

## 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 was adopted in April 2019.
- 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 (policy SS1) makes provision of land for at least 12,800 dwellings:
- About 8,792 dwellings have already been completed or committed through planning consents.
  - About 1,260 dwellings in a strategic development area (SDA) on land east of Lutterworth.
  - About 1,200 dwellings in an SDA at Scraftoft North.
  - About 1,200 dwellings on other sites allocated in the Local Plan.
  - About 307 dwellings on non-allocated sites or sites to be allocated in neighbourhood plans for Rural Centres and Selected Rural Villages.

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

*1. The District's open space, sport and recreation facilities (as shown on the Policies Map) and any future additional facilities provided as part of new development will be safeguarded and enhanced through improvements to their quality and use.*

*2. Development resulting in the loss of or reduction in defined open space, sport and recreation facilities will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:*

*a. 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*

*b. 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*

*c. the proposal is for alternative recreational provision which meets evidence of local need in such a way as to outweigh the loss.*

*3. 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:*

*a. the provision of specific new open space, sport and recreation facilities in accordance with local standards; and/or*

*b. the enhancement of identified existing facilities to meet the relevant local standards.*

*4. New open space, sport and recreation facilities should be provided within residential development sites (unless otherwise agreed by the Council) and should:*

*a. be accessible, usable, of high quality and good design, visible and safe and include facilities for a range of ages;*

*b. enable links to be created between new development and surrounding recreational networks and facilities (including Public Rights of Way);*

*c. provide an appropriate landscaping and landscape maintenance scheme; and*

*d. 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:

- **Scraftoft North Strategic Development Area (policy SC1):** The masterplan for the development will include the provision of a neighbourhood centre including a community hall and other community facilities or upgrade of existing facilities.
- **Lutterworth (policy L1):** The masterplan for the development is required to provide for a community hall and other community facilities or upgrade of

existing facilities, and safeguarded land for a potential new leisure centre to serve Lutterworth.

## Harborough District Council Physical Activity Strategy

- 1.11 **Introduction:** HDC has produced a 'Physical Activity Strategy 2018-2023' 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 strategy states that 'the Council is 'a key player in the delivery of sports and physical activity services, and residents and local sports providers place a high value on our services'.
- 1.13 The strategy has six themes:
- Increasing participation.
  - Targeting specific groups.
  - Building effective partnerships.
  - Developing active environments.
  - Improving our leisure centres.
  - Exploring new ways to better utilise our existing sport and leisure infrastructure.
- 1.14 **Leisure centres:** The strategy states that 'on a national level local authority owned leisure centres remain popular. They continue to attract new membership due to their perceived focus on affordability and public health and this is especially the case in our district due to the absence of a large commercial provider. Public responses to our consultation have clearly identified some of the areas for improvement in our current facility provision whilst also signalling high levels of support for local authority-led leisure facilities. Developing a vision of our future offering at Market Harborough Leisure Centre and Lutterworth Sports Centre is a key objective of the Council'.
- 1.15 **Better utilising our infrastructure:** The strategy states that 'our leisure centres are certainly important, but they are not the only destinations for sport and physical activity in the district. Responses to our survey have indicated that residents want to see more opportunities being offered at the many other locations we have in the district. In particular, schools and village (or community) halls make for excellent destinations for activities. If we can make our existing facilities more accessible to new users, and available for a wider range of uses, we can ensure that they become a greater resource toward the improvement of public health in the district'.

1.16 **Strategic priorities:** These have been produced to align with the main themes:

- To increase participation levels in physical activity across the district, with a focus on tackling inactivity.
- To develop sustainable and long-term approaches to incentivising specific groups who have the lowest levels of activity in the district.
- To further develop - through our Active Together Team - our effective and sustainable network of organisations across a diverse range of physical activity and sport opportunities to meet the changing needs of our residents.
- To ensure that physical activity and sport is integrated within the planning system by utilising Sport England’s active design principles.
- To refurbish and rebuild the two leisure centres in our district so that they meet national high standards.
- To promote the use of formal and informal local community facilities, including schools and colleges, to help realise their full potential as high-quality community assets.

