

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

## STAGE E UPDATE

**MARCH 2024**

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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Cert Num: 6543-QMS-001

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## ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
BAFA	British American Football Association
BDC	Blaby District Council
BC	Bowls Club
CC	Cricket Club
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
GMPF	Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund
HC	Hockey Club
LCC	Leicestershire County Council
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
LMS	Last Man Stands
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NTP	Non turf pitch
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
S106	Section 106
TGR	Team Generation Rate
TC	Tennis Club
U	Under

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

### 1.1: Introduction

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) was appointed by Blaby District Council (BDC) to update its 2020 Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). The updated PPS will help inform the preparation of the new Local Plan, planning for growth up to 2041. This work is part of a dual commission in which the Council is also developing an Indoor Built Facilities Strategy.

The document includes updates to the overall supply and demand analyses for each of the sports, which were included in the original Assessment Report. It will also renew relevant sections from the Strategy & Action Plan document including recommendations, housing scenarios and site by site action plan.

Information has been provided by the Council and the relevant National Governing Bodies (NGBs) for each sport regarding alterations in supply, quality (including ancillary provision) and affiliation data since the previous study.

Conducting annual reviews will help to keep the PPS live and up to date. This includes an update of the supply and demand data which is within this document (known as the Stage E process within the PPS guidance). There will come a point where the Steering Group will conclude that there have been significant changes to a sport or Study Area/Sub Area that require a full refresh of the Playing Pitch Strategy, or when the core data has aged beyond five years since its original capture. The Steering Group should scope the extent of the work (Stage A of the PPS Guidance). The refresh will involve following all stages and steps of Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance.

### 1.2: Local context

#### ***Blaby District Plan 2021-2024***

The District Plan's vision is to ensure that Blaby has thriving and vibrant communities where people are happy to live, work and visit. To achieve this vision, the Council has a number of priorities set out under the following themes:

Themes	Priorities
A Place to Live	Deliver the Climate Change Strategy and champion the Green Agenda. Deliver the right housing in the right places. Work in partnership to keep our communities safe and healthy. Help people to help themselves and live independently. Deliver services which are 'digital by choice'.
A Place to Work	Support businesses in the District, to encourage investment and growth and respond to evolving challenges that they may face. Work with partners to deliver accessible, local employment and training opportunities. Promote a healthy workforce and workplaces across Blaby District.
A Place to Visit	Promote Blaby District as a tourism destination. Continue to promote and focus on our ambitions for Walk / Ride Blaby District. Provide desirable, accessible green spaces for visitors and communities.

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To create healthy communities, the Authority is committed to maintaining its two leisure centres to the highest quality, support health partners to provide a holistic and preventative joined up service to residents and promote and deliver health and physical activity programmes.

### ***Blaby Local Plan***

The present Local Plan comprises the Core Strategy (adopted 2013) and Delivery Development Plan Document (adopted 2019). A new plan is being developed. The new Local Plan will set out a blueprint for how the district will grow and change over the next 15 years.

### ***Leicestershire County Council: Delivering good health and prevention services 2022-2027***

The County Council's health strategy ambition is to improve the health and wellbeing of all residents and the broader County Council prevention 'offer'. Its stated aim is to protect and improve the health and quality of life of everyone in Leicestershire. To do this it will:

- ◀ Build on strengths of people in its communities - building a network of partners to develop asset-based, community centred approaches.
- ◀ Promote healthy living and healthy places- working with local authorities and partners to address the wider issues that affect health (e.g. housing, built environments, etc).
- ◀ Protect communities and individuals from harm - focusing on tobacco control and smoking cessation, reducing smoking rates and the availability of illegal tobacco.
- ◀ Provide services that meet community needs- commissioning high quality and safe services that are linked with key services in the community.
- ◀ Work in partnership to transform how the County Council deliver services - advocating for prevention with health and care partners at system, place and neighbourhood level.

### ***Active Together***

Active Together is a county wide initiative for Leicestershire which has the aim to make sport and physical activity not only more accessible but part of everyday life. Active Together is one of 43 active partnerships in England. They work with public and local partners to transform lives through sport and physical activity. It has identified the following three priorities to build more active communities across the county in the 'Physical Activity Framework 2023-2024':

- ◀ Inspire – Encouraging young people to engage, participate & learn through fun sport & physical activity opportunities that interest and excite them, developing a positive and meaningful relationship with movement and physical activity, acquiring lifelong learning and promoting social & emotional wellbeing.
- ◀ Develop – Giving young people opportunities to learn & grow key skills such as confidence, self-belief & determination, as well as improving their physiological & psychological skills in a fun, safe, supportive environment that has key values at its core & engenders a lifelong love of movement.
- ◀ Excel – Providing opportunities for young people who aspire towards further progression & success in sport & physical activity, either as an individual or as part of a team, through competition structures, talent pathways & performance programmes.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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## ***A healthier you – Leicestershire County Council***

Leicestershire County Council offers support and advice on four health related issues:

- ◀ Reach and maintain a healthy weight.
- ◀ Stopping smoking.
- ◀ Get active.
- ◀ First contact plus (information about a range of services all in one place).

## ***Leicestershire 2022 - 2025 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)***

JSNA's enable partners to better understand present and future public health and wellbeing requirements. They are based on collaboration between local authorities, clinical care commissioning groups (CCGs) and other partners. BDC is covered by the County 2022-2025 JSNA.

JSNAs analyse the health needs of populations with the purpose of improving community health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities. It should be viewed as a continuous process of strategic assessment and planning with the aim to develop local evidence-based priorities for commissioning which will improve the public's health and reduce inequalities.

The Health and Wellbeing Board of Leicestershire agreed that the 2022-25 JSNA will be published in subject-specific chapters throughout this three-year time period. These chapters will be developed in line with CCG and local authority commissioning cycles. The JSNA chapters will be aligned to Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework and to the needs of commissioners. The outputs of the JSNA will be:

- ◀ Subject-specific chapters of an assessment of current and future health and social care needs in pdf format.
- ◀ Subject specific dashboards summarising data to do with JSNA themes.

The BDC area is just one within Leicestershire so reports produced may not present a complete picture due to the contrast between its demographics and the county as a whole.

## ***Climate Change Strategy***

BDC's ambition is for the Council to be Net Zero by 2030, and to support Blaby District to become Net Zero by 2050. It has six key themes:

- ◀ Reducing CO2 emissions.
- ◀ Protecting the environment and enhancing biodiversity.
- ◀ De-carbonising transport and travel.
- ◀ Reducing waste and resource use and moving to a circular economy.
- ◀ Support sustainable communities.
- ◀ Behaviour change and education.

## ***Summary of local policy***

The drive to reduce improve the health and wellbeing of residents in Blaby and the wider county is evident through the commitments pledged in the Blaby District Plan.

The Council has identified its vision to have thriving and vibrant communities where people live, work and visit. Housebuilding will be a key factor in attracting people to live in the area. The District's proximity to Leicester City could be attractive to those who work in the City, as well as those who work in the surrounding rural districts.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

BDC recognises the need for increased physical activity, partnership working and investment in holistic and preventative services. It also has a commitment to reduce carbon emissions and for its assets (including leisure centres) to become Net Zero by 2030.

## **Match equivalent sessions**

Pitches have a limit of how much play they can accommodate over a certain period of time before their quality, and in turn their use, is adversely affected. As the main usage of pitches is likely to be for matches, it is appropriate for the comparable unit to be match equivalent sessions but may for example include training sessions and informal use. One team accessing one whole pitch is considered to use the pitch for 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week based on them playing home and away fixtures on an alternate basis (therefore only requiring access to their home pitch every two weeks).

As a guide, the NGBs for football, cricket, and rugby union have set a standard number of matches that each pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its quality. Given how the sports operate, this is per week for football and rugby union and per season for cricket.

*Table 1.1: Capacity of playing pitches in match equivalent sessions*

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Pitch type</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week
Rugby union	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	4 per season	0 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	60 per season	60 per season

More detailed sport specific capacity guidance is detailed within the relevant sections of this report.

## **Scope**

The scope of the PPS as already mentioned is consistent with that in 2020. This is as follows:

- ◀ Football pitches (including 3G pitches)
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches (including 3G pitches)
- ◀ Hockey pitches (sand/water based AGPs)
- ◀ Other pitch sports as relevant including American football
- ◀ Tennis and netball courts
- ◀ Bowling greens
- ◀ Golf

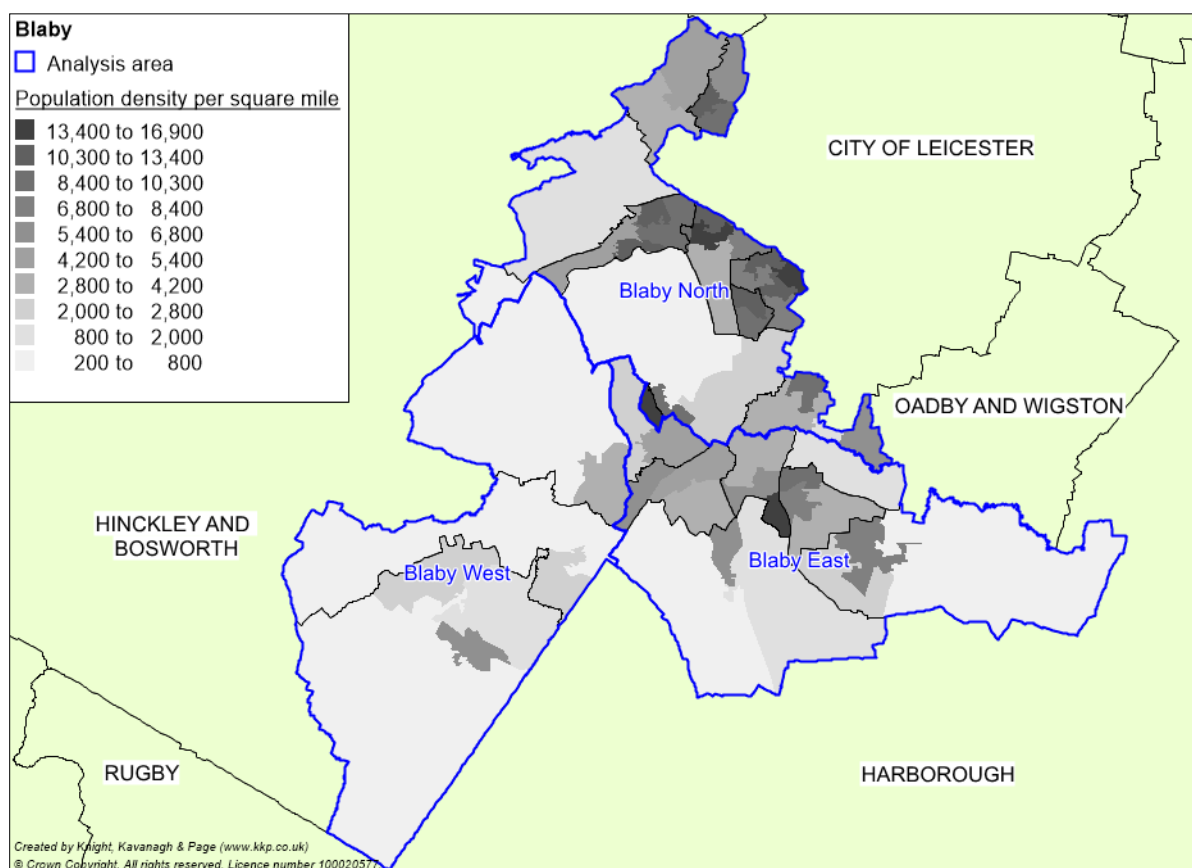
# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## Study area

The study area for the update is consistent with the 2020 study. This is the Blaby authority district boundary which has been sub divided into three unique areas to allow for a more localised assessment of provision and examination of playing pitch supply and demand at a local level. These are:

- ◀ Blaby North
- ◀ Blaby East
- ◀ Blaby West

Figure 1.1: Blaby District analysis area map



## Future demand

Alongside current demand, it is important for a PPS to assess whether the future demand for playing pitches can be met. Using ONS population projections (2018 – 2041) an estimate can be made of the likely future demand for playing pitches.

Other information sources that were used to help identify future demand, especially for non-pitch sports (where team generation rates are not applicable) include:

- ◀ Recent trends in the participation.
- ◀ The nature of the current and likely future population and their propensity to participate.
- ◀ Feedback from clubs on their plans to develop additional teams/attract additional members.
- ◀ Any local and NGB specific sports development targets (e.g. increase in participation).

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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### PART 2: FOOTBALL

#### 2.1: Introduction

The organisation primarily responsible for the development of football in the District is Leicestershire & Rutland County FA. It is also responsible for the administration, in terms of discipline, rules and regulations, cup competitions and representative matches, development of clubs and facilities, volunteers, referees, coaching courses and delivering national football schemes.

This section of the report focuses on the supply and demand for grass football pitches. Part 3 captures supply and demand for third generation pitches (3G pitches) which are the preferred AGP (artificial grass pitch) surface type for football. In future, it is anticipated that there will be a growing demand for the use of 3G pitches for competitive football fixtures, especially to accommodate mini and youth football.

#### ***Local Football Facility Plans (LFFPs)***

To support in delivery of both the current and superseding FA National Games Strategy (NGS), the FA commissioned a nationwide consultancy project. A Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) has been produced for every local authority across England.

The LFFP is strategically aligned to the National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS); a 10-year plan to change the landscape of football facilities in England. The NFFS represents a major funding commitment from the national funding partners (The FA, Premier League, DCMS, Football Foundation) to inform and direct an estimated one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next ten years.

LFFPs will identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. As such, around 90% of all national football investment through the funding partners will be identified via LFFPs.

It is important to recognise that a LFFP is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential investment - it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Consequently, it cannot be used in place of a PPS and is not an accepted evidence base for site change of use or disposal.

The Blaby District LFFP was completed in 2019 and identified 20 potential projects for investment. Since the previous PPS, refurbished changing rooms have been provided at Lutterworth Road whilst proposed new changing rooms at Countesthorpe College and Kirby Muxloe Sports Ground are still progressing. Refurbished changing rooms at Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground are also progressing, with the Football Foundation working with the Council to determine whether developer funds are available to invest in the refurbishment.

#### ***Consultation***

To update the data in this section of the report, consultation has been carried out with Leicestershire FA, the Football Foundation and the Council, as well as the provision of updated affiliation data (2023/24) and PitchPower quality assessment reports.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## 2.2: Supply

The 2020 PPS identified a total of 116 pitches across 43 sites, of which, 107 were available for community use across 43 sites. Using updated supply information provided by Leicestershire & Rutland County FA there has been an increase of 13 pitches across the District. This equates to a total of 129 pitches, of which, 120 are available for community use.

Table 2.1: Summary of grass football pitches available to the community

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Totals	% change
<b>2020</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Blaby East	19	2	15	9	4	<b>49</b>	-
Blaby North	17	2	9	8	6	<b>42</b>	-
Blaby West	5	1	4	2	4	<b>16</b>	-
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>107</b>	
<b>2024</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Blaby East	20	7	12	10	7	<b>56</b>	<b>14%</b>
Blaby North	16	2	9	9	6	<b>42</b>	<b>0%</b>
Blaby West	7	1	6	5	3	<b>22</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>10%</b>
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>% change</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>10%</b>	-

The biggest increase in pitch format is youth 11v11 pitches which have increased by 140% (or seven pitches). This format of football (youth football for 13–16-year-olds) has grown by 21 teams since the 19/20 football season and this is as expected if demand is to be accommodated for.

It should be noted that although there has been an increase in the overall supply of pitches, there has not been an increase in overall supply of playing field land. Pitches have been identified as being marked at sites which previously accommodated pitches, but which fell out of use due to lack of demand. As an example, Meadow Sports Ground and Winston Avenue Sports Ground are identified (through PitchPower data provided by Leicestershire & Rutland CFA) as having an increased number of marked pitches when compared to 19/20 season. A full breakdown of pitches is available in Table 2.8

In accordance with the FA Youth Review, U17 and U18 teams can play on adult pitches. The FA's recommended pitch size for adult football is 100x64 metres.

Table 2.2: FA recommended grass/3G pitch sizes

Age group	Playing format	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres excluding run offs)	Recommended pitch dimensions (metres including run offs)
Mini-Soccer U7/U8	5v5	37x27	43x33
Mini-Soccer U9/U10	7v7	55x37	61x43
Youth U11/U12	9v9	73x46	79x52
Youth U13/U14	11v11	82x50	88x56
Youth U15/U16	11v11	91x55	97x61
Youth U17/U18	11v11	100x64	106x70
Over 18/Adult	11v11	100x64	106x70

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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## ***Pitch quality***

The quality of football pitches across the District was originally assessed in 2020 via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the FA) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (50-80%), Poor (<50%). These quality ratings have been reviewed via consultation with Leicestershire & Rutland CFA, the Football Foundation and the utilisation of PitchPower reports.

Pitch quality primarily influences the carrying capacity of a site; often pitches lack the drainage and maintenance necessary to sustain levels of use. Pitches that receive little to no ongoing repair or post-season remedial work are likely to be assessed as poor, therefore limiting the number of games they can accommodate each week without it having a detrimental effect on quality.

Conversely, well maintained pitches that are tended to regularly are likely to be of a higher standard and capable of taking a number of matches without a significant reduction in surface quality.

The table below compares the quality of pitches that are available for community use in Blaby from the 2020 PPS to now (23/24 football season). Pitch information has been updated using information provided by Leicestershire & Rutland CFA (in the form of PitchPower assessments) for the following sites:

- ◀ Blaby & Whetstone Sports Youth Club
- ◀ Cosby Recreation Ground
- ◀ Holmes Park
- ◀ Huncote Sports and Social Club
- ◀ Leicester Road Recreation Ground
- ◀ Lutterworth Road
- ◀ Saffron Dynamo FC
- ◀ Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Field
- ◀ Thurlaston FC
- ◀ Winston Avenue Sports Ground

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Pitch quality information for the remaining sites is consistent with the 2020 position.

Table 2.3: Pitch quality assessments (community use pitches)

Analysis area	Adult pitches			Youth pitches			Mini pitches		
	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor	Good	Standard	Poor
<b>2020</b>									
Blaby East	1	9	9	-	9	8	1	7	5
Blaby North	-	4	13	-	6	5	-	6	8
Blaby West	-	2	3	-	4	1	-	-	6
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2023</b>									
Blaby East	6	11	3	10	4	5	11	3	3
Blaby North	-	3	13	-	6	5	-	7	8
Blaby West	4	-	3	5	2	-	6	1	1
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Change</b>	<b>900%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>1600%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>37%</b>

As the table above highlights, there has been a significant improvement in pitch quality since the 2020 PPS and a decrease in the number of standard and poor quality pitches. Whilst the supply of good quality pitches in percentile terms looks significant, it translates to improvements at strategic community club sites as showed below.

Table 2.4: PitchPower report feedback

Site ID	Site name	2020 PPS audit score	PitchPower score
1	Blaby & Whetstone Sports Youth Club	Standard/Poor	Good/Advance
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Poor	Good/Advance
23	Holmes Park	Good	Poor/Basic
27	Huncote Sports and Social Club	Poor	Poor/Basic
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Poor	Good/Advance
36	Lutterworth Road	Standard	Good/Advance
37	Meadow Sports Ground	Standard	Poor/Good
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Standard	Good/Advance
51	Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Field	Standard	Good/Advance
55	Thurlaston FC	Poor	Good/Advance
58	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Poor	Good/Advance

All the sites listed above are working with the Football Foundation and are in receipt of Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GPMF) investment. This will see the quality of these sites be sustained/improved over the next several years.

### **Football Foundation Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GPMF)<sup>1</sup>**

With quality of grass pitches becoming one of the biggest influences on participation in football, the FA has made it a priority to work towards improving quality of grass pitches across the country. This has resulted in the creation of the GPMF. As part of this, grass pitches identified as having quality issues undergo a pitch inspection from a member of the GMA (formerly Institute of Groundsmanship).

<sup>1</sup> <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/grant/grass-pitch-maintenance-fund>

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The GPMF can be utilised by grassroots football clubs, leagues and other eligible, organisations with the simple aim of improving the quality of grass pitches. The key principles behind the service are to provide members of the programme with advice/practical solutions via a PitchPower site assessment and subsequent Assessment Report which will also identify the key enhanced maintenance works required along with machinery requirements.

Following a report, clubs can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches. Once a PitchPower grass pitch assessment report has been produced for the site, eligible organisations can then apply for grant funding support through the GPMF, a fund offering six-year tapered grants to help enhance or sustain the quality of their grass pitches. The fund is a key part of the Football Foundation's Grass Pitch Improvement Programme - an ambition to deliver 20,000 good quality grass pitches by 2030. If a site is categorised as 'poor' or 'basic' then clubs can apply for funding to enhance pitch quality, whilst clubs with good quality pitches can also apply for a lower level of funding to sustain quality.

All applicants must have the required security of tenure and have received a PitchPower Assessment Report, with the fund currently open to football clubs (excluding pitches used for National League System play), leagues, County FAs, community organisations and charities. In 2023 the fund has now been opened to education organisations and town/parish councils as eligible applicants. Local authorities are not currently eligible applicants, however, eligible organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have permission of the landowner via service level agreement.

### ***Pitch improvement***

The FA has a Pitch Improvement Programme aimed at improving the standard of grass pitches across the Country. For provision included in the programme, clubs can utilise the services of the FF's PitchPower web app to carry out an on-site assessment of their pitches. This then provides the Grounds Management Association (GMA) with the detail needed to create a personalised, informative report to advise on how improvements can be made. Clubs then receive bespoke advice and support to help with any future actions, funding applications and equipment, with clubs getting access to discounted rates for machinery and consumables through local partnerships.

The web app is open to access by all providers, including clubs, schools and local authorities. Following a PitchPower report, organisations can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches. Applicants are also required to submit a PitchPower assessment for each of their pitches as a condition of any grant funding application for FF grass pitch investment, such as the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund.

PitchPower is less restricted by the seasonal window of in-season play than the non-technical assessments within the PPS guidance, instead being able to be undertaken within a 10-month period, with assessments completed and submitted within one of three windows: September - October, November – March or April – June. Organisations receiving FF funding to improve their grass pitches must carry out two assessments a year, with at least one in the mandatory November – March window.

As well as the completion of other supporting information such as detail of volunteer training and what maintenance equipment is available, the assessment requires the taking of images and a single soil sample at each assessment site. There are three assessment sites for adult and youth pitches at each goal area and the centre circle, whilst for mini pitches there are two sites at the centre circle and one goal area.

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The PitchPower assessments use a new five step Performance Quality Standard (PQS) rating system developed by the GMA, with the FF and Sport England agreeing alignment with the capacity guidance within the existing PPS Guidance. This alignment is shown in the table below.

Table 2.5: Agreed equivalent PPS quality rating for PQS ratings.

PQS rating	PPS quality rating
Poor	Poor
Basic	Standard
Good	Good
Advanced	Good
High	Good

## **Ancillary facilities**

Broadly speaking the quality of ancillary facilities accompanying grass football pitches has not altered since 2020. However, there has been some progression on specific projects identified in the Blaby LFFP. These are as follows:

- ✦ A new changing pavilion is being progressed at Kirby Muxoe Sports Ground.
- ✦ A refurbishment of changing provision at Kirby Muxoe Recreation Ground has begun.
- ✦ Countesthorpe Leysland Community College is progressing with plans to develop a new changing pavilion on-site to support its planned 3G pitch development.
- ✦ Planning permission has been granted for a new clubhouse and changing room facility at Thurlaston FC.
- ✦ The refurbishment of the changing pavilion at Lutterworth Road (supporting Whetstone Juniors).

## **Security of tenure**

Tenure arrangements in the District are generally secure for clubs. Nearly all clubs either have long term lease arrangements in place or alternatively have long standing rental arrangements in place with parish or town councils. Where pitches are operated by parish or town councils there is a guarantee that pitches will continue to be provided over the next three years, and therefore these are secure. An exception to this is found at schools and academies that state their own policies and are more likely to restrict levels of community use.

As of 2024, the only thing of note which has changed since the 2020 PPS is that Whetstone Juniors FC is exploring options to extend its lease on its site at Lutterworth Road.

## **Football pyramid demand**

The football pyramid is a series of interconnected leagues for adult men's football clubs in England. It sits below the football league (the National League) and comprises six steps, with various leagues at each level and more leagues lower down the pyramid than at the top. These are then supported by regional feeder leagues, which were previously at Step 7 of the pyramid but are now not included.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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Clubs playing within the NLS must adhere to Stadium Accreditation<sup>2</sup> requirements set out by the FA. The higher the level of football being played the higher the requirements. Clubs cannot progress into the league above if the ground grading requirements do not meet the correct specifications. Stadium Accreditation assesses grounds from Grade 1 to 7, which aligns with Step 1 clubs down to Step 6 clubs making the transition from Regional Feeder League. Please refer to the FA website<sup>3</sup> for the full specifications for each.

As of the 23/24 football season, two teams play in the football pyramid. Both Kirby Muxloe FC and Saffron Dynamo FC compete at Step 6.

The system has a hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top. Clubs within the step system must adhere to ground requirements set out by the FA. The higher the level of football being played the more onerous the requirements.

A club cannot progress into the league above if its ground does not meet the correct specifications. Ground grading assesses grounds from A to H, with 'A' being the requirement for Step 1 clubs and H the standard for Step 6 clubs. The general principle for clubs in the football pyramid is that they have to achieve the appropriate grade by March 31<sup>st</sup> of their first season after promotion. This, in effect, allows a short grace period for facilities to be brought up to standard, although it does not apply to clubs being promoted to Step 6 (as they must meet FA requirements from the outset).

### ***Women's National League System***

Correspondingly there is a Women's National League System similar to the adult men's which provide structure to the women's game. This ranges from Tier 1 to Tier 6 with each Tier requiring differing ground grading requirements.

Although women's clubs still need to meet ground requirements set out by the FA these differ from the men's National League System.

Ratings range from grade A to C each with differing minimum requirements. Tier 1 and 2 in the Women's National League System is akin to Tier 3 and 4 of the men's National League System, although not exactly the same. The system is also hierarchical format with promotion and relegation between the levels, allowing even the smallest club the theoretical possibility of rising to the top of the system.

There was one team in the District which competed in the Women's National League System; Oadby & Wigston FC Women. It has, however, folded since the last PPS and as such, there is no women's teams competing with the women's national league system locally.

### **2.3: Demand**

Leicestershire & Rutland County FA provided KKP affiliation data for the 23/24 football season. It identifies a total of 332 community football teams as playing within Blaby. This is an increase from the 247 which were identified in 2020 as shown below.

For the purposes of this assessment teams are only considered which play regularly on grass pitches. On this basis, the total number of teams identified in this report is lesser than the full affiliation number registered which Leicestershire & Rutland FA which is 342.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://premierleaguestadiumfund.co.uk/stadium-accreditation-programme>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.thefa.com/get-involved/player/ground-grading>

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 2.6: Summary of competitive teams currently playing in the District

Analysis area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5	Total
Blaby East	26	36	21	16	12	111
Blaby North	16	24	16	17	17	90
Blaby West	11	9	5	11	10	46
<b>Blaby District (19/20)</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>247</b>
Blaby East	23	54	28	27	17	149
Blaby North	28	31	21	23	18	121
Blaby West	8	11	15	11	17	62
<b>Blaby District (23/24)</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>332</b>
<b>%change</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>34%</b>

As was the case in 2020, youth 11v11 football is the most prominent format of play, whilst mini 5v5 is the least common.

### ***Women's and girls' demand***

The FA currently has a drive to increase women's and girls' participation by 50%. As such, it is imperative that sufficient facilities become suitable for female access, particularly in relation to toilets and appropriate changing facilities.

In Blaby, as of the 23/24 football season there are seven open age female teams and 41 youth teams. There are a further 20 dedicated mini teams, however, for the purpose of this report they are considered mixed gender.

### ***Exported demand/imported***

Exported demand refers to teams that are currently accessing pitches for home fixtures outside of the study area, despite being registered to the District. Likewise, imported demand is demand from neighbouring authorities accessing pitches in the District to play competitive matches. As of the 23/24 season, the CFA states it is not aware of any regular exported demand out of Blaby or likewise, clubs coming into it for match play purposes.

### ***Population increases***

Based on population projections to 2041, Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass football pitches that will arise from forecasted population growth. This is by using the current within each relevant age groups together with current participation levels to establish team generation rates to understand how much growth is required to establish one new team.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 2.7: Team generation rates (2041)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate (TGR)	Population increase (2041)	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior men (16-45)	17,905	49	1:365.41	4,769.69	13
Senior women (16-45)	18,376	4	1:4,594.00	4,000.73	1
Youth boys (12-15)	2,556	74	1:34.54	577.00	18
Youth girls (12-15)	2,314	18	1:128.56	555.23	4
Youth boys (10-11)	1,189	40	1:29.73	349.09	13
Youth girls (10-11)	1,261	13	1:97.00	179.02	1
Mini soccer mixed (8-9)	2,580	57	1:45.26	345.73	8
Mini soccer mixed (6-7)	2,437	46	1:52.98	414.02	8

Application of TGRs forecast that there will be a potential increase of 66 teams spread throughout the District. The highest level of expected increase is for youth boy's football. This equates to 27 match equivalent sessions per week of additional demand.

Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that team generation rates are based exclusively on future population forecasts and do not account for societal factors or changes in the way people may wish to play sport. Similarly, they cannot account for specific targeted development work within certain areas or focused towards certain groups, such as NGB initiatives or coaching within schools. For example, there is a focus on developing female participation within Leicestershire and nationally which, as mentioned previously, is likely to lead to more women's and girls' teams in the future and therefore increase demand for pitches.

## 2.4: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly provide for competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affects the playing experience and people's enjoyment. In extreme circumstances, it can result in the inability of a pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off peak times. As a guide, The FA has set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without it adversely affecting its quality.

