any current issues or proposals in the district.</p>
Gymnastics	<p>British Gymnastics' <i>'Facility Strategy 2017 - 2021'</i> (2017) identifies a range of facilities options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standalone dedicated facilities - Achievable for most clubs. Can provide for participation and competition. • Multi-venue dedicated facilities - For large club-based organisations looking to further expand opportunities. • Dedicated facility as part of a multi-sport venue - Most likely to be local authority-based projects. • Non-dedicated space as part of leisure centre - Ideal for club delivery and mass participation activities. • Satellite venues - Opportunities for clubs to scale up their programmes and increase activity options. • Non-dedicated spaces in leisure centres - Ideal for introductory level, mass participation programmes. 	<p>British Gymnastics confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are four clubs in the district, all of which use non-specialist facilities. • There is limited access to facilities within Harborough with all clubs having waiting lists restricting access to gymnastics activities due to the lack of time within non-dedicated facilities. • As the area is fairly rural it is likely to be difficult to identify appropriate sites to convert into dedicated sites. • There is a large demand for more gymnastics opportunities and Clubs all have large waiting lists.

Sport	Facilities priorities	Implications for Harborough
Handball	<p>England Handball confirmed that it does not have a current facilities strategy but stated that ‘we are in desperate need for facilities that handball can be played in, with courts that are 20m x 35m as a minimum’.</p>	<p>There are no handball clubs in Harborough but ‘some investment is being made to increase handball activity across the county, some of which may occur in the Harborough district. This activity has the potential to develop into new community club activity’.</p>
Netball	<p>England Netball’s ‘<i>Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals</i>’ (2016) has the following facilities objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with Badminton England and England Basketball actively influence the development of, and access to community facilities in common priority areas. • Establish a new network of appropriate standard indoor netball facilities through a partnership with the English Cricket Board. • Increase and enhance the network of County and Regional Netball Centres providing central venue homes for netball. • Support the provision of Intensive Netball Training Centres offering high quality netball environments for performance athletes. 	<p>England Netball confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a priority for England Netball to protect and support the improvements of key venues to sustain and grow our core market. Market Harborough Leisure Centre is the home venue for a number of Clubs who compete in the Harborough Netball League and so is a key venue that we would wish to protect and support improvements to’. • ‘There is an active senior and junior netball league currently operating from Harborough Leisure Centre (within the Dome) and we are aware that both Leagues would like to expand. The adult League for example would like to deliver programmes such as walking netball. We would envisage the Junior League being engaged in the delivery of ‘Bee Netball’ which is an under 11 product being launched in July 2019 at the Netball World Cup’. • ‘If the Leagues could find access to suitable replacement facilities, and a greater number of courts, the sport has the potential for growth’. • ‘Both adults and junior membership levels have increased over the past 3 years. Adult growth -7%, Junior growth - 21%’
Squash	<p>England Squash’s ‘Squash Facility Report’ was completed in 2016. It is currently working with Sport England to find a way to combat a damaging and unprecedented number of court closures. It is keen to ensure that squash courts are protected for the future and will work with facility managers and providers on these matters. In order for Squash to thrive, the ratio of courts per capita should be close to one per 10,000 people.</p>	<p>England Squash confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘The need for investment and required impact on deliverers makes Harborough a key area for future delivery and squash participation’. • ‘The demographic within the local area lends itself to squash participation and target markets for the sport’. • ‘The county association is proactive and there is an abundance of competition in the East Midlands’. • ‘The current ratio of squash courts per capita in Harborough is 1: 17,500’.

Sport	Facilities priorities	Implications for Harborough
Swimming	Swim England's <i>'Towards a Nation Swimming: A Strategic Plan for Swimming in England 2017 - 2021'</i> (2017) includes a commitment to 'working with providers to create a swimming environment that is more inclusive and exceeds the expectations of swimmers'.	<p>Swim England confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Although we are aware of some of the issues in Harborough District Council we cannot understand why the two community facilities in question at 27 years old (Harborough LC) and 15 years old (Lutterworth LC) are being considered for replacement as they are both relatively new builds and should not have deteriorated to that extent'. • 'It is acknowledged that the two community pools have limited use for competitive swimming but they do provide the expected range of community activities'. • 'Leicester Sharks use the Harborough District pools simply because there is limited supply in Leicester'. • 'Harborough District is bounded on the north by the City of Leicester, which although it has a water deficit provides a number of substantial leisure centres with swimming pools; and Corby District is to the east and provides a 50-metre pool complex for major competition'. • 'With a current population of nearly 92,000 Harborough District has a water deficit of approximately 125m² but only has two major population conurbations at Market Harborough and Lutterworth and even with a significant population increase is unlikely to require a third community swimming facility. Inevitably there will be 'swimmer export' to the pools in Leicester and Corby'. • 'From Swim England's perspective the obvious solution would be to develop one of the two existing facilities. Lutterworth could certainly do with an additional learner pool'. • 'If there is some pressing reason why one of the current facilities must be replaced then an enlarged main pool would be the obvious option. With Market Harborough being the largest population base in the District it would make sense to have a 25m x 8-lane pool plus learner pool with some spectator seating there'. • 'With regards to the development at Scraftoft, clearly this area is orientated towards Leicester and residents are extremely unlikely to consider Harborough District as their leisure and recreation provider; pressure will undoubtedly grow for Leicester to provide extra facilities in the east of the city'.

