

2 Assessment of Need

Introduction

2.1 This section examines the data and evidence gathered on local need for sport and recreation provision. The sources assessed include:

- a) Analysing previous relevant surveys and consultations with local people and organisations, including:

The 2006 Green Space Strategy Audit

A 2010 citizens' panel survey on open spaces (including indoor and outdoor sports facilities).

A 2010 survey of local sports clubs.

- b) Undertaking and analysing new surveys and consultation with local people and organisations, including:

A 2011 survey of governing bodies of sport.

A 2011 survey of local pitch sports clubs.

A 2011 survey of local schools.

A 2011 survey of leisure centre users.

Green Space Strategy Audit

2.2 As part of the 2006 Audit a questionnaire was prepared for users and non users of the Districts green spaces. It was made available at the Council offices, on their website and published in Uttlesford Life. 912 completed questionnaires were received and the key findings are summarised below.

2.3 *Amount of green space:* Respondents were asked if there was enough green space where they live. 56% indicated that the amount of green space was just right. A further 22% indicated that there was 'plenty' of green space, with the remaining 22% indicating there was not enough.

2.4 *Travel to green space:* Respondents were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to a green space and by what mode of transport. Almost 80% of respondents indicated that they would walk under a mile to a green space and just over 30% indicated they would walk or drive 2-3 miles. Around 65% of respondents would drive to a greenspace if it was 4-5 miles away and over 70% would drive 6+ miles. Cycling or using public transport to visit green spaces was less popular, with the most frequent response being 30% of people would cycle 1-3 miles to a green space.

2.5 *Types of green space:* Respondents were asked which types of green space they use and how frequently. The most frequently used types of green space were green spaces around home, followed by rights of way and parks. Bowling greens, allotments, tennis courts, golf courses and sport pitches were all rarely used by respondents, with over half of respondents never using them.

Citizens Panel survey

2.6 In July 2010, members of Uttlesford Voices, the citizens' panel were asked to indicate their views on open space provision in the district, including indoor and outdoor sports facilities. 289 responses were received and the key findings are summarised below.

- 2.7 *Quantity of open space:* Respondents were asked their views on the quantity of provision of open space:

	No.		No.		No.		No.		No.
Parks and gardens	26		175		23		44		21
Natural areas	25		164		38		48		9
Amenity green space	26		163		35		41		19
Children's play areas	18		151		45		46		27
Allotments	13		76		43		96		59
Outdoor sports facilities	17		102		39		85		43

- 2.8 *Quality of open space:* Respondents were asked their views on the quality of provision of open space:

<i>Open space type</i>	<i>Very good</i>		<i>Good</i>		<i>Average</i>		<i>Poor</i>		<i>Very poor</i>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Parks and gardens	54	19.2	115	40.9	77	27.4	24	8.5	11	3.9
Natural areas	52	18.4	129	45.6	79	27.9	17	6.0	6	2.1
Amenity green space	29	10.3	117	41.5	102	36.2	27	9.6	7	2.5
Children's play areas	33	11.7	101	35.8	108	38.3	34	12.1	6	2.1
Allotments	8	3.0	66	25.1	109	41.4	58	22.1	22	8.4
Outdoor sports facilities	13	4.7	75	27.4	113	41.2	57	20.8	16	5.8

- 2.9 *Use of open space:* Respondents were asked how often they use different types of open space:

	<i>Dail</i>		<i>Weekl</i>		<i>Monthl</i>		<i>Less than</i>		<i>Don'</i>	
	No.		No.		No.		No.		No.	
Parks and gardens	25		38		63		70		47	
Natural areas	52		97		54		51		33	
Amenity green space	37		81		37		69		61	
Children's play areas	9		44		29		31		174	
Allotments	4		4		1		4		268	
Outdoor sports facilities	5		34		19		47		178	

2.10 *Travel to open space:* Respondents were asked how they travel to different types of open space:

	No.		No.		No.		No.
Parks and gardens	109		144		10		8
Natural areas	72		200		9		3
Amenity green space	53		192		9		2
Children's play areas	54		147		2		5
Allotments	63		80		7		4
Outdoor sports facilities	108		82		7		7

2.11 *Quantity of indoor facilities:* Respondents were asked their views on the quantity of provision of indoor sports facilities:

	No.		No.		No.		No.
Sports halls	18		159		49		46
Swimming pools	21		146		71		34
Indoor bowls	19		78		46		123
Indoor tennis	10		53		70		129
Health and fitness	17		114		45		89
Squash courts	11		83		49		110

2.12 *Quantity of outdoor facilities:* Respondents were asked their views on the quantity of provision of outdoor sports facilities:

	No.		No.		No.		No.
Grass pitches	26		125		72		52
Synthetic turf pitches	12		38		69		135
Tennis courts	12		112		79		68
Bowling greens	17		107		43		98
Golf courses	28		91		44		85

2.13 *Quality of outdoor facilities:* Respondents were asked their views on the quality of outdoor sports facilities in their area:

		Percentage
Very good	13	4.7%
Good	75	27.4%
Average	113	41.2%
Poor	57	20.8%
Very poor	16	5.8%

- 2.14 *Use of outdoor facilities:* Respondents were asked their views on how often they use outdoor sports facilities in their area:

Daily	5	1.8%
Weekly	34	12.0%
Monthly	19	6.7%
Less than monthly	47	16.6%
Don't use them	178	62.9%

- 2.15 *Mode of transport:* Respondents were asked how they travel to sports facilities:

Car	108	54.8%
Walk	82	41.6%
Cycle	7	3.6%
Public transport	7	3.6%

Local sports clubs survey

- 2.16 A postal and e-mail questionnaire was circulated to 57 sports clubs in the district by Uttlesford District Council in April 2010. 21 responses were received and the material covered by the survey included:

- a) Membership profile.
- b) Views on facilities used.

- 2.17 *Membership profile:* The profile of responding clubs is as follows:

- a) *Overall membership size:* This is as follows:

Number of members	Number	Percentage
1 - 50	8	38.1%
51 - 100	5	23.8%
More than 100	8	38.1%

- b) *Membership trends:* One-third of the clubs reported increased membership over the past three years, one-third has remained static and one-third has experienced a fall in members.
- c) *Waiting lists:* Only one club (4.8%) currently has a waiting list for membership and the rest (95.2%) do not.

- 2.18 *Facilities usage:* Facilities issues were covered as follows:

- a) *Suitability:* Respondents were asked whether the standard of sports provision at their main facility meets the existing and future needs of the club. 15 clubs (71.4%) stated that their needs are fully met, whilst the remaining six (28.6%) identified a range of improvements that are required.
- b) *Condition:* Respondents were asked for their views on the condition of various aspects of the facilities they use:

		Percentage
Very good	28	50.0%
Good	12	21.4%
Average	11	19.6%
Poor	4	7.1%
Very poor	1	1.8%

c) *Quantity:* Respondents were asked for their views on the number of outdoor facilities in Uttlesford and responded as follows:

Facility type	More than enough		About right		Not enough		No opinion	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Rugby pitches	0	0.0%	6	33.3%	6	33.3%	6	33.3%
Cricket pitches	0	0.0%	8	44.4%	5	27.7%	5	27.7%
Football pitches	1	5.6%	7	38.9%	5	27.7%	5	27.7%
Synthetic turf pitches	0	0.0%	2	11.1%	9	50.0%	7	38.9%
Tennis courts	0	0.0%	6	33.3%	6	33.3%	6	33.3%
Bowling greens	1	5.5%	9	50.0%	3	16.7%	6	33.3%

Governing bodies of sport

2.19 An e-mail questionnaire survey was conducted amongst the governing bodies of sport for Essex, whose contact details were provided by Sport England. The material covered by the survey was:

- a) Any relevant strategies or policy documents relating to their sport in the East, Essex and Uttlesford in particular.
- b) Any issues or priorities of particular importance to facilities provision for their sport in Uttlesford.
- c) Details of any current or planned future facilities projects in the district, which should be reflected in the strategy.