The following ratings were used in the District:

Adult pitches		Youth pitches		Mini pitches	
Pitch quality	Matches per week	Pitch quality	Matches per week	Pitch quality	Matches per week
Good	3	Good	4	Good	6
Standard	2	Standard	2	Standard	4
Poor	1	Poor	1	Poor	2

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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Table 2.8 overleaf applies the above pitch ratings against the actual level of weekly play to determine a capacity rating as follows:

<b>Potential capacity</b>	Play is below the level the site could sustain
<b>At capacity</b>	Play matches the level the site can sustain
<b>Overused</b>	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Table 2.8: Football pitch capacity analysis

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity <sup>4</sup> (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
1	Blaby and Whetstone Youth Club	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		1	Good	3.5	3	0.5	-	Pitch overplayed by 0.5 match sessions per week.
1	Blaby and Whetstone Youth Club	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	2	4	2	-	No capacity in the peak period.
2	Blaby Thistly Meadow Primary School	Blaby East	Yes	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(7v7)	1	Good	1	6	5	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	Yes	College	<b>Unsecure</b>	Adult		1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Played to capacity.
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	Yes	College	<b>Unsecure</b>	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Played to capacity.
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	Yes	College	<b>Unsecure</b>	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Played to capacity.
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	Good	1	6	5	1	Actual spare capacity.
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Good	1	6	5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Good	1	4	3	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	2	4	2	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	Yes	College	<b>Unsecure</b>	Adult		3	Standard	4	6	2	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	Yes	College	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	2	8	6	2	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	Yes	College	<b>Unsecure</b>	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	3.5	2	1.5	-	Pitch is overplayed.
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	Yes	College	<b>Unsecure</b>	Youth	(9v9)	3	Standard	3.5	6	2.5	2.5	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Community	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
10	Danemill Primary School	Blaby North	No	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1	2	2	1	Unavailable for community use.
11	Dorothy Avenue Playing Field	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	Poor	2	2	-	-	Played to capacity.
14	Forest East Park	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	2	4	2	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
14	Forest East Park	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Played to capacity.
15	Fossebrook Primary School	Blaby North	No	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Unavailable for community use.
16	Glen Hills Primary School	Blaby North	No	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Unavailable for community use.
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	Poor	4	2	2	-	Pitches are overplayed.
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	0.5	4	3.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity.
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1	4	2.5	-	No capacity in the peak period.
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Standard	0	4	4	2	Actual spare capacity on pitch.
18	Greenfield Primary School	Blaby East	No	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(5v5)	2	Standard	2	8	6	2	Unavailable for community use.
19	Greystoke Primary School	Blaby East	Yes	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Adult		1	Standard	1	2	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure.
23	Holmes Park	Blaby East	Yes	Commercial	Secure	Adult		1	Standard	3	2	1	-	Pitch is overplayed.
25	Huncote Primary School	Blaby West	No	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Unavailable for community use.

<sup>4</sup> Based on pitch quality The FA recommends a maximum number of match equivalent sessions to be accommodate per pitch type. Please refer to Section 2.4 for the full breakdown.

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity <sup>4</sup> (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
27	Huncote Sports And Social Club	Blaby West	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		2	Poor	4	2	2	-	Pitches are overplayed.
27	Huncote Sports And Social Club	Blaby West	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	0	2	2	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
28	King George V Playing Field	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	0	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity.
29	King George's Field	Blaby West	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	0	2	2	1	Actual spare capacity.
30	Kirby Muxloe Primary School	Blaby North	No	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1	2	1	1	Unavailable for community use.
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		3	Poor	3.5	3	0.5	-	Pitches are overplayed.
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	2.5	2	0.5	-	Pitch is overplayed.
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	2	2	-	-	Played to capacity.
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	2.5	1	1.5	-	Pitch is overplayed.
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Blaby North	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	1.5	2	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity.
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Community	Secure	Adult		1	Good	2	3	1	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Community	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Good	1	6	5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Community	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Good	1	6	5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Community	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	1.5	4	2.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
36	Lutterworth Road	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		1	Good	2	3	0.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity.
36	Lutterworth Road	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Good	2	12	10	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
36	Lutterworth Road	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Good	2	12	10	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
36	Lutterworth Road	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	2	Good	5.5	8	2.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
36	Lutterworth Road	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Good	2.5	8	5.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
37	Meadows Sports Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Community	Secure	Adult		6	Standard	5	12	7	4	Actual spare capacity.
37	Meadows Sports Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Community	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Good	1	12	11	1	Actual spare capacity.
37	Meadows Sports Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Community	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Played to capacity.
38	Mossdale Meadows	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		2	Poor	4	2	2	-	Pitch is overplayed.
38	Mossdale Meadows	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Poor	0	4	4	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
38	Mossdale Meadows	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Poor	0	4	4	2	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
38	Mossdale Meadows	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	2	1	1	-	Pitch overplayed.
39	Northfield Park	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Played to capacity.
40	Oakfield Park	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	3.5	1	2.5	-	Pitch overplayed.
40	Oakfield Park	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	1	4	4	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
40	Oakfield Park	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Poor	2	2	-	-	Played to capacity.
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	-	Pitch overplayed
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	0	4	4	1	Actual spare capacity.
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Played to capacity.
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		1	Good	2	3	1	-	Stadia pitch. Protected use.

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Pitch size	No. of pitches	Quality rating	Current play (match sessions)	Site capacity <sup>4</sup> (match sessions)	Overused, at capacity or spare capacity	Spare capacity in peak period	Comments
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Good	0.5	6	5.5	0.5	Actual spare capacity.
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Good	5	4	1	-	Pitch overplayed.
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Blaby East	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	3.5	4	0.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
45	Sapcote Recreation Ground	Blaby West	Yes	Community	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	-	Pitch overplayed.
46	Shakespeare Park	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Poor	1.5	2	0.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
46	Shakespeare Park	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Poor	2	2	-	-	Played to capacity.
46	Shakespeare Park	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
48	Southey Close	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Pitch overplayed.
50	Stafford Leys Primary School	Blaby North	Yes	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	4	4	-	-	Played to capacity.
51	Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Fields	Blaby West	Yes	Community	Secure	Adult		2	Good	4.5	6	3.5		Played to capacity at peak time.
51	Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Fields	Blaby West	Yes	Community	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Good	3.5	8	4.5		Played to capacity at peak time.
52	The Pastures Primary School	Blaby East	No	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Unavailable for community use.
53	The Pavilion Leisure Centre	Blaby West	Yes	Commercial	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Standard	0.5	2	1.5	1	Actual spare capacity.
54	Thorpe Astley Community Centre	Blaby North	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1	1	-	-	Played to capacity.
55	Thurlaston Football Club	Blaby West	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Adult		2	Good	1	6	5	1	Actual spare capacity.
55	Thurlaston Football Club	Blaby West	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	1	Good	1.5	6	4.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
55	Thurlaston Football Club	Blaby West	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	1	Good	1	6	5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
55	Thurlaston Football Club	Blaby West	Yes	Sport Club	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Good	1.5	4	2.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Adult		1	Poor	1.5	1	0.5	-	Pitch overplayed.
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	3	Poor	0	6	6	6	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
60	Willoughby Road Playing Field	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(11v11)	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
60	Willoughby Road Playing Field	Blaby East	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	1	Poor	0	1	1	1	Spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.
61	Winstanley Community College	Blaby North	Yes	College	<b>Unsecure</b>	Adult		2	Standard	4	4	-	-	Played to capacity.
61	Winstanley Community College	Blaby North	Yes	College	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	3.5	4	0.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
61	Winstanley Community College	Blaby North	Yes	College	<b>Unsecure</b>	Youth	(9v9)	1	Standard	2	2	-	-	Played to capacity.
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Blaby West	Yes	Council	Secure	Youth	(9v9)	2	Good	3	8	5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Blaby West	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(7v7)	2	Good	4.5	12	7.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Blaby West	Yes	Council	Secure	Mini	(5v5)	2	Good	4	12	8	-	Played to capacity at peak time.
72	New Lubbethorpe Primary School	Blaby East	No	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(5v5)	1	Standard	1	4	3	1	Unavailable for community use.
78	Croft Primary School	Blaby West	Yes	School	<b>Unsecure</b>	Mini	(7v7)	1	Standard	3.5	4	0.5	-	Played to capacity at peak time.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## Actual spare capacity

The table below identifies actual spare capacity by site and pitch. It totals 19 match equivalent sessions per week and is identified across 24 pitches on 15 sites.

Table 2.9: Actual (peak time) spare capacity site by site

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match equivalent sessions)
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Adult	2	1
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Blaby North	Youth 9v9	2	2
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Blaby North	Mini 5v5	1	0.5
28	King George V Playing Field	Blaby North	Mini 7v7	1	1
29	King George's Field	Blaby West	Youth 9v9	1	1
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Blaby North	Youth 9v9	1	0.5
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Adult	1	1
36	Lutterworth Road	Blaby East	Adult	1	0.5
37	Meadows Sports Ground	Blaby East	Adult	6	4
37	Meadows Sports Ground	Blaby East	Mini 7v7	2	1
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Mini 5v5	1	1
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Blaby East	Mini 5v5	1	0.5
53	The Pavilion Leisure Centre	Blaby West	Youth 11v11	1	1
55	Thurlaston Football Club	Blaby West	Adult	2	1

Table 2.10: Spare capacity by analysis area

Actual spare capacity (match sessions per week)					
Analysis Area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Blaby East	6.5	-	-	1	0.5
Blaby North	-	-	2.5	1	1.5
Blaby West	1	1	1	-	-
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

### Overplay

The table below identifies overplay by site and pitch. It totals 17 match equivalent sessions per week and is identified across 20 pitches on 15 sites.

Table 2.11: Summary of overplay

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating (match sessions)
1	Blaby and Whetstone Youth Club	Blaby West	Adult	1	0.5
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	Youth 11v11	1	1.5
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Blaby North	Adult	2	2
23	Holmes Park	Blaby East	Adult	1	1
27	Huncote Sports And Social Club	Blaby West	Adult	2	2
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Blaby North	Adult	3	0.5
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Blaby North	Mini 5v5	1	0.5
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Blaby North	Youth 9v9	1	1.5
38	Mossdale Meadows	Blaby North	Adult	2	2
38	Mossdale Meadows	Blaby North	Youth 9v9	1	1
40	Oakfield Park	Blaby East	Adult	1	2.5
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Adult	1	0.5
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Blaby East	Youth 11v11	1	1
45	Sapcote Recreation Ground	Blaby West	Adult	1	0.5
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Adult	1	0.5

A breakdown of overplay by analysis area and pitch type is shown in the table below. 68% of all overplay is identified as being on adult pitch formats. There are no mini 7v7 pitches identified as being overplayed.

Table 2.12: Overplay summary by analysis area

Actual spare capacity (match sessions per week)					
Analysis Area	Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
Blaby East	4	2.5	-	-	-
Blaby North	5	-	2.5	-	0.5
Blaby West	3	-	-	-	-
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0.5</b>

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

### 2.5: Supply and demand analysis (23/24 football season)

Having considered supply and demand, the tables below identify current demand (i.e. spare capacity taking away overplay) in each of the analysis areas for each pitch type, based on match equivalent sessions.

Total future demand in the District accounts for ONS forecasts to 2041.

#### **Adult pitch analysis**

Table 2.13: Supply and demand balance of adult pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>5</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Blaby East	6.5	4	2.5	-	6
Blaby North	-	5	5	-	7
Blaby West	1	3	2	-	3
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11.5</b>

The table above highlights that there is an insufficient supply of adult pitches in the District both now and in the future. Future demand is based on a broad district position.

#### **Youth 11v11 pitch analysis**

Table 2.14: Supply and demand balance of youth 11v11 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>6</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Blaby East	1	2.5	1.5	-	1.5
Blaby North	-	-	-	-	-
Blaby West	1	-	1	-	1
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12.5</b>

The table above highlights that there is an insufficient supply of youth 11v11 pitches in the District both now and in the future. The current shortfall is minor but future demand does highly exacerbate that position.

#### **Youth 9v9 pitch analysis**

The table above shows that on a District wide level there is spare capacity available. This is however only specific to Blaby West and the future demand position is likely to create small shortfalls district wide for this pitch format.

<sup>5</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>6</sup> In match equivalent sessions

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 2.15: Supply and demand balance of youth 9v9 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>7</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Blaby East	-	-	-	-	-
Blaby North	2.5	2.5	-	-	-
Blaby West	1	-	1	-	1
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>

### *Mini 7v7 pitch analysis*

Table 2.16: Supply and demand balance of mini 7v7 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>8</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Blaby East	2.5	-	2.5	-	2.5
Blaby North	1	-	1	-	1
Blaby West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>

The table above shows that there is a sufficient supply of mini 7v7 pitches in the District. No analysis areas show overplay. Anticipated future demand is expected to utilise all available spare capacity and a small district-wide shortfall emerges.

### *Mini 5v5 pitch analysis*

Table 2.17: Supply and demand balance of mini 5v5 pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>9</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
Blaby East	0.5	-	0.5	-	0.5
Blaby North	1	0.5	0.5	-	0.5
Blaby West	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2.5</b>

There is currently a sufficient supply of mini 5v5 pitches in the District to accommodate for current demand. When accounting for future demand, a small shortfall is expected to emerge.

<sup>7</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>8</sup> In match equivalent sessions

<sup>9</sup> In match equivalent sessions

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## 2.6: Conclusion (2024)

Using the supply and demand analysis tables, it is determined that there are current shortfalls on adult and youth 11v11 pitches. All remaining formats have spare capacity. When considering future demand (ONS population forecasts to 2041), shortfalls emerge across all pitch formats.

Table 2.18: Summary of supply and demand in Blaby District

Pitch format	Actual spare capacity <sup>10</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
<b>2023/24 season</b>					
Adult	7.5	12	4.5	7	11.5
Youth 11v11	1	2.5	1.5	11	12.5
Youth 9v9	3.5	2.5	1	7	6
Mini 7v7	2	-	2	4	2
Mini 5v5	2	0.5	1.5	4	2.5
<b>2019/20 season</b>					
Adult	0.5	10.5	10	6	16
Youth 11v11	-	2.5	2.5	11	13.5
Youth 9v9	2	2	-	4	4
Mini 7v7	2	0.5	1.5	2.5	1
Mini 5v5	0.5	-	0.5	3.5	3

When compared to the findings of the 2020 PPS, there have been clear and obvious improvements to the existing the quality of the pitch supply (as evidenced through recent PitchPower scores) which have reduced the identified shortfall and increased the available capacity available to community clubs.

The current picture for the 23/24 season shows that there are shortfalls on adult and youth 11v11 pitches with remaining pitch formats broadly having a small amount of spare capacity. This is an improved position from the 19/20 season with shortfalls reduced and capacity increased, despite a significant increase in demand.

Future demand (ONS forecasts) is realised predict the potential growth of 66 teams district wide. This would result in existing shortfalls to be exacerbated and for modest shortfalls to appear on youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 and 5v5 pitch types.

<sup>10</sup> In match equivalent sessions

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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### **Football – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ There are current shortfalls on adult and youth 11v11 format football pitches. All remaining pitch formats have sufficient capacity.
- ◀ The pitch quality position has improved since the 2020 PPS and therefore shortfalls have reduced, and additional capacity has been created.
- ◀ Future demand (expressed through ONS population forecasts to 2041) exacerbates existing shortfalls on adult and youth 11v11 pitches and creates small shortfalls on all remaining pitch types.

### **Football – supply summary**

- ◀ The 2020 PPS identified a total of 116 pitches across 43 sites of which 107 were available for community use across 43 sites. Using updated pitch information provided by Leicestershire & Rutland County FA there has been an identified increase of 13 pitches across the District. This equates to a total of 129 pitches of which 120 are available for community use.
- ◀ Ancillary provision is generally considered to be okay through the District. Football partners are currently progressing four separate projects which will see provision improved at key community football sites.

### **Football – demand summary**

- ◀ 332 community football teams are situated in Blaby and need access to 3G pitches for midweek training and recreational opportunities. This is an increase from 247 in the 2020 PPS.
- ◀ Future demand (ONS forecasts) to 2041 anticipates the potential growth of 66 teams.

## PART 3: THIRD GENERATION TURF (3G) ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCHES (AGPS)

### 3.1: Introduction

Competitive football can take place on 3G surfaces that have been FIFA or International Matchball Standard tested and approved by the FA for inclusion on the FA pitch register. As such, in addition to training demand, a growing number of 3G pitches are now used for competitive match play, providing that the performance standard meets FIFA quality requirements.

World Rugby produced the 'Performance Specification for artificial grass pitches for rugby', more commonly known as 'Regulation 22', which provides the necessary technical detail to produce pitch systems that are appropriate for rugby union. The artificial surface standards identified in Regulation 22 allows matches to be played on surfaces that meet the required standard, meaning full contact activity, including tackling, rucking, mauling and lineouts, can take place.

Competitive rugby league play and contact practice is permitted to take place on 3G pitches which are deemed by the Rugby Football League (RFL) to meet its Performance Standard. Pitches fall under two categories; community club pitches which require retesting every two years and elite stadia pitches which require an annual retest. Much of the criteria within the RFL performance standard test also forms part of the World Rugby test, meaning World Rugby certified 3G pitches are considered by the RFL to be able to meet rugby league requirements, subject to passing an additional RFL performance standard test.

Many test contractors offer reduced rates through efficiency savings to carry out multiple performance tests in the same session, therefore providers seeking 3G pitch compliancy for a number of sports would be recommended to consider this opportunity. Other sports that are known to use 3G pitches for training and match play include American football and lacrosse.

EH's Artificial Grass Playing Surface Policy (June 2016) advises that 3G pitches should not be used for hockey matches or training and that they can only be used for lower level hockey (introductory level) as a last resort when no sand-based or water-based AGPs are available.

### Consultation

In order to update the data in this section of the report, consultation has been carried out with Leicestershire FA, the Football Foundation and the Council, as well as the provision of updated affiliation data (2023/24) and PitchPower quality assessment reports.

### 3.2: Supply

The recommended dimensions for an 11v11 size 3G artificial grass pitch for football are 100 x 64 metres. This extends to an area of 106 x 70 metres with the recommended minimum three metre run off area included. These dimensions allow for all age group match play to take place including adults, youth under 17/18 and younger age groups via overmarked pitches, e.g., the marking out of two 9v9 pitches for under 11/12s.

If a new pitch is proposed to measure below the recommended dimensions, then justification must be provided for this in relation to the identified needs it will provide for and/or site constraints.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

In doing so, the impacts of a reduced pitch size in meeting current and future needs must be considered, e.g., a pitch not providing the recommended dimensions for adult match play and/or only being able to accommodate one rather than two overmarked 9v9 pitches. This justification needs to be included in the planning application details submitted to the relevant Local Planning Authority for the new pitch.

Unless otherwise stated and justified for an individual pitch, proposals in this PPS for any new 3G artificial grass pitches are based on providing them to the recommended dimensions.

There are a total of three pitches which fully meet Sport England recommended dimensions as set out above. All the pitches are available to the community and are sports lit. This is an increase of one full size pitch since the last PPS with a new pitch provided at Kirby Muxloe Sports Club.

Table 3.1: 11v11 size 3G pitches in the District

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Sports lit?	Size (metres)
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	Yes	Yes	106 x 70
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Blaby North	Yes	Yes	100 x 64
33	Leicester Forest RFC	Blaby North	Yes	Yes	122 x 76

There has also been an increase of one smaller size 3G pitch (Winstanley Community College), meaning there are now seven smaller size 3G pitches servicing the District across six sites. Such pitches are generally not suitable for adult match play but can be used to accommodate youth and mini matches provided they are FA approved, of an adequate size and with adequate run-off areas. More commonly, they are used to accommodate commercial football leagues and social play.

Table 3.2: Additional supply of 3G pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Community use?	Sports lit?	Size (metres)
1	Blaby and Whetstone Youth Club	Blaby East	1	Yes	Yes	34 x 23
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	1	Yes	Yes	35 x 30
23	Holmes Park	Blaby East	1	Yes	Yes	44 x 30
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Blaby East	1	Yes	Yes	61 x 43
53	The Pavilion Leisure Centre	Blaby West	2	Yes	Yes	36 x 20
61	Winstanley Community College	Blaby North	1	Yes	Yes	50 x 35

Just over half (57%) of small sided 3G pitch provision is based in the Blaby East Analysis Area. This is the only provision servicing this analysis area, with no 11v11 size provision located in the area. Likewise, there are two small pitches servicing the Blaby West Analysis Area, with no other 3G pitches available in the analysis area. The remaining pitch is the new small size 3G pitch at Winstanley Community College, which is located in the Blaby North Analysis Area.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## *Future provision*

The Blaby District LFFP (2019) identified four 11v11 size pitch projects and two small sided 3G pitch projects.

- ◀ Countesthorpe Leyland Community College
- ◀ Holmes Park – Leicestershire CFA
- ◀ Lubbesthorpe Leisure Centre Football Hub (two pitches)
- ◀ Winstanley School (7v7)
- ◀ Enderby Leisure Centre (5v5 pens x3)

The small sided 3G pitch at Winstanley School (Winstanley Community College) has now been delivered. At Countesthorpe Leyland Community College, a tender for the 3G pitch has been submitted and accompanying ancillary facilities have been designed with cost estimates sought. At Holmes Park, Stage 1 surveys are complete and flood planning is now underway.

## *FA pitch register*

In order for competitive matches to be played on 3G pitches, the pitch should be FIFA or IMS tested and approved and added to the FA 3G Pitch Register, which can be found at: <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/3g-pitch-register>.

Pitches undergo testing to become a FIFA Quality pitch or a FIFA Quality Pro pitch, with provision commonly constructed, installed and tested in situ to achieve either accreditation. The differences between the accreditations are that FIFA quality pitches are designed to accommodate substantial levels of regular usage, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are more for high level performance, with usage levels therefore more limited to protect the standard. Generally, FIFA Quality pitches can be typically used for 60-85 hours per week, whereas FIFA Quality Pro pitches are able to accommodate 20-30 hours.

To remain accredited, pitches must be re-assessed every three years to ensure that quality has not deteriorated beyond acceptable levels, although this is required annually for clubs using 3G pitches within the football pyramid (steps 1-6).

The table below identifies the position for pitches which are accredited for match play. Three sites are due to have their accreditation expire in May 2024 unless they are retested (of which all are expected to be to be). No other pitch in Blaby is registered for match play.

Table 3.3: 3G pitch certification for match play

Site ID	Site name	Size (metres)	Registered?	Certification expiry
3	Brockington College	106 x 70	FA Approved	31/05/2027
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	100 x 64	FIFA Approved	<b>31/05/2024</b>
33	Leicester Forest RFC	122 x 76	FA Approved	<b>31/05/2024</b>
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	61 x 43	FA Approved	31/05/2026
61	Winstanley School	50 x 35	FA Approved	<b>31/05/2024</b>

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## **World Rugby compliant pitches**

To enable 3G pitches to accommodate competitive rugby union matches, World Rugby has developed the Rugby Turf Performance Specification. This is to ensure that the surfaces can replicate the playing qualities of good quality grass pitches, provide a playing environment that will not increase the risk of injury and are of an adequate durability.

The specification includes a rigorous test programme that assesses ball/surface interaction and player/surface interaction and has been modified to align the standard with that of FIFA. Any 3G pitch used for any form of competitive rugby must comply with this specification and must be tested every two years to retain compliance.

There is one 3G pitch in the District, which is World Rugby compliant, based at Leicester Forest RFC. The RFU reports that there are no current plans to develop new World Rugby compliant provision in the area.

## **Management**

The 3G pitch at Brockington College is managed in-house by the School which has full control of facility access. The pitch at Leicester Forest RFC is managed and operated by the RFU as part of its RFU Rugby 365 terms and conditions of delivery. The pitch at Kirby Muxloe Sports Club is managed by the Club itself.

There are mixed management models for the six small sided 3G pitches in the District. Pitches at Saffron Dynamos FC and Blaby and Whetstone Youth Club are managed by football clubs, the two pitches provided at the Pavilion Leisure Centre are managed commercially, the pitch at Holmes Park is managed by Leicestershire & Rutland County FA and the pitch at Countesthorpe Community College is managed in-house by the School.

## **Availability**

The availability of the 11v11 size pitches is summarised in the table below.

Table 3.4: Summary of 11v11 3G pitch availability

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Availability
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	Reserved for school use until 18:00 during the week. Available to the community from 18:00 until 21:00 Monday to Friday. The pitch is available from 09:00 to 18:00 on Saturdays and Sundays.
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Blaby North	The pitch is available all day relative to community need until 22:00. No community access Tuesday or Saturdays relative to match play requirements for non-league senior men's team.
33	Leicester Forest RFC	Blaby North	The pitch is available for booking through the RFU Rugby 365 website. The pitch is available for use from 09:00 – 21:00 Monday through to Sunday.

For small sided pitches, provision at Holmes Park and at the Pavilion Leisure Centre are generally available from 09:00 – 21:00 throughout the week and the weekends. The pitch at Countesthorpe Community College is available at the same times as Brockington College.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Small sided provision based at football clubs is predominately accessible around club opening hours and therefore, is generally only accessible during peak times for training and match days.

## **Quality**

Depending on use, it is considered that the carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately ten years and it is the age of the surface, combined with maintenance levels, which most commonly affects quality. It is therefore recommended that sinking funds be put into place by providers to enable long-term sustainability, ongoing repairs and future refurbishment beyond this period.

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (60-79%), Poor (<60%). The quality ratings assigned to the sites also consider the user quality ratings gathered from consultation.

The pitch at Brockington College was resurfaced in 2023 and is therefore expected to be in good condition. As previously stated, it is awaiting retesting to be recertified on the FA pitch register.

The pitch at Kirby Muxloe Sports Club was installed in 2020 and is considered to be of good quality whilst the pitch at Leicester Forest RFC was installed in 2018 and remains of an excellent quality.

Table 3.5: Age and quality of 11v11 size 3G pitches

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Year installed	Quality (2020)	Quality (2023)
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	2023	Poor	Good
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Blaby North	2020	N/A	Good
33	Leicester Forest RFC	Blaby North	2018	Good	Good

In terms of the small sided provision in the District, pitches located at Holmes Park and Saffron Dynamo FC are good quality have either developed or resurfaced in the last year. Pitches at the Pavilion Leisure Centre and Countesthorpe Community College are standard quality and there is one poor quality pitch at Blaby & Whetstone Youth Club.

## **Ancillary facilities**

All 11v11 size 3G pitches are accompanied by ancillary facilities that are considered adequate and no issues were raised during consultation or via site assessments.

However, it should be noted that Kirby Muxloe Sports Club is applying to the Football Foundation for an additional changing facility to support both community and first team demand on site.

### **3.3: Demand**

In 2020, both full size pitches were operating at or near capacity. Leicestershire County FA reports that this is the same now in 2024. The new pitch provided at Kirby Muxloe Sports Club is now also at capacity. This is in part, due to it having reduced access due to match play requirements most Tuesdays relative to the performance level of the senior men's club on site which compete at Step 6 level.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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### ***Football training demand***

Getting access to good quality, affordable training facilities is a problem for many clubs throughout the country. In the winter months, midweek training is only possible at floodlit facilities.

Of clubs responding to consultation in 2020, ten reported that they require additional training facilities and specifically mentioned demand for 3G pitches (as listed below). The CFA reports this remains broadly accurate for these same clubs in 2024.

- ◀ Blaby Meadows FC
- ◀ Whetstone Juniors FC
- ◀ Oadby & Wigston FC
- ◀ Thurlaston FC
- ◀ Epworth Forest JFC
- ◀ United Revolution FC
- ◀ Kirby Muxloe FC
- ◀ Croft Juniors FC
- ◀ Braunstone United FC
- ◀ Cosby United FC

Whetstone Juniors FC is known to be exporting demand outside of Blaby into Leicester for training although it is a partner club for the 3G pitch proposal at Countesthorpe Community College and as such this position will resolve itself in the future.

### ***Rugby union demand***

The one existing pitch at Leicester Forest RFC is broadly maximised in peak time periods for rugby union. Leicester Forest RFC has core usage hours of use on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays and on Saturdays and Sundays. Slots are available to other rugby union clubs (or football/other sports if no rugby union demand is apparent) within peak time periods, however, with limited hours.

### **3.4: Supply and demand analysis (football)**

To quantify demand, the FA has established a football training model, which suggests that one 11v11 3G pitch can accommodate 38 affiliated teams (with capacity built in for other forms of demand). This is based on peak time access being Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings (Mondays and Fridays are discounted as it is considered that teams do not want to train in such close proximity to a weekend match, and it also allows for other forms of access such as for commercial leagues and recreational play).

Its aim is that all teams will train at least once per week on a 3G pitch, although it is recognised that nationally some activity may need to be retained on sand-based artificial; grass pitches and smaller sized 3G pitches to ensure their sustainability.

Given the above, with 332 teams currently affiliated to the District there is a need for 8.5 full size 3G pitches (rounded down from 8.73).

As there are currently two 11v11 size pitches at Brockington College and Kirby Muxloe Sports Club servicing football, it is considered that there is a need an additional six 11v11 size pitches in the District to accommodate all affiliated football demand.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

For the purposes of the analysis, the pitch at Leicester Forest RFC has been discounted as its primary function is to service rugby union clubs in the Leicestershire area and therefore midweek peak time slots are mostly unavailable to football clubs.

From a small sided pitch perspective, two pitches are primarily known to offer a basic level of training demand to clubs, these are Saffron Dynamo FC and Winstanley Community College FC. These each account for 0.5 full size pitch equivalent each (or one full size pitch in total). The remaining pitches are discounted.

Based on the above, the current active supply contributing to meeting midweek football training demand equates to three full size pitch equivalents.

This results in a broad district wide shortfall of 5.5 full size pitches.

The table below considers the number of 11v11 size 3G pitches required if every football team was to remain training within the analysis area in which they play.

As can be seen below, it is clear there the highest shortfall of 11v11 size 3G provision is in the Blaby North Analysis Area with a total of 3.5 full size pitch equivalents required to meet midweek football training demand.

