

**MILTON KEYNES**

**Sport & Active Communities Strategy**

**PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

**Final Report**

**March 2015**



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## SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

### Introduction

1. The development of a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is one of the first actions arising from the adopted Sports and Active Communities Strategy. It specifically addresses grass pitch provision across the authority, with a particular focus on football, cricket and rugby. The strategy is one of the first to be developed using the 2013 Sport England guidance, and its development has been with the close involvement of Sport England, the Football Association at both regional and county level, English Cricket Board and Bucks Cricket Board, the Rugby Football Union, and Milton Keynes Council. Hockey England has been kept aware throughout the strategy but has not been closely involved as artificial grass pitch provision was considered in detail in the main Sport and Active Communities Strategy.
2. The strategy provides an assessment of the need for and issues relating to grass pitch provision in Milton Keynes. There are policy recommendations to guide priorities, and costed proposals for investment over the next few years. Of particular concern is the need to improve the quality of sites to improve their attractiveness and usefulness to sport, as well as providing more sites to meet identified need as the population grows.

### Methodology

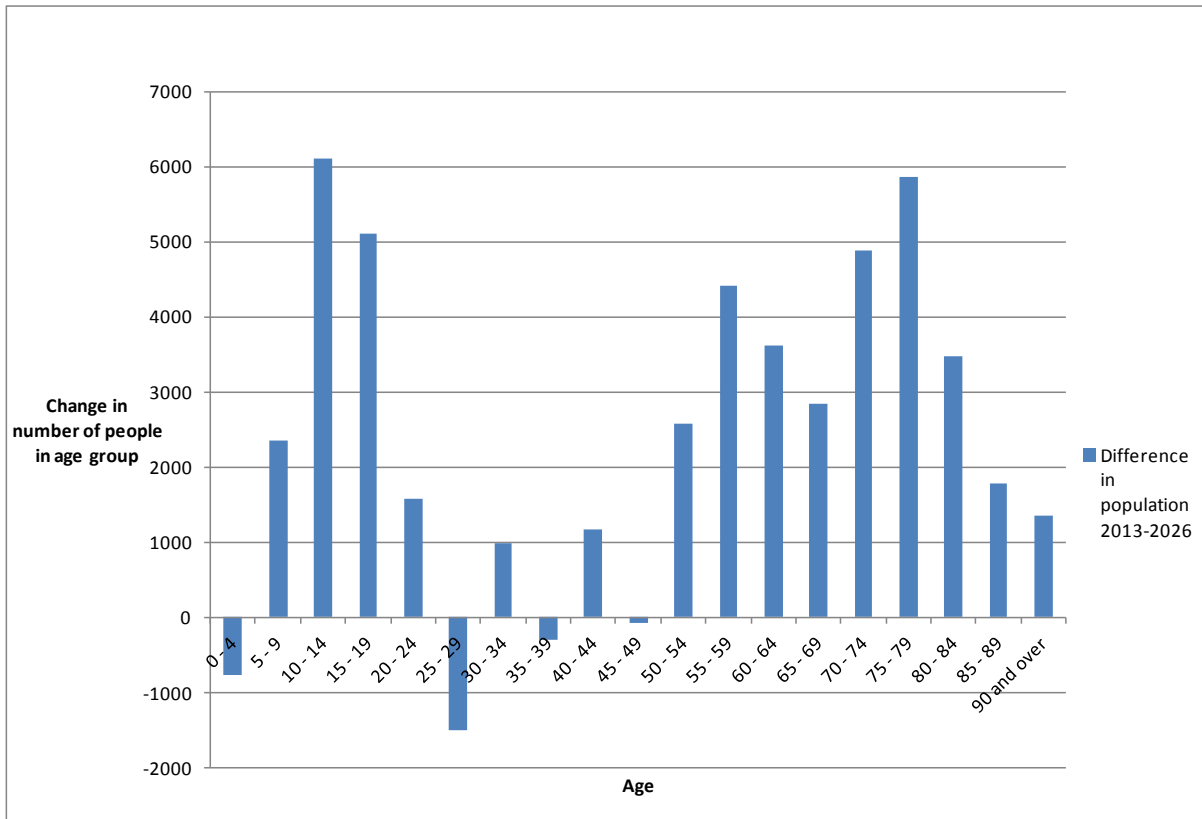
3. Milton Keynes Council commissioned Nortoft Partnerships to undertake the Playing Pitch Strategy work as part of the Milton Keynes Sport and Active Communities Strategy. The methodology of the PPS follows the Sport England Playing Pitch Guidance of 2013, with the close involvement of the national governing bodies, consultation with clubs, schools and pitch providers, site visits to playing fields, and mathematical modelling. This report brings together the findings and proposes site specific recommendations, with costs and priorities for investment where appropriate.
4. All of the clubs involved in football, cricket and rugby have been consulted, with a 100% return from both cricket and rugby. The football clubs consultation was supplemented by a separate meeting of the football leagues whose representatives were able to provide good information about both individual sites and the clubs and teams across the authority.
5. Each site used by the community has been visited and assessed, and views sought on site quality and issues from users. The approach follows that of the Sport England guidance. Primary school sites which are not used by the community have been included in the database, and the area of each playing field assessed using existing GIS layers.
6. The emerging findings and priorities were discussed with the sport governing bodies and with Milton Keynes Council. The initial priorities for investment are for a period

of 5 years, but there are also longer term proposals. Both have been informed by, and will continue to inform the MK Local Investment Plan which is the summary of infrastructure requirements for Milton Keynes as it grows.

## Population and future growth of Milton Keynes

7. Milton Keynes Intelligence (MKi) Observatory provided the Sport and Active Communities Strategy population projections and the details of the housing proposals which are used as the basis of the PPS assessment.
8. The current population of Milton Keynes Borough is around 252,000 and overall there is a fairly similar age profile across the different areas of the authority. However there are more people under 18 years in the West, and the largest proportion of older people (aged 60 years and over) is in the North of Milton Keynes.
9. There is expected to be significant growth in the Milton Keynes population in the period up to 2026, with the population rising to around 297,000. The exact details of this growth are still to be confirmed in some locations, for example in Newport Pagnell, where the emerging Neighbourhood Plan is proposing higher housing numbers. These changes and further projections will need to be taken into account and may require further playing field space to be provided than currently identified in this strategy's recommendations.
10. However, the population is also expected to age overall, and the existing notable dip in those aged around 20-30 years is expected to continue. There is strong growth in the number of young people up to the age of 19 years, and in the number of people in each age group aged 50+ years. This is best illustrated by the graph in Figure 1, which shows the change in population at each age group between 2013 and 2028.
11. The new population growth will be focussed in the West, East and Central areas of Milton Keynes, but the rural areas and North will see very little change

Figure 1: Estimated population change between 2013 and 2028



### Key findings for football, cricket and rugby

12. Football, cricket and rugby are largely self sustaining in Milton Keynes, with demand for the sports being met within the authority. There do not appear to be any significant cross-border movements of players.
13. The sports have all grown as the population of Milton Keynes has increased, but the rates of growth in participation have not been as fast as anticipated. In fact both football and cricket have seen a slight fall in rates of participation since 2007, see Figure 2. The team numbers are based on a combination of data sources including: club survey returns, national governing body information, league tables and the web sites of the clubs themselves. For cricket, the team information refers to the preceding summer, whilst for football and rugby the team information is for the winter seasons. Therefore in the table below the latest cricket numbers refer to 2013, whilst football and rugby refer to the winter of 2013/14.

Figure 2: Changes in rates of participation 2007-14

Team numbers and age groups	Number of teams			Team Generation Rate			Growth or decrease in participation 2007/08 - 2013/14
	Year			Year			
	2007/8	2010	2013/14	2007/8	2010	2013/14	
<b>Football</b>							
Minis (u10)	227	112	123	9.52	8.99	8.58	
Junior/youth (10-15 years) boys	179	197	175	18.17	19.78	17.7	
Junior/youth (10-15 years) girls				1.78	2.49	1.44	
Youth & adult (16+ years) men	113	126	113	2.16	2.39	2.11	
Youth & adult (16+ years) women				0.08	0.10	0.06	
<b>Cricket</b>							
Junior cricket - boys	35	14	19	3.36	1.35	1.02	
Junior cricket - girls	0	0	1	0	0	0.05	
Men's cricket	67	73	66	1.06	1.14	0.99	
Women's cricket	1	2	0	0.03	0.03	0.00	
<b>Rugby</b>							
Mini/midi -rugby - mixed	15	18	18	1.02	1.19	1.10	
Junior rugby - boys	10	10	14	1.35	1.35	1.61	
Junior rugby - girls	2	0	3	0.19	0.00	0.35	
Men's rugby	11	15	12	0.23	0.31	0.25	
Women's rugby	2	2	2	0.04	0.04	0.04	
Note: the way junior cricket teams were recorded by clubs may be the reason for the substantial difference in team numbers between 2007/08 and 2010.							

14. Additionally, the housing development in Milton Keynes was much slower over the period up to 2014 than was expected in 2007/08, so the number of people available to play sport has not grown as anticipated at that earlier time. The consequence is that, overall, both cricket and football have more than sufficient capacity overall to cater for both the planned growth up to 2026, and future increases in participation, even if this now achieved the 1% pa across the age groups. This is not necessarily the case however in some specific locations such as in Newport Pagnell, where there is less pitch provision than is needed for the community now, and this situation will be exacerbated as the town grows.
15. The reasons behind the comparatively slow growth of football and cricket are complex. The key issue raised by all of the clubs involved in these sports is the relatively poor quality of provision in Milton Keynes. This has negatively impacted upon the ability of the clubs to attract and maintain players, especially as most of the sites provide for both sports, and are also used to varying degrees as public open spaces. A priority for the future is therefore to improve the quality of provision; splitting the sports where possible, and focussing investment on sites with limited informal use. Schools are an important resource for community football, but none



have formal community use agreements which secure this use into the longer term. Securing this use is therefore also a priority.

16. The sport of rugby is very different from football and cricket in that there are only three clubs and they are responsible for their own sites. The two urban sites have some informal use, but this appears to be of lesser extent than that of many football/cricket venues. The quality of their pitches and facilities are generally good. This may in part account for the ability of the sport to at least maintain its rates of participation, and increase the numbers of juniors playing. The priorities for rugby are to enhance the existing three club sites, in particular Milton Keynes and Bletchley which are closest to the new housing areas and which are already at or approaching capacity.
17. The draft list of site investment priorities is provided as Figure 3. The priorities are based on the criteria listed in each sports specific section of this strategy, on the existing site issues and opportunities, and on national governing body priorities where these are available.
18. In relation to artificial grass pitches (AGPs) no new potential priorities have emerged from this PPS which would require substantial review of the now adopted Sport and Active Communities Strategy, but there is now a proposal to develop the already planned central MK AGP as a pitch with a rugby specification, which means that it can be used for both rugby training and football. This proposal also supports the use of MK as a venue for the Rugby World Cup in 2015. The resurfacing of the Sir Herbert Leon Academy to 3G is the highest priority for the FA.
19. A proposal has emerged from further consultation with Newport Pagnell Town Council which is the development of one or more 3G pitches as part of an extension to Willen Road playing fields. These will require a full feasibility study and business plan to confirm viability.

### Coordination between football and cricket

20. As sites across Milton Keynes are increasingly managed by a wide range of providers and there is increasing conflict between the sports of cricket and football where sites overlap, there is a real need to establish a formal local coordination mechanism between the sports. This should be a forum which includes FA and Bucks Cricket Board representatives and which has the direct involvement and support of the main leagues in both sports. The group will require formal terms of reference and an agreed schedule of meetings, but the purposes of the forum should be:
  - to reduce conflicts between the sports, particularly when the seasons overlap.
  - support MKC in annually updating the schedule of site investment priorities to support the gaining of developers' contributions.
  - to identify site priorities for further site assessment and the identification of options and costs, through the jointly funded programme using the Institute of Groundmanship's Regional Pitch Advisor.

- to work with individual schools to secure where possible, any existing community use of the grass pitches.
- coordinate information about the availability of sites for hire which can then be passed onto clubs.

## Key findings for other sports

21. Other relatively minor sports in Milton Keynes which require to be considered in the playing pitch strategy but which are well catered for and / or do not require separate detailed consideration are:
- Lacrosse – use Woughton on the Green and Shenley Leisure Centre AGPs. This is currently a small club with single men’s team playing none league matches. The club hopes to have both a men’s and a women’s team playing in leagues from autumn 2015. This would ideally require access to an appropriate AGP on Saturdays. There is not set guidance on whether the surface needs to be sand based or rubber crumb (3G). Alternatively lacrosse can use natural grass pitches. As this sport is still relatively small in Milton Keynes, no specific action is required at this time. However particular provision for lacrosse should be considered, if justified by the growth in the game, at the next review of the Playing Pitch Strategy.
  - Baseball – Woughton on the Green and Conniburrow both have specialist pitch provision and Milton Keynes is a national centre for this sport. Retain as at present.
  - Rugby league – use pitches at Emerson Valley (MKRFC) – no identified separate priorities

## Playing pitches on schools sites

22. The provision of playing fields on school sites available to the community in Milton Keynes is currently fairly limited, and is for football only, however there is some further potential. The schools where grass pitches are currently available for community use are:

### School sites used by the community

- Bradwell Village School
- Broughton Fields School
- Caroline Haslett Primary School
- Cold Harbour C of E Primary School
- Fullbrook Middle School
- Hazeley School
- Heronsgate School
- Leon Secondary School
- Long Meadow School

- Loughton School
- Shenley Brook End School
- The Lord Grey School
- The Radcliffe School

23. As almost none of the school sites have formal community use agreements for the use of their grass pitches, this use cannot be considered secure. This is a significant issue as mini and junior teams often favour school sites (predominantly primary schools) due to child protection issues, the fact that these sites do not suffer from unofficial use, informal use, damage to the playing surface, or dog fouling, and they are usually cheaper to hire. The lack of changing provision is not an issue for mini and junior teams.

24. The only current use of grass pitches on school sites is for football, as the quality of school sites is too poor for cricket use, and rugby is focussed on the club sites. Some schools have said that their grass pitches are potentially “available” but the potential capacity is difficult to assess as the schools responding have tended to be unrealistic in their expectations about what their playing fields could realistically withstand in terms of community use, or have not been able to quantify the potential. The list of schools stating that their grass pitches are available for hire or they might be interested in community use are:

School grass playing fields “available” for hire by the community but not currently used

- Denbigh School
- Giffard Park Primary School
- Hanslope Combined School
- MK Academy
- New Bradwell Combined School
- Olney Middle School
- Ousedale School (Newport Pagnell Campus)
- Simpson Combined School
- Stantonbury Campus
- St Mary Magdalene’s RC Primary School
- Walton High School

Schools potentially interested in hiring their grass pitches

- Chestnuts Primary School
- Queen Eleanor Primary School
- Lavendon School
- Tickford Park Primary School
- Southwood School

25. Where schools are not interested in community use, a number of reasons have been given, including the fact that the pitches are already heavily used by the school, and

that there would be a requirement for the school site supervisor to open up and lock up again after community use, making any hire uneconomic.

