

An Assessment
of
Open Space
in
Cambridge

Volume 1: Pitch Sports

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The commission

1.2. The Planning and Leisure Services Department of Cambridge City Council commissioned an assessment of the supply of and demand for open space in Cambridge. The English Sports Council supported the Council in terms of office time and expertise.

1.3. The study was commissioned for a variety of reasons. The Planning Department required it to:-

1.3.1. provide a more structured approach to the identification of open space subject to protection in the Cambridge Local Plan;

1.3.2. inform a reassessment of the Open Space Standards, the review of which has been identified as a project to be completed prior to/as part of the Local Plan review;

1.3.3. support the development control process when development is proposed on playing pitches and other open space; and,

1.3.4. inform the debate about development land availability in Cambridge.

1.4. The Leisure Services Department required the study to:-

1.4.1. contribute to the Review of the Leisure Strategy;

1.4.2. contribute to the production of a Playing Pitch Strategy and to guide the development of pitch sports and provision of sports pitches in the coming years; and,

1.4.3. contribute to a comprehensive review of play areas.

1.5. The objectives

1.6. The objectives of the study were to:-

1.6.1. assess the current playing pitch demand and supply in Cambridge and include in the report of study a reasoned conclusion about the adequacy (quantity and quality) of existing provision to meet future demand; a justified local standard for playing pitch provision and set out its implications for the review of the Open Space Standard and policies in the Local Plan; and, guidance to allow

Leisure Services to develop its own Playing Pitch Strategy.

- 1.6.2. assess the current demand for and supply of recreation grounds and other open spaces in Cambridge and include in the report a reasoned conclusion about the adequacy of existing provision to meet future demand; and, discussion of implications of the above for the review of the Open Spaces Standards.

- 1.7. In line with the above objectives, the detailed scope of the study embraced the following:-

- 1.7.1. Playing pitches:-

- use the Sports Council's methodology to produce a detailed assessment of the number of sports pitches required to meet identified demand;
- analysis of the existing register of recreational land to provide an inventory of pitches distinguishing between the sports they are used for, their ownership, and availability to different groups;
- an assessment of the quality of existing provision; and,
- consideration of the various policy options.

- 1.7.2. Recreation grounds:-

- analysis of data supplied by the Leisure Services Department to produce an inventory of other recreational land distinguishing between the various forms of open space.

1.8. The study area

- 1.9. The study area was defined to include both the City itself, as well as the villages immediately adjoining the city boundaries (e.g. Milton, Histon, Fulbourn, the Shelfords, Granchester).

1.10. This report

- 1.11. This report represents Volume 1 of the Report of Study. It summarises and discusses findings and conclusions of the study in respect of the supply of and demand for playing pitches.

- 1.12. The following sections of this report deal with the:-

- 1.12.1. method and definitions employed by the study (Section 2);
 - 1.12.2. main findings in terms of the supply of and demand for pitch sports (Section 3); and,
 - 1.12.3. the overall conclusions and suggested priorities for action (Section 4).
- 1.13. Supporting material is contained with the Appendices included at the back of this document.

2. METHOD AND DEFINITIONS

2.1. General approach

2.2. The study of playing pitches involved essentially a two-staged process:- Stage One: data collection; and, Stage Two: data analysis.

2.3. Data collection

2.4. An audit was conducted in the summer of 1998 of all known sports pitches and relevant open spaces within the study area. This audit also examined their use. The audit was based upon the following components:-

2.4.1. Questionnaire surveys involving:-

- all known pitch sport clubs within the study area;
- all known schools and institutes of further and higher education within the study area; and,
- all relevant parish councils within the study area.

Specimen copies of the relevant questionnaires are included in **Appendix A**.

2.4.2. Site inspections of all known pitches within the study area.

2.4.3. A review of the relevant information held both by the City Council's Planning and Leisure Services Departments, as well as previous research conducted both within the City and elsewhere.