Table 3.6: Current demand for 3G pitches in the District (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Current number of teams	3G requirement <sup>11</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches <sup>12</sup>	Potential shortfall
<b>2020</b>				
Blaby East	111	2.92 - <b>3</b>	-	3
Blaby North	90	2.37 - <b>2</b>	1	1
Blaby West	46	1.21 - <b>1</b>	-	1
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2023</b>				
Blaby East	149	3.92 - <b>4</b>	0.5	3.5
Blaby North	121	3.18 - <b>3</b>	2.5	0.5
Blaby West	62	1.63 - <b>1.5</b>	-	1.5
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5.5</b>

It is noted that the total Leicestershire & Rutland FA affiliation teams numbers total 342 teams. This is higher than what is used in this report due to ten teams not regularly accessing grass pitches for play (these consist of a mixture of disability and futsal teams). If these were to be accounted for in the broad 3G need then there would be a total need of nine full size pitches and a current shortfall of six full size pitches (on a district-wide basis).

These teams do not feature in the above modelling in Table 3.6 but should be noted by relevant partners.

<sup>11</sup> Figure rounded down to the nearest whole number.

<sup>12</sup> Full size pitch at Leicester Forest RFC has been discounted from the football analysis as it only services rugby.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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## ***Future demand***

Future demand for community football teams identified in Part 2: Football, identified potential growth equating to 66 potential teams by 2041 on a district-wide basis. With 332 teams identified as existing in Blaby currently and 66 teams potential emerging by 2041, it equates to future team total of 398 teams.

When applying the FA model to this figure, it establishes a potential need of ten full size pitches (rounded down from 10.47 full size pitch equivalents). This equates to a full size shortfall of seven pitches (based on the current supply of provision).

## ***Cross boundary demand***

This report focuses on need from the Blaby District. It does not consider demand from neighbouring authorities which in turn will have their own needs. However, where new developments do occur on the periphery of neighbouring authorities, they may take a proportion of demand from Blaby (or vice versa) to develop a comprehensive programme of use. Need for provision should therefore be reviewed regularly as part of Stage E.

## ***Match play demand***

Improving grass pitch quality is one way to increase the capacity at sites but given the cost of doing such work and the continued maintenance required (and associated costs), alternatives need to be considered that can offer a more sustainable model for the future of football. One substitute to grass pitches is the use of 3G pitches for competitive matches (with another being the use of hybrid pitches), providing that the pitch is FA/FIFA approved, sports lit and available for community use during the peak period.

Since the 2020 PPS, there has been an increase in the role of 3G pitches accommodating football match play. Of the pitches which are registered for match play, KKP estimate that up to 40 teams have access to 3G pitches for match play. This is an increase from the 2020 PPS and is due to pitches becoming available at Winstanley College (11 registered teams accessing the site) and Kirby Muxloe Sports Clubs (28 teams registered to the site – of which a proportion will use the 3G pitch).

## ***Rugby union***

As mentioned previously, there is one World Rugby compliant 3G pitch in the District located at Leicester Forest RFC. The pitch is utilised by the Club and other District based clubs to accommodate both midweek training and demand for competitive matches. The RFU states that this provision currently meets the local need for 3G pitches for rugby union.

## **3.5: Conclusion (2024)**

In conclusion, there is an insufficient supply of 11v11 size 3G pitches to meet current demand based on the FA training model in the District. As such, it is determined that an increase in provision is required, with future provision best placed in the Blaby East and Blaby West analysis areas.

In short, on a district-wide level, there is a current shortfall of 5.5 full size pitches. This is the same when applied by analysis area.

In the future (2041) the shortfall of 5.5 full size pitches increases to seven full size pitches.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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To ensure that current supply and any future supply is of a good enough standard to accommodate demand, providers are encouraged to put sinking funds in place to ensure long-term sustainability. This will allow for re-surfacing to take place when required and will ensure that FA certification remains in place.

For rugby union, the 3G pitch at Leicester Forest RFC is sufficiently accommodating both training and match demand and is therefore considered to be adequate in meeting demand for rugby union.

### **3G – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ There is an insufficient supply of 3G pitches in Blaby to accommodate both current and future demand for football trained, based on the FA training model.
- ◀ For rugby union, the 3G pitch servicing Leicester Forest RFC is sufficient for its and the wider region's needs.

### **3G – supply summary**

- ◀ There are three 11v11 size 3G pitches in Blaby all of which offer community use.
- ◀ There are also seven small sided 3G pitches which also offer community use.
- ◀ An 11v11 size 3G project is progressing at Countesthorpe Community College which will reduce identified shortfalls.
- ◀ All 11v11 and two small sided pitches are FA registered and are accredited for match play purposes.
- ◀ Most 3G provision is good or standard quality. There is one poor quality small sided pitch located at Blaby & Whetstone Youth Club.

### **3G – demand summary**

- ◀ The 3G pitches currently servicing the Blaby are reported to be operating at or close to capacity at peak times, especially during winter months.
- ◀ 332 community football teams are situated in Blaby and need access to 3G pitches for midweek training and recreational opportunities.
- ◀ Future demand (ONS forecasts) to 2041 anticipates the potential growth of 66 teams and 1.5 full size pitches.

### PART 4: CRICKET

#### 4.1: Introduction

The Leicestershire Cricket Board (LCB) is the main governing and representative body for Cricket within Oadby & Wigston. Working closely with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), it is responsible for the management and development of every form of recreational cricket for men, women and children within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston. It is currently working with the ECB on delivering its Strategy, 'Inspiring Generations', which has been live since 2020.

#### ***Country Facilities Strategy***

Leicestershire Cricket is currently undertaking a County Facilities Strategy, one of which, is to be produced by each individual county cricket board across the Country, unique to its geographical area as well as being diverse in its representation. These will be seen as a long-term plan and will involve engagement with key stakeholders, including clubs, leagues, active partnerships, county pitch advisors and Sport England.

To inform the strategies, the ECB has set out guidelines to ensure that the following facilities are considered throughout the development of the strategies:

- ◀ Traditional facilities (pitches, outfield, pavilions, practice areas).
- ◀ Non-traditional facilities (multi-use games areas, tapeball/softball spaces, courts/cages).
- ◀ Indoor facilities (multi use halls, cricket specific halls, match play venues).

The strategies will be used to shape investment decisions and priorities, with the decision-making process clearly explained before a list of priority projects is produced. To inform this process, each strategy will utilise PPS findings, where in place, as a 'high quality' evidence base.

#### ***Consultation***

Consultation was undertaken with both the ECB and LCB to inform this section of the report. It builds on consultation with community clubs which was undertaken in 2020.

Leicestershire Cricket identifies that there has been a range of changes to the local club network since 2020. This is summarised below:

- ◀ Leicestershire Teachers & Mosedale CC has merged with Countesthorpe CC
- ◀ Whetstone CC has merged with Horizon CC (Leicester based club).
- ◀ Braunstone CC has folded.

#### 4.2: Supply

As of 2024, there are 17 natural turf wicket squares located across 16 sites. Of these, all are available for community use. This is a reduction of one square since the 2020 PPS. Provision which was established at Saffron Dynamos FC has now been lost and is utilised specifically for football.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 4.1: Cricket square supply

Site ID	Site	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of squares
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	1
7	Countesthorpe Cricket Club	Blaby East	Yes	1
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Blaby North	Yes	1
13	Enderby Cricket Club	Blaby North	Yes	1
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Blaby North	Yes	1
27	Huncote Sports and Social Club	Blaby West	Yes	1
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Blaby North	Yes	1
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	1
37	Meadow Sports Ground	Blaby East	Yes	1
39	Northfield Park	Blaby East	Yes	1
45	Sapcote Recreation Ground	Blaby West	Yes	1
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	1
61	Winstanley Community College	Blaby North	Yes	1
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Blaby West	Yes	1
66	Leicester Ivanhoe Cricket Club	Blaby North	Yes	2
67	Braunstone Lane	Blaby North	Yes	1

## ***Disused provision***

Playing fields which have previously accommodated formal pitch provision are categorised as disused. A disused site is a playing field which is not being used at all by any users and is not available for community hire either. One disused site and one disused square were identified during the 2020 PPS. Both sites remain disused.

Sharnford Cricket Club folded in 2017 and as such the site is now disused with no formal cricket activity affiliated to the site.

Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground has a disused cricket square which has not been maintained as a formal cricket offer for several years. However, the remaining site is regularly used and accessed for competitive football.

## ***Non-turf pitches (NTPs)***

The ECB highlights that NTPs which follow its TS6 guidance on performance standards are suitable for high level, senior play and are considered able to take 60 matches per season, although this may include training sessions via the use of mobile nets.

In the District, no standalone squares are identified. There are, however, eight NTPs which accompany existing cricket squares based at club sites:

- ◀ Cosby Recreation Ground
- ◀ Countesthorpe CC
- ◀ Enderby CC
- ◀ Glenfield Sports Ground
- ◀ Kirby Muxloe Sports Ground
- ◀ Leicester Ivanhoe CC
- ◀ Leicester Road Recreation Ground
- ◀ Winston Avenue Sports Ground

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

This supply is consistent with 2020 and no new NTPs have been established.

## ***Future provision***

There are no known plans, as of 2024, for new natural turf cricket provision to be established in Blaby.

### ECB Ball Strike

Where there is either new cricket provision being put in place, or more commonly a development which may prejudice the use of the cricket facility, there is a requirement for a full ball strike risk assessment to be undertaken and appropriate mitigation put in place as part of the development. As such, the ECB recommends that the clubs and organisations seek to have a ball strike risk assessment undertaken; further information can be provided by the ECB.

In 2020, Countesthorpe CC highlighted that it was actively looking to purchase netting to surround its ground to prevent potential ball strike issues with nearby housing. This has not yet been progressed.

## ***Security of tenure***

The table below shows the tenure arrangement of cricket clubs in the District. Based on feedback from consultation (2020), most clubs in the District are considered to have secure tenure. Clubs which are based at parish or town council owned facilities are likely to play on facilities which are secure and therefore no perceived issues with tenure have been identified.

GNG CC and Bharat Sports CC are the only clubs which have unsecure tenure in the District as a result of having short term rental agreements in place for use of Braunstone Lane, from Leicester City Council. While there are no perceived issues with this for either club, the site cannot be a secure site to clubs from the Blaby District with it operating primarily for Leicester City based clubs.

Winston Avenue Sports Ground and Winstanley Community College are included in the table below, but currently has no regular site user.

Table 4.2: Club tenure arrangements (2024)

Site ID	Site name	Club	Tenure arrangement
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Cosby CC	Rental
7	Countesthorpe Cricket Club	Countesthorpe CC	Freehold
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Leicester Iconz *	Unknown
13	Enderby Cricket Club	Enderby CC	Long term lease
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Anstey and Glenfield CC	Long term lease
27	Huncote Sports and Social Club	Huncote CC	Unknown
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Kirby Muxloe CC	Freehold
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Narborough & Littlethorpe CC	Long term lease
37	Meadow Sports Ground	Wigston CC / Leicester Electric CC *	Long term lease / rental
39	Northfield Park	Blaby Village CC	Freehold
45	Sapcote Recreation Ground	Sapcote CC	Unknown
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Horizon CC *	Long term lease

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Site ID	Site name	Club	Tenure arrangement
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Cosby CC	Rental
61	Winstanley Community College	-	Rental
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	-	No current user
66	Leicester Ivanhoe Cricket Club	Leicestershire Ivanhoe CC	Freehold
67	Braunstone Lane	GNG CC/Bharat Sports CC	Annual rental

\* Denotes clubs which import demand into Blaby from Leicester.

## ***Pitch quality***

The quality of cricket pitches in the District were assessed in 2020 via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by the ECB) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (50-79%), Poor (<49%).

Maintaining high pitch quality is the most important aspect of cricket; if the wicket is poor, it can affect the quality of the game and can, in some instances, become dangerous. As an example, if a square is poor quality, a ball can bounce erratically on a wicket and become a danger to nearby players.

The non-technical assessment in 2020 found four squares to be good quality and 14 squares to be standard. No squares were identified as being poor quality through the non-technical audit.

Consultation with the ECB and Leicestershire Cricket states that there has been changes to the quality of supply since 2020. These are detailed in Table 4.3.

In summary, the changes to square summary are as follows. Squares at Countesthorpe and Leicester Ivanhoe cricket clubs have improved and are now of a good quality. Those at Winstanley Community College and Braunstone Lane are now poor. Everything else remains consistent with the 2020 findings.

Table 4.3: Quality ratings for community available grass wicket squares (site by site)

Site ID	Site	No. of squares	Square quality (2020)	Square quality (2024)
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	1	Standard	Standard
7	Countesthorpe Cricket Club	1	Standard	Good
8	County Hall Sports Ground	1	Standard	Standard
13	Enderby Cricket Club	1	Good	Good
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	1	Good	Good
27	Huncote Sports and Social Club	1	Standard	Standard
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	1	Standard	Standard
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	1	Good	Good
37	Meadow Sports Ground	1	Good	Good

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Site ID	Site	No. of squares	Square quality (2020)	Square quality (2024)
39	Northfield Park	1	Standard	Standard
45	Sapcote Recreation Ground	1	Standard	Standard
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	1	Standard	Standard
61	Winstanley Community College	1	Standard	Poor
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	1	Standard	Standard
66	Leicester Ivanhoe Cricket Club	2	Standard	Good
67	Braunstone Lane	1	Standard	Poor

To obtain a full technical assessment of wicket and pitches, the ECB recommends a Performance Quality Standard (PQS) assessment. The PQS looks at a cricket square to ascertain whether the pitch meets the Performance Quality Standards, which are benchmarked by the Institute of Groundsman.

Table 4.4: Performance Quality Standard Ratings

Quality rating	Details
Premier (High)	Where the surface is intended for Premier League play, with those within the top quartile capable of holding minor county and 1st class one day matches. May include some of the better schools and university pitches.
Club (Standard)	A Club pitch suitable for league, school and junior cricket.
Basic	An acceptable level suitable for recreational cricket and where the surface is designed and maintained within tight financial limitations such as local authorities.
Unsuitable	This is where the surface is deemed unfit or unsafe for play.

Clubs can contact the ECB to arrange for a pitch advisor to complete three different reports (comprehensive/mini/verbal) that vary in cost. A fully comprehensive report includes soil testing and guidance on machinery and corrective procedures, a mini report includes guidance on machinery and corrective procedures and a verbal report is a spoken version of a mini report.

## **Ancillary facilities**

Ancillary facility rating is primarily influenced by the type of amenities which are available on a site and their quality, such as a clubhouse, changing rooms, showering provision, car parking, dedicated umpire, spectator facilities and boundary fencing.

The 2020 audit identified a mixed picture in relation to the quality of overall provision servicing community clubs in the District.

Since the PPS was produced, Blaby Village CC has completed a project which saw a new modular build toilet block be installed on the site. Other clubs have had minor works carried out internally albeit nothing of substantial note.

Consultation with Leicestershire Cricket has meant that several quality scores from the initial audit have changed. This is broadly due to wear and tear at sites or them now not being sufficient enough to accommodate demand levels. Key changes are as follows:

- ◆ Countesthorpe CC now has good quality ancillary provision (moved from standard).
- ◆ Sapcote Recreation Ground now has standard quality ancillary provision (moved from good).

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

The table below highlights ancillary quality on a site-by-site basis.

Table 4.5: Site by site breakdown of ancillary quality

Site ID	Site	Ancillary quality (2020)	Ancillary quality (2024)
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Standard	Standard
7	Countesthorpe Cricket Club	Standard	Good
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Standard	Standard
13	Enderby Cricket Club	Good	Good
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Good	Good
27	Huncote Sports and Social Club	Standard	Standard
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Good	Good
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Good	Good
37	Meadow Sports Ground	Poor	Poor
39	Northfield Park	Standard	Standard
45	Sapcote Recreation Ground	Good	Standard
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Poor	Poor
61	Winstanley Community College	Standard	Standard
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Poor	Poor
66	Leicester Ivanhoe Cricket Club	Standard	Standard
67	Braunstone Lane	Poor	Poor

## Training facilities

Access to cricket nets is important, particularly for pre-season/winter training. Of clubs which responded to consultation, just one, GNG CC highlights a need for new provision. It suggests a need for practise nets at its site on Braunstone Lane to help improve its ability to undertake training. As of 2024, this has not materialised. The ECB and Leicestershire Cricket note that Blaby Village CC is exploring opportunities to develop a new on-site training offer.

## 4.3: Demand

As of the 2023 cricket season, there are 16 clubs competing in Blaby District, generating 57 teams. As a breakdown, this equates to 32 senior men's, one senior women team, 2 junior boys' and two junior girls' teams as seen below.

Table 4.6: Summary of the number of competitive teams

Club name 2020	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys'	Junior girls'
Anstey & Glenfield CC	2	-	-	-
Blaby Village CC	1	-	-	-
Braunstone CC	1	-	-	-
Bharat Sports	1	-	-	-
Cosby CC	2	-	1	-
Countesthorpe CC	4	1	7	-
Enderby CC	3	-	5	-
GNG CC	1	-	-	-
Huncote CC	2	-	-	-
Kirby Muxloe CC	2	-	4	-
Leicester Ivanhoe CC	4	-	4	-

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Club name 2020	Senior men's	Senior women's	Junior boys'	Junior girls'
Leicestershire Teachers & Mossdale CC	3	-	-	-
Narborough & Littlethorpe CC	2	-	3	-
Sapcote Cricket Club	2	-	-	-
Whetstone CC	2	-	-	-
Wigston Town CC	2	-	-	-
<b>Blaby District (2020)</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>-</b>
Club name 2023	-	-	-	-
Anstey & Glenfield CC	2	-	-	-
Blaby Village CC	2	-	-	2
Cosby CC	2	-	2	-
Countesthorpe CC	4	1	6	-
Enderby CC	2	-	3	-
Huncote CC	1	-	-	-
Kirby Muxloe CC	2	-	4	-
Leicester Ivanhoe CC	4	-	5	-
Narborough & Littlethorpe CC	2	-	3	-
Sapcote Cricket Club	2	-	-	-
Wigston Town CC	1	-	-	-
2023 (imported demand) *				
Bharat Sports	3	-	-	-
GNG CC	1	-	-	-
Leicester Electric CC	2	-	-	-
Leicester Iconz CC	1	-	-	-
Horizon CC	1	-	-	-
<b>Blaby District (2024)</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>

For teams importing demand into Blaby from neighbouring Leicester, only demand which is attributed to Blaby is accounted for i.e., Leicester Electric CC has four Saturday teams overall, of which, just two plays in Blaby. On this basis, two are accounted for in the table above.

### **All Stars cricket**

In partnership with the ECB clubs in the District can register to become an ECB All Stars Cricket Centre. Once registered, a club can deliver the programme which aims to introduce cricket to children aged from five to eight. Subsequently, this may lead to increased interest and demand for junior cricket at clubs.

The programme seeks to achieve the following aims:

- ◀ Increase cricket activity for five to eight year olds in the school and club environment.
- ◀ Develop consistency of message in both settings to aid transition.
- ◀ Improve generic movement skills for children, using cricket as the vehicle.
- ◀ Make it easier for new volunteers to support and deliver in the club environment.
- ◀ Use fun small sided games to enthuse new children and volunteers to follow and play the game.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

The ECB has also launched Dynamos cricket, a new programme to inspire kids aged 8-11 to play cricket. Dynamos cricket is the latest launch by the ECB, building on the existing All Stars programme for 5-8-year-olds. Participants will continue to develop their skills and be introduced to a countdown style of cricket match.

In 2020, the following clubs served as All Stars Centres. These are Enderby CC, Narborough & Littlethorpe CC, Anstey and Glenfield CC, Kirby Muxloe CC, Sapcote CC, Wigston Town CC and Leicestershire Ivanhoe CC. No clubs, at the time, were acting as providing Dynamos cricket.

As of 2024, the number of clubs providing opportunities for Dynamos has increased as identified in the table below, with Kirby Muxloe and Leicester Ivanhoe cricket clubs both offering the programme.

Table 4.7: Summary All stars and Dynamo participation (2023 season)

Clubs	All Stars participation	Dynamos participation
Bharat Sports	1	
Countesthorpe CC	1	
Enderby CC	11	
Kirby Muxloe CC	7	18
Leicester Ivanhoe CC	25	15
Narborough & Littlethorpe CC	35	-
Sapcote Cricket Club	15	

### **Softball cricket**

Softball cricket is an ECB initiative aimed at women and girls to increase participation in cricket as a sport. The aim of softball cricket sections are enjoyment and participation; without pads, a hardball, a heavy bat and limited rules. Sessions follow a festival format with each session running for a maximum of two and half hours, shorter than traditional formats. Playing equipment is supplied by festival organisers, with all participants provided with a t-shirt for taking part.

Each match consists of two teams of six to eight people, with everyone having an opportunity to bat and bowl. Each team bats once, with a pair of batters facing two or three overs. Batters are dismissed in traditional ways, but bowling can be either overarm or underarm, depending on the bowler's preference. Each batting team starts with a score of 200 runs, with runs added to this total by running between the wickets or by hitting the ball to a boundary. Two runs are added to the total for each wide ball; whilst five runs are removed when a batter is out.

Three clubs are identified as offering softball cricket in Blaby, this is a substantial increase since 2020 where it was not known to be offered. The three clubs are Bharatt CC, Countesthorpe CC and Enderby CC. This demand is not accounted for in Table 4.6 as it does not relate to hardball demand on wickets.

### **Exported demand**

Displaced or exported demand refers to Blaby based teams that are currently accessing pitches outside of the local authority for their home fixtures, normally because their pitch requirements cannot be met, which is usually because of pitch supply, in some cases quality issues or stipulated league requirements for access to certain facilities.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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Countesthorpe CC is the only club in the District which exports demand outside of the area. Its 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> team travel to Gilmorton CC into neighbouring authority, Harborough, to play competitive fixtures. This is still the case in 2020.

### ***Imported demand***

Imported demand refers to any demand from neighbouring local authorities that access facilities within the District due to a lack of available facilities in other local authorities where such team or club is based.

GNG CC and Bharat Sports CC both import demand into the District from Leicester. The teams share the facility at Braunstone Lane on a rotational basis. This isn't a perceived issue given the management and ownership of Braunstone Lane, via Leicester City Council.

Since 2020, a further three clubs which are all considered to be Leicester based now play within Blaby These are Horizon CC, Leicester Iconz CC and Leicester Electric CC. The latter of these uses facilities in Blaby to accommodate demand for its 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> teams (in a similar fashion to Countesthorpe CC exporting demand into Harborough).

### ***Latent demand***

Latent demand is defined as the number of additional teams that could be fielded if access to a sufficient number of outdoor sports facilities (and ancillary provision) was available, whereas exported and imported demand refers to those that are playing outside of their local authority area. There is no identified latent demand in the District in 2020 and 2023.

### ***Last Man Stands***

Last Man Stands (LMS) is a social outdoor eight-a-side T20 cricket game is played midweek, lasts approximately two hours and is generally played on non-turf wickets. All eight wickets are required to bowl a team out so when the seventh wicket falls, the 'Last Man Stands' on his own. This shorter format of the game has encouraged more people to participate in the sport and is increasing in popularity.

There are two LMS leagues which service residents from the Blaby District but are in Leicester. The specific leagues which Leicester Midweek League Premier and the Leicester Midweek League Division 1.

### ***Future demand***

The ECB's refreshed strategy called "Inspiring Generations" was announced in January 2019. It builds on the strong foundations laid by Cricket Unleashed and supports the growth of cricket in England and Wales between 2020 and 2024. At the heart of this strategy is a single unifying purpose, which gets to the core of what the game can do for society both on and off the field to ensure that cricket is in an even stronger position that it is in 2019.

Inspiring Generations has six key priorities and activities including transforming women's and girls' cricket to increase the representation of women in every level of cricket by:

- ◀ Growing and nurture the core
- ◀ Inspiring through elite teams
- ◀ Making cricket accessible
- ◀ Engaging children and young people
- ◀ Transforming women's and girl's cricket
- ◀ Supporting communities

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## *Women's and girl's cricket*

Women's and girls' cricket in Blaby, is, in relative term, underrepresented when compared to the wider Leicestershire region. Since the 2020 PPS there has been growth for this demographic locally, with several teams now offering softball opportunities and clubs such as Blaby Village offering dedicated girls' options.

In contrast, however, Leicestershire Cricket reports that there is work to be done to put established Blaby clubs on par with their counterparts across Leicestershire in relation to offering more comprehensive women's and girls' offering.

## *Population forecasts*

Based on population projections to 2041, Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass football pitches that will arise from forecasted population growth. This is by using the current within each relevant age groups together with current participation levels to establish team generation rates to understand how much growth is required to establish one new team.

Table 4.8: Team generation rates (2041)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate <sup>13</sup>	Population increase	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (18-55)	23,629	32	1:738.41	5,649.01	7
Senior Women's (18-55)	24,434	1	1:24,434.00	5,473.04	0
Junior Boys (7-18)	7,459	23	1:324.30	1,735.26	5
Junior Girls (7-18)	6,953	2	1:3,476.50	1,564.51	0

It is important to acknowledge that whilst team generation rates project team growth as a factor of population and existing teams, there are plans and strategies to increase the number of teams at some formats beyond what current trends suggest, due to a desire to change such trends.

## ***Peak time demand***

An analysis of match play identifies peak time demand (2023 season) for senior cricket as Saturday, with most teams playing at this time (28 teams). The remaining four senior teams play on Sundays.

For junior cricket, peak time demand is midweek, with all clubs' youth sections playing between Monday and Friday. As a result, squares have greater capacity to carry junior demand as play can be spread across numerous days (providing the squares are not overplayed).

<sup>13</sup> Please note TGR figures are rounded up to the nearest whole number.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## 4.4: Capacity analysis

Capacity analysis for cricket is measured on a seasonal rather than a weekly basis. This is due to playability (as only one match is generally played per square per day at weekends or weekday evening) and because wickets are rotated throughout the season to reduce wear and tear and to allow for repair.

The capacity of a square to accommodate matches is driven by the number and quality of wickets. This section of the report therefore presents the current pitch stock available for cricket and illustrates the number of competitive match equivalent sessions per season per square that is available and that currently takes place.

For good quality squares, capacity is considered to be five matches per grass wicket per season, whilst for a standard quality square, it is four matches per wicket per season. For poor quality squares, no capacity is considered to exist as such provision is not deemed safe for play. This is summarised in the table below.

Table 4.9: Grass wicket capacity

Wicket quality	Matches equivalent sessions (per season)
Good	5
Standard	4
Poor	0

In addition to grass wickets, NTPs are considered to have capacity for 60 match equivalent sessions per season providing that they are not poor quality (in which instance no capacity is provided). However, this capacity is only relevant for non-traditional formats of play and junior cricket (which is not applicable in Oadby & Wigston), where the provision is more commonly used and where matches can be played on a variety of days, rather than for traditional senior cricket due to league requirements generally not allowing usage. The capacity of such provision is therefore judged separately to the capacity of grass wickets when a square has both.

The number of matches played by each team has been derived Play Cricket data for the 2023 season.

Where there were clear and obvious gaps in Play Cricket data (particularly for junior cricket) assumptions have been made based on localised trends. These are that all senior teams play between ten and 12 home matches per year and all junior teams play between four and six matches per year. This is used to allocate capacity ratings as follows:

Potential capacity	Play is below the level the site could sustain
At capacity	Play matches the level the site can sustain
Overused	Play exceeds the level the site can sustain

The capacity analysis assumes that all clubs rotate their wickets evenly. However, this may not be the case at all sites, with central wickets often used more commonly than outer wickets that are closer to the boundary. The idea of this is to showcase what the capacity is, or could be, if best practice was followed for the whole square, rather than doing it on a wicket-by-wicket basis.

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Table 4.10: Capacity of cricket squares

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Site users	Security of tenure	Community use?	No. of squares	Pitch quality	No. of grass wickets	Capacity (sessions per season)	Actual play (sessions per season)	Capacity rating (sessions per season)	Potential spare capacity for senior Saturday cricket?	Potential spare capacity for midweek junior cricket?
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Cosby CC	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	10	40	24	16	No	Yes
7	Countesthorpe Cricket Club	Blaby East	Countesthorpe CC	Secure	Yes	1	Good	11	55	54	1	No	No
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Blaby North	Leicester Iconz	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	8	32	12	20	Yes	Yes
13	Enderby Cricket Club	Blaby North	Enderby CC	Secure	Yes	1	Good	9	45	36	9	No	Yes
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Blaby North	Anstey and Glenfield CC	Secure	Yes	1	Good	9	45	24	21	No	Yes
27	Huncote Sports and Social Club	Blaby West	Huncote CC	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	8	32	12	20	Yes	Yes
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Blaby North	Kirby Muxloe	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	9	36	40	4	No	No
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Narborough & Littlethorpe CC	Secure	Yes	1	Good	13	65	36	29	No	Yes
37	Meadow Sports Ground	Blaby East	Leicester Electric CC	Secure	Yes	1	Good	8	40	24	16	No	Yes
39	Northfield Park	Blaby East	Blaby Village CC	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	6	24	26	2	No	No
45	Sapcote Recreation Ground	Blaby West	Sapcote CC	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	8	32	22	10	No	Yes
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Horizon CC	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	6	24	12	12	Yes	Yes
61	Winstanley Community College	Blaby North	-	Unsecure	Yes	1	Poor	9	0	0	0	No	No
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Blaby West	-	Secure	Yes	1	Standard	9	36	0	36	Yes	Yes
66	Leicester Ivanhoe Cricket Club	Blaby North	Leicestershire Ivanhoe CC	Secure	Yes	2	Good	10	40	39	1	No	No
								7	28	29	1	No	No
67	Braunstone Lane	Blaby North	GNG CC/Bharat Sports	Unsecure	Yes	1	Poor	10	0	30	30	No	No

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## ***Spare capacity***

A square is only considered to have actual spare capacity if it is available for further usage at peak time. For senior cricket, peak time is Saturday as this is when most demand exists. As only one match can be played on each square per day, only two Saturday teams can be assigned to play home matches on one square (based on matches being played on an alternate home and away basis). As such, if a square has two Saturday teams already playing home fixtures on it, no actual spare capacity is perceived to exist for additional senior usage. If one or no teams are playing on a square on a Saturday, and it has overall capacity, actual spare capacity for senior demand is generally identified.

Using the criteria above, there are four sites in the District which are able to theoretically accommodate an increase in demand for Saturday cricket. These are identified in the table below. In total, an additional five senior teams could accommodate in the peak period.