26. Milton Keynes Council should look to have a closer relationship with those schools providing community use and seek to formalise this use where appropriate. An engagement plan to include these sites as well as schools that would like to open to community use should be developed and kept under review.
27. Although not all schools are suitable nor want to open to the community it is important to understand what provision is there. A list of the size of all the primary school playing field areas is therefore provided as Appendix 1.

### New and proposed pitch sites

28. There are a number of new playing pitch sites that are in the process of being planned as part of new housing developments as well as some that are currently in their establishment period, prior to use. None of these have been included in the modelling aspects of this assessment.
29. As these are developed and come into use there will be an opportunity to revisit the distribution and usage of pitches across Milton Keynes. This should be a key element of the next review of the playing pitch strategy, in around 5 years.

In establishment period:

- Conniburrow: 4 mini soccer and 1 senior football pitch
- Broughton Pavilion: 2 junior football pitches and 1 cricket ground (opened summer 2014)

New sites planned:

- Brooklands: 2 senior and 2 junior football plus 1 cricket
- Western Expansion Area 10: 2 senior, 4 junior pitches and 1 cricket
- Western Expansion Area 11: 2 senior and 4 junior football
- Tattenhoe Park: 1 senior and 2 junior football pitches and 1 cricket pitch (TBA)
- Strategic Land Area: to be confirmed
- Site for Stony Stratford Cricket Club: double pitch site close to WEA Area 11.
- Extension of the Wilen Road Playing Field, Newport Pagnell, by 9.7 ha to provide for separate football and cricket pitches, plus improved clubhouse provision. Potentially also as a site for 3G pitch(es).

## Site specific priorities and recommendations

30. The following table provides a summary of the site specific priorities. Where the primary need is for the improvement of pitches or ancillary facilities, these have not been costed because it will depend upon the specific factors at each site. However reference can be made to the costs schedule produced by Sport England as part of their Protecting Playing Fields programme. Copies of these are provided as Appendix 2, or see <http://www.sportengland.org/funding/our-different-funds/protecting-playing-fields/budget-costs/>.

Figure 3: Site specific priorities

Site	Community Sports on site	Project/Comments	Date	Estimated cost and source of funding	Priority
Ancell Trust Sports Ground	Football Cricket	Retain both sports currently. Likely to be moved to Stony Stratford Football Club ownership.	2015/2016		1
Bow Brickhill	Football Cricket	Great Brickhill CC and BCB exploring reinstatement of cricket on this site, with the expectation that cricket will be played on site from 2016/17. Potentially earlier for juniors if artificial strip is added.	2016/2017	See Appendix 2 S106 ECB	1
Bradwell Sports Ground	Football Cricket	Retain for cricket and football.			
Bradwell Village School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
Brooklands	Football Cricket	Develop 2 senior and 2 junior football pitches plus one cricket	2015/16	Developer provision Tariff	1
Broughton Fields School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
Broughton Pavilion	Football Cricket	Complete establishment of 2 junior football pitches. Separate pitch areas as far as possible. Site also with 1 cricket pitch.	2014	Complete the establishment period	
Browns Wood	Football	Pitch improvements needed to bring up to standard. Walton Parish Council considering upgrades to pitches and changing.	2016/2017	See Appendix 2 S106	2
Campbell Park Cricket Ground	Cricket	Review future of cricket on this site, in association with MK Parks Trust.			
Caroline Haslett Primary School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			

Site	Community Sports on site	Project/Comments	Date	Estimated cost and source of funding	Priority
Castlethorpe Recreation & Sports Centre	Football Cricket	Retain for cricket and football.			
Cold Harbour Combined CofE School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
Conniburrow Sports Ground	Football Baseball	Bring into use. 4 mini and 1 senior football, baseball	2014/2015	Establishment period	1
Crownhill Sports Ground	Football Cricket	Retain for football and cricket. Explore ways of decreasing conflict between cricket and football.			
Denbigh School/Shenley Leisure Centre	Football	Retain use for football.			
Derwent Drive, Bletchley Youth Centre	Football	Improve pitch quality by drainage, secure storage. Extend changing rooms	2017/18	See Appendix 2 S106	3
Downs Barn Field & Pavilion	Football	Has high levels of informal use and ongoing pitch problems affecting quality. Consider transfer to open space.			
Emberton Playing Field & Pavilion	Football Cricket	Retain for both sports.			
Emerson Valley District Park/MK RUFC	Rugby	Development of the void in pavilion. Floodlighting of an additional pitch for training.  60x40m 3G Floodlit AGP with shock pad. Costs would need to be met by club.	2015/16	Costs to be confirmed for void. £50,000 for floodlights. S106 RFU  £900,000 Club	1

Site	Community Sports on site	Project/Comments	Date	Estimated cost and source of funding	Priority
Fullbrook Middle School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
Hanslope Combined School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
Hanslope Recreation Ground	Football Cricket	Retain for both sports. Explore ways of decreasing conflict between cricket and football.			
Hazeley School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
Heelands Playing Field (North) Heelands Rangers	Football	Retain football and improve buildings.	2016/2017	See Appendix 2 S106	3
Heronsgate Middle School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
High Street Sports Ground, Great Linford	Cricket	Retain use for cricket and improve quality.	2017/18	See Appendix 2 S106 ECB	3
Hodge Lea	Football	Retain for football.			
Kents Hill Sports Ground	Football	Re-mark to minis and juniors			
Long Meadow School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
Loughton School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
Loughton Sports & Social Club	Football	Retain for football.			



Site	Community Sports on site	Project/Comments	Date	Estimated cost and source of funding	Priority
Manor Fields Sports Ground/Bletchley RUFC	Cricket Rugby	Retain for cricket and rugby.	2016/2017		
		Improve pitch drainage on bottom pitch to benefit both sports.	2015/16	See Appendix 2 S106, RFU, ECB	2
		Increase grass floodlit area for rugby	2015/16	£50,000 S106, RFU	2
		Undertake feasibility assessment to develop 60x40m 3G Floodlit AGP with shock pad. Unlikely to be RFU priority for funding.	2017/18	£900,000 Club	
Marsh Drive Sports Ground/Great Linford Park	Football Cricket	Site transferred to Great Linford PC. Retain both sports. Enlarge car park. Mini/junior focus. Improved management to reduce dog fouling.	2015/2016	See Appendix 2 S106 ECB	2
Medbourne Community Sports Pavilion	Football	Retain for football and increase number of junior pitches.	2014/2015	See Appendix 2 S106	1
Milton Keynes Village Sports Ground & Pavilion	Football Cricket	Improve pitches (drainage and levelling), new secure storage, reduce conflict with cricket	2015/16	See Appendix 2 S106	2
Monkston Sports Ground & Pavilion	Football	Retain for football and improve evenness of pitches.	2015/2016	See Appendix 2 S106	3
New Bradwell Combined School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
New Bradwell Sports Club	Football Cricket	Retain for cricket and football (stadium pitch).			

Site	Community Sports on site	Project/Comments	Date	Estimated cost and source of funding	Priority
Newport Pagnell Youth Club	Football	Retain for football.			
North Furzton Playing Field	Football Cricket	Retain both football and cricket.			
Olney Nursery Field	Football	Retain for football (stadium pitch).			
Olney RUFC, Recreation Field, Allotment and Bowls/Tennis Club	Football Cricket Rugby	Changing room and clubhouse improvements. Floodlighting additional pitch for training. Drainage works to pitches.		£110,000 RFU S106	2
Open University	Football Cricket	Retain cricket and football. Secure community use.			
Ousedale School (Newport Pagnell)	Football	Grass pitches not used by the community but sand based AGP is used for football training.			
Perry Lane Recreation Ground, Sherington	Football	Retain for football.			
Rickley Park Sports Ground	Football	Retain for football. Increase maintenance to improve quality of pitches.	2016/2017		2
Selbourne Avenue/Scot Sports	Football	Club wishes to explore the development of a 3G AGP training pitch. Feasibility study needed.	2017/2018	£5,000 for feasibility study £395,000 for pitch Club	3
Shenley Brook End School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
Sir Herbert Leon Academy	Football	Improve pitch drainage	2015/16	See Appendix 2 S106	2
		Resurface AGP to 3G	2014/15	£150,000 FA/Football Foundation	1
Stadium MK	Football	No community use.			

Site	Community Sports on site	Project/Comments	Date	Estimated cost and source of funding	Priority
Stantonbury Campus	Football	Explore the transfer of grass pitches to community use priority. Develop new pavilion, car parking etc.	2017/2018	£255,000 for 2 team changing pavilion + parking and access. S106	2
		Resurface AGP to 3G	2015/16		1
Strategic Land Area/Newton Leys	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	2023/26	Tariff	3
Stony Stratford Cricket Club	Cricket	Club development of new double pitch site close to WEA 10.	2015/16	Club	1
Tattenhoe Lane Sports Ground	Football	Improve pitch quality by drainage, secure storage. Extend changing rooms.	2017/18	See Appendix 2 S106	2
Tattenhoe Park	Football Cricket	Develop 1 senior and 2 junior football pitches and 1 cricket pitch with ancillary facilities	2018/19	Tariff / MKC	1

Site	Community Sports on site	Project/Comments	Date	Estimated cost and source of funding	Priority
Tattenhoe Pavilion/District Park	Football	<p>Retain for football. Should the site be transferred by CAT the following criteria will be required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• priority for pitch bookings will be given to local football clubs before offering to the wider Milton Keynes area or beyond;</li> <li>• bookings by football clubs will be guaranteed and it will not be asked to leave the facility;</li> <li>• user groups are protected;</li> <li>• reduced rates will be available for youths using the facility;</li> <li>• MK College will be able to continue coaching at Tattenhoe</li> </ul> <p>Improve drainage of pitches. Take measures to reduce dog fouling.</p>	2014/2015	See Appendix 2 S106	1
The Lord Grey School	Football	Secure community use. Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use of grass pitches. AGP also used by community.	2017/18		2
The New Park (Wolverton Town FC)	Football	<p>Feasibility study into the option of developing a stadium pitch with floodlights.</p> <p>Improve pitches.</p>	2015/16	<p>Feasibility study: cost dependent on brief</p> <p>See Appendix 2 S106</p>	3
The Radcliffe School	Football Cricket Rugby	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use of grass pitches. AGP used by community.	2016/16		

Site	Community Sports on site	Project/Comments	Date	Estimated cost and source of funding	Priority
The Recreation Ground, North Crawley	Football Cricket	Retain for football and cricket. Explore ways of decreasing conflict between cricket and football.			
Walnut Tree Playing Fields & Pavilion	Football Cricket	Retain for football and cricket. Pitch and square improvements to improve quality.	2015/2016	See Appendix 2 S106	2
Walton High School	Football	Retain for football. Explore formalisation of community use.			
Wavendon Gate Cricket Ground	Cricket	Retain cricket. Pitch improvements and management measures to reduce dog fouling.	2014/2015	See Appendix 2 S106, ECB	2
Wavendon Recreation Ground	Football	Retain for football (3 mini pitches). Explore how improved car parking can be provided close to this site.	2015/16		
Westcroft Playing Fields	Football Cricket	Retain for football and cricket (in establishment period). Explore ways of improving the quality of the pitches for both cricket and football.	2015/2016		
Western Expansion Area 10	Football Cricket	Develop 2 senior football and 4 junior football pitches with ancillary facilities	2018/19	Tariff	2
Western Expansion Area 11	Football	Develop 2 senior football and 4 junior football pitches with ancillary facilities	2018/19	Tariff	2
Willen Road Sports Ground	Football Cricket	Extend site by 9.7 ha to provide separate high quality cricket and football pitches plus new clubhouse / changing provision. Potentially also 3G AGP(s) subject to feasibility study.	2016/17	See Appendix 2 S106	1
Willen Village Playing Field	Football Cricket	Retain for football and cricket. Explore ways of decreasing conflict between cricket and football.	2015/2016		2

Site	Community Sports on site	Project/Comments	Date	Estimated cost and source of funding	Priority
Wolverton Sports Club	Cricket	Retain for cricket. Site also shared with bowls and tennis. Club is currently exploring the option of developing a junior football pitch on site.	2015/16	Feasibility assessment	1
		Priority site for cricket investment. A key issue is lack of car parking which requires further feasibility work to determine best solution.	2016/17	ECB	
Woughton on the Green	Football Cricket Baseball/Softball Hockey Lacrosse	Retain all sports and facilities. Convert football to community use on move of MK Dons to new training site. Priority site for cricket investment.	TBC	TBC	1

## Previous pitch sites

31. Former pitch sites where pitches are no longer provided but could be theoretically brought back into use for sport include the following, however it is expected that most of these will remain as informal open space. The sites are not a priority for investment to bring into use because they are not required to meet existing or potential unmet demand, and most are already extensively used as public open space. If pitches were re-established, then they are likely to experience the same conflicts as at existing similar sites across MK, and as such are unlikely to become high quality venues. The costs of maintain the pitches would be high, but with relatively low ability to generate income from use.
32. If the sites are considered long term to be suitable for development, then developers' contributions are justified and the value of the site should be directly reinvested in other playing field sites within the relevant catchment area.
  - Bradville Hall Community Centre
  - Coffee Hall - open space with goalposts used for informal use
  - Fishermead Sports Ground - Campbell Park Parish Council have plans to reintroduce football and are looking at funding options for a changing pavilion
  - Heelands Playing Field (South) - Bradwell Parish Council plans to reintroduce pitches
  - Kiln Farm Sports Ground- single pitch site on industrial estate.
  - Knowlhill Cricket Ground
  - Lavendon Playing Field
  - Oldbrook Playing Field
  - Sherwood Drive
  - Wavendon Village Cricket Ground
  - Western Road Recreation Ground
  - Woolstone Sports Ground

## Funding the proposals

33. In relation to new development, any charges on developers must be appropriate and directly relevant to the new populations. It is clear from the club returns for each of the sports that individuals travel up to 20 minutes to their "home" club, though some clubs have a more local catchment, particularly for mini and junior for football. For the purposes of developers' contributions it is therefore proposed that:
  - Planning standards for playing fields are adopted based on; quantity, quality and accessibility
  - For developments within Milton Keynes but outside of the Tariff areas, investment should be made into sites within a 10 minute catchment drive time for football and cricket which are within the main urban area, including Bletchley

- For developments in and close to Newport Pagnell, the investment should be into playing fields in and close to Newport Pagnell (east of the M1)
  - For other developments east of the M1 and in Hanslope and Castlethorpe, the investment should be into local playing field sites which will meet the needs of the population arising from the new housing.
34. Sport also remains a high priority for Council funding from its own resources, but Parish Councils and other community organisations can also bid for government money and external grant aid for sport, leisure and community infrastructure. This includes programmes such as Protecting Playing Fields of Sport England, and grant aid from bodies such as Football Foundation, the ECB and RFU.

### Monitoring and Review

35. The proposed forum for football and cricket can support the monitoring of the delivery of the PPS, alongside the RFU in relation to rugby. There will be a need to have an annual updated schedule of investment priorities, and this will need to be produced by a PPS Delivery Group, which should be based on the PPS Steering Group.
36. The PPS will need to be updated in 2019 to take account of:
- Changes in the housing proposals
  - New planning timescales and horizons
  - Participation trends in the sports
  - Changes in the playing field stock



## FOOTBALL

*Note: the following demand/supply information refers only to community football. The MKDons have their own development plans and manage the pitches which are used by them exclusively.*

### Overview

37. During the season 2013/14 there were 408 teams playing football on grass in Milton Keynes. The pattern of football participation in the authority is similar to many places, with the highest number of teams being boys' teams drawing on those aged between 10 and 15 years. There is also a strong mini team sector, and the men's football is reasonably strong. There are 13 girls teams but the participation in the women's game currently falls off to three teams.

