

Breckland Council

Evidence Base for Indoor and Built  
Sports and Recreational Facilities

November 2016

DRAFT



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# 1: Introduction and Context

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- 1.1 In August 2016 Breckland Council commissioned naa to produce an evidence base for indoor and built sports and recreational facilities. The evidence base will be applied in the development of the Breckland Council Local Plan.
- 1.2 This report sets out the evidence base and outcomes from this work. It comprises this report and an appendix which has gathered and developed the full evidence base. The work has applied the Sport England methodology of Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG) which is the industry accepted methodology for developing an evidence base for indoor and built sports and recreational facilities.
- 1.3 This hard evidence data has been combined with extensive consultations to obtain views from the organisations which provide opportunities for community use of indoor sports and recreational facilities in Breckland. This has been with the providers, and operators, comprising public, commercial, schools and independent organisations. Site visits and meetings with the providers of the facilities in Breckland have also been held to understand how things work on the ground.
- 1.4 The sports facility types included in the project are: swimming pools; sports halls, full size artificial grass pitches (AGPs), indoor bowling centres, indoor tennis centres, squash courts and health and fitness centres. The assessment includes all providers of these facilities: Breckland Council and through its operator Parkwood Leisure, schools, commercial and trust organisations and clubs.
- 1.5 The development of the evidence base is in two stages. Firstly, development of the evidence base for 2016, so the current assessment. Then secondly, the assessment for 2031 based on the projected changes and growth in the Breckland population to 2031.
- 1.6 This report and the appendix sets out the evidence base for 2016 and 2031 for four of the facility types. These being, indoor bowling centres, indoor tennis centres, squash courts and health and fitness. This report and appendix also sets out the 2016 evidence base for swimming pools, sports halls and full size AGPs.
- 1.7 The reason for the current assessment for the latter three facility types is because it has been decided to undertake a Sport England bespoke facility planning model (fpm) assessment for these three facility types. This will be based on the projected population growth across the authority and the projected residential development from 2016 to 2031.
- 1.8 These three facility types are the most important facility types in terms of community level sports and recreational participation. Based on Sport England research they account for between 60% - 70% of the total community level participation. For this reason, Sport England has developed very extensive data at the local level on the supply, demand and accessibility for these facility types through the fpm. The fpm can be applied to model future projections of change based on the projected population growth in any local authority area and taking account of the catchment area of facilities across boundaries.
- 1.9 Given the projected scale of population change and new residential development across the authority, it is important this change and growth is considered fully in the future assessment for these facility types.

1.10 This fpm work is scheduled to be undertaken over the November 2016 - January 2017 period. Once completed the assessment Appendix and this overarching report will be updated to provide a comprehensive evidence base report for all seven facility types for 2016 – 2031.

1.11 The sequence of this document is

- Section 2 – Planning context for Breckland – corporate and development planning. Population change, participation and non-participation in sport and physical activity
- Section 3 - Assessing Needs and Opportunities for each sports facility type – the methodology and its application
- Section 4 – Planning Framework and Delivery.

1.12 The appendix is:

- Appendix: Audit, assessment and evidence base for Indoor and Built Sports and Recreational Facilities. Breckland.

## 2: Planning Context for Breckland

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2.1 This section sets out:

- The Breckland strategic, corporate and development planning context for the study;
- The current and projected changes in population in Breckland 2015 – 2031 and the impact on the demand for indoor sports facilities; and
- Trends in participation and non-participation in sport and physical activity for Breckland, East Region and England wide.

2.2 These findings provide the overall planning context for the sports facilities assessment.

### ***National and local development planning***

2.3 The national planning context for the project is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The key paragraphs from the NPPF which apply to the project are:

- Section 8 which sets out national planning policy on ‘Promoting healthy communities’. Within this section at paragraphs 73 and 74 the NPPF states that:
  - *Paragraph 73 - Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required”*
- Paragraph 74 - Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:
  - an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
  - the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
  - The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

### ***Planning framework and standards***

2.4 For many years, certainly since before Planning Policy Guidance Note on Sport, Open Space and Recreation was first produced in 1991, the ‘standards’ approach has been a fundamental part of planning and delivering future facility provision, on the basis of a per head level of provision e.g. 6 acres of recreational open space per 1000 people and more recently x m<sup>2</sup> of sports hall space per 1,000 population.

- 2.5 This enabled an easy-to-calculate method of delivery, but was inflexible, difficult to manage and implement and generally ineffective in securing funding for indoor sports and recreational facilities. More recent advice contained in the NPPF and from Sport England in the ANOG in 2014 is leading towards a new system based on a local needs assessment identifying future requirements allied to the population and sports participation in any particular area.
- 2.6 This new system is derived from evidence of need, thorough assessment and consultation with stakeholders.

### ***Sport England: Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance***

- 2.7 In July 2014 Sport England published the Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG). The guidance is intended to provide a recommended approach to developing an evidence base for indoor and built sports and recreational facilities at the community level.
- 2.8 It replaced the withdrawn PPG 17 “Assessing needs and opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17” (DCLG, 2001) and provides guidance on how to deliver the NPPF at the local level. ANOG, focuses on the practicalities of producing a clear and robust assessment to help develop and apply local planning policy. The approach has been developed so that it can be tailored to apply to a range of sports facilities. All of these are included in the Breckland project and the work adopts and applies the ANOG guidance.

### ***Breckland Local Plan***

- 2.9 Breckland is currently preparing a new Local Plan to cover the period 2011 – 2036. To date the council has completed an Issues and Options Consultation (November 2014), a Preferred Directions Consultation (January 2016) and a Preferred Site Options and Settlement Boundaries Consultation (September 2016). The Council is preparing a Pre Submission Consultation for publication in the spring of 2017.
- 2.10 The responses to the Preferred Directions consultation in terms of the scope of the evidence base for indoor sports and recreational facilities project brief are summarised as:
- *Greater Norwich Projects Team:* A greater focus on indoor sports provision would also be welcomed. The plan refers to an audit of all open space provision identifying deficiencies which are proposed to be addressed through the plan but we have not found mention of the provision of indoor sports facilities. We are aware of local concerns regarding the capacity of facilities in nearby Wymondham that may be worsened by increased growth not only in Wymondham itself, but also in Attleborough and some of the LSCs. It is therefore important that the need for and supply of indoor sports facilities is addressed in the Breckland Local Plan, and assessing the potential impact of cross boundary use of existing facilities.
  - *Attleborough Town Council:* Lack of policy regarding sports and leisure/ informal open space. Planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessments of the needs for open space, sport & recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.
  - *What Watton Wants:* Watton is completely restricted with its sports facilities due to the PFI arrangement with its exclusion zone which prevents Breckland Council from supporting any competing activity within 10 miles of their facilities for further

22 years. It would bring more people into Watton from the surrounding villages to use the facilities.

