

8 HOCKEY PITCH NEEDS

8.1 Organisational context

- **England Hockey:** England Hockey is the governing body of the sport and supports the development of the game in Harborough district.
- **England Hockey-affiliated club:** There are two affiliated clubs that play in Harborough district who collectively comprise six men's teams, five women's teams, five junior boy's teams and five junior girl's teams, plus three clubs from neighbouring areas that use pitches in the district.

8.2 Strategic context

8.2.1 National hockey strategy

England Hockey's strategic plan 2017 - 2027 '*A Nation Where Hockey Matters*' (2017) contains the following priorities of relevance to Harborough district:

The vision is for England to be a 'Nation Where Hockey Matters'.

Adults: The number playing regularly in the club network will be increased by:

- Working with universities, schools and colleges to deliver quality playing experiences and clear pathways to club hockey.
- Working with regional and local leagues and affiliated clubs, to deliver the highest quality playing experience and appropriate competition frameworks.
- Developing more opportunities for over 40s to play hockey.
- Delivering a quality programme of competitions that meet the needs of players and clubs.

Young people: The number playing hockey in schools and clubs will be increased by:

- Developing more relationships between clubs and primary and secondary schools.
- Working with clubs to increase the number of junior hockey sessions being provided.
- Delivering a quality programme of competitions that meet the needs of players, schools and clubs.
- Developing an ability-based pathway for children aged 5-12 for adoption in clubs, schools and youth organisations.

Informal hockey: The numbers of people playing informal hockey will be increased by:

- Setting up opportunities to play Quicksticks and Hockey Heroes in community sites.
- Increasing the opportunities to play Rush Hockey at schools, colleges, universities, clubs and community sites.
- Increasing the opportunity for women to take part in Back to Hockey sessions at clubs and community sites.

8.2.2 Hockey facilities strategy

England Hockey's '*Facilities Strategy*' (2016) contains the following key elements:

Vision: For every hockey club in England to have appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players.

Mission: 'More, Better, Happier Players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities'. The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

- **Protect - To conserve the existing hockey provision:** There are currently over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities.) The current provision must be retained where appropriate, to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country.
- **Improve - To improve the existing facilities stock (physically and administratively):** The current facilities stock is ageing and there needs to be strategic investment into refurbishing the pitches and ancillary facilities. There needs to more support for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers and education around owning an asset.
- **Develop - To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain:** The research has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable Hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site.

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8.2.3 Neighbouring local authorities

Playing pitch strategies in neighbouring districts identify cross-boundary issues:

Rugby

The '*Rugby Playing Pitch Strategy*' (2013) identifies that Rugby is a major centre for hockey and it is likely that the very large Rugby and East Warwickshire HC will be drawing members from the West sub-area of Harborough district.

Blaby

The '*Blaby Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment*' (2020) identifies that 'there is no identified demand for formal community hockey in the district'.

Oadby and Wigston:

The '*Oadby and Wigston Playing Pitch Strategy*' (2018) identifies that there is limited hockey played in the borough.

Leicester

The '*Leicester City Council Playing Pitch Strategy*' (2017) identifies that 'there is spare capacity for hockey on the sites in Leicester and only very limited growth is expected in the future'.

Charnwood

The '*Charnwood Playing Pitch Strategy*' (2018) identifies that there is sufficient hockey pitch capacity to meet all current and future needs to 2036.

Melton

Melton Borough Council is working on an updated Playing Pitch Strategy for the borough in 2022. The '*Melton Playing Pitch Strategy*' (2014) identifies that 'there is sufficient supply of pitches to meet all future needs'.

Rutland

Rutland County Council is working on an updated Playing Pitch Strategy for the county in 2022. The '*Rutland Sports and Recreation Strategy*' (2015) identifies that 'there is sufficient pitch space for hockey up to 2036'.

Corby

The '*Corby Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan*' (2017) identifies a 'sufficient supply of full size hockey suitable AGPs for current and future demand'.

Kettering

The '*Kettering Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy Needs Assessment Report*' (2020) identifies that 'there is enough hockey suitable AGPs to accommodate both current and future demand in Kettering. However, the poor quality of Kettering Pitch and Track AGP creates a future shortfall'.

Daventry

The '*Daventry Playing Pitch Strategy*' (2018) identifies that 'there are sufficient pitches to meet the current demand, but only a small number have long term security of use' and that 'almost all of the pitches will require re-carpeting within 5 years'.