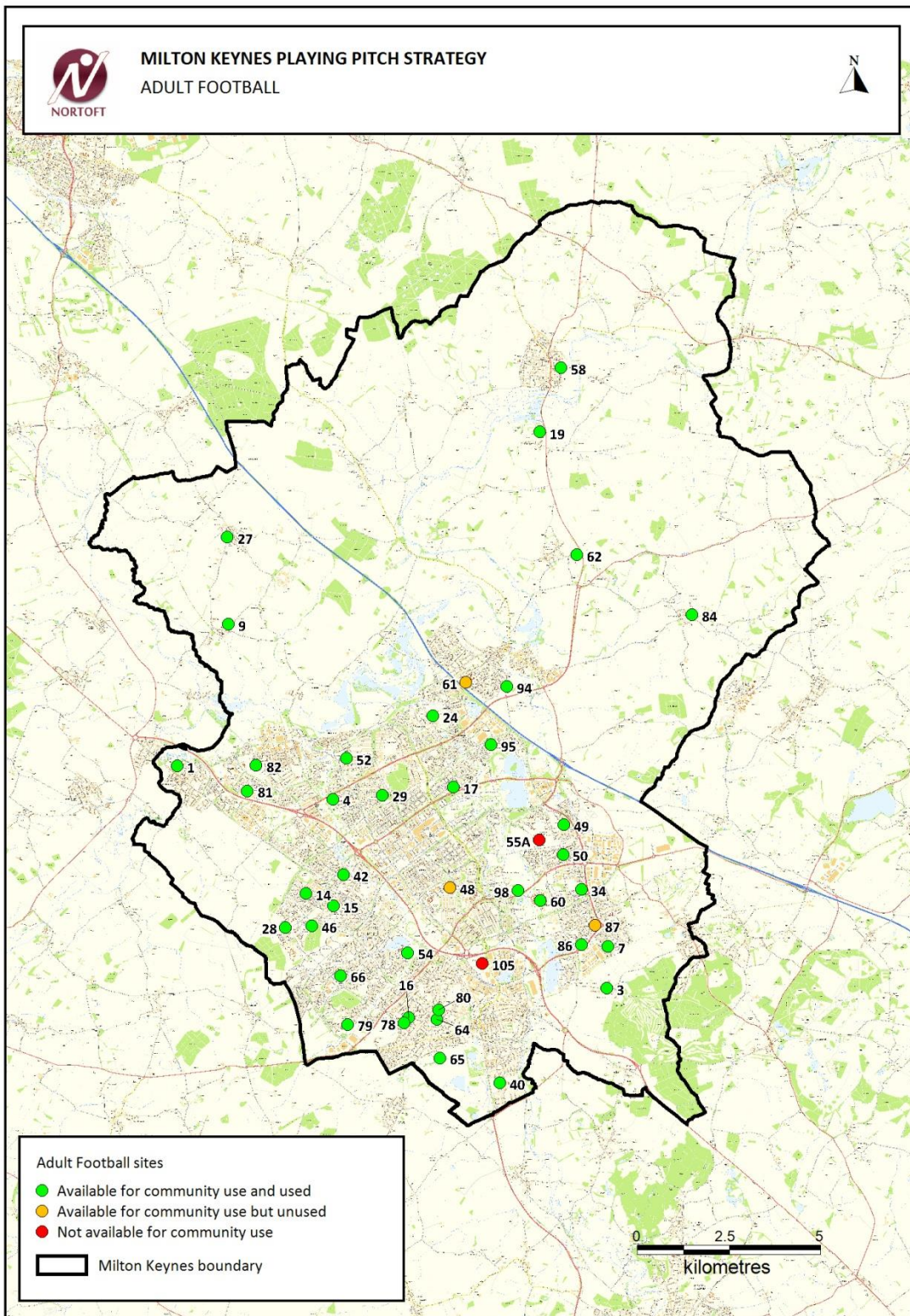
	Age Groups	Team age group	2013/14
Mini-soccer 6-7 yrs - mixed	6 -7 yrs	u7 & u8	48
Mini-soccer 8-9 yrs - mixed	8 -9 yrs	u9 & u10	75
Youth football 9 v 9 - boys	10-11yrs	u11 & u12	59
Youth football 9 v 9 - girls	10-11yrs	u11 & u12	4
Youth football 11 v 11 boys	12-15 yrs	u13 & u16	101
Youth football 11 v 11 girls	12-15 yrs	u13 & u16	9
Men's football	16-45yrs	u17 +	109
Women's football	16-45yrs	u17 +	3
			<b>408</b>

38. All except for one of the clubs responding to the survey draw their membership from within MK Borough, and one club (Tattenhoe Youth) partially played outside the Borough for the season 2013-14, but returned to Milton Keynes for the season 2014-15 onwards. The imported team is a senior team from Buckingham and they intended to relocate for the season 2014-15 to outside the authority.
39. The peak demand for football in Milton Keynes is notably different between the age groups. All minis play on a Saturday morning, but matches often follow on from each other. About 44% of juniors/youth matches also take place on a Saturday morning, with the remainder mostly being Sundays though split across the morning and afternoons. The demand for senior pitches (age groups 16+ years) peaks on a Sunday morning at about 26% of matches, the remainder of the demand being spread mainly over Saturday afternoons and Sunday afternoons.
40. Only a proportion of pitches in Milton Keynes were marked out to the required FA pitch sizes for the seasons 2012-13, and 2013-14. It was therefore agreed that for the purposes of the strategy that the assessment should be made on the basis of a combined mini pitch area of 0.3 ha, and a combined junior/youth pitch area of 0.5

ha. For the season 2012-14 there were 44 adult pitch sites in Milton Keynes, 42 junior pitch sites, and 29 mini pitch sites. These are mapped in Figures 4, 5 and 6, with the sites listed in the accompanying schedules.

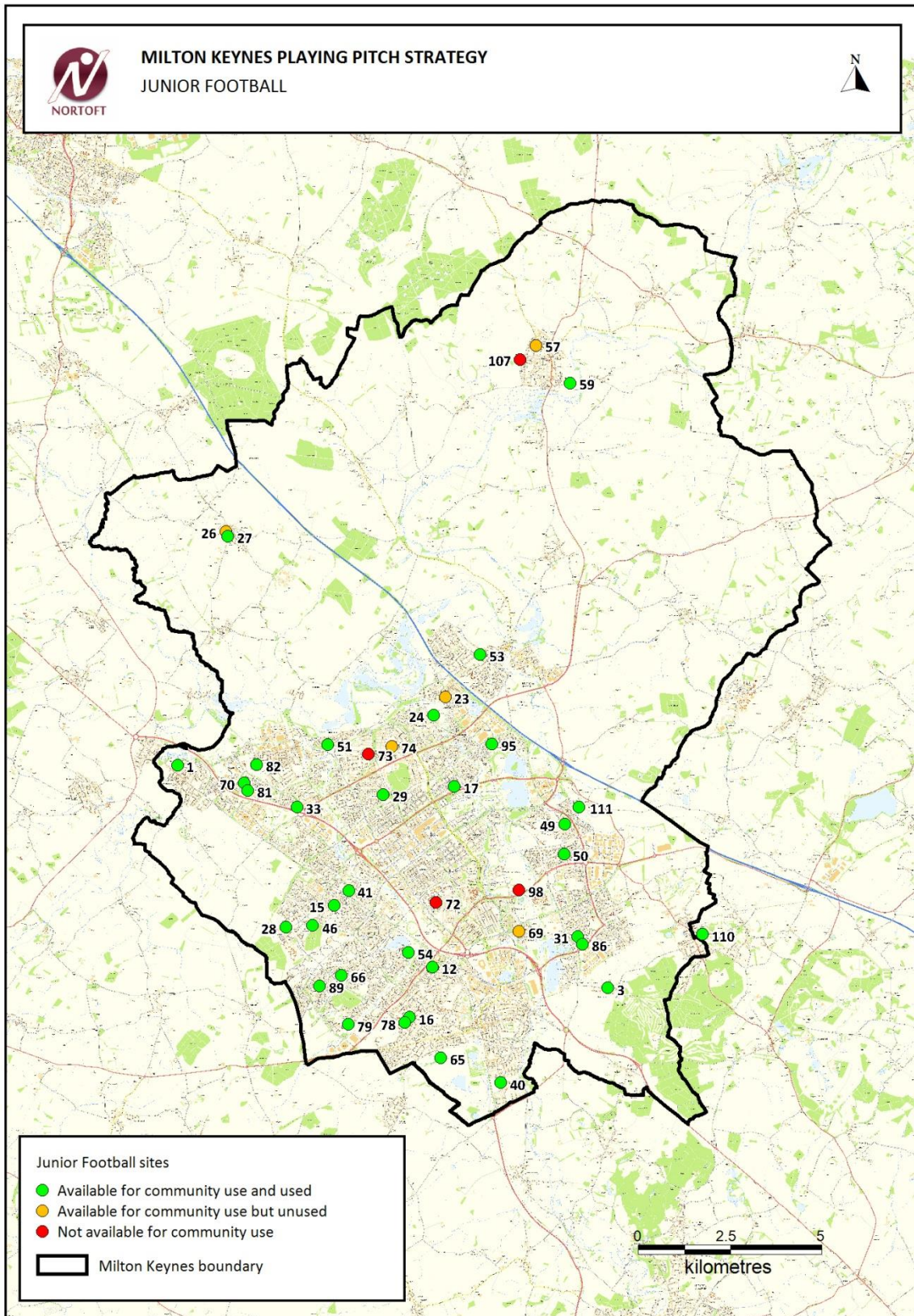
41. There is overall sufficient playing field space, if each pitch was used to its maximum, across the authority now in secure community use, to potentially cater for football in the period up to 2021, and possibly even up to 2026. This is the case even if a 1% growth in participation is achieved across all age groups. This conclusion excludes a significant number of school pitches which are used on a less secure basis by clubs (9 mini pitches, 22 junior pitches, 16 senior pitches across the authority).
42. With the peak time characteristics of the sport, at peak times there is a “surplus” of provision in secure community use of around 28ha of pitch space. However there are too few junior/youth pitches, and too many senior sized pitches at the present time. The problems with the junior/youth pitch supply worsens over the period up to 2026, whilst the surplus of provision for senior football remains, and minis are approximately in balance.
43. This situation has largely arisen because: the housing growth of Milton Keynes has been slower than anticipated in the earlier playing pitch strategies, and the sport has not grown as anticipated over the last 10 years.
44. There is still a need to ensure that there is sufficient accessible playing field space in the expansion areas of Milton Keynes to cater for the new populations, however the highest priority elsewhere is to improve quality of sites, both of the pitches and of the ancillary facilities. This may include, where possible, the splitting of cricket use from football, ways to reduce the impact of the informal use of the playing field area, particularly the reduction of dog fouling, and providing the “correct” pitch sizes for the juniors/youth teams. The season 2014-15 has seen a further move in Milton Keynes towards the FA recommended pitch sizes, and most teams are now using the “correct” pitch, other than for some of the u13 and u14 age group teams who play in either the 9v9 or 11v11 format.

Figure 4: Adult pitch sites season 2013-14



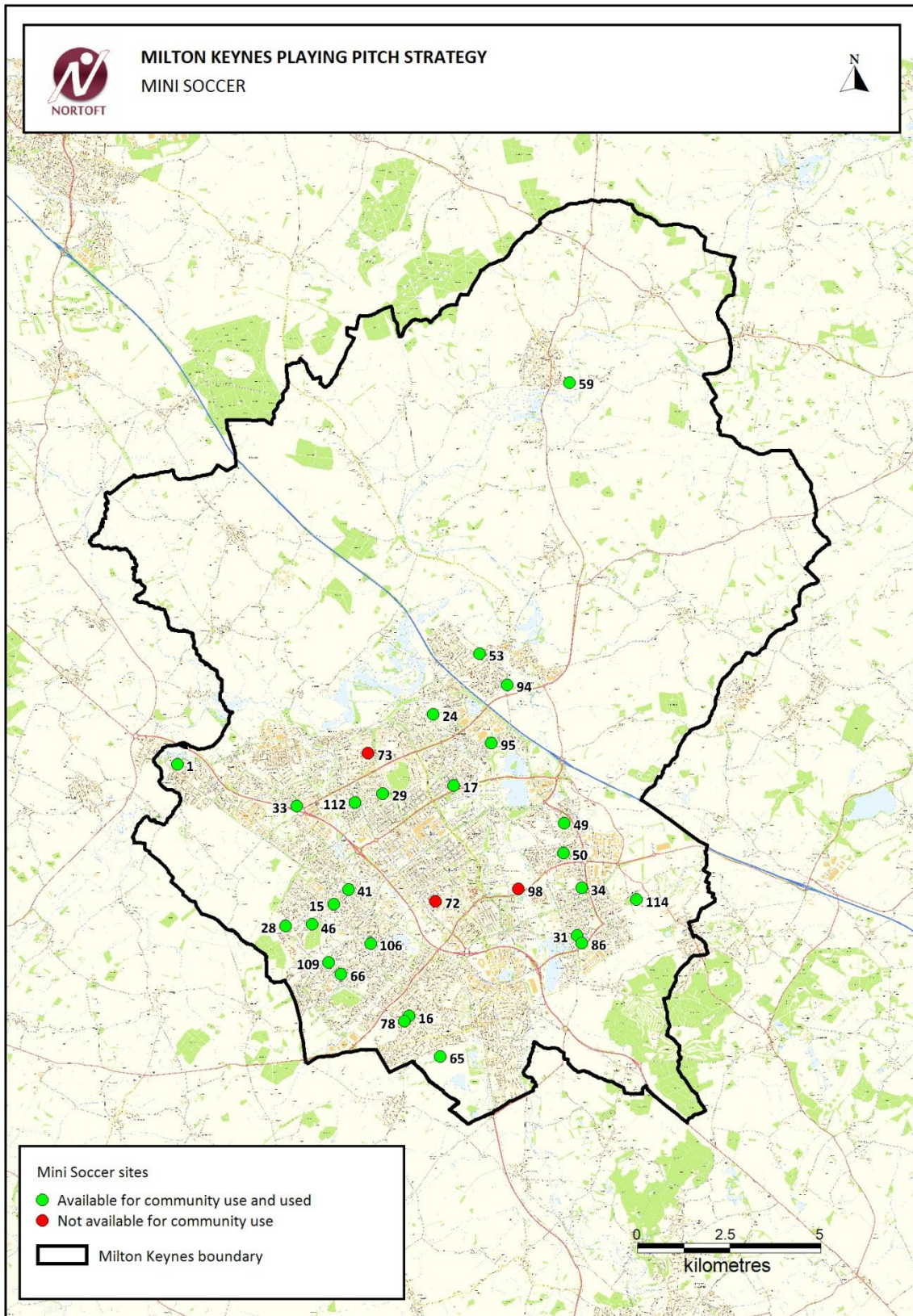
<b>Ref No</b>	<b>Adult Football: Site Name</b>
1	Ancell Trust Sports Ground
3	Bow Brickhill
4	Bradwell Sports Ground
7	Browns Wood
9	Castlethorpe Recreation & Sports Centre
14	Crownhill Sports Ground
15	Denbigh School/Leisure Centre
16	Derwent Drive, Bletchley Youth Centre
17	Downs Barn Field & Pavilion
19	Emberton Playing Field & Pavilion
24	Marsh Drive Sports Ground/Great Linford Park
27	Hanslope Recreation Ground
28	Hazeley School
29	Heelands Playing Field (North) Heelands Rangers
34	Kents Hill Sports Ground
40	Leon Secondary School
42	Loughton Sports & Social Club
46	Medbourne Community Sports Pavilion
48	MK Academy/Woughton Lesiure Centre
49	Milton Keynes Village Sports Ground & Pavilion
50	Monkston Sports Ground & Pavilion
52	New Bradwell Sports Club
54	North Furzton Playing Field
55a	Oakgrove School
58	Olney Nursery Field
59	Olney RUFC, Recreation Field, Allotment and Bowls/Tennis Club
60	Open University
61	Ousedale School (Newport Pagnell)
62	Perry Lane Recreation Ground
64	Rickley Park Sports Ground
65	Selbourne Avenue/Scot Sports
66	Shenley Brook End School
78	Tattenhoe Lane Sports Ground
79	Tattenhoe Pavilion/District Park
80	The Lord Grey School
81	The New Park (Wolverton Town FC)
82	The Radcliffe School
84	The Recreation Ground, North Crawley
86	Walnut Tree Playing Fields & Pavilion
87	Walton High School
94	Willen Road Sports Ground
95	Willen Village Playing Field
98	Woughton on the Green
105	Stadium MK