- 2.11 These responses to the Preferred Directions Consultation have been considered in the development and compilation of the evidence base for indoor sports and recreational facilities.
- 2.12 In 2008 Breckland Council commissioned Parkwood Leisure Services Consultancy to undertake a study and prepare a Leisure Facility Analysis report on the provision for outdoor and indoor sports and leisure facilities. The project scope included, playing pitches, artificial grass pitches, swimming pools and sports halls. It focused on a market assessment of current and future demand in each of the five main settlements.
- 2.13 This study and its findings has now been overtaken in terms of methodology for needs assessments, as set out in the NPPF, plus the scale of future residential development across the authority. Furthermore, the age of the study means it would not meet Sport England's guidance on the need for such strategies to be produced every three years for playing pitches.
- 2.14 The Breckland Local Plan Part 1 Preferred Directions (December 2015) Preferred Policy ENV 4 is about open space sport and recreation. It describes the existing provision and responses to the issues and options consultation. It then describes the preferred policy direction (pages 96 – 98). The content is about open space and recreational open space for outdoor sports. The policy does not refer to policies for indoor sports and recreational facilities. The evidence base developed for this project provides the basis for development of planning policies for indoor sports and recreational provision.
- 2.15 This evidence base report covers the period 2016 – 2031. The reason being that projecting changes in the supply of sports facilities of closures, new commitments and modernisation of existing venues becomes much more challenging the longer the time period. Changes in supply not just openings and closures but also major modernisations can very much influence the spatial distribution of demand.
- 2.16 Also, the demand for facilities and rates of participation do change. Table 2.2 below sets out how the rate of adult participation, based on the Sport England and Active People benchmark measure of adult once a week participation has changed in Breckland over the 2015 – 2016 period, along with East Region and national comparisons. This table shows the scale of these changes over this period. This table illustrates the challenges of projecting changes in participation in the future and over too long a time period.
- 2.17 For these reasons of changes in supply and demand/participation Sport England consider it is prudent to develop an evidence base for no more than a ten to fifteen year period. Building into this assessment any known changes in supply and setting out the basis for demand/participation assessments. This evidence base is therefore based on the 2016 – 2031 period. It is recommended that the evidence base is reviewed in line with Local Plan review periods and is updated in five years' time to cover the period 2031 – 2036.

### ***Breckland Strategic and Corporate Policy***

- 2.18 The Council has set out its vision and priorities for the authority in the Council's Corporate Plan 2015 – 2019. The vision is that Breckland is a place of opportunity and ambition for all.
- 2.19 The priorities for delivery of the Council's vision are: supporting Breckland to develop and thrive; providing the right services at the right time and in the right way;

developing the local economy to be vibrant with continued growth; and enabling stronger more independent communities.

- 2.20 Key content in the Council's Corporate Plan and which has implications for the evidence base for indoor sports facilities are set out next.
- 2.21 **Corporate Plan key content 1** - *Breckland spans over 500 square miles. Breckland's population is set to grow from the current 133,000 residents to 141,000 by 2021. Half of the current residents live in one of the five market towns with the remainder living in rural village homes. This means that the authority has a low population density.* (summary of page 4) The Local Plan sets out – Breckland's population is projected to grow from 138,233 to 153,313 by 2036 (ONS sub-national population projections).
- 2.22 The nature of the Breckland population in dispersed settlements with a low population density and considerable distances between main settlements, does pose a challenge for provision of indoor sports and recreational facilities.
- 2.23 The implications of the authority's main settlement pattern as described in the Council's corporate plans can be summarised as
- Residents travel further to use the facilities – but Sport England research shows that to maintain and increase participation on a regular basis local accessibility is important. The time and cost of travel plus the competing demands on time to do other activities which fit into the lifestyle of individuals and families can discourage participation;
  - Provide more facilities than may be needed in recognition of the settlement pattern of the authority and so create local accessibility. This however has a cost in providing and maintaining more facilities than may be needed. Moreover, there may not be a core business case to justify provision and provide a viable facility without extensive financial support. Provision is driven by the settlement patterns and lack of access, not the supply and demand and capacity of the existing facilities to meet the demand across Breckland. For example, the Sport England assessment of the annual throughput for a 4 lane x 25 metre swimming pool based on a for a 50 week year is 95,000 visits; and
  - Make more use of what already exists, by increasing access to facilities that exist but which maybe not fully accessible to the public or for clubs to use. This applies especially to facilities on school sites. In effect, it extends the supply base and catchment area. By doing so it addresses the settlement pattern and is trying to increase access to venues across a wider area and to more residents.
- 2.24 The settlement pattern of Breckland and as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan is important context in development of the evidence base in assessing, supply, demand and accessibility. This has been taken into full account in compiling the evidence base.
- 2.25 **Corporate Plan key content 2** - The Council's priority of "enabling stronger more independent communities" has an action to - *work with partners on supporting older people to remain active, participative and live independently within the community* (page 9).
- 2.26 Understanding the demographic profile of the authority and how this is changing over the Local Plan period is important, in identifying the sporting and physical activity population. As the resident population ages, the demand for particular indoor sports facilities changes, as does the reasons and levels of participation. So, it is about growth in the total population but also the changes in the core resident population that makes up the demand profile.

### ***Population change and the sporting population***

- 2.27 In determining the current and future demand for sports facilities the changes in population are integral to that assessment. It is reasonable to assume that an absolute increase in population will led to an increase in the demand for sports facilities. However, it is important to consider the age structure of the population now and how this is projected to change up to 2031 and beyond across Breckland.
- 2.28 It could be that the age structure of the population means that whilst there is a projected increase in absolute population numbers, the age structure of the population means there is a lower total number of people in the main age bands for sports participation in 2031 than in 2016. The reverse could equally apply.

### ***Current population***

- 2.29 The data used for the population assessment in Breckland is the Council's population projections provided by the Council's Planning Department. The current (2016) population of Breckland is estimated at 135,832 people, of which 67,616 are male (49.7%) and 68,216 are female (50.3%). The overall population structure is as follows (comparisons with Breckland extrapolated from Sport England's Local Sport Profile and compared with the East Region and National averages):

- Very slightly fewer percentage of males to females than regional and national average;
  - No difference in the percentage of people in the 16-19 age group than the regional or national average;
  - Very slightly higher percentage of people in the 20-24 age group than the regional average (by 0.5%) and very slightly lower percentage than nationally (by 1%);
  - Very slightly higher percentage of people in the 25-34 age group than regional or national averages between 1% - 2%);
  - Lower percentage of people in the 35 – 49 age group (by 3.5%) than regional or national averages;
  - Lower percentage of people in the 50-64 age group than regional or national averages; (by 1% - 2%); and
  - Higher percentage of people in the 65+ age group (by 3%) than regional or national averages.
- 2.30 There are also the following:
- a much higher proportion of white or white British than regional average (by 6%) or national average (by 11%). Note no data for Breckland for 2015 and so the data is for 2012 for all areas; and
  - a slightly larger proportion of disabled people than regional average (by 1%) and national averages (by 2%) possibly a reflection of a high population aged 65+.

