

Public Document Pack



MID SUFFOLK CABINET	
DATE:	MONDAY, 5 JULY 2021 10.30 AM
VENUE:	KING EDMUND CHAMBER, ENDEAVOUR HOUSE, 8 RUSSELL ROAD, IPSWICH

Councillors
<u>Conservative and Independent Group</u> David Burn Julie Flatman Jessica Fleming Peter Gould Lavinia Hadingham Suzie Morley (Chair) Harry Richardson John Whitehead Gerard Brewster (Vice-Chair)

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AGENDA

PART 1

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC PRESENT

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- 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS**
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- 4 **TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S PETITION SCHEME**
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7 **FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST**

Please note the most up to date version can be found via the website:

[Forthcoming Decisions List » Babergh Mid Suffolk](#)

8 **MCa/21/9 LEISURE, SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES STRATEGY** 13 - 166

Cabinet Member for Health & Welbeing

9 **MCa/21/10 NEEDHAM MARKET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN** 167 - 172

Cabinet Member for Planning

10 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC (WHICH TERM INCLUDES THE PRESS)**

To consider whether, pursuant to Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public should be excluded from the meeting for the business specified below on the grounds that if the public were present during this item, it is likely that there would be the disclosure to them of exempt information as indicated against the item. The author of the report proposed to be considered in Part 2 of the Agenda is satisfied that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

11 **MCa/21/11 TO CONFIRM THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE OF THE MEETING HELD ON 07 JUNE 2021** 173 - 174

Date and Time of next meeting

Please note that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, 2 August 2021 at 10.30 am.

Webcasting/ Live Streaming

The Webcast of the meeting will be available to view on the Councils Youtube page: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSWf_0D13zmegAf5Qv_aZSg

For more information about this meeting, including access arrangements and facilities for people with disabilities, please contact the Committee Officer, Henriette Holloway on: 014490724681 or Email: Committees@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Introduction to Public Meetings

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Domestic Arrangements:

- Toilets are situated opposite the meeting room.
- Cold water is also available outside opposite the room.
- Please switch off all mobile phones or turn them to silent.

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1. Leave the building immediately via a Fire Exit and make your way to the Assembly Point (Ipswich Town Football Ground).
2. Follow the signs directing you to the Fire Exits at each end of the floor.
3. Do not enter the Atrium (Ground Floor area and walkways). If you are in the Atrium at the time of the Alarm, follow the signs to the nearest Fire Exit.
4. Use the stairs, not the lifts.
5. Do not re-enter the building until told it is safe to do so.

BMSDC COVID-19 – KING EDMUND COUNCIL CHAMBER ENDEAVOUR HOUSE

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils (BMSDC) have a duty of care to ensure the office and the space used by Members of the Public, Councillors and Staff are COVID-19 Secure and safe. But each person is responsible for their own health and safety and that of those around them.

The BMSDC space within Endeavour House has been assessed and the level of occupancy which is compatible with COVID-19 Secure guidelines reached, having regard to the requirements for social distancing and your health and safety. As a result, you will find the number of available seats available in the Council Chamber and meeting rooms much lower than previously.

You must only use seats marked for use and follow signs and instructions which are on display.

The following specific guidance must be adhered to:

Arrival at Endeavour House (EH) and movement through the building

- On arrival use the main entrance.
 - If there are other people inside signing in, wait outside until the space is free.
 - Whilst in EH you are now required to wear your face covering (unless you have an exemption) when inside in all parts of the building (including the access routes, communal areas, cloakroom facilities, etc.).
 - Use the sanitizer inside the entrance and then sign in.
 - Please take care when moving through the building to observe social distancing – remaining a minimum of 2m apart from your colleagues.
 - The floor is marked with 2m social distancing stickers and direction arrows. Please follow these to reduce the risk of contact in the walkways.
 - Do not stop and have conversations in the walkways.
 - There are restrictions in place to limit the occupancy of toilets and lifts to just one person at a time.
 - Keep personal possessions and clothing away from other people.
 - Do not share equipment including pens, staplers, etc.
- A seat is to be used by only one person per day.
 - On arrival at the desk/seat you are going to work at you must use the wipes provided to sanitize the desk, the IT equipment, the arms of the chair before you use them.
 - When you finish work repeat this wipe down before you leave.

Cleaning

- The Council Chamber and meeting rooms at Endeavour House has been deep cleaned.
- General office areas including kitchen and toilets will be cleaned daily.

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- Two metre distancing should be observed as much as possible but may always not be practical. Assemble and wait at muster points respecting social distancing while you do so.

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Health and Hygiene

- Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds especially after entering doors, using handrails, hot water dispensers, etc.
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- If you start to display symptoms you believe may be Covid 19 you must advise your manager, clear up your belongings, go home and follow normal rules of isolation and testing.
- Whilst in EH you are required to wear your face covering when inside (unless you have an exemption) in all parts of the building (including the access routes, communal areas, cloakroom facilities, etc.). Re-useable face coverings are available from the H&S Team if you require one.
- First Aiders – PPE has been added to first aid kits and should be used when administering any first aid.
- NHS COVID-19 App. You are encouraged to use the NHS C-19 App. To log your location and to monitor your potential contacts should track and trace be necessary.

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Agenda Item 3

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **MID SUFFOLK CABINET** held in the King Edmund Chamber, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich on Monday, 7 June 2021 at 09:30am.

PRESENT:

Councillor: Suzie Morley (Chair)
Gerard Brewster (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: David Burn Julie Flatman
Jessica Fleming Peter Gould
Lavinia Hadingham Harry Richardson
John Whitehead

In attendance:

Councillor(s): John Field
Sarah Mansel
Andrew Mellen
Keith Welham

Officers: Chief Executive (AC)
Strategic Director (JN)
Deputy Monitoring Officer (JR)
Assistant Director – Customer Services (SW)
Assistant Director – Economic Development and Regeneration (FD)
Assistant Director – Sustainable Communities (TB)
Professional Lead – Key Sites and Infrastructure (CT)
Governance Officer (CP)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY COUNCILLORS

There were no declarations of interest declared.

3 MCA/21/1 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 08 MARCH 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and would be signed at the next practicable opportunity.

4 TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF PETITIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S PETITION SCHEME

None received.

5 QUESTIONS BY COUNCILLORS

There were no questions from Councillors.

6 MATTERS REFERRED BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY OR JOINT AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEES

There were no matters referred.

7 FORTHCOMING DECISIONS LIST

7.1 Councillor Brewster advised that item CAB271 on the Forthcoming Decisions List, General Fund Financial Monitoring 2021/22 – Quarter 1, had the incorrect Cabinet Member noted.

7.2 The Chair confirmed that the item would be amended to read ‘Cabinet Member for Finance’.

8 MCA/21/2 QUARTER FOUR PERFORMANCE PRESENTATION

8.1 The Chair welcomed the Assistant Director for Customers Services to the meeting.

8.2 The Assistant Director for Customer Services introduced the Quarter Four Performance Presentation and provided an overview of the key performance measures to Members.

8.3 In response to a question from Councillor Field regarding the iESE award nomination for the Planning Enforcement Team, the Assistant Director for Customer Services confirmed that the submission written for the award would be shared to demonstrate why the team was recognised for their customer focus.

8.4 Following a further question from Councillor Field regarding the performance measures for customer services, the Assistant Director for Customer Services advised that although the telephone call abandonment rate and call answer times were above target for quarter 3, the average rates over the year were below target. Members were advised that call rates were higher during quarter 3 due to the issuing of Council Tax bills and rent letters in this period. The number of telephone queries were therefore significantly increased as a result.

8.5 Councillor Welham queried whether the complaints which had been received and upheld were related to particular services areas. The Assistant Director for Customer Services confirmed that these complaints were predominantly in relation to missed bin collections and housing repairs works. Members were advised that these services had been affected by Covid-19 restrictions to working practices.

- 8.6 The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, Councillor Richardson, responded to questions from Councillor Welham regarding wellbeing support for rural communities, and provided an update on the work which had taken place in the development of the Wellbeing Strategy.
- 8.7 Councillor Flatman, the Cabinet Member for Communities, responded to a question from Councillor Welham regarding the plans for the opening of Needham Lake Visitor Centre. Councillor Flatman outlined the various plans in place including guided walks activities, working with schools, and outreach amenities.
- 8.8 Councillor Brewster recognised the level of work undertaken by the Economies Team during the pandemic with regard to Government grants and thanked all officers involved in the roll out of the various grants.
- 8.9 Councillor Richardson expressed thanks to the Strategic Director, the Assistant Director for Planning for Growth, the Corporate Manager for Communities, and Councillor Flatman for their work on the Wellbeing Strategy over the last few months.
- 8.10 On behalf of the Cabinet, Councillor Morley thanked all officers for the work undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic.

9 MCA/21/3 GATEWAY TO HOMECHOICE ALLOCATIONS POLICY REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

- 9.1 The Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Hadingham, introduced the report which set out the proposed changes to the Gateway to Homechoice Allocations Policy.
- 9.2 The recommendations in the report were proposed by Councillor Hadingham and seconded by Councillor Flatman.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED:-

That the Allocations Policy amendments, as set out in Appendix A of the report be approved by Cabinet.

Reason for Decision:

- 1.1 To ensure that the Allocations policy meet legal requirements.
- 1.2 To clarify wording in the policy so that key decisions are made fairly and consistently by all Gateway Local Authorities.

10 SUFFOLK WASTE AND RECYCLING CONSISTENCY IN HOUSEHOLD AND BUSINESS RECYCLING CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Fleming, provided Members with details of the Suffolk Waste and Recycling Consistency in Household and Business Recycling Consultation, and the recommendation to assemble a cross party working group to consider the consultation.
- 10.2 Councillor Fleming proposed the recommendation. This was seconded by Councillor Whitehead.
- 10.3 In response to a question from Councillor Field, the Leader confirmed that the working group would be a joint group with Babergh District Council.
- 10.4 Councillor Mellen asked a question regarding the timescales for a response and when the working group would meet. Councillor Fleming advised that the group would be meeting as soon as possible and that a request for nominations had been sent to the political groups leaders.
- 10.5 Councillor Mansel queried the number of Councillors from Mid Suffolk District Council and Babergh District Council, as the number of political groups in each authority differs.
- 10.6 It was agreed that an additional Member from Mid Suffolk District Council would be included in the working group to ensure the same number of representatives from each authority. The cross party working group would consist of the Cabinet Member for Environment, a Cabinet Member, a Liberal Democrat Member and a Green Party Member.

By a unanimous vote

It was RESOLVED:-

That a cross party working group consisting of the Cabinet Member for Environment and a Member from each political group be constituted to consider the issues raised in the consultation document for a response to be submitted to the Assistant Director for Environment and Commercial Partnerships under her delegated powers.

Reason for Decision: To ensure that a comprehensive response is prepared before the consultation response deadline announced by the Government.

11 MCA/21/4 SPEND AGAINST THE CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY EARMARKED RESERVE

- 11.1 The Cabinet Member for Environment introduced the report which was for noting only.
- 11.2 Councillor Fleming provided details of the tree mapping work and canopy survey currently being undertaken.
- 11.3 Following a question from Councillor Mellen, Councillor Fleming confirmed that the results from the biodiversity surveys were expected in September

2021.

11.4 The report was noted.

12 MCA/21/5 CROSS STREET EYE WORKSPACE DEVELOPMENT

12.1 Councillor Gould declared a local non-pecuniary interest as a Member of Eye Town Council and advised that he would take part in the debate for the item but not the vote.

12.2 The Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, Councillor Brewster, introduced report MCA/21/5, Cross Street Eye Workspace Development.

12.3 Councillor Brewster outlined the proposed plans for the development project and moved the recommendations in the report.

12.4 Councillor Flatman seconded the recommendations and commented that the project provided a fantastic opportunity for small and start up businesses.

12.5 The Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and the Assistant Director for Economic Development and Regeneration responded to questions from Councillor Field regarding the proposed layout of the building, in particular the kitchen areas.

12.4 Following a question from Councillor Field, the Assistant Director for Economic Development and Regeneration provided an explanation of the various savings from decarbonisation activities identified by external sustainability consultants.

12.5 Members resolved to enter into closed session.

12.6 Members returned to open session in order to vote.

It was RESOLVED:-

1.1 **That the high-level business case and options appraisal attached as Appendix A of the report be fully considered.**

1.2 **That the Assistant Director for Economic Development and Regeneration be authorised to progress with the development of an optimal scheme and carry out a tender process to secure an appropriate operator for the completed building.**

1.3 **That £195,000 be authorised from the Growth and Efficiency fund for the necessary redevelopment as outlined in 1.2 above.**

Reason for Decision:

1.1 The Council has through negotiation with Suffolk County Council and Eye Town Council secured a unit in Eye town centre which can be used for

creation of new workspace which in turn will support the local community of Eye and surrounding area.

- 1.2. The Councils workspace demand study in October 2019 identified a need for more workspace including incubators and hot desk spaces across the district.
- 1.3. Refurbishing the building will create a new space for Eye Town Council in the heart of the Town Centre.
- 1.4. The planned development has already secured funding for low carbon improvements and match funding from the Suffolk Growth and Investment Fund.

13 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC (WHICH TERM INCLUDES THE PRESS)

It was RESOLVED:-

That pursuant to Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the business specified below on the grounds that if the public were present during the item, it is likely that there would be the disclosure to them of exempt information.

14 MCA/21/5 CROSS STREET EYE WORKSPACE DEVELOPMENT - PART 2

15 MCA/21/6 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - CIL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME JUNE 2021

It was RESOLVED:-

That Cabinet approved the recommendations as detailed in the report.

Reason for Decision: As detailed in the report.

16 MCA/21/7 TO CONFIRM THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 08 MARCH 2021

The business of the meeting was concluded at 11.50 am.

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Chair

Agenda Item 8

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS

TO: CABINET	REPORT NUMBER: MCa/21/9
FROM: Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing – Councillor Harry Richardson	DATE OF MEETING: 5 July 2021
OFFICER: Assistant Director for Economic Development and Regeneration - Fiona Duhamel	KEY DECISION REF NO. CAB2000

REFRESH OF THE BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK COUNCILS JOINT LEISURE, SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the updated evidence base and the refreshed Sport, Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy.
- 1.2 To understand and support the strategic shift within the refreshed document from a traditional approach to delivering 'sport' and 'leisure' to a more holistic way of encouraging 'physical activity' within our communities. This will increase opportunities to get more people more active in the districts.

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 DO NOTHING (Not Recommended) – the current strategy is in place, however, no longer fits our wider aspirations to increase participation in our communities or reflects the updated evidence base we have now developed.
- 2.2 APPROVE (Recommended) – this refresh strategy considers the new housing numbers, key actions have been delivered since the previous evidence base and reflects national emphasis on increased community physical activity. It also reflects the current known impacts of COVID 19 on our district provision.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the refreshed Sport, Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy, priority actions identified and supporting evidence base be approved.
- 3.2 That officers develop a comprehensive Action Plan for the next 3 year based on the priority actions identified in the Strategy.

REASON FOR DECISION

1. That the Councils have a clear strategy and action plan for Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity to support delivery across the Districts for the next 3 years and which reflects national and regional policies and strategies.
2. Developing an up to date Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy is a key strand of the Council emerging Wellbeing Strategy
3. To ensure the Councils have a strategy which is linked to key partner outcomes eg Clinical Commissioning Group priorities, Active Suffolk.

4. The refreshed evidence base and strategy will maximise the current assets across the district for our communities.

4. KEY INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In 2017 the current Sport, Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy was approved by the Councils. This was a robust policy position and has clear strategic priorities; these are outlined below.
- 4.1.1 Children and Young People - Increase the number and frequency of children, young people (1-18 years) and families across the district regularly taking part in traditional and non-traditional sport and physical activity.
 - 4.1.2 Older People - Increase the number and frequency of older people regularly taking part in traditional and non-traditional sport and physical activity to reduce social isolation and to improve health and wellbeing.
 - 4.1.3 Volunteers - Increase the volunteer base of sport and physical activity clubs and groups to build capacity, resilience and support growth in participation levels.
 - 4.1.4 Mental Health - Increase active participation and benefits to participants with mental health issues through sport and physical activity.
 - 4.1.5 Physical and Learning Disabilities - Improve the engagement and uptake of those with physical and learning disabilities into community and leisure facilities, ensuring that facilities are accessible, and activities are available to all.
 - 4.1.6 Sports and Leisure Infrastructure - Support the provision of sustainable community sport and leisure facilities and the spaces and infrastructure that individuals, clubs, schools and groups can access and use to take part.
- 4.2 Since the strategy was adopted there has been substantial progress in the delivery of sport and leisure facilities across the districts; £2,030,000 investment in building new swimming facilities in Hadleigh; £2,400,000 investment in an extension and refurbishment of Kingfisher leisure Centre, Sudbury which have both been completed. There has been £1,200,000 invested in gym facilities at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre, £200,000 refurbishment of Stradbroke Swimming Pool & Fitness Centre and £60,000 invested in gym facilities at Debenham Sports and Leisure Centre.
- 4.3 We have several Leisure and wellbeing schemes and programmes ranging from our active schools programme which targets inactive children through working with schools, offering a range of activities for children during school breaks and family cooking opportunities. We have fit villages, women on wheel, Great East swim, free activities in our parks, G.P. referral scheme and health walks. We have active wellbeing scheme which is aimed at 50+ who are inactive people and working with the GP surgeries. A programme of events targeting people that have dementia through range of activities.
- 4.4 In addition to infrastructure delivery there have been a number of key strategies which have been adopted or are in development which have a fundamental impact on the provision of Sport, Leisure and physical Activity in our districts.
- 4.5 The Communities Strategy was adopted in 2019 and creates conditions for communities to thrive; to allow for volunteers, community leaders and publicly funded services to work

together sustainably. This will ensure our communities remain great places to live in and work from.

- 4.6 The Well-being Strategy has been under development and the refreshed Sport, Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy is one strand of the Well-being Strategy. The Well-being Strategy sets out what we want to achieve under the priority of good wellbeing for people in our communities. This strategy is designed to ensure that the Councils adopt a wellbeing culture in everything we do; that our work is inherently about people's quality of life, sense of place and of identity.
- 4.7 There have also been several changes locally and on a national scale that the current strategy does not necessarily consider, and which will have an impact on our desire to increase participation across the districts. Locally, the level of planned areas of housing growth in both districts, the impact of this growth and the demographic towards an aging population will impact upon types of provision required and supply and demand for sport and leisure provision.
- 4.8 National and regional policies and strategies will also have an impact upon facilities and participation. Changes to participation trends in both structured and informal forms of sport, leisure and physical exercise since the publication of Public Health England's "Everybody Active, Every Day" (2014) and the Government's "Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation" (2015) are complemented by the new Sport England Strategy "Uniting the Movement".
- 4.9 There are opportunities to grow new sports and leisure facilities in partnership with National Governing Bodies of Sport and key partners (Sport England, Active Suffolk, Most Active County). as well as opportunities to enhance and increase the local, community-based activities that promote fitness, health and wellbeing. Part of this will be working with our communities to communicate that being active is not just attending an exercise class or specific sports club but can be local activities like gardening, walking with a friend.
- 4.10 The new strategy reflects the potential long-term impact and financial viability of current sport and leisure provision as a result of Covid 19 which to date has been severe. The need to help local sports clubs and groups to recover post covid will be a key part of the new action planning. Encouraging organisations and clubs to think about future sustainability, succession planning and workforce or volunteering strategies will be an important part of their future. We have also been working with both Clinical Commissioning groups that cover the districts to better understand the impact that COVID-19 and in particular long COVID is having on our residents and local communities.

SUMMARY OF THE REFRESH OF THE STRATEGY

- 4.10.1 We commissioned Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy to update the Sport, Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy, review and update evidence and audits in February 2021. There were SIX outputs we were seeking to achieve from the commission:
- 4.10.2 *To update the evidence, base for indoor sport, leisure and physical activity facilities to account for recent investment in core facilities, future population growth and the changing demographic profile of the Districts.*
- 4.10.3 *To consider changes in participation trends and a strategic shift from 'sport' and 'leisure' to 'physical activity' in a more holistic sense linked to a stronger understanding of the health and wellbeing benefits of being active.*
- 4.10.4 *To identify opportunities to support this shift through enhanced and increased opportunities to be active in local, community settings as well as core sports and leisure facilities, particularly given the rural nature of the Districts.*

- 4.10.5 *To explore the current role and future potential of community facilities in providing access to sport and physical activity opportunities*
- 4.10.6 *To understand the impact of Covid-19 on facilities, services and providers and to assess the longer-term implications of the pandemic on the sustainability of sports and leisure provision across the Districts.*
- 4.10.7 *To identify priority areas and opportunities for investment into infrastructure, services, programmes and partnerships to inform development of a 'pipeline' of projects over the next five years.*

Stakeholder Engagement

- 4.11 When we commissioned this work, we were aware that not only was the whole country still in the grip of the pandemic but also that many clubs were closed due to covid. It was therefore vital that we carried out extensive and meaningful engagement. A comprehensive programme of stakeholder and partner consultation was created and delivered.
- 4.12 This included discussions with 44 strategic stakeholders and 11 sport national governing bodies, and 254 responses to four bespoke surveys issued to Sports Clubs, Schools, Town and Parish Councils, Village Hall Committees and Voluntary Groups. Strategic stakeholders included District and County Council Officers, Leisure providers, Active Suffolk, health partners (including both CCG's) and community organisations such as Community Action Suffolk and One Life Suffolk.
- 4.13 There was an internal officer group that had representatives from across the Council to feed into the refresh of the strategy. There was also a stakeholder group which included Babergh and Mid Suffolk officers, SLC, representatives from both CCG's, Active Suffolk and Councillors to support the refresh of the strategy. In addition, we hosted two all Member workshops to review the proposed approach to the refreshed document and test draft outcomes and objectives.

Evidence base refresh

- 4.14 The audits of sport and leisure provision in the Districts have been updated and include both formal sports and leisure facilities and informal spaces and places that can accommodate physical activity including village halls, community centres and open spaces and playgrounds.
- 4.15 The audits found that 88% of parishes in Babergh (65 of 74) and 77% of parishes in Mid Suffolk (86 of 111) have at least one community building which is or could be used for formal and informal physical activity. Many village halls and community centres are well-used for group activities such as Fit Villages, yoga, fitness classes and dance but it is apparent that programming capacity is limited, and the space/functionality of these facilities does not always meet requirements of users.
- 4.16 There is a good supply of outdoor pitches and courts in Babergh but the condition of these is variable and many tennis and netball courts require resurfacing. All wards contain grass football pitches, but many are in a poor condition and there is high demand from football clubs for artificial grass pitches to accommodate all-weather match play and training.
- 4.17 Recent investment into the Councils' four core leisure facilities has significantly improved provision of public health and fitness facilities Sudbury, and the new swimming pool in Hadleigh provides high quality provision to support the growing population in this area of Babergh.

- 4.18 Updated supply and demand assessments undertaken shows a theoretical oversupply of swimming pool space in Babergh based on the estimated capacity during peak times across all of the facilities against estimated peak time demand. However, a large proportion of the existing supply of pool space is located on school sites with limited public access. Fully publicly accessible pool space is also largely dependent upon the new Hadleigh Pool and at Kingfisher LC in Sudbury.
- 4.19 There is a theoretical oversupply of swimming pool space in Mid Suffolk based on the estimated capacity during peak times across all of the facilities against estimated peak time demand. However, this includes the pool at MOD Wattisham where access is restricted to vetted clubs / community groups outside of Army use hours which will, in reality, significantly reduce its ability to meet local demand. Excluding MOD Wattisham would leave supply and demand broadly in balance but heavily reliant on the fully publicly available space provided at Mid Suffolk and Stradbroke leisure centres. The total water space also includes 3 small pools that currently only offer swimming lessons and a member only health club and spa facility which will be less accessible than a public swimming pool.
- 4.20 There is an undersupply of swimming lesson spaces in Mid Suffolk and large developments in Stowmarket, Thurston, Woolpit and surrounding area will likely place significant strain on the already stretched water space at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre.
- 4.21 The total supply of sports halls in Babergh is sufficient to meet current and future estimated demand. However, a key challenge for sports hall provision in the District is that all of these are on education sites, limiting access during the day and providing the Council with limited control in how they are managed in terms of community use. The age and condition of a number of sports halls is also an issue and the current oversupply could quickly shift to an undersupply if facilities reach the end of their economic life, are withdrawn from public use or deteriorate in quality to such extent as to significantly impact upon their ability to meet the needs of users.
- 4.22 The total supply of sports halls across Mid Suffolk is just about sufficient to meet current and future estimated demand. However, as with the pool at MOD Wattisham, access to the sports hall is heavily restricted and if removed from the assessment, leaves an undersupply of sports hall space equivalent to 4 badminton courts.
- 4.23 Sports hall provision in Mid Suffolk is also heavily reliant upon education sites (4 of the 7 identified), limiting access during the day and providing the Council with limited control in how they are managed in terms of community use. The age and condition of the only fully publicly accessible sports halls at Mid Suffolk LC and Debenham LC is also a key issue. As with Babergh, the current oversupply shown for Mid Suffolk could quickly shift to an undersupply if facilities reach the end of their economic life, deteriorate in quality or are withdrawn from public use.
- 4.24 The existing strategic priorities are weighted towards increasing participation and engagement by four identified target groups (older people, children and young people, disabled people and those experiencing mental health issues) with one additional priority focusing on enablers (volunteers) and one on the facilities and places for people to be active.
- 4.25 Whilst some people within these identified target groups will remain a priority moving forwards, these groups are currently too broadly defined and that there is an opportunity to re-frame the approach to ensure it focuses less upon a general cohort of the population and more upon the specific groups and localities that are most likely to be inactive and experience greatest health inequalities.

Summary of refreshed strategy and outcomes

- 4.26 The vision for the strategy will continue to be *“Mid Suffolk and Babergh will support, encourage and inspire their communities to be more active and achieve a better quality of life.”*
- 4.27 There is a subtle change proposed to the strategic aim which currently states *“To support and enable increased levels of sport and physical activity participation across Babergh and Mid Suffolk; to support the improvement of health and wellbeing within our communities, particularly those from disadvantaged groups”*. However, a proposed and subtle change to the Strategic Aim to replace ‘disadvantaged groups’ with *‘less active people experiencing greater health inequalities’*. This better reflects the outcome-based approach to providing support across the wider community for those who will benefit most from being more active rather than a focus on specific groups.
- 4.28 The proposed strategic outcomes reflect changes in the evidence base and future needs. The strategic outcomes fall into three distinct but interrelated ‘themes’ which form the building blocks of the updated LSPA Strategy. Active people, Active places and Spaces and Active Partnerships. There are six strategic outcomes in total:

Active People

1. Reduced levels of inactivity amongst communities and in localities experiencing greater health inequalities.
2. Increased opportunities for all residents to move more through an accessible, diverse and inclusive programme of activities.

Active places and spaces

3. Sustainable community sport, leisure and physical activity facilities that enable and support all residents to be active.
4. Green and open spaces providing formal and informal opportunities for all residents to be ‘everyday active’.

Active partnerships

5. A strong, sustainable and strategically aligned ecosystem of partnerships supporting all residents to be more active.
6. A skilled, knowledgeable and enabled workforce and volunteer base supporting communities to be more active.

- 4.29 In addition Strategic Objectives above there are six reoccurring strategic issues regarding facilities provision which impact upon the district: Insufficient local swimming lesson provision and lack of public swimming opportunities; Limited community use of school facilities and high reliance on those who do have community use arrangements; limited capacity in community buildings that do not satisfy local requirements; Limited mid-scale multi indoor provision; Delay/non delivery of Suffolk FA’s local Football Facilities plan and multiple organisations and groups working in isolation.
- 4.30 A pipeline of potential infrastructure projects has been identified which reflects the growing need to meet the future built provision across the Districts. These projects are described in Section 7.3 of the Sport, Leisure and physical activity strategy and are informed by the facility audits, supply and demand assessments, stakeholder engagement and a local understanding of the landscape of provision. They seek to address identified weaknesses or deficits in provision and increasing pressures on the capacity of existing facilities, particularly within areas of significant planned housing growth.

5. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 5.1 The Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy makes specific reference to the Corporate Plan (2019-27) specifically: Community volunteers are skilled and able; continued support for Health and Wellbeing outcomes that prevent interventions; manage our corporate assets effectively; targeted grants to support Community capacity building and outcome-based commissioning.
- 5.2 There are direct links with the Communities Strategy as it creates conditions for communities to thrive; to allow for volunteers, community leaders and publicly funded services to work together sustainably. This will ensure our communities remain great places to live in and work from. The Well-being Strategy which is designed to ensure that the Councils adopt a wellbeing culture in everything we do; that our work is inherently about people's quality of life, sense of place and of identity.
- 5.3 The economic strategy objectives to rejuvenate our vibrant market towns, have thriving, attractive, sustainable and connected communities are linked to the strategy. As there is a pipeline of activities within the strategy to improve provision and connect the communities through partnerships.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. However, the implementation of the strategy could, in the future, have significant financial implications but these will be the subject of reports for consideration by both Cabinets.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8. There are no direct legal implications associated with this report.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Corporate / Significant Business Risk No. 3c01 – Risk: The Councils are not aligned with Suffolk's health and care system plans or integrated within the multiagency locality arrangements. 3c02 – Risk: Collective accountability and responsibility for health and wellbeing outcomes across the organisation is unclear and not applied consistently.

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
If investment opportunities are not identified or identified but not implemented, then resources will not be realised to contribute to the delivery of the strategy	2	2	Prioritise the development of investment opportunities. Further detail on the future pipeline activities to ensure the investment opportunities are maximised
If assets are not maximised, then opportunities could	2	2	Further work with the assets to ensure

be missed and impact the delivery of the strategy			options have been considered. To facility linkages between assets and groups to maximise use and offer for the community
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10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 There has been an extensive consultation process undertaken in refresh of the Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy - see section above. These are identified in the appendices of the strategy and include key stakeholders, sports clubs, schools and the voluntary sector.
- 10.2 There was a comprehensive programme was created with a wide range of stakeholder engagement which included 44 strategic stakeholders and 11 sport national governing bodies, and 254 responses to four bespoke surveys issues to Sports Clubs, Schools, Town and Parish Councils, Village Hall Committees and Voluntary Groups

11. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

- 11.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report. However, a specific focus of the Councils' strategic approach is targeted at those in need. The main strategic aim references those from disadvantaged groups as do several the key priorities.
- 11.2 The broad direction of the strategy is a move towards a more community, inclusive and holistic approach A full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) will need to be carried out when further work on the identified pipeline. Attached at Appendix G

12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no direct environmental implications associated with this report. There are potential environmental issues regarding the future pipeline of actions with active travel and active play. These would be considered, and the implications assessed. Any additional built facilities would have associated environment impacts requiring assessment and mitigation.

13. APPENDICES

	Title	Location
(a)	Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy – Update 2021	Attached
(b)	Supply and Demand assessment	Attached
(c)	Stakeholder engagement	Attached
(d)	National Governing Board information	Attached
(e)	Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) initial screening	Attached

14. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Leisure Facilities Audit

Updated Play and Pitch Strategy Action Plan

The Sport, Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy - BCa/17/32.

15. REPORT AUTHORS

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Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy – Update 2021

Babergh and Mid- Suffolk District Councils

June 2021

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Executive summary

Background and Context

- 1 Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils adopted their existing Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity (LSPA) Strategy in 2017 following a comprehensive review of the leisure services, facilities and partnerships across both Districts.
- 2 The Councils articulated their vision to ***“support, encourage and inspire their communities to be more active and achieve a better quality of life”*** and a strategic aim ***“To support and enable increased levels of sport and physical activity participation across Babergh and Mid Suffolk; to support the improvement of health and wellbeing within our communities, particularly those from disadvantaged groups”***.
- 3 The Strategy established a robust policy position and a clear set of strategic priorities for how the Joint Councils would support the delivery of sport and physical activity services in the future. It set out what the Councils will continue to do, building on success of the past; what they will support and enable through new ways of working; and what they will no longer do, promoting self-reliance where appropriate.
- 4 Four years on, and in the wake of the biggest public health crisis for generations, the Councils have taken a positive and proactive step to reviewing and updating the LSPA Strategy at a time when supporting residents to be more active has never been more important. Physical activity levels have fallen during the Covid-19 pandemic and inactivity remains a ‘ticking timebomb’ in terms of the long-term public health of communities – a fundamental issue that only the public sector is likely to tackle.
- 5 Since 2017, the development of a new Joint Local Plan, the successful delivery of investment schemes across the Councils’ core leisure facilities, the changing nature of sport and leisure activities and the current and likely future impact of Covid-19 upon communities provide a strong rationale for a review and refresh of the LSPA Strategy. The review also coincides with the development of the Councils’ new Wellbeing Strategy and the two documents are fundamentally connected.
- 6 The existing Strategy is progressive and aligns strongly with wider sector thinking on the role of physical activity in a more holistic sense, way beyond traditional sport and leisure activities taking place in conventional facilities. It highlights and fully embraces a strategic shift towards supporting wider health and wellbeing outcomes across the Districts and identifies physical inactivity, particularly amongst specific groups as a key challenge for the Councils and their partners to address. The approach to this project has therefore been one of reviewing, updating and where possible, strengthening the existing LSPA Strategy rather than starting completely afresh.
- 7 Covid-19 has had a severe impact over the past 15 months on sport and leisure provision and the physical and mental health and wellbeing of communities across the UK. Babergh and Mid Suffolk have an elderly population with over 50% of the population living in rural communities. Following a year of reduced activity and limited social mobility, the prevalence of frailty and mental health conditions have escalated hugely and are a major concern for the Councils and their health and social care partners.
- 8 Being more active is widely recognised to have a powerful positive impact upon an individual’s physical and mental health and wellbeing. Many of the direct and indirect health impacts of Covid-19 can be treated, at least in part, through increased physical activity and the public leisure

sector alongside wider community groups and partners therefore have a pivotal role to play in supporting communities to recover from the pandemic.

- 9 The updated LSPA Strategy represents a critical and timely opportunity to identify new ways in which the Councils and their partners can support residents to be more active.

Key Requirements

- 10 The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy (SLC) supported the Councils previously in developing their joint strategic approach and have now been commissioned to review and update the LSPA Strategy through delivery of the following key workstreams:
- ▶ To update the evidence base for indoor sport, leisure and physical activity facilities to account for recent investment in core facilities, future population growth and the changing demographic profile of the Districts
 - ▶ To consider changes in participation trends and a strategic shift from ‘sport’ and ‘leisure’ to ‘physical activity’ in a more holistic sense linked to a stronger understanding of the health and wellbeing benefits of being active
 - ▶ To identify opportunities to support this shift through enhanced and increased opportunities to be active in local, community settings as well as core sports and leisure facilities, particularly given the rural nature of the Districts
 - ▶ To explore the current role and future potential of community facilities in providing access to sport and physical activity opportunities
 - ▶ To understand the impact of Covid-19 on facilities, services and providers and to assess the longer-term implications of the pandemic on the sustainability of sports and leisure provision across the Districts
 - ▶ To identify priority areas and opportunities for investment into infrastructure, services, programmes and partnerships to inform development of a ‘pipeline’ of projects over the next five years.