2.20 *Swimming:* The response from the Amateur Swimming Association East Region can be summarised as follows:

Issue	Response
Relevant strategies or policies relating to swimming in the East, Essex and Uttlesford in particular.	The ASA's national strategy 'From Policy to Pool - An ASA Policy Document on Swimming pools in England' (2009) emphasises the need for additional pool space to meet increased participation and the need to upgrade ageing facilities to improve financial and environmental sustainability.
Any issues or priorities of particular importance to facilities provision for swimming in Uttlesford.	Over the Uttlesford area there appears to be an estimated deficit of around 38% in water space accessible by all sections of the community. We recognise that there are a number of 'private' pools, these may provide a significant provision for parts of the population, but this does not cover the deficit for schools and the community as a whole. The Great Dunmow Leisure Centre was built in 2003 so should be in good condition and the Lord Butler Centre was built in 1984. The age is not really a concern for the medium and short term but long term some consideration should be given to the Lord Butler centre.
Details of any current or planned future swimming facilities projects in the district, which should be reflected in the strategy.	No current projects.

2.21 *Bowls:* The response from the Essex Bowling Association was as follows:

Issue	Response
Relevant strategies or policies relating to bowls in the East, Essex and Uttlesford in particular.	We have no specific facility strategies for Essex/ Uttlesford District Council area.
Any issues or priorities of particular importance to facilities provision for bowls in Uttlesford.	We have one Indoor Club in the Uttlesford area (Turpins IBC). The area surrounding the District Council is catered for by Havershill, Falcon and Tye Green.
Details of any current or planned future bowls facilities projects in the district, which should be reflected in the strategy.	Whilst the Market Segmentation data for Uttlesford area shows a high percentage of residents in the 'Comfortable Retired Couple' Category, we consider that at present there is adequate provision for Indoor Bowls.

2.22 *Judo:* The response from the British Judo Association East Region can be summarised as follows:

Issue	Response
Relevant strategies or policies relating to judo in the East, Essex and Uttlesford in particular.	British Judo is undertaking a Facility Strategy and whilst our two clubs within the district have been included in that, during the audit they didn't have any facility requirements. Currently West Essex JC has its own dojo and Saffron Walden JC trains out of Dame Bradbury's School, so they are fairly sorted for facilities.
Any issues or priorities of particular importance to facilities provision for judo in Uttlesford.	Being able to be part of any sports leisure centre's activity programmes, for example having provision to run holiday or community activities.
Details of any current or planned future judo facilities projects in the district, which should be reflected in the strategy.	No current projects.

2.23 *Netball:* The response from the Netball Essex can be summarised as follows:

Issue	Response
Relevant strategies or policies relating to netball in the East, Essex and Uttlesford in particular.	We have two developing clubs in this area and looking to build on this.
Any issues or priorities of particular importance to facilities provision for netball in Uttlesford.	The two Clubs are based in Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow. There is a leisure facility at Great Dunmow, which the club uses, Saffron Walden uses a dual use school site.
Details of any current or planned future netball facilities projects in the district, which should be reflected in the strategy.	No current projects.

2.24 *Football:* The response from the Essex Football Association can be summarised as follows:

Issue	Response
Relevant strategies or policies relating to football in the East, Essex and Uttlesford in particular.	<p>Participation rates: The area being predominantly rural does not have high levels of participation which is strange because some of its neighbouring authorities such as East Hertfordshire and Chelmsford have very high levels of participation. We put this down to the majority of villages in the district being on the small side so there are often not the numbers of people to grow larger clubs.</p> <p>Housing growth: We are particularly concerned around the 'growth agenda' and would like to make sure that any additional housing growth includes new pitch development either by the way of new pitches or enhancement of existing football/sport facilities. As some of the larger towns/villages grow we would like consideration to be given to larger multi-pitch sites with improved access. Ideally these would be 4 full size pitches or bigger so that larger youth and adult clubs all be located on one site. Great Notley is a good example in neighbouring Braintree whereby the pitch provision meets the needs of a new development.</p>
Any issues or priorities of particular importance to facilities provision for football in Uttlesford.	<p>Improvements at Parish Council Sites: Dunmow Rhodes is the largest club in Uttlesford yet the town council is not allowing it access to the changing rooms at the Causeway Recreation Ground. The club needs more pitches but is unable to achieve this due to site location and limited support from the TC. Most sites are operated by parish councils in Uttlesford so it is a critical issue that the District Council provides strong leadership to the Town and Parish Councils as an outcome of the strategy. This could involve asking PCs to set aside or propose future recreational land as part of the LDF process especially if Saffron Walden and Dunmow are set to grow.</p>
Details of any current or planned future football facilities projects in the district, which should be reflected in the strategy.	<p>Parish council pitches: A general improvement is needed to the quality of pitches at parish Council sites.</p> <p>Synthetic turf pitches: There is no 'Third Generation' (3G) pitch in Uttlesford. A priority for the Essex FA is a 3G in each LA, although in Uttlesford, a network of small 3G pitches for training might be a more appropriate option probably starting with Saffron Walden and Dunmow. 40m x 25m would be the ideal size but we would not probably invest any of our limited monies in these at this current time.</p> <p>Herbert's Farm: The Essex FA has one priority at the moment at Herbert's Farm in Saffron Walden which is an extension and refurbishment of the pavilion on site.</p>

2.25 *Badminton:* The response from the Badminton England can be summarised as follows:

Relevant strategies or policies relating to netball in the East, Essex and Uttlesford in particular.	We have no specific facility strategies for Essex/ Uttlesford District Council area.
Any issues or priorities of particular importance to facilities provision for Badminton in Uttlesford.	There is relatively little Badminton activity in the district.
Details of any current or planned future netball facilities projects in the district, which should be reflected in the strategy.	No current projects.

Pitch sports clubs survey

2.26 An e-mail questionnaire survey was conducted amongst a sample of 45 pitch sports clubs (football, cricket and rugby) in Uttlesford whose contact details were provided by the governing bodies of the sports. 15 completed returns were received, a 33.3% response rate. The material covered by the survey was as follows:

- Profiles in terms of membership numbers, trends and development aspirations.
- Opinions on the facilities used, including quality, convenience and availability.

2.27 *Club profile:* The profile of responding clubs is as follows:

- Overall membership size:* This is as follows:

<i>Number of members</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1 - 50	7	46.7%
51 - 100	4	26.7%
More than 100	4	26.7%

- Membership composition:* The percentage members of all responding sports clubs in different membership categories are listed below:

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Under 16's	52.9%	4.4%
Aged 16 and above	40.7%	2.0%
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>93.6%</i>	<i>6.4%</i>

- Development plan:* 7 (46.7%) clubs currently have a written development plan and 8 (53.3%) do not.
- Problem issues:* Clubs reported the following current problem issues:

<i>Problem</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Lack of external funding (grants etc.)	12	80.0%
Shortage of volunteer help	11	73.3%
Lack of appropriate local facilities	8	53.3%
Lack of internal funding (subs etc.)	5	33.3%
Access difficulties for members (e.g. lack of public transport)	4	26.7%
Lack of information about local facilities/services	3	20.0%
Limited links/co-operation with other local clubs	2	13.3%
Membership recruitment/retention	1	6.7%
None	0	0.0%

e) *Future plans:* Clubs reported the following future plans:

Plans	Number	Percentage
Expand the range of facilities provided	12	80.0%
Increase the number of members	9	60.0%
Refurbish existing facilities	6	40.0%
Relocation to different premises	3	20.0%
None	0	0.0%

2.28 *Facility use:* The use of local facilities by clubs is summarised below:

- a) *Convenience of location:* 12 clubs (80.0%) say the facilities they use are at their preferred location and 3(20.0%) that they are not.
- b) *Availability of facilities:* 13 (86.7%) clubs say that the facilities they use are always available when needed, 2 (13.3%) that they are mostly available when needed and none (0.0%) that they are sometimes available when needed.
- c) *Quality of facilities:* Views on the quality of facilities are as below:

Element	Good Quality	Acceptable Quality	Poor Quality
Firmness of surface	26.7%	26.7%	46.7%
Grip underfoot	26.7%	26.7%	46.7%
Bounce of ball on pitch	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
Flatness of pitch	20.0%	26.7%	53.3%
Length of grass	26.7%	46.7%	26.7%
Grass cover	26.7%	26.6%	46.7%
Posts and sockets	53.3%	46.7%	0.0%
Line markings	46.7%	33.3%	20.0%
Free from litter, dog fouling etc.	26.7%	53.3%	20.0%
Changing facilities	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%
Showers - clean, hot, plenty of water	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%
Parking	53.3%	0.0%	46.7%
Value for money	46.7%	26.7%	26.7%
Overall quality of pitch	26.7%	26.7%	26.7%

- d) *Problems of non-availability:* The problems caused by non-availability to those 12 clubs with limited access are as follows:

Problem	Percentage
Unable to train as frequently as needed	26.7%
Have to play home fixtures elsewhere	20.0%
Unable to increase club membership	20.0%

Schools survey

2.29 An e-mail questionnaire survey was conducted amongst a sample of 25 primary and secondary schools in Uttlesford. 10 completed returns were received, from four secondary and six primary schools, a 40.0% response rate. The material covered by the survey was as follows:

- a) Details of current provision and aspirations for future improvements.
- b) The basis and amount of community use.
- c) The condition of facilities.
- d) Attitudes to new or enhanced community use in the future.

2.30 *Existing provision and community use:* The table below summarises the sports facilities that are currently provided by the schools that responded and those where there is currently external community use.

Facility type	Currently provide	Available for Community use
Sports hall	2	2
Indoor swimming pool	0	0
Other indoor hall or gymnasium	6	4
Dance studio	0	0
Synthetic turf pitch	1	1
Multi-use games area	0	0
Squash court(s)	0	0
Tennis courts	0	0
Adult football pitches	3	3
Junior football pitches	5	4
Mni-soccer pitches	0	0
Cricket pitches	3	0
Rugby pitches	2	1

2.31 *The basis of current community use:* The basis of community use is as follows:

Basis of use	Number
Lettings only (e.g. 'block bookings' by clubs)	6
Managed use (e.g. 'pay and play' by individuals)	3

2.32 *Future community use:* Attitudes to additional community use of school facilities in the future were as follows:

- Additional use:* 70% of respondents indicated that they would consider additional community use in the future and 30.0% that they would not.
- Daytime community use:* None of the schools indicated that they would consider accommodating daytime community use in the future.
- Factors inhibiting external use:* The following factors were stipulated:

Factor	%
Access to the school and its grounds is problematic at evenings/weekends	30%
The additional wear and tear on the facilities might compromise school use	30%
The costs of accommodating external users would be higher than the income	30%

- Attitudes to future community use:* 33.3% of respondents indicated that if the above problems could be overcome, they would be prepared to allow their facilities to be used by the community in the future.

Leisure centre users' survey

2.33 *Introduction:* A self-completion questionnaire was administered to a random sample of 75 users of the Lord Butler Leisure Centre, 63 users of the Dunmow Leisure Centre and 50 users of the Mountfitchet Romeera Leisure Centre.