8.2.4 Findings of the 2018 Harborough PPS

The key findings of the '*Harborough Playing Pitch Strategy*' (2018) in relation to rugby are below:

- 'The hockey clubs, particularly the larger ones, attract players from a wide area, and 20-30 minutes travel time is not unusual, particularly for the senior players at the larger clubs. Most of the Harborough area has access to a hockey club within 20 minutes travel time, either within or outside of the district'.
- 'There is one imported club, Welford HC which plays at Lutterworth College but whose members come from Daventry district'.
- 'There are only 3 sites with a total of 4 hockey pitches in Harborough, and each site has resident hockey clubs. The Leicester City HC is actively considering relocating to within Leicester City, but this is not confirmed and would be likely to be after at least 3 years'.
- 'There is no spare capacity at Leicester Grammar School (two pitches) or at Welland Park Academy, though there is some space at Lutterworth College'.
- 'The sites at Leicester Grammar and Welland Park are fully used on a Saturday and this is restricting club growth. There are high hire charges at Welland Park for hockey use, which would limit the use by the club, even if there is spare pitch capacity'.
- 'The Lutterworth Club is small and shares its pitch with Welford HC, imported from Daventry district'.
- 'None of the sites have formal long term use agreements, though Leicester Grammar operates on a lease arrangement with the resident clubs, Leicester City and Leicester Men's'.
- 'All of the surfaces are ageing and management issues are reported at both Lutterworth College and Welland Park which are impacting on the pitch quality. The pitch quality at Leicester Grammar is good, and the site is used for county hockey matches in addition to club matches and training'.
- 'The estimated additional demand arising from Harborough district by 2031, at 0.5 pitches for matches on Saturdays, may turn out to be an underestimate if the increase in the junior game is transferred into the senior game. However any growth in the sport will be dependent upon the provision of a new hockey pitch, as there is no capacity on the two main hockey sites in the district, and the Lutterworth site is both too far away and insufficiently attractive to new players to meet this new demand'.
- 'The lack of capacity is restricting the ability of the clubs to meet the current demand, and there are no other sites in the district with large size hockey surface pitches'.
- 'Leicester Ladies is exploring a new, second site in Leicester, but this is at an early stage. If the club relocated some of its use from Leicester Grammar then this may provide some spare capacity on that site to meet the new demand. However it is possible that the Leicester City HC would instead expand to operate on two sites, effectively still leaving no spare capacity on the Leicester Grammar School site'.
- 'The Market Harborough HC is at capacity on its site at Welland Park Academy, and this pitch no longer fully meets the match pitch requirements of England Hockey. Furthermore

there are some site issues which impact on the club's ability to operate. The pitch issues on this school site need to be addressed and should include a review of the hire charges for hockey, which are currently comparatively high. A formal community use agreement could potentially be linked to public investment in the pitch for re-carpeting'.

- One additional match specification hockey surface AGP is required for Harborough. The preferred option is for a hockey surface pitch to be developed at Robert Smyth Academy. If this this not possible, an alternative may be a new pitch at Farndon Fields'.
- 'The Lutterworth College hockey pitch is requires resurfacing. This should be to a hockey surface except if suitable alternative provision for the hockey clubs becomes available in close proximity to Lutterworth. In this case, with the agreement of England Hockey, the pitch could be re-carpeted to 3G football turf'.

8.2.5 Implications of the strategic context

The implications of the strategic context are as follows:

- **The 2018 PPS:** The 2018 Harborough PPS concluded that 'the lack of capacity is restricting the ability of the clubs to meet the current demand, and there are no other sites in the district with large size hockey surface pitches'.
- **Neighbouring areas:** Of the neighbouring areas, only Daventry has identified a deficiency in hockey pitch provision.

8.3 Hockey demand

8.3.1 Expressed demand

The following clubs affiliate to England Hockey. Clubs with memberships that are drawn primarily from outside the district are shown in italics, as are pitches outside the district:

Club	Home Grounds	Men's teams	Women's teams	Mixed teams	Boy's teams	Girl's teams
<i>Leicester Men's HC</i>	<i>St. Margaret's Pastures SC Leicester Grammar School</i>	6	0	1	0	0
<i>Leicester City HC</i>	<i>St. Margaret's Pastures SC Leicester Grammar School</i>	3	5	0	4	4
Market Harborough HC	Robert Smyth Academy Welland Park Academy	6	4	1	4	4
<i>Welford HC</i>	<i>Lutterworth College Naseby Playing Field</i>	0	0	2	0	0
TOTALS	-	15	9	4	8	8

8.3.2 Sub-area analysis

Teams are distributed by sub-area as follows:

Sub-area	Men's teams	Women's teams	Mixed teams	Boy's teams	Girl's teams
West	0	0	2	0	0
Middle	9	4	1	4	4
East	6	5	1	4	4
HARBOROUGH	15	9	4	8	8

8.3.3 Sub-area analysis

Team numbers in 2018, as recorded in the 'Harborough Playing Pitch Strategy' (2018) compare with the current numbers playing in the district are as follows:

Season	Men's teams	Women's teams	Boy's teams	Girl's teams
2016/17	10	12	1	3
2021/22	15	9	8	8
Change	+5	-3	+7	+5

8.3.4 Demand trends

National affiliation data for hockey club members provided by England Hockey reveals successive increases in the period since 2010 as follows:

Year	No. players	Annual % increase
2010/11	102,313	-
2011/12	106,665	4.3%
2012/13	114,642	7.5%
2013/14	113,575	-0.9%
2014/15	120,404	6.0%
2015/16	129,857	7.9%
2016/17	138,915	6.6%
2017/18	143,762	3.6%

8.3.5 Displaced demand

Displaced demand relates to play by teams from within the study area which takes place outside of the area, or vice versa. There is significant displaced demand for Hockey in Harborough district, with demand from nine teams imported from neighbouring areas and demand from two teams exported to pitches in adjacent local authorities.