### **Future population**

- 2.31 The total population of Breckland is projected to rise from 135,832 people in 2016 to 149,769 people by 2031, a projected increase of 9.3%. The proportion of females to males is 49.7% male and 50.3% female in 2016. In 2031 it is projected to be 50.2% male and 49.8% female.
- 2.32 If the population changes are assessed in accordance with the different age groups that generally take part in different sports, the situation is expected to be as follows:

**Table 2.1: Population change by age bands for Breckland 2016 - 2031**

Age group	2016	2031	Change %
<b>Total population</b>	135,832	149,769	+ 10.2%
<b>Active population for sport and physical activity (5-54)</b>	76,510	78,023	+ 1.9%
<b>Less active population (55 – 64)</b>	17,149	19,424	+13.2%
<b>Inactive population (0-4, 65 -74)</b>	25,723	28,042	+9%
<b>Adult indoor sports (20-44)</b>	37,105	37,774	+ 1.8%

- 2.33 The findings are:

- The total population of Breckland is projected to increase from 135,832 people in 2016 to 149,769 people by 2031, a projected increase of 10.2%
- Meantime the population in the age band range 5 – 54 and which is the age range for the most active population for participation in sport and physical activity is projected to increase, by just 1.9% over the 2016 – 2031 period

This is a key finding in that population change in the age bands where participation takes place most, there is a much smaller percentage increase in population. Therefore, with the same participation rates population change is only going to be a very small driver in increased demand for indoor sports facilities. The rates of participation for particular sports in Breckland over the 2006 – 2015 period of the Sport England Active People survey are set out following the population assessment

- There is also a category of less active population in the 55 – 64 age group and this is projected to increase by the highest percentage over the 2016 – 2031 period and by 13.2%

This age band does participate, albeit it has a lower rate of participation than in the younger age bands of the active population, hence the term less active population. Indoor sports/activities which this age band participates in most are, swimming and social/recreational day time activity such as badminton and exercise/dance classes, as well as some low intensity fitness activity. Low impact exercise classes are a popular activity with women. Motivations for participation are a health benefit and as a social and recreational activity. Outdoor activities are more popular than indoor, especially walking and for men golf, fishing and cycling.

- The inactive population (0 – 5 and 65 - 74) meantime increases by 9% over the period. It is important to distinguish the active from the inactive population

because the active and the less active population is the basis of the demand assessment

- The main age bands for participation in indoor hall sports and exercise classes which can take place in sports halls is 20 - 44 years of age. This population is projected to increase by 1.8%
- It is important to consider the population by each gender because their participation and use of sports facilities differs. Male participation is very much around indoor hall sports such as five a side football, basketball and badminton. Whilst female participation is more about is very much around swimming, gym exercise and dance classes, pilates and yoga, more than hall sports
- Both genders participate in health and fitness with this being higher with females. The total male population in the 20 - 44 age band is 18,253 people in 2016 and increases to 19,916 by 2031. The female total is 18,852 people in 2016 and is 17,858 in 2031. So the gender split in population totals is quite close but with a high proportion of males by 2031. So possibly a slightly higher demand for hall sports but not significant, assuming participation rates remain as in 2016
- Swimming participation is the only activity/facility type which is genuinely cradle to grave in terms of the age of participants. The Breckland population in the active population (5 – 54) as already set out is projected to increase by 1.9% between 2016 and 2031. So again population changes in this main age band for swimming participation is going to generate a small increase in demand for swimming
- Swimming is also a popular activity for the less active 55 – 64 population. The 55 – 64 age band increases by 13.2% between the two years but in numbers it is only an increase of 2, 275 people. So again, not a big increase in demand from this age band
- For people aged 65 - 74, swimming and low impact exercise classes are the main indoor activities that people participate in. Outdoor activities such as walking are more popular, The Breckland population aged 65 – 74 is projected to increase from 8,860 to 10,202 people by 2031, an increase of 15% but only 1,342 people. Again a small increase in swimming demand from overall projected growth in population
- Indoor bowling national participation data sets out that participation is highest in the 75 - 79 age band for both females (at 2.6% of this age band participating nationally) and males (4% participating nationally). The data identifies that between the ages 16 – 49 only 0.09% of the male population plays indoor bowls and only 0.06% of the female population plays bowls
- The Breckland population in the 75 – 79 age band for males is projected to increase between 2016 – 2031 by 32% but only 956 people. For females, the projected increase is 30.4% but only 973 people. Given the very low percentage of the population in this age band that play indoor bowls (despite it being the age band with the highest participation), then again population increase is not going to be a driver of increased demand for indoor bowling.

2.34 To summarise therefore, and based on the projected changes in the Breckland population over the 2015 – 2031 period, demand for indoor sports facilities from projected population change is not a big driver of increased demand for indoor sports facilities.

**Trends in participation and non-participation in sport and physical activity for Breckland, East Region and England wide**

- 2.35 As well as the impact of projected population change on demand for indoor sports facilities it is also important to consider the rates of indoor sports participation. Like population change participation change is challenging to forecast. However, it is possible to set out past trends in participation as an indicator.
- 2.36 The findings for adult participation in sport and physical activity for Breckland are presented using the Sport England Active People benchmark measure of once week participation of 1 x 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity. This is applied by Sport England in sports policy and its assessment of funding awards.
- 2.37 Any sport, activity or facility type included in the '1 x 30' sport indicator has to be undertaken for at least 30 minutes at least once a week and at moderate intensity. Moderate intensity is defined as where the participant should have a raised heart rate and be breathless but still able to hold a conversation.
- 2.38 The '1x30' sport indicator does not include recreational walking or recreational cycling (as the former NI8 indicator did). It does include more organised and intense/strenuous walking activities: Backpacking, Hill Trekking, Cliff Walking, Gorge Walking, Hill Walking, Rambling, Power Walking and sport 'walking'.
- 2.39 The '1x30' sport indicator does include light intensity activities for those aged 65 and over: (in recognition that for people of this age, they can be considered moderate intensity). It includes yoga, pilates, indoor and outdoor bowls.
- 2.40 The findings for East Region and England wide are included to provide context and comparison for the Breckland findings. This is for the period of the Active People surveys 2006 – 2016.

**Table 2.2: Rate of at least once a week adult participation in sport and physical activity Breckland, East Region and England wide 2006 – 2016**

Breckland participation measure for at least once a week participation of 30 minutes duration at moderate intensity by adults (16+)	2006 Participation Rate (%)APS 1	2016 Participation Rate (%)APS 10 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter
<b>Once a week rate of participation all adults</b>		
Breckland	32.7%	29.8%
East Region	35.2%	36.1%
England	34.6%	36.1%
<b>Once a week rate of participation by gender</b>		
Breckland Male	36.2%	31.6%
Breckland Female	29.3%	28.0%
East Region Male	39.1%	39.5%
East Region Female	31.5%	32.8%
England wide Male	39.4%	40.7%
England wide Female	30.1%	31.7%
<b>Swimming Pools and Sports Halls once a week participation</b>		
Breckland	20.4%	14.6%
East Region	22.9%	20.9%
England wide	22.7%	21.9%
<b>Swimming once a week participation</b>		
Breckland	8.4%	6.6% (1)
East Region	8.1%	5.6%
England	8%	5.6%
<b>NON participation in sport and physical activity</b>		

Breckland	56.3%	57.4%
East Region	53%	53%
England	54.3%	53.2%

(Source: Sport England Active People Survey 2006 – 2016)