2.5. Establishing precisely how many pitches there are within the study area is difficult for a number of reasons, for example:-

2.5.1. the number of pitches at a given site can fluctuate over short periods of time for reasons of management and husbandry. This means that the findings of a count conducted in one season may differ from the results of a similar exercise conducted the following season;

2.5.2. the time at which site surveys are conducted will greatly influence the number of pitches identified through site investigation; and,

2.5.3. football matches involving younger children may use portable goals and small-sided pitches, and these may be difficult to identify through site inspection. (Counts of junior

football pitches were therefore restricted to those which were marked out, (with goals in place) and of sufficient size to host games between older children's teams).

- 2.6. For the above reasons the assessment of playing pitch supply within the study area can only be considered to be a 'snapshot' in time.

2.7. Data analysis

- 2.8. A central component of the analysis was an examination of the extent to which pitches identified were in 'secured public use' (see below for definition), recognising that this has a considerable bearing upon the value of facilities both individually and collectively to the community at large.

- 2.9. The supply of football, rugby, hockey and cricket pitches in secured public use was assessed using the English Sports Council's 'Playing Pitch Methodology', summarised in **Appendix B**. This was then compared with contrasting analyses based on:-

2.9.1. the City Council's adopted 'Open Space Standards' contained in the current local plan (1.12 ha. of publicly available pitches per 1000 people to be applied to new areas of residential development); and,

2.9.2. the National Playing Field Association's (NPFA) 'Six Acre Standard', as it relates to sports pitches (1.20 ha per 1000 people).

2.10. The use of standards

- 2.11. It is important to appreciate how the Council and NPFA standards differ from the English Sports Council's method. The former are essentially a simple calculation using an accepted ratio of the space required per capita, whilst the latter is based on the identifiable requirements of individual teams converted into an assessment of 'peak-demand' demand for pitches.

- 2.12. The application of these different methods can lead to contrasting conclusions about the adequacy of the supply of sports pitches, and this point is discussed later in this report (para. 3.70).

- 2.13. The full NPFA standard also includes provision for other forms of open space, and these are covered in Volume 2 of this report of study. That part of the standard applying to formal recreation is detailed below.

Table 2.1: the 'Six Acre Standard'

Resource	Amount
1. Facilities such as pitches, bowling greens, tennis courts and, putting greens	1.6 - 1.8 ha per 1000 people (4 - 4.45 acres)
2. Facilities described in (1) within the education sector, which as a matter of practice and policy, are available for public use	The above includes a specific allocation of 1.20 ha (3.0 acres) per 1000 people for pitch sports.
3. Facilities described in (1) which are within the voluntary, industrial and commercial sectors, and serve the needs for outdoor recreation for members their members, or the public	

2.14. It will be noted that the standard also includes provision for other outdoor sports facilities, such as courts and greens. Such facilities were outside the remit of this study, although they are discussed further later in this section (see para. 2.30).

2.15. The City Council's own adopted standards for the provision of open space are based on the NPFA standards as advised in Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 - Sport and Recreation. This is set out in greater detail in **Appendix B**. The Cambridge open space standards are summarised in the following table.

Table 2.2:- Cambridge City Councils planning guidance on open space provision

Resource	Amount
Formal Open Space (equivalent to the NPFA category of Outdoor Sport)	1.6 - 1.8 ha/000, of which 1.12 ha/000 should be sports pitches
Children's Play Areas	0.2 - 0.3 ha/000. Should be within 400 metres of user
Informal Open Space (such as informal parks and gardens and other open space for those activities which do not require special preparation for participation).	1.5 - 1.8 ha/000.
Total recommended minimum standard	3.3 - 3.9 ha/000

2.16. As with any other forms of open space, the quality and location of playing pitches is of equal importance to the quantity provided. It is therefore necessary to ensure that all pitches in secured public use are suitably located and fit for purpose.