8.3.6 Unmet demand

Unmet demand takes a number of forms:

- Teams may have access to a pitch for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa.
- Some pitches may be unavailable to the community.

- The poor quality and consequent limited capacity of pitches in the area and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement.

Consultation with local clubs indicated that there is some unmet demand at present. In particular, Lutterworth HC has to train on a pitch in Rugby because of heavy midweek football usage of the Lutterworth College pitch.

8.3.7 Latent demand

Whereas unmet demand is known to currently exist latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. There is no evidence of latent demand for hockey in Harborough district.

8.4 Hockey pitch supply in Harborough District

8.4.1 Quantity

This section summarises the detail of the supply of artificial turf pitches suitable for hockey (sand-dressed and sand-filled) in Harborough district.

- Water-based pitches are the preferred surface for elite-level hockey. The sports turf uses a denser pile than other surface types which, combined with the water layer, provides the truest ball roll of any artificial turf system.
- Sand-dressed artificial turf is a higher specification surface designed specifically for fast-paced hockey.
- With sand-filled pitches, the playing surface is only partially filled (usually about two-thirds of the pile height) so the game is played on the sports carpet, not the sand infill.
- Both types of sand-based pitches can also be used for football, but the rubber crumb-filled, long-pile surface of '3G' football turf pitches and/or World Rugby Regulation 22-compliant pitches are not suitable of hockey use. The peak demand period for hockey is Saturday for match play and midweek 6.00pm to 10.00pm for training.
- **Full-sized pitches with community use and used:**

Site	Address	Size	Surface	Floodlit	Built	Resurfaced
Leicester Grammar School	London Road, Great Glen LE8 9FL	110m x 65m	Water-based	Yes	2008	-
Leicester Grammar School	London Road, Great Glen LE8 9FL	110m x 65m	Sand-dressed	Yes	2008	-
Lutterworth College	Bitteswell Road, Lutterworth LE17 4EW	97m x 61m	Sand-filled	Yes	2001	2020
Robert Smyth Academy	Burnmill Road, Market Harborough LE16 7JG	97m x 61m	Sand-dressed	Yes	2021	-
Welland Park Academy	Welland Park Road, Market Harborough LE16 9DR	102m x 63m	Sand-filled	Yes	2008*	-

* Some pitch surface repairs undertaken in the summer of 2021.

- **Pitches with community access but not used for hockey:** There are no pitches with community access that are not used for hockey by external hirers.
- **Provision by sub-area:** Pitches with community use and used by sub-area are as follows:

Sub-area	Population	No. Pitches	Pitches per capita
West	28,963	1	1: 28,963

Middle	35,494	2	1: 17,747
East	28,197	2	1: 14,099
HARBOROUGH	95,537	5	1: 19,107

8.4.2 Use of hockey pitches for football

The Welland Park Academy and Lutterworth College pitches are used extensively for football training on midweek evenings, which makes them unavailable to cater for hockey.

Site	Hockey use	Hockey use (%)	Football use	Football use (%)	Unused	Unused (%)
Leicester Grammar School	14 hours	26.9%	0 hours	0.0%	38 hours	73.1%
Lutterworth College	6 hours	23.1%	15 hours	57.7%	5 hours	19.2%
Robert Smyth Academy	16 hours	50.0%	10 hours	31.2%	6 hours	18.8%
Welland Park Academy	8 hours	25.0%	12 hours	37.5%	12 hours	37.5%

The split between midweek and weekend use at each pitch is as follows:

Site	Midweek used hours	% capacity	Saturday used hours	% capacity	Sunday used hours	% capacity
Leicester Grammar School	6.0	15.0%	6.0	50.0%	2.0	16.7%
Lutterworth College	17.0	85.0%	4.0	66.7%	0.0	0.0%
Robert Smyth Academy	15.0	75.0%	6.0	100.0%	2.0*	16.7%
Welland Park Academy	14.0	70.0%	4.0	66.7%	0.0	0.0%
TOTALS	52.0	52.0%	20.0	66.7%	4.0	15.0%

* Limited Sunday usage as a condition of planning consent.

8.4.3 Quality

The qualitative analysis of pitches and related facilities in Harborough district involved a visit to all hockey pitches, to undertake the sport-specific non-technical visual inspections produced by England Hockey for Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance' (2013). The assessment generates an overall 'score' for each pitch by evaluating the condition of the playing surface, fencing, floodlighting, disability access and changing provision. The scores are as follows:

Site	Pitch	Changing
Leicester Grammar School	Good	Good
Lutterworth College	Good	Standard
Robert Smyth Academy	Good	None
Welland Park Academy	Standard	Standard

8.4.4 Pitch maintenance

All hockey pitch maintenance in the district is carried out by the pitch owners, although there is no record of the extent to which this complies in each case with best practice.