(1) Data for Breckland is for 2010 -11 no data beyond this year

#### 2.41 The data shows that;

- The Breckland adult participation rate across all activities has decreased from 32.7% of all adults participating at least once a week in 2006 to 29.8% in 2016
- Breckland's rate of adult once a week participation is lower than for East Region and for England in 2006 and the gap has increased by 2016
- Breckland's female participation has been consistently lower than male participation over the period. It was 29.3% of adult females participating at least once a week in 2006 and 28% in 2016. Female participation is also lower than male participation in both East Region and England wide. It is however 5% above the Breckland rate for the Region and the England rate is nearly 4% above Breckland. This is a consistent finding of lower female participation than male in nearly all areas. It underlines the importance of providing facilities where female participation is higher, such as swimming pools
- The Breckland male once a week participation rate whilst higher than for females has declined, it being 36.2% of adult males participating at least once a week in 2006 and 31.6% in 2016
- The Breckland rate of adult male participation at 31.6% of males participating in 2016 is considerably lower than the rate for East Region (39.5%) and the England wide rate (40.7%)
- The adult rate of swimming participation in Breckland was 8.4% in 2006 and has declined to 6.6% in 2010 – 11, last year data is available. It has also declined at both East Region level from 8.1% in 2006 to 5.6% in 2016 and England wide from 8% in 2006 to 5.6% in 2016. There has been a decline in swimming participation in almost all areas of England and is the subject of research by Sport England and the Amateur Swimming Association
- Non-participation in Breckland (measured as adults who undertake no sport or physical activity) has increased from 56.3% of all adults in 2006, to 57.4% of all adults doing no activity in 2016
- The Breckland rate of non-participation at 57% is higher than in East Region (53%) and England wide (53.2%) in 2016.

#### 2.42 Overall and in summary the key findings are;

- Breckland has a slightly declining rate of adult sports and physical activity participation over the period of the Active People surveys from 2006 to 2016. This is for all sports and includes both indoor and outdoor sports

- Adult male participation is higher than female participation in total in Breckland. However, for both genders participation is declining, very slightly for females by just over 1% but by 4.6% for males over the 2006 – 2016 period
- Swimming is the most popular activity in Breckland. The rate of swimming participation has declined by 1.8% in the five years between 2006 and 2011 to 6.6% of all adults swimming at least once a week. Swimming has declined by 2.6% across the Region and by 2.4% across England between 2006 and 2016
- The scale of the challenge to create a more active and healthy Breckland population is reflected in the finding that over 50% of the adult population in Breckland do no sport or physical activity at all in 2016. This has increased by 1.4% since 2006. It remains a significant challenge.

2.43 Finally, these findings should be considered alongside targets and development initiatives put in place by Breckland Council, Parkwood, Leisure, and local sports clubs, National Governing Bodies of Sport, Active Norfolk and community groups. Development work by all these organisations could impact on increasing demand for indoor sports facilities. This is the subject matter for developing a local sports and recreational strategy for the authority, including all these providers.

### ***Residential Development Breckland***

2.44 The projected residential development across Breckland is set out below in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3: Residential Development Breckland**

Settlement Hierarchy	Local Plan Allocations (2011-2036)	Completions @ (31/3/2016)	Commitments (11/07/2016)	Total	Estimated Population growth (2011-2036)
Thetford	0	295	3334	3629	7668
Attleborough	2650	309	938	3897	8252
Dereham	750	256	534	1540	2953
Swaffham	750	264	598	1612	3100
Watton	400	252	653	1305	2445
Local Service Centres	925	376	905	2206	4209
Rural Areas	150	281	308	739	1053
<b>Total</b>	<b>5625</b>	<b>2033</b>	<b>7270</b>	<b>12905</b>	<b>29682</b>

(Source: Breckland Council Planning Department 2016)

2.45 This distribution is consistent with the broad spatial strategy to direct the majority of development towards the larger, more sustainable, settlements. 50% is directed to the key settlements of Attleborough and Thetford; 30% to the Market Towns of Dereham, Swaffham and Watton; 15% to the Local Service Centres and the remaining 5% in rural areas.

# 3: Assessing Needs and Opportunities for each facility type

- 3.1 This section sets out the methodology that has been used in the development of the needs assessment and evidence base. The assessment has been produced applying the guidance from Sport England in ANOG for indoor and built sports facilities.
- 3.2 The ANOG methodology was published by Sport England in 2014 following extensive consultation and a review of the former PPG 17 Companion Guide to Assessing Needs for Indoor Sport and Recreation and Open Space. ANOG is now the accepted industry wide methodology for undertaking a needs assessment and developing an evidence base.
- 3.3 The ANOG methodology has four parts. These are: quantity, quality, accessibility and availability. The Sport England ANOG guidance advises to set out the findings from the needs assessment in terms of;
- Protect: an evidence base which can inform policy formulation and seek to protect exiting facilities where there is an identified current need and future need for use by the community;
  - Enhance: an evidence base which can inform policy and seek to enhance the provision of existing facilities where there is an identified current and future need and the most effective way to meet this need is by improvement to what already exists. This could be by enhanced facility provision but it could also change access and availability of existing facilities to make the existing supply deliver more use for the community; and
  - Provide: an evidence base which can inform policy and lead to provision of new facilities where there is an identified need now and in the future. Plus, the most cost and sports effective way to meet this need is by provision of new facilities.

**Diagram 3.1: Sport England Approach to Assessing Needs**



3.4 The stages of the ANOG approach are set out below and this is followed by a description of how the ANOG has been applied in Breckland:

*A Undertaking an Assessment:*

Stage 1 – Prepare and tailor your assessment

Stage 2 – Gather information on supply and demand

Stage 3 – Assessment, bring the information together

*B Application of the Assessment*

**Stage 1: Prepare and tailor the assessment.**

3.5 At the scoping meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2016 the project brief and proposal were reviewed. The client requested that the 2016 assessment be completed by the end of November for all the facility types. This would establish the baseline evidence base. Towards the end of this stage it would be possible to determine if a bespoke facility planning model (fpm) assessment would be required to develop a detailed evidence base for swimming pools and sports halls based on the stage one findings, the impact of the projected, scale and location of new residential development. Plus views obtained through consultation from providers, operators, schools and clubs about changes in the current provision.

3.6 It was also decided to review the value and benefit of undertaking a bespoke fpm assessment for full size artificial grass pitches (AGPs) for football and hockey use. Again the stage one evidence base findings would provide the direction and the merit of doing this work as part on of the indoor sports and built recreational facilities evidence base, or, doing this work as part of a playing pitch strategy for Breckland.

3.7 The latter would consider the role of AGPs in meeting the future demand for football and hockey on all types of surfaces natural grass and artificial. It may therefore be more effectively progressed as part of a playing pitch strategy project.

3.8 The scoping meeting allowed naa to familiarize ourselves with the key Council documents and understand the relationship between the development of the evidence base and the wider Council objectives. Key contacts within Breckland Council were identified for consultations as well as external stakeholders, principally Sport England, Active Norfolk, Parkwood Leisure, Watton Sports Trust and the secondary schools with indoor sports facilities. The facilities for site visits were identified and the key consultees as part of the site visits.

3.9 The data on the existing supply of facilities in Breckland for each of the seven facility types in the project scope was produced for the meeting. This was taken from the Sport England Active Places Power database and the facility listing for 2016. This was subsequently reviewed by BDC for any errors, and omissions. Some very minor changes were needed and it formed the existing supply database for use in the 2016 evidence base work.