Update to the Evidence Base

- 11 Audits of sport and leisure provision in the Districts have been undertaken and include both formal sports and leisure facilities and informal spaces and places that can accommodate physical activity including village halls, community centres and open spaces and playgrounds.
- 12 The audits found that 88% of parishes in Babergh (65 of 74) and 77% of parishes in Mid Suffolk (86 of 111) have at least one community building which is or could be used for formal and informal physical activity. Many village halls and community centres are well-used for group activities such as Fit Villages, yoga, fitness classes and dance but it is apparent that programming capacity is limited and the space/functionality of these facilities does not always meet requirements of users.
- 13 There is a good supply of outdoor pitches and courts in both Babergh and Mid Suffolk but the condition of these is variable and many tennis and netball courts require resurfacing. All wards in both Districts contain grass football pitches, but many are in a poor condition and there is high demand from football clubs for artificial grass pitches to accommodate all-weather match play and training.
- 14 Recent investment into the Councils’ four core leisure facilities has significantly improved provision of public health and fitness facilities in Stowmarket and Sudbury, and the new

swimming pool in Hadleigh provides high quality provision to support the growing population in this area of Babergh.

- 15 Updated supply and demand assessments undertaken by SLC show a theoretical oversupply of swimming pool space in Babergh based on the estimated capacity during peak times across all of the facilities against estimated peak time demand. **However**, a large proportion of the existing supply of pool space (c. 800 sqm) is located on school sites (Ipswich High School and Royal Hospital School) with limited public access. Fully publicly accessible pool space is also largely dependent upon the new Hadleigh Pool and at Kingfisher LC in Sudbury which is c. 35 years old.
- 16 The total supply of sports halls in Babergh is sufficient to meet current and future estimated demand. **However**, a key challenge for sports hall provision in the District is that all of these are on education sites, limiting access during the day and providing the Council with limited control in how they are managed in terms of community use. The age and condition of a number of sports halls is also an issue and the current oversupply could quickly shift to an undersupply if facilities reach the end of their economic life, are withdrawn from public use or deteriorate in quality to such extent as to significantly impact upon their ability to meet the needs of users.
- 17 There is a theoretical oversupply of swimming pool space in Mid Suffolk based on the estimated capacity during peak times across all of the facilities against estimated peak time demand. However, this includes the pool at MOD Wattisham (325 sqm) where access is restricted to vetted clubs / community groups outside of Army use hours which will, in reality, significantly reduce its ability to meet local demand. Excluding MOD Wattisham would leave supply and demand broadly in balance but heavily reliant on the fully publicly available space provided at Mid Suffolk and Stradbroke leisure centres. The total water space also includes 3 small pools that currently only offer swimming lessons and a members only health club and spa facility which will be less accessible than a public swimming pool.
- 18 There is an undersupply of swimming lesson spaces in Mid Suffolk and large developments in Stowmarket, Thurston, Woolpit and surrounding area will likely place significant strain on the already stretched water space at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre.
- 19 The total supply of sports halls across Mid Suffolk is just about sufficient to meet current and future estimated demand. However, as with the pool at MOD Wattisham, access to the sports hall is heavily restricted and if removed from the assessment, leaves an undersupply of sports hall space equivalent to 4 badminton courts.
- 20 Sports hall provision in Mid Suffolk is also heavily reliant upon education sites (4 of the 7 identified), limiting access during the day and providing the Council with limited control in how they are managed in terms of community use. The age and condition of the only fully publicly accessible sports halls at Mid Suffolk LC and Debenham LC is also a key issue. As with Babergh, the current oversupply shown for Mid Suffolk could quickly shift to an undersupply if facilities reach the end of their economic life, deteriorate in quality or are withdrawn from public use.
- 21 The large housing developments in Capel St Mary/East Bergholt/Brantham and Great Cornard in Babergh, and Stowmarket and Thurston/Woolpit/Elmswell in Mid Suffolk are priority areas for the Councils to consider additional and improved sport and physical activity provision due to the scale of the developments and the likely pressure this will place on the capacity of existing provision.

Stakeholder Engagement

- 22 A comprehensive programme of stakeholder engagement which included discussions with 44 strategic stakeholders and 11 sport national governing bodies, and 254 responses to four bespoke surveys issues to Sports Clubs, Schools, Town and Parish Councils, Village Hall Committees and Voluntary Groups. Strategic stakeholders included District and County Council

Officers, Leisure providers, Active Suffolk, health partners (including both CCG's) and community organisations such as Community Action Suffolk and One Life Suffolk.

- 23 A number of key challenges emerged from the stakeholder engagement including the limited availability of core facilities, the challenges with accessibility given the rural nature of the Districts, exacerbated by poor public transport and the dangerous nature of roads for walking and cycling alongside the limited awareness amongst residents of local opportunities to be active.
- 24 The impact of Covid-19 on physical and mental health has been profound and it is unclear how this will influence residents' willingness and confidence to return to activity. The lockdowns and social distancing have also placed huge financial strain on the Councils and their respective leisure operator partners and the future leisure market remains uncertain.
- 25 Stakeholders identified a number of opportunities to address these challenges and support increased engagement in sport and physical activity across the districts. Common themes included more locally based provision and targeted outreach activity, better use and activation of green and open spaces and improved signposting of activities and awareness of the benefits of being 'everyday active'.
- 26 A strong, recurring theme with all stakeholders is the importance of partnership working and the opportunity to build sustainable relationships with the Councils and within communities. This will require the Councils to commit more staffing resources to help develop and sustain good working relationships, potentially through the newly structured and resourced Communities Team.

New Strategic Outcomes and Objectives

- 27 Identifying a clear set of strategic aims and aspirations is central to the development of any effective strategy. It should provide a clear line of sight or 'golden thread' which connects an overall Vision for sport and physical activity provision in the Districts right through to the delivery of specific actions on the ground.
- 28 Whilst this commission is intended as a review and refresh of the existing LSPA Strategy rather than a fundamental re-write, SLC has taken the opportunity to review the framework and strategic priorities of the existing Strategy and to explore, with the Councils, a new outcomes-based approach to the updated Strategy.
- 29 SLC has observed that the existing strategic priorities are weighted towards increasing participation and engagement by four identified target groups (older people, children and young people, disabled people and those experiencing mental health issues) with one additional priority focusing on enablers (volunteers) and one on the facilities and places for people to be active.
- 30 Whilst some people within these identified target groups will remain a priority moving forwards, SLC believe that they are currently too broadly defined and that there is an opportunity to re-frame the approach to ensure it focuses less upon a general cohort of the population and more upon the specific groups and localities that are most likely to be inactive and experience greatest health inequalities.
- 31 It is also recognised that the current target cohorts will inevitably include many people who are already active and will equally omit a large proportion of the population who do not fall within these groups but face similar challenges and barriers to being active. For example, those on low income, without access to a vehicle or from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. In short, it feels like too much of a 'broad-brush' approach to categorisation of target groups which would benefit from a more refined and insight-led focus across the wider community.

32 Discussion with the Strategy Project Group and through the Member workshops reached a consensus that the updated Strategy needs to increase activity across all ages and communities but to direct greater focus and resource to the least active and those experiencing the greatest health inequalities, irrespective of demographic groups.

33 SLC has identified an opportunity to strengthen the framework of the updated LSPA Strategy to help direct and deliver the Councils' future aspirations for leisure, sport and physical activity across the Districts. It is proposed that the updated Strategy is developed within a framework which:

- ▶ Establishes an overall **Vision** for the future of sport and physical activity in Babergh and Mid Suffolk
- ▶ Defines the required **Strategic Outcomes** or end results
- ▶ Identifies the **Strategic Objectives** that need to be achieved to help get the right results
- ▶ Develops the specific **Actions** required to meet the objectives and support delivery.

34 Through discussion with the Strategy Project Group, it is considered that both the existing Vision and Strategic Aim stand true today. They articulate the Councils' commitment to increasing activity levels as a mechanism to improve health and wellbeing and reference the need to tackle inequalities by supporting those from disadvantaged groups.

Vision:

35 *"Mid Suffolk and Babergh will support, encourage and inspire their communities to be more active and achieve a better quality of life."*

Strategic Aim:

36 *"To support and enable increased levels of sport and physical activity participation across Babergh and Mid Suffolk; to support the improvement of health and wellbeing within our communities, particularly those from disadvantaged groups"*

37 However, in line with the aforementioned rationale, SLC propose a subtle change to the Strategic Aim to replace 'disadvantaged groups' with 'less active people experiencing greater health inequalities'. This better reflects the outcome-based approach to providing support across the wider community for those who will benefit most from being more active rather than specific groups.

38 The Strategic Outcomes and supporting Strategic Objectives fall into three distinct but interrelated 'themes' which form the building blocks of the updated LSPAS Strategy:

- ▶ **Active People** – What outcomes do the Councils want to see and for whom?
- ▶ **Active Places and Spaces** – What infrastructure, places and spaces are needed to contribute to these outcomes?
- ▶ **Active Partnerships** – Who are the key partners and enablers and how should the Councils work with them to help contribute to these outcomes?

Table ES1: Strategic Outcomes and Objectives

Strategic Outcomes	Strategic Objectives
Strategic Theme: Active People	
1. Reduced levels of inactivity amongst communities and in localities experiencing greater health inequalities	Develop insight into <i>which</i> groups are less active and <i>where</i> , to ensure resource is targeted where it is most needed and will have the most impact
	Increase the number and frequency of people from identified target groups and localities taking part in regular physical activity
	Leverage external funding to support targeted interventions
2. Increased opportunities for all residents to move more through an accessible, diverse and inclusive programme of activities.	Develop a diverse and inclusive physical activity programme in collaboration with communities which is delivered in local settings and makes use of technology through an enhanced digital offer
	Raise awareness of all residents of the opportunities to be active locally and the physical and mental health benefits of being more active
	Establish effective, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of programmes and initiatives to understand what works and to inform future design and delivery
Strategic Theme: Active Places and Spaces	
3. Sustainable community sport, leisure and physical activity facilities that enable and support all residents to be active	Support the provision of sustainable indoor and outdoor facilities which are accessible to all, meet evidenced need and provide development pathways from beginners to elite level performance
	Increase locally based provision through more community use of schools, community centres, village halls and sports club facilities
	Maximise the opportunities for CIL/Section 106 to support the facility infrastructure required to meet the needs of a growing population
4. Green and open spaces providing formal and informal opportunities for all residents to be ‘everyday active’	Protect and maintain sustainable green and open spaces that provide opportunities for formal and informal outdoor sport, recreation and physical activity
	Activate green and open spaces through development of a co-ordinated programme of outreach activities and use of digital technology
	Support and promote clear, safe routes that enable confident, active travel through early intervention into the planning stages

Strategic Outcomes	Strategic Objectives
	of new development and through the Councils’ wider approach to sustainable travel Enhance opportunities for active play through playgrounds and youth provision (such as skate parks/cycle parks) and by utilising digital tools.
Strategic Theme: Active Partnerships	
5. A strong, sustainable and strategically aligned ecosystem of partnerships supporting all residents to be more active	Take a lead role in establishing a ‘whole system’ multi-agency approach to tackling inactivity Work with health partners to establish physical activity as a core prevention measure to improve local health outcomes Support schools, sports clubs, Town and Parish councils and community sector partners to maintain and develop physical activity opportunities, particularly for people from less active groups Work closely with leisure operator partners to develop and deliver a diverse and inclusive programme of activities in community settings across the Districts
6. A skilled, knowledgeable and enabled workforce and volunteer base supporting communities to be more active.	Increase the volunteer base of sport and physical activity clubs and groups to build capacity, resilience and support growth in participation levels Increase the skills and capability of sports clubs to diversify their offer and appeal to a wider audience, particularly less active groups Support the upskilling of the leisure operator workforce to deliver targeted and specialist health and wellbeing interventions and a more inclusive service Work with partners across the integrated care system to increase awareness and understanding of physical activity opportunities to ‘make every contact count’.

Making it Happen

39 Building upon the proposed Strategic Outcomes and Objectives described in Table ES1, SLC has developed a set of draft high level actions which form the next layer of the updated LSPA Strategy and seek to address three fundamental questions:

► **What?**

What high-level actions are needed to achieve the Strategic Objectives and contribute to the Strategic Outcomes?

► **How?**

How are these high-level actions going to be achieved and what are the more specific detailed actions that sit below these?

▶ **Who?**

Who will lead on the actions and what role will partners play in helping to deliver them?

- 40 The high-level actions set out in Section 7 of this report are designed to act as a starting point from which the Councils will need to review, discuss and develop further in partnership with stakeholders to ensure there is strong buy-in and ownership by those involved in delivery of the Strategy.
- 41 In addition to the high-level actions which are designed to support delivery of the Strategic Objectives of the updated LSPA Strategy, SLC has developed a pipeline of potential infrastructure projects which are designed to meet identified need for future built provision across the Districts.
- 42 These projects are described in Section 7.3 of the report and are informed by the facility audits, supply and demand assessments, stakeholder engagement and a local understanding of the landscape of provision. They seek to address identified weaknesses or deficits in provision and increasing pressures on the capacity of existing facilities, particularly within areas of significant planned housing growth.

1. Introduction

Background and approach to updating the Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils adopted their existing Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity (LSPA) Strategy in 2017 following a comprehensive review of the leisure services, facilities and partnerships across both Districts.
- 1.1.2 In 2017 the District Councils articulated their **vision** to *“support, encourage and inspire their communities to be more active and achieve a better quality of life”*.
- 1.1.3 This was accompanied by a clear **strategic aim** focused on improving health and wellbeing and targeting resources to support disadvantaged groups: *“To support and enable increased levels of sport and physical activity participation across Babergh and Mid Suffolk; to support the improvement of health and wellbeing within our communities, particularly those from disadvantaged groups”*.
- 1.1.4 The Strategy established a robust policy position and a clear set of strategic priorities for how the Joint Councils would support the delivery of sport and physical activity services in the future. It set out what the Councils will continue to do, building on success of the past; what they will support and enable through new ways of working; and what they will no longer do, promoting self-reliance where appropriate.
- 1.1.5 The Strategy was developed and adopted concurrently with a Leisure Facilities Strategy for 2017-2030 which reviewed the current state of the Councils’ public leisure facility provision, identified gaps in provision and highlighted key issues, risks and investment opportunities moving forwards.
- 1.1.6 Four years on, and in the wake of the biggest public health crisis for generations, the Councils have taken a positive and proactive step to reviewing and updating the LSPA Strategy to ensure it aligns with current strategic priorities and the future role of the Councils at a time when supporting residents to be more active has never been more important.
- 1.1.7 Since 2017, the development of a new Joint Local Plan, the successful delivery of investment schemes across the Councils’ core leisure facilities, the changing nature of sport and leisure activities and the current and likely future impact of Covid-19 upon communities provide a strong rationale for a review and refresh of the LSPA Strategy.
- 1.1.8 This report describes the updated evidence base and key themes from stakeholder engagement and sets out the proposed new strategic outcomes, objectives and high-level actions for the future delivery of leisure, sport and physical activity services across the Districts. It is not proposed to act as the public facing strategy document but seeks to provide the detailed background information to the Councils in support of the updated LSPA Strategy. It is proposed that the Councils, following review and approval of this report, develop a shortened, public facing version of the updated Strategy and work up the more detailed Action Plan with its partners.

1.2 Terms of Reference

- 1.2.1 The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy (SLC) supported the Councils previously in developing their joint strategic approach and have now been commissioned to review and update the LSPA Strategy through delivery of the following key workstreams:

- ▶ To update the evidence base for indoor sport, leisure and physical activity facilities to account for recent investment in core facilities, future population growth and the changing demographic profile of the Districts
- ▶ To consider changes in participation trends and a strategic shift from 'sport' and 'leisure' to 'physical activity' in a more holistic sense linked to a stronger understanding of the health and wellbeing benefits of being active
- ▶ To identify opportunities to support this shift through enhanced and increased opportunities to be active in local, community settings as well as core sports and leisure facilities, particularly given the rural nature of the Districts
- ▶ To explore the current role and future potential of community facilities in providing access to sport and physical activity opportunities
- ▶ To understand the impact of Covid-19 on facilities, services and providers and to assess the longer-term implications of the pandemic on the sustainability of sports and leisure provision across the Districts
- ▶ To identify priority areas and opportunities for investment into infrastructure, services, programmes and partnerships to inform development of a 'pipeline' of projects over the next five years.

1.2.2 It is recognised that the existing Strategy already aligns strongly with wider sector thinking on the role of physical activity in a more holistic sense, way beyond traditional sport and leisure activities taking place in conventional facilities. It highlights and fully embraces a strategic shift towards supporting wider health and wellbeing outcomes across the Districts and identifies physical inactivity, particularly amongst specific groups as a key challenge for the Councils and their partners to address.

1.2.3 Four years on and this position has not changed. Inactivity remains a 'ticking timebomb' in terms of the long-term public health of communities and a fundamental issue that only the public sector is likely to tackle. For this reason, the approach to this project has been to review, update and where possible, strengthen the existing LSPA Strategy rather than starting completely afresh. It should be noted that the update to the evidence base includes a high-level audit of indoor and outdoor facilities but does not constitute a full, Sport England compliant Playing Pitch Strategy or Built Sports Facility Strategy.

1.2.4 As outlined in this report, the project has involved significant engagement with a wide range of stakeholders to seek feedback on what has happened over the previous four years and understand more about the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. It has also benefitted from regular engagement with a Strategy Project Group consisting of elected Members, council officers and wider partners including Active Suffolk, Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and West Suffolk CCG.

1.3 Impact of Covid-19

1.3.1 The decision to update the LSPA Strategy has been partly driven by the challenges arising from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

1.3.2 Covid-19 has had an enormous impact on the landscape of leisure, sport and physical activity provision. The lockdown periods and ongoing social distancing restrictions has created a huge financial challenge for local authorities and their leisure operator partners and community-based sport clubs. Government support through the National Leisure Relief Fund has not been sufficient to cover the losses incurred through the periods of closure and there remains considerable uncertainty regarding the length of the recovery period and the future market for leisure centre operations.

- 1.3.3 Across the UK there is a real threat of permanent closure of leisure centres. A recent survey by the District Councils Network revealed that 1 in 3 District Councils expect to be forced to close some or all of their leisure centres within the next year¹. Establishing sustainable contractual arrangements with Abbeycroft Community Leisure in Babergh and Everyone Active in Mid Suffolk to enable the continued provision of core leisure facilities will need to be a key priority for the Councils in the updated LSPA Strategy. Equally, it will be important to explore opportunities for additional, community-based delivery of services, through strong partnership working, to facilitate activity amongst less active groups.
- 1.3.4 The health impact of the pandemic is profound. On top of the acute illness associated with severe cases of Covid-19, the impact of long Covid presents a new and unknown challenge to the public health of communities. Long Covid, symptoms of which includes breathlessness, fatigue and anxiety for over 12 weeks after first infection, has affected c.700,000 people in the UK and c.57,000 in the East of England². Clinics have been established across the country to assess needs and make referrals to aid recovery and physical activity providers have already been recognised as an important partner and referral route.
- 1.3.5 Physical deconditioning and poor mental health and wellbeing are two indirect health impacts of Covid-19, prominent across all demographics. Throughout the pandemic the occurrence of mental health disorders, frailty and other conditions associated with social isolation and sedentary behaviour has increased significantly and are a major concern for health partners across the Districts.
- 1.3.6 The delay to receiving medical treatment and undergoing elective surgery means that in some areas waiting lists have extended from 18 weeks pre-Covid to c.18-24 months. As a result, there is a large cohort of adults living in pain with their condition deteriorating as they wait for surgery. This is of particular concern in Babergh and Mid Suffolk due to the large elderly population in both Districts. Helping to prepare patients for surgery will be a key opportunity for partnership working between local NHS bodies, the Councils and their leisure partners.
- 1.3.7 Being more active is widely recognised to have a powerful positive impact upon an individual's physical and mental health and wellbeing. Many of the direct and indirect health impacts of Covid-19 can be treated, at least in part, through increased physical activity and the public leisure sector alongside wider community groups and partners therefore have a pivotal role to play in supporting communities to recover from the pandemic.
- 1.3.8 The updated LSPA Strategy therefore represents a critical and timely opportunity to identify ways in which the Councils and its partners can support residents to be more active.

1.4 The Structure of the Strategy Report

- 1.4.1 As noted above, this report is not designed to act as the public facing Strategy document but seeks to provide a suitably detailed account for Council Members and Officers of how the existing Strategy has been reviewed and updated. Following its review and subject to its approval at Full Council meetings in July 2021, it is proposed that the Councils develop a public facing version of the Strategy and develop the Action Plan with its partners.
- 1.4.2 The remaining sections of the Strategy report are structured as follows.

¹ <https://districtcouncils.info/press-releases/one-in-three-councils-expect-to-be-forced-to-close-leisure-centres-forever-new-survey/>

² Office for National Statistics – 1 April 2021

Table 1: Report Structure

Section		Key Content
2	Strategic Review	A summary of the wider local, regional and national strategic context for the updated LSPAS
3	Population Demographics and Health Statistics	A draft Vision, Strategic Outcomes and Objectives for the new Strategy.
4	Updated Evidence Base for Sport and Physical Activity Facilities	Facility audits, supply and demand assessments and future housing growth
5	Stakeholder Engagement	Key themes from engagement with strategic stakeholders, sports clubs, schools, community groups and parish and town councils.
6	Strategic Outcomes and Objectives	A new strategy framework and identified Strategic Outcomes and Objectives
7	Making it Happen	Priority actions for delivery of the updated LSPAS – services, programmes and built infrastructure

2. Strategic Review

Local, Regional and National Strategic Context

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The updated LSPA Strategy forms part of a wider strategic context and is a key component of an integrated framework of Council strategies supporting improved health and wellbeing outcomes and increased community cohesion across the Districts.
- 2.1.2 It also supports a countywide and national strategic policy to improve local health and social outcomes by tackling inactivity. Driven by a clear mandate from Government and Sport England, many local authorities and their partners are placing particular emphasis on identifying, targeting and engaging with inactive and less active groups.
- 2.1.3 This section explores the local, regional and national strategic context and drivers that inform, connect and support the Councils' delivery of leisure, sport and physical activity and the approaches that will underpin the new LSPA Strategy.

2.2 Local Strategic Context

Corporate Plan 2019-2027

- 2.2.1 The Councils' vision, as described in the jointly agreed Corporate Plan 2019-2027, is to build *"great communities with bright and healthy futures that everyone is proud to call home."* This vision is underpinned by six strategic priorities: Environment, Economy, Housing, Wellbeing, Customers and Communities.
- 2.2.2 Each of these six priorities are supported by their own strategies which define the required outcomes and each has (or will have) a delivery plan and programme board which provides a governance structure for sub-strategies and projects. The Councils aspire for all actions and investments to be outcome driven, and the programme boards will enable improved needs-based decision making with suitable performance management and evaluation processes in place.
- 2.2.3 The LSPA Strategy will be an important sub-strategy of the Councils' existing Communities Strategy and new Wellbeing Strategy. However, despite the direct association with Communities and Wellbeing, sport and physical activity has a role to play within all six core strategic priorities.

Communities Strategy 2019-2036

- 2.2.4 Three key challenges for Babergh and Mid Suffolk are identified within the Communities Strategy: an ageing population, increasing social isolation and increasing housing demand. It adopts the following approaches in seeking to tackle these issues:
- ▶ **A place-based approach** – community inspired and community led outcomes
 - ▶ **A collaborative approach** – working with communities and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to develop a more integrated, joined-up service
 - ▶ **A devolved approach** – exploring opportunities for communities to take ownership of assets and services
 - ▶ **A needs-based approach** – evidence-based and insight-led approach to addressing inequalities and focusing resources

- ▶ **A preventative approach** – directing investment towards prevention
- ▶ **An enabling approach** – empowering and enabling communities to help themselves
- ▶ **A partnership approach** – identifying and working with partners who are best placed and suitably skilled to support and deliver shared outcomes
- ▶ **An intelligence led approach** – identifying and using data to better understand the needs of communities and prioritise resources
- ▶ **An inclusive approach** – developing new ways to engage and connect with communities, providing all groups with an opportunity to be heard
- ▶ **A values-based approach** – ensuring that the Councils’ organisational values are reflected through its relationship with communities.

2.2.5 These approaches reflect the Councils’ commitment to their communities and sets out the principles for future investment and how they will work to support local people in their local environment live happier, healthier and more active lives.

Wellbeing Strategy

2.2.6 The new Wellbeing Strategy identifies five themes that are designed to address an overarching outcome for **“All residents to live happy, healthy and independent lives.”** These are:

- ▶ Place and Environment
- ▶ Mental and Physical Health
- ▶ Education and Learning
- ▶ Work and Local Economy
- ▶ People and Community.

2.2.7 The Strategy focuses on influencing those wider determinants of health which the Councils and other agencies, have some control over. It sets out a series of desired outcomes and required objectives, below which a number of tactics are outlined to inform action-planning and delivery.

2.2.8 The new Wellbeing and LSPA Strategies have been developed concurrently and are fundamentally connected. The LSPA Strategy forms a key pillar of the Mental and Physical Health theme in the Wellbeing Strategy but also has a role to play in supporting all of the other themes.

Joint Local Plan

2.2.9 The update to the LSPA strategy is partially driven by the publication of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Pre-Submission (Reg 19) Document (November 2020) which outlines the proposed planned development in the Districts up to 2037. This development plan identifies a provision of 5,075 new homes in Babergh and 8,285 new homes in Mid Suffolk, in addition to homes with outstanding planning permissions at 1st Apr 2018, 4036 in Babergh and 3831 in Mid Suffolk.

2.2.10 A windfall allowance of 500 homes in each District is also identified (windfall sites are defined as sites not specifically identified in the development plan). Data from the Office for National Statistics (2016-based population projections) identifies a projected population increase over the plan period of approximately 7,300 people in Babergh and 9,300 people in Mid Suffolk. The largest developments are identified in Sproughton, Hadleigh and Capel St. Mary in Babergh and in Stowmarket, Thurston, Elmswell and Woolpit in Mid Suffolk.

- 2.2.11 In addition to the provision outlined within the Joint Local Plan, a large mixed use strategic development site on the northern edge of Sudbury was granted planning permission in 2018. The site, known as Chilton Woods, has been acquired by Taylor Wimpey whose proposal includes 1150 new homes and a range of community facilities and green space within the parishes of Chilton, Acton, Long Melford and Sudbury.
- 2.2.12 The Joint Local Plan aspires to develop a clear vision for the towns of Hadleigh and Sudbury in Babergh and Eye, Needham Market and Stowmarket in Mid Suffolk. Vision Groups are being established for each and it will be important that the new LSPA Strategy can support these groups to ensure the provision of sport and physical activity facilities and services is sufficient to meet the needs of a growing population.

2.3 Regional Strategic Context

- 2.3.1 The new LSPA Strategy will play a critical role in supporting countywide health and wellbeing outcomes within Babergh and Mid Suffolk. It will establish and strengthen the role of the Councils in contributing to these outcomes through the delivery of sport and physical services across the Districts.
- 2.3.2 Suffolk County Council, Active Suffolk and regional health partners, such as the Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and the West Suffolk CCG provide additional strategic direction for the LSPA Strategy update. The County also benefits from a partnership of local authorities, public sector bodies, the voluntary sector and private companies in the Most Active County partnership which helps to coordinate efforts to address levels of inactivity in Suffolk

Suffolk Joint Health & Wellbeing Board – Strategy Refresh 2019-2022

- 2.3.3 The Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board is made up of partners from the Local Authorities and the CCGs. In 2019 they released an update to their Strategy.
- 2.3.4 There is strong synergy between the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Strategies and this regional Health and Wellbeing Strategy, both expressing a commitment to address inequalities, build stronger, more resilient communities and embed prevention. Collective action across a range of organisations is also one of the key principles behind the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 2.3.5 Four priorities have been identified in the updated Health and Wellbeing Strategy, all of which can be supported by the Councils' LSPA Strategy for Babergh and Mid Suffolk. Examples of identified areas of focus that the LSPA Strategy can make to these priorities is shown in italics.
- ▶ Every child in Suffolk to have the best start in life. *(Increase the number of children across the Districts who are a healthy weight)*
 - ▶ People of working age are supported to optimise their health and wellbeing. *(Prevent cardiovascular disease in Suffolk including support to be healthy at work)*
 - ▶ Older people have good quality of life. *(Reduce the impact of frailty on the lives of older people by providing opportunities to be and stay active)*
 - ▶ People in Suffolk have the opportunity to improve their mental health and wellbeing. *(Enable and support people to help themselves by building in 'everyday activity' that becomes a habit and acts as a catalyst for feeling better about themselves and the world around them).*
- 2.3.6 Additionally, the four priority cohorts within the population identified in the existing LSPA Strategy are echoed within the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, emphasising its strong alignment with the countywide context.

Active Suffolk – Strategic Vision

- 2.3.7 Active Suffolk is one of 43 Active Partnerships across England, dedicated to increasing the number of people taking part in sport and physical activity, funded primarily by Sport England and local authorities in Suffolk.
- 2.3.8 Active Suffolk has set out a Strategy Vision for 2017-2025 for how they intend to improve the health and wellbeing of residents by inspiring everyone to be more active.
- 2.3.9 Their priorities, which they will work with local authorities and other local partners to achieve, are to:
- ▶ Improve health and wellbeing by increasing participation and reducing inactivity
 - ▶ Strengthen community, social and economic wellbeing across Suffolk
 - ▶ Demonstrate leadership across the sector to build insight infrastructure and capacity.
- 2.3.10 There are strong parallels between the aims of the LSPA Strategy and Active Suffolk's own priorities who are a key partner in supporting the delivery of shared goals across the Districts.

Suffolk Sports Facility Framework – District Developments

- 2.3.11 Suffolk County Council and Active Suffolk play a key role in monitoring the planning and delivery of sports and leisure developments across the County through the Suffolk Sports Facilities Framework Strategic Group. The key purpose of the group is to ensure there is clear visibility on planned developments for East and West Suffolk, Ipswich, Babergh and Mid-Suffolk and a joined-up approach to delivery across local authority boundaries.
- 2.3.12 The group meet regularly to discuss progress on the delivery of projects, highlight any emerging plans for future developments and explore potential opportunities for cross-boundary provision through a partnership approach.
- 2.3.13 Given the proximity of Ipswich to both Babergh and Mid-Suffolk, its potential housing growth and the age and condition of Ipswich Borough Council's sports and leisure facilities, it will be important for the Councils to keep abreast of any future development plans in Ipswich. Similarly, the housing growth planned for the A14 corridor will potentially need some cross-boundary collaboration with West Suffolk District Council to ensure the sport and physical activity needs of the growing population can be met by a suitable mix and scale of facilities.

2.4 National Strategic Context

- 2.4.1 The new LSPA Strategy update is also informed by national policy developed by Public Health England and Sport England.

Public Health England Strategy 2020-2025

- 2.4.2 Tackling inequalities is a fundamental principle of the Public Health England Strategy which emphasises the importance of prevention, a place-based approach and behaviour change to achieve a healthier population, all of which are recognised within the Council's collective strategies.

Sport England – Uniting the Movement

- 2.4.3 In January 2021, Sport England launched their new 10-year strategy, ‘Uniting the Movement’. The strategy marks a shift in thinking towards a greater emphasis on health and wellbeing and tackling inequalities. Much like the Councils’ Communities and Wellbeing strategies, it aims to support people to live healthier, happier and more fulfilling lives.
- 2.4.4 Uniting the Movement highlights five big issues where Sport England see the greatest potential for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity. These are:
- ▶ Recover and Reinvent – *supporting the recovery of the sector from the impacts of Covid-19 and building towards greater inclusivity, relevance and resilience*
 - ▶ Connecting Communities – *working with communities to support the network of organisations that provide direct benefits in bringing people together to improve their physical and mental wellbeing in their place*
 - ▶ Positive Experiences for Children and Young People – *supporting positive experiences of physical activity for children and young people*
 - ▶ Connecting with Health and Wellbeing – *working collaboratively to improve sport and physical activity messaging, experiences and opportunities so that they are inclusive of all and creating meaningful partnership links with health systems*
 - ▶ Active Environments – *making the choice to be active easier by creating and supporting active spaces including dedicated facilities, community spaces and the wider built environment within a place.*
- 2.4.5 The Councils’ Communities and Wellbeing Strategies emphasise a collaborative approach to partnership working and recognise that many organisations are able to support communities and contribute to a more active place. Given the rurality of the districts, connecting communities is a critical focus for the Councils to prevent social isolation and maximise opportunities for residents to engage with group activity.
- 2.4.6 The Joint Councils have committed to an approach that extends beyond the core leisure centres and physical assets. Whilst the population recover confidence to return to indoor activities, the wider active environment is critically important to encourage people to be active in different ways. New initiatives in the Districts, such as Our Parks in partnership with the Most Active County team, are testing new ways to support residents with a place-based approach.
- 2.4.7 The wider strategic context, both on a regional and national level provides a robust and consistent framework of shared outcomes, insight and initiatives that the Councils can draw upon and align with through development of the updated LSPA Strategy.

3. Population Demographics and Health Statistics

Where are we now? A snapshot of the Districts

3.1 Population Demographics

3.1.1 Table 2 provides a snapshot of the population, demographics and access statistics within Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

Table 2: Population, Demographics and Access in Babergh and Mid Suffolk (Source: ONS, Suffolk Observatory, Joint Local Plan)

Babergh	Mid Suffolk
Babergh has a population of approximately 92,036	Mid Suffolk has a population of approximately 103,895
Both Districts have an ageing population. The proportion of the population aged 65 or over is 25% in Babergh and Mid Suffolk, compared to 18% nationally.	
There are fewer children and young people in Babergh and Mid Suffolk, 19% of the population are under 18 compared to 21% nationally.	
In Babergh 25% of the population live in Sudbury and Great Cornard.	20% of the population of Mid Suffolk live in Stowmarket.
69% of the population in Babergh live in rural areas, much higher than the national average of 18%.	In Mid Suffolk 75% of the population live in rural areas.
The Joint Local Plan identifies an additional 5075 new homes in Babergh in addition to 4036 homes with outstanding planning permissions at 1 st April 2018 and a windfall allowance of 500. ³	The Joint Local Plan identifies an additional 8285 new homes in Babergh in addition to 3831 homes with outstanding planning permissions at 1 st April 2018 and a windfall allowance of 500.
The projected population increase identified by the ONS is 7300 (+8% to 2037).	The projected population increase identified by the ONS is 9300 (+ 9% to 2037)
In both Districts approximately 98% of the population are white (85% nationally).	
Babergh has lower than average levels of deprivation. 11% of children live in low-income families (17% nationally). The parishes with the lowest income decile are in Sudbury East (ID 3), Great Cornard (ID 3) and	In Mid Suffolk 10% of children live in low-income families, compared to 17% nationally. The Income Decile (ID) is below 5 in only four parishes, all of which are in Chilton (ID 2), Combs Ford (ID 2) and St. Peters (ID 4) in Stowmarket and Needham Market (ID 4).

³ Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Pre-Submission (Reg 19) Document (November 2020) – Page 42

Babergh	Mid Suffolk
Hadleigh North (ID3), and Sproughton and Pinewood (ID 4) in the Ipswich Fringe	
A higher proportion of the population own a vehicle. In Babergh 14% of households own no vehicle (25.8% nationally) and 46% own at least 2 vehicles (32% nationally). Households without a vehicle are concentrated in towns, for example 28% households in Sudbury have no car or van.	11% of households in Mid Suffolk do not own a vehicle and 50% of households own a minimum of 2 vehicles. The greatest proportion of households without a car or van is in the built-up areas of Needham Market (20%) and Stowmarket (18%).