### Neighbouring local authority sports facilities strategies

1.17 **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:

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
Blaby District Council	The council does not have a current sports facilities strategy so there is no detailed analysis of facility needs.	Unknown

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
Charnwood Borough Council	<p>The 'Charnwood Built Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2018-2036' (2018) concludes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sports halls:</b> Two new sports halls are required in the Sustainable Urban Extensions.</li> <li>• <b>Swimming pools:</b> Additional water space will be required to meet future demand.</li> <li>• <b>Health and fitness:</b> Existing provision should be maintained and extra stations provided at Charnwood Leisure Centre.</li> <li>• <b>Squash courts:</b> Existing provision should be maintained.</li> <li>• <b>Indoor bowls:</b> Consideration should be given to providing additional capacity.</li> <li>• <b>Gymnastics:</b> Additional specialist facilities are required.</li> <li>• <b>Community halls:</b> No extra halls needed, but additional sports activities should be encouraged.</li> </ul>	There is no spare capacity in current provision, which may lead to exported demand to Harborough.
Corby District Council	<p>The 'Corby Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Strategy' (2017) concludes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sports halls:</b> Usage is currently close to capacity, with limited daytime access. Additional provision will be required to meet future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Swimming pools:</b> Provision meets all current and projected future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Health and fitness:</b> Supply and demand are currently balanced, so additional provision will be required to meet future needs.</li> </ul>	Apart from the swimming provision, there is no current spare capacity at indoor facilities in Corby, which may lead to exported demand to Harborough.

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
Daventry District Council	<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"> <li>• <b>Sports halls:</b> 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.</li> <li>• <b>Swimming pools:</b> 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.</li> <li>• <b>Health and fitness:</b> Provision meets current needs, although a further 331 fitness stations will be required to meet future needs</li> <li>• <b>Indoor bowls:</b> There is a current spare capacity, which should also be sufficient to meet all future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Indoor tennis:</b> 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.</li> <li>• <b>Athletics tracks and running:</b> The new 8-lane track at Moulton College meets much of the long-term needs in the District. The investment priorities are measured routes for walking and running.</li> <li>• <b>Squash courts:</b> Provision meets all current and projected future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Village and community halls:</b> Current needs are met but additional provision should be made in conjunction with new housing developments.</li> </ul>	<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>
Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	<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"> <li>• <b>Sports halls:</b> 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.</li> <li>• <b>Swimming pools:</b> Provision meets all current needs, although the pool at Hinckley Leisure Centre should be updated and a new pool provided to meet future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Indoor bowls:</b> Provision meets all current and projected future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Indoor tennis:</b> 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.</li> <li>• <b>Community halls:</b> Provision meets all current needs, but future demand may require further provision.</li> </ul>	<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>

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
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"> <li>• <b>Sports halls:</b> There is sufficient provision at present, but Desborough Leisure Centre should be replaced. Additional provision will be required to meet future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Swimming pools:</b> There is a shortfall of swimming provision in the borough, which should be addressed through expanded pool space at Kettering Swimming Pool.</li> <li>• <b>Community halls:</b> Six improvement or expansion projects were identified to add capacity to existing provision.</li> </ul>	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	<p>The most recent assessment of sports facilities needs in the district was 'The Melton Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy' (2011) which identifies the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sports halls:</b> There is a current shortfall in provision equivalent to two sports halls.</li> <li>• <b>Swimming pools:</b> There is a small current shortfall of water space in the district.</li> <li>• <b>Health and fitness:</b> Current needs are met, with a small surplus of provision.</li> <li>• <b>Indoor bowls:</b> Existing levels of provision are adequate.</li> <li>• <b>Indoor tennis:</b> The LTA has identified a shortfall in indoor courts in the county.</li> <li>• <b>Community halls:</b> Existing levels of provision are adequate.</li> </ul>	Shortfalls in sports halls, pools and indoor tennis might lead to imported demand to Harborough.
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"> <li>• <b>Sports halls:</b> Based upon the identified standard of provision, there is a current shortfall.</li> <li>• <b>Swimming pools:</b> Based upon the identified standard of provision, there is a current shortfall.</li> <li>• <b>Community halls:</b> Existing levels of provision are adequate and current per capita standards should be replicated to meet future needs.</li> </ul>	Shortfalls in sports halls and swimming pools provision have been identified. Leicester Grammar school attracts high user numbers from this authority area.