2.34 The survey covered usage patterns, perceptions of the adequacy of provision and desired improvements.

2.35 *Frequency of use:* This was recorded as follows:

Frequency	Lord Butler		Dunmow		Mountfitchet	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Every day	18	24.0	4	6.3	7	14.0
Less than daily but more than weekly	37	49.3	49	77.8	26	52.0
Weekly	16	21.3	8	12.7	14	28.0
Fortnightly	2	2.7	1	1.6	2	4.0

Monthly	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Less than monthly	2	2.7	1	1.6	1	2.0

2.36 *Travel time:* This was recorded as follows:

<i>Time</i>	<i>Lord Butler</i>		<i>Dunmow</i>		<i>Mountfitchet</i>	
	No.	%	No.	No.	%	No.
Less than 5 minutes	22	29.3	29	46.1	19	38.0
5 - 10 minutes	29	38.7	20	31.7	15	30.0
11 - 15 minutes	13	17.3	7	11.1	8	16.0
16 - 20 minutes	7	9.3	5	7.9	5	10.0
More than 20 minutes	4	5.3	2	3.2	3	6.0

2.37 *Travel mode:* This was recorded as follows:

<i>Mode of transport</i>	<i>Lord Butler</i>		<i>Dunmow</i>		<i>Mountfitchet</i>	
	No.	%	No.	No.	%	No.
Car	62	82.7	59	93.6	39	78.0
Team coach/minibus	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Public bus	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Train	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Bicycle	2	2.7	1	1.6	1	2.0
Walk	11	14.7	3	4.8	10	20.0

2.38 *Views on the number of local facilities:* Of those who expressed an opinion, the collective responses were as follows:

<i>Facility type</i>	<i>Too many</i>		<i>About right</i>		<i>Too few</i>	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sports halls	1	0.7	101	66.0	51	33.3
Swimming pools	0	0.0	90	53.3	79	46.7
Health and fitness	4	2.6	114	73.5	37	23.9
Synthetic turf pitches	0	0.0	36	40.9	52	59.1
Tennis courts	1	0.9	66	52.4	59	46.8
Bowls greens	0	0.0	69	79.3	18	20.7
Squash courts	0	0.0	74	64.9	40	35.1
Golf courses	8	7.1	63	56.3	41	36.6
Grass pitches	0	0.0	73	65.2	39	34.8
Village/community halls	1	0.7	110	79.7	37	26.8

The implications for open space, sport and recreation provision

2.39 The analysis of local need and demand for sport and recreation provision in Uttlesford has highlighted a number of key issues that will be strongly reflected in this study.

- The 2006 Audit revealed that over 50% of respondents considered the level of green space provision within the district to be about right, with a further 22% considering the level to be 'plenty'.
- The Citizen's Panel survey revealed that a significant proportion of the respondents feel that the amount of provision of different types of open space within the District is about right. For Parks and gardens, Natural areas and Amenity green space the majority of respondents considered the quality of the provision to be good. For Children's play areas, Allotments and Outdoor sports facilities the quality was generally considered to be average.
- The Citizen's Panel survey also revealed that a significant proportion of the respondents feel that there are too few of several types of sports facility locally, in particular swimming pools, indoor and outdoor tennis courts, synthetic turf pitches and grass pitches.

- d) The Council's 2010 survey of local sports clubs revealed high levels of satisfaction with local sports facilities, with 71.4% of respondents saying that their needs are fully met. Conversely, 50% of respondents believe that there are too few synthetic turf pitches locally.
- e) Most of the governing bodies of sport have no policies or strategic priorities relating to facility provision in the Uttlesford area, although swimming and football have identified some deficiencies.
- f) Respondents to the pitch sports clubs survey were generally critical of the quality of pitch provision in Uttlesford.
- g) Schools are already major providers of sports facilities with community use in Uttlesford and several who do not currently offer external access to their facilities would consider doing so in the future.
- h) The leisure centre users survey showed patterns of very regular use (weekly or more frequently) by facility users. As with some other local surveys, local levels of provision for swimming and tennis courts were judged to be insufficient.

Consultation

- 2.40 Following production of a draft version of this report, copies were circulated to Uttlesford District Council, Sport England and the governing bodies of sport that responded to the original consultation stage to verify the accuracy of the document and obtain feedback. Appendix 4 was also circulated to all Parish and Town Councils by Uttlesford District Council for comment on the sites included and the comments made. Where appropriate all comments were incorporated into the final report.