Figure 5: Junior football pitch sites season 2013-14



<b>Ref No</b>	<b>Junior Football: Site Name</b>
1	Ancell Trust Sports Ground
3	Bow Brickhill
12	Cold Harbour Combined CofE School
15	Denbigh School/Leisure Centre
16	Derwent Drive, Bletchley Youth Centre
17	Downs Barn Field & Pavilion
23	Giffard Park Primary School
24	Marsh Drive Sports Ground/Great Linford Park
26	Hanslope Combined School
27	Hanslope Recreation Ground
28	Hazeley School
29	Heelands Playing Field (North) Heelands Rangers
31	Heronsgate Middle School
33	Hodge Lea
40	Leon Secondary School
41	Loughton School
46	Medbourne Community Sports Pavilion
49	Milton Keynes Village Sports Ground & Pavilion
50	Monkston Sports Ground & Pavilion
51	New Bradwell Combined School
53	Newport Pagnell Youth Club
54	North Furzton Playing Field
57	Olney Middle School
59	Olney RUFC, Recreation Field, Allotment and Bowls/Tennis Club
65	Selbourne Avenue/Scot Sports
66	Shenley Brook End School
69	Simpson Combined School
70	St Mary Magdalene's RC Combined School
72	St Paul's RC Secondary School
73	Stanton Middle School
74	Stantonbury Campus
78	Tattenhoe Lane Sports Ground
79	Tattenhoe Pavilion/District Park
81	The New Park (Wolverton Town FC)
82	The Radcliffe School
86	Walnut Tree Playing Fields & Pavilion
89	Westcroft Playing Fields
95	Willen Village Playing Field
98	Woughton on the Green
107	Ousedale School (Olney Campus)
110	Fullbrook Middle School
111	Broughton Fields School

Figure 6: Mini Soccer pitch sites season 2013-14



Ref No	Site Name
1	Ancell Trust Sports Ground
15	Denbigh School/Leisure Centre
16	Derwent Drive, Bletchley Youth Centre
17	Downs Barn Field & Pavilion
24	Marsh Drive Sports Ground/Great Linford Park
28	Hazeley School
29	Heelands Playing Field (North) Heelands Rangers
31	Heronsgate Middle School
33	Hodge Lea
34	Kents Hill Sports Ground
41	Loughton School
46	Medbourne Community Sports Pavilion
49	Milton Keynes Village Sports Ground & Pavilion
50	Monkston Sports Ground & Pavilion
53	Newport Pagnell Youth Club
59	Olney RUFC, Recreation Field, Allotment and Bowls/Tennis Club
65	Selbourne Avenue/Scot Sports
66	Shenley Brook End School
72	St Paul's RC Secondary School
73	Stanton Middle School
78	Tattenhoe Lane Sports Ground
86	Walnut Tree Playing Fields & Pavilion
94	Willen Road Sports Ground
95	Willen Village Playing Field
98	Woughton on the Green
106	Caroline Haslett Primary School
109	Long Meadow School
112	Bradwell Village School
114	Wavendon Recreation Ground

## Detailed assessment

45. This section provides a summary of the detailed assessment which is provided in Appendix 3 to the report.
46. This analysis is based on the fact that *on average* each pitch in Milton Keynes Borough can provide for 2 matches per week at the senior and junior/youth pitch sizes, and 4 matches per week for the mini pitches. This pitch quality was confirmed by the “check and challenge” exercise undertaken with the key league representatives, the non-technical site assessments, and feedback from the clubs. This suggests that a very high proportion of the sites are “standard” in terms of



quality, with a very small number being “good” and a similar low number being “poor”.

47. The club returns, additional information from the FA, and web research has demonstrated that there are no significant winter training demands for grass pitches, as almost all training takes place on AGPs. The requirement in terms of grass pitch capacity is therefore directly related to matches.
48. However the club returns, booking information and web based research shows that a large number of teams are playing on “incorrect” sized pitches, particularly juniors. Juniors appear to play on both senior size pitches and, to a lesser extent, mini pitches. This will however also reflect the fact that the largest junior/youth league in the Borough, the MK and Border Counties Junior League required an 11v11 format for all of their matches for the season 2013/14.
49. There is also a significant usage of school pitches, though this has fallen off since previous strategies. The main use is for juniors, with the main reasons given overall as: site security, no dog fouling, lower cost, and because the pitches are more often marked out at the “correct” size, particularly 9v9. For the season 2013-14 there were 9 mini pitches, 22 junior pitches and 16 senior sized pitches used on school sites across the authority.
50. As the peak time demand is less than the total amount of pitch space required across the week it is appropriate to consider the total pitch requirement as the main guide to future need. Both are provided below for comparison, and both are based on the assumptions that the 1% pa growth will be achieved across each of the age groups, and that the peak time characteristics of the sport stay the same. The summary of the analysis is given in Figure 7. This excludes all of the grass pitches on school sites as these have no formalised community use agreements.

Figure 7: Football needs and requirements up to 2026

	Age Groups	Number of teams within age group				Minimum number of pitches required if used at maximum capacity (@ 4 senior or junior/youth teams, 8 mini)				Peak time number of pitches required for matches				Number of pitches in secure use	Overall balance in provision (at 1% growth in participation) number of pitches in secure use				Playing pitch area required to meet demand across the week (hectares)				Playing pitch area currently available in secure use (hectares)	Overall balance in provision (at 1% growth in participation) (hectares)				Peak time balance in provision (at 1% growth in participation) secure				Playing pitch area required to meet demand at peak time (hectares)				Peak time balance in provision (at 1% growth in participation) (hectares)															
		2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026		2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026		2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026												
		Mini-soccer 6-7 yrs - mixed	6-7 yrs	129	150	165	165	16	19	21	21	16	19		21	21	30	14	11	9	9	5		6	6	6	9	4	3	3	3	14	11	9	9	5	6	6	6	4	3	3	3								
Mini-soccer 8-9 yrs - mixed	8-9 yrs																																																		
Youth football - boys	10-15yrs	160	181	228	252	43	49	62	68	38	43	54	60	31	-12	-18	-31	-37	22	24	31	34	16	-6	-9	-15	-19	-12	-12	-23	-29	19	21	27	30	-4	-6	-12	-14												
Youth football - girls	10-15yrs	13	15	18	20																																														
Men's football	16-45yrs	109	114	122	130	28	29	31	33	15	15	16	17	53	25	24	22	20	20	21	22	23	37	18	17	15	14	38	38	37	36	10	11	11	12	27	26	26	25												
Women's football	16-45yrs	3	3	3	4																																														
TOTAL PITCH AREA (HECTARES)																46	51	59	64	62	16	11	3	-2																											
TOTAL PLAYING FIELD AREA @ 150% PITCH AREA (HECTARES)																69	76	88	96	92	23	16	4	-3																											

Note:

Pitch sizes as The FA Guide to Pitch and Goalpost Dimensions, 2012

Senior: 0.7 ha; Junior/youth combined size: 0.5 ha; Mini combined size: 0.3 ha

### Football pitch demand

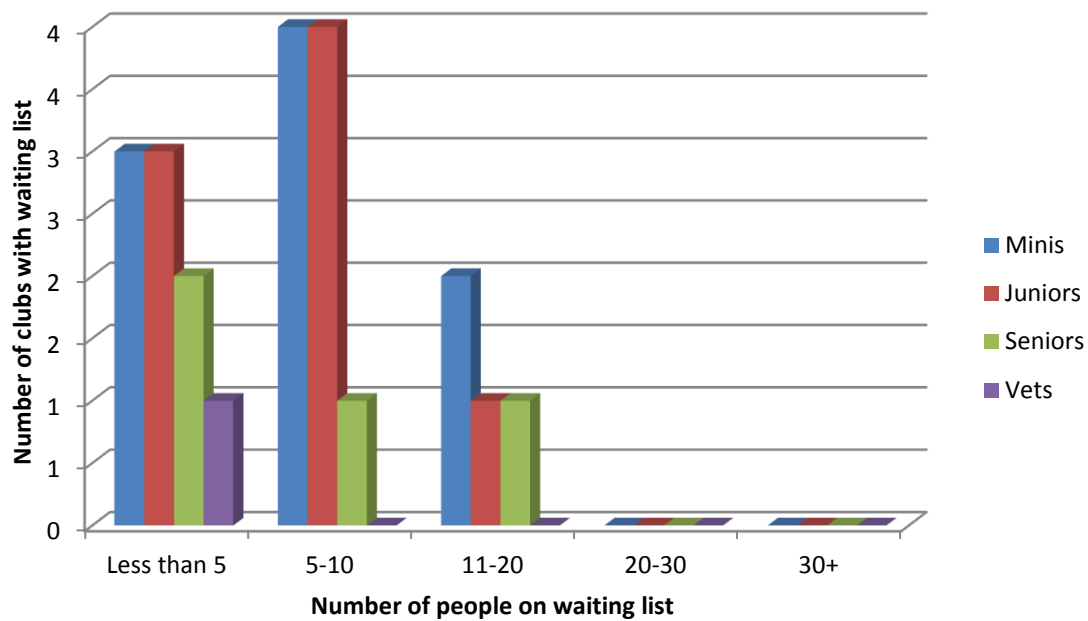
Mini @ 8 teams/pitch average quality. Junior @ 4 teams/pitch average quality. Senior @ 4 teams/pitch average quality

51. The imbalance in the size of pitches available in secure community use (excluding school pitches) based on the total demand for 2013-14 was:
- Overall balance in provision: 24 ha of playing field space surplus which are in secure community use, comprising
    - About 18 ha surplus pitch space for those teams playing on adult pitches
    - About 6 ha deficit of junior pitch space for those teams aged u11-u16
    - About 4 ha surplus pitch space for minis.
52. By 2026 this picture will have changed with both the increase in population in Milton Keynes and increased rates of participation. By that time the current playing field space in secure community use will be entirely taken up and used to the maximum. The current deficit in pitch space for juniors/youth will have worsened very significantly, but there will still be a significant surplus of senior pitch space.
53. The assessment of future pitch space needs is based on the current Team Generation Rates for the sport, the forecast demographics for Milton Keynes, and a forecast growth in the game of 1% per annum across the age groups. However it should be noted that the game from 2007 through to 2013 has been largely static in the rates of participation in Milton Keynes, so the provision assessment modelled below is likely to be generous.
54. Because of the peak time characteristics of the sport, the peak time demand for junior pitches and for senior pitches is less than the number of pitches actually required across the week. Because all of the minis play on a Saturday morning and because two matches can be played consecutively on the same pitch, it is assumed that each pitch is used for 8 teams.

### Latent demand

55. There appears to be a small amount of latent/unmet demand in Milton Keynes based on the club return for the season 2013-14: 22 clubs had a waiting list, but of these, 9 clubs had less than 5 people on the waiting list, and 9 clubs had 5-10 people on the waiting list. Only 4 clubs had a longer waiting list.

Figure 8: Clubs and waiting lists - football



56. Comments about the waiting lists:

- Tattenhoe Youth: boys and approx 1-6 months
- Woburn Lions: mainly boys but some girls. Most of the demand comes from families in the SE MK area and keen to play more in the Wavendon area.
- Southside United: no formal waiting list but turn away some players
- Roman Rangers: several age groups full. Have to turn away players due to both lack of suitable coaches and also pitch availability/overuse
- Woburn Lions: mainly boys wishing to join teams to play with friends
- Shenley FC: usually accommodate at the beginning of each season, also waiting list is usually those u6 which is our minimum age
- City Colts: no formal waiting list but do turn away a number of players each year as don't have sufficient capacity
- MK Wanderers: All waiting list boys train with their relevant age group and are made part of the squad
- Shenley FC: no waiting list but where don't have sufficient players to make a team, hold 'development squad' training until have sufficient players.

57. Almost all of the clubs anticipate growing in the next 5 years. However 90% of the clubs responding identified issues which affect their potential expansion. A very high proportion of these are facility related, including particularly the cost and the availability of facilities, especially affordable winter training. School sites are reported as being cheaper, more secure, and not affected by dog fouling, so an attractive option particularly for mini and junior clubs.

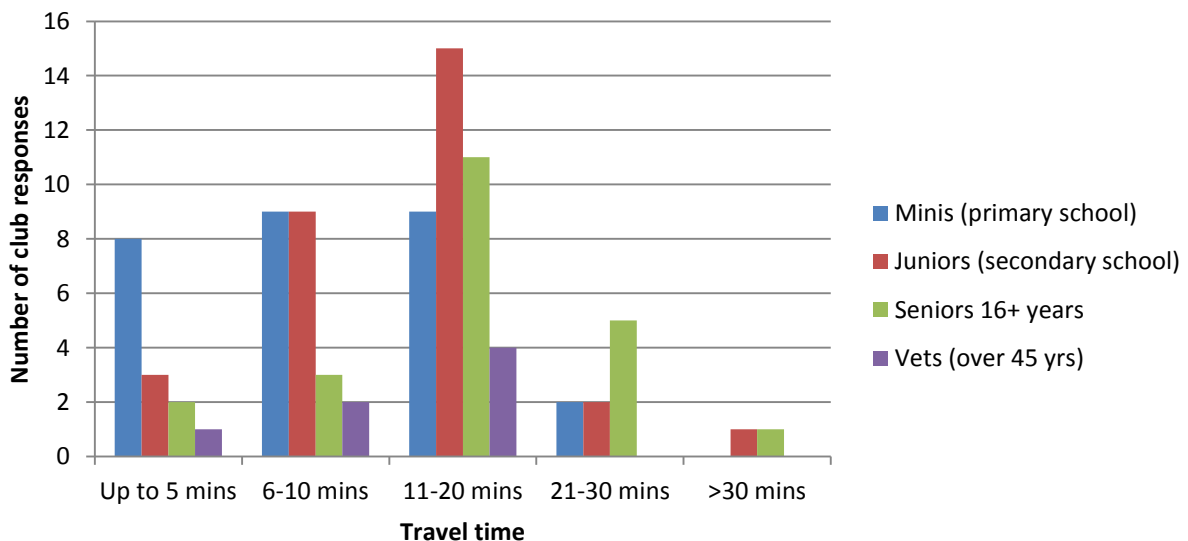
## Developing the options for the future

58. 80% of the clubs have a development plan.
59. The club returns provide a useful overview of the wider issues which should influence the future consideration of the options for football in Milton Keynes.