<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
Rugby District Council	<p>'Rugby Sports Facilities Strategy' (2016) concludes the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sports halls:</b> Provision meets all current and future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Swimming pools:</b> Provision meets all current and future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Health and fitness:</b> Provision meets current needs, although a further 185-260 fitness stations will be required to meet future needs</li> <li>• <b>Indoor bowls:</b> Provision meets all current and future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Indoor tennis:</b> Two indoor courts are required in Rugby to meet current and future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Squash courts:</b> Provision meets current needs, but an additional two courts will be required for future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Athletics track and running routes:</b> The athletics track meets the needs of the borough in the long term. The priorities are the development of new measured walking and running routes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Village and community halls:</b> Current needs are met but additional provision should be made in conjunction with new housing developments.</p>	<p>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.</p>
Rutland Council	<p>'Rutland Sport and Recreation Facilities Strategy 2015-2036' (2015) concludes the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sports halls:</b> Provision meets all current and future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Swimming pools:</b> Additional pool provision is needed in Oakham to meet current and future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Health and fitness:</b> Provision meets all current and projected future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Indoor bowls:</b> Provision meets all current and future needs.</li> <li>• <b>Indoor tennis:</b> 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.</li> <li>• <b>Squash courts:</b> Provision meets all current and future needs.</li> </ul>	<p>There is limited spare capacity at most facility types to meet any current demand from Harborough.</p>

## Neighbouring local authority housing proposals

1.18 **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:

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Major development proposals</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
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.
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.

<b>Local Authority</b>	<b>Major development proposals</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
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

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

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

1.21 **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.

1.22 **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

1.23 **National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF):** This sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides the framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 11) and there are a number of topic related sections. Section 8 of the NPPF relates to *Promoting healthy and safe communities*. The policies in this section are of the greatest relevance to sports facilities provision are:

*91. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:*

*a) 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;*

*b) 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; and*

*c) 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.*

*92. To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:*

*a) 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;*

*b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;*

*c) 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;*

*d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and*

*e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.*

*96. Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning*

*policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.*

*97. Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:*

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.*

1.24 **National Planning Practice Guidance:** The Government has also issued ‘National Planning Practice Guidance’ and the following is of particular relevance to sports facilities:

- **Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space**  
*‘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’.*
  - *‘Local planning authorities are required to consult Sport England in certain cases where development affects the use of land as playing fields.’*
  - *‘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;*
    - *proposals which lead to the loss of use for sport of a major body of water;*
    - *creation of a major sports facility;*
    - *creation of a site for one or more playing pitches;*
    - *development which creates opportunities for sport (such as the creation of a body of water bigger than two hectares following sand and gravel extraction);*
    - *artificial lighting of a major outdoor sports facility;*
    - *a residential development of 300 dwellings or more.*

- **Health and safe communities:**  
How can positive planning contribute to healthier communities?

*The design and use of the built and natural environments, including green infrastructure are major determinants of health and wellbeing. Planning and health need to be considered together in two ways: in terms of creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles,.....*

What is a healthy place?

*A healthy place is one which supports and promotes healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages. It will provide the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, and support community engagement and wellbeing.*

*It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments.*

## The Government's Sports Strategy

1.25 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

1.26 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.