**Stage 2: Gather Information on Supply and Demand**

3.10 The hard evidence data and mapping for Breckland and the surrounding local authorities from Sport England's Active Places Power database is the source for developing the hard evidence base. The data is reviewed and a commentary provided on the supply, demand, access and availability of each of the facility types. For the larger facility types of swimming pools, sports halls and indoor bowling centres (there are no indoor tennis centres in Breckland) there is more extensive data on participation rates, frequency of participation by age six bands and for both genders.

- 3.11 This data is interrogated and a commentary developed on demand for facilities. Also the data on the catchment area of facilities and how accessible they are by different travel modes is reviewed and a commentary provided. This is both a quantified and spatial assessment. It identifies if there is demand located outside the catchment area of facilities and if so at which locations and at what scale. So the gaps in access to facilities are identified and the scale of this unmet demand from lack of access.
- 3.12 Finally the data provides findings on the level of usage at facilities and how this is distributed across venues. So it is possible to identify if some facilities are fuller than others.
- 3.13 For swimming pools and sports halls, which account for between 60% - 70% of the total indoor sports facility participation at the community level, it is possible to do the same data analysis described for Breckland for all the neighboring authorities. So tables are produced setting out the findings for each local authority alongside Breckland. As the assessment is based on the catchment area of facilities in Breckland extending into these neighbouring authorities and vice versa, it is possible to identify how much Breckland demand is exported and how much is imported.
- 3.14 This data with an extensive review and compilation of the findings into a detailed report provides the hard evidence part of the ANOG assessment for the facility types in 2016. The findings from this work are then overlaid with findings from the population and participation review up to 2031, already described to provide the forward assessment up to 2031 for the four facility types of indoor bowling, indoor tennis, squash courts and health and fitness. As already set out, providing the assessment and evidence for swimming pools and sports halls and possibly artificial grass pitches will be undertaken as part of a facility planning model assessment. The results will then be incorporated into this evidence base report and appendix to provide a 2016 – 2031 evidence base for all facility types.
- 3.15 This extensive hard evidence database forms a large part of the content for the consultations and site visits. The site visits and consultations allowed for a cross check on what the hard evidence data was saying about the facility provision but more importantly: the community access to the venues; the objectives, hours and types of use; changes and challenges in operation of the venue for community use from the provider and the customer; and the barriers to increasing participation. Information where available was also collected on programming, membership details and details of casual and club user information. Discussion focused on the type of operation.
- 3.16 Site visits and or consultations were undertaken with all the main providers, Parkwood Leisure, schools, clubs and sports trusts. This included all type of operation, pay and play, organised club use and commercial membership providers. The site visit consultations were held with the business and or facility manager and the head of PE at schools. The only exceptions were Scared Heart Convent School and Dereham Neatherd High School who declined to either meet and or respond.

### **Stage 3 – Assessment Report**

- 3.17 The final part is to bring all the findings together into the actual assessment of the current and future provision for each of the facility types. This is set out in full in Appendix 1. The sequence of reporting is the same for each facility type and it is structured to follow the Sport England's ANOG guidance.
- 3.18 For each facility type the findings under each of the ANOG headings are set out in a summary table. This is followed by more detailed findings following ANOG, This is followed in turn, with a commentary on the site visits and consultations for each facility type.

- 3.19 To repeat, the assessment report sets out the evidence base for the facility types in 2016. The evidence base to 2031 is set out for indoor bowling, indoor tennis, squash and health and fitness. The evidence base for swimming pools, sports halls and possibly artificial grass pitches to 2031 will be progressed through the use of Sport England's facility planning model to provide the assessment up to 2031.
- 3.20 When that is completed both the assessment report and this overarching report will be updated to provide a complete evidence base for 2016 – 2031 for each facility type.
- 3.21 To provide a link between the full assessments in the appendix and this overarching report, the summary of key findings for each facility type are set out in section 4.

## 4: Planning Framework

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- 4.1 This section sets out in tabular form a summary of the key findings and recommendations for each of the facility types.
- 4.2 For indoor bowling, indoor tennis, squash and health and fitness this is a summary of the findings from the full assessment and evidence base for each facility type for 2016 and 2031.
- 4.3 For swimming pools, sports halls and full size artificial grass pitches, it is a summary of the findings from the full assessment and evidence base for 2016. Once the facility planning model work has been completed then the findings for 2031 will be added to this section. This will provide a summary of the assessment and evidence base for all seven facility types 2016 – 2031.
- 4.4 The recommendations which arise from the assessment are categorised under the headings of 'Protect', 'Enhance' and 'Provide', as recommended by Sport England in the ANOG guidance. These categories are not mutually exclusive and some recommendations will sit comfortably both within 'Enhance' and 'Provide' for example. The focus is more about:
- Protection of what already exists – because there is an identified need and demand (PROTECT);
  - Enhancement and making more effective use of the existing sports facilities. This is by one or more of: modernisation of the facilities and/or management intervention and change to work with all providers in partnership. To do this, so as to ensure that opportunities to work collaboratively are taken and the opportunities for community use are maximised (ENHANCE); and
  - New provision of facilities is much less of a focus, in large part because of the needs assessment finding that there is limited need for new provision for four of the facility types up to 2031. The forward assessment for swimming pools, sports halls and artificial grass pitches is to be undertaken. Whilst there is not a need for much new provision but where there is a need to protect existing facilities, this can lead to RE-PROVISION. This is based on a continuing need for the facility but on grounds of buildings reaching the end of their life and it is more cost and sports effective to re-provide. (PROVIDE OR RE-PROVIDE).
- 4.5 The final part of this section is a summary of the project and describes the application of the evidence base.

**Table 5.1: Evidence Base Recommendations**

SWIMMING POOLS	
PROTECT	<p><b>2016 Findings</b></p> <p>Protect and maintain the 2 swimming pool sites which provide for community use. These sites have a total of 5 individual pools. Breckland Leisure Centre and Waterworld has three pools: a main pool of 313 sq metres of water (a 25m x 6 lanes pool), a leisure pool of 275 sq metres of water and a teaching/learner pool of 75 sq metres of water.</p> <p>Dereham Leisure Centre has two pools, a main pool of 338 sq metres of water, (also a 25m x 6 lanes) and a teaching/learner pool of 135 sq metres of water.</p> <p>In 2016 some 70% of the total demand for swimming from Breckland residents is being met. All of the unmet demand is from location and demand located outside the catchment area of a pool. It is not because of lack of swimming pool capacity.</p> <p>Some 80% of the total 70% of the demand for swimming which is met/satisfied is a Breckland resident using a pool located in the authority, known as retained demand. This is a reasonably high level of retained demand and shows the pool locations and catchment areas are reasonably well placed in relation to where the Breckland demand for swimming is located.</p> <p>In 2016 the estimate is that 30% of the Breckland demand that is met is exported. This equates to around 1,190 visits and the demand retained in the authority is 4,680 visits in the weekly peak period.</p> <p>Based on the mapping of pool locations and catchment areas of pools in neighbouring authorities, most demand is exported to South Norfolk Attleborough is outside the drive to catchment area of the Breckland Leisure Centre pool and the nearest pool is at Wymondham Leisure Centre in South Norfolk. This pool has recently had a £3m modernisation, which along with it being the most accessible pool for the eastern side of Breckland will increase its attractiveness to Breckland residents.</p>
ENHANCE	<p>The quality of the swimming pool offer is very good. The two pool sites can provide for the full range of swimming activities of, learn to swim, public recreational swimming, lane and fitness swimming and swimming development through clubs. Also fun, confidence building and family based activities within the leisure pool at the Breckland centre.</p> <p>The pools were built in two eras. Breckland Leisure Centre opened in 1974 and was extensively modernised in 2007. Dereham Leisure Centre opened in 2007 and so is nine years old. Over the period to 2031 there will be the need to maintain the quality of the swimming pools and modernise the venues.</p>
PROVIDE	<p>Unmet demand reflects the geographic size, the settlement pattern of the authority and the distances between the major settlements. Also the two pool sites are located in the north east and south/ west of the authority. The areas of highest unmet demand outside the catchment area of a pool is in and around Swaffham and Watton.</p> <p>Both are just outside the drive time catchment area of the Dereham swimming pool. Swaffham appears to be equidistant between the Dereham pool and the pool in</p>