Table 4.11: Spare capacity summary of senior cricket

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of squares	Actual spare capacity (MES)	Number of additional team that could be accommodated
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Blaby North	1	12	1
27	Huncote Sports and Social Club	Blaby West	1	12	1
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	1	12	1
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Blaby West	1	24	2

In addition to the above, a square at Winstanley Community College which has formerly had community club use is not used. As the quality of the square is now deemed to be poor (confirmed by Leicestershire Cricket) it has not been assigned a capacity for use. If quality was improved, it could then be theoretically used and assigned a capacity.

For junior cricket, most squares with spare capacity have actual spare capacity for an increase in demand. This is because junior matches are generally played during midweek, where matches can be spread across numerous days, meaning capacity is not limited to two teams. Moreover, where there is the of NTPs, this provides further capacity that is generally not available to senior demand.

For a square to have actual spare capacity for junior cricket, it must not be poor quality, have secure tenure, not be overplayed or have more than four match equivalent sessions of spare capacity as this is the average number of matches an additional junior team would play. Furthermore, a square is not considered to have capacity for an increase in demand if it is already used by six midweek teams or more as availability is then assumed to be limited (on average, clubs are able to play junior fixtures on three nights per week, with other nights reserved for other activity such as All Stars).

In relation to junior cricket, all sites but one is considered to have capacity to accommodate additional match play. As junior cricket is predominately played midweek or Sundays, there is a higher scope to accommodate this demand on various dates. Only Braunstone Lane is discounted due clubs having unsecure tenure on the site. The table below looks to highlight the potential number of additional teams all available sites could accommodate if demand increased.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 4.12: Spare capacity summary of junior cricket

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of squares	Actual spare capacity (MES)	Number of additional team that could be accommodated
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Blaby East	1	16	4
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Blaby North	1	20	5
13	Enderby Cricket Club	Blaby North	1	8	2
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Blaby North	1	20	5
27	Huncote Sports and Social Club	Blaby West	1	20	5
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	1	12	3
37	Meadow Sports Ground	Blaby East	1	16	4
45	Sapcote Recreation Ground	Blaby West	1	8	2
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Blaby East	1	12	3
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Blaby West	1	24	6

### Overplay

Overplay translates to a site accommodating more demand than it can sustain. While it is possible to sustain certain minimal levels of overplay providing that a regular, sufficient maintenance regime is in place, a resolution is recommended to ensure that there is no detrimental effect on quality over time.

In Blaby, three sites are overplayed as identified in the table below. Overplay at two sites; Kirby Muxloe Sports Club (Kirby Muxloe CC) and Northfield Park (Blaby Village CC) is minimal and relates to quality/scale of wicket but in real terms, is not considered an issue.

Overplay at Braunstone Lane (GNG and Bharat cricket clubs) is directly due to the poor quality of the wickets at the site.

Table 4.13: Summary of overplayed sites

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of squares	Overplay (MES)
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Blaby North	1	4
39	Northfield Park	Blaby East	1	2
67	Braunstone Lane	Blaby North	1	30

### 4.5: Supply and demand analysis

Consideration must be given to the extent in which provision can accommodate current and future demand.

The table below looks at actual spare capacity during the peak period (Saturday) for senior cricket against identified exported and future demand. Future demand is based on population growth to 2041 (which equates to an increase of seven teams) and exported demand relates to the two senior men's teams which are exported outside of the District from Countesthorpe CC which wants to play nearer to its home site.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 4.14: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for senior Saturday cricket

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)	Demand (match sessions)				
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Exported demand	Total
Blaby East	12	34	22		20	42
Blaby North	12	-	12		-	12
Blaby West	36	2	34		-	34
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>66</b>

Based on the current picture there is a sufficient supply of cricket provision in the District, notwithstanding specific capacity issues at several sites. Future demand (population changes) identifies the growth of seven teams which causes a shortfall to emerge. When considering exported demand of two teams by Countesthorpe this further exacerbates shortfalls.

### **Junior cricket capacity balance**

The table below looks at actual spare capacity during the peak period (midweek) for junior cricket. Future demand is based on population changes and equates to the potential growth of five junior boy's teams.

Table 4.15: Supply and demand analysis of cricket squares for junior cricket

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity (sessions per season)	Demand (match sessions)				
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Exported demand	Total
Blaby East	56	34	22			22
Blaby North	48	-	48			48
Blaby West	52	2	50			50
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>90</b>

As can be, there is sufficient capacity to accommodate demand for junior cricket both now and in the future across the District, with no potential shortfalls identified.

### **4.6: Conclusion (2024)**

In conclusion, based on current demand levels, there is sufficient capacity in the District to accommodate existing demand for cricket provision. When accommodating for future demand, shortfalls are apparent.

On a club-by-club level there are clear capacity challenges at the more established clubs throughout the area. Countesthorpe CC as an example, must export senior demand into Harborough to accommodate fixtures and has a junior section which is running to full site capacity.

Other clubs such as Kirby Muxloe CC, Leicester Ivanhoe CC and to some extent other clubs with smaller squares such as Blaby Village CC are unable to accommodate much more demand. This represents a challenge to cricket in Blaby as these clubs are those most likely to see an increase in women and girls' activity in the future.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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As a wider point, if the quality of the square was improved to standard quality at Braunstone Lane, then 84% of overplay in the District would be removed.

### **Cricket – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ There is currently a sufficient supply of cricket provision in the District.
- ◀ Future demand (as well as the consideration of exported demand) creates a shortfall of cricket for Saturday peak time access (typically for senior men).

### **Cricket - supply summary**

- ◀ There are 17 natural turf wickets in Blaby across 16 sites.
- ◀ There is one disused cricket site at Sharnfold Cricket Club following the Club folding in 2017.
- ◀ There are eight non-turf-wickets accompanying as many sites.
- ◀ Of the 17 natural turf squares, seven are good quality, eight are standard quality and two are poor quality.
- ◀ Poor quality ancillary provision is located at four club sites. These are Meadow Sports Ground, Warwick Road Recreation Ground, Winston Avenue Sports Ground and Braunstone Lane.

### **Cricket - demand summary**

- ◀ As of the 2023 season there are 16 clubs identified as competing in Blaby which cumulatively consist of 58 teams.
- ◀ Countesthorpe CC export demand for two senior men's teams outside of the District to accommodate match play.
- ◀ Future demand (ONS forecasts to 2041) identifies potential growth equating to seven men's teams and five junior boys' team.
- ◀ Leicestershire Cricket is working to increase opportunities for recreational and formal cricket for women and girls in Blaby which may lead to increased demand over and above what is identified through population forecasts.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## PART 5: RUGBY UNION

### 5.1: Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is split into four areas across the country with a workforce team that covers development, coaching, governance and competitions. As part of this, Club Developers deliver core programmes for clubs across Blaby. The RFU oversees a variety of formats and programmes, including 15-aside, 10-aside, 7-aside and Tag rugby as well as the Touch Union. Its aim is to increase and retain participation within the game, with facilities needing to be appropriate, affordable and accessible in order to enable this.

#### **Consultation**

In order to update this section of the report, consultation has been carried out with the RFU and the Council. Since the 2020 PPS was completed, the RFU has confirmed that Cosby RFC has folded and is no longer registered as operating any rugby union activity.

Table 5.1: List of clubs (2020)

<b>Rugby union clubs in Blaby District (2020)</b>
Cosby RFC
Old Newtonians RFC
Leicester Forest RFC
Leicester Lions RFC
Vipers RFC
<b>Rugby union clubs in Blaby District (2024)</b>
Old Newtonians RFC
Leicester Forest RFC
Leicester Lions RFC
Vipers RFC

### 5.2: Supply

The RFU confirms that the supply of pitches available to clubs has not changed since 2020. On this basis, the information presented in this report is consistent with initial findings in 2020.

The one fundamental change to the supply of pitches since 2020 is the RFU definition of what should be included within the PPS assessment. As of 2022, the RFU no longer considers rugby union pitches which are without permanent goalposts as featuring within the supply of pitches available. Typically, this only impacts on the supply of either mini or junior pitches at sites as senior pitches are typically posted.

In Blaby, this impacts on two sites:

- ◀ One junior pitch at Winstanley College has been removed from the 2023 supply.
- ◀ One mini pitch at Old Newtonians RFC has been removed from the 2023 supply.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 5.2: Supply of rugby union pitches available for community use

Analysis area	No. of senior pitches (2020)	No. of senior pitches (2024)
Blaby East	7	7
Blaby North	5	6
Blaby West	-	-
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>%change</b>	-	<b>8%</b>

The increase in pitch supply directly relates to Old Newtonians RFC which has an additional pitch accounted for which was being primarily used for football activity in 2020. No new playing field land has been established for this increase.

The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches. For rugby union pitch dimension sizes please see the table below.

Table 5.3: Rugby union age group and pitch format definitions

Team reference	Age group	Team type	Max dimensions (metres)
Senior men	Over 18 years old	Senior	100x70 (with posts at either end)
Senior women	Over 18 years old	Senior	100x70 (with posts at either end)
Age Grade Boys	U13s – U18s	U13s*, U14s, U15s, U16s, U18s (as dual age band w/U17s)	100x70 (with posts at either end) *90x60 (with posts at either end)
Age Grade Girls	U12s – U18	U12 (Single age band) U14s (as dual age band w/U13s), U16s (as dual age w/U15s), U18s (as dual age band w/U17s)	100x70 (with posts at either end)

For age grade mixed rugby (for children aged between U7 through to U12) there is no requirement for rugby posts to be provided for competitive play. However, in most cases nationally, play of this type takes place on senior pitches which are overmarked for such activity. The audit only identifies dedicated, line marked pitches with accompanying posts. The dimensions for age grade mixed rugby are detailed in the table below.

Table 5.4: Rugby union pitch dimensions

Team type (ages)	Team reference	Maximum pitch dimensions (metres) <sup>14</sup>
Under 7	Age grade mixed	20 x 12
Under 8	Age grade mixed	45 x 22
Under 9	Age grade mixed	60 x 30
Under 10	Age grade mixed	60 x 35
Under 11	Age grade mixed	60 x 43

<sup>14</sup> Recommended run off area for all pitch types requires five meters each way and a minimum in-goal length of six metres.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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## **Security of tenure**

All four rugby union clubs in the District have freehold of their respective sites as follows:

- ◀ Leicester Forest RFC
- ◀ Leicester Lions RFC
- ◀ Old Newtonians RFC
- ◀ Vipers RFC

The recently folded Cosby RFC did not have freehold of its site. It held a licence agreement with Cosby Parish Council. Its tenure position is not related to it folding, provision at the site was, in the previous PPS, considered secure due to the ownership of the Parish Council.

## **Pitch quality**

The quality of rugby pitches across the District were assessed (in 2020) via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments as determined by RFU) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

These scores have been reviewed with the RFU in 2023 to determine if there have been any changes to quality. The consultation with the RFU did not result in any changes being applied to the scoring which was used in 2020. It is deemed that all quality scores in 2020 are consistent with the current position in 2023.

The methodology for assessing rugby pitch quality looks at two key elements; the maintenance programme and the level of drainage on each pitch. An overall quality based on both drainage and maintenance can then be generated. The agreed rating for each pitch type also represents actions required to improve pitch quality. A breakdown of actions required based on the ratings can be seen below:

Table 5.5: Definition of maintenance categories

Category	Definition
M0	Action is significant improvements to maintenance programme
M1	Action is minor improvements to maintenance programme
M2	Action is no improvements to maintenance programme

Table 5.6: Definition of drainage categories

Category	Definition
D0	Action is pipe drainage system is needed on pitch
D1	Action is pipe drainage is needed on pitch
D2	Action is slit drainage is needed on pitch
D3	No action is needed on pitch drainage

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 5.7: Quality ratings based on maintenance and drainage scores

		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	Poor	Poor	Standard
	Natural Adequate (D1)	Poor	Standard	Good
	Pipe Drained (D2)	Standard	Standard	Good
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	Standard	Good	Good

The figures are based upon a pipe drained system at 5m centres that has been installed in the last eight years and a slit drained system at 1m centres that has been installed in the last five years.

Based on the above criterion, there are ten standard quality pitches and one poor quality pitch in the District.

A breakdown of senior pitch quality by analysis area is shown in the table below.

Table 5.8: Quality of senior rugby union pitches

Analysis area	No. of good quality pitches	No. of standard quality pitches	No. of poor quality pitches
Blaby East	-	6	1
Blaby North	-	5	1
Blaby West	-	-	-
<b>Blaby District</b>	-	11	2

Most senior rugby union pitches are standard quality. Standard quality pitches are located at all four community club sites. A poor-quality senior pitch remains at Crosby RFC which is unused due to the Club folding.

All clubs suitably maintain pitches their own pitches which correlates to no significant issues being identified during the non-technical assessments in 2020. The RFU reports (2023) that pitches at Vipers RFC are also considered to be close to reaching an M2 maintenance score.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 5.9: Site quality ratings (2024)

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Number of pitches	Floodlit?	Pitch type	Non-technical assessment score (2023)	Quality rating
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	Yes	1	No	Senior	M0/D1	Poor
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	1	Yes (half pitch)	Senior	M0/D1	Poor
33	Leicester Forest RFC	Blaby North	Yes	1	No	Senior	M1/D1	Standard
33	Leicester Forest RFC	Blaby North	Yes	1	No	Senior	M1/D1	Standard
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Yes	1	No	Senior	M1/D1	Standard
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Yes	1	No	Senior	M1/D1	Standard
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Yes	1	No	Senior	M1/D1	Standard
57	Vipers RFC	Blaby East	Yes	1	Yes	Senior	M1/D1	Standard
57	Vipers RFC	Blaby East	Yes	1	No	Senior	M1/D1	Standard
57	Vipers RFC	Blaby East	Yes	1	No	Senior	M1/D1	Standard
59	Leicester Lions RFC	Blaby East	Yes	1	Yes	Senior	M1/D3	Standard
59	Leicester Lions RFC	Blaby East	Yes	1	No	Senior	M1/D1	Standard
59	Leicester Lions RFC	Blaby East	Yes	1	No	Senior	M1/D1	Standard

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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### ***Ancillary facilities***

The term ancillary facilities relates to built facility infrastructures. Typically, this includes (but is not limited to) clubhouses, changing rooms, showers, carparking and toilet facilities.

From a club perspective, the ancillary facilities at Leicester Lions RFC are excellent having been newly provided in 2018. Consultation with the Club (2020) did not raise any issues, with all provision meeting the latest RFU specifications.

The ancillary offer at Old Newtonians RFC is poor. The building is a 1960s build, with all internal facilities being outdated and poorly functioning. The kitchen is limited to what it can offer members and is the top priority to be replaced. The bar and social space offer are small and old, and the boiler is reaching the end of its anticipated lifespan, with the Club highlighting that it struggles to suitably heat both the showers and bar area. There is one communal shower block servicing all changing rooms on site and whilst currently adequate for the club and the number of teams it offers, will not be suitable in the future if it is to increase the number of teams it offers.

Vipers RFC has access to a large clubhouse and changing facility block. The facility is largely outdated and consequently it is acknowledged that there is a need to refurbish the existing changing rooms and to increase disability access. The Club has recently received a grant award from the RFU towards improve the quality of its social space and therefore its bar and function area are of sufficient quality.

The ancillary offering at Leicester Forest RFC is standard quality with no key issues raised during consultation or identified during the non-technical site assessment.

Although now not in operation for the purposes of rugby union, facilities at Cosby Recreation Ground are poor. The facility services football, cricket as well as rugby union and is outdated with both shower, toilet and changing provision all considered to need refurbishment to meet modern technical standards.

### **5.3: Demand**

Demand for rugby pitches in the District tends to fall within the categories of organised competitive play and organised training.

#### ***Competitive play***

For the 23/24 rugby union season, there are four community clubs competing in the District. As mentioned, this is a decrease of one club since the 19/20 season, with Crosby RFC no longer operating.

In the last PPS, there was a total of 49 teams identified in totality across all five clubs. As of this season, there are a total of 56 teams operating across the four active club, a cumulative growth of seven teams. The highest level of growth has been for junior girls' rugby where both Leicester Forest RFC and Vipers RFC both now operate a total of four dedicated teams each (this includes a dedicated U12 teams which is accounted for as mixed age grade in the table below).

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 5.10: Summary of club demand (23/24 season)

Club	No. of rugby union teams				
	Senior (19+)		Age grade boys/girls (13-18)		Age grade mixed (6-12)
	M	F	M	F	Mixed
Leicester Forest RFC	3	-	5	3	7
Leicester Lions RFC	3	-	5	-	7
Old Newtonians RFC	1	-	-	-	5
Vipers RFC	3	-	5	3	7
<b>Blaby total (23/24 season)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Blaby total (19/20 season)</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>%change</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8%</b>

### Training demand

Training for community rugby union clubs is important to ensure they can adequately compete in competitive matches. For all community clubs throughout the Country, training for senior and older age group junior teams typically takes place midweek and as such there is a requirement for sports lighting to be present to enable training to take place, as to account for autumnal/winter lighting conditions.

Table 5.10: Summary of rugby union club facility use for evening training (grass pitches)

Club	Training demand (23/24 season)	Match equivalent sessions on grass pitches
Leicester Forest RFC	Most training takes place on WR compliant 3G pitch. Only known training on grass pitches is on Sunday mornings due to comprehensive demand from mixed age grade and junior players requiring space over and above what the 3G provides.	2 MES – remainder of training on 3G pitch.
Leicester Lions RFC	Leicester Lions RFC train on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evening on a dedicated floodlit training area adjacent to its senior backs towards the back of its site. This area is similar size to a senior pitch and therefore sufficient for the majority of the club's midweek training activity. On Tuesday and Thursday, its senior men's teams train for 1.5 hours per night. On Wednesday nights, its junior teams train for one hour.	0 MES – all training on dedicated pitch with sports lighting. Training on this space equates to 5 MES per week.
Old Newtonians RFC	Old Newtonians RFC accesses a dedicated floodlit training area which services all midweek demand. The Club trains one night per week with both its senior men's and women's teams training for 1.5 hours each on a Tuesday night	0 MES – all training on dedicated pitch with sports lighting. Training on this space equates to 1 MES per week.
Vipers RFC	Vipers RFC train on a floodlit grass pitch which accommodates all its midweek training demand (in addition to competitive matches). The Club's senior sections train on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for 1.5 hours each with select junior teams training on Wednesdays.	6 MES (not including any competitive match play demand).

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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### ***Touch rugby union***

To actively encourage participation in rugby union clubs may provide alternative offers to traditional club competition. Touch rugby is one possible format which clubs can use; touch rugby is non-contact rugby sessions, during which participants compete in teams to score tries, following similar laws to traditional rugby union formats. Clubs, schools or community organisation can establish their own touch rugby sessions or can become hosts of Touch Union<sup>15</sup> sessions.

Touch Union sessions are 90 minutes long and combine music, fitness and rugby skills. Sessions are of mixed gender, ability and age and are based on touch rugby being a social activity. No clubs in Blaby hold specific Touch Rugby Union sessions, but all four active clubs are known to offer social touch (non-contact) rugby out of the traditional rugby union season as a general fitness/social enterprise.

### ***Walking rugby***

Walking rugby is a slower game of touch rugby that is accessible for disability groups and older participants, generally aged 55 years and above. The game is less physical than traditional rugby, but the general aim remains the same, with passing and scoring laws applying; and tackling involves a two-handed touch to the waist or below. Sessions for over 55's are an opportunity for participants to become physically active and for others to re-engage with rugby at a less strenuous pace. At present there are no formal walking rugby sessions taking place in the District.

### ***Use of artificial pitches***

Nationally, clubs identify the use of 3G pitches for training as a method of protecting the match pitches and providing a high-quality surface for full contact practice. Competitive play continues to take place on grass pitches for the most part, however, the use of 3Gs for the fulfilment of competition fixtures does take place regularly in some areas if suitable provision is available, particularly on sites where Rugby 365 pitches have been provided. Further detail on use of 3G pitches can be found in Part 3: Third Generation Artificial Pitches.

As part of the RFU Investment Strategy, Leicester Forest RFC was selected for the development of a full size 3G WR compliant pitch which opened in 2018. The pitch is primarily accessed by Leicester Forest RFC but is also open for use from other rugby union clubs in the regional relative to availability as well as for other groups such as football clubs.

As of 2024, there is no significant use of the pitch from alternate rugby union clubs other than Leicester Forest RFC itself. The pitch in the past, has been used by several clubs from the Leicestershire region but largely on an ad-hoc basis.

### ***Exported/imported demand***

Exported demand refers to existing demand which is transferred outside of the study area; whilst imported demand refers to any demand from neighbouring local authorities that accesses facilities in the District due to a lack of available facilities in other local authorities where such team or club is based.

Coalville RFC was the only club identified as importing demand into the District in 2020.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/ways-to-play/the-touch-union>

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

The Club utilised the 3G pitch located at Leicester Forest RFC for ad hoc training sessions throughout the season when onsite pitches are unfit for use. The Club has since completed a new sports lighting project and as such has a lesser requirement to access provision in Blaby.

## ***Unmet/latent demand***

Unmet demand is existing demand at clubs which is not able to access sufficient supply of pitches for match play or training. It is usually expressed, for example, where a team is already training but is unable to access a match pitch or where a league or club operates a waiting list.

Latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision.

No clubs identified either any unmet or latent demand in 2020. The RFU report that this position is likely to be the same today.

## ***Future demand***

Future demand can be defined in two ways, through participation increases and using population forecasts.

### ***Population increases***

Based on population projections to 2041, Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator can estimate the likely additional demand for grass football pitches that will arise from forecasted population growth. This is by using the current within each relevant age groups together with current participation levels to establish team generation rates to understand how much growth is required to establish one new team.

Table 5.11: Team generation rates (2041)

Age group	Current population within age group	Current no. of teams	Team Generation Rate	Population increase	Additional teams that may be generated from the increased population
Senior Men's (19-45)	16,192	11	1:1,619.20	4,188.82	2
Senior Women's (19-45)	16,800	1	0	3,502.39	0
Junior Boys (13-18)	3,632	10	1:242.13	1,014.00	4
Junior Girls (13-18)	3,284	3	1:547.33	942.44	1
Mini rugby mixed (7-12)	7,496	24	1:288.31	1,343.33	4

When TGRs are applied to the District as a whole, the forecasted growth in demand leads to the creation of two senior men's teams, four junior boys' teams, one junior girls and four mixed age grade teams.

## ***Future demand summary***

Future demand in this report will be based on ONS projections through to 2041 in line with Local Plan timelines.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## 5.4: Capacity analysis

The capacity for pitches to regularly accommodate competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affects the playing experience and people’s enjoyment of playing rugby. In extreme circumstances, it can result in the inability of a pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off-peak times. To enable an accurate supply and demand assessment of rugby pitches, the following assumptions are applied to site by site analysis:

- ◀ All sites that are used for competitive rugby matches (regardless of whether this is secured community use) are included on the supply side.
- ◀ Use of school pitches by schools increases demand by one match equivalent session, unless school activity levels are known.
- ◀ All competitive play is on senior size pitches (except for where age grade specific pitches are provided).
- ◀ U13 teams generally play on a 90 x 60m pitch and play 13 vs 13.
- ◀ From U14 upwards, teams generally play 15 v15 and use a full pitch.
- ◀ Mixed age grade teams (U6-U12) play on half of a senior pitch i.e., two teams per senior pitch or a dedicated mini pitch. See RFU Age Grade Rugby Guidance for more details.
- ◀ For senior and youth teams the current level of play per week is set at 0.5 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis (assumes half of matches will be played away).
- ◀ For mini teams playing on a senior pitch, play per week is set at 0.25 for each match played based on all teams operating on a traditional home and away basis and playing across half of one senior pitch.
- ◀ Senior men’s rugby generally takes place on Saturday afternoons.
- ◀ Senior women’s rugby generally takes place on Sunday afternoons.
- ◀ Junior rugby generally takes place on Sunday mornings.
- ◀ Mini rugby generally takes place on Sunday mornings.
- ◀ Training that takes place on club pitches is reflected by the addition of match equivalent sessions to current usage levels.

As a guide, the RFU has set a standard number of matches that each pitch should be able to accommodate, set out below.

Table 5.12: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments

Drainage score	M0 - Poor	M1 - Adequate	M2 - Good
D0 - Natural Inadequate	0.5	1.5	2
D1 - Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained	1.5	2	3
D2 - Pipe Drained	1.75	2.5	3.25
D3 - Pipe and Slit Drained	2	3	3.5

Capacity is based upon a basic assessment of the drainage system and maintenance programme ascertained through a combination of the quality assessment and consultation. This guide, however, is only a very general measure of potential pitch capacity. It does not account for specific circumstances at time of use and it assumes average rainfall and an appropriate end of season rest and renovation programme.

The peak period

The peak period for rugby union is consistent with that it was in 2020. For senior teams, it is Saturday PM, as all senior men’s teams play currently, with senior women’s teams playing on Sunday afternoons. Peak time for mini and junior rugby is Sunday AM

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Table 5.13: Capacity table for rugby pitches in the District

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Security of tenure	Number of pitches	Pitch type	Non-tech score	Quality rating	Floodlit?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch Capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Comments
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	Yes – unused	<b>Unsecure</b>	1	Senior	M0/D1	Poor	No	1.5	1.5	-	The pitch is at capacity through curricular use.
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Blaby East	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M0/D1	Poor	Half pitch	0	1.5	-	Pitch unused. Spare capacity is discounted due to the poor quality of the pitch.
33	Leicester Forest RFC	Blaby North	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	2	2	-	Pitch played to capacity due to mixed age grade and junior demand on Sundays.
33	Leicester Forest RFC	Blaby North	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	1.75	2	0.25	Limited spare capacity available
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	0.5	2	1.5	Pitch used for first team games only.
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	1.25	2	0.75	Pitch utilized by mixed age grade teams.
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Blaby North	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	0	2	2	Pitch has no registered demand attributed to it.
57	Vipers RFC	Blaby East	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	Yes	7	2	5	Training pitch which accommodates 6 MES of training specific demand. One additional MES added for match play purposes.
57	Vipers RFC	Blaby East	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	1.5	2	0.5	1 <sup>st</sup> XV pitch. Used for one senior and two junior matches per week (on average).
57	Vipers RFC	Blaby East	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	4.75	2	2.75	Pitch overplayed due to cumulative usage from mixed and grade and junior sections of the Club.
59	Leicester Lions RFC	Blaby East	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D3	Standard	Yes	1.5	3	1.5	1 <sup>st</sup> XV pitch. Used for one senior and two junior matches per week (on average).
59	Leicester Lions RFC	Blaby East	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	3	2	1	Slight overplay on pitches towards the rear of the site due to heavy use from mixed age grade and junior section of the Club.
59	Leicester Lions RFC	Blaby East	Yes	Secure	1	Senior	M1/D1	Standard	No	2.75	2	0.75	Slight overplay on pitches towards the rear of the site due to heavy use from mixed age grade and junior section of the Club.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## **Actual spare capacity**

The next step is to ascertain whether or not any identified ‘potential capacity’ can be deemed ‘actual capacity’. There may be situations where, although a site is highlighted as potentially able to accommodate some additional play, this should not be recorded as spare capacity against the site. For example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below full capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of regular friendly matches and activities that take place but are difficult to quantify on a weekly basis.

Based on Table 5,12, it appears that spare capacity is available on several pitches and at least on one pitch per each of the four community clubs in the District. This, however, is not the case. Spare capacity, although apparent, cannot be utilised on all instances due to match day programming and the further need to protect pitches for first team match play, this is applicable to spare capacity at Vipers and Leicester Lions rugby union clubs, were neither site has any actual spare capacity available. This is because of this potential spare capacity being on each clubs first team pitch (which needs protection for match day purposes).

In contrast, actual spare capacity is available at both Leicester Forest and Old Newtonians RFC. This equates to 0.25 match equivalent sessions per week at Leicester Forest RFC and 4.25 match equivalent sessions per week at Old Newtonians RFC.

## **Overplay**

Four pitches in the District are overplayed, derived from two club sites; Vipers RFC and Leicester Lions RFC. Total overplay at Vipers equates to 7.75 match equivalent sessions per week and at Leicester Lions, 1.75 match equivalent sessions per week.

## **5.5: Supply and demand analysis**

Having considered supply and demand, the table below identifies the overall spare capacity in each of the analysis areas for senior rugby union pitches based on match equivalent sessions per week.

Total future demand in the District is based on adding population changes as defined by ONS projections to 2041. As a reminder, this equates to two senior men’s, four junior boys, one junior girl and four mixed age grade teams.

Table 5.14: Summary of supply and demand balance on senior rugby union pitches

Analysis area	Actual spare capacity <sup>16</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
Blaby East		9.5	9.5	-	9.5
Blaby North	4.5	-	4.5	-	4.5
Blaby West		-	-	-	-
<b>Blaby District (2024)</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>

Overall, there is an insufficient supply of provision in the District (based on the 23/24 rugby union season). Deficiencies specially arise from Vipers RFC and Leicester Lions RFC. All shortfalls are within the Blaby East Analysis Area.

<sup>16</sup> In match equivalent sessions

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Spare capacity largely available at Old Newtonians RFC reduces shortfalls on a district-wide basis but plays no role in supporting clubs where overplay is identified.

When compared to the 2020 PPS, it is evident that demand for the sport has increased and known shortfalls have largened.

Table 5.14: Supply and demand comparison (2020 to 2024)

	Actual spare capacity <sup>17</sup>	Demand (match equivalent sessions)			
		Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Future total
<b>Blaby District (2024)</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>
<b>Blaby District (2020)</b>	<b>4.75</b>	<b>1.75</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8.25</b>	<b>5.25</b>

## 5.6: Conclusions (2024)

In summary, when looking at provision on a District wide level, there is an insufficient supply of rugby union provision to accommodate current levels of demand. Future demand exacerbates already apparent shortfalls.

Shortfalls are specifically attributed to Vipers and Leicester Lions rugby union clubs. It is clear that each has a particular deficit of midweek capacity for training purposes which carries through to match days and overall site deficiencies.

The Strategy & Action Plan will explore sport specific scenarios to reduce and alleviate identified overplay at Vipers RFC and Leicester Lions RFC.