### Distribution of pitches

60. The travel time of players at the different age groups (excluding the MKDons players) provide the justification for the geographical distribution of pitches. The following graph shows how long players travel in Milton Keynes, the large majority of which will be by car.

*Figure 9: Travel time of players - football*



61. These findings suggest for minis local pitches, ideally within 10 minutes travel time are a high priority. Juniors tend to travel up to 20 minutes and only occasionally beyond. Most seniors travel for up to 20 minutes, but some travel up to 30 minutes. Vets tend to travel only up to 20 minutes.
62. The main Milton Keynes built up area takes approximately 20 minutes to travel across in any direction. Most pitches can therefore be theoretically located anywhere within the urban area to cater for the demand from seniors, though more local provision, within the relevant quarter of Milton Keynes would be appropriate for minis and juniors.
63. From the club returns, 81% of clubs play where they want to. Those wishing to play elsewhere are:

- Tattenhoe Youth – move back into Milton Keynes, to play at Tattenhoe Lane or Tattenhoe Pavilion
- Swanfica – Far Bletchley (costs too high in this area)
- United MK FC – school pitches, because they are cheaper
- St Georges – nearer to CMK.

### Site ownership and management

64. Site ownership/management of those facilities used by clubs:
- About 38% of clubs (incl MKDons) lease their facility
  - About 30% of the facilities are Milton Keynes Council (externally managed), or parish council
  - About 15% of sites are schools/colleges
65. The issues identified in the survey by the clubs which impact upon their ability to expand their numbers of teams are:

*Figure 10: Football club expansion issues*

Issue affecting expansion	% of responses
<b>Access to facilities/lack of facilities</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Cost of facilities</b>	<b>66</b>
Lack of funding	53
Lack of coaches	44
Lack of volunteers	41
Others:	19
Recruitment of members	13
<i>Poor ground conditions at Woburn and limits to parking at Wavendon Recreation Ground (Woburn and Wavendon FC)</i>	
<i>Cost of hiring winter training (Gt Linford)</i>	
<i>Lack of AGPs for winter training (City Colts)</i>	
<i>Lack of facilities for training and playing (Southside Utd)</i>	
<i>Quality. Cost of facilities (Shenley FC)</i>	

66. Those clubs which use grass playing field sites which are also extensively used as informal open space highlight the most problems, mainly associated with poor quality pitches, and particularly high levels of dog mess.
67. Those sites which are either Milton Keynes Council sites or parish sites have the poorest quality pitches.
68. There are a number of sites which are currently in the ownership of Milton Keynes Council are currently going through, or may be subject to the Community Asset Transfer process.

69. Club non specific aspirations identified in the club survey were:
- Woburn Lions – plans to improve facilities further and are keen to be a part
  - Southside United – need extra pitches
  - Roman Rangers – need extra playing and training facilities within their main area
  - City Colts – want to expand but need more pitches
  - Stony Stratford – need more pitches as existing site floods

### General comments made in the club survey

70. It is useful to identify some of the general comments made in the clubs survey, some of which should be used to guide the overall coordination and consideration of football provision in Milton Keynes.

*There is no central register of available facilities which can be referenced by everyone. A club/team cannot say "I would like to train indoors on a Weds from 19:00 to 20:30 - what choices of venue do I have." This would be really useful.*

*Severe shortage of convenient, available, all-weather pitches suitable for football training during the winter. We need to be able to block-book facilities, and ideally want to reduce down to one or two centres to make it easier to manage. All facilities are overstretched and can only manage a few time slots. Juggling bookings for 25 teams for winter training facilities over 5 different locations is very challenging for a volunteer-run club.*

*..... what about youth football..we just want affordable pitches to promote sport.... council pitches is just too expensive*

*.....Tattenhoe Pavilion .... charge too much for us to use the whole facility ..... Instead we train away for the area that we represent and play games there.*

*We struggle each season to pay pitch fees ....and winter training fees...*

### Criteria for investment

71. In determining the priorities for future investment in football, the following criteria should be considered (see Figure 3 for sites specific priorities):
- a. Consider the reduction of the amount of playing field space in secure community use for football, particularly where there is sufficient capacity within the travel time and there are site issues e.g. high levels of informal use, clash with cricket, or the site is relatively poor quality in terms of its pitches or ancillary facilities etc.
  - b. Support and encourage those schools with community use to retain it, particularly in relation to minis and juniors

- c. Concentrate senior football onto a smaller number of sites with good quality pitches and changing
- d. Provide basic wash facilities and secure storage at other playing field sites plus secure storage
- e. Reduce as far as possible the overlap of football with cricket
- f. Where possible, secure existing sites with fencing to reduce levels of informal use
- g. Remark some of the senior pitches to meet the new FA junior/youth pitch sizes
- h. Prioritise for investment for football, those sites with little/no informal use
- i. Where new sites are proposed in relation to new development, these should be provided for sport rather than as general open space
- j. Other than in the major extensions to MK, target developers' contributions towards site improvements within a 10 minute travel time.

## Site proposals

72. The existing sites with community football which are priorities for investment include:
  - Browns Wood
  - Derwent Drive
  - Heelands Playing Fields
  - Medbourne Community Sports Pavilion
  - Monkston Sports Ground and Pavilion
  - Sir Herbert Leon Academy (pitch resurfacing to 3G plus grass pitch improvements)
  - Stantonbury Campus (pitch resurfacing to 3G)
  - Tattenhoe Pavilion/District Park
  - Tattenhoe Lane Sports Ground
  - The New Park, Wolverton Town (feasibility study into development of stadium pitch)
  - Walnut Tree Playing Fields and pavilion
  - Westcroft Playing Fields
  - Willen Road Sports Ground
  
73. The site by site list of investment priorities are contained in Figure 3.



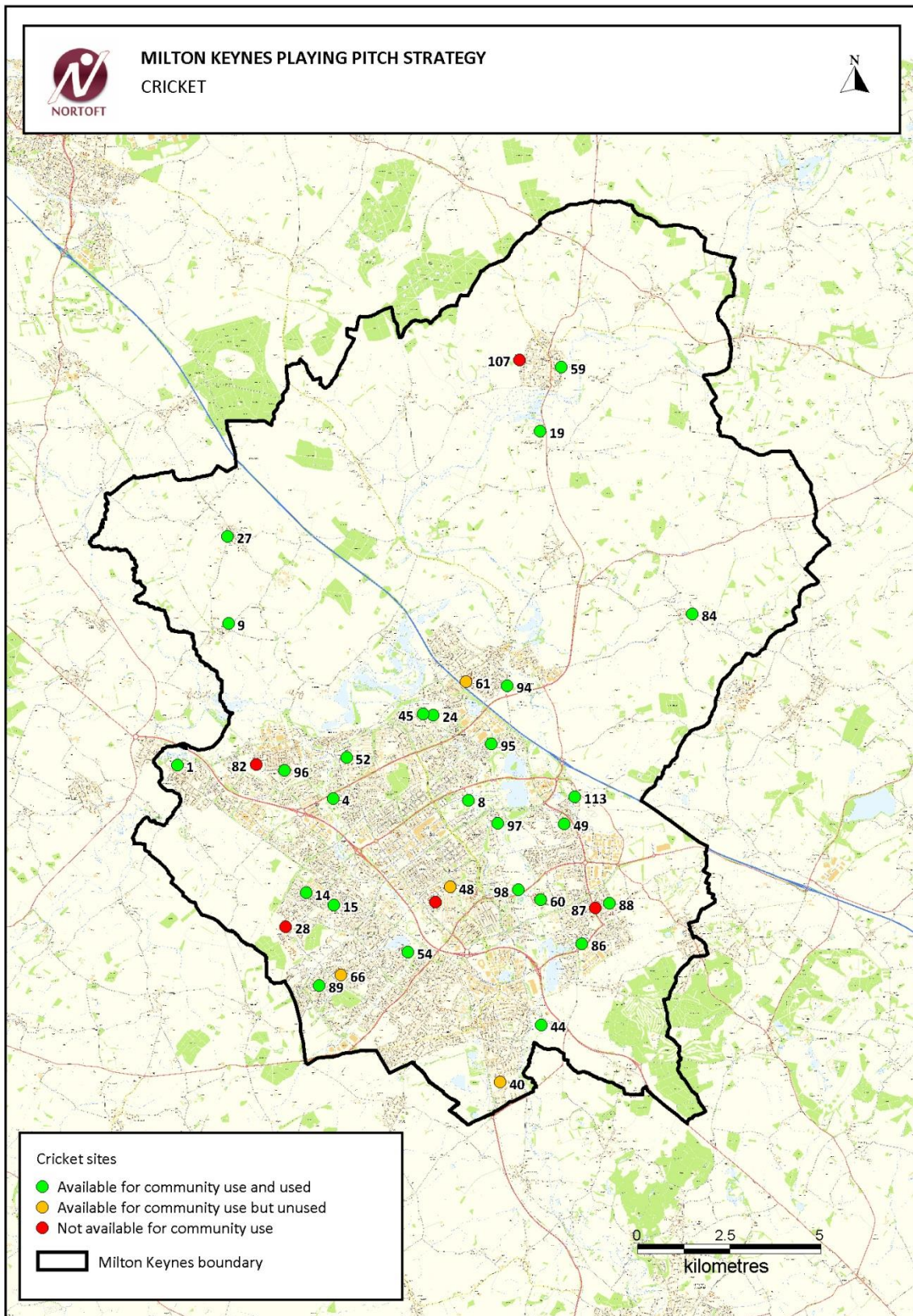
## CRICKET

### Overview

74. All of the clubs in Milton Keynes responded to the clubs survey which provides a good indication of the issues experienced by the clubs. The BCCB also undertook a detailed survey of sites and quality during summer 2013. These together inform the findings for cricket in Milton Keynes.
75. The situation with regard to cricket in Milton Keynes within the main urban area can be very simplistically summarised as there are too many relatively poor quality grounds available for community cricket. Even in the long term the anticipated demand for the sport seems unlikely to fill the currently allocated grounds. The priority is to improve the quality of a sufficient number grounds across the Borough to provide for the sport, particularly in the urban area. This should help clubs to attract and retain members and enable the sport to grow. There are some grounds which are not priorities for retaining cricket, and could be used for football or open space.
76. The cricket club survey did not specifically ask the question as to whether the membership is drawn from within Milton Keynes. However 77% of members travel less than 5 miles to their club, which suggests that all the clubs are effectively drawing their membership from within the authority area.
77. Only 6 of the 24 clubs had any junior teams in addition to the adult game, and of these only Bletchley, Olney, Stony Stratford and Wolverton Town had more than one junior team.
78. The club survey asked whether there had been more, the same or fewer teams in 2013 than in 2012. A large majority of clubs responded saying that the team numbers had stayed the same (17 clubs). Two of the clubs had seen fewer teams; Wolverton Town and Newport Pagnell, but four clubs had grown; Bletchley with one junior team, North Crawley, Printers with a second team, and Stony Stratford with one girls team.
79. Although there has been limited growth in the cricket rates of participation, the Bucks Cricket Board and ECB, with Sport England support are actively trying to address this situation. The decision was therefore taken to retain a 1% growth in participation rates across the age groups for cricket in the PPS modelling, so that the sport can grow in the Borough, rather than be held back by any future lack of facility provision.
80. The peak demand for cricket is during the months of June and July generally, and in terms of days of the week on Saturday afternoons, with 50% of matches taking place at that time. The rest of the matches are spread across the week, with possibly Thursday evening being the most popular.

81. The cricket sites in Milton Keynes are mapped in Figure 11, and listed in the accompanying schedule. Most of the sites used for club cricket are either maintained by the parishes or by contract from Milton Keynes Council (e.g. MK Leisure). A small number of sites are club “owned”/managed by clubs. Many of cricket sites are multi-purpose with 18 of the sites being shared with football, and one with rugby. Only 9 of the sites in Milton Keynes had no other sport uses, but this included the pitch at Campbell Park which had relatively restricted cricket use but is also an important open space.
82. The peak time requirement in 2014 was for 18 grounds, which will rise to 22 grounds by 2026 if a 1% increase in the rates of participation is achieved. As there are currently 24 cricket grounds in secure community use in Milton Keynes, theoretically there is sufficient capacity for cricket even in the longer term. However the quality of the grounds is a key issue and is impacting upon ability of the clubs to attract and retain players of all ages.
83. Also potentially available are a number of sites allocated for cricket but not used (Medbourne, Shenley Brook End, Tattenhoe District Park) and three further sites currently under development (Brooklands, Tattenhoe Park, Western Expansion Area). These are all multi-use sites planned to be shared with both football and with informal use as part of district parks.
84. There are also 13 grounds which were originally built for cricket but which have not been brought into use. These are again all multi-use sites where the main sport catered for is football but where there is also significant informal use.
85. In addition to the community sites, some schools have previously hosted community cricket, for example Denbigh School. However unless these grounds were in use in 2013 or after, they have not been included in the assessment of the community facilities. In terms of the strategic priorities of the Bucks Cricket Board, school sites are less favoured than community sites because of restricted access and generally poorer quality.
86. As with football, the planned “surplus” of provision is in large part because the sport has not grown as anticipated over the last 10 years but neither has Milton Keynes itself experienced the housing growth originally planned. This means that sufficient grounds space has already been planned into the growth of Milton Keynes. The priorities for the future are again therefore to improve quality, both of the grounds and of the ancillary facilities. This may include, where possible, the splitting of cricket use from football, ways to reduce the impact of the informal use of the playing field area, particularly the reduction of dog fouling. This improvement in quality will help the clubs to attract and retain players.

Figure 11: Cricket sites 2014



<b>Ref No</b>	<b>Site Name</b>
1	Ancell Trust Sports Ground
4	Bradwell Sports Ground
8	Campbell Park Cricket Ground
9	Castlethorpe Recreation & Sports Centre
14	Crownhill Sports Ground
15	Denbigh School/Leisure Centre
19	Emberton Playing Field & Pavilion
24	Marsh Drive Sports Ground/Great Linford Park
27	Hanslope Recreation Ground
28	Hazeley School
40	Leon Secondary School
44	Manor Fields Sports Ground
45	High Street Sports Ground, Great Linford
48	MK Academy/Woughton Lesiure Centre
49	Milton Keynes Village Sports Ground & Pavilion
52	New Bradwell Sports Club
54	North Furzton Playing Field
59	Olney RUFC, Recreation Field, Allotment and Bowls/Tennis Club
60	Open University
61	Ousedale School (Newport Pagnell)
66	Shenley Brook End School
72	St Paul's RC Secondary School
82	The Radcliffe School
84	The Recreation Ground, North Crawley
86	Walnut Tree Playing Fields & Pavilion
87	Walton High School
88	Wavendon Cricket Ground
89	Westcroft Playing Fields
94	Willen Road Sports Ground
95	Willen Village Playing Field
96	Wolverton Sports Club
97	Woolstone Cricket Ground
98	Woughton on the Green
107	Ousedale School (Olney Campus)
113	Broughton Pavilion

## Detailed assessment

87. This section provides a summary of the detailed assessment which is provided in Appendix 3 to the report. It uses as the baseline for the supply of grounds the number of sites currently used by cricket clubs, but excluding that at the Open University which does not have secure community use.
88. For the purposes of clarity the following definitions are used in this report.