	<p>Downham Market.</p> <p>Swaffham is the area of highest unmet demand and it represents around 95 sq metres of water. Watton has unmet demand of around 80 sq m of water. The scale of the unmet demand <u>because of lack of access to a pool</u> in Swaffham and Watton is small in relation to the size of a 25m x 4 lane pool, which is 212 -250 sq metres of water, depending on lane width.</p> <p>On its own, the scale of unmet demand in 2016 because of lack of access to a pool, is insufficient to support provision of a swimming pool at either location.</p> <p><b>Swimming Pools 2016 – 2031.</b> The key issues which emerge from the swimming pools assessment for the fpm study on future provision are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact the scale and location of the projected population growth 2016 – 2031 has on the demand for swimming pools and the capacity of the existing venues to meet an increase in demand from population growth. The assumption is that supply will remain unchanged and so how is any increase in demand accommodated? Also what is the scale of the increase and how is it distributed across the authority?</li> <li>• The impact of the ageing of the core resident population from 2016 – to 2031. If there are more people in the main age bands that swim in 2031 when compared with 2016, then this could further add to the demand total. The reverse could also be true and this will offset increased demand from population growth.</li> <li>• The impact of the ageing of the existing swimming pools over the 2016 – 2031 period. The recent and very extensive modernisation of the Wymondham Leisure Centre pool could have a pull effect on the Breckland demand which is located within the catchment area of the Wymondham pool. More modern pools have a draw effect and this could continue to draw demand out of Breckland.</li> </ul> <p>Next stage - these findings and key issues form the basis for setting the parameters for the fpm specification to assess the demand for swimming pools up to 2031 and beyond. This work will be undertaken and the full results included in the overall assessment report and the main findings and recommendations set out in this evidence base report.</p>
<b>SPORTS HALLS</b>	
<b>PROTECT</b>	<p><b>2016 Findings</b></p> <p>Maintain and protect the existing supply of sports halls. In 2016 Breckland has a total supply of 9 sports halls on 7 sites with a total of 32 badminton courts. Two of the sites are part of the multi sports public leisure centres at Dereham and Breckland Leisure Centre in Thetford. In addition, there is the sports hall at Attleborough Sports Hall and the dual use site at Swaffham Leisure Centre with Nicholas Hammond Academy.</p> <p>There are then 3 main sports halls on secondary school sites at Convent of the Scared Heart, Swaffham, Neatherd High School Dereham and Wayland Academy Watton. In addition to these sites, there is the Watton Sports Centre sports hall and a 2 badminton court sports hall at Northgate High School, Dereham.</p> <p>The total supply of sports halls is 32 badminton courts but this reduces to 27 courts in the weekly peak period because of the variable availability of sports halls across the education venues. Total demand for sports halls by Breckland residents equates to 36 courts in 2016.</p> <p>Some 83% of the Breckland total demand for sports halls is being met in 2016 based</p>

	<p>on the drive time and walking catchment area of the sites. Of this total, some 78% is met in Breckland, based on Breckland residents using the nearest sports hall to where they live. So, the network of sports hall sites and their catchment area is providing a good level of access for Breckland residents.</p> <p>Some 27% of the Breckland demand which is met is exported and met in neighbouring authorities. The data does not identify how much demand goes where and the mapping of the nearest venues makes it difficult to identify which venues are absorbing some of the Breckland demand. (this will be addressed in the fpm assessment).</p>
ENHANCE	<p>The sports hall stock is quite old, with an average age of 32 years There has been one sports hall opened since 2000, this being the Dereham Leisure Centre in 2007. The oldest sports hall is at Wayland Academy opened in 1970. Four of the oldest venues have been modernised. The oldest unmodernised sports halls are Swaffham Leisure Centre (1981) and Attleborough Sports Hall (1982).</p> <p>Over the period up to 2031 there will be a need to modernise the sports hall venues. In particular, replace the floor surface, upgrading the lighting systems and modernise changing rooms.</p> <p>Given the age of the Swaffham and Attleborough centres, plus the education venues and Watton Sports Centre, it could be more cost effective to re-provide these centres, rather than modernise them. (This will be addressed in the fpm study).</p>
PROVIDE	<p>In 2016, unmet demand for sports halls equates to just fewer than 6 badminton courts. The biggest cluster of unmet demand is in and to the north of Dereham. It is principally residents who do not have access to a car and live outside the walking catchment of the Dereham Centre and the school sports halls. It totals around 2 badminton courts.</p> <p>There is also a cluster of unmet demand around Watton but it only represents 1 badminton court. Again, this is demand located outside the walking catchment area of sports halls. The remainder of the unmet demand is distributed cross the authority</p> <p><b>Sports Halls 2016 – 2031</b> - the key issues which emerge from the sports hall assessment for the fpm study, are very similar to swimming pools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of the scale and location of the projected population growth 2016 – 2031 has on the demand for sports halls and the ability of the existing venues to meet this demand. As there is a small shortfall in supply to meet demand in 2016 then how does this change both quantitatively and spatially by 2031?</li> <li>• The impact of the ageing of the core resident population from 2016 – to 2031. The population assessment has identified the total male population in the 20 - 44 age band (main age band for participation in indoor hall sports) is 18,253 people in 2016 and increases to 19,916 by 2031. The female total is 18,852 people in 2016 and is 17,858 in 2031. So overall virtually no change in the total population in the age band that has the highest participation in hall sports.</li> <li>• The impact of the ageing of the existing sports halls over the 2016 – 2031 period, the stock has an average age of 32 years in 2016. If there are more modern sports halls in neighbouring authorities, this will draw demand out of Breckland.</li> <li>• The impact of population growth at specific sports hall sites/catchment areas. Inevitably the main public leisure centres are going to attract most demand and</li> </ul>

	<p>participation because of the range of activities they provide for and for both club and community use. So what is the impact of population growth from (possible) lack of sports hall capacity at these venues?</p> <p><b>Next stage</b> - these findings and key issues form the basis for setting the parameters for the facilities planning model specification to assess the demand for sports halls up to 2031 and beyond. This work will be undertaken and the full results included in the overall assessment report and the main findings and recommendations set out in this evidence base report.</p>
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**ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES**