3.2 Population Health

3.2.1 Table 3 provides a snapshot of the population health statistics within Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

Table 3: Population Health in Babergh and Mid Suffolk (Source: ONS, Public Health England, Suffolk Observatory)

Babergh	Mid Suffolk
In both Districts the proportion of adults in good health is above average.	
The prevalence of mental health disorders is lower than average in Babergh and Mid Suffolk.	
21% of 4-5yr olds in Babergh are overweight or obese, and 30% of 10-11 yr olds. This is better than the national average of 23% and 34%, respectively.	21% of 4-5yr olds in Mid Suffolk are overweight or obese, and 28% of 10-11 yr olds.
62% of adults in Babergh are classified as overweight or obese (nationally 62%).	69% of adults in Mid Suffolk are classified as overweight or obese, significantly higher than the national average.
Life expectancy in both Districts is higher than the national average.	
The mortality rate from causes considered preventable by lifestyle factors is lower in Babergh and Mid Suffolk than the national average.	
14.3% of adults in Babergh walk and 0.4% of adults cycle for travel at least three times per week. This is significantly lower than average: nationally 23% and 3.1% of adults walk or cycle, respectively, for travel three times per week.	12.2 % of adults in Babergh walk and 1.5% of adults cycle for travel at least three times per week.
Across both Districts adults are slightly more active than average (see below).	
Children in Babergh and Mid Suffolk are considerably less active than the national average. 38% of children meet physical activity recommendations, compared to 47% nationally.	

- 3.2.2 The statistics presented in Table 3 represent data collected by Public Health England and the Office of National Statistics pre-Covid. While the up-to-date statistics are not available, it is widely acknowledged that Covid-19 has exacerbated health inequalities and worsened many wider determinants of health. Section 3.3 explores the wider impact of the coronavirus pandemic on population health.

3.3 Implications of Covid-19 on Population Health

- 3.3.1 As the pandemic has progressed, existing health issues have been exacerbated and new problems have arisen. Consultation with health partners, including Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and West Suffolk CCG, members of the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and local social prescribers has highlighted a series of concerns and priorities for the Districts.
- 3.3.2 A major concern is the general ‘deconditioning’ of the population, particularly amongst older people due to the months of lockdown and limited activity. Frailty is already a priority area for Integrated Neighbourhood Teams in Babergh and Mid Suffolk, with a high proportion of elderly residents and care homes. Increased sedentary behaviour throughout the pandemic has increased rates of frailty and reduced strength, confidence and independence.
- 3.3.3 The delay to treatment and elective surgery caused by the pandemic is a critical concern for NHS England and local providers. Elective surgery waiting lists have increased from c.18 weeks pre-Covid to c.18-24 months. As a result, there is a large proportion of the population awaiting treatment, often in considerable pain with their condition worsening as a result. Supporting these residents to re-build their strength, pre-surgery will be a key priority for health partners, and collaboration with the District Councils, their leisure operating partners and community providers will be important to support the need to help get people moving again.
- 3.3.4 In addition to limited physical movement, there has been a huge impact of restricted social mobility. The implications of Covid-19 upon mental health extends throughout the population but groups of particular concern for health partners include children and young people, the elderly and those who have been shielding.
- 3.3.5 The prevalence of long Covid is a new and relatively unknown challenge for health partners. Long Covid is defined by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) as, ‘signs and symptoms that develop during or following an infection consistent with Covid-19 which continue for more than 12 weeks and are not explained by an alternative diagnosis’. Symptoms of long Covid are wide-ranging and fluctuating, and can include breathlessness, chronic fatigue, “brain fog”, anxiety and stress⁴.
- 3.3.6 In the UK, approximately 700,000 people are experiencing sustained symptoms over 12 weeks post-infection, including c.57,000 in the East of England⁵. The uncharted nature of the virus raises serious concerns over the duration of long Covid and the long-term consequences for sufferers, for example in the UK, 59% of long Covid patients (411,000 people) have experienced symptoms for over 9 months.
- 3.3.7 Sustained symptoms of long Covid are affecting people of all ages and in all states of health. During the height of the pandemic, it was apparent that those with pre-existing health conditions were more likely to develop acute illness and require hospitalisation. In comparison, 72% of those suffering with long Covid had no pre-existing health conditions. As a result, a new cohort of healthy individuals now require significant support from the health and care system.

⁴ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/post-Covid-syndrome-long-Covid/>

⁵ Office for National Statistics – 1 April 2021

- 3.3.8 Long Covid clinics and assessment centres have been established across the UK to treat patients. The centres bring together doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists to offer both physical and psychological assessments and refer patients to appropriate treatment and rehabilitation services. For Babergh and Mid Suffolk, the Suffolk and North East Essex Long Covid Assessment Service is a virtual clinic which refers patients directly to the appropriate services or specialist clinics for their needs⁶.
- 3.3.9 In addition to specialist clinics, it has been widely recognised that physical activity and moving more is a powerful treatment route for those with less severe symptoms. For example, the Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG signpost people to One Life Health Walks, Active Suffolk Activity Finder and Keep Suffolk Moving pages.
- 3.3.10 There is a critical role for physical activity to support both those suffering directly from long Covid and those suffering indirect consequences of Covid, for example mental health disorders and frailty.
- 3.3.11 The updated LSPA Strategy, alongside the Councils’ wider Wellbeing Strategy, will therefore need to play a significant role in supporting individuals, clubs and organisations to recover from the immediate impact of Covid-19 and to create the conditions for residents to embed physical activity into their everyday lives, building resilience and improving long-term health outcomes.

3.4 Sport and Physical Activity Participation

- 3.4.1 The Sport England Active Lives Survey has provided high level estimates of population activity levels twice a year since November 2015.
- 3.4.2 The Active Lives survey groups the population into the following three levels of activity (where activity includes cycling for sport and leisure or travel, fitness activities, walking for leisure or travel, sporting activities and dance):
- ▶ Active (at least 150 minutes a week)
 - ▶ Fairly active (an average of 30-149 minutes a week)
 - ▶ Inactive (less than 30 minutes a week)
- 3.4.3 In the May 2016-2017 Active Lives Survey, 20% of the population in Babergh and 25% of the population of Mid Suffolk were deemed ‘inactive’, compared to a national average of 26%. Those considered ‘active’ formed 62% of the population in Babergh and 60% in Mid Suffolk, compared to a national average of 62% (see Table 4).

Table 4: Active Lives data for Babergh, Mid Suffolk, Suffolk and England comparing May 16/17 to May 19/20

Area:	Babergh		Mid Suffolk		Suffolk		England	
	May 16/17	May 19/20	May 16/17	May 19/20	May 16/17	May 19/20	May 16/17	May 19/20
Inactive	20.0%	20.7%	25.8%	21.5%	25.6%	23.5%	25.6%	25.5%
Fairly Active	17.7%	13.1%	13.8%	14.2%	14.7%	12.4%	12.4%	11.7%

⁶ <https://ipswichandeastsuffolkccg.nhs.uk>

Area:	Babergh		Mid Suffolk		Suffolk		England	
	Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive
Active	62.2%	66.3%	60.4%	64.4%	59.7%	64.1%	62.0%	62.8%

- 3.4.4 In the last Active Lives Survey (May 2019-2020) the proportion of inactive people in Babergh was recorded at 21% and the proportion of active people had increased to 66%. In Mid Suffolk 22% of the population are inactive and 64% are active. In both Babergh and Mid Suffolk the averages are better (lower percentage of inactive people and higher percentage of active people) than the national and Suffolk county average and the overall trend in activity levels across the Districts is a positive one.
- 3.4.5 The data implies that younger adults (16-34) in Babergh are significantly less active but older people (75+) in Babergh are more active than their counterparts in Mid Suffolk and the rest of Suffolk.
- 3.4.6 Disabled people in the districts are significantly less active than non-disabled people. In Babergh 47% of those with a disability class themselves as active, compared to 71% of people without a disability. In Mid Suffolk only 37% of those with a disability are active, compared to 70% of those who do not.
- 3.4.7 There is an Active Lives survey for Children and Young People based on activity levels during the academic year. For the academic year 2019-2020, 37.1% of children and young people in Suffolk were active, 26.0% fairly active and 36.9% inactive. This is considerably worse than the national average of 44.9% active and 31.2% inactive.
- 3.4.8 Activity levels have changed during Covid-19. The most recent Active Lives data, collected in mid-November 2020 and shown in Table 5, documents the change in activity levels during the pandemic.

Table 5: Active Lives Data for England, Suffolk, Babergh and Mid Suffolk from November 2019/20 reflecting the impact of Covid-19

Area	Active (> 150 minutes)			Fairly Active (30-150 minutes)			Inactive (< 30 minutes)		
	% of adults	Change from baseline	Change in last 12 months	% of adults	Change from baseline	Change in last 12 months	% of adults	Change from baseline	Change in last 12 months
England	61.4	-0.7%	-1.9%	11.5	-0.9%	-0.7%	27.1	+1.6%	+2.6%
Suffolk	63.2	+5.7%	+1.9%*	10.9	-4.4%	-2.2%*	26.0	-1.3%*	+0.3%*
Babergh	62.7	+7.1%*	-0.0%*	12.0	-3.5%*	-2.4%*	25.3	-3.6%*	+2.4%*
Mid Suffolk	64.2	+3.4%*	-1.2%*	13.3	-0.1%*	+2.9%*	22.6	-3.4%*	-1.7%*

*no significant change
 Baseline data established in November 2015/16

- 3.4.9 Nationally there has been a significant decrease in the proportion of active adults and a significant increase in the proportion of inactive adults within the 12 months preceding November 2020. There has been no statistically significant change to activity levels in Babergh or Mid Suffolk and in both Districts the proportion of inactive adults remains below the national average.
- 3.4.10 Sport England have identified that activity levels have reduced the most amongst younger adults (16-24) and pensioners, those from more deprived areas and within Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities. The data has highlighted that inequalities have been exacerbated with the most active individuals becoming more so and the least active individuals taking part in less physical activity than pre-Covid.

3.5 Leisure Facilities Participation Data

- 3.5.1 The Councils' leisure operators, Abbeycroft Leisure (Babergh) and Everyone Active (Mid Suffolk) have provided headline data on usage of the four core indoor sports and leisure facilities – Kingfisher Leisure Centre and Hadleigh Pool in Babergh and Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre and Stradbroke Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre.
- 3.5.2 A summary of usage data from 2017/18 to 2019/20 is provided in Table 6

Table 6: Usage Data of Core Leisure Facilities 2017/18 - 2019/20

Facility	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Variance 2017-20
Kingfisher LC	278,683	282,251	311,635	+ 11.8%
Hadleigh Pool	121,221	116,576	127,780	+5.4%
Total Babergh	399,904	398,827	439,415	+10%
Mid Suffolk LC	904,023	893,817	888,172	-1.75%
Stradbroke Pool	103,590	105,582	103,579	0%
Total Mid Suffolk	1,007,613	999,399	991,751	-1.6%

- 3.5.3 Usage levels across the Babergh facilities have increased by c. 10% over the 3-year period some of which can be explained by the success of the free swim initiative and also due to a change in management system, enabling more accurate visit data.
- 3.5.4 Usage across the Mid Suffolk facilities has remained relatively stable over the period with casual swimming dropping slightly and health and fitness increasing. The reduction in 2019/20 is likely to be a result of reduced visits in the month leading up to the first lockdown at the end of March 2020.

4. Updated Evidence Base for Sport and Physical Activity Facilities

Facility audits and supply and demand assessments on core provision linked to current and future population

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 SLC has undertaken an audit of facilities that support sport and physical activity across the Districts in order to provide the Councils with a clear and up to date position on current provision.
- 4.1.2 In addition to dedicated sports facilities, the audit includes community buildings, parks and open spaces which have the capacity to host less-traditional physical activity beyond the core built provision.
- 4.1.3 The facility audits include:
- ▶ Sports / leisure centres
 - ▶ Outdoor sports and leisure facilities (including grass pitches, artificial pitches and hard courts)
 - ▶ Community facilities (village halls, community centres and sports pavilions)
 - ▶ Parks and play areas, including the provision of multi-use games areas (MUGAs)
- 4.1.4 Previous audits provided by the Council have been used as a baseline and updated through use of Sport England's Active Places Power audit data, other desktop research and satellite imagery (Google Earth) where appropriate. The update has also been informed through consultation with National Governing Bodies, schools, sports clubs and Parish and Town councils.
- 4.1.5 The audits include information on public accessibility, identifying how many facilities per town or parish are on school sites, community sport club sites and publicly accessible land (e.g. recreation grounds).
- 4.1.6 In addition, SLC has undertaken supply and demand assessments for core sports and leisure provision (20/25m swimming pools, 3+ court sports halls and health and fitness facilities) to establish how well the current core facility provision meets identified need, both now and in the future taking account of planned housing growth.
- 4.1.7 This section provides a summary of the key outputs from the facility audits and supply and demand assessments. Copies of the full audits for both Districts are provided in Appendices 1 and 2 and more detail on the supply and demand assessments is provided in Appendix 3.

4.2 Sports and Leisure Centres including Schools with Community Use

- 4.2.1 The leisure portfolio of Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils includes four core facilities: Hadleigh Pool and Kingfisher Leisure Centre operated by Abbeycroft Leisure in Babergh; and Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre and Stradbroke Leisure Centre operated by Everyone Active in Mid Suffolk.

4.2.2 In addition to the Council owned and managed facilities there are a number of schools and commercial sport and leisure facilities in the two Districts. For the purpose of the audit and the supply and demand assessments, sport and leisure facilities are classified as those with at least one of the following:

- ▶ Health and Fitness Suite (gym)
- ▶ Sports Hall
- ▶ Swimming Pool.

Babergh

4.2.3 The audit has identified 17 sport / leisure facilities in Babergh, including 8 schools and 7 private/commercial clubs.

4.2.4 There is a variable level of community-use in schools with three of these, Hadleigh High School, East Bergholt High School and the Ormiston Academy Trust, providing community-use during weekday evenings and weekends through a management agreement with Abbeycroft Leisure. A similar arrangement with Abbeycroft Leisure for operation of Holbrook Academy was ceased during the Covid-19 pandemic and the school has changed their community-use arrangements to remove public-access sessions.

4.2.5 **All sports halls in Babergh are located on school sites and public access to them is reliant on suitable community-use agreements with those schools.**

4.2.6 Since adopting the existing LSPA strategy in 2017, Babergh District Council has invested £4.43M in its two core facilities:

- ▶ Hadleigh Pool and Fitness (£2.03M) - new 5-lane 25m pool to replace the previous pool which has been demolished and replaced with green space
- ▶ Kingfisher Leisure Centre (£2.4M) – extension of health and fitness suite from 54 to 100 stations, new exercise studios and refurbished wet and dry changing rooms.

4.2.7 There are 7 private/commercial facilities 3 of which have a health and fitness suite, and 5 have a swimming pool, for example First Strokes is a small swimming pool (18 x 7m) in Sproughton and Pinewood which hosts swimming lesson providers and is open for Pay and Play. Lett's Swim in Hadleigh is a new compact pool open for private hire and swimming lessons.

Mid Suffolk

4.2.8 The audit has identified 18 sport / leisure facilities in Mid Suffolk.

4.2.9 In addition to the Council-owned core facilities in Stowmarket and Stradbroke, Debenham Sports and Leisure Centre, which is owned and managed by Debenham Village Hall Trust, includes a 4-court sports hall and 32 station health and fitness suite.

4.2.10 There are 8 private / commercial facilities and 7 schools including Thurston Community College which is operated by Abbeycroft Leisure under a community-use management arrangement.

4.2.11 Since adopting the existing LSPA strategy in 2017, Mid Suffolk District Council has invested £1.4M in its two core facilities linked to a new management agreement with Everyone Active and a further £60K in Debenham Sports and Leisure Centre:

- ▶ Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre (£1.2M) - extension to the health and fitness suite from 60 to 100 stations and general improvements to the interior of the building

- ▶ Stradbroke Swim and Fitness Centre (£200K) – refurbishment to the interior and improved pool plant but no extension to the capacity of the facility.
- ▶ Debenham Sports and Leisure Centre (£60K) – investment in gym facilities.

4.2.12 In Mid Suffolk the private / commercial facilities are predominantly bespoke health and fitness suites, some of which have studios attached, and compact swimming facilities. There are 3 private swimming pools (all 10 x 5m) in Redlingfield, Wortham and Gosbeck which host swimming lessons.

4.3 Community Facilities

4.3.1 Community facilities are a critical part of the landscape of provision, particularly given the rural nature of the Districts and their ability to support opportunities for residents to be active locally within accessible and familiar neighbourhood-based settings.

4.3.2 Most village halls, community centres and sports pavilions across the Districts offer some form of activity including exercise and dance classes and martial arts and some halls are large enough to host badminton, for example Rattlesden Village Hall and Blackbourne Community Centre.

4.3.3 Community Centres act as a hub for wider local activities and have great potential for hosting increased levels of outreach work. Initiatives such as Active Suffolk's Fit Villages have been extremely successful in delivering local opportunities to be active in rural areas, particularly amongst older people.

4.3.4 Across the 74 towns and parishes in Babergh there are 89 village halls, community centres and sports pavilions (as shown in Table 7). This equates to 1 facility per 1000 residents. All core and hinterland villages, except Chilton (Lavenham ward) have at least one. There are 9 parishes (8 Hamlets, 1 Hinterland Village) without their own village hall but in most cases they either share or have access to a hall in a neighbouring village.

4.3.5 There are 111 towns and parishes in Mid Suffolk with 113 community buildings, equal to 1.1 facilities per 1000 residents (Table 8). However, the distribution of community facilities is uneven, and 25 parishes do not have their own village hall, including 7 Hinterland Villages.

4.4 Outdoor Sports and Physical Activity Facilities

4.4.1 The audit of outdoor sports and physical activity facilities includes:

- ▶ Football pitches (adult, youth, junior; grass and artificial grass pitches)
- ▶ Rugby Pitches
- ▶ Cricket Pitches
- ▶ Netball Courts
- ▶ Tennis Courts
- ▶ Hockey Pitches
- ▶ Multi-Use Artificial Grass Pitches
- ▶ Bowls Greens
- ▶ Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs)
- ▶ Playgrounds.

- 4.4.2 Table 7 and Table 8 provide an overview of all pitches in Babergh and Mid Suffolk, respectively, regardless of their ownership and status for community use. This provides the Council with an understanding of the total quantity of facilities that exist across the Districts. A summary of the proportion of pitches on school sites in each District is presented in Table 9 and the full audits are provided in Appendices 1 and 2.
- 4.4.3 Many parishes contain space for informal play and activity (see Appendix 1 and 2). The Council's Open Space Assessment (Ethos) provided the baseline audit of playgrounds and multi-use games areas for informal activity and was updated using desktop research and satellite imagery.

Babergh

- ▶ There are 126 football pitches in total (1.4 per 1000 residents). There are 119 grass football pitches including 61 adult, 27 youth and 31 junior pitches and 7 artificial grass pitches.
- ▶ There are 38 rugby pitches in Babergh, however these are concentrated in Hadleigh and Stour and are predominantly school pitches (61%).
- ▶ Cricket is well spread out across the District with 34 pitches across 20 of the 24 wards.
- ▶ There are 99 marked tennis courts in Babergh (1.1 per 1000 residents), many of these are joint use macadam or artificial grass pitches shared with Netball. 65% of tennis courts in Babergh are on school sites. There are 51 marked netball courts (0.6 per 1000 residents) in the District, 80% of which are on school sites. The condition of courts varies considerably across public, club, state school and private school sites.
- ▶ There are 14 bowls green with an affiliated club.

Mid Suffolk

- ▶ There are 135 football pitches in Mid Suffolk (1.3 per 1000 residents) including 130 grass pitches: 73 adult, 26 youth and 31 junior and 5 artificial grass pitches.
- ▶ There are 13 rugby pitches in Mid Suffolk located in 5 wards with 8 of these on school sites.
- ▶ There are 31 cricket pitches. Only 8 wards do not contain a cricket pitch.
- ▶ Mid Suffolk has 96 marked tennis courts (0.9 per 1000 residents) and 46 netball courts (0.4 per 1000 residents), often shared between the two sports. 44% of tennis courts and 70% of netball courts are on school sites. Many courts, especially those on a tarmac surface, require re-surfacing.
- ▶ Mid Suffolk contains 31 bowls greens, each with an affiliated club.

Table 7: Audit of Town and Parish Facilities by ward in Babergh

Ward (Babergh)	Population (ONS mid-2019)	Total Facilities (community-use and private)							Facilities per 1000 residents						
		Comm. Facilities (Indoor) ⁷	Football (Grass + AGP)	Rugby Pitches	Cricket Pitches	Tennis Courts	Netball Courts	Bowls Green	Comm. Facilities (Indoor)	Football Pitches	Rugby Pitches	Cricket Pitches	Tennis Courts	Netball Courts	Bowls Green
Assington	2589	4	2	0	1	0	0	0	1.5	0.8	0	0.4	0	0	0
Box Vale	2788	6	10	0	2	2	0	1	2.2	3.6	0	0.7	0.7	0	0.4
Brantham	2559	1	4	0	1	2	1	1	0.4	1.6	0	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.4
Brett Vale	3205	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	1.9	0.9	0	0	0	0	0
Bures St Mary & Nayland	2831	3	7	0	2	6	4	0	1.1	2.5	0	0.7	2.1	1.4	0
Capel St Mary	2880	2	7	0	0	2	0	1	0.7	2.4	0	0	0.7	0	0.3
Chadacre	6121	6	4	0	2	0	1	0	1.0	0.7	0	0.3	0	0.2	0
Copdock & Washbrook	3196	5	6	0	2	2	0	1	1.6	1.9	0	0.6	0.6	0	0.3
East Bergholt	2947	1	11	2	2	7	5	1	0.3	3.7	0.7	0.7	2.4	1.7	0.3
Ganges	2458	1	3	0	0	1	0	1	0.4	1.2	0	0	0.4	0	0.4
Great Cornard	9751	4	9	4	2	12	10	1	0.4	0.9	0.4	0.2	1.2	1.0	0.1
Hadleigh North/South	8933	6	12	10	2	7	6	1	0.7	1.3	1.1	0.2	0.8	0.7	0.1

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⁷ Community Facilities includes: Village Halls, Community Centres and Sports Pavilions

Ward (Babergh)	Population (ONS mid-2019)	Total Facilities (community-use and private)							Facilities per 1000 residents						
		Comm. Facilities (Indoor) ⁷	Football (Grass + AGP)	Rugby Pitches	Cricket Pitches	Tennis Courts	Netball Courts	Bowls Green	Comm. Facilities (Indoor)	Football Pitches	Rugby Pitches	Cricket Pitches	Tennis Courts	Netball Courts	Bowls Green
Lavenham	5154	6	4	0	1	4	0	0	1.2	0.8	0	0.2	0.8	0	0
Long Melford	5746	4	6	0	2	0	1	0	0.7	1.0	0	0.3	0	0.2	0
North West Cosford	2698	7	4	7	9	8	3	1	2.6	1.5	2.6	3.3	3.0	1.1	0.4
Orwell	2580	8	4	1	1	17	5	0	3.1	1.6	0.4	0.4	6.6	1.9	0
South East Cosford	2655	7	2	0	1	0	1	0	2.6	0.8	0	0.4	0	0.4	0
Sproughton & Pinewood	5867	2	3	0	0	3	0	1	0.3	0.5	0	0	0.5	0	0.2
Stour	3232	3	14	10	2	11	12	2	0.9	4.3	3.1	0.6	3.4	3.7	0.6
Sudbury NW/NE/SE/SW	13846	7	11	4	2	15	2	2	0.5	0.8	0.3	0.1	1.1	0.1	0.1
Babergh Total	92036	89	126	38	34	99	51	14	1.0	1.4	0.4	0.4	1.1	0.6	0.2

Table 8: Audit of Town and Parish Facilities in Mid Suffolk

Ward (Mid Suffolk)	Population (ONS mid-2019)	Total Facilities (community-use and private)							Facilities per 1000 residents						
		Comm. Facilities (Indoor) ⁸	Football (Grass + AGP)	Rugby Pitches	Cricket Pitches	Tennis Courts	Netball Courts	Bowls Green	Comm. Facilities (Indoor)	Football Pitches	Rugby Pitches	Cricket Pitches	Tennis Courts	Netball Courts	Bowls Green
Bacton	2,940	6	6	0	0	0	0	1	2.0	2.0	0	0	0	0	0.3
Battisford & Ringshall	3,912	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	1.3	0.3	0	0	0	0	0
Blakenham	3,180	4	8	0	0	2	0	1	1.3	2.5	0	0	0.6	0	0.3
Bramford	2,442	1	2	0	0	5	0	1	0.4	0.8	0	0	2.0	0	0.4
Chilton / St Peter's / Stow Thorney / Combs Ford*	21,936	3	15	4	4	17	12	2	0.1	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.5	0.1
Claydon & Barham	6,062	7	7	0	1	6	4	1	1.2	1.2	0	0.2	1.0	0.7	0.2
Debenham	3,294	4	6	1	1	5	4	2	1.2	1.8	0.3	0.3	1.5	1.2	0.6
Elmswell & Woolpit	6,349	2	7	0	3	4	0	1	0.3	1.1	0	0.5	0.6	0	0.2
Eye	3,047	4	7	0	2	3	2	1	1.3	2.3	0	0.7	1.0	0.7	0.3
Fressingfield	2,902	7	4	0	0	4	1	1	2.4	1.4	0	0	1.4	0.3	0.3

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⁸ Community Facilities includes: Village Halls, Community Centres and Sports Pavilions

*Stowmarket Wards

Ward (Mid Suffolk)	Population (ONS mid-2019)	Total Facilities (community-use and private)							Facilities per 1000 residents						
		Comm. Facilities (Indoor) ⁸	Football (Grass + AGP)	Rugby Pitches	Cricket Pitches	Tennis Courts	Netball Courts	Bowls Green	Comm. Facilities (Indoor)	Football Pitches	Rugby Pitches	Cricket Pitches	Tennis Courts	Netball Courts	Bowls Green
Gislingham	3,211	7	2	0	3	5	0	2	2.2	0.6	0	0.9	1.6	0	0.6
Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden	5,611	7	13	0	3	9	6	4	1.2	2.3	0	0.5	1.6	1.1	0.7
Hoxne & Worlingworth	2,735	7	6	0	2	3	0	2	2.6	2.2	0	0.7	1.1	0	0.7
Mendlesham	2,960	4	4	0	0	2	0	2	1.4	1.4	0	0	0.7	0	0.7
Needham Market	6,119	6	5	0	1	2	2	1	1.0	0.8	0	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.2
Onehouse	2,882	2	7	3	2	3	3	1	0.7	2.4	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.0	0.3
Palgrave	2,907	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	2.1	0.3	0	0	0	0	0
Rattlesden	3,238	6	3	0	1	0	1	0	1.9	0.9	0	0.3	0	0.3	0
Rickinghall	2,944	4	6	0	0	2	2	1	1.4	2.0	0	0	0.7	0.7	0.3
Stonham	3,031	7	3	0	1	2	0	2	2.3	1.0	0	0.3	0.7	0	0.7
Stradbroke & Laxfield	3,094	5	4	1	3	9	4	3	1.6	1.3	0.3	1.0	2.9	1.3	1.0
Thurston	5,901	4	8	4	3	12	4	1	0.7	1.4	0.7	0.5	2.0	0.7	0.2
Walsham-le-Willows	3,198	5	10	0	1	1	1	1	1.6	3.1	0	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Mid Suffolk Total	103,895	113	135	13	31	96	46	31	1.1	1.3	0.1	0.3	0.9	0.4	0.3

Table 9: Proportion of Outdoor Pitches on School Sites in Babergh and Mid Suffolk

District	Adult Football Pitches	Youth Football Pitches	Mini Football Pitches	Rugby Pitches	Cricket Pitches	Tennis Courts	Netball Courts
Babergh	25 %	37 %	42 %	61 %	35 %	65 %	80 %
Mid Suffolk	16 %	32 %	73 %	62 %	19 %	44 %	70 %

4.5 Supply and Demand Analysis

4.5.1 An updated supply and demand assessment has been undertaken to provide an indication of the balance of supply and demand for key areas of indoor sport and physical activity provision in each District.

4.5.2 It is important to note that this assessment only takes account of supply and demand within the Districts and does not take account of imported or exported demand across local authority boundaries. It will therefore be important for the Councils to keep abreast of neighbouring authorities' plans for the future development of sport, leisure and physical activity facilities and to adopt a collaborative approach to meeting current and future demand from a growing population.

4.5.3 Assessments for each of the types of provision listed below have been undertaken based on population and demographic data for each District currently (2019 ONS mid-year estimates) and in the future (2036 ONS population projections).

- ▶ Health and fitness (gyms)
- ▶ General Swimming
- ▶ Swimming Lessons
- ▶ Sports halls.

4.5.4 The assessment for health and fitness, general swimming and swimming lessons are based on SLC's latest methodologies and most up to date participation rate assumptions. The methodologies used have changed in some respects from those used in the previous Leisure Facilities Strategy work undertaken for the Councils, so the findings are not directly comparable with previous results. The main changes are summarised below:

- ▶ Health and fitness – demand levels based on updated age-based participation rates with socio-economic and ethnicity-based sensitivity factors applied.
- ▶ General swimming – demand levels based on updated participation rates with socio-economic and ethnicity-based sensitivity factors applied. The model considers demand in the peak period against capacity of existing provision in the peak period (rather than current / assumed usage levels)
- ▶ Swimming lessons – demand levels based on updated participation rates with socio-economic and ethnicity-based sensitivity factors applied.

4.5.5 An up-to-date audit of supply has also been used to inform the assessments. The key findings of the assessment in terms of the balance of supply and demand for these key types of provision are summarised in this section for each local authority area. It should be noted that these assessments exclusively consider supply and demand within each District and do not take account of imported or exported demand across the local authority boundaries.

4.5.6 Full details of the supply and demand assessment, including the mapping of facility provision, is provided in Appendix 3 and a summary of the findings for each District is provided below.

Babergh

4.5.7 Based on 2019 mid-year estimates, Babergh has a population of 92,036 people which will increase to 99,442 by 2036. The demand generated by this population, taking into account demographic factors including age, ethnicity and socio-economic status, has been compared with existing levels of supply in the district.

Table 10: Babergh Supply and Demand Assessment – Key Headlines

Provision	Supply and Demand Analysis		Comments
	2019	2036	
Health and Fitness	Undersupply of 81 stations	Undersupply of 91 stations	There are 9 facilities with community access and 331 stations in total. Facilities are concentrated in the areas with the highest population density and there is no health and fitness provision north of Sudbury.
General Swimming	Oversupply of 817 sqm	Oversupply of 815 sqm	There is a theoretical oversupply based on the estimated capacity during peak times across <u>all</u> of the facilities against estimated peak time demand. However , a large proportion of the existing supply of pool space (c. 800 sqm) is located on school sites (Ipswich High School and Royal Hospital School) with limited public access. Fully publicly accessible pool space is largely dependent upon the new Hadleigh Pool and at Kingfisher LC in Sudbury which is c. 35 years old.
Swimming Lessons	Oversupply of 790 pupils	Oversupply of 989 pupils	8 of the 9 pools identified through the supply audit offer swimming lessons as part of their programming.
Sports Halls* <i>*Size referenced using the number of</i>	Oversupply of 20 badminton courts	Oversupply of 20 badminton courts	The total supply of sports halls across the District is sufficient to meet current and future estimated demand. However , a key challenge for sports hall provision in the District is that <u>all</u> of these are on education sites, limiting access during the day and providing the Council with limited control in how they are

Provision	Supply and Demand Analysis		Comments
	2019	2036	
<i>badminton courts</i>			managed in terms of community use. The age and condition of a number of sports halls is also an issue and the current oversupply could shift to an undersupply if facilities reach the end of their economic life or deteriorate in quality to such extent as to significantly impact upon their ability to meet the needs of users.

Mid-Suffolk

4.5.8 Based on 2019 mid-year estimates, Mid Suffolk has a population of 103,895 people which will increase to 112,973 by 2036. The demand generated by this population, taking into account demographic factors including age, ethnicity and socio-economic status has been compared with existing levels of supply in the district.

Table 11: Mid Suffolk Supply and Demand Assessment - Headlines

Provision	Supply and Demand Analysis		Comments
	2019	2036	
Health and Fitness	Oversupply of 7 stations	Undersupply of 18 stations	<p>There are 11 facilities with community access and 485 stations in total which is sufficient to meet current and future demand.</p> <p>Facilities are concentrated in the areas with the highest population density, for example in Stowmarket, Thurston, Needham Market, Eye and Stradbroke.</p> <p>Note: Since undertaking the assessment, SLC has been advised that a new PureGym fitness facility is soon to open in Stowmarket. It is unclear how many stations will be provided and the facility has <u>not</u> been included in the assessment. However, it will be a significant addition to the local supply and will lead to a likely theoretical oversupply of provision.</p>
General Swimming	<p>Oversupply 350 sqm</p> <p><i>*Excluding the MOD Wattisham pool the</i></p>	<p>Oversupply 356 sqm</p> <p><i>*Excluding the MOD Wattisham pool the</i></p>	<p>As with Babergh, there is a theoretical oversupply based on the estimated capacity during peak times across <u>all</u> of the facilities against estimated peak time demand. However, this includes the pool at MOD Wattisham (325 sqm) where access is restricted to vetted clubs / community groups</p>

Provision	Supply and Demand Analysis		Comments
	2019	2036	
	<i>oversupply is reduced to 25 sqm.</i>	<i>oversupply is reduced to 31 sqm.</i>	outside of Army use hours which will, in reality, significantly reduce its impact on demand. The total water space also includes 3 small pools that currently only offer swimming lessons and a members only health club and spa facility.
Swimming Lessons	Undersupply of 429 pupils	Undersupply of 81 pupils	5 of the 7 pools identified through the supply audit offer swimming lessons as part of their programming.
Sports Halls* <i>*Size referenced using the number of badminton courts</i>	In balance, supply equals current demand <i>*Excluding the MOD Wattisham sports hall results in an undersupply of 4 courts.</i>	Undersupply of 1 badminton court, broadly in balance. <i>*Excluding the MOD Wattisham sports hall results in an undersupply of 3 courts.</i>	The total supply of sports halls across the District is just about sufficient to meet current and future estimated demand. However , as with the pool at MOD Wattisham, access to the sports hall is also restricted and it is unclear the extent to which it will be able to meet demand. As with Babergh, sports hall provision is heavily reliant upon education sites (4 of the 7 identified), limiting access during the day and providing the Council with limited control in how they are managed in terms of community use. The age and condition of the only fully publicly accessible sports halls at Mid Suffolk LC and Debenham LC is also an issue and the current oversupply could shift to an undersupply if facilities reach the end of their economic life or deteriorate in quality to such extent as to significantly impact upon their ability to meet the needs of users.

4.6 Implications of Planned Housing Growth

- 4.6.1 The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Pre-Submission (Reg 19) Document (November 2020) outlines the proposed planned housing developments up to 2037. The Joint Local Plan has planned for 9611 homes in Babergh and 12,616 homes in Mid Suffolk.
- 4.6.2 Table 12 and Table 13 provide a high-level assessment of the existing sport and physical activity facility provision within the areas in Babergh and Mid Suffolk where the largest developments are due to take place.

Table 12: Implications of housing growth in Babergh on sport and physical activity provision.