### Rugby union – supply and demand summary

- ◀ There is currently an insufficient level of rugby union provision in the District.
- ◀ A district wide shortfall of six match equivalent sessions is apparent. This is broadly due to overplay at both Vipers and Leicester Lions rugby union clubs.
- ◀ Future demand of 4.5 MES exacerbates existing shortfalls.

### Rugby union - supply summary

- ◀ There are 13 grass senior rugby union pitches from six sites pitches identified across Blaby.
- ◀ Of the 13 pitches, 11 are standard quality and two are poor quality.
- ◀ Ancillary provision at Old Newtonians RFC is poor quality, the quality of provision at the remaining three community clubs is a mixture of standard and good quality.
- ◀ Vipers RFC has the highest shortfall on grass pitches of all clubs in Blaby.
- ◀ Leicester Forest RFC has a WR compliant 3G pitch which typically used to capacity each week.

### Rugby union - demand summary

- ◀ There is a total of four community rugby union clubs in Blaby. This is a reduction of one since the 2020 PPS. Crosby RFC has since folded because of participation issues.
- ◀ There are 56 registered teams competing in rugby union, an increase of 7 since the 2020 PPS.
- ◀ The Women’s Rugby World Cup (2025) is expected to be a catalyst for increased participation for women’s and girls’ rugby union.
- ◀ Future demand (defined via 2018 ONS projections) forecasts the growth of 13 potential teams by 2041.

<sup>17</sup> In match equivalent sessions

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## PART 6: BOWLS

### 6.1: Introduction

All bowling greens in the District are flat greens. Bowls England is the governing body for flat green bowls with overall responsibility for ensuring effective governance. Regionally, it is administered by Bowls Leicestershire.

The flat green bowling season runs from April to September.

#### **Consultation**

To update this report, consultation was undertaken with a representative from Bowls Leicestershire. In 2020, all clubs in Blaby were responsive to consultation requests.

### 6.2: Supply

There are seven bowling greens in the District, located across seven sites, all of which, are available for community use. The distribution of bowling greens is split between the Blaby North (57%) and East (43%) analysis areas. There is no identified provision in the Blaby West Analysis Area. Since 2020, there has been no change to the supply of bowling green provision in the District.

Table 6.1: Bowling green supply

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Number of greens	Green type
28	King George V Playing Field	Blaby North	Yes	1	Flat
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Blaby North	Yes	1	Flat
46	Shakespeare Park	Blaby North	Yes	1	Flat
64	Blaby Bowls Club	Blaby East	Yes	1	Flat
69	Glenfield Bowls Club	Blaby North	Yes	1	Flat
70	Coventry Road	Blaby East	Yes	1	Flat
71	Countesthorpe Bowls Club	Blaby East	Yes	1	Flat

Outdoor sports sites which have previously accommodated formal provision are categorised being disused A disused site is not being used at all by any users and is not available for community use/hire either.

There are no identified disused bowling greens identified in Blaby District.

#### **Ownership/management**

Bowling clubs in the District are largely considered to have secure tenure, meaning that its likely they will continue to operate on their current sites for the foreseeable future. No issues were raised responding clubs in relation to their current tenure situation.

The table below outlines current lease arrangements for all responding clubs in the District.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 6.2: Club tenure arrangements

Site ID	Site name	Club	Tenure arrangement
28	King George V Playing Field	Enderby BC	Leased until 2025 from Enderby Parish Council. As of 2024, The Club is beginning negotiations for an extension of this agreement which will last through to 2050.
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Kirby Muxloe BC	Leased until 2075 from Kirby Muxloe Village Hall.
46	Shakespeare Park	Shakespeare Park BC	Accessed through agreement with Shakespear Park Management Association. Secure.
64	Blaby Bowls Club	Blaby BC	Freehold
69	Glenfield Bowls Club	Glenfield BC	Rented per annum from Glenfield Parish Council
70	Coventry Road	Narborough & District BC	Leased until 2115 from Narborough Bowls Club Ltd
71	Countesthorpe Bowls Club	Countesthorpe BC	Freehold

## Quality

The quality of bowling greens across the District have been assessed, in 2020, via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (70-80%), Poor (<70%). For bowling greens, the non-technical assessment considers several attributes of the site including the surrounding hard surfaces to the green, disability access, evenness, grass coverage and signs off unofficial use.

Bowls Leicestershire reports that green quality at Countesthorpe BC and Shakespear Park BC are now both standard (a downgrade from their respective previous good quality scores). It does however expect the quality of Countesthorpe to improve to good by the time the 2024 bowls season commences.

Table 6.3: Summary of bowling green quality

Site ID	Site name	Club	Quality rating (2020)	Quality rating (2024)
28	King George V Playing Field	Enderby BC	Good	Good
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Kirby Muxloe BC	Standard	Standard
46	Shakespeare Park	Shakespeare Park BC	Good	Standard
64	Blaby Bowls Club	Blaby BC	Good	Good
69	Glenfield Bowls Club	Glenfield BC	Standard*	Standard*
70	Coventry Road	Narborough & District BC	Good	Good
71	Countesthorpe Bowls Club	Countesthorpe BC	Good	Standard

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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Of the responding bowls club (2020), three state that the quality of their green has improved in quality over the past three years. Both Blaby BC and Narborough & District BC conclude the reason for an improve green is due to an improved maintenance regime which has been undertaken by its groundskeepers.

Kirby Muxloe BC highlighted that it has taken control of its green management with one of its playing members now undertaking the maintenance on site, with this resulting in a higher output, with better attention to detail given to the surface.

### ***Ancillary facilities***

All clubs in the District have access to a clubhouse/pavilion on site. It is therefore important to recognise the importance of ancillary provision to bowling clubs as, if the facilities onsite are of suitable quantity/quality and meet players' needs, this can help sustain and grow membership levels.

In 2020, the pavilion at Shakespeare Park was in a state of disrepair was not fit for purpose. Since then, Braunstone Town Council has worked with relevant stakeholders to build a new pavilion comprising of social facilities, toilets and a kitchen which is designed to accommodate for several sports including football.

Glenfield BC previously highlighted an aspiration to upgrade its changing facilities and to offer improved disability access to the site for current/potential disability users. Bowls Leicestershire is unaware of any changes to the site since consultation and site audits were carried out in 2020.

Enderby BC stated that it had previously received grants from the Council allowing it to upgrade and modernise its social facilities and watering system for its green. Bowls Leicestershire reports that provision at the site is of an overall sufficient quality for current levels of demand.

Kirby Muxloe BC stated its provision was of an overall adequate quality in 2020, however, it did identify that its changing and toilet facilities were of a poor quality. Since then, it has installed new toilet provision at its site, and it is working to improving the access to the site to support its membership. Leicestershire Bowls identifies it is actively looking to improve the walkway around the bowling green at the site due to concerns around health and safety from users.

There was/are no notable issues to raise about the remaining clubs in Blaby.

### ***Sports lighting***

Bowling greens that are serviced by sports lighting can enable increased usage, especially during evenings outside of summer months. However, in Blaby no greens are currently serviced. Bowling greens with sports lighting are somewhat rare across the Country and this is therefore comparable with the national picture.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## 6.3: Demand

### *Club demand*

There are seven bowls clubs playing in the District. Total memberships for the 2023 season were provided by Bowls Leicestershire. In total, based on a comparison between the 2020 season data (captured via club consultation) and 2023 season, there has been a net reduction in bowls equating to an 8% in participation.

Table 6.4: Current club membership (2020)

Site	Club	2020 total	2023 total	% difference
King George V Playing Field	Enderby BC	73	71	3%
Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Kirby Muxloe BC	71	70	1%
Blaby Bowls Club	Blaby BC	80	84	5%
Glenfield Bowls Club	Glenfield BC	61	53	13%
Coventry Road	Narborough & District BC	81	60	25%
Countesthorpe Bowls Club	Countesthorpe BC	89	79	11%
Shakespeare Park Bowls Club	Shakespeare Park	34	32	5%
-	<b>Totals</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>8%</b>

Leicestershire Bowls state that on average, most club memberships are consistent with what they were in 2020. The one exception to this is at Narborough & District BC which has seen a reduction of 25% due to internal disputes between members.

### *Future demand*

Using ONS projections (2018-2043), the number of persons aged 65 and over living in the District is likely to increase continuously from 20,390 in 2018 to 29,584 in 2041, representing an increase of 45.1%. Due to this age band being the most likely to play bowls, demand for bowling greens is likely to increase considerably in the future or at least remain static.

### *Additional demand*

#### *Bowls Bash*

To increase participation, Bowls England has recently launched a product known as Bowls Bash. This is an exciting, new form of lawn bowls that is easy to play, shortened and fun for all ages and abilities. The aim is to roll the ball at the Jack; the closer you get, the more points you earn for your team, and bonus points are given for kissing the target. It is normally played in teams of two, with players delivering 30 bowls each per match, and generally lasts an hour.

Bowls Bash is also intrinsically linked to the Play Bowls initiatives, with able to add Bowls Bash sessions onto the platform.

No clubs in Blaby have currently taken up Bowls Bash yet.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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## *Play Bowls*

Play Bowls is a new product designed to assist clubs in attracting more casual, pay and play participants. Clubs are now able to sign up to the scheme, with booking slots for access then able to be secured and paid for via the Play Bowls website.

The aim is for this to help the sport become much more accessible whilst making it easy for clubs to evolve and manage the demand from the casual audience. No clubs in Blaby are currently signed up to the initiative, although it is in its infancy.

## ***Latent demand***

Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in bowls but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 172 people who would like to participate in the sport within Blaby. The most dominant segment is 'Frank' – Twilight Year Gents (23.3%).

Notwithstanding the above, none of bowling clubs in Blaby are reported as being played to capacity, with all clubs able to accommodate new members. As such, it is considered that anyone within the District that would like to start participating could do so at the clubs and greens already in existence.

## **6.4: Supply and demand analysis**

Bowling green capacity is very much dependent upon the volume of organised bowling that exists and the day/time of these. Greens may have no spare/limited capacity at certain times of the day, especially when competitive bowling is taking place. There are many periods (every day of the week) when the green is unused or well below capacity.

Bowls England does not have any specific guidance on bowling green capacity, as a guide, it states that any club with at least 20 members is generally considered be sustainable. In Blaby, all clubs have a strong membership base with all clubs operating with well over 20 members.

Bowls Leicestershire (2023) suggests that all existing clubs can adequately manage their memberships on their respective greens, it is also likely that future demand will not change this position (particularly within the next three to five years).

## **6.5: Conclusions (2024)**

As there is no evidence to suggest a need for new bowling greens in the District, the priority should be based on supporting existing clubs to improve their ancillary offering and quality of green. Several clubs in the District aspire to improve their ancillary offering, and therefore, achieving this will likely be the most beneficial action to bowls in the District (in a similar manner to what has been achieved at Shakespear Park).

Further to this, improving the quality of existing bowling greens, which are not good quality, will likely improve the capacity for provision to accommodate increase levels of demand.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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## **Bowls – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ There is a sufficient supply of bowling greens to accommodate current and future demand in the Blaby District.
- ◀ The focus for bowls in the District should be focused around enabling participation on a club specific basis and supporting programmes such as Bowls Bash

### **Bowls – supply summary**

- ◀ There are seven bowling greens in the District, located across seven sites, all of which, are available for community use.
- ◀ Three greens are good quality and four are standard quality. There is no poor quality bowling green provision in Blaby.
- ◀ Green quality at Countesthorpe BC and Shakespear Park BC are now both standard (a downgrade from their respective previous good quality scores in 2020).
- ◀ There are no disused bowling greens in the District.
- ◀ Since the 2020 PPS, a new clubhouse has been provided at Shakespear Park which is good quality and serves a multi-sport offer with football and tennis.

### **Bowls – demand summary**

- ◀ Leicestershire Bowls state that on average, most club memberships are consistent with what they were in 2020. The one exception to this is at Narborough & District BC which has seen a reduction of 25% due to internal disputes between members.
- ◀ All clubs have sufficient capacity to accommodate growth in the sport.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## PART 7: TENNIS

### 7.1: Introduction

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the organisation responsible for the governance of tennis and administers the sport locally across Blaby. The LTA has recently restructured its strategic approach to target a number of national focus areas, with a priority on developing the sport at park sites.

#### **Consultation**

This report has been updated via online research as a desktop exercise as the LTA was unresponsive to consultation requests.

### 7.2: Supply

There are 39 tennis courts identified in the District across 12 sites, with all courts available for community use. There are no known changes to the supply of tennis courts in Blaby identified as of 2024.

Table 7.1: Outdoor tennis court supply

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	Management	No. of courts	Floodlit?	Court type
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	Yes	School	4	Yes	Macadam
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	Yes	School	2	Yes	Artificial
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	Yes	School	3	No	Macadam
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Private	3	No	Artificial
28	King George V Playing Field	Blaby North	Yes	Parish Council	3	Yes	Artificial
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Blaby North	Yes	Parish Council	2	No	Macadam
46	Shakespeare Park	Blaby North	Yes	Parish Council	2	No	Macadam
51	Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Fields	Blaby West	Yes	Sports Club	4	Yes	Macadam
54	Thorpe Astley Community Centre	Blaby North	Yes	Parish Council	2	Yes	Macadam
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Blaby West	Yes	Parish Council	1	No	Macadam
63	Blaby Victoria Tennis Club	Blaby East	Yes	Sports Club	3	Yes	Macadam
65	David Lloyd Narborough	Blaby East	Yes	Private	6	Yes	Artificial
68	Leicester Forest East Tennis Club	Blaby North	Yes	Sports Club	1	Yes	Artificial
68	Leicester Forest East Tennis Club	Blaby North	Yes	Sports Club	3	Yes	Clay

There are also two indoor courts with a dome structure provided at Leicester Forest East TC which do not feature in the above figures (due to not being outdoor courts).

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

In terms of distribution, 51% of identified tennis provision is located in the Blaby North Analysis Area. The Blaby West Analysis Area has the least provision, with five courts equating to 12% of overall supply.

## ***Padel provision***

Padel tennis is relatively new to Great Britain and is growing in popularity, particularly since its recognition as a sport and integration within the LTA. In 2022, 90,000 people reportedly played padel more than once in England, representing a 493% year on year increase compared to 2021 (15,000). This exemplifies the continued growth of the sport and the need to ensure that such demand is being adequately catered for.

In order to grow the sport, the LTA is focused on improving the infrastructure and the coach education pathway. At the end of 2020, there were 87 courts, whereas there are now 275, with a projected growth to 450 in 2023. It is therefore envisaged that the infrastructure and participation in padel will increase significantly in the next five years.

There are no padel courts currently located within Blaby.

The LTA states that padel court development at leisure centre sites can be particularly beneficial as provision can be tied into other sports facilities and profit from an already established operating model. Furthermore, it identifies that they can benefit clubs and particularly those that may be otherwise struggling due to the additional revenue that they can provide.

Notwithstanding the above, the LTA also states that it is not encouraging clubs to convert existing tennis courts to padel courts, unless it can be shown that they have the capacity to support this. This is to ensure that the provision of tennis courts remains sufficient.

## ***Ownership/management***

Tennis clubs in the District are largely considered to have secure tenure, meaning that its likely they will continue to operate on their current sites for the foreseeable future. No issues were raised by any responding club in relation to their current tenure situation (in 2020).

Table 7.2: Club tenure arrangements

Site ID	Site name	Club	Tenure arrangement
28	King George V Playing Field	Enderby Lawn Tennis Club	Long term lease from Enderby Parish Council. Club lease
51	Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Fields	Stoney Stanton Tennis Club	Facilities owned by Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Fields Association. Club uses through association.
63	Blaby Victoria Tennis Club	Blaby Victoria Tennis Club	Rented from Blaby Parish Council
68	Leicester Forest East Tennis Club	Leicester Forest East Tennis Club	Freehold

## ***Sports lighting***

Courts with spotlighting enable use throughout the year and are identified by the LTA as being particularly crucial for club development. In the District, there are 22 sports lit courts available for community use, these are all located at club sites.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## Court type

Most courts in the District have a macadam surface. The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels.

To ensure courts can have continued to be used beyond this time frame, it is recommended that a sinking fund is put into place for eventual refurbishment.

The surface types of all courts are consistent with that in 2020 and in Table 7.1.

## Quality

The quality of tennis courts across the District were assessed in 2020 via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (70-80%), Poor (<70%).

Maintaining high court quality is an important aspect of tennis and therefore the non-technical assessment assesses several factors which evidence court quality. The criteria for the non-technical assessment consists of; court surface grip underfoot, damage to a court surface, line markings, evidence of moss/lichen, slope of courts, disability access, fencing and courts being of an appropriate size for competitive tennis.

The only known change to the quality of provision is at Shakespear Park which has had the surfaces on two macadam courts fully resurfaced. These are now good quality. All other courts are expected to be in a consistent position as 2020.

Table 7.3: Site by site quality breakdown

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club	No. of courts	Quality (2020)	Quality (2024)
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	-	4	Poor	Poor
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East		2	Standard	Standard
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East		3	Poor	Poor
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Blaby North	County Hall LTC	3	Standard	Standard
28	King George V Playing Field	Blaby North	Enderby TC	3	Good	Good
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Blaby North	-	2	Standard	Standard
46	Shakespeare Park	Blaby North	-	2	Poor	Good
51	Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Fields	Blaby West	Stoney Stanton TC	4	Good	Good
54	Thorpe Astley Community Centre	Blaby North	-	2	Standard	Standard
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Blaby West	-	1	Poor	Poor

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Club	No. of courts	Quality (2020)	Quality (2024)
63	Blaby Victoria Tennis Club	Blaby East	Blaby Victoria TC	3	Standard	Standard
65	David Lloyd Narborough	Blaby East	-	6	Good	Good
68	Leicester Forest East Tennis Club	Blaby North	Leicester Forest East TC	4	Good	Good

Poor quality courts are identified at Brockington College, Countesthorpe Community College, and Winston Avenue Sports Ground. The non-technical audit found that these courts had poor surface quality and grip underfoot.

## ***Ancillary provision***

The ancillary facilities servicing the tennis clubs in Blaby has largely remained the same since the 2020 study. One key change is the improvement of a clubhouse, toilets and kitchen facility located at Shakespear Park which is available for recreational court users.

The 2020 PPS assessment identified that ancillary facilities servicing the tennis clubs in the District are largely good or standard quality. Leicester Forest East TC and Stoney Stanton TC both highlighted that their facilities are good quality.

Enderby TC highlighted that its facilities are standard quality, but highly outdated. Specifically, it stated an aspiration to develop a new clubhouse, with improved disability access, replacing its current provision to ensure that facilities servicing it are fit to service members in the future.

In contrast to the above, Blaby Victoria TC highlighted that its ancillary offer is poor quality and in need of refurbishment. The current facility is an old wooden facility which offers little in terms of social space, changing or appropriate toilet facilities.

## **7.3: Demand**

The LTA was unresponsive to consultation attempts from KKP. As such, this assessment does not provide updated membership figures across the five clubs for the 2023 affiliation window.

It is, however, possible to review the national participation trends from 2022, which state:

- ◀ Number of adults reporting that they had played tennis during the year increased 43% compared to the previous year, rising from 3.3 million to 4.7 million from January through to December. This is the highest total recorded since 2017 and has continued the growth seen in 2018-19 which was interrupted during the pandemic.
- ◀ More than two million adults play monthly, and this is the highest level recorded since the LTA started tracking this measure seven years ago.
- ◀ Children's weekly participation in tennis has seen positive growth in the past year with over three and a half million children playing tennis with an extra 328,000 children playing tennis in schools.

Whilst this is not Blaby specific, it does provide an indication on the national trend which clubs are experiencing. It further dictates the need for facilities which can readily accommodate for increased demand for informal and recreational activity.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

For reference, the 2020 club membership numbers can be found in the table below.

Table 7.4: Summary of club membership

Name of club	Seniors	Juniors	Total
Enderby Lawn Tennis Club	89	39	128
Stoney Stanton Tennis Club	88	64	152
Blaby Victoria Tennis Club	20	36	56
Leicester Forest East Tennis Club	140	85	225
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>561</b>

## **Latent demand**

Latent demand refers to potential demand; individuals who would like to participate within the sport but do not do so. This can be for a variety of reasons including a lack of courts or appropriate facilities. There is no identified latent demand in Blaby.

Additionally, Sport England's Market Segmentation Tool enables an analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in tennis in the District but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 1,799 people, 272 (15.1%) of which are within the segment 'Tim – settling down males'.

## **7.4: Supply and demand analysis at club sites**

The LTA suggests that a non-floodlit hard court can accommodate 40 members whereas a floodlit hard court can accommodate 60 members. For air domed courts, membership of 100 is considered applicable and permanent indoor courts can accommodate 200 members. It should be noted that the abovementioned figures relate to LTA viability guidelines for clubs and are not the maximum capacity. The figure relates to what most clubs, based on the level of provision, would find sustainable.

The LTA did not provide updated demand figures for clubs, so 2020 figures are retained and shown in the table below.

Table 7.5 Summary of supply and demand (2020)

Club	Current demand (members)	Future Demand (members)	Number of courts (floodlit)	Recommended capacity (members)	Capacity (2020)
Enderby Lawn Tennis Club	128	100	(3)	180	52
Stoney Stanton Tennis Club	152	-	(4)	240	88
Blaby Victoria Tennis Club	56	20	(3)	180	124
Leicester Forest East Tennis Club	225	110	(4)	640*	415

\* Capacity guidelines have been adjusted to account for two indoor tennis courts.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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From a club perspective, each had sufficient capacity to accommodate demand levels in 2020. To that end, each had a large spare membership capacity thus allowing for large growth without becoming oversubscribed. Whilst difficult to say, it is likely these clubs have not reached that capacity threshold as of 2024.

There is no mechanism for capturing the use of publicly available non club courts. As such, the focus should be on improving quality, both in terms of the courts and the accompanying ancillary facilities (where applicable), as well as providing a smoother booking system for potential users.

## 7.5: Conclusion (2024)

Clubs are considered viable as long as they have the appropriate levels of membership to sustain their courts and accompanying ancillary facilities. Therefore, clubs that have lower levels of participation in comparison to the remaining clubs within the Authority may have issues maintaining their provision.

Enderby and Blaby Victoria tennis clubs both aspire to improve their ancillary offering and therefore, achieving this will likely be the most beneficial action to tennis. Further to this, improving the quality of and accessibility to existing tennis, which are not good quality, will likely improve the capacity for provision to accommodate increase levels of demand.

All remaining publicly available non-club courts are deemed to have spare capacity. When this is accompanied by the substantial amount of expressed latent demand there is a clear need to actualise further usage of these courts. As such, the focus should be on improving quality, both in terms of the courts and the accompanying ancillary facilities, as well as providing a smoother booking system for potential users.

### **Tennis – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ There is a sufficient capacity at community tennis club sin Blaby to accommodate current demand.
- ◀ For non-club activity, there is a sufficient supply of courts. However, quality is a concern at several sites and there would be benefit to greater alignment to LTA offers such as LTA Play.
- ◀ There are no Padel tennis courts in Blaby.

### **Tennis – supply summary**

- ◀ There are 39 courts across 12 sites in Blaby all of which offer a level of community use.
- ◀ There are no padel courts in the District.
- ◀ Ancillary provision servicing Enderby TC is dated but function and provision at Blaby Victoria TC is poor and would benefit from refurbishment/replacement. Provision at remaining club sites is good quality.
- ◀ Since the 2020 PPS, quality has improved at Shakespeare Park with both courts being resurfaced.

### **Tennis – demand summary**

- ◀ There are five community tennis clubs in Blaby. Each has sufficient capacity to accommodate existing levels of demand.
- ◀ Latent demand (Sport England segmentation data) suggests there is a high number of people (1,799) in Blaby which would like to participate in Tennis but are not currently doing so in Blaby.
- ◀ National trends for tennis indicate an increase in the demand for the sport which may translate to need for formal club and recreational/informal tennis offers.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## PART 8: NETBALL

### 8.1: Introduction

England Netball is the governing body with overall responsibility for ensuring the effective governance of the sport.

Whilst often played indoors, there are far more outdoor courts provided and in use by the netball community than there are indoor. Nationally, England Netball reports that the challenge is that the supply of outdoor netball courts is generally not of a good enough standard for use by the community, whilst accessibility and a lack of floodlighting can also be problematic.

#### **Consultation**

England Netball was consulted by KKP to update this section of the report.

### 8.2: Supply

Since the PPS in 2020, two new courts have come online at Winstanley Community College meaning there are now eight outdoor netball courts located across three unique sites in the District. These courts are overmarked on an existing artificial grass pitch. All courts are located at education sites.

Table 8.1: Netball courts in Blaby

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Community use?	No. of courts	Floodlit	Court type
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	Yes	3	Yes	Macadam
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	Yes	1	Yes	Astro
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	Yes	2	No	Macadam
61	Winstanley Community College	Blaby North	Yes	2	Yes	Astro

#### **Over marking**

Whilst it does help with usage levels and sustainability, an issue for netball nationally is that many of its courts are dual use tennis courts. This limits accessibility (especially during the summer when tennis nets are often permanently in place) and can impact on quality due to higher levels of wear and tear. This is true with all courts in the District, with each overmarked with tennis and small sided football markings.

#### **Court type**

The estimated lifespan of a macadam court is ten years, depending on levels of use and maintenance levels. To ensure courts can continue to be used beyond this time frame, it is recommended that a sinking fund is put into place for eventual refurbishment. Artificial courts generally allow for greater levels of access, especially during inclement weather spells, as well as requiring less frequent maintenance. Nevertheless, the cost of resurfacing the courts is more expensive despite the lifespan being similar.

Most of the courts in the District (five) have a macadam surface, three, have an AstroTurf surface.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## **Court quality**

The quality of tennis courts across the District have been assessed, in 2020, via a combination of site visits (using non-technical assessments) and user consultation to reach and apply an agreed rating as follows:

- ◀ Good
- ◀ Standard
- ◀ Poor

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments were as follows: Good (>80%), Standard (70-80%), Poor (<70%).

The criteria for the non-technical assessment consists of; court surface grip underfoot, damage to a court surface, line markings, evidence of moss/lichen, slope of courts, disability access, fencing and courts being of an appropriate size for competitive tennis

Following a non-technical assessment (2020) five netball courts were identified as being poor quality, and one standard quality. All five poor quality courts are based on macadam surfaces, each overmarked with tennis and/or football markings. The new courts at Winstanley College have been provided in the last three years as part as an AGP resurface to 3G and as such are of a good quality.

Since the previous study in 2020, the sand-based astroturf court at Countesthorpe Community College has deteriorated to poor quality whilst the macadam courts on site remain in poor condition.

Table 8.2: Netball court quality

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of courts	Court type	Quality
3	Brockington College	Blaby North	3	Macadam	Poor
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby East	1	Astro	Poor
			2	Macadam	Poor
61	Winstanley Community College	Blaby North	2	Astro	Good

## **8.3: Demand**

Blaby Netball Club established in 2012 as a ‘back to netball’ Club. It has since evolved into a competitive Club with two senior teams. The first team compete in Premiership Division of the Leicester Netball League. Despite the name, the Club do not play fixtures or train within the District. The Club train on Monday evenings at the Wigston Academy (Oadby & Wigston) and play fixtures at Soar Valley Leisure Centre (Leicester) as part of a central venue league structure. Most recent membership numbers for the Club from the 2021/22 season show it currently has 98 members, increasing from 84 members in the 2019/20 season.

### **Leicester Netball League**

The Leicester Netball League is a Senior and Youth Netball League based at Soar Valley Leisure Centre (Charnwood). The League is played using two indoor courts and five outdoor floodlit courts. The season runs generally from September through until April.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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## ***Back to Netball and Walking Netball***

Back to Netball sessions are running across England and provides women of all ages a welcoming re-introduction to the sport. Sessions cover the basics of the game including passing, footwork and shooting and finish with a friendly game. Since its creation in 2010, over 60,000 women have taken part. There is one session taking place in the District, located at Countesthorpe College

Walking netball has evolved from a growing demand of walking sports e.g. walking football. Walking netball is a slower version of the game. It has been designed so that anyone can play regardless of age and fitness level and therefore offers opportunities for older adults to participate and enjoy.

Since the last PPS was completed, a new walking netball programme has been established at Brockington College, ran via England Netball.

## ***Latent demand***

Latent demand refers to potential demand; individuals who would like to participate within the sport but do not do so. This can be for a variety of reasons including a lack courts or appropriate facilities. There is no evidenced latent demand in the District, this is largely due to the nature of how netball is played in the region, with indoor central venue leagues being prominent. Furthermore, no school reported any expressed demand for outdoor court facilities, outside of existing use.

Additionally, Sport England's Market Segmentation Tool<sup>18</sup> enables an analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in netball within the District but are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand of 280 people, 66 (24%) of which are within the segment 'Chloe – fitness class friends'.

## **8.4: Supply and demand analysis**

The analysis suggests that there is enough outdoor netball provision in the District to accommodate for all current demand and any potential future growth. As all competitive teams are likely to compete within the local Leicestershire league structure (which operates as central venue) outside of the District, there is no perceived demand likely to be generated for outdoor courts, other than, recreational sessions.

One point of note is that there is no netball provision available for residents in the Blaby West Analysis Area. Although there is no formal demand identified, does reduce opportunities for residents to engage in informal or recreational opportunities.

## **8.5: Conclusion (2024)**

As a result of the central venue position for competitive netball in Leicestershire, emphasis should be placed on the development of recreational programmes to encourage participation in the sport.

There has already been evident progression with this since the 2020 PPS as evidenced by the walking netball programme which now takes place at Brockington College.

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<sup>18</sup> See Appendix 2  
March 2024

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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### **Netball – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ In summary, there is enough netball provision in the District to meet current and future demand therefore a priority should be placed on retaining the supply of courts and improving quality when possible.

### **Netball - supply summary**

- ◀ In total, there are eight outdoor netball courts located across three unique sites in the District. All courts are located at education sites.
- ◀ Most of the courts in the District (five) have a macadam surface, three, have an AstroTurf surface.
- ◀ All five macadam courts are poor quality, whilst the AstroTurf court at Countesthorpe Community College is also of poor quality. The two courts at Winstanley Community College are of good quality.