1.27 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

- 1.28 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:



<b>Sport</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
Athletics	<p>England Athletics' <i>'Facilities Strategy 2018 - 2025'</i> (2018) recognises a hierarchy of facilities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Club Training Venue</b> - 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.</li> <li>• <b>Compact Athletics Facility</b> - 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.</li> </ul> <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>	<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.</p>

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
Badminton	<p>Badminton England's <i>'National Facilities Strategy (2012)</i> lists the specific requirements of facilities used for badminton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The hall should have a sprung floor as a minimum.</li> <li>• The lighting must be suitable (no lights above courts and no natural light).</li> <li>• There should be appropriate space around the court for safety.</li> <li>• The walls must be the right colour (green or blue).</li> <li>• The ceiling must be the appropriate height (6.7m).</li> </ul> <p>Local authority priority areas are identified for 'Community Badminton Networks', but Harborough is not included.</p>	<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.</p>
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"> <li>• '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'.</li> <li>• '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'.</li> </ul>	<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>

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
Bowls	<p>The English Indoor Bowling Association (EIBA) confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It does not have a facility strategy, The EIBA and Bowls England are in discussion with Sport England regarding its 'sports facility interventions'.</li> <li>• It is seeking to develop 'effective partnerships with local authorities/leisure providers', from which will 'develop an overall facility strategy/action plan.</li> </ul>	<p>The EIBA confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• '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'.</li> <li>• Membership of Harborough and District IBC increased from 122 in 2015 to 156 in 2018 (a 27.9% increase).</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• <b>Standalone dedicated facilities</b> - Achievable for most clubs. Can provide for participation and competition.</li> <li>• <b>Multi-venue dedicated facilities</b> - For large club-based organisations looking to further expand opportunities.</li> <li>• <b>Dedicated facility as part of a multi-sport venue</b> - Most likely to be local authority-based projects.</li> <li>• <b>Non-dedicated space as part of leisure centre</b> - Ideal for club delivery and mass participation activities.</li> <li>• <b>Satellite venues</b> - Opportunities for clubs to scale up their programmes and increase activity options.</li> <li>• <b>Non-dedicated spaces in leisure centres</b> - Ideal for introductory level, mass participation programmes.</li> </ul>	<p>British Gymnastics confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are four clubs in the district, all of which use non-specialist facilities.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• As the area is fairly rural it is likely to be difficult to identify appropriate sites to convert into dedicated sites.</li> <li>• There is a large demand for more gymnastics opportunities and Clubs all have large waiting lists.</li> </ul>
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>

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
Netball	<p>England Netball's 'Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals' (2016) has the following facilities objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In partnership with Badminton England and England Basketball actively influence the development of, and access to community facilities in common priority areas.</li> <li>• Establish a new network of appropriate standard indoor netball facilities through a partnership with the English Cricket Board.</li> <li>• Increase and enhance the network of County and Regional Netball Centres providing central venue homes for netball.</li> <li>• Support the provision of Intensive Netball Training Centres offering high quality netball environments for performance athletes.</li> </ul>	<p>England Netball confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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'.</li> <li>• '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'.</li> <li>• 'If the Leagues could find access to suitable replacement facilities, and a greater number of courts, the sport has the potential for growth'.</li> <li>• 'Both adults and junior membership levels have increased over the past 3 years. Adult growth -7%, Junior growth - 21%'</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• 'The need for investment and required impact on deliverers makes Harborough a key area for future delivery and squash participation'.</li> <li>• 'The demographic within the local area lends itself to squash participation and target markets for the sport'.</li> <li>• 'The county association is proactive and there is an abundance of competition in the East Midlands'.</li> <li>• 'The current ratio of squash courts per capita in Harborough is 1: 17,500'.</li> </ul>