Term	Definition
Ground	The whole pitch area including the cricket square and outfield
Square/table	The fine turf area which is specially mown and managed to give a high quality set of strips (often 6, 9 or 12 strips)
Strip	Single strip of natural turf or artificial turf on which the wickets are placed at either end for a single match
Wicket	The collective name for the 3 stumps and the bails placed at each end of the strip
Site	The ground plus ancillary facilities such as the club house/pavilion, car parking etc

89. The peak time requirements for cricket need to drive the assessment because this determines overall how many grounds are required. The analysis suggests that with the 24 cricket grounds available in 2014 with secure community use, that there is more than enough current capacity in terms of the number of grounds to cater for cricket's growth up to 2026, even if the sport grows at 1% per annum through to 2026. A key issue is whether this overall supply is of sufficient quality to be able to provide effectively for the game. It is also apparent that some sites are unable to meet the potential demand from their resident club.
90. In terms of the number of strips required to cater for the demand, the calculation is based on an average of 3.5 matches per strip in any one season, excluding non turf pitches. The best sites can probably cater for more matches per strip (5+), whilst the poorer sites can probably cater for less matches per strip, probably around 3. With the characteristics of Milton Keynes, the agreed approach with BCB is that an average rate of 3.5 matches per season per strip should be used in the modelling for this authority. The summary of the modelling is provided in Figure 12.
91. There are currently 247 natural turf strips in Milton Keynes in secure community use and excluding both non turf strips and the Open University ground, so if the average capacity for matches is 3.5 per strip per season these provide a capacity for 865 matches across the season. The season is approximately 26 weeks (April-September) therefore there is a need for 319 strips across the season to cater for all of the use. This rises to about 402 by 2026, based on the 1% growth in the game and the increase in the Milton Keynes population.

92. This calculation in relation to strip capacity confirms that the overall level of provision for cricket in Milton Keynes is well above what is actually being used in 2014, and even the forecast growth up to 2026.
93. There is however an issue in providing for junior cricket. As their strip length is different from adult games, if the natural turf strips are used for the junior game, it cannot be reused for the senior game. Sites with junior teams therefore significantly benefit from a no n-turf strip which does not have the same problems. There are currently 13 sites with non-turf strips in secure community use, but of the clubs with junior teams Wolverton Town is notable in not having a non-turf strip on their club site. This club therefore struggles to meet the demand on its site.



Figure 12: Cricket grounds - balance in provision up to 2026

Grounds

	Age Groups	Number of teams within age group				Peak time 1 Senior only	Peak time 2 All age groups	Minimum total number of grounds required (assumes juniors play on senior grounds) @ max average capacity of 5 teams per ground across week i.e. 2.5 home games				Peak time pitch requirement (total number of grounds) on Saturdays				Number of grounds available				Balance in provision for secure sites (at 1% growth in participation)				Area of cricket grounds required to meet demand at peak time in hectares (based on 9 strips) @ 1.3 ha				Area currently available to cricket in secure use, hectares @ 1.3 ha per ground	Balance in area available in secure use. In hectares:			
		2014	2016	2021	2026			2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026	Available and used	Grounds used and in secure use i.e. excl Open Uni	Used but not secure (e.g. school sites)	Available but not used	Balance in provision for secure site	Balance in provision for secure sites	Balance in provision for secure sites	Balance in provision for secure sites	2014	2016	2021	2026		2014	2016	2021	2026
		2014	2016	2021	2026			2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2021	2021	2026	2014	2021	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026		2014	2016	2021	2026
Junior cricket - boys	7-18yrs	19	21	25	28	across midweek assume max Thurs (33%) Sat pm (50%)	18	19	21	22	17	18	19	20	25	27	2	3	10	9	8	7	22	23	25	26	35	13	12	10	9	
Junior cricket - girls	7-18yrs	1	1	1	1																											
Men's cricket	18-55yrs	68	72	77	81																											
Women's cricket	18-55yrs	0	0	0	0																											

## Strips

	Age Groups	Number of teams within age group				Peak time 1 Senior only	Peak time 2 All age groups	Minimum total number of strips required to provide for 26 weeks of matches @ average 3.5 matches per strip (assumes juniors play on senior grounds)				Peak time strip/ground requirement on Saturdays				Total peak time strip/ground requirement on Saturdays (number of strips x 26 weeks)				Capacity: number of strips in secure community use: 247 x 3.5 uses per season (excludes Open Uni)	Overall balance in provision for secure sites (number of strips)	Overall balance in provision for secure sites (number of strips)	Overall balance in provision for secure sites (number of strips)	Overall balance in provision for secure sites (number of strips)				
		2014	2016	2021	2026			2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026	2014	2016	2021	2026						2014	2016	2021	2026
		Junior cricket - boys	7-18yrs	19	21			25	28	across midweek assume max Thurs (33%)	327	351	386	411	17	18	19	20	442						470	502	527	865
Junior cricket - girls	7-18yrs	1	1	1	1																							
Men's cricket	18-55yrs	68	72	77	81	Sat pm (50%)																						
Women's cricket	18-55yrs	0	0	0	0																							



## Current latent demand

94. Almost half of the cricket clubs in Milton Keynes would like to increase their number of teams in the future, ranging from the smaller clubs such as MK Badshahs through to Wolverton Town. Most of the aspirations are for developing youth teams (7 out of the 11 clubs). The issues raised by the clubs in holding back this development are wide ranging but the following table suggests that the most common problems are a lack of external funding and a shortage of coaches/volunteers, rather than grounds/pitch issues. BCB and ECB are actively supporting the clubs in Milton Keynes relation to the problems they are facing in relation to the shortage of funding and coaches/volunteers.

*Figure 13: Cricket clubs expansion issues*

Issue	Number of times raised by clubs as a restricting factor
Lack of external funds	8
Shortage of coaches or volunteers	7
Cost of hire/using facilities	6
Shortage of indoor training	5
Shortage of adult pitches	4
Failing membership	4
Lack of internal funds	4
Shortage of junior pitches	3
Shortage of all weather wickets	3
Shortage/poor quality changing	2
Cost of travelling to compete	1

95. The club survey for cricket did not specifically ask the question as to whether there was a waiting list for club membership. However it is likely that there is only a very small amount of latent demand for cricket in Milton Keynes, given the large potential supply of cricket grounds available. If there is latent demand, this is most likely to be amongst young players who want to join one of the largest clubs. BCB is therefore working with clubs and schools to encourage more take up of cricket by young people, particularly amongst those in ethnic minorities.

## Developing options for the future

### Distribution of grounds

96. The travel distance of cricket players is known from the clubs survey, which shows that around 77% of players travel less than 5 miles to their club, with about 30% travelling less than 3 miles. This suggests that, as Milton Keynes is approximately 6

miles north-south, and also east-west, that a travel time of about 10-15 minutes is appropriate for the catchment of most clubs.

97. Only three of the clubs in Milton Keynes are not currently playing at their preferred venues; MK Azad who use Willen but would prefer Westcroft, Westcroft CC who play at Great Linford but would prefer Westcroft, and Wolverton Town who would prefer Radcliffe School but use Willen instead.
98. However there is a strong interest by a number of clubs to move to the newly developed/planned sites at Broughton and Brooklands as they expect the quality of the new sites to be higher than their current venues. This reflects the wishes of the clubs to have better quality facilities, rather than a shortage of facilities overall.
99. Bucks Cricket Board would generally support a move towards a slightly smaller total number of cricket grounds if the remainder were improved quality. However there must still be sufficient space for the sport to grow long term, and a minimum of 20 grounds will still be required by 2026.

#### Site ownership, management, and quality

100. Of the 30 sites used by cricket clubs, 16 are on a lease basis with the remainder available on a casual hire basis. Only the Open University site is freehold. Most of the sites available on a lease basis are managed by the clubs, but those available on a casual hire basis are managed by the parish, or by contract. One site is at Campbell Park and in the ownership of the Parks Trust, but the others are mainly parish or Milton Keynes Council owned sites.
101. Those sites which are owned by Milton Keynes Council have been or may be subject to the Community Asset Transfer process. For these sites, it is proposed that most would see a continuation of cricket use, in which case it is essential that this use is stated as a requirement in the CAT documentation.
102. The clubs were asked as part of the survey to comment on their existing sites. In general the results provide a useful summary of the issues associated with site quality both across the authority and specifically, and identifies those sites where problems appear to be the most common. It is notable however that the expectations of the individual clubs influence their comments, for example Manor Fields site is rated as good by Bletchley and by GS Dial Square, but poor by MK United.
103. Overall Bucks Cricket Board feels that the expectations of cricket clubs in Milton Keynes in terms of the quality of their grounds is lower than elsewhere in the county as in BCB's view, the cricket grounds in Milton Keynes are generally lower quality compared to other sites in the county. A summary of the results is provided in Figure 14, and the club survey comments about the requirements at individual sites at Figure 15.

## Criteria for investment

104. In determining the priorities for future investment in cricket, the following criteria should be considered:
- a. Retain the amount of playing field space in secure community use for cricket as at present. Where appropriate exchange new sites designated for cricket with sites within 10 minutes drive time which have notable quality issues.
  - b. Prioritise investment for cricket on those sites which have the most active clubs and the most potential for the sport
  - c. Where there are sites which have nominally been developed for cricket, are technically available for hire but are unused, these should be used for football, other sport or for open space.
  - d. Reduce as far as possible the overlap of football with cricket.
  - e. For those sites subject to CAT, retain cricket where indicated in the playing pitch strategy
  - f. Improve the quality of maintenance of the sites/grounds, including both squares and outfield
  - g. Prioritise for investment for cricket, those sites with little/no informal use and minimal overlap with football
  - h. Where new sites are proposed in relation to new development, these should be provided for sport rather than as general open space
  - i. Other than in the major extensions to MK, target developers' contributions towards site improvements within a 10 minute travel time.

Figure 14: Cricket club comments on site quality in 2013

Club	Home Ground	Pitch quality overall	Pavilion	Changing	Car park	Value for Money	Problems with Site	Implications of issues	Improvements needed			Other comments
Stony Stratford	Ansell Trust											
Old Bradwell	Bradwell Sports and Social Club						Excess water runs onto outfield from surrounding road. Bowls club too close, new fence not hire enough		Artificial wicket			
Stony Stratford	Campbell Park								New female toilets			Currently access to the home changing room is via the gents toilet which makes staging girls games a challenge
Castlethorpe	Castlethorpe Sports Ground						Outfield poor due to maintenance by parish council. Rent high.		2 sightcreens	Scoreboard	Bigger pavilion to incorporate bar	
Wolverton Town	Crown Hill						Crown Hill pitch is poorly maintained and inadequate, outfield suffers from litter and dog residue the pavilion changing is OK but kitchen is not equipped It is also five miles from the main clubhouse in Osborne Street					
GS Amigos (now merged with Santander)	Great Linford											
Printers	Great Linford						Outfield grass not cut short enough		Outfield too long - been raised but no improvement			Pay up front for a discount, 10 games at £65 per game, including discount. If match is cancelled no refund or part refund. Discount is enticing. For 2014 20 games will be paid for up front. Winter training indoor nets too expensive, may join with another club to share costs. Potential to start a junior section but lack of funds and coaches
Westcroft	Great Linford											
New City	Great Linford						Pitch generally better than average and good drainage. Last season had uneven bounce. Outfield not regularly cut to a good standard.	The facilities are dated, particularly the Pavilion. Astro turf practice pitch provided at far end of the ground. Cannot accommodate Sunday games due to use by other teams.				Meetings with the Parish have taken place with a list of desired facilities provided. Parish has promised improved facilities but it is dependant on funding available. We are starting a new 3rd Team which will involve mainly youth with some seniors. The games will be played at Broughton Pavilion (New ground)
Bletchley	Manor Fields						Open access, dog walkers		Artificial wicket on bottom square	Roll on covers	Machinery (owned by individuals)	

Club	Home Ground	Pitch quality overall	Pavilion	Changing	Car park	Value for Money	Problems with Site	Implications of issues	Improvements needed			Other comments
GS Dial Square MK United	Manor Fields Manor Fields						It is not our preferred venue as it doesn't have facilities maintained properly, especially pitch/wicket is not prepared properly, sometimes due to unevenness of wicket its dangerous to play and have had complaints from players as well as opposition have logged complaints against the wicket with league. Though notified these issues have not been tackled, this is discouraging our young players to go away from the club are seeking better facilities elsewhere in the county. We would prefer to play at Broughton or Great Linford facilities which have all the facilities maintained and are clean and tidy has all the bear minimum done.					Ground should go under renovation programme to build a good changing rooms, scoreboard, pitches, rolling and it should be monitored regularly via some sort of inspection to grade the ground and penalise if they don't comply to standards.
Shenley Church End Milton Keynes	Manor Fields Middleton						Occasionally events are held that encroach on the outfield. This is on both Saturdays and Sundays		Better training nets	Better artificial strip		New changing rooms being built for 2014
New Bradwell MK Badshahs	New Bradwell Old Bradwell						Games called off due to the drainage issue where the ground is a low point and water comes off the surrounding road onto pitch	Clash with football at start and end of season	Covers	Outdoor practice facilities	Needs fencing around site to stop balls.	Bradwell may start a Sunday Team, may have fixture clashes, and would need to find another venue. Nowhere to play on Saturdays. Herts mere no refunds on ground hire if game is called off, hit what limited funds that we have.
Open Uni Wolverton Town	Open University Osbourne Street						parking in Osborne street is almost impossible on match days. Osborne Street changing facilities need upgrading they are small and the umpires room is tiny.	All junior matches put great strain on the volunteers there is no quiet day at all	Refurbish hard surface nets	Improve score box	Enlarge changing rooms.	Need to replace outfield cutter and heavy roller
Olney	Recreation Ground, Olney						Loam quality on new laid wicket		Covers	Score box		Need external funding for improvements