### **Netball - demand summary**

- ◀ There are no netball clubs based in the District, with all demand from Blaby Netball Club exported outside of the Authority.
- ◀ The local league structure for competitive netball operates on a central venue basis outside of the District. Consequently, it is not expected that there will be a significant rise in demand for outdoor netball courts, other than for recreational formats.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## PART 9: GOLF

### 9.1: Introduction

Golf is the fifth largest participation sport in England, with around 730,000 members belonging to one of 1,800 affiliated clubs and a further two million people playing independently outside of club membership. There are an estimated 3,000 golf courses across the Country, with approximately 90 designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest because apart from the intensively managed trees and greens they have other habitats with high wildlife value. Many other courses also exist within designated Heritage Coast sites, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or listed Historic Parklands.

Nationally, the sport is governed by England Golf. Its role includes providing competitions for players of all ages and abilities, identifying and developing the most talented golfers, maintaining a uniform system of handicapping, administering and applying the rules, and introducing new golfers via its initiatives such as 'Get into Golf'.

#### **Consultation**

The section of the report was informed by an England Golf facility report on the District provided to KKP in October 2023.

### 9.2: Supply

There are three different types of golf facilities recognised by Sport England and governed by England Golf, as defined in the table below. Facilities such as pitch and putt courses and miniature/crazy golf courses are not included as these are not considered to be traditional formats of the game and are not comparable offerings.

Table 9.1: Definitions of golf facilities

Facility type	Description
Standard	A standard par course, with a minimum of 9 holes but normally associated with 18-hole courses; many 9-hole courses have different tee boxes which allow the provision to be played as an 18-hole course. Some courses provide 27 holes, with any two loops of 9-holes played to make up an 18-hole round.
Par 3	Shorter length of holes than a standard course, with no hole longer than Par 3. Most likely to be a 9-hole course although 18-hole offerings do exist. Does not include pitch and putt courses, which are even shorter offerings and are not considered to be a traditional version of the sport.
Driving Range	Includes covered and uncovered driving range bays but not practice areas within golf courses; ranges are based on the hiring of balls, with users not required to retrieve, whereas practice areas are generally for members to use with their own balls (although a growing number have dispensers). Does not include 'entertainment' ranges or virtual offerings, although some driving ranges have expanded to also provide these features.

There are five golf courses in the District across five sites. In terms of distribution of golf facilities, three courses are in the Blaby West Analysis Area and two are in the Blaby East Analysis Area. There is no golf provision located in the Blaby North Analysis Area.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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Table 9.2: Existing golf provision

Site ID	Site	Analysis area
72	Blaby Golf Centre	Blaby East
73	Cosby Golf Club	Blaby West
74	Enderby Golf Course	Blaby East
75	Kirby Muxloe Golf Club	Blaby West
76	Whetstone Golf Club	Blaby West

## **Management**

Enderby Golf Club is managed by commercial operator, Everyone Active, as part of its leisure contract with Blaby District Council. The remaining four clubs'/centre sites are operated internally as dedicated sports clubs.

## **Accessibility**

Sport England data indicates that most people will travel up to 20 minutes to access sports facilities, including golf courses. Given this, Figure 9.1 highlights all golf courses within a 20 minute drive time catchment of existing golf facilities in the District.

There are 11 golf facilities (either nine or 18 hole courses) in a 20 minute drivetime catchment of provision in the District. As can be seen below, it is considered that all residents of the District are able to suitably able to access golf provision, in either the District, or the surrounding authorities.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Figure 9.1: Golf provision within a 20 minute drivetime catchment of existing facilities

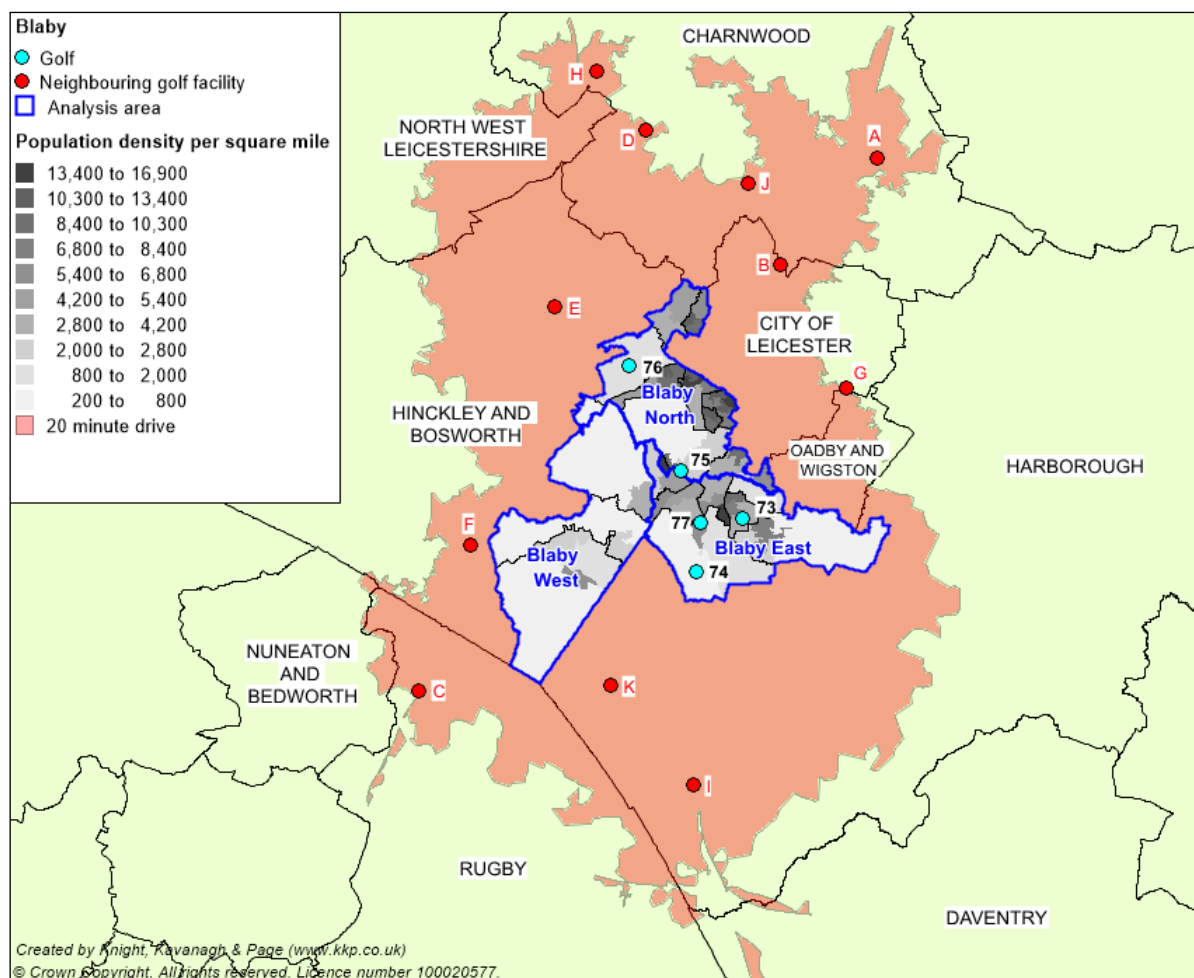


Table 9.2: Golf provision within a 20 minute drivetime catchment of existing facilities

Map ID	Site	District
A	Beedles Lake Golf Centre	Charnwood
B	Birstall Golf Club	City of Leicester
C	Bramcote Water Golf Course	Rugby
D	Charnwood Forest Golf Club	Charnwood
E	Forest Hill Golf & Conference Centre	Hinckley and Bosworth
F	Hinckley Golf Club Ltd	Hinckley and Bosworth
G	Leicestershire Golf Club	City of Leicester
H	Longcliffe Golf Club	Charnwood
I	Lutterworth Golf Club	Harborough
J	Rothley Park Golf Club	Charnwood
K	Ullesthorpe Court Hotel & Golf Club	Harborough

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## **Course facilities**

Blaby Golf Centre has several specific golf facilities on site to cater to a broad range of consumer demands. The centre does not formally operate as a golf club and its nine-hole course is centred around a more casual golf segment, with the course primarily being available for pay and play, as such, there is no formal membership base aligned for golf aligned to the site. It also offers crazy golf and pitch and putt (nine hole) opportunities to casual users.

Cosby Golf Club operates a traditional 18 hole course and a nine bay driving range. To access the course, users must have a formal membership with the Club. The driving range is open to members and non-members (through pay and play opportunities).

Enderby Golf Club is the sole local authority owned facility in the District. It operates a nine hole municipal course on both a membership and pay and play basis.

Kirby Muxloe Golf Club offers an 18 hole traditional hole course. The course is an England Golf Championship venue which translates to it being of an exceptional quality for high level competitive golf. It also offers a ten bay driving range. Membership of the facility is the most premium in the District but pay and play opportunities are available for casual users.

Whetstone Golf Club offers an 18 hole traditional golf course and 30 bay driving range, which is the largest in the District. Membership prices are aligned to traditional, competitive, golf clubs.

Table 9.3: Summary of golf courses in Blaby

Site ID	Course name	Holes	Driving range?	Other facilities
72	Blaby Golf Centre	9	No	Pitch and putt Crazy golf
73	Cosby Golf Club	18	Yes	-
74	Enderby Golf Course	9	No	-
75	Kirby Muxloe Golf Club	18	Yes	-
76	Whetstone Golf Club	18	Yes	-

## **Quality**

All courses are good quality, with a dedicated maintenance regime carried out at each facility (based on 2020 audit information).

## **Ancillary facilities**

Golf clubs need multiple revenue sources to operate effectively, and the provision of a clubhouse can often be key for golf clubs as it can provide an income stream, not only from members but also through hiring the venue out for occasions (e.g. wedding receptions). Most clubs in the District have access to a dedicated clubhouse which offers opportunities for revenue generation. Enderby Golf Course is the only facility which does not offer a dedicated clubhouse for members.

Blaby Golf Centre has a dedicated clubhouse which offers a bar and pool tables for users of the site. As detailed earlier, the site largely caters for a casual golf consumer base and therefore the clubhouse is designed for this market.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Cosby, Kirby Muxloe and Whetstone golf clubs all have dedicated clubhouses which are designed to offer dedicated bar and function facilities. Each can cater for various events commercial or golf occasions throughout the year.

Enderby Golf Course is the only course which does not have a dedicated clubhouse. It does, however, offer a dedicated café facility which offers food and drink to users through the day. The facility forms part of Enderby Leisure Centre, which is managed by Everyone Active.

## **Management and ownership**

There are three main types of ownership and management models of golf facilities in England: members clubs, proprietary clubs, and municipal facilities. Each of these is summarised in the table below.

Table 9.4: Types of ownership and management of golf facilities

Management type	Description
<b>Members</b>	Traditionally owned by members and run by committees. They are likely to hire caterers and green staff. Most members' clubs offer some level of pay and play and encourage golf societies but are mostly focused on membership numbers.
<b>Proprietary</b>	Owned or managed by businesses or individuals, these can include country club type facilities at the high end of the golfing market alongside more localised facilities. Many have clubs operating within them but can also take a much more relaxed attitude to dress and traditions of golf. Pay and play opportunities tend to be a key feature of the business plan.
<b>Municipal</b>	These are generally owned by a local authority, although in a growing number of instances, management has been contracted and externalised to private companies. Due to a lack of financial viability, many have closed across the Country in recent years and many that remain are under threat.

It is recognised that members clubs and visitors to such clubs are normally expected to dress appropriately, have a registered handicap certificate (a certificate issued by the Council of National Golf Unions (CONGU)) and be familiar with the rules and etiquette of the game. This is not uncommon at some proprietary clubs, but municipal courses tend to be more relaxed with regard to dress codes and do not require people to have handicaps, making golf much more accessible.

Consequently, municipal courses are, in many instances, seen as entry level facilities, with players using them before having the confidence to move on to a members' or high-end proprietary club (although many people can and do stay attached to a particular course). They also tend to offer a more affordable golfing experience.

The business model for members clubs tends to rely heavily on income through membership subscriptions and use of ancillary facilities, rather than from pay and play usage, although attention has somewhat switched at many sites in recent years due to demand falling. The same can be said for some proprietary clubs, although, in general, more emphasis is placed on supplementing regular activity with green fee sales.

Conversely, municipal sites have always been heavily reliant on visitors even though membership packages are normally available (often in the shape of season tickets). On occasion, these can be linked to access to other local authority operated sports facilities, such as leisure centres and swimming pools.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Despite the above generalisations, each golf facility, regardless of management type, will have its own processes in terms of how much focus is placed on membership and pay and play usage, or whether it equally encourages both. There is no correct way to run a site. A club that focuses on members has guaranteed income, but this can often deter more casual players or nomadic golfers through, for example, a lack of peak time availability.

In contrast, a site that depends on visitors can struggle to be viable if there are spells of inclement weather during summer months and can discourage people that want to be part of a club environment. On the other hand, more income can be brought in through regular users compared to what would be the case had they been part of a membership scheme.

In Blaby, there are two member's club, two proprietary clubs and one municipal site.

Table 9:5: Summary of management in Blaby

Site name	Management type
Blaby Golf Centre	Proprietary
Cosby Golf Club	Members
Enderby Golf Course	Municipal
Kirby Muxloe Golf Club	Members
Whetstone Golf Club	Proprietary

### 9.3: Demand

The 2022 national average for golf club membership in England was 407 members per Club. Of the three affiliated golf clubs in Blaby (Cosby, Kirby Muxloe & Whetstone golf clubs), average membership is currently 568 members per club, placing Blaby 40% above the national average. Average membership for the clubs has increased from 473 members per club in 2015, with Kirby Muxloe Golf Clubs membership increasing by 26% since 2015.

#### ***Ways to play***

In partnership with England Golf, Ways to Play includes a broader range of golf opportunities than nine hole golf that Golf Express previously promoted. These include, but are not limited to Golf Sixes, nine hole golf, Footgolf, Adventure golf, pitch & putt and simulator play.

#### ***FootGolf***

FootGolf is a relatively new activity that is played on a golf course using a football. The object of the game is to get the ball into the hole using only your feet in the fewest number of shots possible. It is governed by the UK FootGolf Association.

Nationally, there are currently 160 recognised Golf courses that incorporate FootGolf, with many clubs recognising it as a chance to provide an income stream that can provide sustainability at a time when participation in the traditional game has decreased. The sport is generally played on a smaller than average courses, with Par 3 courses being ideal.

In the District, no clubs/courses are identified as operating as FootGolf centres. As each course have strong memberships for aligned to the traditional game across 9 and 18 hole courses it is largely the position that FootGolf would not be needed as an additional offer for existing clientele.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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### ***Get into Golf***

Get into Golf is a national campaign, delivered locally, to inspire people to take up golf. The campaign is run by England Golf and is provided by local golf facilities and PGA professionals.

Its purpose is to create awareness for the sport and opportunities for beginners by providing support and low-cost activities including:

- ◀ Taster sessions
- ◀ Beginner courses
- ◀ Learn golf in a day
- ◀ Improvers courses

### **9.4: Supply and demand analysis**

The overall picture suggests that there is substantial demand for golf in the District which is demonstrated by the supply of facilities available to the Districts residents both in and outside of the District. Given the above, it is considered that the current supply of facilities can meet current and future demand.

Therefore, emphasis should be placed on capitalising on potential latent demand identified in the District, as well as exploring opportunities to increase club revenue through initiatives such as FootGolf.

Further analysis at club or facility level, along with some additional England Golf tools, could be used to better understand the existing members and visitors of each venue. This may help to establish a clearer picture of the overall facility landscape and how well it caters for the local demographic.

### **9.5: Conclusion (provided by England Golf)**

In summary, there is an average amount of provision in the District which also offers some variety. The existing facilities are clearly servicing a demand as evidenced by the membership numbers across the identified which accommodate members. It is the view of England Golf that all current facilities should therefore be retained and protected to ensure no gaps in golf provision are created, with opportunities explored to improve the mix of facilities, putting particular focus on accessible driving ranges to offer more entry level style facilities for those who are new to the game.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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## **Golf – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ There are five golf courses in the District spread across five sites. Three courses offer 18 hole courses and two offer nine hole courses.
- ◀ There are no footgolf opportunities identified in the District.
- ◀ It is considered that the current supply of facilities in the District can meet current and future demand for traditional golf, with emphasis placed on ensuring sites are able to retain current members and users as well as assisting them in capitalising on any untapped demand and future demand.

## **Golf - supply summary**

- ◀ Application of a 20 minute drive time catchment to all existing golf courses in the District shows 11 potential facilities which are likely to be accessible for the Districts residents.
- ◀ Quality is considered to be good at all courses in the District.

## **Golf - demand summary**

- ◀ The 2022 national average for golf club membership in England was 407 members per Club. Of the three affiliated golf clubs in Blaby (Cosby, Kirby Muxloe & Whetstone golf clubs), average membership is currently 568 members per club, placing Blaby 40% above the national average. Average membership for the clubs has increased from 473 members per club in 2015, with Kirby Muxloe Golf Clubs membership increasing by 26% since 2015.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## PART 10: HOCKEY

### 10.1: Introduction

Hockey in England is governed by England Hockey (EH) and is administered locally by the Leicestershire Hockey Association.

Competitive league hockey matches and training can only be played on sand filled, sand dressed or water based artificial grass pitches (AGPs). Although competitive, adult and junior club training cannot take place on third generation turf pitches (3G), 40mm pitches may be suitable for introductory level hockey, such as school curriculum low level hockey. EH's Artificial Grass Playing Surface Policy details suitability of surface type for varying levels of hockey, as shown below.

Table 10.1: England Hockey guidelines on artificial surface types suitable for hockey

Category	Surface	Playing Level	Playing Level
England Hockey Category 1	Water surface approved within the FIH Global/National Parameters	<b>Essential</b> International Hockey - Training and matches	<b>Desirable</b> Domestic National Premier competition Higher levels of EH Player Pathway Performance Centres and upwards England
England Hockey Category 2	Sand dressed surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	<b>Essential</b> Domestic National Premier competition Higher levels of player pathway: Academy Centres and Upwards	<b>Desirable</b> All adult and junior League Hockey Intermediate or advanced School Hockey
England Hockey Category 3	Sand based surfaces within the FIH National Parameter	<b>Essential</b> All adult and junior club training and league Hockey EH competitions for clubs and schools Intermediate or advanced schools hockey	EH competitions for clubs and schools (excluding domestic national league)
England Hockey Category 4	All 3G surfaces	<b>Essential</b> None	<b>Desirable</b> Lower level hockey (Introductory level) when no category 1-3 surface is available.

For senior hockey teams, a full sized pitch for competitive matches must measure at least 91.4 x 55 metres excluding surrounding run off areas which must be a minimum of two metres at the sides & three metres at the ends. England Hockey preference is for four metre side and five metre end run offs, with a preferred overall area of 101.4 x 63 metres though a minimum overall area of 97.4 x 59 metres is accepted.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## Consultation

In order to update this section of the report, consultation has been carried out with England Hockey and the Council.

## 10.2: Supply

There are no full-size hockey suitable AGPs in the District, however, there are six small sided pitches. These are spread across five sites, with two pitches located at Ellis Park. The supply is pitches can be found in Table 10.2.

## Quality

Depending on use, it is considered that the carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately ten years and it is the age of the surface, combined with maintenance levels, which most commonly affects quality. It is therefore recommended that sinking funds be put into place by providers to enable long-term sustainability, on-going repairs and future refurbishment beyond this period.

The percentage parameters used for the non-technical assessments in 2020 were as follows; Good (>80%), Standard (60-79%), Poor (<60%). The quality ratings assigned to the sites also consider the user quality ratings gathered from consultation.

The quality of the pitch supply is largely poor, with many facilities provided over ten years ago. None have had significant investment into surface replacement and have been maintained to an adequate level over the past decade. As such, the current position is that the majority of pitches, with the exception of the two at Ellis Park, are poor quality.

Since the 2020 PPS was produced, a small sided sand dressed pitch at Winstanley College has been converted into a 3G surface. This had no impact on community hockey.

England Hockey report that aside from the above there have been no changes to the supply of pitches in Blaby since 2020. It is not aware of any improvements to the supply of pitches, particularly those which are poor quality.

Table 10.2: Hockey suitable provision in the District

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Surface type	Quality (2020)	Quality (2024)
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Blaby North	1	Sand Dressed	Poor	Poor
12	Ellis Park	Blaby East	2	Sand Dressed	Standard	Standard
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Blaby North	1	Sand Dressed	Poor	Poor
51	Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Fields	Blaby West	1	Sand Dressed	Poor	Poor

## 10.3: Demand

No pitches are used for either hockey training or for competitive matches and England Hockey reports that there is no identified community hockey demand in the District. The current facility stock is used entirely for curricular purposes and for recreational football.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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England Hockey (2023) states that there remains no hockey demand originating from Blaby. It further states that demand originating from Leicester is largely satisfied, notwithstanding issues with the potential loss of an artificial grass pitch at Soar Valley Academy (Leicester) – however, this would not impact on Blaby.

## ***Converting sand-based AGPs to 3G***

Since the introduction of 3G pitches and given their popularity for football, providers have seen this as a way of replacing their tired sand-based carpet and generating money from hiring out a 3G pitch to football clubs and commercial football providers. This has come at the expense of hockey, with players now travelling further distances to gain access to a suitable pitch and many teams being displaced from their preferred geographical area.

Due to its impact on hockey, it is appropriate to ensure that sufficient sand-based AGPs are retained for the playing development of hockey. To that end, a change of surface will require a planning application and, as part of that, the applicants will have to show that there is sufficient provision available for hockey in the locality. Advice from Sport England and EH should therefore be sought prior to any planning application being submitted.

It should also be noted that, if a surface is changed, it could require the existing floodlighting and drainage to be changed and, in some instances, noise attenuation measures may need to be put in place.

## **10.4: Conclusion (2024)**

There is a clear need to improve the quality of sand dressed AGPs in the District. However, given there is no reported current or future demand for community hockey to be played within the District, there could be an opportunity to explore converting some of these to 3G pitches to meet demand identified or into more general purpose multi-use-games areas.

On a site by site basis, this should still be done in consultation with England Hockey to ensure that this will not be detriment to the sport, particularly school participation.

### **Hockey – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ There are no full size hockey suitable pitches in Blaby. There are however five small sided pitches provided across four sites.
- ◀ There is no demand from hockey originating in Blaby.

### **Hockey - supply summary**

- ◀ There are five small sided pitches in Blaby. The quality at three of the five sites is poor quality. The two pitches situated at Ellis Park are standard quality.

### **Hockey- demand summary**

- ◀ There is no formal demand for hockey identified in Blaby. Any demand originating from Blaby residents will be expressed in neighbouring authorities.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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## PART 11: AMERICAN FOOTBALL

American football in the UK is governed and administered by the British American Football Association (BAFA). Adult men's contact teams play within its National League (BAFANL) on Sunday afternoons and play five home fixtures per regular season with a playoff system to follow for those which qualify.

### 11.1: Supply

There are no dedicated American football pitches in the District. Traditionally in England, clubs often utilise overmarked rugby union pitches or 3G pitches to accommodate both training and competitive fixtures.

### 11.2: Demand

There is one community American football club based in the District; Leicester Falcons. The Club has been nomadic since its inception in 2006. In the 2019 season, it played its fixtures at Leicester Lions RFC but has since relocated to Leicester Forest RFC to play its fixtures on the recently developed World Rugby Compliant 3G pitch.

### 11.3: Supply and demand analysis

BAFA does not have any pitch capacity guidelines for the sport. On this basis, it is important to understand what type of pitch any American football demand is played on (i.e., rugby union) and how much use that pitch receives for its primary and any secondary sport.

In the case of Leicester Falcons, match and training demand is attributed to a 3G pitch and as such there is no capacity guidelines for use.

### 11.4: Conclusion (2024)

American Football in the District is essentially well catered for with Leicester Falcons accessing a 3G pitch for matches and training. Given its nomadic history, if it was to relocate again in the future, it is likely that its demand can be accommodated on an existing grass rugby union pitch which has spare capacity i.e., Old Newtonians RFC.

#### **American Football – supply and demand summary**

- ◀ Demand for American football is well accommodated for in Blaby on existing rugby union provision. There are no dedicated pitches for American football, however, this is not uncommon nationally.

#### **American Football - supply summary**

- ◀ There is no dedicated American football provision.
- ◀ Demand for the sport is expressed on a 3G pitch at Leicester Forest RFC.

#### **American Football - demand summary**

- ◀ Leicester Falcons is the Club situated in Blaby. It has one team which usually plays on Sundays.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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### PART 12: SPORT SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS (UPDATED 2024)

The findings of the Blaby PPS update (2024) are broadly like that of 2020. There have, however, been significant pockets of growth in certain sports such as football which has impacted available spare capacity and the need for associated provision such as 3G pitches. Participation for other outdoor sports included in this project has largely stayed the same.

Based on the changes to the supply and demand position, as well as changes to infrastructure, and site quality, the sport specific recommendations in the Blaby PPS (2020) have been updated for all sports within the scope and can be seen below. All recommendations set out in Part 5 Strategic Recommendations (2020 PPS) are still applicable and do not feature within this update.

#### *Grass football pitch recommendations*

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of pitches until all demand is being met (unless replacement provision meets Sport England requirements and is agreed upon and provided).
- ◀ Utilise the Football Foundation's PitchPower app to assist in the improvement and ongoing maintenance of provision.
- ◀ Support clubs and eligible organisations to access funding to improve quality of grass pitches, including through the FF Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund.
- ◀ Work to accommodate future demand at sites which are not operating at capacity or at sites not currently available for community use that could be moving forward.
- ◀ Improve ancillary facilities where this is a clear need to do so (as set out within the action plan in this report).
- ◀ Work to secure tenure for clubs which have a reliance on accessing provision at education sites.
- ◀ Ensure clubs playing within, or with aspirations to play within, the National League System can progress.
- ◀ Explore pitch reconfiguration where possible in order to alleviate pitch shortfalls.
- ◀ Update the Local Football Facilities Plan for Blaby in due course with findings from the PPS.
- ◀ Monitor future growth in football demand over the lifespan of this document as it is expected to be significant (66 teams).
- ◀ Explore opportunities for club-led management and maintenance models at sites where appropriate.
- ◀ Focus on the development of good quality pavilion provision at key strategic multi-pitch sites and those with a focus on growth of women and girls' participation.

#### *3G pitch recommendations*

- ◀ Look to increase the supply of 3G pitches throughout the District. The Blaby East Analysis Area has the highest identified need.
- ◀ Ensure that any new 3G pitches have community use agreements in place.
- ◀ Ensure all current and future providers have in place a sinking fund to ensure long term sustainability.
- ◀ Ensure that all new 3G pitches are constructed to meet quality performance standards and are on the FA 3G Pitch Register to enable their use for competitive match play.
- ◀ Encourage more match play demand to transfer to 3G pitches and ensure that pitches remain suitable to accommodate such demand through appropriate certification when it is required.
- ◀ Ensure that any new 3G pitches are priced competitively against the cost of hiring a grass pitches and are aimed at local grassroots clubs.
- ◀ Consult with the RFU if any new 11v11 pitches are provided to determine potential need from local rugby union clubs.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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- ◀ Update the Local Football Facilities Plan for Blaby in due course with findings from the PPS.

### *Cricket recommendations*

- ◀ Existing quantity of cricket squares to be protected or be fully mitigated to meet National Planning Policy.
- ◀ Work with clubs and grounds staff to review quality issues on squares to ensure appropriate quality is achieved at sites assessed as standard and sustained at sites assessed as good.
- ◀ Consider long term future of the Sharnford Cricket Club site which has been out of use since 2017. Evidence suggests it may play a role as a strategic reserve for the sport in the future.
- ◀ Ensure security of tenure for all clubs with lease arrangements in place by ensuring agreements have over 25 years remaining.
- ◀ Support pavilion developments where it is required.
- ◀ Explore opportunities to provide Countesthorpe CC with a secondary square within a suitable locality to accommodate its exported demand.
- ◀ Explore options to provide clubs capacity for future demand including square quality improvements, creation of NTPs, securing tenure and secondary sites or creating new provision if required.
- ◀ Where sites are overplayed consider the opportunity to provide hybrid wickets to enable higher durability of the cricket square.
- ◀ Any new cricket provision created should have a ball strike assessment carried out as a matter of due course. Where new housing or building developments are under consideration within proximity to existing facilities a ball strike risk assessment should be undertaken. In addition, any clubs which could be potentially affected by this issue should be signposted to the ECB.
- ◀ Deliver the All Stars Cricket, Dynamos and women & girls programmes and seek to increase junior and female participation as a result.
- ◀ Work to increase women and girls' participation in line with the emerging Inspiring Generations ECB Strategy and protect existing provision so that women and girls have a suitable place to practise and play.

### *Grass rugby union recommendations*

- ◀ Existing quantity of rugby union pitches to be protected or be fully mitigated to meet National Planning Policy.
- ◀ Improve pitch quality, where possible, at secure sites to alleviate overplay and create actual spare capacity, this is particularly important at Vipers RFC and Leicester Lions RFC.
- ◀ Continue to develop strong relationships between rugby clubs and schools through curricular and extracurricular programmes to increase levels of mixed age grade and junior participation.
- ◀ Work to provide additional sports lighting at Vipers RFC and Leicester Lions RFC.
- ◀ Improve ancillary facilities where this is a clear need to do so.
- ◀ Maximise the use of the WR compliant 3G pitch at Leicester Forest RFC for rugby union participation.

### *Bowling green recommendations*

- ◀ Retain existing quantity of greens.
- ◀ Existing quantity of bowling greens to be protected or be fully mitigated to meet National Planning Policy.
- ◀ Improve standard quality greens to good through enhanced maintenance regimes.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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- ◀ Assist clubs, where possible, with any future ancillary provision improvements.
- ◀ Work to support clubs to be financially sustainable.
- ◀ Support clubs with plans to increase membership so that growth can be maximised.