8.4.5 Ownership, management and security of access

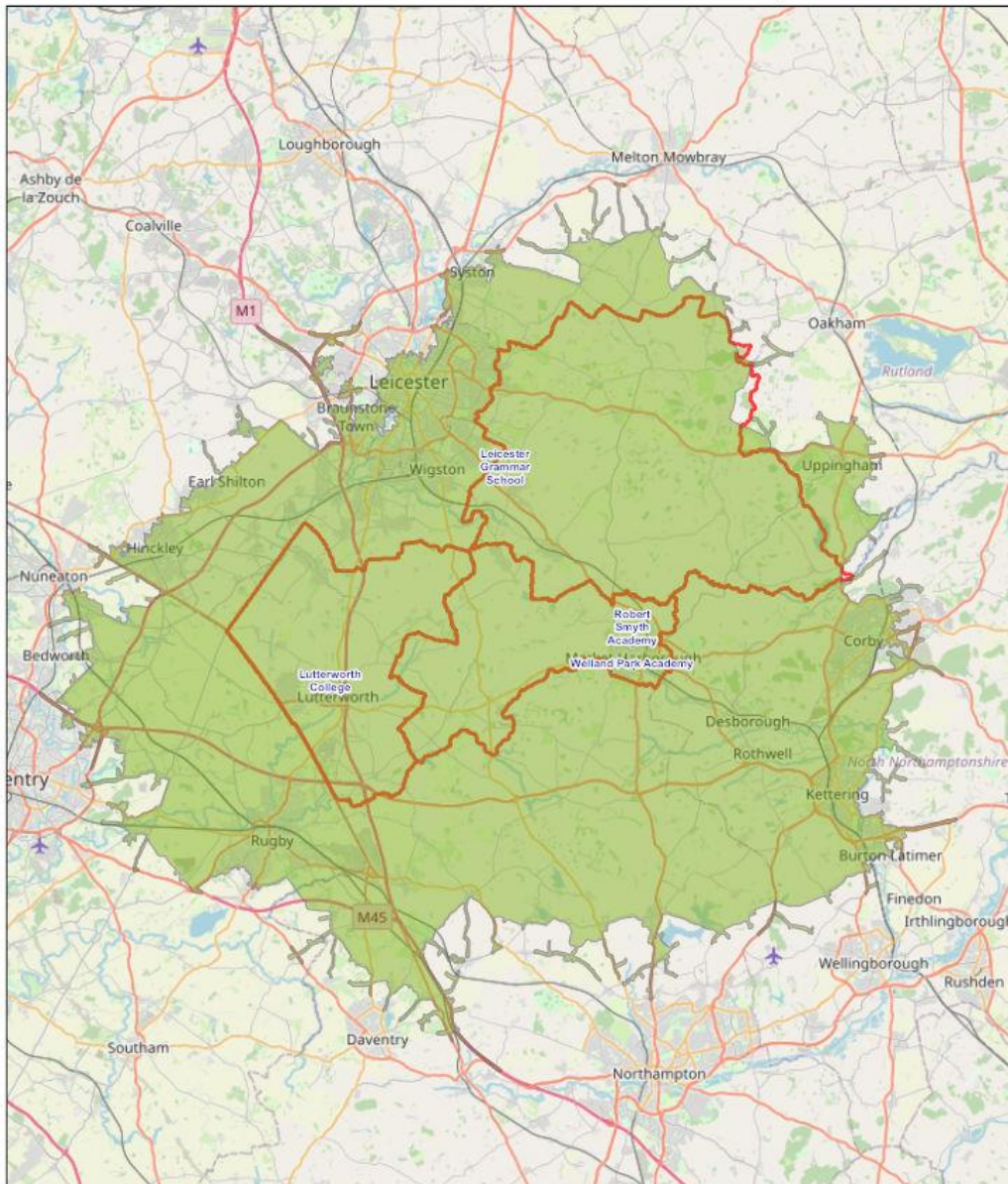
The ownership, management and security of community access of hockey pitch sites is detailed below. Security of access refers to the extent to which community use is protected.

Site	Ownership	Management	Security
Leicester Grammar School	Leicester Grammar School	Leicester Grammar School	Secured
Lutterworth College	Lutterworth College	Lutterworth College	Unsecured
Robert Smyth Academy	Robert Smyth Academy	Robert Smyth Academy	Secured
Welland Park Academy	Welland Park Academy	Welland Park Academy	Secured

8.4.6 Geographical distribution

The geographical distribution of artificial grass pitches in Harborough has been assessed by identifying catchments to illustrate local level accessibility. This is based on the results of the clubs' survey, which identifies 20-minutes travel time as the typical maximum. Based upon this, the map shows that the entire local population is within the catchment of at least one pitch.

HARBOROUGH - Artificial Grass Pitches for Hockey 20 Mins Drive



- 2/14/2022
- ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES FOR HOCKEY
- 20.0 Minutes
- ▭ West Sub Area, Middle Sub Area, East Sub Area
- ▭ Harborough District Boundary

1:557,790
0 2.75 5.5 11 mi
0 4.5 9 18 km
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8.5 The views of stakeholders on pitch supply and demand

8.5.1 England Hockey

Consultation with England Hockey raised the following issues:

- Four hockey clubs play in Harborough district, although Leicester City HC, who were formerly based exclusively at pitches at Leicester Grammar School in Great Glen, now have a lease at St. Margaret's Pasture Sports Centre in Leicester, the clubs first and second teams train and play their matches at the Great Glen pitches.
- Welford HC draws its membership from outside of Harborough district but plays its matches in Lutterworth.
- Leicester Men's Hockey Club is still based primarily at the Leicester Grammar School pitches.
- Market Harborough HC is based at the new pitch at Robert Smyth Academy and continues to use the Welland Park Academy pitch which was recently refurbished. There is extensive midweek evening football use at both sites which reduces the available time for Hockey.