2.17. Fuller explanations of both the Sports Council's Playing Pitch Methodology is included in **Appendix B**.

2.18. The importance of qualitative factors

2.19. Due regard in analysis has been paid to qualitative factors, such as the overall quality of facilities, and geographical spread. The concerns and aspirations of both providers and users (gleaned largely through postal surveys as well as interviews with local authority officers and parish councils) were also taken into account.

2.20. Participation outside the scope of this study

2.21. As this study is concerned with the public demand for pitches, it excludes demand from other sectors, such as through curricular requirements; professional and semi-professional sport; and, university and higher educational non-sports activity.

2.22. The development of local standards

2.23. In addition to placing great emphasis on the importance of protecting open space and recreation provision, the government advises in Planning Policy Guidance Note 17, that local authorities should identify deficiencies in public open space and recreation provision and justify the amount and location of new provision against other competing pressures for the use of the land. PPG 17 states that, ‘.. it will be helpful if local planning authorities draw up their own standards of provision for formal and informal sport and recreation, based on their own assessment of need and include in their local plan’.

2.24. The setting of targets thus enables an assessment of current relevant provision and the establishment of a set of standards that can be used in planning policy to secure new or improved public open space in both existing settlements and planned areas of new development. Government advises, in the absence of a detailed local study, that an appropriate standard can be applied to the level of outdoor playing space provision and quotes the NPFA ‘Six Acre Standard’ as a guideline. However, this study has sought to generate a more realistic local standard, based upon the findings of the study, for the planning and provision of sports pitches.

2.25. Definition of the study area

2.26. As mentioned, the study area was defined to include both the City itself, as well as the villages immediately adjoining the city boundaries (e.g. Milton, Histon, Fulbourn, the Shelfords, Granchester). This was in recognition of the fact that team sports travel both out of and into the City to make use of facilities.

2.27. The study has revealed evidence of some clubs travelling into and out of the study area from elsewhere. Limitations on time and resources precluded examination of these wider movements. It must therefore be

recognised that the study area is not necessarily a self-contained catchment.

2.28. The study area population

2.29. The population data upon which much of this study is based was provided by Cambridge County Council. It is understood that this data is based upon the population normally resident. The figures therefore include the student population. The population estimates are for 1997, 2001, 2006, and 2011 to cover the City and surrounding parishes, as defined earlier. (See para. 3.65 for population figures/estimates).

2.30. Definition of key terms used in this report

2.31. **'Pitch sports'**. The term 'pitch sports' covers many activities requiring access to fairly extensive and marked-out areas of open space. In practice the study has been primarily concerned with the four most popular pitch sports in terms of participation:- football, cricket, rugby, and hockey. Other less popular pitch sports, such as lacrosse and american football, are also in theory covered by the study. However, the limited reference to such sports within the remainder of this report reflects the fact that the study identified little by way of evidence of demand for these minority sports.

2.32. In terms of formal outdoor sporting provision the project brief only required the study to examine pitch sports as defined above. However, the study method used also allowed data to be collected on other sports facilities (namely tennis courts, putting and bowling greens), where such facilities are located within sites qualifying for investigation through this study. It will be noted from **Table 2.1** that courts and greens fall within the overall Six Acre Standard. For this reason a summary of the provision of tennis courts, bowling and putting greens and the contribution they make to areas available for outdoor sports is contained in **Appendix C**.

2.33. **'Secured public use'**. Analyses of the supply of and demand for sports pitches examined the extent to which facilities were in 'secured public use'. This term is generally accepted to embrace the following:-

- 2.33.1. all local authority pitches;
- 2.33.2. educational facilities where they are subject to formal dual/community use agreements;
- 2.33.3. any other institutional facilities which are available to the public as a result of formal dual/community use agreements; and,
- 2.33.4. any facilities owned, used or maintained by clubs/private individuals which as a matter of policy or practice are

available for use by large sections of public through membership of a club or admission fee. In either case the 'cost of use' must be reasonable and affordable for the majority of the community.