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
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"> <li>• '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'.</li> <li>• 'It is acknowledged that the two community pools have limited use for competitive swimming but they do provide the expected range of community activities'.</li> <li>• 'Leicester Sharks use the Harborough District pools simply because there is limited supply in Leicester'.</li> <li>• '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'.</li> <li>• 'With a current population of nearly 92,000 Harborough District has a water deficit of approximately 125m<sup>2</sup> 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'.</li> <li>• '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'.</li> </ul>

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
Swimming (cont)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• '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'.</li> </ul> <p>'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'.</p>
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:</p> <p>To support sustainable clubs, the priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a minimum of one accessible, high quality dedicated multi-table facility in every active county.</li> <li>• Support current clubs to ensure long-term security of use of their facilities and to develop facilities or access multisport and multi-use environments.</li> </ul> <p>To support the social recreational game, the priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the implementation of free-to-use outdoor tables, prioritising centres of population.</li> <li>• Establish a network of social table tennis venues offering vibrant informal environments for all.</li> </ul>	<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>

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Facilities priorities</b>	<b>Implications for Harborough</b>
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"> <li>• Increase the number of covered and floodlit courts by 50%.</li> <li>• Install online booking and entry systems so everyone can book a tennis court easily from their mobile phone, computer or tablet.</li> <li>• Refurbish courts, clubhouses and other social spaces to ensure players have a great experience every time they visit.</li> <li>• Support other innovative and creative ideas that meet local demand.</li> </ul>	<p>The LTA confirmed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• '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'.</li> <li>• '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'.</li> <li>• '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 re-visited once our facility funding criteria have been confirmed'.</li> <li>• 'Great Glen Tennis Club have had discussions with Leicester Grammar School about facility development. They would like to have upgraded clubhouse facilities.</li> </ul>
Volleyball	<p>Volleyball England's <i>'Facilities Strategy'</i> (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.</p>	<p>No specific local facilities priorities in Harborough.</p>

## Neighbourhood Plans

1.29 Neighbourhood planning is a way for communities to help decide the future of the places where they live and work. The following ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plans in Harborough district make mention of sports facilities:

- The Arnesby Neighbourhood Plan notes that ‘the village hall opened in 1963 and is very well utilised from both within and outside the community. In the recent community consultation, the village hall was the most valued community asset, 87% of those responding thought that it was important or very important’.
- The Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan includes provision for ‘meeting any growth in demand for recreational facilities from the population of the Parish by increasing the capacity of the Coplow Centre’. It notes that ‘the Centre is constantly in use throughout the week and facilities require upgrading and expansion to accommodate a growing population’.
- The Broughton Astley Neighbourhood Plan notes that ‘there is a lack of both formal and informal leisure facilities within the village, resulting in the need to travel elsewhere to access facilities’. It therefore proposes ‘a centrally located community and leisure facility which will provide a minimum 4-court sports hall, gym and dance facilities, all-weather pitch, changing facilities, meeting rooms and associated administration and parking facilities for the benefit of all the community’.
- The Burton Overy Neighbourhood Plan mentions the village hall, ‘which has its own kitchen, accommodates village and private functions and is well used by the clubs and societies of the village. In 2017, it was awarded a Lottery Grant of £10,000 to renovate the entrance to the Hall, to make it safer and more user friendly, with better access and more suitable parking for disabled users’.
- The Foxton Neighbourhood Plan notes that the village hall is used for activities including fitness sessions.
- The Great Bowden Neighbourhood Plan states that the ‘Village Hall is the most used community venue which is used by 79% of respondents. The Church Hall is used by 47% of residents and the Community Pavilion is used by 28% of the community. Both the Village Hall and Church Hall provide a large range of classes, a meeting venue for village societies, open village events and a well-attended pre-school. They have little spare capacity. The Community Pavilion is home to Great Bowden Cricket Club and is less busy. Its availability is curtailed to the broader community during the evenings of the summer months. However, during the day it is under-utilised. The room available for community use in the Pavilion is smaller than those available in the Village Hall and Church Hall and this may restrict its broader appeal’. Plan policy supports the provision of additional facilities capacity but contains no specific proposals for achieving this.