### *Tennis recommendations*

- ◀ Retain and sustain quality of club courts for competitive play through implementation of appropriate maintenance regimes.
- ◀ Support clubs which aspire for courts and ancillary facility improvements such as Enderby TC (KGV Playing Field).
- ◀ Improve quality of non-club courts and accompanying ancillary provision, first and foremost focusing on sites that best accommodate informal play.
- ◀ Explore implementation of ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access schemes at appropriate sites to enhance available provision for informal tennis.
- ◀ Consider the feasibility of operating LTA programmes to attract new players to the sport.
- ◀ Work to strengthen the links between schools and tennis clubs. This will encourage children to play, strengthen the membership of clubs and increase their financial viability and also make better use of school tennis courts where they exist.

### *Netball recommendations*

- ◀ Protect quantity of courts.
- ◀ Improve the quality of courts at Brockington College as a priority.
- ◀ Seek to improve the quantity of courts in the District. The current supply is low and limits opportunities for participation.
- ◀ Aim to secure long term community access for courts which are used for recreational activity.
- ◀ Look to continue and expand the use of courts for England Netball initiatives such as Back to Netball and walking netball.
- ◀ Facilitate improved engagement between England Netball and schools.

### *Golf recommendations*

- ◀ Protect existing golf provision unless appropriate mitigation is secured in line with planning policy, or an independent needs assessment identifies a course as being surplus to requirements.
- ◀ Sustain course and ancillary facility quality and seek improvements where necessary.
- ◀ Support clubs in membership retention and potential growth and encourage clubs and providers to work more collaboratively in terms of creating pathways for players.

### *Hockey recommendations*

- ◀ Refurbish the existing small sided pitches in the District to provide a multi-sport offer for recreational and informal purposes where there is a need to do so.
- ◀ Promote opportunities for residents to engage in formal hockey programmes at clubs which lie on the periphery of the District in Leicester.

### *American football recommendations*

- ◀ Ensure that Leicester Falcons can continue to operate within the District by accessing sufficient pitch space.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## PART 13: UPDATED SPORT SCENARIO TESTING

Where there have been notable changes in the supply and demand landscape since the 2020 PPS, updated scenario testing has been undertaken. This is applicable for 3G pitches, cricket and rugby union. For the remaining sports included within the scope of work, the supply and demand positions are broadly the same as they were in 2020.

### **3G pitches**

There has been an increase of 85 community football teams playing in Blaby. As a result of this there is a likely increased associated need for 3G pitches to provide for midweek training opportunities.

Modelling is based on an FA model which suggests that for every 38 community football teams there is a need for one (11v11 size) 3G pitch with sports lighting.

Full details of the 3G pitch analysis can be found in Part 3 of this report, however, in summary, there is a shortfall of 5.5 full size pitches.

Table 13.1: Current demand for 3G pitches in the District (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Analysis area	Potential shortfall
Blaby East	3.5
Blaby North	0.5
Blaby West	1.5
<b>Blaby District</b>	<b>5.5</b>

### *Future demand for 3G pitches*

ONS population projections identify potential growth of 66 football teams by 2041. Based on this figure, the broad shortfall of 5.5 (11v11 size) 3G pitches increases to seven.

### *Site locations*

The table below identifies sites which could, in theory, be suitable for future development to meet known shortfalls for 3G pitches. Each of these sites will require a full feasibility to be undertaken to determine if they are suitable in meeting known need. Note this list is a starting point for discussion and should be updated as part of the Stage – E process.

It should also be noted that if suitable sites cannot be found within specific analysis areas that meeting shortfalls for this provision type can be met through providing 3G pitches in the alternate analysis areas on the basis a suitable programme of use can be established.

For the development of any 3G pitch at the sites below (and any other suggested sites in the future) there is a need to ensure that Sport England's Playing Field Policy is adhered to.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 13.2: Site options for new 3G pitch developments to alleviate training shortfalls

Analysis area	Site name
Blaby East	Countesthorpe Community College
Blaby East	Holmes Park (CFA headquarters)
Blaby East	Lubbesthorpe Development (two pitches)
Blaby North	Winstanley Community College
Blaby West	Huncote Sports and Social Club
Blaby West	Winston Avenue Sports Ground

### Cricket

#### Addressing overplay

Since the 2020 PPS was produced, three cricket sites have become overplayed. Overplay at two sites Kirby Muxloe and Blaby Village CC is minimal and can be theoretically managed through improving the quality of wickets (thus increasing their usage capacity).

Overplay at Braunstone Lane is high, but likewise can be alleviated via quality improvements to the wickets.

A sufficient maintenance regime can sustain sites with minimal levels of overplay a reduction in play is recommended to ensure there is no detrimental effect on quality of cricket squares over time.

The ECB capacity guidance states that for good quality squares, capacity is five matches per grass wicket per season, whilst for a standard quality square, capacity is four matches per wicket per season. For poor quality squares, no capacity is considered to exist as such provision is not deemed safe for play.

Table 13.3: Impact on overplay if all overplayed squares were improved to good quality

Site name	Club	No. of squares	Square quality	No. of wickets	Current overplay (matches per season)	Potential position (matches per season)
Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Kirby Muxloe CC	1	Standard	9	4	5
Northfield Park	Blaby Village CC	1	Standard	6	2	4
Braunstone Lane	GNG CC/Bharat Sports	1	Poor	10	30	20

As seen in the table above, targeted quality improvements are needed at three sites and if implemented, will alleviate current deficiencies for cricket.

An alternative to improving quality would be to install a non-turf pitch which follow its TS6 guidance. On the basis that an artificial wicket follows its guidance, it can, in theory, accommodate up to 60 matches per season. It is, however, recognised that not all clubs favour these wickets being on site and alternate options are preferable.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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### *Hybrid wickets*

Although not readily available within grassroots cricket, there may be potential in the future to address overplay through the installation of hybrid wicket/s on competitive senior squares. The ECB has been working with SIS Pitches on the installation of hybrid cricket wickets at county cricket clubs (2019) and more recently recreational squares such as Perry Hall Park in Birmingham (2021) and Didsbury Cricket Club in Manchester (2022).

A hybrid wicket combines natural turf grass with less the 5% of uniquely engineered, soft polyethylene yarn, which has already been used to improve golf tees, tennis courts and pitch surrounds. These wickets are to offer a greater capacity in addition to reducing time on repair works with a faster recovery time. Reports found that hybrid wickets improve surface stability, reduced wear, reduced bowler foot holes and significantly extended hours of playing time.

Ideally, once these become more readily available for community cricket clubs and have gone through the required testing, they could act as a way to increase levels of playing capacity on overplayed squares. This would be particularly beneficial for those sites which are limited on space and cannot create additional wickets due to restrictions things such as boundary length or ball strike.

Although it is difficult at this stage to understand what impact hybrid wickets could have on each site's capacity, it is suggested that they could potentially alleviate overplay in the District and increase capacity at potential focus clubs (which could be identified in the future by the ECB).

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## ***Rugby union***

Overplay has been identified at two sites which was not present in the 2020 PPS. This is at Vipers RFC and Leicester Lions RFC.

### *Improving pitch maintenance and drainage*

Maintenance and drainage solutions are an integral method in improving pitch quality at rugby union sites, ensuring that pitches can accommodate demand throughout the season. There are two sites which are identified as being overplayed and the following scenario explores what impact improving both the level of maintenance and installation of drainage solutions would have on the capacity of provision. It is worth noting that Ollerton RFC (Boughton Sports Field) is not overplayed and therefore does not feature in the tables below.

The table below illustrates the RFU pitch quality scoring methodology which ascertains the capacity of pitches based on the scoring criteria.

Table 13.4: RFU capacity guidance

	<b>Maintenance Poor (M0)</b>	<b>Maintenance Adequate (M1)</b>	<b>Maintenance Good (M2)</b>
<b>Drainage</b> natural inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
<b>Drainage</b> natural adequate or pipe drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
<b>Drainage</b> pipe drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
<b>Drainage</b> Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5

The table below looks at what capacity benefits would be ascertained through improvement of both maintenance and drainage solutions in one increment on the above technical criteria. It further looks at the benefit of maximum improvements to both drainage and maintenance to explore maximum benefits.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 13.6: Improving maintenance on all sites/senior pitches by one increment (based on RFU technical criteria)

Site name	Number of senior pitches	Current technical score	Sports lighting?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Improved technical score	Improved capacity rating
Vipers RFC	1	M1/D1	Yes	7	2	5	M2/D1	4
Vipers RFC	1	M1/D1	No	4.75	2	2.75	M2/D1	1.75
Leicester Lions RFC	1	M1/D1	No	3	2	1	M2/D1	-
Leicester Lions RFC	1	M1/D1	No	2.75	2	0.75	M2/D1	0.25

Improving the maintenance of senior pitches at all sites accessed by community clubs would have a theoretical capacity benefit. Shortfalls at Vipers RFC would reduce by a total of two match equivalent sessions per week (leaving a total of 5.75 match equivalent sessions remaining) and overplay at Leicester Lions would be fully alleviated with a small amount of spare capacity created.

Table 13.6: Improving drainage on all sites/senior pitches by one increment (based on RFU technical criteria)

Site name	Number of senior pitches	Current technical score	Sports lighting?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Improved technical score	Improved capacity rating
Vipers RFC	1	M1/D1	Yes	7	2	5	M1/D2	4.5
Vipers RFC	1	M1/D1	No	4.75	2	2.75	M1/D2	2.25
Leicester Lions RFC	1	M1/D1	No	3	2	1	M1/D2	0.5
Leicester Lions RFC	1	M1/D1	No	2.75	2	0.75	M1/D2	0.25

A similar approach to improving maintenance has been undertaken in the table above for drainage installation (through improvement to pitches by one increment on the RFU technical criteria). Installing pipe drainage to senior pitches at all sites accessed by community clubs would have a theoretical capacity benefit by reducing total overplay at Vipers RFC by one match session per week (in total). At Leicester Lions RFC, overplay would also be reduced by one match equivalent session per week. Overplay would still remain and would equate to 0.75 match equivalent sessions per week.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Table 13:7: Improving both maintenance and drainage to M2/D3 at all sites/senior pitches (based on RFU technical criteria)

Site name	Number of senior pitches	Current technical score	Sports lighting?	Match equivalent sessions (per week)	Pitch capacity (sessions per week)	Capacity rating	Improved technical score	Improved capacity rating
Vipers RFC	1	M1/D1	Yes	7	2	5	M2/D3	3.5
Vipers RFC	1	M1/D1	No	4.75	2	2.75	M2/D3	1.25
Leicester Lions RFC	1	M1/D1	No	3	2	1	M2/D3	0.5
Leicester Lions RFC	1	M1/D1	No	2.75	2	0.75	M2/D3	0.75

The table above shows that overplay at Leicester Lions RFC could be fully alleviated through improving the onsite maintenance. Drainage solutions would also provide a capacity benefit.

Maximum maintenance improvements and drainage solutions would not alleviate overplay on the site and total of 4.75 match equivalent sessions per week would remain. On this basis, there is a need to consider alternate opportunities to alleviate this.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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### *Sports lighting*

A further option to reducing overplay on club sites (or at least reducing concentrated overplay) is through the installation of sports lighting.

At Vipers RFC overplay is so high because of concentrated training demand on one pitch. If this was able to be spread across an additional pitch the concentrated impact would be reduced. With reduced overplay, the impact of pitch improvements and drainage solutions would be much higher than what is currently the case and is identified in the table above.

### *3G pitch provision*

Holmes Park (Leicestershire & Rutland County FA) is a three-minute drive time away from both Vipers RFC and Leicester Lions RFC. As shown above, both rugby union clubs have a level of overplay on current pitches.

The County FA is exploring plans to develop its main grass pitch into a 3G surface to increase the level of football demand it can accommodate on site. Providing a 3G pitch which has a World Rugby compliant surface for training purposes would theoretically provide beneficial in reducing or alleviating overplay relative to the number of accessible hours each club could receive. This is because of demand being transferred away from grass pitches.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## PART 14: ACTION PLAN (UPDATED 2024)

The site-by-site action plan seeks to address key issues identified in the updated Assessment Report (2024). It provides recommendations based on current levels of usage, quality and future demand, as well as the potential of each site for enhancement. It is organised by Analysis Area and includes information pertaining to the sub sections below.

### **Site hierarchy**

The Council should make it a high priority to work with NGBs and other partners to comprise a priority list of actions based on local priorities, NGB priorities and available funding. As stated in Recommendation (e), to allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach, the Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of playing pitch sites and associated facilities.

The identification of sites is based on their strategic importance in a regional context i.e., they accommodate the majority of demand, or the recommended action has the greatest impact on addressing shortfalls identified either on a sport-by-sport basis or across the Council area as a whole.

*Table 14.1: Tiered site criteria*

Criteria	Hub sites	Key centres	Local sites
Site location	Strategically located in the District. Priority sites for NGBs.	Strategically located within the analysis area.	Serves the local community.
Site layout	Accommodates three or more grass pitches, generally including provision of an AGP (or with the potential).	Accommodates two or more grass pitches.	Accommodates one or two pitches.
Type of sport	Multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision.	Generally single sport provision but may cater for two.
Management	Management control allows for wide community use, i.e., through the local authority, a leisure operator or a school with a community use agreement.	Management control generally allows for wide community use but may include sites that are owned or leased by clubs/other organisations.	Management control can be via the local authority, schools, clubs and other providers such as town or parish councils
Maintenance regime	Maintenance regime aligns or could align with NGB guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns or could align with NGB guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime or an in-house maintenance contract.
Ancillary facilities	Good quality ancillary facilities on site (or potential), with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches; may include wider social/function facilities.	Good quality ancillary facility on site (or potential), with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	Limited or no changing room access on site.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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**Hub sites** are of district wide importance where users are willing to travel to access the range and high quality of facilities offered and are likely to be multi-sport. These have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the issues identified in the assessment.

**Key centres** are more community focused, although some are still likely to service a wider analysis area (or slightly wider); however, there may be more of a focus on a specific sport i.e., a dedicated site.

It is considered that some financial investment may be necessary to improve the facilities at both hub sites and key sites. This could be to improve the provision, create additional provision (e.g., a 3G pitch) or to enhance the ancillary facilities in terms of access, flexibility (i.e., single-sex changing if necessary) and quality as well as ensuring that they meet the rules and regulations of local competitions.

**Local sites** refer to those sites offering minimal provision or that are of minimal value to the wider community. Primarily they are sites with one pitch/facility or a low number of pitches/facilities that service just one or two sports (e.g., bowling green sites).

For local sites, consideration should be given, on a site-by-site basis, to the feasibility of a club taking on a long-term lease (if not already present), in order that external funding can be sought. Such sites will require some level of investment, either to the outdoor sport facilities or ancillary facilities and is it anticipated that one of the conditions of offering a hire/lease is that the Club would be in a position to source external funding to improve/extend the provision.

Other sites considered in this tier may be primary school sites or secondary school sites that are not widely used by the community or that do not offer community availability.

### **Partners**

The column indicating partners in the Action Plans below refers to the main organisations that the Council (or the relevant provider) would look to work with to support delivery of the actions.

Given the extent of potential actions, it is reasonable to assume that partners will not necessarily be able to support all the actions identified but where the action is a priority and resource is available the partner will endeavour to assist.

As all sites sit within the local authority area, the Council is considered to be a partner for each identified action (as the column indicates partners for the Council) and is therefore not included. However, it is acknowledged that it will take on more of a leading role for some specific sites and some specific actions (e.g., at council venues).

### **Priority**

Although hub sites are mostly likely to have a **high** level actions, as they have wide importance, high priority sites have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the key issues identified in the assessment. Therefore, some key centres and local sites are also identified as having a high priority level. It is these projects/sites which should generally, if possible, be addressed within the short term (1-2 years).

The majority of key centres have **medium** priority actions. These have analysis area importance and are identified on the basis of the impact that they will have on addressing the issues identified in the assessment, although not to the same extent as high priority actions.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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The **low** priority actions tend to be for single pitch or single sport sites and often club or education sites with local specific importance but that may also contribute to addressing the issues identified in the assessment for specific users. Whilst low priority, there may be opportunities to action some of the recommendations made against such sites relatively quickly e.g., through S106 funding.

### **Costs**

The strategic actions have also been ranked as low, medium, or high based on cost. The brackets are:

- ◀ (L) -Low - less than £150,000
- ◀ (M) -Medium - £150,000 - £750,000
- ◀ (H) -High £750,000 and above

These are based on Sport England's estimated facility costs which can be found at: [Facility cost guidance | Sport England](#)

### **Timescales**

The Action Plan has been created to be delivered over a ten-year period and the information within the Assessment Report, Strategy and Action Plan will require updating as developments occur. The indicative timescales relate to delivery times and are not priority based:

- ◀ (S) -Short (1-2 years)
- ◀ (M) - Medium (3-5 years)
- ◀ (L) - Long (6+ years)

### **Aim**

Each action seeks to meet at least one of the three Sport England aims of the Strategy; **Enhance, Provide, Protect.**

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## BLABY EAST ANALYSIS AREA

### Area summary – pitch sports

Analysis area	Pitch/facility type	Current supply/ demand balance
<b>Football – grass pitches</b>		
Blaby East	Adult	Demand is being met
	Youth 11v11	1.25 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 9v9	Demand is being met
	Mini 7v7	Demand is being met
	Mini 5v5	Demand is being met
<b>Football – 3G pitches</b>		
Blaby East	Full size (106 x 70m)	3.5 full size pitches
<b>Rugby union pitches</b>		
Blaby East	Senior	5.75 match equivalent sessions
<b>Hockey - artificial grass pitches</b>		
Blaby East	Full size	No formal demand
<b>Cricket pitches</b>		
Blaby East	Senior	22 match equivalent sessions-

### Area summary – non-pitch sports

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Bowls</b>	Both current and future demand can be met.
<b>Tennis</b>	Club demand is being met. There is a requirement to focus on informal activity at non-club courts and improving the recreational tennis offer.
<b>Netball</b>	Supply is adequate to meet demand. All provision in the analysis area is situated at Countesthorpe Community College.
<b>Golf</b>	Two courses locally, Blaby Golf Centre and Enderby Golf Club. The former is a more recreational/casual offer. Supply adequate for the analysis area.
<b>American football</b>	Both current and future demand can be met.

### Priority recommendations

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Football</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚡ Protect provision.</li> <li>⚡ Improve pitch quality at key sites to alleviate overplay, especially at key, poor quality and/or overplayed sites such as Countesthorpe Community College, Holmes Park and Oakfield Park.</li> <li>⚡ Consider match play opportunities on 3G pitches relative to new developments which take place over the lifespan of the PPS to reduce pressure on grass football pitches.</li> </ul>
<b>3G pitches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚡ Explore opportunities to increase the supply of full size 3G pitches to alleviate the localised shortfall of three full size pitches.</li> <li>⚡ Ensure all pitches have a sufficient sinking fund in place to ensure long term sustainability and that they are accredited for match play.</li> </ul>
<b>Rugby Union</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚡ Protect provision.</li> <li>⚡ Increase the capacity of playing pitches at Vipers RFC and Leicester Lions to reduce shortfalls.</li> <li>⚡ Explore options to increase supply of sports lighting at Vipers RFC and Leicester Lions.</li> </ul>
<b>Hockey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚡ No formal demand.</li> </ul>

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Cricket</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Sustain quality of squares through dedicated maintenance regimes.</li> <li>◀ Explore long term options to provide Countesthorpe CC with a secondary home venue within its locality to accommodate its 3rd and 4th senior men's teams which current export demand outside of the District.</li> </ul>
<b>Bowls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision and sustain quality to adequately meet demand.</li> </ul>
<b>Tennis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Enhance recreational offer and explore options to install Padel courts at focus sites, to be identified by the LTA.</li> </ul>
<b>Netball</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Work to increase the number of recreational sessions which take place in the District.</li> </ul>
<b>Golf</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> </ul>
<b>American Football</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Ensure demand can continue to be met.</li> </ul>

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

**BLABY EAST ANALYSIS AREA**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status (2024)	Recommended actions (2024)	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
1	Blaby and Whetstone Youth Club	Football	Sports Club	A good quality adult and youth 9v9 pitch on site. Pitch quality on the site has improved since 19/20 season. Overplay of 0.5 MES per week on adult pitch. The site is receiving GPMF which has enabled pitch quality to improve on the site and should see it sustained over forthcoming years.	Pitch quality needs to be sustained to continue accommodate high levels of usage of pitches. A small transfer of adult demand onto alternate adult pitches will reduce overplay.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
1	Blaby and Whetstone Youth Club	Football (3G)	Sports Club	One poor quality small sided 3G pitch.	Explore short to medium term options to resurface and consider the pitch for gaining FA accreditation for match play for mini football.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	H	S-M	M	Protect Enhance
2	Blaby Thistly Meadow Primary School	Football	School	One good quality mini 7v7 football pitch. Tenure is unsecure on site. No recorded community use for 23/24 season. .	Sustain quality of pitch by upholding the current maintenance regime.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Football	Cosby Recreation Ground Charity	Two poor quality adult pitches, two youth pitches and one mini pitch. All assessed as good quality. The site has sufficient capacity relative to existing demand. There is a need to improve the ancillary provision on the site to support Cosby United FCs aspiration to grow women's and girls' activity on the site.	Ensure pitch quality is sustained to continue to be able to accommodate for existing levels of demand as well as future growth. Explore options to improve the ancillary offer on the site to promote women's and girls' activity.	FA, FF Charity	Local site	M	L	L-M	Protect Enhance
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Cricket	Cosby Recreation Ground Charity	One standard quality cricket square with ten grass wickets.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	ECB Council	Local site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
5	Cosby Recreation Ground	Rugby union	Cosby Recreation Ground Charity	One poor quality (M0/D1) senior rugby union pitch. Cosby RFC has folded since the previous PPS. Pitch now unused.	Retain as a strategic reserve if the Club is to reform in the future. In the interim, consider conversion to a football pitch relative to localised demand.	RFU Council	Local site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Football	School	Three adult pitches, two mini 5v5 pitches, one youth 11v11 pitch and three youth 9v9 pitches all standard quality. Tenure unsecure on site. Youth 11v11 pitch is overplayed and the remaining pitches are underutilised.	Work with football partners to improve pitch quality. Explore opportunities to develop a community use agreement. In the long term, consider opportunities to provide additional ancillary facilities to support the pitches (over and above what is currently in place at the School and which will support the 3G pitch once built).	FA, FF School	Hub Site	M	L	M	Protect Enhance Provide
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Football (3G)	School	One standard quality small sided 3G pitch. In addition, plans are progressing to develop an 11v11 size 3G pitch on the site alongside a two team changing room to support use of the new pitch.	Progress plans to build a 11v11 3G pitch to reduce localised shortfalls. Ensure sinking fund is in-place for refurbishment when required.	FA, FF School	Hub Site	H	S-M	H	Protect Provide
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Tennis	School	Two standard quality sand-based AstroTurf courts and two poor quality macadam courts.	Retain for curricular use and improve quality as required.	LTA School	Hub Site	L	L	L	Protect
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Netball	School	One standard quality sand-based AstroTurf court and two poor quality macadam courts.	Retain for curricular use and improve quality as required.	EN School	Hub Site	L	L	L	Protect

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status (2024)	Recommended actions (2024)	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
6	Countesthorpe Community College	Hockey	School	One poor quality small sided sand dressed hockey pitch. The hockey pitch is not used for either hockey training or for competitive matches.	Explore funding opportunities to improve quality or consider use for alternate sporting purposes.	EH School	Hub Site	L	L	L	Protect
7	Countesthorpe Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality cricket square with good quality accompanying ancillary provision. The 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> senior men's teams export demand outside of the authority due to a perceived lack of facilities within the locality.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Explore opportunities to develop a new site for the Club to accommodate its exported demand (or for it to use underutilised sites in Blaby if considered suitable).	ECB Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
18	Greenfield Primary School	Football	School	Two standard quality mini 5v5 football pitches. Pitches are unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
19	Greystoke Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality adult football pitch. Tenure is unsecure on site.	Retain for school use.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
23	Holmes Park	Football	CFA	One good quality adult football pitch. The CFA is considering options of converting the pitch to a 11v11 3G pitch to better accommodate high demand levels on site. The pitch is currently overplayed. The site is receiving GPMF.	Sustain quality of pitch by upholding the current maintenance regime unless the pitch is to be replaced by 3G pitch. Based on local shortfalls for 3G pitches, there is evidence to support any forthcoming application on this development.	FA, FF	Key Centre	L	L	H	Protect Provide Enhance
23	Holmes Park	Football (3G)	CFA	One good quality small sided 3G pitch. If a full size pitch is developed on site this pitch may need to be lost to increase wider infrastructure supporting the site.	Sustain quality. Allow for the loss of the pitch if a full size offer is created on site to ensure the site can accommodate an increased level of demand on the site	FA, FF	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Football	Parish Council	One adult pitch, two mini pitches and one youth 9v9 pitch all poor quality. Small levels of overplay on adult pitch. Two main pitches have been unplayable for long periods due to bad weather and drainage issues. The site is receiving GPMF which over time should improve pitch quality to and should see it sustained over forthcoming years.	Given identified overplay, there is a need to improve pitch quality.	FA, FF Parish Council	Local Site	M	L	L	Protect Enhance
34	Leicester Road Recreation Ground	Cricket	Parish Council	One good quality cricket square with 13 wickets. Home of Narborough & Littlethorpe CC.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	ECB Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
36	Lutterworth Road	Football	Sports Club	One adult pitch, two mini 5v5 pitches, two mini 7v7 and four youth 9v9 pitches all good quality. Changing provision supporting the site is poor and needs replacement/refurbishment. The site is receiving GPMF which has enabled pitch quality to improve on the site and should see it sustained over forthcoming years.	Sustain good pitch quality and explore medium- long term opportunities to improve quality of the ancillary provision supporting the site.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	M	L	M	Protect Enhance
37	Meadow Sports Ground	Football	Sports Club	Six standard quality adult pitches, a good quality mini pitch and a poor quality youth pitch on site. Site has sufficient capacity to accommodate demand but improvements are required to improve the user experience. The site is receiving GPMF which will enable pitch quality to improve on the site and should see it sustained over forthcoming years. The ancillary	Given identified overplay, there is a need to improve pitch quality. The Club recently received funding to enhance pitch maintenance and quality should consequently improve. Explore funding opportunities to replace/refurbish the changing pavilion.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	M	M	H	Protect Enhance

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status (2024)	Recommended actions (2024)	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
				provision supporting the site is poor and needs refurbishment/replacement.							
37	Meadow Sports Ground	Football	Sports Club	The main pitch on the site is not currently supported by sports lighting. If this was provided, the site would be able to support Magna 73 FCs progression through the National League System.	Explore funding opportunities to provide sports lighting on the main pitch to enable a progression in the NLS and create an improved performance player pathway in the District.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	M	M	L	Protect Enhance Provide
37	Meadow Sports Ground	Cricket	Sports Club	An eight wicket square which is good quality. Home to Wigston CC and Leicester Electric CC. Ancillary provision poor.	Ensure quality of the cricket square is sustained. Explore opportunities to improve the quality of the pavilion.	ECB Sports Club	Local Site	M	M	H	Protect Enhance
39	Northfield Park	Football	Parish Council	One poor quality adult pitch which spare capacity discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Look to improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance.	FA, FF Parish Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
39	Northfield Park	Cricket	Parish Council	One standard quality cricket square with six wickets. The site is minimally overplayed by two matches per season.	Explore options to improve wicket quality to increase site capacity.	ECB Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
40	Oakfield Park	Football	Parish Council	One poor quality adult pitch which has small levels of overplay, one standard quality mini 7v7 pitch and two poor quality youth 9v9 pitches. Changing provision supporting the site needs replacement/refurbishment.	Explore opportunities to improve pitch quality and consider longer term options to improve the ancillary provision on site.	FA, FF Council	Local Site	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Football	Sports Club	One adult stadia pitch, two youth pitches and one mini pitch. All are good quality. Overplay is identified on one youth 11v11 pitch. The site is receiving GPMF which has enabled pitch quality to improve on the site and should see it sustained over forthcoming years.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Ensure the Club is in a position to gain promotion (if applicable) in the future through meeting appropriate ground grading requirements associated with non-league football.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Football (3G)	Sports Club	One good quality small sided 3G pitch which is on the FA pitch register.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Ensure sinking fund is in-place for refurbishment when required.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
44	Saffron Dynamo FC	Cricket	Sports Club	Cricket on the site has been lost since the 2020 PPS. No longer provision on site.	N/A	-	-	-	-	-	-
52	The Pastures Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 5v5 football pitch. Pitch not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
57	Vipers RFC	Rugby union	Sports Club	Three standard quality (M1/D1) senior rugby union pitches. One pitch has sport lighting and is highly overplayed as a result of high midweek use. Over play is also apparent on a secondary pitch (not sportslit) due to high junior and mixed age grade demand.  The changing facility is largely outdated and would benefit from refurbishment.	Work to alleviate identified site overplay through a combination of providing new sports lighting (to spread training demand across the site) and improve pitch quality through maintenance and drainage solutions.  Consider the medium to long term feasibility of refurbishing current changing and social facilities on site.	RFU Sports Club	Local Site	M	M	M	Protect Enhance Provide
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Football	Parish Council	One poor quality adult football pitch which is overplayed and three unused mini 7v7 pitches.	Improve pitches quality through maintenance improvements to alleviate overplay.	FA, FF Parish Council	Local Site	M	L	L	Protect Enhance

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status (2024)	Recommended actions (2024)	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
58	Warwick Road Recreation Ground	Cricket	Parish Council	One standard quality cricket square with six wickets. Changing provision site assessed as poor quality.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Explore funding options to improve the onsite ancillary offer.	ECB Parish Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
59	Leicester Lions RFU	Rugby union	Sports Club	Three standard quality pitches. The 1 <sup>st</sup> XV pitch (M1/D3) has a recent pipe drainage system installed. Ancillary facilities are good condition having been recently provided in 2018.  One pitch (to the back of the site) is overplayed because of high demand from its junior and mixed age grade section.	There is a need for additional sports lighting to be provided to the rear of the site to allow for an increased spread of training demand. The site would also benefit from pitch improvements.	RFU Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
60	Willoughby Road Playing Field	Football	Parish Council	Two poor quality youth pitches. The site is currently unused.	Explore localised position to maximise use of the site. Consider pitch improvements relative to future use.	FA, FF Parish Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
63	Blaby Victoria Tennis Club	Tennis	Sports Club	Three standard quality macadam courts. All courts floodlit. Poor quality ancillary provision that requires refurbishment. The current facility is a wooden structure which offers little in terms of social space, changing or appropriate toilet facilities.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Explore opportunities to refurbish the ancillary offer to service current and future membership.	LTA Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
64	Blaby Bowls Club	Bowls	Sports Club	One good quality flat bowling green. The Club has a strong club membership.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	BE Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
65	David Lloyd Narborough	Tennis	Private	Six good quality artificial courts which are all floodlit.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	LTA Private	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
70	Coventry Road	Bowls	Sports Club	One good quality flat bowling green. The Club (Narborough & District) has a strong membership.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	BE Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
71	Countesthorpe Bowls Club	Bowls	Sports Club	One good quality flat bowling green. The Club has a strong club membership.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	BE Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
72	New Lubbethorpe Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 5v5 football pitch. Tenure is unsecure on site.	Retain for school use.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## BLABY NORTH ANALYSIS AREA

### Area summary – pitch sports

Analysis area	Pitch/facility type	Current supply/ demand balance
<b>Football – grass pitches</b>		
Blaby North	Adult	5 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 11v11	Demand is being met
	Youth 9v9	Demand is being met
	Mini 7v7	Demand is being met
	Mini 5v5	Demand is being met
<b>Football – 3G pitches</b>		
Blaby North	Full size (106 x 70m)	0.5 full size pitches
<b>Rugby union pitches</b>		
Blaby North	Senior	Demand is being met
<b>Hockey - artificial grass pitches</b>		
Blaby North	Full size	No formal demand
<b>Cricket pitches</b>		
Blaby North	Senior	Demand is being met

### Area summary – non-pitch sports

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Bowls</b>	Both current and future demand can be met.
<b>Tennis</b>	Club demand is being met. There is a requirement to focus on informal activity at non-club courts and improving the recreational tennis offer.
<b>Netball</b>	Supply is adequate to meet demand. Quality improvements required at Brockington College.
<b>Golf</b>	No provision in the analysis area.
<b>American football</b>	Both current and future demand can be met.