<p><b>PROTECT</b></p>	<p><b>2016 Findings</b></p> <p>Maintain the existing supply of AGP's across Breckland. In 2016 Breckland has 5 AGPs pitches on four sites.</p> <p>There is a double pitch site at Dereham Hockey Club with two sand dressed pitches. There are two other sand dressed pitches at Breckland Leisure Centre and Watton Sports Centre. There is only one 3g pitch which is located at Dereham Neatherd High School.</p> <p>The 5 pitches have an effective supply of 4.8 pitch equivalents in the weekly peak period. The very slight reduction of 0.20 of a pitch is due to very slightly reduced hours of access for community use.</p> <p>The Breckland hard evidence demand for AGPs is for a minimum of 3.6 pitches for the combined use for football (2.8 pitches) and hockey (0.8 pitches). This is however an under estimate of demand for hockey. The Dereham Hockey Club is a very large club with 13 men's and women's senior teams and 9 boys and girls teams. So, the demand for this club and for hockey is for between 1.5 and 2 pitches, which is the club's supply of pitches.</p> <p>Pitches are accessible in Dereham (3 pitches), Thetford (1 pitch) and Watton (1 pitch). There are no pitches in Swaffham and Attleborough. The nearest pitches to Swaffham are the Dereham pitches and a pitch at RAF Marham in KL &amp; WN. This is an old sand dressed floodlit pitch opened in 1974 Given the age, location and limited access to this pitch it could not be regarded as a pitch which is accessible to Swaffham.</p> <p>There is no pitch in Attleborough and the nearest pitch is located at Easton College in South Norfolk. This is however outside the 20 minute drive time catchment area of Attleborough and is not an effective supply for Attleborough.</p>
<p><b>ENHANCE</b></p>	<p>The average age of the 5 pitches is 17 years and so quite an old stock. The pitches have been provided at a rate of one in each of the past four decades. The Dereham Hockey Club pitches are the oldest having opened in 1987 and were last resurfaced in 2007.</p> <p>The Watton Sport Centre pitch was opened in 1998, and has not been re-surfaced. The centre is trying at present to secure funds to re-surface the pitch. Breckland Leisure Centre pitch opened in 2006 and according to the data has not been resurfaced. Finally, the most recent pitch is the 3g pitch at Neatherd High School opened in 2014.</p> <p>All five pitches are floodlit.</p>

	<p>There will be a need to resurface all pitches over the period to 2031. The average age for a pitch carpet is around 6 - 8 years, depending on the level of use.</p>
PROVIDE	<p><b>AGPs 2016 – 2031</b></p> <p>The key issues which emerge from the AGP assessment for the (possible) fpm study are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The balance in the type of pitch surfaces. Four of the pitches are sand filled/dressed surfaces and only one is a 3g surface. The Football Association policy is to move all football use onto 3g surfaces, so there is a deficit in supply of 3g pitches to meet the FA objective. Scope to redress the pitch surface balance is limited because the 2 pitches at Dereham Hockey Club are sand based pitches for hockey use. So, the only pitches that could be converted are at Watton Sports Centre and Breckland Leisure Centre.</li> <li>• The project group will decide if it wishes to undertake a bespoke facility planning model (fpm) study to assess the impact of population growth and change has on the supply, demand, access and availability of AGPs up to 2031. Or, if the forward assessment of AGP's is best progressed as an integral part of a playing pitch strategy.</li> <li>• This is because the provision of AGPs is inextricably linked to the strategy of the Football Association, already set out. This has implications for the number of natural grass pitches required (reduced) and the provision of 3g pitches (increased). Also, as set out, Breckland has only one 3g pitch and so to meet the FA's objective could mean conversion of pitches (Breckland Leisure Centre and Watton Sports Centre) to a 3g surface, or provision of new 3g pitches. If there is new provision this has implications for the level of football use of sand dressed pitches. Moving football onto 3g pitches and not replacing with hockey use at the sand based pitches (challenging to achieve) could lead to an oversupply of sand dressed pitches.</li> </ul> <p>Given the inter relationship of all these issues of both natural grass and artificial grass pitches, plus the different surfaces for different sports and the FA strategy, it may be more appropriate to examine the future provision for AGP's within a playing pitch strategy. This will consider the needs of all pitch sports and all types of pitch provision and surfaces. The way forward will be resolved by the project steering group.</p>
<b>INDOOR BOWLING</b>	
PROTECT	<p>Maintain but keep under review the need for the three indoor bowling centres over the period to 2031.</p> <p>Indoor bowling is the indoor sports facility type most used by residents in their 70's and 80's. Indoor bowling participation is highest in the 75 – 79 age band.</p> <p>There are three indoor bowling centres in Breckland. Breckland Leisure Centre Thetford (6 rinks and opened in 2006); Dereham Leisure Centre (4 rinks and opened in 2007); and Old Hall Indoor Bowls Club NW of Watton (4 rinks opened in 1974 and modernised in 2002).</p> <p>By applying the Sport England rates and frequency of participation to the Breckland population in 2016 and for 2031, it is possible to identify the potential demand for indoor bowling. In 2016 this equates to 908 bowlers in 2016 and increasing to 1, 081 bowlers in 2031. At a per rink capacity of 100 bowlers per rink, this equates to 9 rinks in</p>

	<p>2016 and increasing by 2 rinks to 11 in 2031.</p> <p>So, on this assessment supply of rinks slightly exceeds demand over the period to 2031. This however is based on the existing rates of indoor bowling participation continuing to apply – this is questionable.</p> <p>The current membership of the two resident clubs at the public leisure centres is, Dereham Leisure Centre 200 members and at Thetford it is 100 members. The Old Hall indoor bowls club did not respond to requests for a meeting. An off chance site visit did not result in meeting anyone from the club. So, there is no data about membership of this club or the centre operation.</p> <p>The playing membership of the two Breckland clubs in 2016 at a total of 300 members, plus the public pay and play usage at the centres is well within the capacity of the 10 rinks at the two centres.</p> <p>In 2014 the County Sports Partnership delivered a 2 year project funded by the Governing Body and working with the clubs and Parkwood Leisure. The aim being to grow participation of people aged 55+ in the sport of bowls across the four main formats of the game (including indoor). The project had a countywide remit and a large element of the project was to award grants to bowls clubs to fund open days and structured coaching sessions to support the recruitment of new players.</p> <p>The indoors bowls clubs in the Breckland area were engaged across the 2 years of the project; Dereham IBC were very successful in recruiting new players and ran a total of 4 recruitment events and recruited 44 players aged 55+. The Brecks (Thetford) club also ran 4 recruitment events but only recruited 8 players aged 55+. The project had its challenge in engaging clubs and take up of the project and support was slow.</p> <p>The Dereham club continues to be very proactive in increasing its membership. However, at Thetford the level of usage and membership has led to the rink being divided into two areas of three rinks. One for the bowlers and one for use by martial arts clubs.</p> <p>So overall the clubs need to continue to increase membership to support the provision of the indoor bowling centres.</p>
ENHANCE	The quality of the centres is good and the main quality requirements over the period to 2031 will be replacement of the carpet every 8 – 10 years, depending on the amount of play. There will also be a need to maintain and improve lighting systems.
PROVIDE	There is no identified need to provide further indoor bowling centres in Breckland based on the current level of provision and projected participation levels to 2031.
<b>INDOOR TENNIS</b>	
PROTECT AND ENHANCE	There are no indoor tennis courts/centres located in Breckland. So, there are no recommendations under these headings.
PROVIDE	<p>Based on the Sport England data of Breckland adults who do play and those who would like to play indoor tennis, the 2016 Breckland adult population (over 16) would generate 246 tennis players. Based on the same participation rate applied to the Breckland adult population in 2031, would generate 274 tennis players.</p> <p>The Lawn Tennis Association capacity figure for one indoor tennis court to be occupied for around 80% of the weekly peak period of weekday evenings and</p>