- 2.34. These criteria reflect a fairly standard approach to assessing the availability of sports pitches for use by the public. However, they do have their shortcomings. Firstly, where schools and institutes are subject to formal community use agreements these often tend to relate to 'indoor' facilities rather than sports pitches. The implication of this is that many sports pitches which are in theory subject to community use agreements are in practice available for only very limited periods over the weekend. Those responsible for the day-to-day management and maintenance of such pitches may also resist hiring out to external groups if they believe it would lead to undue wear and tear to the detriment of regular curriculum needs.
- 2.35. Secondly, a significant number of pitches, which do not satisfy the above criteria, are nonetheless regularly used by outside clubs. Within the study area this has proved to be the case with pitches situated at hospitals, private schools, and university colleges; none of which are subject to formal dual use arrangements.
- 2.36. The above provisos have been taken into account in the detailed analysis of pitch supply, summarised in the remainder of this report.

3. THE SUPPLY OF AND DEMAND FOR PITCH SPORTS

3.1. Key findings on the application of standards

3.2. There are 231 full-size pitches within the study area. Of these, 112 are interpreted to be in secured public use. In addition, there are known to be 15 junior football pitches, of which 12 are in secured public use. Presently, there are estimated to be 126.64 ha of pitches in secured public use within the study area, or 0.87 ha for every 1000 people. This compares with a recommended level of provision of 162 ha using the City Council's standard (or 1.12 ha/000); and 173.6 ha using the NPFA's recommended standard (or 1.20 ha/000).

3.3. Within the City there are known to be 179 full-size pitches, and 15 junior pitches. Of these pitches, 76 full-size and 12 junior pitches are deemed to be in secured public use. The resultant area of 86.34 ha (at a ratio of 0.78 ha/000) compares with a recommended level of provision of 123.7 ha using the City Council's standard (or 1.12 ha/000); and 132.5 ha using the NPFA's recommended standard (or 1.20 ha/000).

3.4. A more detailed comparison with standards for open space inside the City is contained in Table 3.5 in Volume 2 of this report of study.

3.5. The study has also identified an estimated 123.66 ha of additional pitches within the study area not in secured public use (or 0.85 ha/000). Within the City alone the equivalent figures are 106.46 ha (or 0.96 ha/000). As will be explained later in this section, many such pitches are used regularly by local teams, and it would therefore be wrong to overlook their significance in this respect.

3.6. Compared with elsewhere, the study area has a comparatively small proportion of council owned pitches (City and parish). Conversely, the university sector makes the largest contribution to the overall supply, although none of these pitches are in secured public use. The other major providers are local school (both state and private sector).

3.7. Irrespective of whichever standard is used, there is a substantial shortfall in the area of pitches in secured public use compared with either standard.

3.8. Ratio of pitches per person

3.9. Overall, the study has identified an estimated 231 full-size football, cricket, rugby and hockey pitches in the study area. This figure includes all known public, private, school and other pitches, irrespective of whether or not they are in secured public use. This total equates to one pitch for every 626 people within the study area. This ratio compares favourably with the estimated equivalent national figure of 1 pitch for

every 989 people. Junior pitches have been excluded here to enable comparison with the findings of studies elsewhere.

3.10. Comparison with other local ratios

3.11. However, the estimated local pitch/person ratio does not compare so favourably with those yielded from similar studies conducted elsewhere.

Table 3.1: comparison of local pitch/person ratios with the results of studies conducted elsewhere

Local Authority	Ratio of Pitch/Person
Kennet District Council	1: 365
London Borough of Bromley	1: 602
<i>The Study Area</i>	<i>1: 621</i>
London Borough of Hounslow	1: 625
Lincolnshire	1: 684
Leicestershire	1: 747
St. Helens	1: 970
Portsmouth	1: 1,087
London Borough of Southwark	1: 2,842

3.12. Obviously, the above figures cover a range of local authority areas, from rural areas (such as Kennet District in Wiltshire), to heavily urbanised areas (such as the London Boroughs and St. Helens); this tends to be reflected in the wide range of ratios.