8.5.2 Leicester Hockey Club

The key comments were as follows:

- 'We have a home venue at St. Margaret Pastures but make some limited use of Leicester Grammar School as it has a water-based pitch for elite teams'.
- 'When our new pitch is laid we will relocate all teams to St. Margaret Pastures in Leicester'.
- 'About 20% of our membership is drawn from Harborough district'.

8.5.3 Market Harborough Hockey Club

The key comments were as follows:

- 'Membership is increasing and also shifting from a historic high number of occasional players to more players that play 90%+ of games each week. The new facility at Robert Smyth Academy has enabled us to meet existing demand, but in the short term has meant a dip in booking at Welland Park. The next steps are to improve opening hours at Robert Smyth and support the resurfacing of a hockey approved surface at Welland Park'.
- 'For teams, we will continue to increase primarily youngsters, with the hope (and historically demonstrated trend) that they continue into adult sides, allowing those to grow. We also hope to continue working with Welland Park for the pitch to be available more often on Sundays (as we have had to cancel a number of fixtures due to staff being unable to open).
- 'Sundays in particular are a challenge and we desperately need two things. Firstly, for planning rules to be relaxed at Robert Smyth Academy to enable us to use it on Sundays and also an extra hour in the evening mid-week would make a massive difference (we could run two sessions a night, not one - plus it would open the pitch up to other non-hockey users). Secondly, for Welland Park to be willing to open on a Sunday'.

- 'We currently have no clubhouse, which means asking young players (including under 10s) to go to a local pub after matches. This has two key implications. Firstly, it's simply not appropriate, but we have no alternate (most of our leagues specify we need to offer refreshments post-match/tournament). Secondly, we have no ability to self-fund (e.g. selling coffees to parents/spectators). As a result, with facilities and other costs rising, so does the cost of participation. We have agreed in principle with Robert Smyth that we could have a permanent base there and are keen for this to be included in the strategy update'.
- 'Space is needed outside of the Robert Smyth Academy pitch for spectators. Currently they stand on grass/mud, then trample this on the pitch'.
- 'If Welland Park were to be resurfaced to a non-Hockey approved surface (e.g. '3G') we would immediately contract and no longer be able to meet existing demand'.

8.6 The implications for hockey in Harborough District

Analysis of local supply and demand for hockey pitches in Harborough district indicates the following:

- **Local clubs:** There are four clubs serving Harborough district, including three that draw the majority of their members from neighbouring areas. Despite the recent demise of Lutterworth HC, the number of teams at Clubs still playing in the district has increased since 2018 because Leicester HC, who formerly used the pitches at Leicester Grammar School in Great Glen have moved to a new pitch within Leicester.
- **Displaced demand:** There is significant displaced demand for Hockey in Harborough district, with demand from nine teams imported from neighbouring areas and demand from two teams exported to pitches in adjacent local authorities.
- **Pitch supply:** There is limited spare capacity of hockey pitches in the Saturday peak-period, although some spare capacity at other times despite midweek evening football usage. Planning consent restrictions on hours of use of floodlights at Robert Smyth Academy limits capacity, as does the difficulties of getting community access to the Welland Park pitch on Sundays due to staffing issues.
- **Clubhouse provision:** Market Harborough HC is keen to establish a clubhouse base with changing and catering facilities at Robert Smyth Academy and has had preliminary dialogue with the Academy in this regard.

8.7 Developments since the 2018 PPS

The key developments since the assessment of hockey needs in the 2018 PPS are as follows:

- Based on team numbers at the clubs still based in Harborough district, expressed demand has increased since 2016/17, although Lutterworth Hockey Club recently folded.

- Leicester City HC's move to a new pitch within the City of Leicester has freed up substantial additional capacity at the Leicester Grammar School pitches, although as the 2018 PPS concluded, the site is not geographically accessible to clubs in other parts of the district and there is substantial education use of the pitches. It is not clear whether the Leicester City HC pitch bookings will be available to other community clubs should Leicester City move all their activity to St Margaret's.
- A new artificial grass pitch for hockey has been provided at Robert Smyth Academy.

8.8 *Assessment of current needs*

To assess whether the current supply of pitches is adequate to meet existing demand an understanding of the situation at all sites available to the community needs to be developed. This is achieved by providing a brief overview for each site, which comprises:

- A comparison between the carrying capacity of a site and how much demand currently takes place there. The carrying capacity of a site is defined as the amount of play it can regularly accommodate without adversely affecting its quality and use. Demand is defined in terms of the number of 'match equivalent' sessions at each site.
- An indication of the extent to which pitches are being used during their peak periods.