Town/Parish	No. new dwellings ⁹	Assessment
Sproughton	1514	<p>Sproughton and Pinewood Ward has limited sport and physical activity provision, especially indoor facilities with only 0.3 village halls/community centres per 1000 residents. However, Suffolk One Sports Centre (with the only 6 court Sports Hall in the Districts) is in Pinewood & there is a well-used multi-sport playing field in Sproughton village.</p> <p>The location of Sproughton, on the Ipswich Fringe, and the new development on the east of the A14 means that residents are likely to use facilities within Ipswich.</p>
Hadleigh	871	<p>The new swimming pool at Hadleigh will likely support demand from the current and future population, however access to other sport and physical activity provision is limited to school sites, for example Hadleigh High School Leisure Centre. Hadleigh Town Council are developing plans to update the facilities and pitches at Layham Road Sports Ground.</p>
Capel St Mary	792	<p>Capel St Mary has good provision of indoor community facilities and football pitches (2.4 per 1000 residents) but limited access to other outdoor sport and physical activity provision. East Bergholt Sports Centre provides evening and weekend access to the Sports Hall and Health and Fitness Suite but there is no swimming provision in the South East of the District.</p> <p>The planned development in Capel St Mary is expected to increase the population by a third and the Council should consider how the provision of sport and physical activity facilities can be increased to support the future population.</p>
Sudbury (Chilton Woods)	1,150	<p>Sudbury and Great Cornard currently has reasonably good provision of facilities with Kingfisher LC, Sudbury Sports Centre at Ormiston Academy and Great Cornard Sports Centre at Thomas Gainsborough School providing a combination of publicly accessible pool space, sports halls, health and fitness provision, outdoor pitches and artificial grass pitches.</p> <p>However, significant development is planned for the area with 1,150 new dwellings at Chilton Woods, north of Sudbury and a further 554 in Great Cornard and consideration will therefore need to be given as to how the sport and physical activity needs of this growing population are to be met.</p>
Great Cornard	554	

Table 13: Implications of housing growth in Mid Suffolk on sport and physical activity provision.

Town/Parish	No. new dwellings	Assessment
Stowmarket	1768	Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre is located in Stowmarket, however the sports hall and swimming pool at the Council’s core leisure facility are at capacity. The provision of football pitches per 1000 residents in Stowmarket is lower than the average across the District. The housing development in Stowmarket will put greater pressure on facilities which are already at limited capacity and with deteriorating conditions.
Thurston	1489	<p>Thurston has relatively good provision of outdoor sports provision, however access is limited to school sites, primarily at Thurston Sports Education Centre. There is no other sport or leisure centre in Thurston and the closest swimming pools are in Stowmarket and Bury St. Edmunds.</p> <p>The significant development in Thurston, and Woolpit and Elmswell in the neighbouring Wards, will require action from the Councils to ensure provision of facilities and space for physical activity can cater for the increased demand. This is especially true for swimming provision.</p>
Elmswell Woolpit	834 717	<p>The Elmswell and Woolpit Ward has a low provision of indoor and outdoor sport and physical activity provision. The Blackbourne Centre in Elmswell acts as a good community-based centre for local sport and physical activity but wider provision is limited. The ward only has 0.3 community indoor facilities per 1000 residents, the second lowest of all Mid Suffolk Wards.</p> <p>In addition to the concerns made above in regard to development across Thurston and Woolpit, there are concerns that access to green and open space is being reduced by new developments.</p>
Barham	615	Claydon and Barham currently have good provision of all facilities within the audit. There are 1.2 community indoor facilities, 1.2 football pitches, 1 tennis courts and 0.7 netball courts per 1000 residents. Residents of Barham are likely to use facilities in Ipswich.

4.6.3 In addition to specific town/parish needs, there are a number of additional considerations during planning process which can promote residents to be more active in less-traditional ways, for example:

- ▶ Ensuring developments provide access to green and open space which can be used for formal and informal activity.
- ▶ Proactively work with planners, Suffolk County Council and Highways to build in safe walking and cycling routes that can be used for active travel.

- Identify opportunities for active play and youth provision (e.g. skateparks and BMX tracks) within new developments and linked to new schools.

4.7 Summary

- 4.7.1 Audits of sport and leisure provision in the Districts have been undertaken and include both formal sports and leisure facilities and informal spaces and places that can accommodate physical activity, for example village halls, community centres and open spaces and playgrounds recognised in the Open Spaces Assessment.
- 4.7.2 The audits found that 88% of parishes in Babergh (65 of 74) and 77% of parishes in Mid Suffolk (86 of 111) have at least one community building which is or could be used for formal and informal physical activity. Many village halls and community centres are well-used for group activities such as Fit Villages, yoga, fitness classes and dance, however it has become apparent that programming capacity is limited, and the space/functionality does not always meet requirements.
- 4.7.3 There is a good supply of outdoor pitches and courts in both Babergh and Mid Suffolk however the condition of these is variable and many tennis and netball courts require resurfacing. All wards in both Districts contain grass football pitches, but many are in a poor condition and there is high demand from football clubs for artificial grass pitches to accommodate all-weather match play and training.
- 4.7.4 Recent investment into the Councils' four core leisure facilities has significantly improved provision of health and fitness in Stowmarket and Sudbury, and the new swimming pool in Hadleigh provides high quality provision to support the growing population in this area of Babergh.
- 4.7.5 Updated supply and demand assessments undertaken by SLC show a theoretical oversupply of swimming pool space in Babergh based on the estimated capacity during peak times across all of the facilities against estimated peak time demand. **However**, a large proportion of the existing supply of pool space (c. 800 sqm) is located on school sites (Ipswich High School and Royal Hospital School) with limited public access. Fully publicly accessible pool space is also largely dependent upon the new Hadleigh Pool and at Kingfisher LC in Sudbury which is c. 35 years old.
- 4.7.6 The total supply of sports halls in Babergh is sufficient to meet current and future estimated demand. **However**, a key challenge for sports hall provision in the District is that all of these are on education sites, limiting access during the day and providing the Council with limited control in how they are managed in terms of community use. The age and condition of a number of sports halls is also an issue and the current oversupply could quickly shift to an undersupply if facilities reach the end of their economic life or deteriorate in quality to such extent as to significantly impact upon their ability to meet the needs of users.
- 4.7.7 There is a theoretical oversupply of swimming pool space in Mid Suffolk based on the estimated capacity during peak times across all of the facilities against estimated peak time demand. However, this includes the pool at MOD Wattisham (325 sqm) where access is restricted to vetted clubs / community groups outside of Army use hours which will, in reality, significantly reduce its ability to meet local demand. Excluding MOD Wattisham would leave supply and demand broadly in balance but heavily reliant on the fully publicly available space provided at Mid Suffolk and Stradbroke. The total water space also includes 3 small pools that currently only offer swimming lessons and a members only health club and spa facility which will be less accessible than a public swimming pool.
- 4.7.8 There is an undersupply of swimming lesson spaces in Mid Suffolk and large developments in Stowmarket, Thurston, Woolpit and surrounding area will likely place significant strain on the already stretched water space at Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre.

- 4.7.9 The total supply of sports halls across Mid Suffolk is just about sufficient to meet current and future estimated demand. However, as with the pool at MOD Wattisham, access to the sports hall is heavily restricted and if removed from the assessment, leaves an undersupply of sports hall space equivalent to 4 badminton courts.
- 4.7.10 Sports hall provision in Mid Suffolk is also heavily reliant upon education sites (4 of the 7 identified), limiting access during the day and providing the Council with limited control in how they are managed in terms of community use. The age and condition of the only fully publicly accessible sports halls at Mid Suffolk LC and Debenham LC is also a key issue. As with Babergh, the current oversupply shown for Mid Suffolk could quickly shift to an undersupply if facilities reach the end of their economic life, deteriorate in quality or are withdrawn from public use.
- 4.7.11 The large developments in Capel St Mary/East Bergholt/Brantham and Great Cornard in Babergh, and Stowmarket and Thurston/Woolpit/Elmswell in Mid Suffolk are priority areas for the Councils to consider additional and improved sport and physical activity provision.

5. Stakeholder Engagement

Key Themes from Stakeholder Consultation

5.1 Introduction and Approach

- 5.1.1 The existing LSPAS was informed by consultation with Council officers, strategic partners, sports clubs, schools and voluntary organisations to seek feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the provision at the time and what opportunities existed for developing leisure, sport and physical activity opportunities across Babergh and Mid Suffolk.
- 5.1.2 As part of this review and update of the LSPAS, SLC has adopted the same approach to gather views on progress since 2017, key successes and areas for improvement, the impact of Covid-19, future challenges, opportunities and priorities for sport and physical activity provision across the Districts and what the Councils' future role should be in supporting this.
- 5.1.3 In order to engage with a wide range of stakeholders, SLC facilitated virtual meetings with key strategic stakeholders and issued four bespoke online questionnaires to wider stakeholders including sports clubs, schools, community groups and Parish and Town Councils.
- 5.1.4 This section provides an overview of the key, recurring themes captured through the engagement and which have informed the development of the updated LSPAS. Further detail is provided in Appendix 4 alongside the full Survey responses in Appendix 5.

5.2 Response to Engagement

- 5.2.1 SLC has engaged with a total of 44 strategic stakeholder partners through virtual meetings. These key partners were identified through discussion with the Councils' project team and included Council officers, leisure operator partners (Abbeycroft Leisure and Everyone Active), Active Suffolk, Suffolk County Council, Community Action Suffolk, One Life Suffolk, Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG and West Suffolk Social Prescribing, Suffolk Family Carers and Stowmarket Integrated Neighbourhood Team.
- 5.2.2 In order to gather sport specific information, SLC also engaged with either regional or national representatives of 11 national governing bodies: Suffolk FA, England and Wales Cricket Board, England Hockey, Rugby Football Union, England Netball, Lawn Tennis Association, England Athletics, Swim England, British Gymnastics, Badminton England and British Cycling.
- 5.2.3 In addition to these discussions there was a good response to the online surveys with a total of 254 responses (compared to 121 in 2017) broken down as follows:
- ▶ Sports Clubs – 129 responses
 - ▶ Schools – 32 responses
 - ▶ Community Groups – 11 responses
 - ▶ Town and Parish Councils – 54 responses
 - ▶ Village Halls/Community Centres – 28 responses.
- 5.2.4 Town and Parish Councils are key partners for the District Councils, however only 28% engaged with the process with some responding to say they did not think this was relevant to them or part of their remit. This perhaps reflects a disconnect between the self-perceived of the role of the Town and Parish Councils in supporting local opportunities for their residents to be active.

- 5.2.5 A small number of Parish Clerks responded to indicate that their parish was too small or their residents too elderly to consider participation in sport and physical activity. This highlights a need for the messaging of the updated LSPA Strategy to clearly articulate the definition of ‘activity’ in the broadest and most inclusive sense and to work in partnership with Town and Parish Councils to identify ways in which they can support opportunities for people to be active at a very local level.

5.3 Progress made since 2017

- 5.3.1 As part of the engagement with strategic stakeholders, views were sought on the progress made by the Councils since 2017 in delivering the strategic priorities of the existing LSPAS. Some of the key, general themes that emerged included:

- ▶ **Strong investment in core facilities** - It was widely recognised through the stakeholder engagement that the Council has made significant progress since 2017 in increasing the capacity and improving the quality of its core sports and leisure facilities. Total investment of c.£7M into core leisure facilities across both Districts alongside a further c.£2M through Community Grants, Section 106 and CIL funding in support of community provision has been a positive step in sustaining and improving the current facility infrastructure.
- ▶ **Positive partnerships** - There was also recognition of the Councils’ positive partnership working with its leisure operators and other partners such as Active Suffolk and SCC which has seen the successful delivery of a number of programmes and initiatives designed to increase participation in sport and physical activity, particularly amongst older people.
- ▶ **Developing relationship with Health** - A stronger relationship with health partners is developing through the Councils forming closer links with the CCGs and by being part of the new Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs). However, it is recognised that the Council and its delivery partners such as Everyone Active could further strengthen these links by embedding themselves more firmly within the INTs and playing a stronger role as part of the ‘connect’ space between the INTs and local residents.
- ▶ **Still too traditional in approach** - Some stakeholders feel that the Councils’ approach since 2017 has been quite ‘traditional’, focusing upon delivery through its core facilities. Whilst Abbeycroft Leisure have been a willing partner in delivering community outreach work, Everyone Active are generally considered to have played a more traditional, facility management role in recent years. This was an observation accepted by Everyone Active themselves and something that they are planning to address as part of the new management agreement for Mid Suffolk.
- ▶ **Limited profile of LSPAS** - The existing LSPAS has not had as high a profile as it should have. Stakeholders were unsure how embedded it has been within the Councils’ wider strategic framework and uncertain of the role it has played in providing strategic direction to the provision of sport and physical activity services across the Districts.
- ▶ **Lack of visibility in terms of action plan, governance and performance management** - It has been difficult for the Councils to track progress and measure the outputs of the existing LSPAS. No action plan was developed and no governance structure put in place to help guide delivery.

5.4 Key Challenges

- 5.4.1 There were a number of key challenges that emerged as recurring themes through both the discussions with strategic stakeholders and the survey responses. These include:
- ▶ The ongoing financial impact of Covid-19 upon leisure operators and continued uncertainty regarding the extent to which the market will return to pre-Covid conditions and how long this might take. This will impact negatively upon income streams for a further 12-18 months.

- ▶ Increasing pressure on Council budgets and resources available to support the future provision of facilities and services.
- ▶ There is concern amongst Town/Parish Councils and sports clubs that the provision of appropriate facilities to support physical activity has not increased to match the growing population.
- ▶ The rural nature of Districts continues to be a challenge in terms of travel / access to core facilities, particularly for families without multiple cars. In addition, safe active travel is a challenge in the Districts as many of the roads are dangerous for walking and cycling.
- ▶ There is a strong reliance on school facilities to meet the needs of clubs across the Districts, particularly in terms of sports halls and this reliance on school provision limits daytime accessibility.
- ▶ There are limited funding cycles for commissioned initiatives (e.g. Fit Villages, Active Schools) and a need to ensure successful programmes are maintained and a strong legacy built.
- ▶ Existing health inequalities have widened further as a result of Covid-19 with activity levels dropping more amongst low-income groups and those with disabilities or long-term health conditions.
- ▶ There will be significant health implications resulting from ‘long Covid’ and lengthening waiting lists for elective surgery. People are likely to remain debilitated for longer periods than pre-Covid and there are likely to be significant challenges regarding the general deconditioning of residents, particularly older people who may be less confident to re-engage in activities.
- ▶ The affordability of sport and physical activity may become more of a challenge amongst low-income groups given the impact of Covid-19 on jobs and the economy.
- ▶ Lack of awareness about local opportunities to be active remains a key challenge. The surveys highlighted the difficulty sports clubs face in promoting their activities and raising awareness locally.
- ▶ One of the biggest challenges for sports clubs in increasing or sustaining membership and providing a more inclusive offer is the lack of qualified coaches and supporting volunteers. Sports clubs specifically identified a lack of specialist coaching and equipment as a major challenge to meeting the needs of disabled participants.
- ▶ Local facilities, including village halls, community centres and sport pavilions, are well used for activities. However, they are rarely fit for purpose and lack space and/or ancillary facilities to support larger activities. Local facilities also struggle to cater for arts and cultural activities, for example dance and theatre classes and productions, due to a lack of space, staging, heating, sprung flooring, lighting etc.

5.5 Future Priorities and Opportunities

5.5.1 Stakeholders were asked what they considered to be the key priorities and opportunities for the future delivery of sport and physical activity provision across the Districts. Many of these reflect opportunities to tackle the challenges being faced across the Districts.

- ▶ To provide more opportunities for residents to be active in local settings by recognising and strengthening the role of community facilities for sport, physical activity, arts, cultural and social activities which all contribute to improved health and wellbeing.
- ▶ To challenge and support leisure operator partners to be more outward-facing and to deliver more targeted community outreach through the activation of local spaces and community-based facilities.
- ▶ To continue to strengthen the relationship with health partners, particularly through the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and links with social prescribing teams.

- ▶ To facilitate greater partnership working across providers, sports clubs, Town and Parish councils, schools and wider partners in a place.
- ▶ To support development of a less traditional and more inclusive and diverse mix of facilities and activities which appeal to a wider audience, particularly those less active.
- ▶ To develop more of a 'blended' offer which makes use of digital platforms and open space, reflecting changes in behaviour through Covid-19.
- ▶ To support and maintain the role played by schools in providing facilities for use by the community.
- ▶ To increase awareness of what is available and where through more comprehensive and joined-up signposting and by making 'every contact count'.
- ▶ To support and strengthen the role of parish and town councils in providing local opportunities to be active and to strengthen links across the different tiers of local authorities.
- ▶ To provide a longer-term view and strategic direction in support of CIL/S106 allocations linked to future development.
- ▶ To develop an approach to evaluation of community grant applications which is more strategically driven and aligned with the priorities of the new LSPA Strategy.
- ▶ To provide opportunities for building more 'everyday' activity into lifestyles through active travel and 'incidental' movement.
- ▶ To strengthen awareness of opportunities to engage with and be active in natural green spaces.
- ▶ To support volunteers and coaches across the Districts and identify opportunities to provide training for more inclusive activities for those with a disability or long-term health condition.

"Try to establish a 'collective thinking' with different groups and work together to ensure maximum provision for all residents across the district."

Figure 1: Word cloud showing the recurring challenges and opportunities from all survey responses (sports clubs, schools, voluntary groups, town/parish councils).




5.6 Impact of Covid-19

- 5.6.1 Stakeholders highlighted that the impact of Covid-19 on sport and physical activity across the Districts has been widespread and sports clubs and providers face an uncertain future and continuing challenges as a result.
- ▶ Covid-19 has highlighted and exacerbated existing health inequalities with activity levels decreasing the most in more deprived communities and amongst people with a disability or long-term health condition.
 - ▶ There remains huge financial pressure on leisure operators and their local authority partners which, combined with the uncertainty of the future market and return of income streams, is a major concern for the future sustainability of core leisure provision.
 - ▶ Sports clubs have suffered financially and whilst support from small grants has been welcomed, the loss of membership and opportunities for fundraising and revenue-generation has left many clubs in financial difficulties.
 - ▶ Existing clubs and activity providers, including the leisure operators have raised concerns over the willingness of people to return to their activity or facility, especially for indoor sports and activities.
 - ▶ Some providers have adapted well to the new environment with many offering an online alternative to engage with participants. However, the shift towards an online offer must consider the issue of digital exclusion and isolation, particularly amongst older people.
 - ▶ The deconditioning of residents arising from the pandemic is a major concern with health partners warning that falls prevention will be a priority for the coming months and increased waiting lists for elective surgery meaning people will be in pain for longer and will limit their ability to be active.
 - ▶ Many residents have been socially isolated for a significant period of time leading to a potential lack of confidence regarding reintegration to pre-Covid activity.
 - ▶ Children and young people have missed out on many months of structured physical activity as well as social interaction and development.
 - ▶ Anti-social behaviour has increased at sites and recreational grounds in the Districts which could be tackled through structured youth sport and physical activities.
- 5.6.2 There have also been some positive shifts which have evolved throughout the pandemic. One example is the wave of volunteers emerging within communities, suggesting an opportunity to harness this social movement to support the recovery of the Districts from Covid-19 and the longer-term provision of opportunities to be active. One Life Suffolk have already witnessed this newfound enthusiasm, with 49 people signed up for Health Walk training in January, equivalent to a years' worth of intake pre-Covid.
- 5.6.3 A second potential opportunity is an increased understanding and appreciation of the benefits of being active in building resilience and improved physical and mental wellbeing. **Maintaining this momentum and energy will be a key challenge for the new LSPAS and there has arguably never been a greater need for the Council to support its residents to be active.**

5.7 Role of the District Councils

- 5.7.1 Stakeholders were asked what role they consider the District Councils should play to be in supporting the landscape of provision of sport and physical activity facilities and services across the District. Some of the key themes included:


- ▶ Taking the lead in bringing the right partners together to establish a clear, common strategic direction and continuing oversight through strong governance.
- ▶ Having an eye on the wider health and wellbeing landscape, helping to 'join the dots' and providing the 'glue' to knit it all together
- ▶ Supporting and empowering people to do things for themselves to build community resilience and ownership – help them to maintain and sustain.
- ▶ Investing in new and existing facilities to meet identified demand and increase accessibility.
- ▶ Providing stronger insight into the needs and motivations of communities to better understand what people want.
- ▶ Coordinating and mapping of activity provision across the Districts to aid signposting and awareness.
- ▶ Providing funding and advice for clubs and community groups to support new initiatives which widen participation amongst less active groups.
- ▶ Directing, supporting and challenging their leisure operator partners to deliver a more outward-facing service which focuses upon increased engagement by less active communities
- ▶ Facilitating wider community engagement and partnerships.
- ▶ Improving access to core facilities, including transportation.
- ▶ Funding to improve or maintain facilities and equipment in schools.



“Think of it similarly to how Facebook matches adverts to its users. We could match clubs and activities to our communities if we understood their motivations better.”

5.7.2 There was also recognition by stakeholders of the important role for Town and Parish Councils to play in supporting their residents to be more active. Whilst the direct delivery of activities is not necessarily within the traditional remit of Town/Parish Councils, the survey responses highlighted their role as an enabler through:

- ▶ Promoting opportunities to be active in local settings.
- ▶ Sourcing grants and providing funding for local activities and initiatives.
- ▶ Providing local representation to support wider partnerships.
- ▶ Working across boundaries with neighbouring parishes to coordinate a wider 'clustering' approach to provision of facilities and activities.



“The Parish Council is perfectly placed to coordinate, support, encourage and part fund local initiatives, ensuring proper transparent consultation and engagement.”

5.7.3 It is important that Town and Parish Councils understand their power to influence community sport and leisure, through allocating funding and facilitating and promoting local activities. It should be a key priority for the District Councils to improve the awareness within this tier of local government, and to work proactively to advise and support CIL, S106 and community grant applications.

5.8 Sport National Governing Bodies

- 5.8.1 11 National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of sport were consulted as part of the LSPA Strategy Update. The NGBs primarily focus on clubs and generally rely on county level representation, often through Active Suffolk who are key partners for sports clubs and community groups delivering activity.
- 5.8.2 The general theme arising from consultation with NGBs was that Babergh and Mid Suffolk is not a high priority area, although there are pockets of unmet demand for some sports including football, badminton, swimming and gymnastics. Further details are provided in Appendix 7 – NGB Sport Information.
- 5.8.3 There are many active sports clubs in the Districts, football is the most popular sport with 27 clubs in Babergh and 37 clubs in Mid Suffolk. 3G provision is a priority for Suffolk FA and an update on all 3G projects in the Districts is provided in Appendix 7.
- 5.8.4 Netball is popular locally and 10 teams in Mid Suffolk now play out of the new England Netball standard facility in Needham Market. For both England Netball and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), resurfacing of tarmac courts in the area is a priority.
- 5.8.5 A lack of available indoor sports provision is considered to be an issue for sports clubs in Babergh and Mid Suffolk. There are high levels of participation in badminton and netball, however the clubs are limited by the accessibility of sports halls and the reliance of school facilities. The LTA highlighted the very limited supply of indoor courts in the region.
- 5.8.6 Swim England highlighted Babergh and Mid Suffolk as an area with high Water Deprivation Index and also commented on the reliance on private school facilities in Babergh.
- 5.8.7 Across most sports a major challenge is sustaining sufficient volunteers and coaches. Several NGBs prioritise coaching and improving access, including coached opportunities, for disabled participants.
- 5.8.8 Development areas for NGBs often focus on urban areas of high deprivation and therefore Babergh and Mid Suffolk are not priority areas for specific outreach projects by any NGBs.
- 5.8.9 The full account of NGB comments and information on participation rates in each sport can be found in Appendix 7.

5.9 Summary

- 5.9.1 A comprehensive programme of stakeholder engagement has been undertaken to inform the updated LSPA Strategy including discussions with 44 strategic stakeholders and 11 national governing bodies and 254 responses to four bespoke surveys issues to Sports Clubs, Schools, Town and Parish Councils, Village Hall Committees and Voluntary Groups. Strategic stakeholders included District and County Council Officers, Leisure providers, Active Suffolk, health partners (including both CCG's) and community organisations such as Community Action Suffolk and One Life Suffolk.
- 5.9.2 A number of challenges emerged from the stakeholder engagement including the limited availability of core facilities, the challenges with accessibility given the rural nature of the Districts, exacerbated by poor public transport and the dangerous nature of roads for walking and cycling and the limited awareness of opportunities amongst residents.

- 5.9.3 The impact of Covid-19 on physical and mental health has been profound and it is unclear how this will influence residents' willingness and confidence to return to activity. This is a major concern for partners across the Districts.
- 5.9.4 The lockdowns and social distancing have placed huge financial strain on the Councils and their respective leisure operator partners and the future leisure market remains uncertain.
- 5.9.5 Stakeholders identified a number of opportunities to address these challenges and support increased engagement in sport and physical activity across the districts. Common themes included more locally based provision and targeted outreach activity from leisure operators, better use and activation of green and open spaces and improved signposting of activities and awareness of the benefits of being 'everyday active'.
- 5.9.6 A strong, recurring theme with all stakeholders is the importance of partnership working and the opportunity to build sustainable relationships with the Councils and within communities. This will require the Councils to commit more staffing resources to help develop and sustain good working relationships, potentially through the newly structured and resourced Communities Team.

6. Strategic Outcomes and Objectives

A new outcomes-based approach for the updated Strategy

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Identifying a clear set of strategic aims and aspirations is central to the development of any effective strategy. It should provide a clear line of sight or ‘golden thread’ which connects an overall Vision for sport and physical activity provision in the Districts right through to the delivery of specific actions on the ground.
- 6.1.2 Whilst this commission is intended as a review and refresh of the existing LSPAS rather than a fundamental re-write, SLC has taken the opportunity to review the framework and strategic priorities of the LSPAS and to explore, with the Councils a new outcomes-based approach to the updated Strategy.

6.2 Review of current Strategic Priorities

- 6.2.1 The existing LSPAS has six Strategic Priorities. Four of these focus on increased participation by specific population groups:
- ▶ Increase the number and frequency of **children, young people (1-18 years) and families** across the District regularly taking part in traditional and non-traditional physical activity.
 - ▶ Increase the number and frequency of **older people** regularly taking part in traditional and non-traditional physical activity to reduce social isolation and to improve health and wellbeing.
 - ▶ Increase active participation and benefits to **participants with mental health issues** through sport and physical activity.
 - ▶ Improve the engagement and uptake of **those with physical and learning difficulties** into community and leisure facilities, ensuring facilities are accessible and activities are available to all.
- 6.2.2 The remaining two Strategic Priorities seek to support and facilitate increased participation across the Districts through a commitment to:
- ▶ Increase the volunteer base of sport and physical activity clubs and groups to build capacity, resilience and support growth in participation levels.
 - ▶ Support the provision of sustainable community sport and leisure facilities and the spaces and infrastructure that individuals, clubs, schools and groups can access and use to take part.
- 6.2.3 SLC has observed that these strategic priorities are weighted towards increasing participation and engagement by four identified target groups and with one priority focusing on enablers (volunteers) and one on the facilities and places for people to be active.
- 6.2.4 Whilst some people within these identified target groups will remain a priority moving forwards, SLC believe that they are currently too broadly defined and that there is an opportunity to re-frame the approach to ensure it focuses less upon a general cohort of the population and more upon the specific groups and localities that are most inactive and experiencing greatest health inequalities.

- 6.2.5 It is also recognised that the current target cohorts will inevitably include many people who are already active and will equally omit a large proportion of the population who do not fall within these groups but face similar challenges and barriers to being active. For example, those on low income, without access to a vehicle or from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.
- 6.2.6 In short, it feels like too much of a ‘broad-brush’ approach to categorisation of target groups which would benefit from a more refined and insight-led focus across the wider community.
- 6.2.7 Discussions with the LSPA Strategy project group and through the Member workshops reached a consensus that the updated strategy needs to increase activity across all ages and communities but to direct greater focus and resource to the least active and those experiencing the greatest health inequalities, irrespective of demographic groups.
- 6.2.8 The existing strategic priorities refer directly to both ‘traditional’ and ‘non-traditional’ physical activity. It was apparent through stakeholder engagement that this broad definition of physical activity should be maintained within the updated strategy and clearly communicated to raise awareness of ‘non-traditional’ activities, particularly those everyday tasks and activities with ‘*incidental movement*’. Examples include:
- ▶ Gardening
 - ▶ Cleaning
 - ▶ DIY
 - ▶ Dancing
 - ▶ Performing Arts / Amateur Dramatics
 - ▶ Museum trips
 - ▶ Walking to the shops/school/GP
 - ▶ Playing with children/grandchildren
 - ▶ Tai Chi
 - ▶ Geocaching
 - ▶ Rock Climbing
 - ▶ Parkour
 - ▶ Skateboarding
 - ▶ Litter Picking.

6.3 A New Strategy Framework

- 6.3.1 SLC has identified an opportunity to strengthen the framework of the updated LSPA Strategy to help direct and deliver the Councils’ future aspirations for leisure, sport and physical activity across the Districts.
- 6.3.2 SLC propose that the updated LSPA Strategy is developed within a framework which:
- ▶ Establishes an overall **Vision** for the future of sport and physical activity in Babergh and Mid Suffolk
 - ▶ Defines the required Strategic **Outcomes** or end results
 - ▶ Identifies the Strategic **Objectives** that need to be achieved to help get the right results
 - ▶ Develops the specific **Actions** required to meet the objectives and support delivery.
- 6.3.3 The framework starts with a Vision that captures the ambition of the Councils and describes what it wants to be over the long-term (the next 10+ years).
- 6.3.4 The Vision is then built upon through the development of Strategic Outcomes which describe the intended results and demonstrate the impact and success of the updated LSPA Strategy.
- 6.3.5 Below these sit the Strategic Objectives which describe the things that the Councils and their partners are working to achieve that will contribute to the Strategic Outcomes. These should be developed on the basis of a much shorter timeframe in order to provide sufficient flexibility to respond to new opportunities and challenges.
- 6.3.6 Finally, the framework includes an Action Plan, to be developed, owned and delivered by the Councils and their partners. It shall identify the specific actions and interventions needed to achieve the Strategic Objectives which subsequently contribute to the Strategic Outcomes and ultimately to the realising of the Vision.

Figure 2: The Strategy Framework



- 6.3.7 This proposed framework has been adopted successfully in similar strategies and is considered by SLC to be best practice in developing a strategic approach to the delivery of leisure, sport and physical activity in a place.

6.3.8 The existing LSPA Strategy has the following Vision and Strategic Aim.

Existing Vision:

Mid Suffolk and Babergh will support, encourage and inspire their communities to be more active and achieve a better quality of life.

Existing Strategic Aim:

To support and enable increased levels of sport and physical activity participation across Babergh and Mid Suffolk; to support the improvement of health and wellbeing within our communities, particularly those from disadvantaged groups.

6.3.9 Through discussion with the Strategy Project Group, it is considered that both the existing Vision and Strategic Aim stand true today. They articulate the Councils' commitment to increasing activity levels as a mechanism to improve health and wellbeing and reference the need to tackle inequalities by supporting those from disadvantaged groups.

6.3.10 However, in accordance with the points noted in 6.2, SLC recommend replacing 'disadvantaged groups' with 'less active people experiencing greater health inequalities' in the Strategic Aim. This better reflects the outcome-based approach to providing support across the wider community for those who will benefit most from being more active rather than specific 'groups'.

Proposed New Strategic Aim:

To support and enable increased levels of sport and physical activity participation across Babergh and Mid Suffolk; to support the improvement of health and wellbeing within our communities, particularly those from less active groups experiencing greater health inequalities.

6.3.11 SLC has developed a set of Strategic Outcomes and Objectives for the updated LSPA Strategy which are proposed to replace the Strategic Priorities of the existing Strategy. These have been informed by the comprehensive stakeholder engagement outlined in this report, discussion with the Strategy project group and through two workshops with Members from both Councils.

6.3.12 The Strategic Outcomes and supporting Strategic Objectives fall into three distinct but interrelated 'themes' which form the building blocks of the updated LSPAS Strategy:

- ▶ Active People – What outcomes do the Councils want to see and for whom?
- ▶ Active Places and Spaces – What infrastructure, places and spaces are needed to contribute to these outcomes?
- ▶ Active Partnerships – Who are the key partners and enablers and how should the Councils work with them to help contribute to these outcomes?

Table 14: Strategic Outcomes and Objectives

Strategic Outcomes	Strategic Objectives
Strategic Theme: Active People	
1. Reduced levels of inactivity amongst communities and in	Develop insight into <i>which</i> groups are less active and <i>where</i> , to ensure resource is targeted where it is most needed and will have the most impact

Strategic Outcomes	Strategic Objectives
<p>localities experiencing greater health inequalities</p>	<p>Increase the number and frequency of people from identified target groups and localities taking part in regular physical activity</p>
	<p>Leverage external funding to support targeted interventions</p>
<p>2. Increased opportunities for all residents to move more through an accessible, diverse and inclusive programme of activities.</p>	<p>Develop a diverse and inclusive physical activity programme in collaboration with communities, which is delivered in local settings and makes use of technology through an enhanced digital offer</p>
	<p>Raise awareness of all residents of the opportunities to be active locally and the physical and mental health benefits of being more active</p>
	<p>Establish effective, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of programmes and initiatives to understand what works and to inform future design and delivery</p>
<p>Strategic Theme: Active Places and Spaces</p>	
<p>3. Sustainable community sport, leisure and physical activity facilities that enable and support all residents to be active</p>	<p>Support the provision of sustainable indoor and outdoor facilities which are accessible to all, meet evidenced need and provide development pathways from beginners to elite level performance</p>
	<p>Increase locally based provision through more community use of schools, community centres, village halls and sports club facilities</p>
	<p>Maximise the opportunities for CIL/Section 106 to support the facility infrastructure required to meet the needs of a growing population</p>
<p>4. Green and open spaces providing formal and informal opportunities for all residents to be ‘everyday active’</p>	<p>Protect and maintain sustainable green and open spaces that provide opportunities for formal and informal outdoor sport, recreation and physical activity</p>
	<p>Activate green and open spaces through development of a co-ordinated programme of outreach activities and use of digital technology</p>
	<p>Support and promote clear, safe routes that enable confident, active travel through early intervention into the planning stages of new development and through the Councils’ wider approach to sustainable travel</p>
	<p>Enhance opportunities for active play through playgrounds and youth provision (such as skate parks/cycle parks) and by utilising digital tools.</p>

Strategic Outcomes	Strategic Objectives
Strategic Theme: Active Partnerships	
<p>5. A strong, sustainable and strategically aligned ecosystem of partnerships supporting all residents to be more active</p>	Take a lead role in establishing a ‘whole system’ multi-agency approach to tackling inactivity
	Work with health partners to establish physical activity as a core prevention measure to improve local health outcomes
	Support schools, sports clubs, Town and Parish councils and community sector partners to maintain and develop physical activity opportunities, particularly for people from less active groups
	Work closely with leisure operator partners to develop and deliver a diverse and inclusive programme of activities in community settings across the Districts
<p>6. A skilled, knowledgeable and enabled workforce and volunteer base supporting communities to be more active.</p>	Increase the volunteer base of sport and physical activity clubs and groups to build capacity, resilience and support growth in participation levels
	Increase the skills and capability of sports clubs to diversify their offer and appeal to a wider audience, particularly less active groups
	Support the upskilling of the leisure operator workforce to deliver targeted and specialist health and wellbeing interventions and a more inclusive service
	Work with partners across the integrated care system to increase awareness and understanding of physical activity opportunities to ‘make every contact count’.