Club	Home Ground	Pitch quality overall	Pavilion	Changing	Car park	Value for Money	Problems with Site	Implications of issues	Improvements needed			Other comments
									Storage	Bowling machine	Refurb of sight screens	
North Crawley	The Rec, NC						A small square and lack of room for expansion of square may become problematic in future if we continue to recruit youth players at a good rate		Storage	Bowling machine	Refurb of sight screens	
Crown	Walnut Tree						maintenance of the pitch/ground is OK (but no better than OK), but the wicket is never rolled properly, even At the start of the season. The pavilion is basically a good building, with good changing rooms, etc., but the care and maintenance of it is very poor.	Not sufficient space to accommodate matches, moderate wicket (not rolled)				
GS Friends United	Wavenden Gate Pav											
Santander	Wavenden Gate Pav						In our experience length of grass on outfield can be an issue on council pitches		Better score box.			Actually Wavendon gate facilities are just about ok. The location is ok, rent is reasonable, the square is ok, the outfield can be problematic but not a serious issue. The changing rooms are small but manageable (just). Obviously we'd like better – but cost would obviously be an issue
Westcroft	Wavenden Gate Pav											
MK Azad	Willen											
Westcroft	Willen											
Newport Pagnell	Willen						Council run facility and they have no idea of the needs of a cricket club and when we point things out they cant assist as it a 'multi use facility'. They also make changes to improve facilities for other sports users on the ground that adversely affect cricket.	The lack of investment in the club facilities makes it difficult to attract new players				The skate park is an issue and has been raised ever since it was mooted. We were steamrollered and it was built as it's a multi-use facility. No plans at this time although the council is looking at a five/ten year plan to improve the facility but most of our members believe it to be pie in the sky.
MK City	Woughton on the Green											
Westcroft	Woughton on the Green											

Figure 15: Cricket sites where improvements needed in 2013

Ground	Improvements needed				Other comments
Ancell Trust					
Bradwell Sports and Social Club	Artificial wicket				
Castlethorpe Sports Ground	2 sightcreens	Scoreboard	Bigger pavilion to incorporate bar	Improve maintenance and cutting of outfield	
Campbell Park	New female toilets				
Crown Hill					
Great Linford				Improve maintenance and cutting of outfield	PRIORITY SITE FOR INVESTMENT IN CRICKET
Marsh Drive	Pavilion/ changing				PRIORITY SITE FOR INVESTMENT IN CRICKET
Manor Fields	Artificial wicket on bottom square	Roll on covers	Machinery (owned by individuals)	Improve maintenance to outfield	
Middleton	Better training nets	Better artificial strip			
New Bradwell					
Old Bradwell	Covers	Outdoor practice facilities	Needs fencing around site to stop balls.		
Open University					
Recreation Ground, Olney	Covers	Score box			
The Rec, North Crawley	Storage	Bowling machine	Refurb of sight screens		
Walnut Tree	Improve rolling and maintenance of the square	Improved maintenance of the changing			
Wavenden Gate Pav	Better score box.			Improve maintenance and cutting of outfield	
Willen Road				Improve maintenance and cutting of outfield	PRIORITY SITE FOR INVESTMENT IN CRICKET

Ground	Improvements needed				Other comments
Wolverton Sports Club	Refurbish hard surface nets	Improve score box	Enlarge changing rooms.	Need to replace outfield cutter and heavy roller	
Woughton on the Green					PRIORITY SITE FOR INVESTMENT IN CRICKET

## Site proposals

105. Priorities at the exiting sites for cricket investment include:

- Bow Brickhill - development of a new cricket square and introduction of cricket onto site
- Manor Fields – improved drainage of bottom pitch area
- Marsh Drive – general improvements
- Wavendon Gate – pitch improvements
- Westcroft – pitch improvements
- Wolverton Sport Club – car parking provision
- Woughton on the Green – pitch improvements

106. The site by site list of investment priorities are contained in Figure 3 above.



## RUGBY

### Overview

107. There are three rugby clubs within the authority; Bletchley, Milton Keynes and Olney. Both Bletchley and Milton Keynes draw their membership from within a 5 mile radius which suggests that most members come from within Milton Keynes urban area, but the Olney club has a slightly larger catchment, reflecting its more rural location. It is likely that the majority of rugby demand is therefore met within the borough, and there is only limited cross-boundary movement of players. The clubs each have long leases (or proposed leases) and all manage their sites. The sites are owned by Milton Keynes Council in the case of the two clubs within the urban area, and by Olney Town Council for the other.
108. The rugby club sites are mapped in Figure 17 along with the other sites within the authority which are “available” for community use, although not used in practice, and also those which are marked out for the sport but not available for community use. The latter are all school sites. As community rugby is currently entirely based on the three club sites, and it is unusual for rugby clubs to use other sites unless they are immediately adjacent to that of the club, only the pitches at the club sites are considered further within this assessment.
109. The peak match demand for rugby is either Saturday afternoon for senior men, or Sunday mornings for juniors, minis/midis. The two ladies teams play on a Sunday afternoon. At the present time there is more than sufficient capacity overall across the authority to cater for matches at peak time, and even by 2026 there will be sufficient space for matches if the sport grows its participation at a rate of 1% pa across each of the age groups.
110. At present there are only 4 separately marked out mini/midi pitches, all at the MK club. Elsewhere the 12 years and under ages play on ½ senior size pitches. If two matches are played consecutively for these age groups, then the peak time requirement for pitch space is 3 pitches, spread across the three clubs. The mini/midi age groups do not usually train other than on Sunday mornings, when they either have matches or train.
111. The greater issue for rugby is the impact of training on the pitch quality/capacity. For the season 2013/14 the amount of training plus other rugby uses of the pitches equate to around 127% of the matches alone. This has a very significant impact on the pitches as all of this training currently takes place on grass, with only the occasional use of other training sites (including indoor) when the grass is completely unusable e.g. site is flooded.
112. The total demand for senior pitch space (including matches and training) in Milton Keynes for the season 2013/14 is almost in balance with the provision. By 2021 however there will be insufficient capacity to cater for all of the demand, the main issue being a lack of capacity to cater for training.

113. At the present time, Bletchley is just slightly short of pitch capacity, MK has just enough, and Olney has sufficient. If Bletchley and MK clubs grow as they anticipate, they will both have a lack of capacity in relation to their pitches, particularly to cater for training. At Bletchley the pitch capacity could theoretically be improved through pitch works, but the site is low lying, generally wet, and can flood. The pitches at MK are new and high quality and would be difficult to improve upon significantly. The best option for both sites might therefore be an all weather training pitch for the medium-longer term, which has the ability to withstand high levels of use.

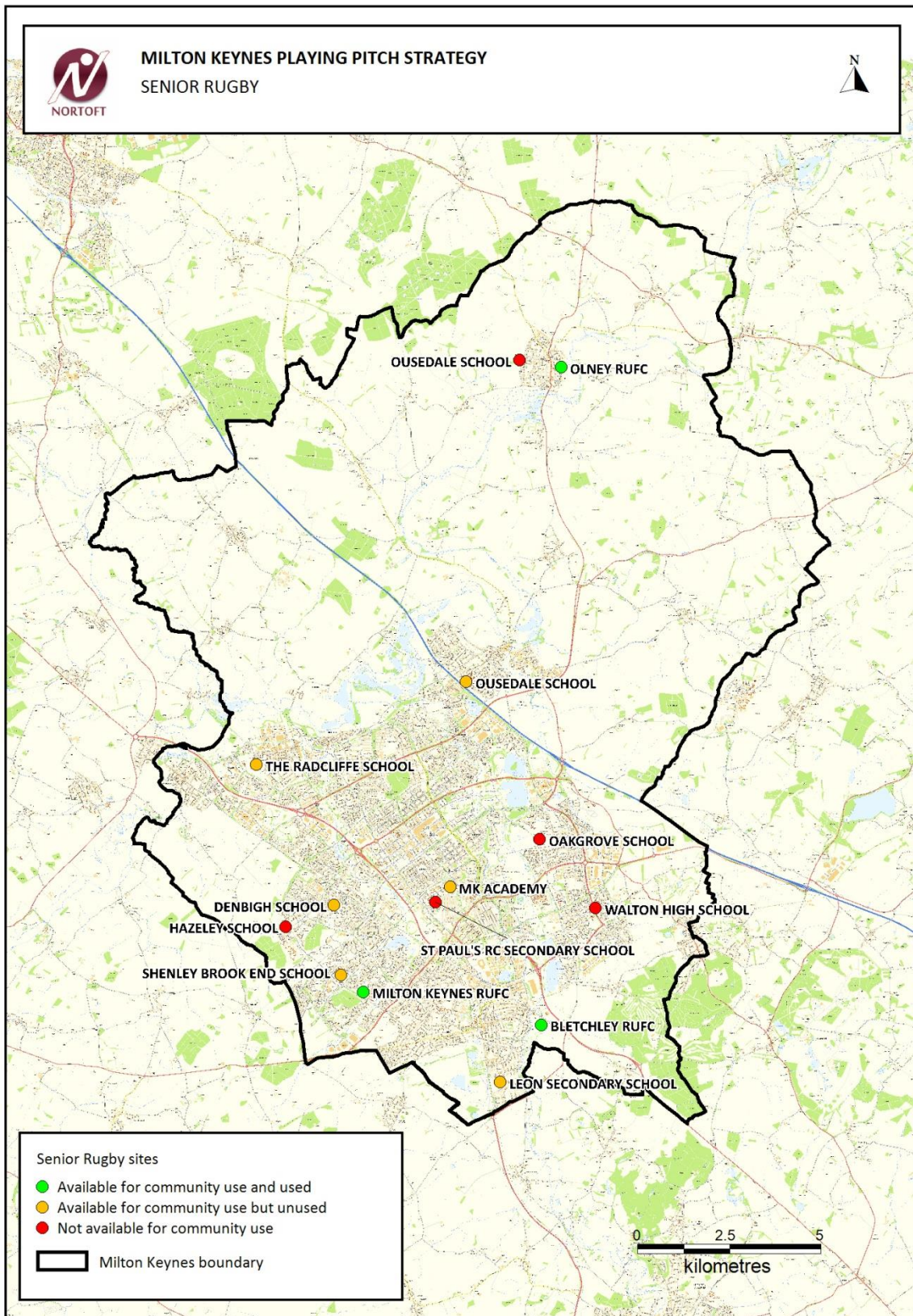
## Detailed assessment

114. This section provides a summary of the detailed assessment which is provided in Appendix 3 to the report.
115. Due to the club focussed characteristics of rugby, the assessment for needs to consider both the authority level of provision, and individual club level, both the match requirements and the overall capacity of the pitches to withstand use. The assessment has been based on a 1% growth in participation across each of the age groups.
116. With the increase in the proposed population of Milton Keynes and the increase in rates of participation, the number of teams in each age group are expected to increase in the period up to 2026, with the greatest growth in the mini/midis age groups and junior boys. At the present time both Bletchley and Milton Keynes clubs have indicated that they expect to grow over the next few years, which also reflects the location of the housing growth. Olney has indicated that it does not expect to grow significantly, reflecting in part the much lower rates of housing growth and the overall aging population in this part of the Borough.
117. At the present time there are no waiting lists for players at the three clubs, which suggests that there is no unmet/latent demand.

*Figure 16: Rugby team growth up to 2026*

	Age Groups	Number of teams			
		2014	2016	2021	2026
<b>Rugby Union:</b>					
Mini/midi -rugby - mixed	7-12yrs	18	21	25	26
Junior rugby - boys	13-18yrs	14	15	18	22
Junior rugby - girls	13-18yrs	3	3	4	5
Men's rugby	19-45yrs	12	13	13	14
Women's rugby	19-45yrs	2	2	2	2

Figure 17: Rugby pitch sites



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014.

118. The assessment of the capacity of the pitches to withstand use is based on the club returns. At the authority wide level, there is sufficient capacity to cater for all of the potential matches in the period up to 2026. However as there is more demand from training and other needs than matches (an average of 127% of the match demand across the authority) the impact on the capacity of the pitches to withstand this level of use is very significant.
119. The following summarises the position at each of the club sites, the calculations behind which are provided in Appendix 3.

### Bletchley

120. Bletchley is the smallest of the three clubs with its 14 teams across the age groups. The site is also used by Milton Keynes College for rugby on an almost weekly basis, and by cricket clubs in the summer.
121. Bletchley has four reasonable quality senior pitches, but they flood on occasion and there can be problems with waterlogging. Two of the pitches are currently floodlit, including the training pitch. There are no separate mini pitches. The changing and ancillary facilities are reasonable.
122. The total amount of use of the site for rugby already slightly exceeds the capacity of the pitches to withstand this level of use, although there is plenty of capacity now and into the future for matches.
123. The club is currently improving its changing provision, and this is noted at the highest priority for the club by the RFU. The club has an aspiration for an artificial grass pitch for training.

### Milton Keynes

124. The Milton Keynes club with its 17 teams moved only relatively recently to its site at Emerson Valley where it has 4 senior and 4 mini pitches, which are still in formal establishment period. These pitches are graded as good, but their future ability to withstand use will depend on whether the high levels of maintenance can be achieved in the long term.
125. The clubhouse is new and good quality, but due to the site characteristics has a large void. Better use of this void is one of the priorities for RFU support. The club is also concerned about the limited availability of car park space, which restricts the potential of the club to grow its mini/midi and junior elements.
126. Because the pitches are good quality, they can just meet the demands placed on them now from the club, both for matches and training. However as the club grows, the pitches will not be able to retain their quality because of overuse, even with high levels of maintenance. The RFU are therefore in discussion with the club to provide

additional floodlights, and also the potential development of an artificial grass pitch for training.

## Olney

127. The club at Olney has 18 teams across the age groups. The pitches are considered good quality, enabling 3 matches/match equivalents on each of the 5 senior pitches each week. There are no separately marked out mini pitches. This pitch capacity easily caters for the club's current needs, with effectively one "spare" pitch across the week.
128. The club's return suggest that the club is not anticipating growing significantly, so the priorities are continued general maintenance/improvement of the site. The RFU's current priority for investment on this site is possibly in relation to toilet facilities.

## Developing the options for the future

129. Across the authority as a whole there will be a definite need for more pitch space to cater for rugby by 2021, with much of the demand arising from the training impact on pitches. The increase in demand is likely to be mainly felt at the Bletchley and Milton Keynes clubs because of the overall increase in population in the urban area.
130. As the sport of rugby tends to be club based, the use of pitches on other sites is not likely to be of any significant extent. More valuable to the growth of the sport would be investment in artificial training pitches to reduce the impact on the grass pitches. Such an investment would enable the clubs to potentially almost double in their size in terms of teams across the age groups.
131. However artificial pitches are expensive to build, so a viable business case would need to be made by both the Bletchley and MK clubs. In the interim, improved/further floodlighting at MK and Bletchley may help to spread the pressures on the grass pitches.

## Criteria for investment

132. In determining the priorities for future investment in rugby, the following criteria should be considered:
  - a. Target investment in rugby to the three existing rugby club sites, with developers' contributions for sites;
    - i. east of the M1 to Olney club
    - ii. elsewhere equally divided between MK and Bletchley clubs
  - b. Provide improved/new opportunities for training through additional floodlighting for existing grass pitches

- c. Provide improved/new opportunities for training through the development of a full size 3G AGP with rugby specification in central MK
- d. Enhancing the viability of the clubs by maximising their clubhouse use through clubhouse improvements

## Site proposals

133. The existing sites with community rugby which are priorities for investment are:

- Emerson Valley/MK RFC – development of void area and floodlighting of additional pitch for training
- Manor Fields/ Bletchley RFC – improved drainage of bottom pitch. Increase area with floodlighting.
- Olney RFC – changing room and clubhouse improvements, floodlighting of additional pitch for training, improved pitch drainage.
- Develop full size 3G rugby specification pitch in CMK.