The site overviews identify the extent to which pitches are:

- ***Being overplayed:*** Where use exceeds the carrying capacity.
- ***Being played to the level the site can sustain:*** Where use matches the carrying capacity.
- ***Potentially able to accommodate some additional play:*** Where use falls below the carrying capacity.

As per England Hockey guidance, pitch capacity is expressed as weekly peak time hours of availability, demand as actual hours of use and the resultant balance is expressed as hours of availability at peak times. The actual used capacity of artificial turf pitches is based upon their hours of use in the peak period supplied by the pitch operators. Clubs drawing the majority of their membership from outside the district are shown in italics:

Site	Users	Saturday capacity	Saturday demand	Saturday balance	Sunday capacity	Sunday demand	Sunday balance
Leicester Grammar School pitch 1	<i>Leicester Men's HC Leicester City HC</i>	6.0	2.0	+4.0	3.0	3.0	Balanced
Leicester Grammar School pitch 2	<i>Leicester Men's HC Leicester City HC</i>	6.0	4.0	+2.0	3.0	0.0	+3.0
Lutterworth College	<i>Welford HC</i>	4.0	4.0	Balanced	3.0	3.0	Balanced
Robert Smyth Academy	Market Harborough HC	6.0	6.0	Balanced	0.0	0.0	Balanced
Welland Park Academy	Market Harborough HC	6.0	4.0	+2.0	4.0	3.0	+1.0
TOTALS	-	28.0	20.0	+8.0	13.0	9.0	+4.0

The assessment shows that:

- There is some limited spare capacity at three sites, although the Leicester Grammar School pitches are too distant from the south of the district to accommodate additional demand from other clubs.
- There is 37 hours of pitch use per week by football teams.

8.9 Assessment of future needs

8.9.1 Population growth

The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 104,839 by 2031, an increase of 9,302 (or 9.7%). Comparison of the projections for 2020 and 2031 shows that the percentage of people aged under 50 falls from 55.6% to 53.2%, with proportionate population increases amongst the over 50s.

8.9.2 Potential changes in demand

Market Harborough HC has identified a need for an additional 7 hours of pitch time per week to meet unmet needs.

8.9.3 Site-specific pressures

There is 37 hours of pitch use per week by football teams which displaces some hockey demand.

8.9.4 Potential changes in supply

The Welland Park Academy pitch needs resurfacing and it is likely that it will be converted to a '3G' football Turf pitch and therefore lost to hockey use.

8.9.5 Existing spare capacity

There is a no effective spare capacity during the Saturday peak period.

8.9.6 Future hockey pitch needs

Future hockey pitch needs are modelled below using 'Team Generation Rates', which identify how many people in a specified age group in the district are required to generate one team. These are then applied to projected changes in population to identify the likely number of future teams.

Team type	Age range	Current population	Current teams	TGR	Population 2031	Teams 2031	Extra teams
Adult male hockey	18-45	13,665	6	1: 2,278	14,996	7	+1
Adult female hockey	18-45	14,063	5	1: 2,813	15,278	6	+1
Boys junior hockey	8-17	6,062	5	1: 1,212	6,195	5	0
Girls junior hockey	8-17	6,264	5	1: 1,253	6,290	5	0

Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator

A supplementary way of modelling future playing pitch needs is Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator. The model applies Team Generation Rates to the projected population increases to estimate the additional pitch needs arising and in addition generates capital and revenue cost estimates for providing the extra pitches. The model needs to be applied alongside an assessment of the various options for meeting unmet demand but provides helpful context for the site-specific supply-demand assessment and the TGR calculations above. The results of applying the Calculator for hockey needs arising from major planned developments in Harborough are set out below.

Development	Number of dwellings	Population	Number of pitches	Changing rooms	Capital costs (£)	Annual costs (£)
East of Lutterworth Strategic Development Area	1,260	2,772	0.04	0.08	£48,678	£1,066
Overstone Park, Market Harborough	600	1,320	0.02	0.04	£23,179	£508
East of Blackberry Grange, Market Harborough	350	770	0.01	0.02	£13,521	£296
Arnesby Road, Fleckney	130	286	0.00	0.00	£5,021	£110
Burnmill Farm, Market Harborough	128	282	0.00	0.00	£4,952	£108
Scraftoft North Strategic Development Area	1,200	2,640	0.04	0.08	£46,359	£1,015
TOTALS	3,668	8,070	0.11	0.22	£141,440	£3,103

8.10 Key findings and issues

8.10.1 What are the main characteristics of current supply and demand?

- **Local clubs:** There are four clubs serving Harborough district, including three that draw the majority of their members from neighbouring areas. Despite the recent demise of Lutterworth HC the number of teams at clubs still playing in the district has increased since 2018 because Leicester HC, who formerly used the pitches at Leicester Grammar School in Great Glen have moved lower teams to a new pitch within Leicester.
- **Displaced demand:** There is significant displaced demand for Hockey in Harborough district, with demand from nine teams imported from neighbouring areas and demand from two teams exported to pitches in adjacent local authorities.
- **Pitch supply:** There is limited spare capacity of hockey pitches in the Saturday peak-period, although some spare capacity at other times despite midweek evening football usage. Planning consent restrictions on hours of use of floodlights at Robert Smyth Academy limits capacity, as does the difficulties of getting community access to the Welland Park pitch on Sundays due to staffing issues. The Welland Park pitch is likely to be resurfaced as a GEN2 pitch, which will cater for hockey and football needs.
- **Clubhouse provision:** Market Harborough HC is keen to establish a clubhouse base with changing and catering facilities at Robert Smyth Academy and has had preliminary dialogue with the Academy in this regard.