6.3.13 It should be noted that during the process of developing and refining the Strategic Outcomes shown in Table 14, there were comments about the phrasing of Strategic Outcome 1 and the use of the phrase ‘Reduced levels of inactivity’. It was felt that this might easily be misread or misinterpreted as reducing levels of activity which would of course be a negative thing for the Councils to do. An obvious solution, and one which was suggested, would have been to change this to ‘Increased levels of activity amongst communities and in localities experiencing greater health inequalities’. However, the outcome is specifically about tackling inactivity i.e. shifting from no activity into some form of activity. The suggested change described above would therefore mean a subtle but important move away from this and would encompass already active people from these communities being more active. For this reason, the Strategic Outcome remains as originally drafted.

7. Making it Happen

Priority Actions to support delivery of the updated Strategy

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 Building upon the proposed Strategic Outcomes and Objectives described in Section 6, SLC has developed a set of draft high level actions which form the next layer of the updated LSPA Strategy.
- 7.1.2 These high level actions are designed to act as a starting point from which the Councils will need to review, discuss and develop further in partnership with stakeholders to ensure there is strong buy-in and ownership by those involved in delivery of the Strategy.
- 7.1.3 In addition to this, SLC has developed a list of potential infrastructure projects which have been informed by the audits, supply and demand and gap analysis, stakeholder engagement and discussions with the Councils project team.
- 7.1.4 This section sets out the proposed high-level actions together with a summary of the potential infrastructure projects identified through the study as being a priority in meeting current and future demand for sport and physical activity facilities.

7.2 High-Level Actions

- 7.2.1 SLC's approach to action planning addresses three fundamental questions:
1. **What?**
What high-level actions are needed to achieve the Strategic Objectives and contribute to the Strategic Outcomes?
 2. **How?**
How are these high-level actions going to be achieved and what are the more specific detailed actions that sit below these?
 3. **Who?**
Who will lead on the actions and what role will partners play in helping to deliver them?
- 7.2.2 The How and Who will need to be developed by the Councils and their partners as part of detailed action planning following formal adoption of the updated Strategy. To assist this process, SLC has developed a set of high-level actions linked to each of the proposed new Strategic Objectives and identified an indicative list of key partners who are likely to be required to support delivery of each set of actions, as shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Strategic Objectives and High Level Actions

No.	Strategic Objectives	High-Level Actions	Key Partners
Active People			
1.1	Develop insight into which groups are less active and where, in order to ensure resource is targeted where it will have the most impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify sources of insight and ensure these are able to reflect changing/evolving needs over time 2. Work with partners to identify priority groups and localities 3. Engage with community groups/leaders to establish a better understanding of specific barriers faced by less active people. 	Community groups/leaders, Health Partners, INTs, Active Suffolk, Public Health England, Sport England, Disability Forum, Local Dementia Alliances, Everyone Active and Abbeycroft
1.2	Increase the number and frequency of people from identified target groups and localities taking part in regular physical activity.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain and build upon existing successful targeted programmes 2. Work with leisure operators to design and deliver new insight-led outreach programmes that cater for all ages 3. Identify key contact points / signposters to help raise awareness. 	Everyone Active and Abbeycroft, Social Prescribers, Primary Care Network, Sports Clubs
1.3	Leverage external funding to support targeted interventions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Map existing funded programmes and commissioning cycles 2. Work with partners to proactively explore and secure new funding sources to support targeted programmes 3. Explore ways to ‘scale up’ programmes using external funding and improve longer term sustainability. 	Active Suffolk, Community Action Suffolk, OneLife, Everyone Active and Abbeycroft
2.1	Develop a diverse and inclusive physical activity programme in collaboration with communities,	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify programming gaps and capacity issues – what and where? 	Everyone Active and Abbeycroft,

No.	Strategic Objectives	High-Level Actions	Key Partners
	<p>which is delivered in local settings and makes use of technology through an enhanced digital offer</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Develop new innovative, non-traditional activities that appeal to a wider audience 3. Identify appropriate local settings for hosting activities 4. Support talented athletes through development pathways. 5. Build capacity in the community for locally led activity. 	<p>Community Groups, Disability Forum, NGBs, Sports Clubs</p>
<p>2.2</p>	<p>Raise awareness of all residents of the opportunities to be active locally and the physical and mental health benefits of being more active</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Map opportunities to be active locally. 2. Develop an accessible platform for residents to source activities. 3. Develop a simple message / campaign to support awareness of benefits of being active. 4. Promote non-traditional activities, including simple everyday tasks, arts and social activities which result in residents moving more. 	<p>Community Action Suffolk, Town/Parish Councils and Village Hall Committees, Council Communications Team, Sports Clubs</p>
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Establish effective, ongoing monitoring and evaluation of programmes and initiatives to understand what works and to inform future design and delivery</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify a baseline of data from which to measure progress. 2. Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for physical activity interventions linked to social value. 3. Embed and proactively manage a performance management framework with Everyone Active and Abbeycroft. 4. Work with community groups and delivery partners to define and monitor key performance indicators that can be used to measure the impact of wider programmes. 	<p>Everyone Active & Abbeycroft, Active Suffolk, OneLife, Community Action Suffolk</p>

No.	Strategic Objectives	High-Level Actions	Key Partners
Active Places and Spaces			
3.1	Support the provision of sustainable indoor and outdoor facilities which are accessible to all, meet evidenced need and provide sporting pathways from beginners to elite level performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support priority projects which will have the biggest impact and meet the needs of the residents (see separate list of Priority Projects) 2. Identify innovative, partnership-based approaches to facility developments which meet shared priorities 3. Work with leisure operators to ensure high quality and accessible core facilities. 	Everyone Active & Abbeycroft, Town/Parish Councils and Village Hall Committees, Health Partners
3.2	Increase locally based provision through more community use of schools, community centres/village halls and sports club facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify projects and initiatives which enable activation of local community facilities. 2. Protect, encourage and support schools to open for community-use. 3. Develop a mapping tool/platform to enable communities to view/find facilities in their area (linked to local facility audit) 	Town/Parish Councils and Village Hall Committees, Schools, Community Action Suffolk, Active Suffolk
3.3	Maximise the opportunities for CIL/Section 106 to support the facility infrastructure required to meet the needs of a growing population	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan is aligned with the updated LSPA Strategy to support allocation of S106 and CIL monies according to evidenced need. 2. Develop evaluation criteria for community grant funding applications which align strongly to the Strategic Outcomes of the LSPA Strategy. 	Town/Parish Councils and Village Hall Committees, Community Groups, Planning Officers
3.4	Enhance opportunities for active play through playgrounds and youth provision (such as skate parks/cycle parks) and by utilising digital tools.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore new, innovative options for active play to be incorporated into new developments and to replace traditional playgrounds in existing settlements. 2. Work with the community, including schools and local interest groups (e.g. historical society, botanical society) 	Public Realm Officers, Town/Parish Councils, Schools, Heritage Sites, Community Groups

No.	Strategic Objectives	High-Level Actions	Key Partners
		to develop a wide range of routes for the Love Exploring App. 3. Work with Town and Parish Councils to identify opportunities for improved youth provision (e.g. skate parks and cycle parks), particularly in areas with high levels of anti-social behaviour.	
4.1	Protect and maintain sustainable green and open spaces that provide opportunities for formal and informal outdoor sport, recreation and physical activity	1. Work with Town and Parish councils to ensure playing pitches and play areas are sufficient to meet need and are well maintained 2. Explore opportunities for sports clubs to play a stronger role in helping to ‘manage’ outdoor pitches 3. Work with planners to ensure green and open space is allocated in new developments.	Town/Parish Councils, Planning Officers, Suffolk County Council
4.2	Activate green and open spaces through development of a co-ordinated programme of outreach activities and use of digital technology	1. Adopt a co-design approach with local communities to identify what activities people want in their parks and open spaces. 2. Identify local community ‘champions’ and support them to stimulate interest from the bottom up. 3. Deliver a series of intergenerational ‘pop up’ events in key parks to stimulate interest and engagement by local residents 4. Explore use of technology to enable stronger awareness of and easy access to active routes, spaces and places. 5. Provide opportunities for environmental volunteering with incidental activity, for example community gardening and litter picking walks.	Everyone Active & Abbeycroft, Suffolk County Council Most Active County, Public Realm Team, Active Suffolk, Town/Parish Councils

No.	Strategic Objectives	High-Level Actions	Key Partners
4.3	Support and promote clear, safe routes that enable confident, active travel through early intervention into the planning stages of new development and through the Councils’ wider approach to sustainable travel	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist with the development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2. Work with the new Sustainable Travel Officer to develop resources which support and promote active travel 3. Strengthen links with SCC Highways to ensure the Council well positioned to influence potential improvements to active travel routes. 	Town/Parish Councils, Planning Officers, Suffolk County Council
Active Partnerships			
5.1	Take a lead role in establishing a ‘whole system’ multi-agency approach to tackling inactivity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a formal body and governance structure for delivery of the Strategy and reporting of progress. 2. Engage with key agencies and community stakeholders to establish new/build on existing partnerships to deliver the Strategy. 	All partners
5.2	Work with health partners to establish physical activity as a core prevention measure to improve local health outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen the role of the Councils and their leisure operator partners within Integrated Neighbourhood Teams. 2. Work with social prescribing teams to develop a clear and coordinated approach across providers. 	Health Partners, Integrated Neighbourhood Teams, Social Prescribers
5.3	Support schools, sports clubs, Town and Parish councils and community sector partners to maintain and develop physical activity opportunities, particularly for people from less active groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and promote local opportunities to be active through the Districts’ network of community organisations & groups. 2. Explore how new, wider partners can help broaden opportunities for residents. 	Schools, Sports Clubs, Town/Parish Councils and Community Sector Partners (CAS, OneLife)
5.4	Work closely with the leisure operator partners to develop and deliver a diverse and inclusive	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with leisure operator partners to develop a resourced and targeted outreach programme, delivered 	Everyone Active & Abbeycroft, Town/Parish Councils

No.	Strategic Objectives	High-Level Actions	Key Partners
	programme of activities in community settings across the Districts	in association with key community partners and based on local insight. 2. Proactively manage the performance of leisure operator partners in delivering against required outcomes and through the use of meaningful and measurable KPIs.	and Village Hall Committees
6.1	Increase the volunteer base of sport and physical activity clubs and groups to build capacity, resilience and support growth in participation levels	1. Promote and support individuals and clubs to embrace and participate in volunteer training. 2. Consider reward / incentive scheme for recognising volunteer work. 3. Encourage and support volunteering in non-traditional activities, for example community gardening and litter picking.	Sports Clubs, Active Suffolk, Community Action Suffolk, OneLife, Town/Parish Councils
6.2	Increase the skills and capability of sports clubs to diversify their offer and appeal to a wider audience, particularly less active groups	1. Identify areas for workforce development to progress into a health and wellbeing service, to support outreach activities and specialist interventions. 2. Support the upskilling of club volunteers and coaches through identifying suitable external funding and / or signposting to relevant training opportunities.	Sports Clubs, Disability Forum, Dementia Alliance, Active Suffolk, Sport England, NGBs,
6.3	Support the upskilling of the leisure operator workforce to deliver targeted and specialist health and wellbeing interventions and a more inclusive service	1. Identify skills gaps in the existing workforce. 2. Work with leisure operator partners to upskill new and existing staff in delivering effective outreach and providing a wider, more specialist health and wellbeing service within core facilities. 3. Ensure all staff have appropriate awareness training to support a fully inclusive service.	Everyone Active & Abbeycroft, Disability Forum, Dementia Alliance, Sport England, Health Partners

No.	Strategic Objectives	High-Level Actions	Key Partners
6.4	Work with partners across the integrated care system to increase awareness and understanding of physical activity opportunities to ‘make every contact count’.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Embed physical activity providers across the Districts into the ‘Connect’ space for each Integrated Neighbourhood Team. 2. Develop easy access ‘tools’ for signposters and connectors on opportunities to be active locally. 	Health Partners – INTs, Everyone Active & Abbeycroft, Social Prescribers, Community Groups

7.3 Project Pipeline – Facility Infrastructure

- 7.3.1 In addition to the high-level actions which are designed to support delivery of the Strategic Objectives of the updated LSPA Strategy, SLC has developed a pipeline of potential infrastructure projects which are designed to support identified need for future built provision across the Districts.
- 7.3.2 These projects are informed by the facility audits, supply and demand assessments, stakeholder engagement and a local understanding of the landscape of provision. They seek to address identified weaknesses or deficits in provision and increasing pressures on the capacity of existing facilities, particularly within areas of planned development.
- 7.3.3 Table 16 and Table 17 present a summary of the identified priority projects for Babergh and Mid Suffolk respectively, and are categorised by locality. The scope and scale of projects vary with some being more extensive, involving potential development of new facilities and some are smaller scale improvements or extensions to existing provision. Some are projects that are already planned but provide an opportunity for the Councils to support, guide and influence their delivery and others are yet to be worked through and will likely require involvement from the Councils to undertake some initial feasibility and scoping work.
- 7.3.4 In addition to the specific, locality-based projects, SLC has identified the following six recurring strategic issues regarding facility provision which impact upon both Districts:
1. Insufficient local swimming lesson provision and lack of public swimming opportunities.
 2. Limited community use of school facilities and high reliance on those who do have community use arrangements.
 3. Limited capacity in community buildings that do not satisfy local requirements.
 4. Limited mid-scale multi-use indoor provision.
 5. Delay/non delivery of Suffolk FA's Local Football Facilities Plan
 6. Multiple organisations and groups working in isolation.
- 7.3.5 Table 18 considers ways in which the Councils could address these strategic issues.

Table 16: Priority Infrastructure Projects - Babergh

Location	Potential Project	Summary	Timeframe
South East Babergh	Increase public swimming provision in the South East of Babergh	<p>There is currently no fully publicly accessible swimming provision in the Southeast of Babergh. Ipswich High School and Royal Hospital School are both independent schools with swimming pools that are used for clubs and swimming lessons only and only available outside school hours.</p> <p>The Council should explore opportunities to increase public swimming provision in the SE of Babergh by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the two schools to understand what capacity they may have to extend community use and what support they would require to enable this. Undertaking feasibility work into the provision of a compact pool in SE Babergh to add capacity. 	Short term (1-2 years)
South East Babergh	Increase community use of dryside sports facilities in schools	<p>In addition to swimming pools, there are good quality dryside facilities at Ipswich High School and Royal Hospital School, however both are limited in terms of community use. Further to this Holbrook Academy have recently closed their facilities to the general public and ended their partnership with Abbeycroft. Whilst the school intends to allow use by certain clubs and groups this move will have a negative impact upon publicly accessible sports hall provision in this part of Babergh.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Council, in partnership with Abbeycroft, work with all of these schools to explore opportunities for extended community use, including potential investment options to support long term financial sustainability.</p>	Short term (1-2 years)
Hadleigh	Layham Road Sports Ground – Community Sports Hub	<p>Housing developments in Hadleigh are expected to increase the population by c.15%. Hadleigh Town Council are already developing plans to update the facilities and pitches at Layham Road Sports Ground, including a new full-size 3G pitch and pavilion. There is an opportunity to work with the Town Council and existing rugby, football and tennis clubs to develop a Community Sports Hub to also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional capacity of grass football and rugby pitches 	<p>Short term (1-2 years)</p> <p>Live, ongoing Project</p>

Location	Potential Project	Summary	Timeframe
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved ancillary facilities/sports pavilion including a community room/exercise studio to accommodate group activities. Resurfacing of tennis and 5-a-side courts. 	
Hadleigh	Sports hall at Hadleigh Pool & Leisure	<p>Sports hall provision in Hadleigh is limited to the high school which is only available outside school hours and at capacity during peak times.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to explore the feasibility of a new 4-court Sports Hall at Hadleigh Pool and Leisure to accommodate demand for indoor sports without the restrictions of school-based facilities. Alternatively, explore provision of a new/extended sports hall at the expanding High School, together with enhanced community access included in the design.</p>	Medium term (3-5 years)
East Bergholt	Improved facilities at East Bergholt Sports Centre	<p>The East Bergholt Sports Centre is on the East Bergholt High School site and managed by Abbeycroft for community use. 1158 new dwellings are planned across East Bergholt, Capel St Mary and Branham which will place additional strain on the facilities at East Bergholt Sports Centre.</p> <p>Given the existing infrastructure and established leisure management presence, there is an opportunity to develop the facilities to support increased community access. Potential options for expansion include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional / extended sports hall Extended health and fitness suite Extend small 3G pitch to full size Refurbish tennis/netball courts. 	Medium Term (3-5 years) in line with large developments
Capel St Mary	Community Sport & Wellbeing Hub	<p>As in East Bergholt, the development of 792 new dwellings in Capel St Mary will add pressure to the limited sports and physical activity facilities in the area. Capel St Mary Community Trust and Parish Council are already developing plans to transform their playing fields into a multi-sport Community Hub with a new 3G pitch in addition to the existing grass pitches and bowling green.</p>	<p>Short term (1-2 years)</p> <p>Live, ongoing project</p>

Location	Potential Project	Summary	Timeframe
		<p>Plans for the proposed hub building include a small gym and community/function space with catering facility alongside changing provision.</p> <p>This represents an excellent opportunity for the Council to work with the Trust and wider health partners to embed community wellbeing facilities into the plans and provide locally accessible and inclusive opportunities to be more active.</p>	
Sudbury / Great Cornard	<p>Develop Masterplan for sports provision across Sudbury and Great Cornard (including Chilton Woods Development)</p>	<p>Sudbury and Great Cornard currently has reasonably good provision of facilities with Kingfisher LC, Sudbury Sports Centre at Ormiston Academy and Great Cornard Sports Centre at Thomas Gainsborough School providing a combination of publicly accessible pool space, sports halls, health and fitness provision, outdoor pitches and an artificial grass pitch.</p> <p>However, significant development is planned for the area with 1,150 new dwellings at Chilton Woods, north of Sudbury and a further 554 in Great Cornard and consideration will therefore need to be given as to how the sport and physical activity needs of this growing population are to be met.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Council undertakes more detailed work in developing a masterplan for future facility provision across Sudbury and Great Cornard to help inform the S106 and CIL allocations during development. This may include exploring a Community Sport and Wellbeing Hub as part of the Chilton Woods development and / or improvements to the collection of indoor and outdoor facilities in the south of Great Cornard including the Sports Centre, Cornard United FC and Sudbury RUFC with strong links to Great Cornard Country Park. Collaboration across these sites and clubs, with other community groups and health partners, could provide an excellent sport and wellbeing offer to cater for the growing population.</p>	<p>Short term planning and medium/long term delivery</p> <p>Live, ongoing project</p>

Table 17: Priority Infrastructure Projects - Mid Suffolk

Location	Potential Project	Summary	Timeframe
Stradbroke	Community Health and Wellbeing Hub	Stradbroke Swim and Fitness Centre has recently been refurbished, its location next to the village sports field, tennis courts, community centre, bowls club and health centre provides an excellent opportunity for the Council, Everyone Active and health partners to develop a joined-up Community Wellbeing Hub in partnership with local stakeholders including Stradbroke High School.	Medium / long Term
Eye	Hartismere School and The Moors Play Area.	<p>Hartismere School in Eye are undertaking a project to extend their community sporting facilities, including a larger sports hall and a new health and fitness suite, and arts facility.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Council consider CIL investment to support the project and work with the school to ensure the facilities are accessible for community use.</p> <p>Nearby play area is also being updated with the Council’s support and there is scope to improve the whole site including the community centre, ancillary facilities and youth provision. A partnership approach that encompasses stakeholders across these two sites and links with the Hartismere Hospital could widely benefit residents in the north of the District.</p>	<p>Medium term (3-5 years)</p> <p>Live, ongoing project at Hartismere School</p>
Debenham	Community Sport and Wellbeing Hub based at Debenham Leisure Centre	<p>The Debenham Sport and Leisure Centre is an important community facility and there are multiple objectives identified in the Neighbourhood Plan to further develop the site and wider sport and leisure provision in the area. These are subject to funding and the Council could assist by exploring the feasibility of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional swimming provision through a ‘compact’ swimming pool north of the village to support community swimming in this rural part of the District • 3G artificial grass pitch (upgrade to existing 2G pitch or additional provision) • Youth facilities. 	Medium term (3-5 years)

Location	Potential Project	Summary	Timeframe
Ipswich Fringe	Snoasis (Great Blakenham)	<p>The Snoasis (now known as Valley Ridge) project in Great Blakenham is still at a relatively early stage. The plans are for a family friendly leisure destination with indoor ski slope, water park and outdoor activities such as high ropes and archery alongside self-catering lodges and 450 room hotel.</p> <p>As the brief develops the Council should explore whether the development has potential to support wider sport, health and wellbeing provision. For example, provision of a new publicly accessible sports hall (possibly even 8-court) as part of a regional scale sports provision to cater for large events and elite performance. An 8-court hall has long been an identified strategic need within the countywide strategic facilities framework (no 8-court provision in Suffolk) and would also significantly support community use which is currently reliant on school-based facilities.</p> <p>The Council should also stay in contact with Ipswich BC regarding any plans for new sports hall provision.</p>	<p>Short term planning and medium/long term delivery</p> <p>Live, ongoing project</p>
Claydon	Claydon High School - Improved community sports facilities	<p>There is significant housing growth planned for Claydon and Barham (690 new homes) and Claydon High School are already developing plans to improve their community sports facilities.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Councils work with and support Claydon High School through CIL and S106 allocations to extend and improve their indoor facilities (sports hall and health and fitness provision) and to ensure this investment is secured through a Community Use Agreement.</p>	<p>Medium term (3-5 years)</p>
Stowmarket	Community Sports and Wellbeing Hub - Chilton Fields	<p>Sport and physical activity provision in Stowmarket is a high priority for the Council given the planned development of 1768 new homes and the existing pressure on sport and physical activity provision in the Town.</p>	<p>Short term (1-2 years)</p> <p>Live, ongoing Project</p>

Location	Potential Project	Summary	Timeframe
		<p>It is recommended that the Councils continue to lead on the project to develop a new, innovative Community Sports and Wellbeing Hub in partnership with Stowmarket High School, Stowmarket Town Council, Suffolk FA, local sports clubs and health partners which has the potential to address a number of key sports facility deficits and contribute strongly to local health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Council should undertake more detailed feasibility and masterplanning work to explore options for the most suitable location, design and facility mix to potentially include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floodlit 3G artificial grass pitch • Sports hall • Community and health facilities and spaces (e.g. co-location with health partners) • Floodlit Netball/Tennis courts • Compact Athletics Facility (as recommended by England Athletics to support wider athletics and off-track running instead of traditional 400m tracks) • Trim trail • Cycling and running/pedestrian routes with links to wider open spaces • Improvements to Grass Pitches. 	
Stowupland	Stowupland High School – Improved community sports facilities	<p>Planned housing growth (461 new homes) in Stowupland and significant development in nearby Stowmarket will increase pressure on local facilities (Mid Suffolk LC and Stowupland High School) and warrant further consideration for improved provision. The School is a potential home site for Stowupland Falcons FC (a large junior football club currently using Needham Market FC’s 3G AGP). It has outdoor pitches and a sports hall with the potential to extend its community use offer by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extending opening hours • Improving the health and fitness offer • Upgrading the sports hall and changing facilities • Resurface tarmac tennis/netball courts. 	Medium term (3-5 years)

Location	Potential Project	Summary	Timeframe
Needham Market	Improve outdoor formal and informal provision in Needham Market	Needham Market Town Council are seeking to improve outdoor physical activity provision at two sites: Crowley Park and the playing field at the former middle school. The latter is located adjacent to the new housing development, relocated library, new netball venue and the existing Community Centre – due to be extended with a café. The community centred location provides an excellent opportunity to improve the open space and create a new play offer.	Short term (1-2 years) Live, ongoing project
Wattisham	Explore opportunities for increased community use of facilities at MOD Wattisham	There are significant sports facilities at MOD Wattisham, including a 25M swimming pool, 4-court sports hall and full-size AGP, which are currently accessible only to approved community groups and clubs. The Babergh/Mid Suffolk border location makes it accessible to both Districts. It is recommended that the Council engage further with the site to explore opportunities to extend community access to the facilities where possible.	Short term (1-2 years)
Thurston	Support development of delivery plan for sports & play provision in Thurston in response to current housing development growth.	Major housing growth is planned in Thurston, Woolpit and Elmswell with over 3000 new homes due to be built before 2037. Facilities in Thurston are limited to the school site which is only available at evenings and weekends. Residents choose to travel to Mid-Suffolk Leisure Centre or Bury Leisure Centre to access swimming provision, both of which are already under strain with current demand. Babergh and Mid Suffolk Council have published a Statement of Common ground with West Suffolk Council which addresses swimming provision in Bury and the cross-boundary usage by residents in Thurston. The Council should support the Parish Councils to develop a locality-based plan for future sport, physical activity and play provision across the wider area to meet the needs of a growing population. Priority areas should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming provision • Sports hall • Active Play (including Youth Provision, e.g. Skatepark) • Football provision, including 3G AGP 	Short term planning and medium/long term delivery

Location	Potential Project	Summary	Timeframe
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible community space. 	
Elmswell	Explore opportunities for new provision at Blackbourne Centre/Sports Ground (Elmswell)	<p>The Blackbourne Community Centre and Sports Ground provides excellent village-based community sports facilities. The Parish Council are due to receive a new land parcel which, with support from the District Council, they could use to extend their sports provision for the village and the wider area. Opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sports pitches Extend/New Sports Hall Extended Community Centre/Indoor provision 	Medium term (3-5 years)
Walsham-le-Willows	Support Walsham-le-Willows Sports Club to extend their provision	<p>Walsham-le-Willows is an exemplar village Sports Club seeking to broaden their sports and community offer. There is an opportunity to add a full size AGP to reduce their reliance on grass football pitches. This would provide space to develop a small sports hall, health and fitness facilities as well as extend community wellbeing activities.</p>	Medium term (3-5 years)

Table 18: Strategic Issues across both Districts.

Strategic Issue	Priority Project	Summary
Insufficient swimming lesson provision & lack of public swimming opportunities	Scoping and feasibility work to identify areas for innovative compact swimming facilities to meet demand for local community	<p>The private sector has developed compact swimming pools which are available for private hire and swimming lessons i.e. the new Lett’s Swim compact pool in Hadleigh and First Strokes in the Ipswich Fringe. Compact pools cost significantly less to build and operate than typical leisure centre pools (normally 25m x 4 lane minimum) and support the high demand for private swimming lessons, though not currently generally used for school swimming lessons.</p> <p>There is an opportunity for Babergh and Mid-Suffolk District Councils to explore a new innovative model to increase swimming provision in the Districts through public compact pools. There are a number of redundant/underused outdoor pools that could be converted and support the demand for swimming lessons in the District and reduce pressure on the four pools. Compact pool provision could be explored in:</p>

Strategic Issue	Priority Project	Summary
	<p>swimming provision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beyton (redundant pool at Thurston Community College Sixth Form) • Great Cornard Sports Centre (currently operating as an all year around lido) • Shotley (a potential area for a compact pool due to its waterfront environment. • Debenham (previous feasibility project and model developed)
<p>Limited community use of school facilities</p>	<p>Review opportunities to extend community access & provision on school sites</p>	<p>There is a great reliance on school facilities in both Babergh and Mid-Suffolk. In Babergh the only available sports hall provision is on school sites. Several secondary schools have been mentioned above as specific priority projects to maintain or extend community access, however there are outdoor and indoor facilities in many primary schools across the Districts which could also be utilised by the local community with some support from the Councils.</p> <p>Opportunities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review opportunities to include sport and physical activity provision (sports halls and outdoor pitches in particular) in plans to extend existing or build new schools against the Schools Infrastructure Delivery Plan (for example Thurston, Woolpit, Hadleigh High School) 2. Review and develop new model Community Use Agreements to enable more community activity whilst maintaining safeguarding, security and financial sustainability.
<p>Limited capacity in community buildings that do not satisfy local requirements</p>	<p>Develop a district wide Community Buildings (Village & Community Halls) Infrastructure Improvement Plan (CBIIIP)</p>	<p>The facilities audit shows a variety of provision per parish without a standard approach. The existing facilities are in many case ageing and not large enough to accommodate sustainable indoor physical activity and wellbeing programmes – especially with Covid restrictions. The audit provides a high-level overview of the provision and the Districts would benefit from completing the village hall survey to better understand local provision. Anecdotally through the survey, halls and community centres appear well used but capacity is restricted for new activities or larger groups.</p> <p>Developing a District wide Community Buildings Infrastructure Improvement Plan (CBIIIP) would identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities for new community facilities including potential redevelopment and/or refurbishment • Opportunities to invest in ancillary facilities that will support local physical activity, health and wellbeing.

Strategic Issue	Priority Project	Summary
		<p>The allocation of Babergh and Mid Suffolk Grant and CIL funding for projects within the above categories could be based on a set of criteria designed to measure the likely impact of projects upon community wellbeing.</p>
<p>Limited mid-scale multi-use indoor provision</p>	<p>Scoping and feasibility work to identify community settings (e.g. in core villages) to establish a model for mid-scale community sport and leisure hubs (e.g. as in Elmswell at the Blackbourne Centre).</p>	<p>There is demand for publicly accessible indoor sports and activity provision but the rural, disparate nature of the Districts presents a challenge in accessing core facilities. The model of a 2-3 court sports hall with community rooms, outdoor pitches & play provision plus ancillary facilities like at Blackbourne Community Centre (Elmswell) could be replicated elsewhere and is an ideal solution for providing local access to facilities in rural areas.</p> <p>Many village halls are too small for indoor sport & sustainable level health and fitness activities. Badminton England suggested that minimum 2-court sports halls are ideal in rural areas to encourage clubs to play recreational badminton but also enable them to compete in local leagues.</p> <p>Larger indoor spaces within community settings will also support the growing sport of short mat bowls (very popular with older adults) as well as catering for martial arts and a range of health and fitness group exercise classes etc. Such venues will also support performing arts activities in particular ballet, dance, drama etc. which can be integral parts of village life but often with insufficient space to accommodate large enough audiences to make such activities sustainable.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to scope possible locations for new or extended halls, ideally located at village hall/ recreation grounds with outdoor pitches to provide a multi-sport hub for a local community. This could be linked to the proposed Community Buildings (Village & Community Halls) Infrastructure Improvement Plan (CBIIP) above.</p>
<p>Delay/non delivery of Suffolk FA's Local Football Facilities Plan</p>	<p>Support implementation of FA's Local Football Facilities Plans across the districts</p>	<p>There are District-wide plans in place for priority football projects which, subject to meeting the necessary criteria, should attract 70/80% funding from The Football Foundation. These include full size football-specific 3G AGP provision, grass pitch improvement and increases to pitch and training capacity for club football at a local level. There are also several proposed changing facility improvements on community venues which will have the capacity to support wider community activity as a more sustainable facility.</p>

Strategic Issue	Priority Project	Summary
		<p>It is recommended that the Councils work closely with Suffolk FA and local clubs to review the priority projects and explore opportunities to deliver these, potentially as part of wider projects e.g. Stowmarket Community Sports Hub.</p>
<p>Multiple organisations and groups working in isolation</p>	<p>Explore opportunities for greater collaboration and partnership working</p>	<p>Given the financial pressures on sport and physical activity providers, services and facilities across the Districts, there is a need to explore new joint models for delivery and long-term sustainability by fostering greater collaboration and partnership working.</p> <p>As well as sport and physical activity providers, there is a need to work closely with Health and Social Care partners, Sports Clubs, Schools and Community and Voluntary Sector Partners. This partnership working will be critical to achieve the aspiration for co-located sports and health facilities at Community Sport and Wellbeing Hubs and will be essential to understand the needs of the community and work with them to identify additional sources of funding to help develop sustainable solutions. The Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs), both in terms of the Core Leadership Team and ‘Connect Space’, represent an existing network of partners who support population health and identify priority areas in their local plan. Embedding physical activity providers within the INTs will be an important step to facilitate partnership working with health and social care.</p> <p>The potential Community Sports and Wellbeing Hub project in Stowmarket is a good example of the Council leading a partnership approach, bringing together stakeholders including Stowmarket High School, Town Council, Everyone Active, local sports clubs and health partners to explore new infrastructure. This approach should be replicated for other potential projects and programmes (not just capital infrastructure) across the District to explore new, creative and sustainable delivery models.</p>

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Facility Audit – Babergh (provided as separate document)

Appendix 2: Facility Audit – Mid Suffolk (provided as separate document)

Appendix 3: Supply and Demand Assessment (provided as separate document)

Appendix 4: Stakeholder Engagement – Analysis (provided as separate document)

Appendix 5: Survey Responses (provided as separate document)

Appendix 6: Updated Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan (provided as separate document)

Appendix 7: NGB Sport Specific Gap Analysis (provided as separate document)



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APPENDIX B – SUPPLY AND DEMAND ASSESSMENT

PROJECT:	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Update
SUBJECT:	Supply and Demand Assessment – Core Leisure Facilities
DATE:	14/05/21

1. Introduction

- 1.1 An updated supply and demand assessment has been undertaken for each of the local authority area to provide an indication of the balance of supply and demand for key areas of indoor sport and physical activity provision in each district as a whole.
- 1.2 Assessments for each of the types of provision listed below have been undertaken based on population and demographic data for each district currently (2019)¹ and in the future (2036)².
- Health and fitness (gyms)
 - General Swimming
 - Swimming Lessons
 - Sports halls.
- 1.3 The assessment for health and fitness, general swimming and swimming lessons are based on SLC’s latest methodologies and most up to date participation rate assumptions. The methodologies used have changed in some respects from those used in the previous Facilities Strategy work undertaken for the Councils, so the findings are not directly comparable with previous results. The main changes are summarised below:
- Health and fitness – demand levels based on updated age-based participation rates with socio-economic and ethnicity-based sensitivity factors applied.
 - General swimming – demand levels based on updated participation rates with socio-economic and ethnicity-based sensitivity factors applied. Model considers demand in the peak period against capacity of existing provision in the peak period (rather than current / assumed usage levels)
 - Swimming lessons – demand levels based on updated participation rates with socio-economic and ethnicity-based sensitivity factors applied.
- 1.4 An up-to-date audit of supply has also been used to inform the assessments. The key findings of the assessment in terms of the balance of supply and demand for these key types of provision are summarised in this section for each local authority area. It should be noted that these assessments exclusively consider supply and demand within each district and do not take account of imported or export demand.

¹ Office of National Statistics Mid-Year Estimates

² Office of National Statistics Population Projections

2. Babergh

2.1 Based on 2019 mid-year estimates, Babergh has a population of 92,036 people which will increase to 99,442 by 2036. The demand generated by this population, taking into account demographic factors including age, ethnicity and socio-economic status has been compared with existing levels of supply in the district.

Health and Fitness

2.2 Nine health and fitness facilities with community access (pay and play or membership access) have been identified within the district with a total of 331 stations between them. The location of the facilities relative to population density across the district currently is shown in Figure 1. Facilities are concentrated around the areas of highest population density as would be expected, with some limited provision available in more rural areas in the centre and south east. There is no provision within the district north of Sudbury.

Figure 1: Health and Fitness Provision in Babergh



	Site Name	Stations	Access Type
1	GREAT CORNARD SPORTS CENTRE	35	Pay and Play
2	HADLEIGH POOL & LEISURE	35	Registered Membership use
3	HOLBROOK ACADEMY	21	Registered Membership use
4	KERSEY MILL HEALTH & FITNESS	20	Pay and Play

	Site Name	Stations	Access Type
5	KINGFISHER LEISURE CENTRE (SUDBURY)	100	Pay and Play
6	PEAKE FITNESS AT THE STOKE BY NAYLAND CLUB	37	Registered Membership use
7	SUDBURY SPORTS CENTRE	15	Pay and Play
8	YOU FIT HEALTH CLUB (IPSWICH) Ex Sprit HC.	18	Registered Membership use
9	ZEST HEALTH AND FITNESS	50	Registered Membership use

2.3 The findings of the health and fitness assessment for Babergh are shown in Table 1. This shows an undersupply currently of c. 81 stations increasing to 99 stations in 2036.