Sport	Facilities priorities	Implications for Harborough
Table tennis	<p>Table Tennis England's <i>'Facilities Strategy 2015 - 2025'</i> (2015) identifies that table tennis takes place in a variety of settings: To support sustainable clubs, the priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a minimum of one accessible, high quality dedicated multi-table facility in every active county. • Support current clubs to ensure long-term security of use of their facilities and to develop facilities or access multisport and multi-use environments. <p>To support the social recreational game, the priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the implementation of free-to-use outdoor tables, prioritising centres of population. • Establish a network of social table tennis venues offering vibrant informal environments for all. 	<p>No specific local facilities priorities in Harborough, although there is one active but non-affiliated club in the district, based at Church Langton Village Hall.</p>
Tennis	<p>The Lawn Tennis Association's <i>'Transforming Tennis Together'</i> programme will invest £125 million over 10-years to improve local tennis facilities, with a target to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of covered and floodlit courts by 50%. • Install online booking and entry systems so everyone can book a tennis court easily from their mobile phone, computer or tablet. • Refurbish courts, clubhouses and other social spaces to ensure players have a great experience every time they visit. • Support other innovative and creative ideas that meet local demand. 	<p>The LTA confirmed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'To deliver our new strategy we will be working with networks of venues in focus areas and we are currently in the process of identifying these'. • 'We believe there is potential to grow tennis in Harborough and if the Local Authority wanted to explore the potential of setting up a network we would be happy to work together to do this'. • 'There have been initial discussions with Leicester Grammar School about a potential indoor tennis centre at the school. There is the potential for these discussions to be revisited once our facility funding criteria have been confirmed'. • 'Great Glen Tennis Club have had discussions with Leicester Grammar School about facility development. They would like to have upgraded clubhouse facilities.

Sport	Facilities priorities	Implications for Harborough
Volleyball	Volleyball England's 'Facilities Strategy' (2009) covers all four forms of the game (indoor, outdoor, beach and sitting). The strategy identifies that a court size of 18m x 9m x 7.5m is required for National League standard play and below. It also states that 'the minimum width of standard sports halls should be raised to 20m from the current 18m, to allow two practice courts in a single hall'. There are no locational priorities.	No specific local facilities priorities in Harborough.

The implications of the strategic context

1.27 The implications of the key strategic influences on sports facilities provision in Harborough are:

- **Harborough Corporate Plan:** The Corporate Plan includes a priority for 'a healthy, inclusive and vibrant community' and its associated Delivery Plan includes a commitment to 'promote an appropriate mix of leisure and recreational infrastructure to meet identified needs'.
- **Harborough planning policy:** The draft Local Plan contains policies that safeguard sports facilities and specifies the circumstances in which new provision will be required to meet the needs of an expanded population. The Harborough Sports Facilities Strategy will provide a robust and evidence-based source to help further inform this process.
- **Harborough Sport and Physical Activity:** The draft strategy identifies a commitment to improving provision at the Council's two main leisure centres in Market Harborough and Lutterworth.
- **Neighbouring local authority sports facilities assessments:** There is no significant spare capacity in facilities provision in neighbouring local authority areas to meet demand in Harborough. The indoor tennis facilities at Harborough Leisure Centre serve wider than district needs and therefore lead to exported demand.
- **Neighbouring local authority housing development proposals:** The proposed scale and location of housing growth in neighbouring local authorities is likely to have a significant impact on demand for sports facilities in Harborough, in particular the 'Whetstone Pastures Garden Village' (3,500 dwellings), the Rugby Radio Station (6,200 dwellings) and Desborough (1,360 dwellings) developments.

- ***Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport policy:*** There are a number of supportive policies in relation to sports facilities provision to support sport and physical activity programmes.
- ***National planning policy:*** The production of a Sports Facilities Strategy based on Sport England's approved methodology meets the stipulations of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- ***National sports policy shifts:*** The move in national sports policy towards prioritising new participants will create a challenge for sport to ensure that the traditional facilities 'offer' is sufficiently relevant and attractive to engage a wider participation base, including people who are currently inactive.
- ***Governing body of sport priorities:*** There are specific identified local priorities for badminton, netball, swimming and tennis.