134. The site by site list of investment priorities are contained in Figure 3 above.

## PLANNING POLICIES AND STANDARDS

### Introduction

135. The Sport and Active Communities Strategy 2014 reviews the key planning policies in Milton Keynes, but the key points are valuable to reiterate here as they guide the required outputs from the Playing Pitch Strategy.
136. The key planning policy documents include the National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, and the Core Strategy, adopted July 2013, but the following section focuses on developers' contributions, and how they can support the development of sport and community facilities.

### Developer contributions

137. The adopted Sport and Active Communities Strategy has significant weight as a material consideration in plan making, decision taking, and at appeal, and this includes the identification of developer contributions. This policy weighting is justified through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

*"Planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessment of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision ...and ... information gained from these assessments should be used to determine what open spaces , sports and recreation provision is required"* (NPPF para 73).

138. The NPPF is also specific in that:

*"... a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan making and decision-making"*.

139. One of the 12 principles is that:

*"... planning should ... take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities to meet local need"* (NPPF para 17).

140. The NPPF also identifies that planning obligations (including developer contributions) should only be sought where they meet all 3 tests of NPPF para 204 (and related to CIL Reg 122).

- *Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms*
- *Directly related to the development*
- *Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.*

141. This PPS cannot provide a detailed list of all investment priorities for playing fields, but it is clear that new development will bring additional pressure on the facility

stock. The initial schedule of priorities for investment are included within this PPS, but these will be updated on an annual basis, and will be guided by the advice from the proposed PPS Delivery Group, from Milton Keynes Council and the relevant Parish/Town Council.

142. The current mechanisms for requiring developer contributions towards infrastructure include the existing MK Tariff and section 106 agreements. Developer contributions are *currently* sought under different policies for different areas of MK:
- In the Urban Development Area (UDA) which comprises the Strategic Land Allocation Area and both the Western and Eastern Expansion Areas.
  - Outside the UDA but in the urban area which includes all of the other housing growth areas
  - In the rural areas outside the UDA and built areas.
143. The Local Investment Plan October 2013 brings together all of the main infrastructure projects proposed to support the growth of Milton Keynes up to 2026, and it lists the priority schemes for investment. The map within the LIP provides a useful overview of the location of main growth areas of Milton Keynes.

### MK Urban Development Area Tariff SPD, November 2007

144. The 'Tariff' is an amount of money per residential unit, or per hectare of employment development, that is payable by owners of land in the Urban Development Area (UDA). The UDA covers land to the north, east and west of the Milton Keynes where future expansion will, or is likely to take place, although the Tariff will not apply to the Northern Expansion Area or Oxley Park as legal agreements for these sites have already been completed.
145. Agreements under this arrangement have now been concluded for most of the areas, comprising nearly 83% of the funding to be raised via the Tariff. These areas include sites with commitments to new playing field provision, see Figure 18 below. Where these agreements have already been concluded, there is no requirement to specify the amount of playing field space to be provided, but there will still be a need to ensure that the sites are developed to an appropriate quality standard and appropriate management arrangement put into place.



Figure 18: Growth areas of Milton Keynes

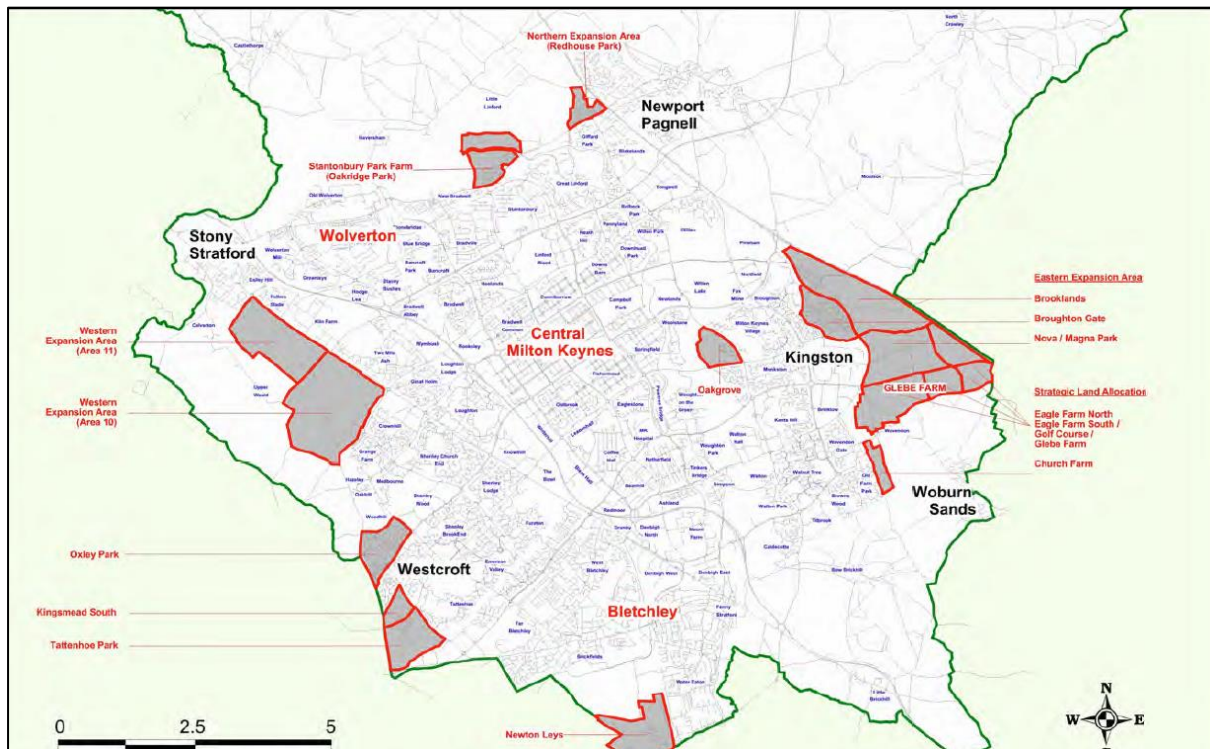


Figure 19: Tariff areas where agreements concluded  
(Source: Milton Keynes Local Investment Plan October 2013)

Development Area	Nature / Scale of Development	Playing field proposals
Magna Park Phases 1, 2 & 3	Employment	None
Broughton Manor Farm	1,530 dwellings and mixed use development	2 junior football pitches, 1 cricket ground
Brooklands	2,500 dwellings, 2.77ha employment and mixed use development, 7,000 sqm commercial use	2 senior and 2 junior football pitches, 1 cricket
Tollgate Cottage	74 dwellings	None
Tattenhoe Park	1,310 dwellings, 2,000 sq m mixed use local centre	1 senior and 2 junior football pitches plus 1 cricket
Kingsmead South	450 dwellings, 480 sq m commercial use	None
WEA Area 10	4,330 dwellings, 6.59ha employment land, 9,500 sq m commercial uses	2 senior and 4 junior football, 1 cricket
WEA Area 11	2,220 dwellings, 9.08ha employment land, 1,300 sq m commercial uses	2 senior and 4 junior football

146. The SPD states that “not all local infrastructure is currently identified for funding through the Tariff. MKC and MKP will maintain contact with service providers and will reconsider their growth related infrastructure requirements when the Tariff is reviewed in 5 years’ time”. The now adopted Sport and Active Communities Strategy (2013) will be a key evidence base for the consideration of relevant growth related infrastructure requirements, as will this Playing Pitch Strategy.
147. In addition to the above sites, the new Strategic Land Allocation Area (SLA) including Newton Leys will have new pitch provision, for football and/or cricket. The details are still however at an early stage and have not been included in this report.

### MK Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations for Leisure, Recreation and Sport Facilities (adopted 2005)

148. This SPG covers the built up area of Milton Keynes, including the Expansion Areas, with the exception of Central Milton Keynes, which has its own SPG. Where proposals for new housing fall outside this CMK area, planning obligations for open space, leisure and recreation will be sought by the Council in line with relevant Local Plan policies. Planning standards are therefore required for this area; quantity of provision, quality of provision and accessibility.

### Planning standards

149. A key output from the Sport and Active Communities Strategy is the development of proposed planning standards for Milton Keynes for the period up to 2026. There are three elements:
- Quantity – a rate of provision of a facility per 1000 people, based on a combination of the current amount of provision, the policy principle of increasing participation rates by 1% per annum across all sports, plus the findings from various modelling, and wide ranging consultations.
  - Accessibility standard – based on the catchment area for each facility type
  - Quality standard – for both new build and refurbishment
150. The PPS assessment has demonstrated that overall there is sufficient playing field space within most of the urban area to cater for future housing growth, however quality is a key issue and there is a need to improve most of the playing field sites, both their pitches and their ancillary facilities. However in the major new areas of housing growth there is still a need to provide locally accessible facilities for football, and potentially for cricket.

## Quantity of playing field space

151. The methodology behind the development of the provision per 1000 standards is provided in Appendix 3, but is summarised below.

*Figure 20: Development of provision per 1000 standards*

Step 1	Identify the number of teams for each relevant age group for each sport e.g. the number of boys aged 10-15 years
Step 2	Identify using MKi demographic information the number of individuals in each relevant age group for each sport e.g. the number of boys aged 10-15 years
Step 3	Calculate the number of teams per 1000 for each relevant age group for each sport, known as the Team Generation Rate (TGR)
Step 4	Apply a multiplication factor to the TGR rate at 1% pa for 2016, 2021 and 2026
Step 5	Using the whole authority demographic profiles for 2016, 2021 and 2026, apply to a population of 1000
Step 6	Apply the forecast TGR rates to the forecast 1000 population for 2016, 2021 and 2026 to identify the number of teams which would be expected to be generated for each age group within each sport
Step 7	Calculate the amount of playing field space that would be required to meet the needs from the 1000 population for each sport at 2016, 2021 and 2026.

152. Although the approach in Milton Keynes during its expansion has been to combine the areas required for football and cricket on many sites, the previous strategy recommendations were that they should be separate to reduce conflicts and to ensure quality. This is still the recommendation and these PPS findings have demonstrated the importance of this approach. The provision per 1000 standards are therefore based on separate provision for each sport.

### *Proposed quantity standard*

153. The proposed playing field standard of provision per 1000 is based on the amount of pitch area required for each of football, cricket and rugby, with an additional allowance for the ancillary facilities including pavilion/clubhouse, car parking etc. For football and rugby this is taken to be 150% of the pitch area alone, and for cricket, 2ha per site.
154. The required standard for the quantity of provision for playing field area is 0.52 ha per 1000 for the period up to 2026 across the authority as a whole. This is a lower rate of provision than the current MK Local Plan figure of 1.5 ha per 1000, and reflects the findings of this assessment.
155. This can be divided between the sports at a ratio of:

- Football: 57%
  - Cricket: 26%
  - Rugby: 17%
156. Within the major new housing areas where provision has not already been agreed, then there is likely to be a need to provide football on site, and possibly cricket depending on local demand. The rugby provision will be off site.
157. Elsewhere the equivalent value of the area of pitches will be calculated using the latest Sport England Facility Cost information. These developers' contributions will be used to improve the quality of pitches and ancillary facilities on football and cricket sites within a 10 minute drive time catchment, and at the closest rugby club site. It is clear that the costs of the works required on playing field sites is more than can be generated from developers' contributions. The prioritised list for site improvements will be reviewed on an annual basis by Milton Keynes Council. For some sites the investment may be for the benefit of more than one sport e.g. sites with both cricket and football.
158. Where there is a lack of accessible playing field space within a location, for example in Newport Pagnell, there may be a need to provide additional playing field space to cater for this deficit.
159. There is also a requirement for developers to contribute towards the cost of clubhouses/pavilions and ancillary facilities at playing field sites. This requirement is based on the following assumption:
- Football: 1 x 4-team changing room pavilion for 3 ha pitch space
  - Cricket: 1 x clubhouse per 2 ha ground
  - Rugby: 1 x 4 team changing room clubhouse for 4 ha pitch space
160. The rate of cost per 1000 is 22% of a 4 team changing room and club room using traditional construction, with the cost reference base being the latest Sport England Facility Cost information on their web site. The proposed split is based between the sport is based on both the theoretical need and the current site quality issues for the sports.
161. The value should be divided between the sports based on the percentages used for the amount of playing field space for each sport (paragraph 155).

### Accessibility of playing field space

162. The accessibility standards are based on the consultation feedback from clubs. It is clear that many club members for cricket and football travel up to about 3 miles or 10 minutes across Milton Keynes, but that the three rugby clubs draw from a wider geographical area around their sites. The Milton Keynes urban area is approximately 7 miles across, so those people living in the more central areas can reach anywhere within the urban area.

### *Proposed standard for accessibility*

163. The proposed accessibility standard for football and cricket is a drive time of 10 minutes. No accessibility standard is required for rugby.

### *Quality of playing fields and ancillary facilities*

#### *Standards for quality*

164. There is now an extensive set of sports facility design advice available from Sport England and the major national governing bodies of sport. The planning policies for Milton Keynes in relation to the quality standards for sports facilities should therefore refer back to this guidance, both for design and layout. However there are specific aspects of design which should be taken into account in the policy framework. The headlines are given below, but more depth is provided in Appendix 5.

#### **Multi-pitch sites**

165. The most useful sites for football development and the best for efficient long term maintenance are those which are ideally at least the equivalent of 4 senior pitches in area, or a minimum size of 6 ha. New sites should therefore be developed with this minimum size in mind.
166. The most useful sites for cricket development and the best for efficient long term maintenance are those which are at least the equivalent of 2 pitches in area. The development of multi-pitch sites by clubs is therefore supported.
167. The most useful sites for rugby are those which are multi-pitch and cater for all ages, usually linked to a club.

#### **Football - pitches sized to meet needs**

168. Consideration should be given to remarking pitches to support the introduction of the new FA recommended pitch sizes.

#### **Changing Facilities**

169. For football, all senior sites should have good quality changing facilities that meet FA guidelines. Whilst changing facilities for minis and juniors is a desirable rather than an essential FA requirement, all mini/junior sites (not associated with senior pitches) should ideally have at least access to basic toilet/wash facilities.
170. For cricket and rugby all sites should have good quality changing and club house facilities that meet the national governing body guidelines.

### **Grass Pitch Quality**

171. All pitches should be well-drained and well-maintained, avoiding over-use and for football enable two or three matches/training sessions per week.
172. Pitches should be allowed to fully recover at the conclusion of the season.
173. Conflict by booking out sites for other activities during the closed season should be avoided. Where this is not possible consideration should be given to developing alternative sites for football.
174. Cricket pitches should be allowed to fully recover at the conclusion of the season and sites should not be shared with other sports or used for informal recreation. If sites are shared the cricket square should be protected, particularly at the start of the cricket season when there is often an overlap with winter sports.
175. All new sites should be located in areas not prone to flooding.
176. All new sites should be drained and laid out in accordance with FA guidelines.

### **Floodlighting**

177. Most rugby clubs and some football clubs also require at least some floodlit grass training area which is away from the pitches. The RFU consider floodlighting as a high priority, particularly where the club is large and has limited scope for training.

### **Site Security**

178. Where possible, and where they are not public open space, sites should be secured (fenced) to reduce/prevent unofficial use of pitches, vandalism of changing facilities and dog fouling.

### **Enshrining quality in planned provision**

179. The quality of new playing fields, particularly those which are provided in relation to new development, should be guided by a clear set of planning criteria. These are provided under the Planning Policies section of this report, alongside guidance on the amount of playing field space which is required per 1000 population.



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