8.10.2 Is there enough accessible and secured community use to meet current demand? **YES**

There is some limited spare capacity at three sites, although the Leicester Grammar School pitches are too distant from the south of the district to accommodate additional demand from clubs from there. It is not certain if the Leicester Grammar School pitch will be available to other clubs if Leicester City HC move all activity off the site.

8.10.3 Is the accessible provision of suitable quality and properly maintained? **YES**

Some pitch surface repairs were undertaken at Welland Park Academy in the summer of 2021.

8.10.4 What are the main characteristics of future supply and demand?

- **Population growth:** The ONS 2018 sub-national population projections forecast a population of 104,839 by 2031, an increase of 9,302 (or 9.7%). Comparison of the projections for 2020 and 2031 shows that the percentage of people aged under 50 falls from 55.6% to 53.2%, with proportionate population increases amongst the over 50s.
- **Changes in demand:** Market Harborough HC has identified a need for an additional 7 hours of pitch time per week to meet unmet needs.

- **Changes in supply:** The Welland Park Academy pitch needs resurfacing and it is likely that it will be converted to a 'GEN2 pitch, which will cater for hockey and football needs.
- **Existing spare capacity:** There is a no effective spare capacity during the Saturday peak period.
- **Future needs:** There will be a small increase in team numbers by 2031, but this will have a negligible effect on demand for pitches.

8.10.5 Is there enough accessible and secured provision to meet future demand? **NO**

There is insufficient spare capacity at existing pitches to accommodate future demand community and community access is secured at only three sites, so continued access by hockey clubs cannot be assumed. Additional capacity could be created in three ways:

- **Secured community access:** Securing community use of the pitch at Lutterworth College via a Community Use Agreement would provide security of tenure for Welford HC.
- **Extension of floodlighting:** Extending the operational period of the floodlights at Robert Smyth Academy would expand midweek training capacity and Sunday usage and the permissibility of this in planning terms should be explored.
- **Diversion of football demand:** Providing additional '3G' football turf pitch capacity in the district would divert football demand away from hockey pitches in the critical midweek training period and provide sufficient extra capacity for extra hockey development initiatives to be developed.

8.11 Scenario testing

8.11.1 Introduction

Based upon the key findings and issues identified above, some scenarios examining the effect of securing additional pitch capacity have been rehearsed to identify the optimum approach to addressing needs.

8.11.2 Scenario 1: Extending opening at Robert Smyth Academy

- **Rationale:** As a condition of planning consent, the floodlights at the Robert Smyth Academy pitch have to be switched off by 9.00pm, reducing the peak-time capacity of the pitch. If this could be extended during the winter months to 10.00pm it would create an additional midweek 5.0 midweek match equivalent sessions.
- **Advantages:** Extending the peak time capacity at the Robert Smyth Academy pitch would provide an extra 5.0 match equivalent sessions for Market Harborough HC to extend its training sessions.
- **Disadvantages:** There are no obvious disadvantages of this scenario.

- **Conclusions:** There is merit in exploring the possibility to extend the floodlighting period at the pitch during the winter months, to meet demand from Market Harborough HC.

8.11.3 Scenario 2: Pitch re-surfacing and Sunday opening at Welland Park Academy

- **Rationale:** Ensuring that the pitch at Welland Park Academy is resurfaced in the next three years will improve its quality and safeguard future use. Extending opening hours to include Sunday mornings would enable Market Harborough HC to hold junior matches there.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - The pitch already exists and as such this represents a relatively low cost solution to maintaining pitch capacity.
 - Sunday opening would enable additional junior fixtures to be accommodated.
- **Disadvantages:** There are no obvious disadvantages of this scenario.
- **Conclusions:** It is essential that the capacity provided by the pitch is retained and enhanced.

8.11.4 Scenario 3: Converting the Welland Park Academy pitch to a '3G' surface

- **Rationale:** The pitch requires resurfacing and there is a current proposal from the Academy to convert it into a '3G' football turf pitch.
- **Advantages:** The advantage of this scenario is that there is a current shortfall of '3G' pitches in the district so this would serve football demand.
- **Disadvantages:** There disadvantages of this scenario are that:
 - There is insufficient spare capacity elsewhere in the district to accommodate demand from Market Harborough Hockey Club.
 - Although Market Harborough Hockey Club has lost four teams since 2020 it has the potential to expand again and make fuller use of the Welland Park pitch if it is retained for hockey.
 - The pitch is below regulation size for football, so could not accommodate adult competitive play.
 - The planning restrictions on hours of use would adversely affect its usage capacity for football.
 - The site is not identified in the as Harborough Local Football Facility Plan as a potential location for a '3G' football turf pitch.