### Priority recommendations

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Football</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Improve pitch quality at key sites to alleviate overplay, especially at key, poor quality and/or overplayed sites such as Glenfield Sports Ground, Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground and Mosssdale Meadows.</li> <li>◀ Consider match play opportunities on 3G pitches relative to new developments which take place over the lifespan of the PPS to reduce pressure on grass football pitches.</li> </ul>
<b>3G pitches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Explore opportunities to increase the supply of full size 3G pitches to alleviate the localised shortfall of 0.5 full size pitches.</li> <li>◀ Ensure all pitches have a sufficient sinking fund in place to ensure long term sustainability and that they are accredited for match play.</li> </ul>
<b>Rugby Union</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Maximise game related benefits of the WR compliant 3G pitch at Leicester Forest RFC.</li> </ul>
<b>Hockey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ No formal demand.</li> </ul>
<b>Cricket</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Sustain quality of squares through dedicated maintenance regimes.</li> <li>◀ Quality improvements are needed at Braunstone Lane.</li> </ul>

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Bowls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision and sustain quality to adequately meet demand.</li> </ul>
<b>Tennis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Enhance recreational offer and explore options to install Padel courts at focus sites, to be identified by the LTA.</li> </ul>
<b>Netball</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Work to increase the number of recreational sessions which take place in the district.</li> </ul>
<b>Golf</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> </ul>
<b>American Football</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Ensure demand can continue to be met.</li> </ul>

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

**BLABY NORTH ANALYSIS AREA**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
3	Brockington College	Football	School	One poor quality adult football pitch, one poor quality youth 11v11 pitch and one poor quality youth 9v9. Played to capacity through curricular use.	Work to improve pitch quality if secure use can be established for potential community user groups.	FA FF School	Key Centre	M	L	L	Protect Enhance
3	Brockington College	Football (3G)	School	A good quality 11v11 3G pitch which was resurfaced in 2023. It is on the FA register for match play until 2027.	Ensure sinking fund is in-place for refurbishment when required. Maximise use of the pitch for affiliated and recreational football.	FA FF School	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect
3	Brockington College	Rugby union	School	One poor quality (M0/D1) senior rugby union pitch. The pitch is available for community use but is unused, the pitch is at capacity through curricular use.	Retain for curricular uses.	RFU School	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect
3	Brockington College	Tennis	School	Four poor quality macadam courts due to surface quality and grip underfoot.	Improve court quality for curricular use as required.	LTA School	Key Centre	L	L	M	Protect Enhance
3	Brockington College	Netball	School	Three poor quality macadam courts. These are overmarked on the tennis courts. These accommodate a walking netball programme operated via England Netball.	Target potential improvements as a site with others dual curricular and community use.	EN School	Key Centre	H	S-M	L	Protect Enhance
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Football	County Council	One standard quality adult pitch with pitch being at capacity.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	FA, FF County Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Cricket	County Council	One standard quality cricket square with eight wickets.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	ECB County Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
8	County Hall Sports Ground	Tennis	County Council	Three standard quality artificial tennis courts.	Sustain court quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	LTA County Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
10	Danemill Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality youth 9v9 football pitch. Pitch unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
11	Dorothy Avenue Playing Field	Football	Parish Council	Two poor quality adult football pitches. The pitches are played to capacity. Changing provision site assessed as poor quality and needs replacement/refurbishment.	Work to improve pitch quality to increase overall site capacity. Explore medium-long term options to improve the ancillary offer supporting the site.	FA, FF Parish Council	Local Site	L	L	H	Protect Enhance
12	Ellis Park	Hockey	Council	Two standard quality small sided sand dressed hockey pitches. The hockey pitches are not used for either hockey training or for competitive matches.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Ensure sinking fund is in-place for refurbishment when required.	Council	Local Site	L	L	M	Protect
13	Enderby Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality cricket square with nine wickets.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	ECB Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
14	Forest East Park	Football	Parish Council	One standard quality mini 7v7 football pitch and one standard quality youth 11v11 pitch.	Sustain pitch quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	FA, FF Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
15	Fossebrook Primary School	Football	School	One poor quality mini 5v5 football pitch. Pitch not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
16	Glen Hills Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality youth 9v9 football pitch. Pitch not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Football	Sports Club	Two poor quality adult football pitches, one standard quality mini 5v5 pitch, one poor quality mini 7v7 pitch and two standard quality youth 9v9 pitches. Levels of overplay on adult pitches.	Ensure appropriate maintenance levels to sustain current usage. Explore options to improve the on-site pitch quality as a means of reducing overplay.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
17	Glenfield Sports Ground	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality cricket square with nine wickets. Home venue of Anstey and Glenfield CC.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	ECB Sports Club	Local Site	M	L	L	Protect
28	King George V Playing Field	Football	Parish Council	One standard quality mini 7v7 football pitch. Pitch currently unused.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	FA, FF Parish Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
28	King George V Playing Field	Bowls	Parish Council	One good quality flat bowls green. Home of Enderby Bowls Club. The Club is currently working to extend its lease with the local parish Council through to 2050.	Sustain quality of the green. Ensure that the Club is able to secure a long term lease from the Parish Council to ensure it is in a position to apply for grant funding.	BE Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
28	King George V Playing Field	Tennis	Parish Council	Three good quality artificial tennis courts. Home venue of Enderby Tennis Club. The Club highlighted (in 2020) an aspiration to develop a new clubhouse with improved disability access.	Sustain court quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Explore medium – long term opportunities to support the club’s ambition of developing a new/improved ancillary offer.	LTA Parish Council	Local Site	M	M	M	Protect Provide
30	Kirby Muxloe Primary School	Football	School	One poor quality mini 5v5 football pitch. Pitch is unavailable for community use.	Retain for school use.	FA, FF Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Football	Parish Council	Three poor quality adult pitches, one poor quality mini 5v5 pitch, one poor quality mini 7v7 pitch and one poor quality youth 9v9 football pitch. Overplayed identified on most pitches. The ancillary provision on site is poor quality and requires refurbishment/replacement.	Work with football partners to refurbish and improve the poor quality pavilion and pitches as identified in the LFFP. Explore options to improve pitch quality. Ensure appropriate maintenance levels to sustain current usage.	FA FF Council	Key Centre	M	M	L	Protect Enhance
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Cricket	Parish Council	<b>Disused</b> - One disused cricket square. Not been used for formal cricket in several years.	Retain as an option for the re-introduction of the square relative to subsequent need being established in the future.	ECB Parish Council	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Bowls	Parish Council	One standard quality flat bowling green. Home of Kirby Muxloe BC. The Club recently installed new toilet provision to supports its membership.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	BE Council	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect
31	Kirby Muxloe Recreation Ground	Tennis	Parish Council	Two standard quality macadam tennis courts. Used as a venue for a Parks Tennis League.	Sustain court quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	LTA Council	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Football	Sports Club	A good quality 3G pitch provided in 2020. The site is identified as needing enhanced ancillary provision to supporting existing levels of demand.	New 3G pitch development will alleviate all overplay on site. Explore funding opportunities to refurbish/replace the existing changing pavilion to accommodate the additional demand created on site to cater for new 3G pitch.	FA, FF Sports Club	Key Centre	H	M	H	Protect Enhance
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Cricket	Sports Club	One standard quality cricket square with nine wickets. Home of Kirby Muxloe CC.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	ECB Sports Club	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
32	Kirby Muxloe Sports Club	Hockey	Sports Club	One poor quality small sided sand dressed hockey pitches. Predominately used for small sided football.	Consider refurbishment to a 3G surface to complement on site provision.	EH Sports Club	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect
33	Leicester Forest RFC	Rugby union (3G)	Sports Club	One good quality full size 3Gpitch. The pitch is a World Rugby compliant, also the pitch is managed and operated by the RFU. Primary function is to service rugby union clubs in Leicestershire. Pitch was installed in 2018.	Ensure that usage is maximised and that it continues to provide a pivotal role in providing rugby union opportunities for clubs and schools across the region. Ensure sinking fund is in-place for refurbishment when required.	RFU Sports Club	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect
33	Leicester Forest RFC	Rugby union	Sports Club	Two standard quality (M1/D1) rugby union pitches. Both pitches are adequately maintained. Pitches at capacity through match play demand, predominately from its mixed age grade and junior section.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	RFU Sports Club	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect
38	Mossdale Meadows	Football	Town Council	Two poor quality adult pitches which have small levels of overplay, four poor quality mini pitches and one poor quality youth 9v9 pitch. Changing provision at the site needs replacement/refurbishment.	Explore opportunities to improve the quality of the grass pitches to alleviate overplay and increase overall capacity. Consider medium to long term opportunities to improve the ancillary offer on the site.	FA, FF Council	Local Site	L	L	H	Protect Enhance
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Football	Sports Club	One poor quality adult pitch, one standard quality mini 5v5 pitch and one standard quality youth 9v9 pitch. Small amounts of overplay on adult football pitch.	Ensure access to pitches on site continues through positive relationships with the rugby union club. Where possible, work to improve pitch quality.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
41	Old Newtonians RFC	Rugby union	Sports Club	Three standard quality senior rugby union pitches. None are spottlit but there is a dedicated training area on the site which does have sports lighting. The clubhouse and changing facilities are highly outdated and require refurbishment to ensure it remains fit for purpose for coming years.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Explore funding opportunities to refurbish/replace the existing changing pavilion.	RFU Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
46	Shakespeare Park	Football	Town Council	Two mini and one youth pitch which are all poor quality. Pitches well used but not overplayed.	Improve pitches quality through maintenance improvements.	FA, FF Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
46	Shakespeare Park	Bowls	Town Council	One standard quality flat bowling green. The site is accompanied by a new build pavilion which has good toilet, catering and social facilities.	Work to improve the quality of the bowling green.	BE Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
46	Shakespeare Park	Tennis	Town Council	Two good quality macadam tennis courts. These were recently resurfaced alongside the development of the new on-site pavilion.	Sustain good quality and promote recreational programmes on the courts if demand can be generated.	LTA Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
48	Southey Close	Football	Council	One poor quality adult pitch which is at capacity.	Sustain current maintenance regime.	FA, FF Council	Local Site	M	L	L	Protect
54	Thorpe Astley Community Centre	Football	Town Council	One poor quality adult pitch. Pitch has limited maintenance.	Improve pitches quality through maintenance improvements.	FA, FF Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
54	Thorpe Astley Community Centre	Tennis	Town Council	Two standard quality macadam tennis courts.	Sustain court quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	LTA Town Council		L	L	L	Protect
61	Winstanley Community College	Football	School	Two standard quality adult pitches, one standard quality mini 7v7 pitch and one standard quality youth 9v9 pitch. Tenure is unsecure at site.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Explore opportunities to secure a community use agreement.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
61	Winstanley Community College	Football (3G)	School	A small sided 3G pitch on site which is good quality. Recently provided having replaced an old astro turf pitch.	Sustain good pitch quality and maximise use.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
61	Winstanley Community College	Cricket	School	One poor quality cricket square with nine wickets. No current community use.	Explore options for the site to be utilised for community cricket. Quality improvements would be needed to support any increased use over and above curricular demand.	ECB School	Local site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
61	Winstanley Community College	Rugby union	School	One poor quality (M0/D1) junior rugby union pitch. This pitch is basically maintained.	Retain for curricular use.	RFU School	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
66	Leicester Ivanhoe Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	Two good quality cricket squares. Nine wickets on each square.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	ECB Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
67	Braunstone Lane	Cricket	Council	One poor quality cricket square with ten wickets. The site is overplayed because of the quality. Ancillary facilities are poor quality. The site is owned and maintained by Leicester City Council.	Work to improve the quality of the square to alleviate existing shortfalls. Consider the feasibility to improve ancillary facilities.	ECB Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
68	Leicester Forest East Tennis Club	Tennis	Sports Club	Two good quality clay tennis courts and two good quality artificial tennis courts. The site also has two indoor tennis courts. Leicester Forest East TC is planning to develop a new indoor court to expand on its indoor provision, this will involve covering an existing outdoor court.	Sustain court quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Support Leicester Forest East TC on its planned development to increase the scale of its indoor provision. The loss of an outdoor court is outweighed by the membership capacity benefit of an additional indoor court.	LTA Sports Club	Local Site	S-M	S-M	H	Protect Provide
69	Glenfield Bowls Club	Bowls	Sports Club	One standard quality flat bowling green. The Green is annual rented from Parish Council. The onsite ancillary offer is poor and the Club has aspirations to improve the disability offer to members.	Explore options to improve the quality of the bowling green. Consider potential options to secure a long term lease arrangement.	BE Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## BLABY WEST ANALYSIS AREA

### Area summary – pitch sports

Analysis area	Pitch/facility type	Current supply/ demand balance
<b>Football – grass pitches</b>		
Blaby West	Adult	2 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 11v11	Demand is being met
	Youth 9v9	Demand is being met
	Mini 7v7	Demand is being met
	Mini 5v5	Demand is being met
<b>Football – 3G pitches</b>		
Blaby West	Full size (106 x 70m)	1.5 full size pitches
<b>Rugby union pitches</b>		
Blaby West	Senior	Demand is being met
<b>Hockey - artificial grass pitches</b>		
Blaby West	Full size	No formal demand
<b>Cricket pitches</b>		
Blaby West	Senior	Demand is being met

### Area summary – non-pitch sports

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Bowls</b>	Both current and future demand can be met.
<b>Tennis</b>	Club demand is being met. There is a requirement to focus on informal activity at non-club courts and improving the recreational tennis offer.
<b>Netball</b>	No provision in the analysis area.
<b>Golf</b>	Three c
<b>American football</b>	Both current and future demand can be met.

### Priority recommendations

Sport	Headline findings
<b>Football</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Improve pitch quality at key sites to alleviate overplay, especially at key, poor quality and/or overplayed sites such as Blaby and Whetstone Youth Club, Huncote Sports and Social Club and Sapcote Recreation Ground.</li> <li>◀ Work to improve ancillary provision at sites with identified need.</li> <li>◀ Consider match play opportunities on 3G pitches relative to new developments which take place over the lifespan of the PPS to reduce pressure on grass football pitches.</li> </ul>
<b>3G pitches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Explore opportunities to increase the supply of full size 3G pitches to alleviate the localised shortfall of 0.5 full size pitches. The shortfall will be predominately aligned to Croft Juniors FC.</li> <li>◀ Ensure all pitches have a sufficient sinking fund in place to ensure long term sustainability and that they are accredited for match play.</li> </ul>
<b>Rugby Union</b>	◀ No provision in the analysis area.
<b>Hockey</b>	◀ No formal demand.
<b>Cricket</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Sustain quality of squares through dedicated maintenance regimes.</li> </ul>

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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Sport	Headline findings
<b>Bowls</b>	◀ Protect provision and sustain quality to adequately meet demand.
<b>Tennis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Enhance recreational offer and explore options to install Padel courts at focus sites, to be identified by the LTA.</li> </ul>
<b>Netball</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◀ Protect provision.</li> <li>◀ Work to increase the number of recreational sessions which take place in the district.</li> </ul>
<b>Golf</b>	◀ Protect provision.
<b>American Football</b>	◀ Ensure demand can continue to be met.

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

**BLABY WEST ANALYSIS AREA**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions (2024)	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
25	Huncote Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 5v5 football pitch. Pitch not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	FA, FF School	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
27	Huncote Sports and Social Club	Football	Sports Club	Two poor quality adult pitches which are collectively overplayed by two match sessions per week. The site is receiving GPMF which will enable pitch quality to improve on the site and should see it sustained over forthcoming years.	Continue pitch improvement work enabled via GPMF.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
27	Huncote Sports and Social Club	Cricket	Sports Club	One standard quality cricket square with eight wickets.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	ECB Sports Club	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
29	King George's Field	Football	Parish Council	One standard quality youth 9v9. Pitch current unused,	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	FA, FF Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
35	Lissman Fields (Sharnford CC)	Cricket	Private	<b>Disused</b> - Sharnford Cricket Club folded in 2017 and as such the site is now disused with no formal cricket activity affiliated to the site. The cost to reinstate the square and onsite ancillary facilities is likely to be significant.	The site should be protected from development (unless adequately re-provided elsewhere in accordance with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy Exception E4), as there is potential need for playing field land to accommodate for existing demand for cricket or alternate sports locally.	Council ECB SE	Local Site	-	-	-	Protect
45	Sapcote Recreation Ground	Football	Parish Council	One poor quality adult pitch. Limited maintenance on pitch.	Improve pitches quality through maintenance improvements.	FA, FF Council	Local Site	M	L	L	Protect Enhance
45	Sapcote Recreation Ground	Cricket	Parish Council	One standard quality cricket square with eight wickets. The square was not maintained in 2020 due to issues relating to Covid 19. It is not anticipated this issue will continue into 2021 and that the square will be fully utilised for club cricket.	Ensure that the square is restored to its usual quality as it was in the 2019 cricket season and that it is ready for competitive cricket intime for the 2021 season.	ECB Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
51	Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Fields	Football	Parish Council	Two good quality adult and two good quality youth 9v9 pitches. Pitches are well used and played to capacity within peak periods. The site is receiving GPMF which has enabled pitch quality to improve on the site and should see it sustained over forthcoming years. Changing provision site assessed as poor quality and needing either refurbishment or replacing.	Sustain pitch quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Explore long term medium to long term options to improve quality of ancillary provision supporting the site.	FA, FF Council	Local Site	M	M	H	Protect Provide Enhance
51	Stoney Stanton War Memorial Playing Fields	Tennis	Sports Club	Four good quality floodlit macadam tennis courts. The onsite ancillary provision servicing Stoney Stanton TC is good. The Club has an aspiration to develop two additional tennis courts to enable increased levels of participation on the site.	Sustain court quality by upholding the current maintenance regime and by ensuring a sufficient sinking fund is in place for future refurbishment work (when required). Where possible, support the aspiration to increase the number of tennis courts available on the site.	LTA Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Provide
53	The Pavilion Leisure Centre	Football	Commercial	One standard quality youth 9v9 pitch which is used once per week.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime.	FA, FF Commercial	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions (2024)	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
53	The Pavilion Leisure Centre	Football (3G)	Commercial	Two standard quality small sided 3G pitch.	Sustain quality by upholding the current maintenance regime. Ensure sinking fund is in-place for refurbishment when required.	FA, FF Commercial	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect
55	Thurlaston Football Club	Football	Sports Club	Two adult, one youth and two mini pitches which are all good quality. Pitches are broadly played to capacity within peak periods of play. The site is receiving GPMF which has enabled pitch quality to improve on the site and should see it sustained over forthcoming years. The ancillary provision on site requires replacement/refurbishment.	Sustain pitch quality and consider medium to long term options to improve the ancillary provision supporting the site.	FA, FF Sports Club	Local Site	L	M	M-H	Protect Provide Enhance
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Football	Parish Council	Two youth and four mini pitches which are all good quality. The site is receiving GPMF which has enabled pitch quality to improve on the site and should see it sustained over forthcoming years. The site would benefit from replacement/refurbishment of the on-site ancillary provision. Home ground to Croft Juniors FC.	Sustain pitch quality and consider medium to long term options to improve the ancillary provision supporting the site.	FA, FF Parish Council	Local Site	L	M	H	Protect Enhance
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Cricket	Parish Council	One standard quality cricket square with nine wickets. The square is no longer used by any community cricket club following a decision by Croft Parish Council to only permit use to clubs/teams which are based within Croft. Croft CC folded several years ago and is not expected to reform.	Actively work with Cricket partners and Croft Parish Council to ensure that the site can be accessed for clubs from within the District or from the wider Leicestershire region. Given identified future shortfalls for cricket in the District it is imperative that access can be secured to service demand.	ECB Council	Local Site	H	S	L	Protect Enhance
62	Winston Avenue Sports Ground	Tennis	Parish Council	One poor quality macadam tennis court. The non-technical audit found that these courts had poor surface quality and grip underfoot.	Consider the feasibility of resurfacing the court to encourage recreational usage.	LTA Council	Local Site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance

## PART 15: HOUSING GROWTH

The PPS provides an estimate of demand for pitch sports based on population forecasts and club consultation to 2041 (in line with the Local Plan). This future demand is translated into teams likely to be generated, rather than actual pitch provision required. The Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator adds to this, updating the likely demand generated for pitch sports based on housing increases and converts the demand into match equivalent sessions and the number of pitches required. This is achieved via team generation rates in the Assessment Report to determine how many new teams would be generated from an increase in population derived from housing growth and gives the associated costs of supplying the increased pitch provision.

Experience shows that housing sites with 600 dwellings or more are likely to generate demand for new provision to be created. For such large scale developments, consideration should be given to providing multi-pitch sites with suitable ancillary provision, including appropriate clubhouse/changing facilities and car parking. Single pitch sites which have been provided traditionally by developers are not considered to provide long term sustainable provision for the relevant sports.

Where demand does not warrant new pitch provision, the Action Plan in this document should be consulted to determine whether the additional demand can be accommodated via existing provision (in which case no further action is required). If this is not the case, contributions should be sought to enhance existing provision in the locality to accommodate the increased demand. This can be through, for example, improving quality, or providing new or improved ancillary provision. Consultation with appropriate NGBs should also be used to assist in the selection of suitable sites and suitable enhancements.

The scenario below shows the additional demand for pitch sports generated from the New Lubbethorpe development which lies to the south of Leicester Forest East and is bordered by the M1 to the east. The demand is shown in match equivalent sessions per week for most sports, with the exception of cricket, where match equivalent sessions are by season. Training demand is expressed in either hours or match equivalent sessions. Where expressed in hours, it is expected that demand will be to either a 3G pitch (to accommodate football demand) or an AGP (to accommodate hockey demand). Where expressed in match equivalent sessions, it is expected training will take place on floodlit grass pitches.

The indicative figures assume that population growth will average 2.4 per dwelling. Based on an anticipated 4,250 dwellings, it is expected that population growth from this development will equate to an additional population of 10,200.

Please note that the PPC can be updated as required over the Local Plan period throughout the lifespan of the PPS to reflect population projections, changes in the housing requirement and change in the average household size.

The number of pitches required in the following tables has been rounded up or down accordingly, however, capital and revenue costs are based on indicative pitch costs, proportionate to the total match equivalent sessions required rather than just whole pitches required.

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## Lubbesthorpe - 4,250 forecasted dwellings

The estimated additional population derived from the Lubbesthorpe develop is estimated to be 10,200 residents (based on 4,250 dwellings being delivered). This population increase equates to 19.33 match equivalent sessions of demand per week for grass pitch sports and 71.86 match equivalent sessions of demand per season for cricket.

Training demand equates to 35.36 hours of use per week for football on 3G pitches. There are also 1.97 match equivalent sessions per week of training for rugby union on a floodlit grass pitch.

Table 15.1: Likely demand for grass pitch sports generated from Lubbesthorpe development

Pitch sport <sup>19</sup>	Estimated demand by sport (Lubbesthorpe)	
	Match demand (MES) per week <sup>20</sup>	Training demand <sup>21</sup>
Adult football	3.09	35.36 hours
Youth football	8.62	
Mini soccer	5.97	
Rugby union	1.64	1.97
Cricket	71.86	-

The table below translates estimated demand into new pitch provision with associated capital and lifestyle costs.

Table 15.2: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision

Pitch type	Estimated demand and costs for new pitches				
	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost <sup>22</sup>	Lifecycle Cost (per annum)	Changing rooms (numbers)	Changing rooms (capital cost)
Adult football	3 (3.09)	£346,935	£68,346	6 (6.18)	£1,237,929
Youth football	8 (8.62)	£790,962	£159,774	10 (10.49)	£2,099,360
Mini soccer	5 (5.97)	£182,793	£36,193	-	£0
Rugby union	1 (1.64)	£276,792	£51,206	3 (3.29)	£658,429
Cricket	1 (1.52)	£535,638	£98,557	(3) 3.04	£609,385
3G	1 (0.93)	£1,082,131	£31,827	1 (1.86)	£372,576

The PPC does not consider other sports (i.e. tennis and netball). These could also be considered as part of a new secondary school (if providing secure community use to provision) which would be beneficial to the overall sporting offer providing of this development.

<sup>19</sup> Note that no figures for hockey AGPs are identified as no current demand exists in the District.

<sup>20</sup> As per the PPS Guidance, demand for cricket is considered in terms of match equivalent sessions per season rather than per week.

<sup>21</sup> Hours equate to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch or hockey suitable AGP

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/facility-cost-guidance>

# BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

## ***New Lubbesthorpe conclusion***

It is important to understand how the potential demand increase for sport aligns to the existing position of the PPS. It is also important to understand the geographic proximity of this development in relation to the District so localised conclusions can be drawn.

The new Lubbesthorpe Development sits broadly within the Blaby East Analysis Area used within the PPS Assessment. This means the conclusions of this area can be used in tandem with the Calculator results.

The recommendations below are strictly points relating to community playing pitch facilities and do not constitute a position on school/curricular need.

The S106 agreement for this development has been signed between the developer and BDC and therefore a capital position is secured. On this basis, it is important to understand the highest existing need for playing pitches (including artificial surfaces) and how this may be exacerbated in the future through this development.

Table 15.3: Blaby East Analysis Area conclusions (2023/24 season)

Analysis area	Pitch/facility type	Current supply/ demand balance
<b>Football – grass pitches</b>		
Blaby East	Adult	Demand is being met
	Youth 11v11	1.25 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 9v9	Demand is being met
	Mini 7v7	Demand is being met
	Mini 5v5	Demand is being met
<b>Football – 3G pitches</b>		
Blaby East	Full size (106 x 70m)	3 full size pitches
<b>Rugby union pitches</b>		
Blaby East	Senior	5.75 match equivalent sessions
<b>Hockey - artificial grass pitches</b>		
Blaby East	Full size	No formal demand
<b>Cricket pitches</b>		
Blaby East	Senior	22 match equivalent sessions-

Based on current shortfalls identified in the updated PPS there are relatively minor deficiencies in youth 11v11 football pitches, rugby union pitches and for cricket squares. However, there is a clear shortfall of 3G pitches.

For grass football pitches there is a slight shortfall of youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions and remaining pitch types have sufficient capacity. These will be exacerbated in the future and shortfalls will emerge on all pitch formats for football. On this basis there would be a tangible benefit to providing an increased a football beneficial offer as part of the development.

For rugby union, providing new pitch provision as part of this development provision is not recommended due to the homely nature of rugby union clubs. Alternatively, the installation of a World Rugby complaint shock pad on a newly provided 3G pitch to absorb local club training demand could also be beneficial. The latter approach would require consultation with the RFU and local clubs (Vipers RFC and Leicester Lions RFC) to fully determine demand for such provision.

## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY UPDATE

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The cricket deficiency is a result of exported demand from Countesthorpe CC (which has two senior teams playing at Gilmorton CC (Harborough)). The Club expresses a need for a new square to be developed in Countesthorpe which is several miles away from this development site. Therefore, providing a significant onsite cricket offer as part of this development is not recommended.

For 3G pitches, there is a clear need for an increase in provision with a current shortfall in the area of three 11v11 pitches based on the 2024 PPS evidence. It is also worthy of note that Blaby East Analysis Area creates the most football demand in the District and therefore has the largest shortfall (three 11v11 pitches at present, not including demand generated from this development). On this basis and coupled with the need for one 11v11 3G pitch to service Lubbethorpe development itself, it is recommended that two 11v11 3G pitches are provided onsite to create a hub site.

### *Conclusion*

Relative to the capital available in the signed S106 agreement then BDC should look to deliver the following (in priority order):

- ◀ Two 11v11 3G pitches (one of which to be considered as accommodating a World Rugby compliant shock pad or alternatively a contribution should be made to a shock pad at Holmes Park<sup>23</sup>).
- ◀ Grass football pitches and supporting ancillary provision to be co-located with 3G pitches).
- ◀ An offsite contribution to improving pitch quality and providing sports lighting at Vipers RFC.

Plans for a new secondary school could also cover sports which are not included within the PPC (i.e. tennis and netball) These should come with a Sport England approved community use agreement. Quality of any provision types provided at a school will need to be of a high quality to accommodate for both curricular and any additional community use.

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<sup>23</sup> Refer to sport specific scenarios for rationale.