	<p>weekend days is 200 users. So, based on the projected participation rates, the Breckland population would generate demand for just over 1 indoor court in each of the two years.</p> <p>It is not a viable proposition to provide just one court and the usual provision is for at least two and usually three indoor courts, ideally situated alongside an established outdoor tennis court club, or, as part of a public or commercial indoor sports centre.</p> <p>Breckland does not have any established outdoor tennis clubs and there are no major commercial indoor sports and leisure centres in Breckland. The Dereham and Breckland Leisure Centres are public sports and recreational facilities under commercial management.</p> <p>The development of outdoor tennis is the main focus of the Lawn Tennis Association. Should outdoor tennis participation increase, this could, in turn, lead to the establishment of an outdoor tennis club in Breckland. This in turn could generate further demand/critical mass for an indoor tennis centre.</p> <p>The recommendation is not to consider provision of an indoor tennis centre, until there is an increase in tennis participation and a viable club base that can create sufficient demand for at least 2 indoor courts. The potential provision of an indoor centre, could then be subject to a detailed feasibility study.</p> <p>(Note: The nearest centre to Breckland is the Easton College Centre which has 8 courts in two separate centres. This venue is within a 20 minute drive time of the eastern side of Breckland but the majority of the authority is outside the 20 minute drive time catchment area of an indoor tennis centre. The other venues are in Broadland but further east from Breckland than the Easton College centre).</p>
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**SQUASH**

<p>PROTECT</p>	<p>Maintain the existing courts and venues at Breckland Leisure Centre (4 courts), Watton Sports Centre (2 courts) and Swaffham Sports Centre (1 court). It is important to provide facilities to enable squash participation to continue at the pay and play level. There is no provision in Dereham or Attleborough. There are no squash or tennis clubs which own or provide squash courts.</p> <p>Participation in squash and racketball based on the benchmark measure of at least once a week participation is available at the East Region level for 2006 – 2015. Participation data is not available below this geographic level. The participation rate in squash at the East Region level has declined, from 0.74% of adults playing at least once a week in 2006 to 0.48% of adults in 2016.</p> <p>The reasons for the reduction in squash participation is attributed by England Squash to (1) decreasing popularity of the sport after the very extensive rise in participation in the 1980's, estimated at over 2m players at its height, (2) increasing attractiveness of other activities, most noticeably health and fitness which appealed to the same demographic (16 – 44) as squash, (3) an ageing average age of squash participation, currently estimated to be between 52 – 55 years of age.</p> <p>Should participation not increase there may be competing demand for the space at the existing centres. Retention of courts at the Breckland Leisure Centre is very important, so that there is continued provision of (at least) one location in Breckland. It is the location with the highest number of courts and there is an active squash club focusing on recreational play.</p>
<p>ENHANCE</p>	<p>The average age of the squash court venues is 31 years and the most recent</p>

	<p>provision is at Watton Sports Centre, which opened in 1998.</p> <p>Continued maintenance of the courts and changing accommodation is required to maintain the quality of the venues and retain participation.</p>
PROVIDE	<p>There is no identified need to provide further squash courts in Breckland up to 2031. This assessment is based on the current level of provision and participation levels which can meet the levels of participation in Breckland and accommodate any increase.</p> <p>Further development of the sport is dependent on rates of participation stabilising, then increasing and attracting a younger age group of players.</p> <p>Based on a 20 minute drive time catchment area of the three centres, all of Breckland is inside the catchment area of a squash venue. There are no courts in Dereham and Attleborough but they are (just) inside the 20 minute drive time catchment area of the courts at Watton Sports Centre.</p>
<b>HEALTH AND FITNESS</b>	
PROTECT	<p>Maintain the existing provision of health and fitness in terms of scale, location and accessibility. Maintain a watching brief on trends in health and fitness provision and participation. It will be important to monitor how these changes reflect the current supply and demand balance - quantitatively, spatially and across all providers (see provide comments).</p>
ENHANCE	<p>The average age of the venues is 18 years, with 6 venues of the total 11 venues having opened pre 1990 and 5 post 2000. The most recent venue is the Amazon Gym in Attleborough, which opened in 2010. The age of the venue is less important than the age of the equipment and according to the data, 6 of the venues have replaced or upgraded equipment in the past 5 years.</p> <p>The oldest equipment is in the education venues and it is understood there are no plans to upgrade or replace equipment. Should schools decide to include health and fitness in their community use offer, then there will be the need to upgrade and replace the equipment, this should be supported.</p>
PROVIDE	<p>Projecting the potential demand for health and fitness to 2031 is very challenging, given the dynamic nature and frequent changes in both provision and participation. Health and fitness provision, more than any other indoor facility type, is very much 'market' led and changes frequently. Recent trends (past 2-3 years) suggest smaller gyms but with more studios to deliver solely class based workouts, as opposed to use of traditional fitness equipment is the latest trend/mix of provision.</p> <p>Also the recent (last 5 years) increase in the low cost gyms without long term memberships and which provide the gym and quality equipment but little else have opened up the market and created a new appeal and market. Meantime, there is possibly less demand for the gyms which also provide for a range of other services, spas, saunas and treatments and which have a long term membership commitment.</p> <p>So, it is a very segregated market in terms of (1) different types of provision for different types of participants and based on (2) consumer demand; (3) levels of disposable income (4) membership and non-membership marketing and pricing and (5) consumers changing interest in different activities.</p> <p>Parkwood Leisure is considering expanding its health and fitness offer at both</p>

	Dereham Leisure Centre and the Breckland Centre. Based on a sound business case this should be supported.
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### **Summary and application of the evidence base**

- 4.6 This project provides an evidence base which sets out the current and future requirements for indoor sports and recreational facilities across Breckland 2016 – 2031.
- 4.7 This has been developed for four of the seven facility types. These being indoor bowling, indoor tennis, squash courts and health and fitness. A facility planning model assessment will be undertaken for swimming pools and sports halls and possibly artificial grass pitches, so as to provide the complete evidence base for the period 2016 – 2031.
- 4.8 The findings from this work will be incorporated into the full audit and assessment Appendix. This covering evidence base report will also be updated to provide the full evidence base for all facility types.
- 4.9 The application of this evidence base will be used by the Council to inform its Infrastructure Development Plan which, in turn, will form part of the Council's new Local Plan. It will also provide a stand-alone document in its own right.
- 4.10 This report and the full audit and assessment appendix provides the evidence base for the development of local planning policies for the provision of indoor sports and recreational facilities at the community level. The demographic and sports participation data, provides an evidence base that can be applied to further shape the Council's wider corporate and strategic planning objectives, as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2015 – 2019.
- 4.11 Finally, the evidence base can also be applied in the development of feasibility studies in matching the needs assessment to a long-term core and viable business case with a procurement route for a particular project.