- The Great Easton Neighbourhood Plan notes that ‘the village hall is an important asset for the village. Many groups, societies and clubs, as well as private users, use the facilities on a regular basis. 77 respondents to the community questionnaire (47%) use the village hall. The village hall has an active management committee. Ongoing refurbishment is required to maintain the level of quality required for public use’.
- The Great Glen Neighbourhood Plan states that there is a good range of community facilities in Great Glen. These include a Youth Club, Scout Hut and Village Hall. These are well used and especially important to the vitality and well-being of the community.
- The Houghton-on-the-Hill Neighbourhood Plan notes that ‘the Village Hall was built in 1922 and has benefitted from significant investment and improvement in the last five years. It comprises a main hall which can seat 140, a committee room, a modern kitchen and storage inside and in outbuildings. It still bears a legacy from piecemeal development over nearly 100 years and has particular deficits in energy efficiency and space for the present, let alone increasing, village population. It is used for a very diverse range of activities, including indoor bowls, exercise group, circuit training, karate and yoga’.
- The Hungarton Neighbourhood Plan states that ‘the Village Hall, opened in 1928, is an independent village charity run by a village hall committee on which all the major organisations in the village have representation. It is a well-used local resource which offers a main hall, meeting room, kitchen and storage area’.
- The Kibworths Neighbourhood Plan supports the need for a ‘multi-functional community centre’ in addition to the existing four-badminton court sports hall at Kibworth School and the village hall. It indicates that developer contributions will be sought to fund new and improved facilities provision.
- The Medbourne Neighbourhood Plan notes that the village hall is an important community asset and that it accommodates pilates classes. It states that ‘the village hall is in need of substantial renovation, in particular internal decoration, re-wiring and removal of the suspended ceiling. The committee has ambitious plans to refurbish and extend the building to include a new kitchen, toilets and meeting rooms.
- The Scraftoft Neighbourhood Plan states that ‘Scraftoft Village Hall is very small and has limited facilities. We are currently looking to provide a new multi-use community hall close the Strawberry Fields development off Beeby Road. We already have outline planning permission and we are looking to secure funding. The new facility will provide more community space, opportunities for multi-faith worship, indoor recreation and activities for young people. The new Community Hall will be planned so that it can provide a branch GP surgery. A new community hall is also essential for the future of the village and is supported by over two-thirds

of local households’. [Facility now largely complete and opened as the Community Hub].

- The Shearsby Neighbourhood Plan notes that ‘the village hall forms a focal point for village life by providing a modern venue for private and public meetings and functions. The Hall is now equipped to the highest standards and suits a wide range of uses’.
- The South Kilworth Neighbourhood Plan states that ‘the Village Hall is well used by a range of community groups and hired by individuals. In the community consultation, the Village Hall was one of the most valued community facilities, 73% of those responding believing that it was either important or very important. The village hall was originally the village Reading Room, but in 2000 with the help of a lottery funded grant it was moved to larger purpose-built premises on Parish Council land. The hall is in need of some refurbishment and upgrading. There is a covenant on the land which precludes the extension of the hall. This covenant has already been changed once so it is unlikely to be amended again within the lifetime of the plan’.
- The Swinford Neighbourhood Plan notes that the ‘village hall is a well-used local resource which offers a main hall, a meeting area, large store cupboard, kitchen/catering facilities and toilet facilities for all abilities.
- The Tur Langton Neighbourhood Plan states that ‘although remaining a very important feature of life in Tur Langton, the Village Hall is in need of improvement to maximise its use and to bring it up to the standards required of a community facility’.

## The implications of the strategic context

1.30 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 adopted 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.
- ***Neighbourhood plans:*** Many of the Neighbourhood Plans make reference to village halls and in the case of Broughton Astley, larger-scale sports facilities.