Table 1: Health and Fitness Supply and Demand Assessment - Babergh

Health & Fitness	2019	2036
Total Population	92,036	99,443
Demand (potential Members)	9,065	9,463
Total Supply (stations)	331	
Satisfied Demand (Members - actuals and benchmarked estimates)	7,282	
Unsatisfied Demand (Members)	1,783	2,181
Unsatisfied Demand (Stations)	81	99
* Negative is oversupply / Positive is undersupply		

General Swimming

- 2.4 Nine indoor swimming facilities six of which provide some form of community access (pay and play or membership access) have been identified within the district with a total water space of 1,186.5 sqm between them. The other 3 shown (Ipswich High School, Letts Swim and Royal Hospital School Holbrook) are available for private hire or club sessions and host swimming lesson providers.
- 2.5 The location of the facilities relative to population density across the district currently is shown in Figure 2. Similar to health and fitness provision, facilities are concentrated around the areas of highest population density, with some limited provision available in more rural areas in the centre and south east and no provision within the district north of Sudbury.

Figure 2: Indoor Swimming Provision in Babergh



	Site Name	Area	Access Type
1	BIRCH FARM COMPLEX	70	Pay and Play
2	FIRST STROKES SWIM SCHOOL IPSWICH	126	Pay and Play
3	HADLEIGH POOL & LEISURE	262.5	Pay and Play
4	IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL	300	Sports Club / Community Association
5	KINGFISHER LEISURE CENTRE (SUDBURY)	500	Pay and Play
6	LETT'S SWIM	62.5	Private hire
7	PEAKE FITNESS AT THE STOKE BY NAYLAND CLUB	108	Registered Membership use
8	ROYAL HOSPITAL SCHOOL HOLBROOK	522	Sports Club / Community Association
9	YOU FIT HEALTH CLUB (IPSWICH)	120	Registered Membership use

- 2.6 The findings of the general swimming supply and demand assessment for Babergh are shown in Table 2. This shows an oversupply currently of c. 817 SQM of water space and an undersupply of 815 SQM in 2036. This is based on the estimated capacity during peak times across all of the facilities against estimated peak time demand.

Table 2: General Swimming Supply and Demand Assessment - Babergh

Latent Demand General Swimming	2019	2036
Total Population	92,036	99,443
Demand (weekly swimming participants)	5,497	5,512
Total Supply (SQM)	2008	
Satisfied Demand (weekly swimming participants - actuals and benchmarked estimates)	12,574	
Unsatisfied Demand (weekly swimming participants)	-7,077	-7,062
Unsatisfied Demand (SQM)	-817	-815
* Negative is oversupply / Positive is undersupply		

Swimming Lessons

- 2.7 Based on desktop research, 8 of the facilities shown in Figure 2 have swimming lesson sessions as part of their programming. The capacity of current swimming lesson programmes at each facility have been estimated based on available information and desktop research.
- 2.8 The findings of the supply and demand assessment for swimming lesson provision in Babergh are summarised in Table 3. This shows an oversupply of provision across the district equivalent to 790 pupils currently and 989 pupils in 2036.

Table 3: Swimming Lessons Supply and Demand Assessment – Babergh

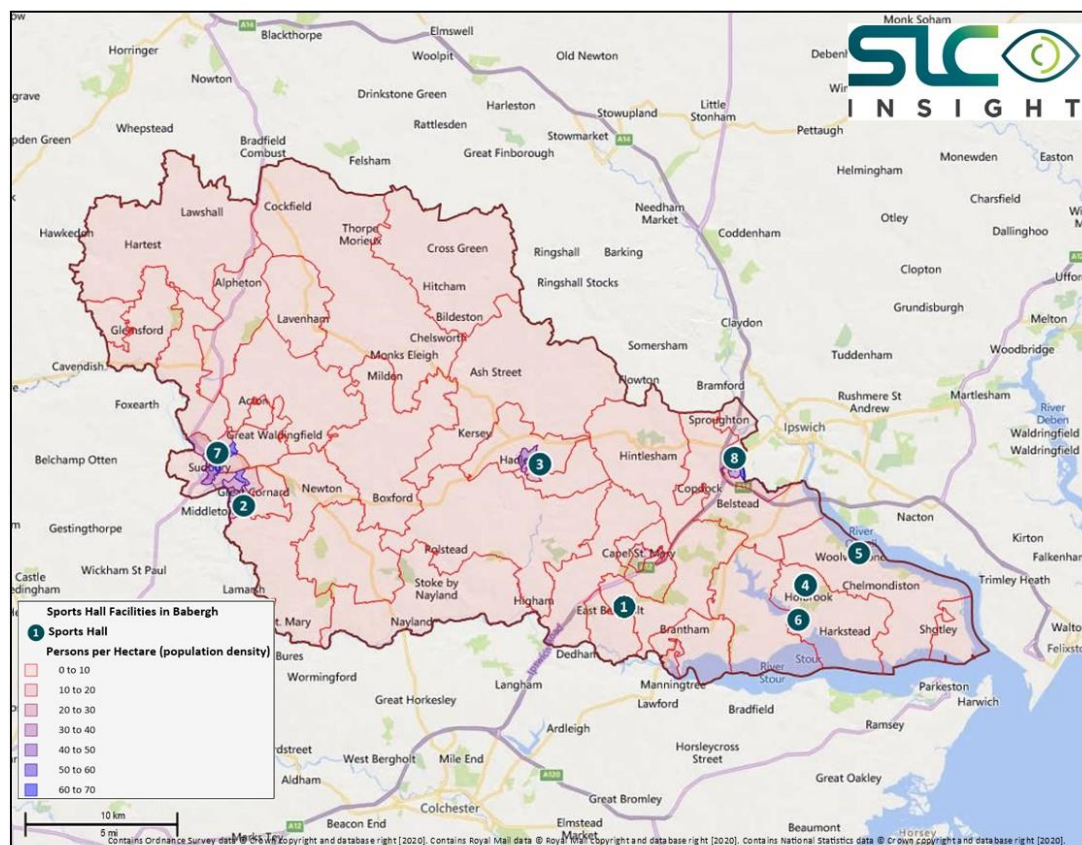
Latent demand Swimming Lessons	2019	2036
Total Population	92,036	99,443
Demand (pupils)	2,567	2,368
Satisfied Demand (pupils - actuals and benchmarked estimates)	3,357	
Unsatisfied Demand (pupils)	-790	-989
* Negative is oversupply / Positive is undersupply		

Sports Halls

2.9 Fourteen sports halls with some form of public access across eight sites have been identified in Babergh. Of these, eight halls are of 3 badminton court size or greater. There are a total of 44 courts across the fourteen halls, 38 courts if only the 3+ badminton court halls are included. The distribution of these facilities relative to population density is shown in

2.10 Figure 3.

Figure 3: Sports Hall Provision in Babergh



	Site Name	Courts	Access Type
1	EAST BERGHOLT HIGH SCHOOL & SPORTS CENTRE	4	Pay and Play
		1	Pay and Play
2	GREAT CORNARD SPORTS CENTRE	5	Sports Club / Community Association
		1	Sports Club / Community Association
3	HADLEIGH HIGH SCHOOL	4	Sports Club / Community Association
		1	Sports Club / Community Association
4	HOLBROOK ACADEMY	4	Sports Club / Community Association
		1	Sports Club / Community Association
		1	Sports Club / Community Association
5	IPSWICH HIGH SCHOOL	5	Sports Club / Community Association
6	ROYAL HOSPITAL SCHOOL HOLBROOK	5	Sports Club / Community Association
7	SUDBURY SPORTS CENTRE	5	Sports Club / Community Association
		1	Sports Club / Community Association
8	SUFFOLK ONE	6	Sports Club / Community Association

- 2.11 An assessment of supply and demand for sports hall provision based on the 2019 and 2036 population of Babergh has been undertaken using Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator. The Sports Facility Calculator can help to quantify the demand generated by a population for key community sports facilities.
- 2.12 Based on the 2019 population and demographics, the population of Babergh generates demand for 24.19 badminton courts. – equivalent to 6.05 4-court halls. In 2036, this increases to 24.79 badminton courts or 6.2 4-court halls. This suggests there is a significant current and future oversupply of sports hall provision in the district.

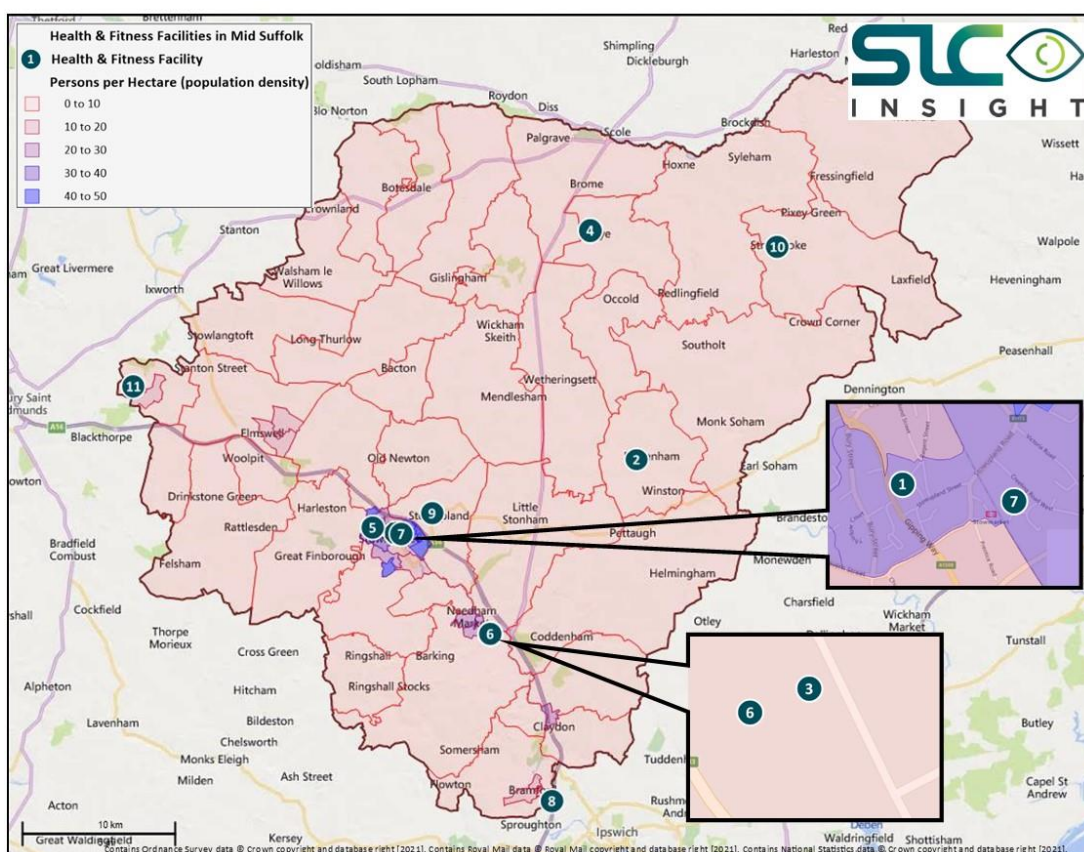
3. Mid Suffolk

3.1 Based on 2019 mid-year estimates, Mid Suffolk has a population of 103,895 people which will increase to 112,973 by 2036. The demand generated by this population, taking into account demographic factors including age, ethnicity and socio-economic status has been compared with existing levels of supply in the district.

Health and Fitness

3.2 Eleven health and fitness facilities with community access (pay and play or membership access) have been identified within the district with a total of 485 stations between them. The location of the facilities relative to population density across the district currently is shown in **Figure 4**. Facilities are concentrated around the areas of highest population density as would be expected, with some limited provision available in more rural areas to the north and east.

Figure 4: Health & Fitness Provision in Mid Suffolk



	Site Name	Stations	Access Type
1	BODYWIZE	47	Registered Membership use
2	DEBENHAM SPORTS AND LEISURE	32	Pay and Play
3	EDT GYM	26	Registered Membership use
4	HARTISMERE SPORTS CENTRE	16	Pay and Play

	Site Name	Stations	Access Type
5	MID SUFFOLK LEISURE CENTRE	100	Pay and Play
6	NEEDHAM GYM & FITNESS	47	Pay and Play
7	NRG FITNESS GYM	60	Registered Membership use
8	RIVERHILLS HEALTH CLUB AND BOUTIQUE SPA	85	Registered Membership use
9	STOWUPLAND SPORTS CENTRE	19	Registered Membership use
10	STRADBROKE SWIM AND FITNESS CENTRE	33	Pay and Play
11	THURSTON SPORTS EDUCATION CENTRE	20	Pay and Play

3.3 The findings of the health and fitness assessment for Mid Suffolk are shown in Table 4. This shows an oversupply currently of c. 7 stations and an undersupply of 18 stations in 2036. This suggests that supply and demand are broadly in balance.

Table 4: Health & Fitness Supply and Demand Assessment – Mid Suffolk

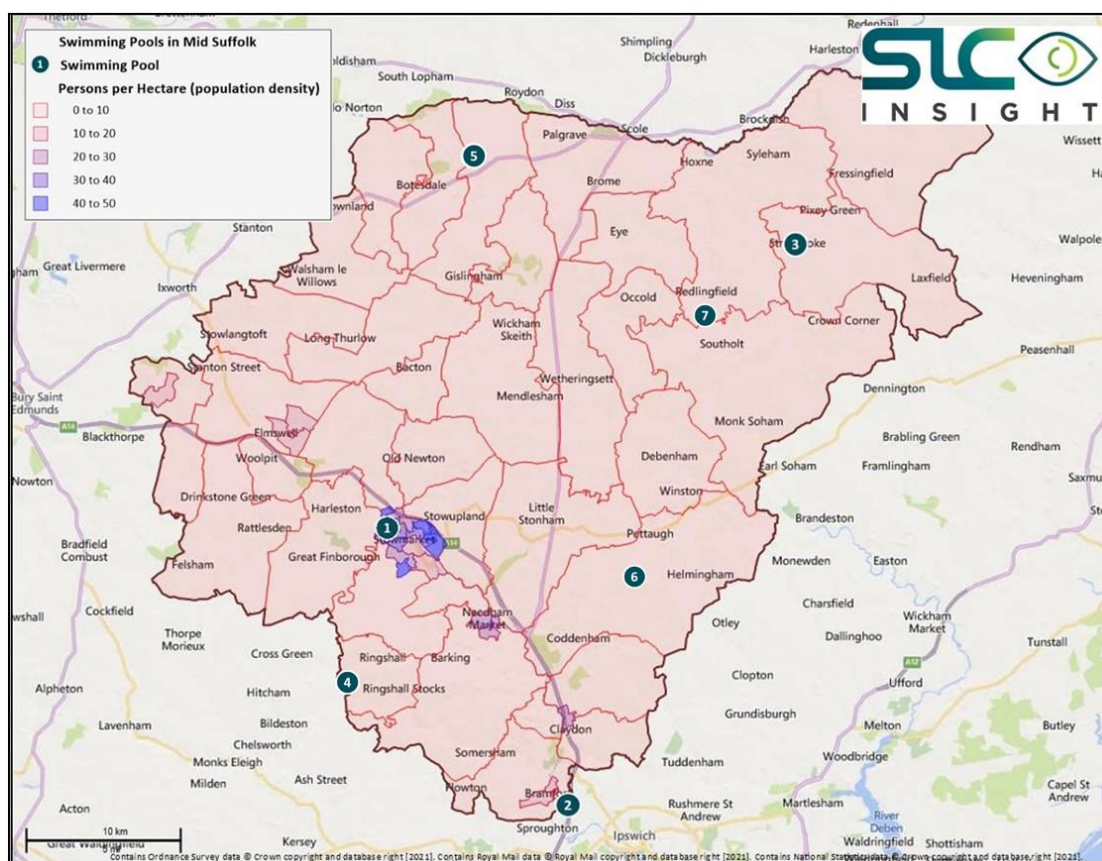
Latent demand Health & Fitness	2019	2036
Total Population	103,895	112,973
Demand (potential Members)	10,513	11,065
Total Supply (stations)	485	
Satisfied Demand (Members - actuals and benchmarked estimates)	10,670	
Unsatisfied Demand (Members)	-157	395
Unsatisfied Demand (Stations)	-7	18
* Negative is oversupply / Positive is undersupply		

General Swimming

3.4 Four indoor swimming facilities which provide some form of community access (pay and play, sports club or membership access) have been identified within the district with a total water space of c.1054 sqm between them, although access to the MOD Wattisham pool is restricted to clubs / community groups outside of Army use hours. A further three private facilities – Wortham Pool, Poplar Farm Pool and Wash Farm Barn – only provides swimming lesson and / or private hire provision.

3.5 The location of the facilities relative to population density across the district currently is shown in Figure 5. The most significant facility, Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre is located in the area of greatest population density, but there is some more limited provision distributed across other areas of the district to the south east and north.

Figure 5: Indoor Swimming Provision in Mid Suffolk



	Site Name	Area	Access Type
1	MID SUFFOLK LEISURE CENTRE	457	Pay and Play
2	RIVERHILLS HEALTH CLUB AND BOUTIQUE SPA	112	Registered Membership use
3	STRADBROKE SWIM AND FITNESS CENTRE	160	Pay and Play
4	MOD WATTISHAM	325	Sports Club / Community Association
5	WORTHAM POOL - IVY HOUSE FARM	54	Lessons only
6	POPLAR FARM POOL (GOSBECK)	50	Lessons only
7	WASH FARM BARN POOL	57	Lessons only

- 3.6 The findings of the general swimming supply and demand assessment for Mid Suffolk are shown in Table 5. This shows an oversupply currently of c. 350 SQM of water space and increasing to 356 SQM in 2036. This is based on the estimated capacity during peak times across all of the facilities against estimated peak time demand.
- 3.7 It should be noted, this calculation includes the MOD Wattisham pool, although access to this facility is more restricted (i.e. to approved groups only) which will, in reality, significantly reduce its impact on demand.
- 3.8 Excluding the MOD pool, the oversupply is reduced to 25 SQM currently and 31 SQM in 2036.

Table 5: General Swimming Supply and Demand Assessment – Mid Suffolk

Latent Demand General Swimming	2019	2036
Total Population	103,895	112,973
Demand (weekly swimming participants)	6,098	6,046
Total Supply (SQM)	1,053	
Satisfied Demand (weekly swimming participants - actuals and benchmarked estimates)	9,135	
Unsatisfied Demand (weekly swimming participants)	-3,037	-3,088
Unsatisfied Demand (SQM)	-350	-356
* Negative is oversupply / Positive is undersupply		

Swimming Lessons

- 3.9 Based on desktop research, 5 of the facilities shown in Figure 5 have swimming lesson sessions as part of their programming. The capacity of current swimming lesson programmes at each facility have been estimated based on available information and desktop research.
- 3.10 The findings of the supply and demand assessment for swimming lesson provision in Mid Suffolk are summarised in Table 6. This shows an undersupply of provision across the district equivalent to 429 pupils currently and 91 pupils in 2036.

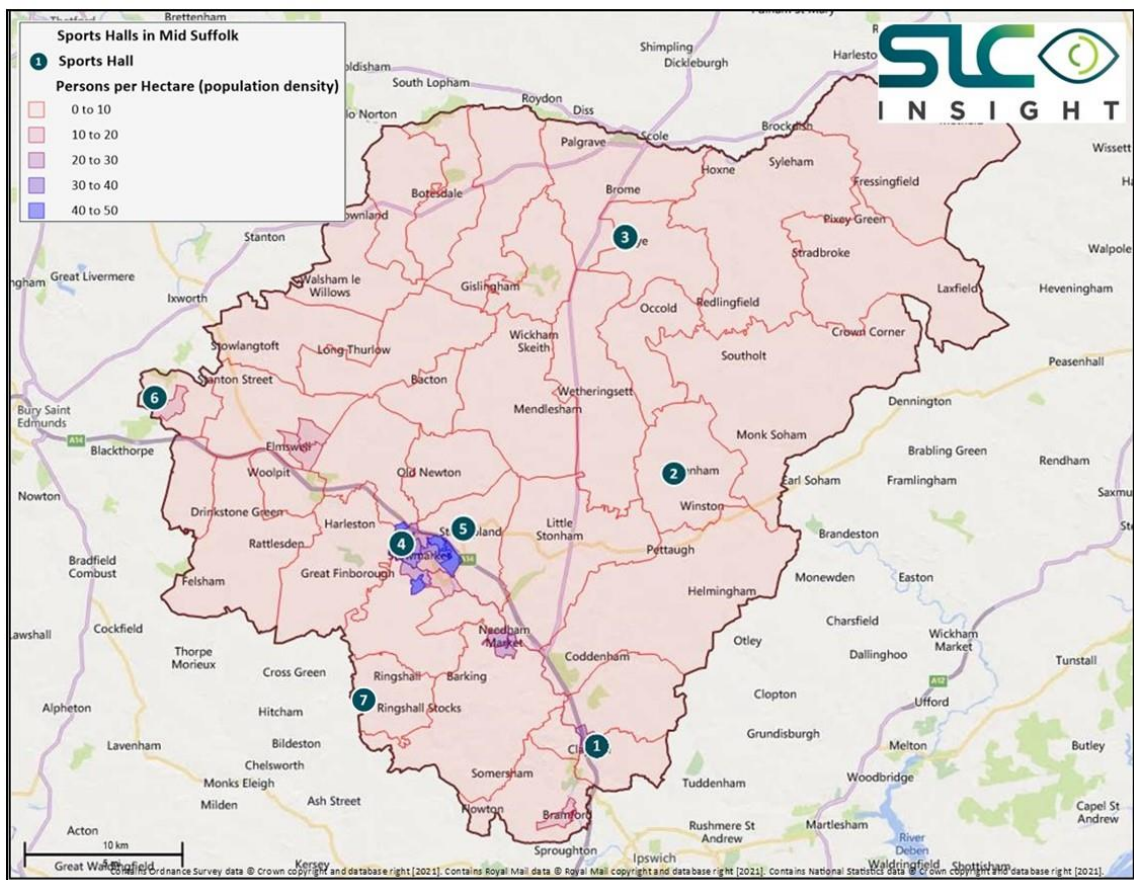
Table 6: Swimming Lessons Supply and Demand Assessment – Mid Suffolk

Latent demand Swimming Lessons	2019	2036
Total Population	103,895	112,973
Demand (pupils)	2,918	2,570
Satisfied Demand (pupils - actuals and benchmarked estimates)	2,489	
Unsatisfied Demand (pupils)	429	81
* Negative is oversupply / Positive is undersupply		

Sports Halls

3.11 Nine sports halls with some form of public access across seven sites have been identified in Mid Suffolk. Of these, 7 halls are of 3 badminton court size or greater. There are a total of 28 courts across the eight halls, 25 courts if only the 3+ badminton court halls are included. The distribution of these facilities relative to population density is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Sports Hall Provision in Mid Suffolk



	Site Name	Courts	Access Type
1	CLAYDON HIGH SCHOOL	4	Sports Club / Community Association
2	DEBENHAM SPORTS AND LEISURE	4	Pay and Play
3	HARTISMERE SPORTS CENTRE	3	Sports Club / Community Association
		2	Sports Club / Community Association
4	MID SUFFOLK LEISURE CENTRE	4	Pay and Play
5	STOWUPLAND SPORTS CENTRE	3	Sports Club / Community Association
		1	Sports Club / Community Association
6	THURSTON SPORTS EDUCATION CENTRE	4	Pay and Play
7	MOD WATTISHAM	4	Sports Club / Community Association

- 3.12 An assessment of supply and demand for sports hall provision based on the 2019 and 2036 population of Mid Suffolk has been undertaken using Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator. The Sports Facility Calculator can help to quantify the demand generated by a population for key community sports facilities.
- 3.13 Based on the 2019 population and demographics, the population of Mid Suffolk generates demand for 27.60 badminton courts. – equivalent to 6.9 4-court halls. In 2036, this increases to 28.59 badminton courts or 7.15 4-court halls. This suggests there is a current and future undersupply of sports hall provision in the district, albeit a small one of c. 1.6 – 2.6 courts.
- 3.14 This undersupply is based on the inclusion of a 4-court hall at MOD Wattisham which has some sports club and community association access. However, as with general swimming provision, the more limited accessibility of this facility should be taken into account when considering the balance of provision. Excluding this facility, the shortfall is slightly increased to c. 5.6 – 7.6 badminton courts.

Author: Anna Dalton, Director, and Toby Kingsbury, Project Director

The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy

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APPENDIX C – STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

PROJECT:	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Update
SUBJECT:	Stakeholder Engagement
DATE:	14/05/21

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1. Sports Clubs

Table 1: Challenges and priorities by specific sport (survey responses)

Sport	Comment	COVID Impact	Quote
Badminton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More daytime access • Access is a big problem for Badminton • Support to encourage more volunteers and provide funding for training/coaching • Concern that people will not want to access indoor sports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nervousness to return to indoor sports • Social restrictions limiting the pre- and post-match enjoyment • Likely reduction in older players returning • Concern that schools will not re-open facilities to the public 	
Bowls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to keep going as a popular activity for older people • Social gathering is important • Would like to attract more younger people and families • Concern for the decline in volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loneliness amongst members • Those with outdoor greens have been able to organise some practice and matches • Good uptake for those clubs who did manage to run some activities between lockdowns • Volunteers have kept the grounds in good condition • Clubs host extra social events which have stopped • Grants from the councils have kept many clubs afloat • Phone calls to stay connected 	<p>Great Waldingfield Bowls and Social Club <i>“We have the facility to offer a space for other exercise eg: Pilates ,chair exercise or similar, but as the area is carpeted and not a washable floor, we are unsure if this is permissible since Covid.”</i></p>
Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire to work with schools, especially state schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members have taken up new hobbies 	<p>Sudbury Cricket Club <i>“The survival of the clubs is key. Cricket is never played in state schools. Without local clubs there</i></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial impact on facilities with clubhouses (bar revenue etc.), fundraising events • Loss of membership income against retained fixed costs • Break of habit, a year away from the sport, now unlikely to return • Lack of schools activity is a concern • Social media to engage 	<p><i>would be no cricket. Getting young people into sport needs to happen. We need the support of parents and funding from the council to help us take sport into schools via a coaching programme. We have had to rely on help from a private school to help fund our coaching programme. The private school is helping us coach people from all backgrounds and ability.”</i></p> <p>Hadleigh Cricket Club <i>“While the first few months of lockdown affected us, with no participation in cricket and only a 7 week season (as opposed to 20 weeks) possible, we did recover well in that short window and actually saw greater participation especially among juniors than we would normally.”</i></p>
<p>Football</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter training facilities • Huge emphasis on facilities • Evening and winter training options – 3G pitches • Clubhouses • No winter training options in Stowmarket • Ancillary facilities poor quality – especially female changing areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial impact – no social or fundraising activities • Social media to engage • Extra admin and management requirements from coaches and volunteers • Debenham Youth Football Club set up sessions online for parents to help keep their children active • Bures Utd FC – Coaches set challenges and sponsored events for charity and new kit 	<p>Salvation Army FC <i>“Lack of winter training is our biggest concern. We really struggle to find places to train when the dark evenings are here as there is nowhere available in Stowmarket to train.”</i></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thurston FC – teamed up with a PT to offer both children and adults activities at home 	
Rugby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winter training facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some zoom sessions 	
Running/Athletics			Stowmarket Striders “In desperate need of a running track to encourage more members. Ipswich and Bury both have tracks and we have lost members to them.”
Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to courts is an issue Concern that members are going to David Lloyd etc. where facilities are significantly better Difficult to widen access without specialist coaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less impact than other sports, with restrictions allowed at least singles for a decent time Lost members who were shielding Sproughton – allowed parents to play with their junior members for free Lost income from match fees Leagues suspended but social play continued through much of the year Support needed for self-employed coaches Some clubs saw an increase in participation as tennis was one of the only sports permissible 	
Other		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hockey – no opportunity to hold fundraising events No recruitment activities 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller sports have used external consultants to run online activities (e.g. gymnastics) • Issues with capacity big problem for small sports • Smaller groups seem to have used online options more than larger sports • Competition swimmers have been significantly impacted – huge amount of work goes into shaving seconds off PB's 	
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Figure 1: Answers to the multiple choice question: What are the main challenges your club faces in growing or sustaining membership?

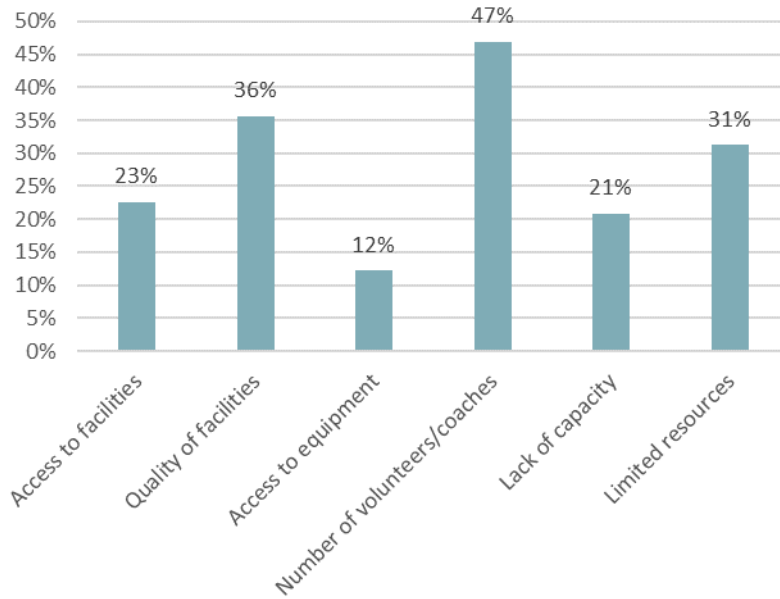


Figure 2: Thematic analysis of open text responses to the question: "What future challenges do you anticipate for sport and physical activity provision in the Districts?"

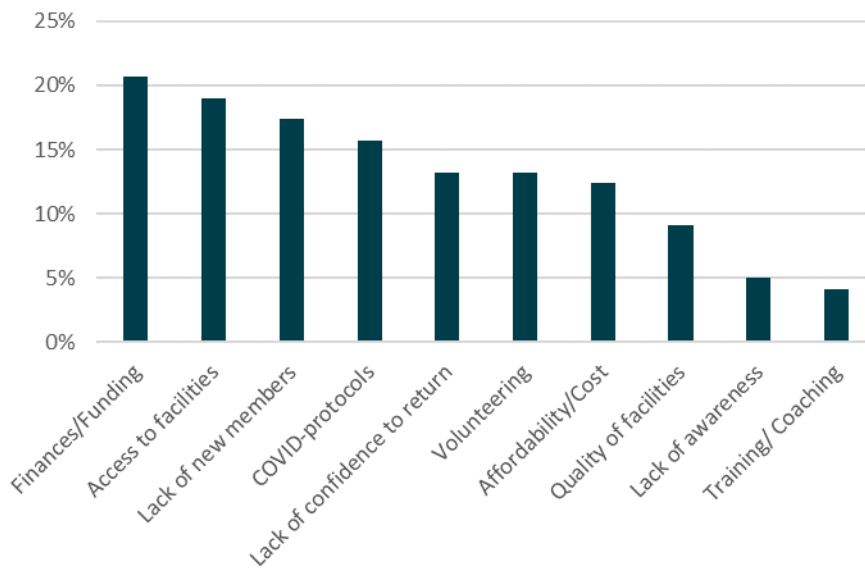


Figure 3: Thematic analysis of responses to the question: "What role could the District Councils play in supporting the provision of and participation in sport and physical activity?"

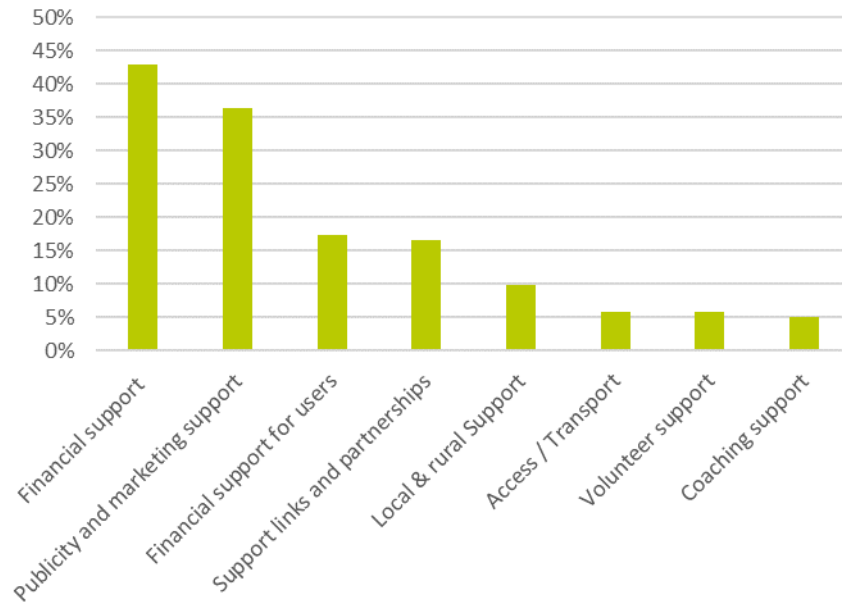


Figure 4: Sport Clubs perception of the change in condition of the facilities they use since 2017.

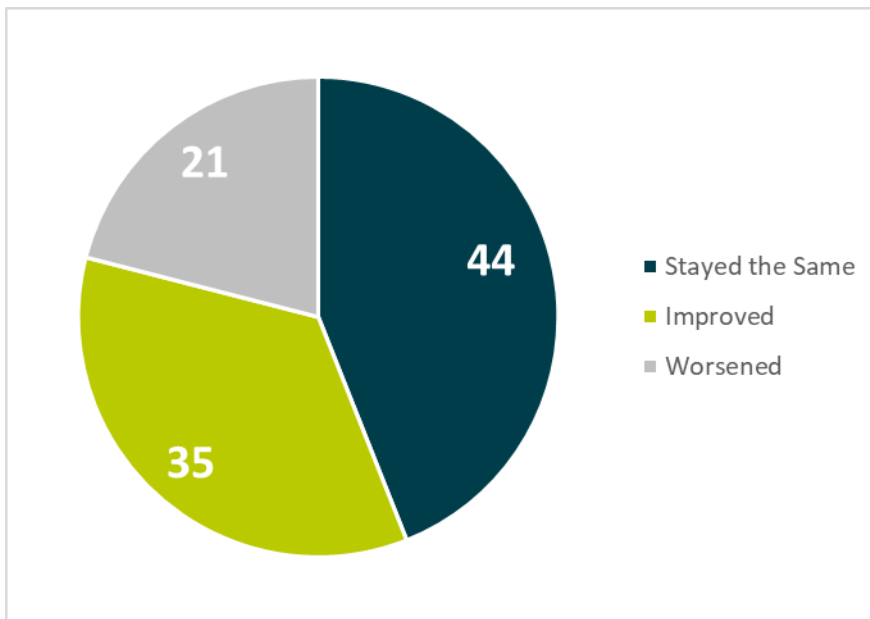


Table 2: Sport Clubs - Ward specific issues in Babergh

Ward	Clubs	Comments on Facilities
Box Vale	Boxford Carpet Bowls Club Boxford & District Bowls Club Milden Cricket Club	Concern that there will be a lack of groundmen as it is done on goodwill. Milden Cricket Club need new nets and would like to build links with schools.
Copdock & Washbrook	Ipswich Cricket club Copdock & Washbrook Lawn Bowls Club Copdock & Washbrook Tennis & Badminton Club Hintlesham and chattisham carpet bowls	The tennis club are considering forming a MUGA to provide facilities for other sports to use the courts. They are looking for funding to upgrade the facilities. No negative comments about the facilities.
East Bergholt	East Bergholt Bowls Club East Bergholt Sports Club East Bergholt Tennis Club East Bergholt Utd FC	Concern that land previously used for recreation is being developed. Old and poor facilities
Ganges	Shotley Peninsula Swimming Club	Reliant on use of pool at Ipswich High School
Great Cornard	Great Cornard parkrun Cornard United FC Great Cornard Karate Club (SEFKA)	Football: <i>"It is a constant battle to keep the pitch in good condition whilst keeping available for a number of teams which is why we hire other facilities to train on."</i> <i>Lack of good quality affordable playing facilities. Clubs at lower end of spectrum find it very difficult to generate funds to cover day to day costs let alone upkeep of facilities the standards of which will eventually decline"</i>
Hadleigh	Hadleigh Stars Gymnastics C.I.C.	Request for AGP to support winter training for football and rugby.