- **Conclusions:** It is essential that the capacity provided by the pitch is retained for hockey and there are better options for meeting '3G' pitch needs in the district elsewhere, particularly since there are two existing full-sized '3G' pitches in Market Harborough.

8.11.5 Scenario 4: Displacing football use to '3G' football turf pitches

- **Rationale:** 37 hours per week of football training usage takes place on artificial grass pitches for hockey. If this use could be displaced to newly-provided specialist '3G' football turf pitches, it would free up significant additional capacity for hockey.
- **Advantages:** The advantages of this scenario are as follows:
 - A new '3G' pitch is currently under construction in Lutterworth, which will accommodate some displaced football demand.
 - Reprogramming football use to specialist '3G' playing surfaces would create another 37 hours per week of pitch capacity for hockey.
- **Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of this scenario are that:
 - All football use is at midweek evenings, not in the period of peak demand for hockey at the weekends. This means that the capacity in the peak periods would not be increased.
 - Although one additional '3G' football turf pitch is currently being provided in the district, this is in Lutterworth rather than Market Harborough where the main hockey demand is concentrated. It is therefore likely that much football demand for floodlit all-weather pitches will continue to be met by artificial grass pitches for hockey in the immediate future.
- **Conclusions:** Whilst displacing football use of artificial grass pitches for hockey would have benefits for the players of both sports, it would have no effect on capacity in the peak periods at weekends and could under no circumstances be achieved by converting any of the existing hockey pitches to a '3G' surface.

8.12 Policy recommendations

8.12.1 Introduction

The recommendations in relation to hockey are made in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 98, which stipulates that existing open space including playing pitches, should not be built upon unless:

- An assessment has taken place which has clearly shown the open space to be surplus to requirements, or;
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable location, or;

- The development is for alternative sport and recreation provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss.

The following recommendations are arranged under the main headings of 'protect', 'enhance' and 'provide'.

8.12.2 Protect

Recommendation 1 - Safeguarding existing provision: The Harborough PPS comprises a robust and evidence-based assessment of current and future needs for hockey in the district. The PPS has identified a need to increase local hockey pitch capacity and to this extent, it will be important for all current community used hockey pitch sites to be retained and protected. It is therefore recommended that planning policies continue to support the retention of all sites, based upon the evidence in the PPS. If proposals to redevelop hockey pitches do come forward, this will only be permissible if they are replaced and meet policy exception E4 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy. This states that 'the playing field or playing fields which would be lost as a result of the proposed development must be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development'.

Recommendation 2 - Security of tenure: The Lutterworth College pitch does not have secured community use and it is therefore recommended as a priority that external clubs' use is secured through a formal Community Use Agreement.

Recommendation 3 - Managing the football-hockey demand interface: Football clubs in the district currently use 37 hours per week of midweek artificial grass pitch time for training purposes, displacing some hockey demand. Managing this demand via co-operative working between the FA and England Hockey is key to ensuring that all existing hockey pitches are retained and that additional '3G' pitches provision is made to redeploy demand from football for floodlit training/match facilities. England Hockey will also support schools with hockey pitches with business modelling for hockey-only pitch operation.

8.12.3 Enhance

Recommendation 4 - Maintaining existing pitch capacity: The pitch at Welland Park Academy will need to be resurfaced in the next three years to ensure that it remains usable.

8.12.4 Provide

Recommendation 5 - Developer contributions and external funding: All the additional demand for hockey arising from housing development in Harborough to 2031, should be accommodated through the recommendations outlined above. It is recommended that an appropriate level of financial contributions be sought under S106 arrangements, and/or through applications for external funding to cover the capital and revenue implications of the new provision to expand capacity.

8.13 Action Plan

8.13.1 Introduction

In the context of the high-level recommendations above, the tables below set out the hockey action plan to guide the implementation of the strategy. The abbreviation stands for HDC - Harborough District Council and MHHC - Market Harborough Hockey Club. The capital cost estimates are based upon Sport England's 'Facility Costs - Second Quarter of 2021' (2021).

8.13.2 Key strategic actions

Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Securing developer contributions	Ensure that policy provision is made to secure developer contributions towards additional hockey pitch capacity and ancillary facilities.	HDC	Developers	Determined by Sport England's New Development Calculator	High
Use of hockey pitches for football training.	Investigate the potential for additional '3G' football turf pitch provision.	HDC	FA/EH	-	High
Co-operation with the FA and RFU	Dialogue between the respective governing bodies on coordinating shared artificial grass pitch needs	England Hockey	FA RFU	-	High

8.13.3 Site specific actions

Site	Issues	Action	Lead	Partners	Resources	Priority
Leicester Grammar School	No current issues.	-	-	-	-	-
Lutterworth College	No secured community use.	Negotiate Community Use Agreement	Lutterworth College	Welford HC	-	Medium
Robert Smyth Academy	No use after 9.00pm on midweek evenings	Re-negotiate planning conditions to allow use until 10.00pm	Robert Smyth Academy	HDC MHHC	-	High
Welland Park Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pitch needs resurfacing No access on Sundays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate Community Use Agreement Investigate the potential for Sunday opening 	Welland Park Academy	HDC MHHC	£100,000 for pitch resurfacing £100,000 for changing upgrade	High