Ward	Clubs	Comments on Facilities
	Hadleigh United Football Club Hadleigh Swimming Club Hadleigh Badminton Club Hadleigh Cycling Club ARENA karate Hadleigh Bowling Club Hadleigh Cricket Club Hadleigh Tennis Club	Most comments from Hadleigh based clubs focussed on volunteers, affordability and support to promote small clubs.
Long Melford	Acton Cricket Club Long Melford Colts & Fillies Long Melford Community Sports Trust Long Melford Football Club	New clubhouse at Stoneylands through the Long Melford Community Trust – <i>“For us the challenge will be ensuring that our new facility can help provide some sustainable support for the development of sport and recreational activities on the site.”</i> <i>“The new clubhouse will be the only modern, multi-purpose sport and recreation facility in Melford and there is a real desire to try and ensure that all the hard work we have put in over the last five years benefits the whole community.”</i>
	Bildeston Carpet Bowls Club Brettenham Park Cricket Club Wattisham Blades Netball Club	Wattisham Blades Netball Club moved to Needham Market Community Centre and are extremely pleased with the courts there. The Cricket Club rely on facilities at Old Buckenham Hall School
Sproughton & Pinewood	Sproughton Tennis Club	<i>“The key priority should be to prevent the loss of existing sport facilities. The next priority is to encourage and support more people to use them. Financial support to small clubs in rural locations that do not have a large enough local catchment but only if they are prepared to open up to non-members (to make the facilities more accessible). Some form</i>

Ward	Clubs	Comments on Facilities
		<i>of funding for coaching to attract people new and/or back to tennis otherwise coaching is unaffordable to many. It is impossible for small tennis clubs to compete with larger clubs with better facilities (such as David Lloyds etc) so more affluent people now migrate to these making it even harder for small clubs financially. If the current facilities are not supported many will be lost."</i>
Stour	Holbrook Hornets Holbrook Bowls Club Holbrook Tennis Club	Holbrook Hornets have winter football training at Royal Hospital School. Abbeycroft no longer manage Holbrook Academy so the tennis club have suffered. The new arrangement with the school allows lessons but does not include toilet or changing facilities. The astroturf at the school was removed and the courts were left with the tarmac beneath. The club no longer have a membership scheme because the facilities have worsened and the access to courts has changed.
Sudbury	Sudbury Cricket Club Sudbury karate club Sudbury Bury Karate skc Tudor archers Sudbury Boxing Club Sudbury Rowing Club	Quality of facilities, affordability and volunteers are a challenge for clubs. Cricket Club limited by access to facilities: <i>"we need a second ground we so hope chilton woods will provide us much needed help"</i>

Table 3: Sport Club - Ward specific issues in Mid-Suffolk

Ward	Clubs	Comments on Facilities
Blakenham	Gipping Valley Bowls Club Great Blakenham Cycle Speedway Somersham Tennis Club	Lack of volunteers Quality of facilities

Ward	Clubs	Comments on Facilities
<p>Stowmarket wards (Chilton / St. Peter's / Stow Thorney / Combs Ford)</p>	<p>Stowmarket Lawn Tennis Club Mid Suffolk Gymnastics Club Stowmarket Striders Stowmarket Fencing Club Chilton Fields parkrun Stowmarket Badminton Club Scorpion martial arts academy Mid Suffolk Indoor Bowls Club Stowmarket Swimming Club Stowmarket Cricket Club Stowmarket Rugby Union Football Club Salvation Army FC Stowmarket Stinger Volleyball Club Stowmarket Judo Club</p>	<p>9 clubs using facilities in Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre 3 using Chilton Fields</p> <p>Club growth restricted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of the sports hall at MSLC • Availability of times to book • A permanent setup for Gymnastics could host hundreds more people <p>Main challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and quality of facilities • Number of volunteers • Limited Resources • Lack of winter training for outdoor sports (e.g. AGP or indoor facilities, MSLC already at capacity) <p>Population Growth: Multiple comments that Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre not large enough to accommodate the growing population of Stowmarket. The swimming pool was built in the 1980's for a population of 8500 – now 3x more. Requests for development to be matched by S106 for sports clubs.</p> <p>Stowmarket Striders: <i>"In desperate need of a running track to encourage more members. Ipswich and Bury both have tracks and we have lost members to them."</i></p>
<p>Claydon & Barham</p>	<p>Claydon FC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor maintenance of Claydon High School Sports Hall • Lack of winter training facilities for football

Ward	Clubs	Comments on Facilities
	Claydon Karate Club Claydon and District Badminton Club Henley Athletic FC	
Debenham	Mid Suffolk Mutts Skater Hockey Club Debenham Ladies Badminton Debenham youth football club Debenham Bowls Club Debenham Badminton Club Debenham Leisure Centre Football Club	Happy with improvements to the Leisure Centre and Sports Hall and cheaper hourly slots. Debenham High School use the facilities during the day -limited access for clubs. General contentment with facilities in Debenham
Eye	Eye Local District Badminton Club Eye New Age Kurling Club Borough of Eye Bowls Club	Currently using community facilities but recognise an opportunity for club growth if facilities at Hartismere School were open during evenings and weekends.
Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden	Haughley PF Bowls Club Old Newton Cricket Club Old Newton United FC Old Newton Bowls Club Stowupland Falcons FC Stowmarket Table Tennis Club Stowupland Bowls Club	No clubs using sports halls Access to winter training facilities (all-weather 3G pitch) Stowupland Falcons: <i>"More all weather 3g pitches, better facilities, also opportunities for revenue generation through owning our own pitches and clubhouse."</i>
Hoxne & Worlingworth	Bedfield and Monk Soham Tennis Club Hoxne Bowls Club	Bedfield Tennis court needs re-surfacing (one court club)

Ward	Clubs	Comments on Facilities
Needham Market	Finborough Ladies Netball Club Needham Market Football Club Bosmere Junior Badminton Club Needham Market Cricket Club Needham Market Phoenix Youth FC	Reliance on school facilities (especially netball)
Rattlesden	Rattlesden Thursday afternoon badminton club Rattlesden Badminton Club	One badminton court in the Rattlesden Village Hall is serving 85 members of two badminton clubs
Stradbroke & Laxfield	Laxfield Football Club Stradbroke Cricket Club Stradbroke White Hart Bowls Club Stradbroke Badminton Club Stradbroke Tennis Club Stradbroke & District Bowls Club	Badminton moved from Stradbroke High School to Hartismere School (Eye) because the hire charges increased. Quality of and access to facilities
Thurston	Thurston table Tennis Club Thurston FC Cockfield Netball Club	Limited facilities Limited ancillary facilities for Football Reliance on School and community facilities

2. Schools

Table 4: Survey Response Analysis for Schools

Key Theme	Comments	Potential options
Accessibility – transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cost and logistics of transport for schools to take their pupils to events or to use other facilities is prohibitive. <p>The rural nature of the districts means that some primary schools in small villages find it difficult to take their pupils to do activities elsewhere.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Low-cost transport to external facilities or clubs – e.g. Activity bus – schools can book the bus a certain number of times per term (dependent on the number of pupils) in order to take their students to use facilities at other schools (e.g. high schools) and/or leisure centres etc.
Coaching – access to quality professional coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to quality coaches is important for schools, especially primary schools, and the sports premium funding has been well-received by some to provide this. Opportunities for coaching courses and qualifications for both pupils and staff would be welcomed 	
Partnerships with local groups/clubs etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools are keen to form links with local sports clubs and those that have, have found that it has increased participation in their school. Schools are looking for the council to support the connection of schools with clubs and with other schools. Some schools have hosted or suggested taster sessions by local clubs for the students to experience different activities <p>Offering a diverse range of activities for all levels of ability is important for schools and they would like links with a variety of clubs, not just the traditional sports</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Twinning programme – Link each school with at least one local club including one which offers a different type of activity (i.e. not just football) to broaden the experience for the pupils. Programme to support and encourage clubs to run taster sessions in schools “Ready, Steady, Have a Go!”. This could be a monthly event in a hub location (e.g. high school) where 2 clubs a month offer taster sessions. Information pack/online resource for schools with a list of the clubs in the area and their contact details.

Key Theme	Comments	Potential options
<p>Access to Facilities and/or quality of facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are some specific facility/physical provision needs, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pot Kiln Primary School (Great Cornard) want to invest in an all weather pitch ○ Hadleigh High School Hardcourt needs replacing – dangerous – used by Suffolk Rockets (Netball Club) ○ Whatfield Primary School are considering all-weather provision ○ Wood Ley Primary School (Stowmarket) has no facilities large enough for indoor PE and the sports hall at Mid-Suffolk Leisure is fully booked by the High School. They would like a new multi-use indoor facility. ○ Stowmarket High have moved the gymnasium into a new building, the new provision is smaller and placing capacity and usage constraints for PE and after-school clubs. ○ Mendham Primary School do not have a hall large enough for indoor activities due to the recent dramatic growth in number of pupils <p>Primary schools would like the opportunity to use other, better facilities in order to diversify the provision and to inspire and enthuse the students.</p>	<p>Support small schools to link with larger schools to potentially join up after school clubs and allow use of their facilities. This would also require support for transport.</p>
<p>Awareness (of activities occurring) / Marketing</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Signposting of the activities that are available 2. Role of schools to educate pupils in the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and staying active. 3. Supporting parents to encourage their children to be active at home and provide resources that will help them do so. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As above – Information pack / online resource for schools with locally available activities, clubs. 2. Council to make better use of the insight schools have and the direct route to support vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

Key Theme	Comments	Potential options
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging families – some schools have had success with the Daily Mile to encourage parents to join in. For example Long Melford Primary School have built a pathway round the field to use as a daily mile track and encourage both children and parents to walk or run a mile each day. 	<p>How many schools participate in the Daily Mile? Is there anything that could support schools to sign up and help to encourage parents and families to join in?</p>
<p>Affordability/Cost of activities</p>	<p>4. Having a diverse and accessible range of affordable options is important</p> <p>Cost is the most recurrent challenge mentioned by schools</p>	<p>1. Activity Voucher for schools to give to families in need (e.g. those on the pupil premium) which will give them 3 sessions at a local club or entry to the leisure centre for 2 weeks – similar to the OneLife agreement with Abbeycroft/Everyone Active. Council to come to an agreement with clubs/providers where they can claim back the cost of attendance from the council. Fixed number of vouchers based on budget.</p>
<p>Finances/Funding for Schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants to support schools to improve facilities, buy or maintain equipment and bring in professional coaches <p>Sports Premium grant has been well-received</p>	
<p>Community Use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some schools (particularly small primary schools) are averse to opening to the public There are a number of schools who, if encouraged and supported, would likely open their facilities for community use, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Babergh <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Waldingfield Primary (would require a caretaker) 	<p>1. Awareness campaign of the benefits to the community to use school facilities</p> <p>Logistical/Administration support for schools wanting to open to the community but aren't sure how or who would want to</p>

Key Theme	Comments	Potential options
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Old Buckenham Hall ○ Pot Kiln (consider if their facilities improved they could be a local sports/community hub) <p>Mid-Suffolk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ringshall Primary ● Cedars Park Primary, Stowmarket ● Trinity Primary, Stowmarket (would require caretaker and external toilets) ● Claydon Primary (would require caretaker and external toilets) ● Mendham (very small school, could open field but it needs refurbishment) 	

3. Town and Parish Councils, and Community Groups/Village Hall Committees

Table 5: Town and Parish Councils - Ward analysis - Babergh

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
Assington	Leavenheath	Finances	Making people aware of what is going on in the village and encouraging volunteers to help make plans for the village facilities	Providing us with options of equipment and if any funding available to help with the costs of replacing existing setups
Box Vale	Brent Eleigh Milden Monks Eleigh	Monks Eleigh would like to update and improve the Children's Play area and put Outdoor Adult Gym Equipment around the edge of the recreation ground.	Accessible sport and physical activity for all	Work with parishes to consider the use of CIL to provide necessary infrastructure where there are shortfalls Ensure continuation of Fit Villages
Brantham	Brantham	Increasing population but don't have sufficient facilities to meet current and future needs. Financial barriers Travel issues (lack of public transport)	Encouraging female sport Making sport and physical activity available to all - particularly those facing financial hardship Travel to sport provision Finding people to run groups/activities	
Bures St Mary & Nayland	Nayland with Wissington	Maintenance of Village Hall Loss of income from hires	Education and financial support. More opportunities for classes etc. at facilities such as swimming pools. More opportunities for children	Grants for equipment, staff, voluntary groups.

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
		Fewer children's activity groups due to lack of volunteers or parents who prefer to use more commercial activities	and the elderly. Better public transport links.	
Chadacre	Lawshall Shimpling	Shimpling – cost of replacing play equipment and football posts when they need it. Finding a new pilates instructor.		
East Bergholt	East Bergholt	Identified demand exceeds the facilities Housing plans will double the current population – no funds or land to expand facilities for sports/physical activity	Investment, investment, investment. Release funds to improve local infrastructure. we have broken floodlights, flooding issues, and scrub land available that we could put in more activities. Unfortunately, we would need many thousands of pounds to achieve our goals. We have the personnel, the ambition, the drive, and the past pedigree, but no financial support.	The football association, the lawn tennis association and the ECB cricket board refuse grant applications if the clubs do not have long term leases or ownership. The district council can set up a finance scheme that allow clubs to get improvement loans, with their parish council standing surety.
Hadleigh	Hadleigh (completed by Councillor Rolf Beggerow)	Under-provision of outdoor provision	HTC is currently planning to upgrade the facilities at the Layham Road Sports Ground, namely a Full size 3G/AGP pitch in line with the top priority area stated in the Babergh Local Football Facilities Plan, commissioned by the FA, Football League and Sport England.	Council sponsors a Working Group of Councillors and Users to manage the Layham Road Sports Ground

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
			<p>This will support mostly the needs of the Hadleigh United FC and the Hadleigh Rugby Club. Also planned is new Sports Pavilion at the Layham Road Sports Ground.</p> <p>Want facilities to bring other sports to Hadleigh – Hockey and Netball</p> <p>“Getting More Land for the Outdoor Sports Clubs. The Volunteer Clubs do a great job for the Community and need more support. This was recognised in the 2017 strategy document (see Strategic Priorities 1,2,3 and 6) but time has proved that was just good words in a document. From my perspective as someone has given over 40 years of voluntary service to Sport in Hadleigh it is about time there was some delivery on these priorities. I am not sure how tax payers money spent on outsourcing an update to the Strategy Document is going to help, but perhaps you can help highlight and report what has not happened</p>	<p>Recognise the need for outdoor facilities/pitches as well as indoor.</p> <p>The District Planners should negotiate additional land for use by the outdoor sports clubs when negotiating with Housing developers. e.g Persimmons Homes. They should facilitate additional major funding for sports (e.g S106) and make the funds available to the Town and Parish Councils, so they can invest in upgrades to facilities and acquire or lease more land.</p>

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
			since the 2017 document was approved."	
Lavenham	Cockfield	The challenge locally is to cover all age ranges and ensure all groups have access to facilities giving physical activity. This includes widening the definition for example the provision of allotments whilst not sport equally provides opportunities for open air physical involvement.		Provide sports and activity schemes with inclusion to avoid a slide by young persons into antisocial behaviour and this like..
South East Cosford	Kersey Lindsey	Barriers in Lindsey – lack of facilities in the village (small village hall only)	Small rural playgrounds are vital for rural children. As this pandemic has shown we need facilities near to home. The provision of facilities such as swimming pools, gyms, sports pitches, tennis courts etc are vital to get everyone out exercising and having fun. Provision for all ages - free at point of access	Ensure that all new development coming forth concentrates on providing access to all to community facilities and not those run by private organisations for profits.
Stour	Holbrook Stutton	Community use at Holbrook Academy - The Peninsula Sports Centre, which used to be run by Abbeycroft Leisure, has now closed, although HPC is negotiating with Holbrook Academy about the future use of the facilities.	Stutton Parish Council is in the process of receiving ownership of land for a playing field with no facilities Holbrook - There is no public local swimming pool which, as the	

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
		Holbrook - The sports pavilion on the Reade Field is no longer fit for purpose and needs complete renovation. This would enhance the facilities available to the general public.	village/district is surrounded by open water, would be an excellent facility, not only for leisure, but also to enable young people to learn to swim and have confidence in the water.	

Table 6: Town and Parish Councils - Ward Analysis - Mid-Suffolk

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
Bacton	Bacton Wattisfield Wyverstone	Wattisfield - The facilities are dated and need serious TLC. Village hall is dated and needs serious money spending on it. Recreation play area also needs investment. Needs bringing into 21st century. Bacton – concerns over the availability of public open space	Acceptance that every parish can't provide everything. There needs to be some coordinated approach as to what facilities and where to ensure value for money.	
Battisford & Ringshall	Barking Offton & Willisham	Offton and Willisham – No land available for outdoor activity. Challenges in planning regulations. Long travel distance to dedicated sport/leisure facilities	More open space	

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
Claydon & Barham	Ashbocking Barham Coddenham	Sport and physical activity provision to match the increased development	<p>Barham picnic site – opportunity for sports/leisure provision and/or active play site</p> <p>Barham parish council is currently looking at funding to install a small play area in Barham</p>	
Debenham	Debenham	Lack of wet provision and youth provision	<p>Since 2017 – there has been the creation of a committee to create a swimming pool in Debenham. The community has created a model proposal and business plan, and raised funds. Discussions with MSDC have stalled due to large turnover of staff at the District.</p> <p>Debenham Neighbourhood Plan specified three key leisure and recreation priorities for the village:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A Swimming Pool (Already identified in MSDC's leisure strategy - business plan already produced). 2) Youth Buildings. 3) Skatepark. 	Strengthened planning policies....(and enforcement!) to ensure new development produces adequate and desired local infrastructure.

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
			<p>The Neighbourhood Plan was endorsed in the 2019 referendum by 96% of the population on a 60% turnout. It specified a number of other new initiatives.</p> <p>The new Play Strategy has identified a number of new proposals including a new premier play structure for the village.</p>	
Eye	Eye Occold	<p>Occold FC have asked for help sourcing a full-size pitch but the parish council has been unable to help</p> <p>“Eye Town Council would need to be part of a bigger partnership to encourage better health and well-being. It can not achieve it by itself.”</p>		Grants for improving existing facilities. Stop allowing new housing to be built on land that could better serve as conservation / recreational areas in rural areas
Fressingfield	Metfield	Parish is too small with too small a budget to make a sufficient impact. Facilities provided and maintained by the County would be preferable. For example a request for new goal posts had to be turned down due to insufficient funds, although the Parish Council offered to support the initiative and fit if funds were raised elsewhere.		

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
Gislingham	Wortham & Burgate		<p>Updating & extending the Children's Play Area so it is more appropriate for a wider age range (3 to 13 whereas it was built 11 years ago for 8 to 13 year olds.</p> <p>Encouraging more football & cricket teams to use our facilities including young people's teams.</p> <p>Encouraging netball, hockey & lacrosse.</p>	<p>Providing funding for facilities including coaches (not buses !)</p> <p>Making land available.</p> <p>Converting obsolete warehouses, granaries, warves into exercise facilities.</p>
Haughley, Stowupland and Wetherden	Haughley Stowupland	Haughley - There are not enough sporting facilities, 3g pitches etc for the growing population of children and the disadvantaged.	Stowupland - The Parish Council is currently consulting on providing a trim trail within the village	District Council to fund public transport to allow access to larger facilities i.e. swimming and all weather surfaces for football and tennis.
Hoxne & Worlingworth	Bedfield Southolt		Bedfield (4acre field with football pitch) - We will engage with any organisation that wishes to use our facilities and are currently in discussions with Framlingham FC	Bedfield - Continue to make grants available through the great team of Tony Bass, Roy Emerson and Josh Holmes.

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
			<p>for the use of our filed for football training.</p> <p>We are always looking for teams to use the pitch and changing facilities.</p>	
Mendlesham	Mendlesham		Currently discussions to sell Community Centre with community hire to continue for part, Community to build new /additional village hall.	
Onehouse	Onehouse		larger or additional leisure centre in the stowmarket area	
Palgrave	Palgrave Yaxley	Districts need to work together or with private enterprise to provide strategic facilities in locations accessible to the populations of several districts by road or rail.	<p>Publicise availability of cross-parish sport, & encourage cross-parish co-operation (no need for us to go it alone)</p> <p>Cooperation to maximise spending power. Help Parish Councils upgrade facilities to allow use by disabled persons.</p> <p>North Suffolk badly needs a sizeable swimming pool. Either work with South Norfolk to expand Diss, work together as Suffolk DCs upgrade Stradbroke, or seek wider</p>	

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
			co-operation to build a pool on Eye Airfield or a similar site near junctions of major road.	
Stowmarket	Stowmarket	Stowmarket has grown significantly from a small market town of 8,000 people in 1981 to a much larger community of over 21,000 people and is still growing. There is a need for additional infrastructure and amenities to meet the needs and expectations of local community. There are some significant deficits in community provision with the Leisure Centre requiring further investment and a number of sports clubs unable to play in their own town such as Netball, Hockey, Youth Football and Basketball with the Stowmarket Striders Athletics Club also seeking facilities.	<p>Town Council could play a role in identifying priorities and delivering projects if there is a sense of direction and purpose in taking action to address the deficits that exist. However, this requires a wider focus on land at Meadlands, Millfields and the Football Club as well as that next to the High School/Leisure Centre and Chilton Fields. The Town Council would be prepared to lead on a project or projects in the town if MSDC wish to concentrate on the land adjacent to the Leisure Centre as long as MSDC will provide a commitment to support projects with gap funding if necessary to get project resourcing plans over the finishing line</p> <p>Support of Stowmarket Town FC Junior Section with 3G Facilities in the town Investigation of MUGAs and sports training facilities for use by various club</p>	

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
Stradbroke & Laxfield	Stradbroke Laxfield	Stradbroke - The biggest challenge faced by the Parish Council is sourcing companies to service and maintain equipment, financing this can also be an issue. If facilities are provided as part of a planning obligation, this MUST come with sufficient funds to maintain and service the area and all its equipment.	Laxfield – good facilities very well used	Strong lobbying of Suffolk County Council to reinstate public transport links.
Thurston	Thurston	<p>With the growth of the village by a further 818 houses - an average increase to the population of around 3,000 there are insufficient parcels of land coming forward to allow for the expansion of facilities.</p> <p>The five new developments within the village are merely offering LEAP facilities with none offering NEAP or anything more challenging.</p> <p>As identified within the Thurston NDP there is a distinct lack of facilities for the 12+ with limited areas for this age group to hang out.</p> <p>There is a lack of provision of wheeled facilities, basketball court, "free access" Multi Use Games Areas and places to "meet".</p>	With the rollout of further growth on the edges of village and towns there will be a natural requirement to ensure that further facilities are incorporated which provide free access at point of use. Play and Recreation Grounds are important as are accessible natural green space.	CIL should be used to enhance, protect and expand the natural environment as well as support those parishes wished to increase their sport and physical facilities. There is a need to ensure that the mental and physical wellbeing of residents is not lost in the drive to provide further housing and schooling.

Ward	Parish / Town	Specific Challenges	Priorities and Opportunities	Role of the DC's
Walsham-le-Willows	Walsham-le-Willows	All organisations, even the Parish Council apart from the Clerk, are run by volunteers – if the Sports Club is to grow any further then relying solely on volunteers is probably not viable.	<p>Possibility of an indoor sports facility that could be used by local school during the day?</p> <p>Possible increase in indoor gym or increase in size of the multi-use games area</p> <p>In terms of growth there is also a balance to be struck between maintaining the current local appeal of the club and turning the club into a more 'generic municipal' facility. More investment through a joint arrangement with MSDC might help to preserve the current local character of the club</p>	

Table 7: Planned projects - Babergh Town and Parish Councils

Ward	Parish / Town	Location specific issues and/or planned/ongoing projects (Quotes from survey)
Box Vale	Monks Eleigh	Monks Eleigh would like to update and improve the Children's Play area and put Outdoor Adult Gym Equipment around the edge of the recreation ground.
Brantham	Brantham	Increasing population but don't have sufficient facilities to meet current and future needs.
	Shimpling	Shimpling – cost of replacing play equipment and football posts when they need it. Finding a new pilates instructor.

Ward	Parish / Town	Location specific issues and/or planned/ongoing projects (Quotes from survey)
East Bergholt	East Bergholt	Housing plans will double the current population – no funds or land to expand facilities for sports/physical activity. Release funds to improve local infrastructure. We have broken floodlights, flooding issues, and scrub land available that we could put in more activities.
Hadleigh	Hadleigh	HTC is currently planning to upgrade the facilities at the Layham Road Sports Ground, namely a Full size 3G/AGP pitch in line with the top priority area stated in the Babergh Local Football Facilities Plan, commissioned by the FA, Football League and Sport England. This will support mostly the needs of the Hadleigh United FC and the Hadleigh Rugby Club. Also planned is new Sports Pavilion at the Layham Road Sports Ground.
Stour	Holbrook	The Peninsula Sports Centre, which used to be run by Abbeycroft Leisure, has now closed, although HPC is negotiating with Holbrook Academy about the future use of the facilities. The sports pavilion on the Reade Field is no longer fit for purpose and needs complete renovation. There is no public local swimming pool which, as the village/district is surrounded by open water, would be an excellent facility, not only for leisure, but also to enable young people to learn to swim and have confidence in the water.
	Stutton	Stutton Parish Council is in the process of receiving ownership of land for a playing field with no facilities

Table 8: Planned projects - Mid Suffolk Town and Parish Councils

Ward	Parish / Town	Location specific issues and/or planned/ongoing projects
Bacton	Bacton	Concerns over the availability of public open space
	Wattisfield	The facilities are dated and need serious TLC. Village hall is dated and needs serious money spending on it. Recreation play area also needs investment. Needs bringing into 21st century.
Battisford & Ringshall	Offton & Willisham	No land available for outdoor activity. Challenges in planning regulations. Long travel distance to dedicated sport/leisure facilities

	Barham	Barham parish council is currently looking at funding to install a small play area in Barham. Barham picnic site – opportunity for sports/leisure provision and/or active play site
Debenham	Debenham	Since 2017 – there has been the creation of a committee to create a swimming pool in Debenham. The community has created a model proposal and business plan, and raised funds. Discussions with MSDC have stalled due to large turnover of staff at the District. Debenham Neighbourhood Plan specified three key leisure and recreation priorities for the village: 1) A Swimming Pool (Already identified in MSDC's leisure strategy - business plan already produced). 2) Youth Buildings. 3) Skatepark.
	Occold	Occold FC have asked for help sourcing a full-size pitch but the parish council has been unable to help
Fressingfield	Metfield	A request for new goal posts had to be turned down due to insufficient funds, although the Parish Council offered to support the initiative and fit if funds were raised elsewhere.
Gislingham	Wortham & Burgate	Updating & extending the Children's Play Area so it is more appropriate for a wider age range (3 to 13 whereas it was built 11 years ago for 8 to 13 year olds. Encouraging more football & cricket teams to use our facilities including young people's teams.
Haughley, Stowupland and Wetherden	Haughley	There are not enough sporting facilities, 3g pitches etc for the growing population of children and the disadvantaged.
	Stowupland	The Parish Council is currently consulting on providing a trim trail within the village
Hoxne & Worlingworth	Bedfield	We will engage with any organisation that wishes to use our facilities and are currently in discussions with Framlingham FC for the use of our field for football training. We are always looking for teams to use the pitch and changing facilities.
Mendlesham	Mendlesham	Currently discussions to sell Community Centre with community hire to continue for part, Community to build new /additional village hall.
Onehouse	Onehouse	Larger or additional leisure centre in the stowmarket area

	Yaxley	North Suffolk badly needs a sizeable swimming pool. Either work with South Norfolk to expand Diss, work together as Suffolk DCs upgrade Stradbroke, or seek wider co-operation to build a pool on Eye Airfield or a similar site near junctions of major road.
Stowmarket	Stowmarket	There is a need for additional infrastructure and amenities to meet the needs and expectations of local community. There are some significant deficits in community provision with the Leisure Centre requiring further investment and a number of sports clubs unable to play in their own town such as Netball, Hockey, Youth Football and Basketball with the Stowmarket Striders Athletics Club also seeking facilities. The Town Council would be prepared to lead on a project or projects in the town if MSDC wish to concentrate on the land adjacent to the Leisure Centre as long as MSDC will provide a commitment to support projects with gap funding if necessary to get project resourcing plans over the finishing line.
Stradbroke & Laxfield	Stradbroke	The biggest challenge faced by the Parish Council is sourcing companies to service and maintain equipment, financing this can also be an issue
Thurston	Thurston	With the growth of the village by a further 818 houses - an average increase to the population of around 3,000 there are insufficient parcels of land coming forward to allow for the expansion of facilities. As identified within the Thurston NDP there is a distinct lack of facilities for the 12+ with limited areas for this age group to hang out. There is a lack of provision of wheeled facilities, basketball court, "free access" Multi Use Games Areas and places to "meet".
Walsham-le-Willows	Walsham-le-Willows	Possibility of an indoor sports facility that could be used by local school during the day? Possible increase in indoor gym or increase in size of the multi-use games area

Table 9: Specific issues and planned projects in Village Halls and Community Centres in Babergh

Ward	Parish	Name of Organisation	Location specific issues and/or planned/ongoing projects (Quotes from survey)
Brantham	Brantham	Brantham Management community interest company	We are just about to do an advertising campaign on social media
Capel St Mary	Capel St Mary	Capel St Mary Community Trust	The facilities we have are dated and in desperate need of improvement. This can not be done without significant external investment. Without improvements people will not use the facilities and either go elsewhere or no longer participate in the sports
East Bergholt	East Bergholt	The Constable Memorial Hall Management Committee	<p>The main issue governing access to the hall is the state of the roof of the main building, which leaks despite remedial works carried out a few years ago (under gurantee). At the moment the hall is usable, but the issue will need to be tackled very soon. The council could help by advising us on the best way forward with this problem and by suggesting possible sources of funding. The hall is a well used and important village asset.</p> <p>The constructrion of an extension to the hall so that we can accommodate more activities alongside each other is a medium term aim of the manangement committee.</p>
Great Cornard	Great Cornard	Great Cornard Parish Council	The Parish Council is looking to enhance current play equipment and also add equipment for the enjoyment of older children.
Great Cornard	Great Cornard	Cornard Leisure Centre	We area trying to link with our local Tri Sudbury group to make Cornard Leisure Centre their home. We would very much like to have more links with clubs moving forward.

Table 10: Specific issues and planned projects in Village Halls and Community Centres in Mid Suffolk

Ward	Parish	Name of Organisation	Location specific issues and/or planned/ongoing projects
Bacton	Westhorpe	Westhorpe Village Hall	We are not looking for financial support, as we have received very generous grants, but help with finding leaders to run sessions and help with promoting them would be very helpful.
Debenham	Debenham	Debenham Sports and Leisure	Extending our partnership with Debenham High School is a key priority for us and we are actively engaged in this. Our priorities are also equally shared with the provision of our Community Centre.
Haughley, Stowupland & Wetherden	Stowupland	Stowupland village hall	<p>The village hall committee are currently looking at a project to increase the facilities that are provided in the hall and on village hall land. This will involve new plans and we will be looking for grant funding for these plans in the future. The support from MSDC will be most welcome as we look at the new plans</p> <p>We have plans to upgrade the facilities for the SSC and Stowupland Bowls club. We are hoping that as our plans for redevelopment take shape we will look forward to working closely with the MSDC grant funding team to get the necessary funding for these exiting plans to go ahead. As i have said we our looking to expand our facilities and that is our priority, if we don't then we will lose many of the organisation's that currently use our area.</p>
Needham Market	Needham Market	Needham Market Community Centre	Olympic Standard Net Ball facilities
North West Cosford	Preston St Mary	Preston St Mary Village Hall	We need to identify any different activities in which our residents may wish to partake. Imminent building works will prevent us from any initiatives until next year.

Ward	Parish	Name of Organisation	Location specific issues and/or planned/ongoing projects
Rickinghall	Rickinghall	Rickinghall Village Hall	<p>We would be happy to support a new tennis club on our courts.</p> <p>We need to rebuild our skatepark ramps at a cost of some £50K. Funding is being sought from MSDC and others. During the process of replacing the skatepark ramps, we have a re-design which will offer twin tracks rather than single track and provide more varied challenges for users.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance of our skatepark, children's play area and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) are an ongoing challenge, particularly as the skate park and play area are free to use. The MUGA is underused and therefore barely covers the running costs.</p>
Stowmarket	Stowmarket	Stowmarket Town Council - community Centre	Grants for any changes we need to make to community centre to make centre more attractive and usable to groups in general
Thurston	Norton	Norton Village Hall	New Community Centre being developed - would like to see full time management and staff roles like those in adjacent villages. We need financial support to complete our building re-development plans which will introduce many more options for various sports for various age groups.
Thurston	Tostock	Tostock Village Hall Committee	Nearly all of our sports facilities are external, and require improvement. We currently have a problem with the surface of our main football pitch which is in need of some work to improve it and make it fit for use. We also need to replace our basketball nets and back boards.
Walsham-le-Willows	Badwell Ash	Badwell Ash Playing Feild and Recreation Ground/Village Hall	Funds where available to improve facilities. Not just for major works but simple decoration to make premises more attractive to potential users.

Ward	Parish	Name of Organisation	Location specific issues and/or planned/ongoing projects
Walsham-le-Willows	Wattisfield	Wattisfield Community Centre	<p>The facilities are very dated and are in need of investment to renovate. Significant lack of funds and investment could close the facility altogether which would be a great shame.</p> <p>The children’s playground is dated but is well used and is in need up renovating or updating but there are no funds available.</p>

4. All Survey Responses:

Sports Clubs

1. Stowmarket Lawn Tennis Club - Tennis
2. Shotley Peninsula Cricket Club - Cricket
3. Sudbury Cricket Club - Cricket
4. Mid Suffolk Gymnastics Club - Gymnastics
5. Capel St. Mary Bowls Club - Bowls
6. Finborough Ladies Netball Club - Netball
7. Old Newton Cricket Club - Cricket
8. Sudbury Karate Club - Martial Arts
9. Hadleigh Stars Gymnastics C.I.C. - Gymnastics
10. Claydon Fc - Football
11. East Bergholt Bowls Club - Bowls
12. Stowupland Falcons Fc - Football
13. Mid Suffolk Mutts Skater Hockey Club - Skating / Skater Hockey
14. Needham Market Football Club - Football
15. Stradbroke Cricket Club - Cricket
16. Stowmarket Striders - Running
17. Shotley Peninsula Swimming Club - Swimming
18. Stowmarket Table Tennis Club - Table Tennis
19. Debenham Ladies Badminton - Badminton
20. Hadleigh United Football Club - Football
21. Wortham Lawn Tennis Club - Tennis
22. Stowmarket Fencing Club - Fencing
23. Sproughton Tennis Club - Tennis
24. Bosmere Junior Badminton Club - Badminton
25. Thurston Table Tennis Club - Table Tennis
26. Chilton Fields Parkrun - Running
27. Holbrook Hornets - Football
28. Wortham Bowls Club - Bowls
29. Stowmarket Badminton Club - Badminton
30. Hadleigh Swimming Club - Swimming
31. Hadleigh Badminton Club - Badminton
32. Claydon Karate Club - Martial Arts
33. Hadleigh Cycling Club - Cycling
34. Needham Market Cricket Club - Cricket
35. Bacton Bowls - Bowls
36. Old Newton United Fc - Football
37. Arena Karate - Martial Arts
38. East Bergholt Sports Club - Football, Cricket, Tennis, Bowls
39. Ipswich Cricket Club - Cricket
40. East Bergholt Tennis Club - Tennis
41. East Bergholt Utd Fc - Football
42. Sudbury Bury Karate Skc - Karate
43. Great Cornard Parkrun - Running
44. Wattisham Blades Nc - Netball
45. Cornard United Fc - Football
46. Shotley Peninsula Swimming Club - Swimming For Adults Only
47. Laxfield Football Club - Football
48. Great Waldingfield Bowls And Social Club - Bowls
49. Stowupland Bowls Club - Bowls
50. Acton Cricket Club - Cricket
51. Debenham Youth Football Club - Football
52. Holbrook Bowls Club - Bowls
53. Scorpion Martial Arts Academy - Martial Arts
54. Mid Suffolk Indoor Bowls Club - Bowls
55. Eye Local District Badminton Club - Badminton
56. Eye New Age Kurling Club - New Age Kurling
57. Great Cornard Karate Club (Sefka) - Martial Arts
58. Claydon Fc - Football
59. Stowmarket Swimming Club - Swimming
60. Tudor Archers - Archery
61. St Botolphs And District Bowls Club - Bowls
62. Harleston Magpies Hockey Club - Hockey
63. Stowmarket Cricket Club - Cricket
64. Christchurch Ladies' Netball - Netball
65. Milden Cricket Club - Cricket
66. Brantham Bowls Club - Bowls
67. Sudbury Boxing Club - Boxing
68. Hadleigh Bowling Club - Bowls

69. Bures Utd Fc - Football
70. Hadleigh Cricket Club - Cricket
71. Boxford Carpet Bowls Club - Carpet Bowls
72. Bramford Tennis Club - Tennis
73. Stowmarket Rugby Union Football Club - Rugby
74. Claydon Fc - Football
75. Bramford Bowls Club - Bowls
76. Bedfield And Monk Soham Tennis Club - Tennis
77. Long Melford Colts & Fillies - Football
78. Sudbury Rowing Club - Rowing
79. Hadleigh Tennis Club - Tennis
80. Henley Athletic Fc - Football
81. Hoxne Bowls Club - Bowls
82. Hintlesham And Chattisham Carpet Bowls - Bowls
83. Gipping Valley Bowls Club - Bowls
84. Debenham - Bowls/Lawn Bowls
85. Old Newton Bowls Club - Bowls
86. Rattlesden Thursday Afternoon Badminton Club - Badminton
87. Salvation Army Fc - Football
88. Somersham Tennis Club - Tennis
89. Debenham Badminton Club - Badminton
90. Claydon And District Badminton Club - Badminton
91. Brantham Leisure Centre - Football,Cricket,Netball,Tennis,Yoga/Pilates,Martial Arts,Dance,Bowls,Table Tennis, Keep Fit
92. Copdock & Washbrook Lawn Bowls Club - Bowls
93. Thurston Fc - Football
94. Brettenham Park Cricket Club - Cricket
95. Haughley Pf Bowls Club - Bowls
96. Rattlesden Badminton Club - Badminton
97. Needham Market Phoenix Youth Fc - Football
98. Thorndon Carpet Bowls - Bowls/Carpet Bowls
99. Boxford & District Bowls Club – Bowls
100. Stradbroke White Hart Bowls Club - Bowls
101. Bildeston Carpet Bowls Club - Bowls
102. Walsham Le Willows Sports Club - Football,Cricket,Tennis,Yoga/Pilates,Bowls,Table Tennis, Darts, Snooker
103. Cockfield Netball Club - Netball
104. Debenham Leisure Centre Football Club - Football
105. Lavenham Ltc - Tennis
106. Stonham Aspal Fc - Football
107. Borough Of Eye Bowls Club - Bowls
108. Thornham Magna Bowls Club - Bowls
109. Inori Aikikai Aikido Dojo - Martial Arts
110. Stradbroke Badminton Club - Badminton
111. Elmswell Cc - Cricket
112. Copdock & Washbrook Tennis & Badminton Club - Tennis,Badminton
113. Holbrook Tennis Club - Tennis
114. Long Melford Community Sports Trust - Football
115. Stowmarket Stinger Volleyball Club - Volleyball
116. Stradbroke Tennis Club - Tennis
117. Stratford St. Mary Carpet Bowls Club - Carpet Bowls
118. Stradbroke & District Bowls Club - Bowls
119. Thorndon Bowls Club - Bowls
120. Great Blakenham Cycle Speedway - Cycling
121. Stowmarket Judo Club - Martial Arts
122. Eye Petanque Club - Petanque
123. Ipswich Cricket Club - Cricket
124. The Jets Fc - Football
125. Sudbury Storms Swimming Club - Swimming
126. Stowmarket Squash Club - Squash
127. Tostock Tennis Club - Tennis
128. Cornard Bowls Club - Bowls
129. Brantham Athletic Football Club - Football



Town/Parish Council

1. Bedfield
2. Eye Town Council
3. Wattisfield
4. Offton And Willisham
5. Rattlesden
6. Monks Eleigh
7. Kersey Parish Council
8. Burstall
9. Debenham Parish Council
10. East Bergholt Parish Council
11. Metfield Parish Council
12. Coddenham
13. Hadleigh
14. Walsham Le Willows
15. Cockfield Parish Council
16. Barking Parish Council
17. Elmswell Parish Council
18. Lawashall Parish Council
19. Southolt Parish Meeting
20. Milden Parish Meeting
21. Ashbocking Parish Council
22. Stratford St Mary
23. Laxfield Parish Council
24. Brent Eleigh Parish Council
25. Nayland With Wissington Parish Council
26. Onehouse Parish Council
27. Shimpling Parish Council
28. Brettenham Parish Council
29. Holbrook Parish Council
30. Yaxley Parish Council
31. Stonham Parva
32. Leavenheath Parish Council
33. Mendlesham
34. Copdock & Washbrook Parish Council
35. Brantham Parish Council
36. Bacton
37. Barham Parish Council
38. Palgrave Parish Council
39. SproUGHTon
40. Crowfield Parish Council
41. Stradbroke Parish Council
42. Haughley Parish Council
43. Stutton
44. Lindsey Parish Council
45. Stowupland
46. Occold
47. Thurston Parish Council
48. Stowmarket Town Council
49. Wortham Parish Council
50. Sudbury Town Council
51. Great Cornard Parish Council
52. Harleston, Stowmarket
53. Leavenheath
54. Wyverstone

Village Halls and Community Centres

1. Norton Village Hall
2. Polstead Village Hall
3. Westhorpe Village Hall
4. Rattlesden Community Council
5. Stratford St Mary Village Institute
6. Elmswell Parish Council
7. Claydon Recreation Ground And Football Club
8. Little Waldingfield Parish Rooms
9. Cedars Park Cic Ltd
10. Preston St Mary Village Hall
11. Stowupland Village Hall
12. Holbrook Village Hall
13. Rickinghall Village Hall
14. Debenham Sports And Leisure
15. Badwell Ash Playing Field And Recreation Ground/Village Hall
16. Wattisfield Community Centre
17. Wetherden Village Hall
18. The Coddenham Centre
19. Long Melford Football Club
20. Capel St Mary Community Trust
21. The Blackbourne And The Wesley
22. Needham Market Community Centre
23. The Constable Memorial Hall Management Committee
24. Stowmarket Town Council - Community Centre
25. Great Blakenham Village Hall
26. Newton Green Village Hall
27. Brantham Management Community Interest Company
Tostock Village Hall Committee
28. The Mix Stowmarket

Schools:

1. Ormiston Sudbury Academy
2. Ringshall
3. Mendham Primary School
4. Rattlesden C of E Primary Academy
5. Bures CEVC Primary
6. Boxford CEVC Primary
7. Elmsett C of E VC primary
8. Elmswell CP
9. Chilton Community Primary
10. East Bergholt High School
11. Pot Kiln Primary School
12. Wood Ley Community Primary School
13. Cedars Park Primary School
14. Long Melford CE Primary and Nursery
15. Bentley & Copdock Primary Schools
16. Somersham Primary School
17. Great Waldingfield CEVC Primary School
18. East Bergholt Primary School
19. Thomas Gainsborough School
20. Trinity CEVAP school
21. Old Buckenham Hall
22. Hadleigh High School
23. Olive Academy - Suffolk
24. Finborough
25. Hartest CE Primary School
26. Royal Hospital School
27. Whatfield CEVC Primary School
28. Wetheringsett Manor School
29. Bildeston
30. Old Newton Primary
31. Claydon Primary School
32. Beaumont Community Primary School

Community Groups

1. Citizens Advice Ipswich
2. Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk
3. Woolverstone Project
4. GoStart Community Transport
5. The Befriending Scheme
6. OneLife Suffolk
7. Porch Project
8. Eastern Angles Theatre Company
9. Thornham Walks
10. Museum of East Anglian Life
11. DanceEast

APPENDIX D – NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY INFORMATION

PROJECT:	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils Leisure, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Update
SUBJECT:	National Governing Body Sport Information Supplied
DATE:	14/05/21

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Table 1: NGB and updated audit information - Babergh

Sport	Pitches (see Audit)	Clubs	Supply and Demand
Football	61 adult, 27 youth 11 v11 & 9v9, 31 mini 7v7 & mini 5 v 5, 7 AGP (126 total)	27 clubs (SFA data), 212 teams (49 adult male, 8 adult female, 77 youth male, 10 youth female, 4 disability, 64 mini soccer teams - LFFP 2020)	See PPS Action Plan and LFFP
Cricket	34 pitches total including 12 at schools and 3 at private clubs.	12 clubs, 11 affiliated 2021 (2 lost since 2015).	Suffolk Cricket comment – Sufficient capacity for current & future growth.
Rugby	38 Total including 23 at Schools	2 clubs Hadleigh – 13 teams (6 mini/midi, 5 youth, 2 adults). Sudbury - 17 teams (6 mini/midi, 8 youth, 3 adults).	No deficit in Sudbury but a 2 adult pitch deficit in Hadleigh
Hockey	5 AGP	1 club (Sudbury), 8 adult, 3 junior teams.	England Hockey comment – Sufficient capacity for current and future growth if current AGP retained. No requirement for additional AGP due to availability in Ipswich, West Suffolk etc.

Netball	51 total, 46 macadam and 5 AGP. 41 courts are on school sites.	4 Netball Clubs	
Tennis	99 total, 77 macadam and 22 AGP. 64 courts are on school sites.	8 registered LTA clubs. 693 registered members.	Holbrook Tennis Club have changed their agreement with Holbrook Academy
Badminton	8 (3+ courts) Sports Halls containing 38 courts (all available for some community use)	2 registered Badminton England Clubs	See Supply and Demand Assessment (Appendix 3). Badminton England supply and demand suggests 79 additional <u>court hours</u> per week by 2030.
Bowls	14 Bowls Greens	13 clubs (BE & SCBA websites)	

Table 2: NGB and updated audit information – Mid Suffolk

Sport	Pitches (see Audit)	Clubs	Supply and Demand
Football	73 adult, 26 youth 11v11 & 9v9, 31 mini 7v7 & mini 5 v 5, 5 AGP (135 total)	37 clubs (SFA data), 51 teams (72 adult male, 5 adult female, 96 youth male, 9 youth female, 1 disability, 68 mini soccer teams - LFFP 2020).	See PPS action plan and LFFP
Cricket	31 pitches total including 6 on school sites	14 affiliated clubs (2 lost since 2015)	Suffolk Cricket comment – Sufficient capacity for current & future growth. Demand for specialist indoor cricket facility/winter nets – A14 west of Ipswich.
Rugby	13 total with 8 on school sites	2 clubs Stowmarket – 13 teams (6 mini/midi, 4 youth, 3 adults). Thurston – 2 teams (2 adult).	No deficit in either Stowmarket or Thurston
Hockey	5.5 AGP	1 Club (Harleston Magpies – 17 Teams 19/20, 28	England Hockey comment – Sufficient capacity for

		Teams 18/19) + Diss Greyhound HC (1 Team) play at Hartismere School in Eye	current and future growth if current AGP retained. No requirement for additional AGP due to availability in Ipswich, West Suffolk etc.
Netball	46 total, 33 macadam and 13 AGP. 32 courts are on school sites.	5 clubs registered in Mid Suffolk and 7 clubs play at Needham market courts, 22 teams, 200 regular female players.	NGB aspiration for more 4-6 ct facility to enable central venue.
Tennis	96 total, 72 macadam and 24 AGP. 42 courts are on school sites.	7 registered LTA clubs	
Badminton	9 (3+ courts) Sports Halls containing 32 courts (3 halls are private use only, only 22 courts are available for community badminton).	8 registered Badminton England Clubs	See Supply and Demand Assessment (Appendix 3). Badminton England supply and demand suggests 81 additional <u>court hours</u> per week by 2030.
Bowls	31 Bowls Greens	29 clubs (BE & SCBA websites) plus 3 without affiliation	

Table 3: Key comments and themes from consultation with National Governing Bodies

National Governing Body	Comments
Suffolk FA	<p>Priorities for Suffolk FA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male, female and disability pathways, quality of grass pitches, safeguarding & refereeing. • To revive the local game, focussing on clubs and affiliated player football both junior & adults. • Delivery of all aspects of the Babergh & Mid Suffolk LFFP's, with appropriate partners, over the next 5-10 yrs. • High priority – 1-2 3G pitches in Stowmarket/Stowupland due to the scale of local club needs <p>There are a number of significant clubs (high performing, with community outreach and/or facilities) with ambitions, which should be supported ie:</p> <p>Babergh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFC Sudbury (facilities improvement) • Capel FC (strong youth based community). <p>Mid Suffolk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needham Market FC (Highest performing club in area with ambitions) • Stowmarket Town FC (on the way up & needing a home base for their youth teams).

National Governing Body	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller clubs with ambition include Claydon & Walsham Le Willows. <p>Challenges Sustaining sufficient & capable workforce & volunteers is an issue for clubs. Back-office tasks, grounds maintenance and sitting on committees becoming more difficult to recruit to. Ageing/lack of time and satisfaction influencing commitment. Coaching generally attracts ongoing support by parents etc.</p> <p>Update on 3G Pitch Progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stowmarket – Part of wider “live” discussions at emerging community sport working group. Town Meadow not suitable for MUGA/training facility due to access/space etc. • Stowupland – High School interest, but no recent progress. • Needham Market – Club aspiration for 2nd pitch on site to cater for growth. No recent progress. • Sudbury – “Live” current discussion with AFC Sudbury to provide 2nd pitch at their site. • Capel St. Mary – Football Foundation funding achieved for clubhouse improvements. Aspiration for 3G later. • Hadleigh – Working with Hadleigh TC to further consider Layham Rd. potential. Rugby Club now staying? Pavilion improvements! • Brantham – Interest for use of old factory site adjacent still aspiration. • Barham FC - Working with FF and B Par.Council to achieve new pitches/facilities at redundant picnic site. <p>Key Investment Projects in Babergh and Mid Suffolk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving solution to Stowmarket Town’s youth pitch provision. Suffolk FA are working with Stowmarket Town Council to consider Millfield as site for good new grass junior pitches (base), plus toilets, car parking etc. (SFA Millfield project – HQ relocation & new 3G unviable). • 3G provision – Priority for Stowmarket Town FC. Siting is funding/financially driven. Town Meadow (STFC) an option, behind the leisure centre/Stowmarket High School or Chilton Fields, unless new land becomes available. (Vision – Millfield nurse club, High Sch. Secondary Club, Town Meadow Pinnacle). • Use of SFA reserves now seeking to spread across projects rather than original large Millfield project. • General availability
<p>England and Wales Cricket Board</p>	<p>Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2015, 4 of the 31/32 clubs have folded (Great Cornard in B, Hartest Coldham, Grundisburgh & Coddendam, & Wortham in MS).

National Governing Body	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults - Mens weekend cricket has reduced but weekday (mainly Wed. eves) short format cricket is increasing ie. Adult 20/20 & recently u19's. Steady increase in Junior sections with 17 clubs now having junior sections and 6 having ladies sections. (which). Overall shift of emphasis from simply team-based clubs to developing as Community Clubs, wider participatory profile. <p>Priorities/Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant unmet or latent demand for cricket Overall, there is a good supply across both district with capacity. ie. Sunday pms more availability due to reduction in Adult matches. Lack of women and girls changing. Sustaining existing clubs – recognition that each have different needs. County's Pitch Association support autumn renovation work. Value to smaller clubs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National priority to protect the baseline of clubs Only 1 club per District Sudbury HC. Based in Sudbury town, historic shared facility with Sudbury Cricket Club. Since sport moved to artificial pitches, they play on sand filled AGP at Thomas Gainsborough School (Great Cornard) – however there is no formal Community Use Agreement. Men's and Ladies adult first teams play at Eastern Premier level. Harleston Magpies HC. Based in Weybread (just in MS on northern border with Norfolk). Large Club (600 members). Own their 2 pitch facility (Water based & sand dressed AGP). Pavilion and space for expansion. Men's & Ladies adult first teams play in National League. <p>Widening participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Back to Hockey established, with Walking Hockey developing. Hockey Heroes (5-8yr olds) had a slow start locally last season but is developing. <p>Demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic discussion about starting a Club in Stowmarket, but never really developed as sufficient Clubs available (4 in Ipswich to choose from, plus large club at Bury St. Edmunds (at Culford in West Suffolk). Plus easy access to Essex Clubs as hockey players used to travelling to choose right club for their approach/level. More recent awareness of hockey activity at Hadleigh High School. Well represented in County Emerging Schools hockey tournaments. To be further investigated. Hockey development mainly linked to level of interest/activity in Schools. Patchy in state provision, more established in independent schools.

National Governing Body	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, consider that there is sufficient club access within the area and developing a new sustainable club in the Stowmarket and Hadleigh is unlikely! <p>Harleston have a working group exploring potential to develop an indoor facility to accommodate indoor hockey, training and potential use by other sports (dependent on size). They are aware of the SCC County Facilities Framework that refers to lack of regional size indoor sports hall ie. Badminton, Volleyball etc? In the meantime they are refurbishing their Pavilion to improve showers/changing and disability access.</p>
Rugby Football Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no specific priority areas – at present the RFU is responding to those clubs under the greatest threat due to COVID. 4 clubs: Hadleigh, Sudbury, Stowmarket and Thurston – all are important to the RFU to ensure their ongoing sustainability. Large increase nationally in participation by women and girls. Development work is demographically based i.e. using IMD indices. Therefore, most work is in more urban areas with a larger population than in Suffolk. No unmet/latent demand for Rugby. There is adequate pitch availability to cater for current demand. RFU supports 4 areas: pitches, clubhouses, floodlights and AGP's <p>Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hadleigh - current “live” discussions re. the potential of a joint rugby/football AGP at Layham Rd. NB. Rugby/Football compliant AGP now available ie. Rugby requires shockpad. Lease on clubhouse only, pavilion Improvements? Sudbury – Previous AGP consideration waning. (SA to catch up with SRUFC). Thurston – applying for/recently received? funding to extend changing and social facilities. (Pitches have capacity. NB. Football 3G planned for Thurston Community College adjacent – Opportunity? Stowmarket, also backed off from AGP consideration. Floodlight required. Secure lease.
England Netball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Babergh and Mid Suffolk are not a priority area for England Netball. All clubs in Mid Suffolk play at the Needham Market facility Thriving netball in Needham/Stowmarket area since refurbishment of NM Community Centre facility. Total: approx. 200 ladies and girls use it on a regular weekly basis. Popular sport, 3 leagues South Suffolk Netball League (12 mile radius of Ipswich, 100 teams), West Suffolk Netball League (Bury St Edmunds, 50 teams), Sudbury Netball League (Thomas Gainsborough School, smaller league).

National Governing Body	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to develop U11, U14 & U16 county wide league. Central Mid Suffolk location preferred. • Catering for stifled growth of Suffolk Rockets as currently travelling to Manningtree (Tendring) to be meet match demands. (Hadleigh High School venue only outdoors as sports hall fully booked). <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of indoor courts availability (normally in school/LA sports halls) due to other sports use. • Poor condition of outdoor courts – mainly slippery surfaces therefore cancellations in wet weather high. No alternative venues.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebranding to make tennis more accessible, incl. Smart Gates technology builds on dive to open up LA/park courts, pay & play/free use etc. Example - Abbey Gardens BSE). • Serves programme focusses on people from deprived areas. Established work with disabilities ref. Exning. Training up community leaders = Tennis for free coaching, working at park sites with min. 3 courts. BMS there is scope to do more. <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General condition of outdoor courts – repair and maintenance, resurfacing etc. • Lack of pay & play courts for casual use. • Lack of indoor courts availability (normally in school/LA sports halls) due to other sport. • Not enough coaches. • Keen to develop parks programmes further i.e. Norfolk link with leisure providers/operators to manage these. • Ensuring it recovers from Covid and continues to grow.
England Athletics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities Strategy - Moving away from 400 metre track focus (retain only), supporting compact athletics facilities, marked and measured running trails, off track running. • Off track priority - Aware of Stowmarket Striders, Hadleigh Hares, Capel Cheetahs, Sudbury Joggers & Sudbury Tri Club. <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety is an issue in rural areas, particularly in winter – lack of lights and pavements. Non club running is hard to monitor, hence England Athletics are encouraging marked lit safe routes. • Ageing population – lack of volunteers, particularly officials; • Track & field drop out – from 14-20 yrs; <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to explore a new/different offer, with social interaction at heart.

National Governing Body	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology helping. Now linked with Strava. Building technology into tracks! • Compact Athletics – flexible facilities, suited to local specification – accessible & cheap! (£150k ballpark). EA Facilities & Planning Manager can assist with feasibility work & technical guidance (Com. Ath. Pack). Some good examples, particularly in Europe of innovative builds.
Swim England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swim England have moved from a disciplines-based staff structure to geographic based staff, concentrating on ‘facilities first’, reflective of the impact of Covid i.e. indoors facilities now at risk around re-opening/age & condition of stock/sustainable futures. • B&MS are a “concern” on the Water Deprivation Table, due to evidenced lack of water space across both districts. • Evidenced need in Babergh – Pool capacity currently reliant on private sector school access. • Additional water space (8/9 lanes) required in MS. • Swim England development work tends to be demographically based and B&MS is not prioritised. • Support in identifying people and organisations to work with, is needed from LA’s.
British Gymnastics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudbury GC – Based in industrial unit south of town centre. Some regional representation. • Hadleigh Stars – Moved to Birch Farm venue in 2019? (Ex-Hadleigh High School). County level club. • Stowmarket – based at MSLC. Lowest representative level in area due to facility limitations. Long-term head Coach retiring. • All clubs in Suffolk have waiting lists except Stowmarket • Demand for a bespoke facility in Stowmarket
Badminton England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babergh and Mid Suffolk is a key area because there are high participation levels in the Districts • For league play need a minimum 2 court venue • School access can be variable and inconsistent • County deficit of an 8 court Sports Hall • The lack of a Sports Development Officer in the Councils is a limitation for clubs.
British Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ipswich is a priority area but Babergh and Mid Suffolk are not. • Focus on recreational riding, facilities & partnerships • Awareness of a number of clubs including Hadleigh BMX, Great Blakenham Cycle speedway club, who use both their own and the Somersham tracks. • Across Suffolk there are 5 “Go Ride” school-based clubs. There are also 19 adult clubs. Generally low “Go Ride” school numbers in B&MS.

National Governing Body	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 fold increase in cycling through COVID <p>Development initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational “Breeze” & guided rides nationally, although ltd locally; • Education and training focus in Suffolk. Working with SCC to develop “place based” partnering. Focus on communities with greatest need. • Suffolk (& B&MS) pro-active re Tour events. Used as activation initiative for cycling promotion ie. working with clubs on the route. <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rurality the issue. Limited support infrastructure ie. places to meet with bike hire, toilets, changing, cafe etc. Seek to designate spaces to build cycling in.

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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Initial Screening Form



Screening determines whether the policy has any relevance for equality, ie is there any impact on one or more of the 9 protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. These are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership*
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

1. Policy/service/function title	Sport, Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy
2. Lead officer (responsible for the policy/service/function)	Vicky Moseley
3. Is this a new or existing policy/service/function?	existing
4. What exactly is proposed? (Describe the policy/service/ function and the changes that are being planned?)	Refresh of the Sport, Leisure and Physical Activity Strategy
5. Why? (Give reasons why these changes are being introduced)	<p>The development of a new Joint Local Plan which has identified new housing numbers in the districts.</p> <p>The key actions identified in the current strategy, which focused on expansion and renewal of existing leisure centres have largely been completed:</p> <p>The changing nature of sport and leisure activities over the last three years</p> <p>The impact of Covid 19 needs to be reviewed on the approach and direction.</p>
6. How will it be implemented? (Describe the decision-making process, timescales, process for implementation)	Full Council on 20 th and 22 nd June and a action plan to developed and to be signed off

7. Is there potential for differential impact (negative or positive) on any of the protected characteristics?	No
8. Is there the possibility of discriminating unlawfully , directly or indirectly, against people from any protected characteristic?	No
9. Could there be an effect on relations between certain groups ?	No
10. Does the policy explicitly involve, or focus on a particular equalities group , i.e. because they have particular needs?	No
<p>If the answers are 'no' to questions 7-10 then there is no need to proceed to a full impact assessment and this form should then be signed off as appropriate.</p> <p>If 'yes' then a full impact assessment must be completed.</p>	
<p>Authors signature Kate Parnum</p> <p>Date of completion 8th June 2021</p>	

Any queries concerning the completion of this form should be addressed to the Equality and Diversity Lead.

* Public sector duty does not apply to marriage and civil partnership.

Agenda Item 9

MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: Cabinet	REPORT NUMBER: MCa/21/10
FROM: Cllr David Burn (Cabinet Member for Planning)	DATE OF MEETING: 5 July 2021
OFFICER: Robert Hobbs (Corporate Manager - Strategic Planning)	KEY DECISION REF NO. CAB295

NEEDHAM MARKET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the findings of the Independent Examiner's Report on the submission draft Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 Subject to implementation of the detailed recommendations in the Examiner's Report, it is proposed that Cabinet agree that the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan proceed to a local referendum.

2. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 A Local Planning Authority may propose to make a decision on a recommendation that differs from that set out by the Examiner. If so, it must give its reason why and undertake further consultation before issuing a final decision. As appropriate, this may require the matter to be re-examined. For the reasons set out in section 4 below this option has been discarded.
- 2.2 The recommended option is that Mid Suffolk agree that, subject to modification, the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan proceed to a local referendum.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Needham Market Town Council be requested to make the necessary modifications to their Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations.
- 3.2 That, subject to satisfactory completion of the above (to be agreed by the Corporate Manager for Strategic Planning), this Neighbourhood Plan be advanced to a local referendum covering the parish of Needham Market.

REASON FOR DECISION

- 3.3 To enable the Council to meet its statutory obligations under Section 17A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and to allow the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to a local referendum

4. KEY INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced the concept of neighbourhood plans. These are plans developed by local communities covering the area in which they live and work and provide them with an opportunity to prepare planning policies and allocate land to shape the future of their area. Consequently, each plan has its own character.
- 4.2 The Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The key stages prior to examination are set out below:
- Area Designation: 30 September 2013
 - Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation: 27 January to 10 March 2020 (carried out by the Town Council). [Nb: this version of the plan updated a draft that was published in July 2015].
 - Regulation 16 Submission Draft consultation: 2 December 2020 to 27 January 2021 (carried out by the District Council). During this period representations were received from twelve organisations / individuals. (This includes one late representation accepted by the District Council).

A Consultation Statement submitted by the Town Council sets out how they went about preparing the Plan. District Council officers have also responded to various enquiries during the plan preparation stages.

- 4.3 The Plan has been independently examined by Ann Skippers BSc (Hons) MRTPI FHEA FRSA AoU, a suitably qualified and experienced person who was independent of the plan making process. The examination was conducted via the written representation and through matters for clarification to which both Town and District Council responded. In the interests of openness and transparency, details relating to the examination were published on the District Council website.
- 4.4 On the 24 May 2021, the Examiner issued her Final Report. It notes that: *“Whilst there are no site allocations, this well-presented Plan contains ten policies covering a variety of issues including community uses, heritage and landscape”* Some modifications are made, with those of note summarised in paragraph 4.5 below. A link to the Full Report is provided at Appendix 1. The Examiner did not consider it necessary to extend the local referendum area.
- 4.5 The modifications made are there to improve the policies and supporting text so that they provide clarity for decision makers. Of the ten policies, four required no modification, and two only required very minor edits. The modifications of note are:
- At Policy NM1 (Housing Mix, Type & Size): removing the dwellings threshold which is not evidenced and is otherwise incompatible with both national policy and strategic policies of the development plan; including a new footnote which clarifies when affordable housing provision may be sought and, changes to supporting text to reflect the latest Joint Local Plan housing requirement figures.
 - At Policy NM2 (Securing good design & layout): various changes to provide clarity and to address the fact that neighbourhood plan should not set out any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings.

- At Policy NM6 (Community Infrastructure): a change to the running order to remove duplication; a modification to remove blanket support for health and social care provision etc., which might otherwise lead to unacceptable development coming forward, and a modification relating to the criteria and conditions associated with any potential loss of community facilities.
 - At Policy NM9 (Reducing and Managing impact of traffic): adding the words '*Otherwise acceptable*' to the start of the policy to remove the blanket support for any development given that this may be development which is not welcomed.
- 4.6 The District Council must now consider all of the Examiner's recommendations, the reasons for them before deciding what action to take. It must also come to a formal view about whether the Plan meets the 'Basic Conditions'.
- 4.7 The 'Basic Conditions' are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 (as amended). In order to satisfy them, the Plan must:
- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State,
 - contribute to the achievement of sustainable development,
 - be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority,
 - not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union obligations, *and*
 - meet the prescribed conditions in relation to the neighbourhood plan and the prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.
- 4.8 Having assessed the Examiner's Report and each recommendation, council officers concur with its findings. It is therefore recommended that all of the modifications proposed be made by the Town Council. If Cabinet agrees with this, the District Council will need to publicise its decision (a 'Regulation 18 Decision Statement') and move the Plan to a local referendum.
- 4.9 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 has made it clear that the only modifications that the District Council can make at this stage are those required to ensure that:
- the plan is compatible with EU obligations,
 - the plan does not breach Convention Rights, or
 - those required for the purpose of correcting minor errors.

The District Council is therefore only able to exercise limited discretion at this point.

- 4.10 As noted above, the task of modifying the Plan falls to the Town Council, with assistance provided as required. While there is no prescribed period for this process the modified plan, along with other specified documents, must be available before the date of the local referendum can be confirmed.
- 4.11 The referendum process is governed by the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations, 2012 (as amended). They set out that not less than 28 working days' notice must be provided of the date of the local referendum. The recent easing of restrictions linked to the coronavirus pandemic now mean that there should be no reason why a referendum cannot take place at the earliest sensible opportunity. The

Council should therefore proceed on that basis, while continuing to monitor the local situation and take appropriate action should new restrictions come back into force.

- 4.12 The Town Council will be expected to promote the referendum, but it should be noted that there are restrictions on the publication of promotional material, advertisements, and expenses. The format of the Referendum question will be:

‘Do you want Mid Suffolk District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Needham Market to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?’

- 4.13 If more than 50% of those who vote in the referendum are in favour of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, then it must be brought into legal force and be ‘made’ (adopted) by the District Council. The regulations also set out the time period by which that must be done. The decision to ratify the eventual outcome will be made either by way of a report presented to Full Council or through an Action out of meeting request, depending on which is the most appropriate.

5. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 5.1 The successful making (adoption) of the neighbourhood plan will enable the District Council to fulfil its corporate priorities in terms of housing delivery, business growth and community capacity building.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The District Council can claim £20,000 from MHCLG for each neighbourhood plan that has not previously been ‘made’ (adopted) for that area. This sum can be claimed once the local planning authority has issued a decision statement detailing their intention to send the plan to referendum. The sum is paid to help meet the costs of delivering this Plan and will be sufficient in this case.
- 6.2 If the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan is successfully ‘made’ (adopted) the Parish Council will be eligible to receive 25% of any Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts from qualifying development in its area.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Town & Country Planning Act, 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations, 2012 (as amended). It has also had regard to the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations, 2004 and the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations, 2017.
- 7.2 If ‘made’ (adopted), the Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan and be used, where relevant, to determine planning applications

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 This report is most closely linked with Significant Business Risk No. 9 - We may not be able to help communities to become more sustainable. The key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
The Neighbourhood Plan fails to receive support at the referendum stage.	Unlikely - 2	Bad - 3	The Parish Council are responsible for promoting the referendum.
Legal challenge to the content of the Neighbourhood Plan and/or judicial review of the District Council's decisions.	Unlikely - 2	Bad - 3	Ensuring that the relevant Regulations are followed and that decision making processes are clear and transparent.

9. CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 As noted in paragraph 4.2, the District Council consulted on the submission draft Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan between 2 December 2020 and 27 January 2021. A link to the representations made at this stage is provided at Appendix 2.
- 9.2 Guidance issued by the Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS) affords the Parish Council / Neighbourhood Plan Working Group the opportunity to see and respond to the submitted representations before the examination commences. A link to the Town Council response is provided at Appendix 3.

10. EQUALITY ANALYSIS

- 10.1 There are no equality or diversity implications arising directly from this report. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is not required.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The consideration of environmental implications are an integral part of the Plan preparation process. The Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to the appropriate Strategic Environmental and Habitats Regulations screening assessments.

12. APPENDICES

Title	Location
Examiners Final Report	https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Neighbourhood-Planning/N-Market-NP-Exam-Report.pdf
Written Representations	https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Neighbourhood-Planning/N-Market-NP-R16-Reps.pdf
Town Council Response	https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Neighbourhood-Planning/N-Market-NP-R16-Reps-Response.pdf

13. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

The submission draft Needham Market Neighbourhood Plan can be found at:

<https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Neighbourhood-Planning/N-Market-NP-Sub-Oct20.pdf>

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Agenda Item 11

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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