3.13. Local pitch/person ratios for individual sports

3.14. The local ratios for specific sports in comparison within the estimated national averages are as follows.

Table 3.2: comparison of local pitch/person ratios for individual sports with the estimated national average

Sport	Study Area (pitches/person)	England (pitches/person)
Senior Football	1: 1,447	1: 1,840
Cricket	1: 3,911	1: 4,243
Hockey *	1: 3,530	1: 8,968
Rugby	1: 2,894	1: 8,271

* includes Artificial Turf Pitches

3.15. Ownership

3.16. It is estimated that about:-

- 3.16.1. 21% of all pitches are owned or controlled by local authorities (i.e. either the City or parish councils). This is well below the estimated national average of about 43%;
 - 3.16.2. 22% of all pitches are controlled by the Local Education Authority schools and colleges of further education, compared with the estimated national average of 29%;
 - 3.16.3. 38% of pitches are controlled by universities and colleges of higher education. This percentage will be far higher than almost anywhere else because of the Cambridge's status as a major university city; and,
 - 3.16.4. the remaining pitches (19%) are controlled by private schools, clubs and other organisations.
- 3.17. It is to be noted that these figures vary from the equivalent figures for sectoral ownership provided in the current Local Plan. This might be explained largely by the fact that the breakdown provided in the local plan covers only the City itself; whereas the percentages generated by this study cover a wider geographical area, including parishes immediately adjacent to the City. However, both sets of figures tally sufficiently to confirm a 'profile' for playing pitch ownership that differs markedly from the national picture. This has implications for the provision of playing opportunities for the community, which are discussed later in this section (see para. 3.48).
- 3.18. Analysis of total pitch provision by ownership alone conceals the fact that provision for some sports is dominated by certain sectors. For example, most football pitches are owned by councils and education authorities. On the other hand, most hockey and rugby pitches are under private control, being largely in the ownership of private schools or university colleges.
- 3.19. Ancillary facilities (e.g. changing rooms, car parking etc.)**
- 3.20. The study highlighted a considerable variation in the quality of ancillary facilities. The most significant findings and problems identified in this respect are dealt with on a sport-by-sport basis later in this section. However, some more general comments can be made here, namely:-
- 3.20.1. that the best facilities tend to be those controlled by the universities, private schools, as well as clubs which have been able to develop their own facilities over a number of years, confident in having security of tenure;
 - 3.20.2. that the worst facilities tend to be those controlled by the City and parish councils. Many clubs using these facilities have complained about the quality of ancillary accommodation. Another major problem associated with

such facilities is vandalism, wear and tear, and abuse of the playing surface resulting from unfettered public access; and,

- 3.20.3. only a few pitches in secured public use benefit from floodlighting, and these again tend to be on sites where clubs have had the security of tenure to develop facilities over the years.

3.21. Participation in pitch sports

3.22. **The national picture.** The following table sets out national figures on participation in pitch sports from the General Household Survey (GHS), whilst a discussion of local trends for individual sports is contained in the relevant sub-section in this section.

Table 3.3: figures from General Household Surveys on participation in pitch sports

Year	Soccer	Cricket	Rugby	Hockey
1987	8.9%	4.2%	0.4%	0.2%
1990	8.5%	3.8%	0.5%	0.6%
1993	8.5%	3.8%	0.5%	0.6%

- 3.23. However, the above statistics should be used with caution. Figures derived from the GHSs for 1987, 1990, and 1993 are so general as to be almost meaningless. Furthermore, trend analysis is difficult as figures are sometimes presented slightly differently within individual GHSs.
- 3.24. Recent assessments from the Sports Council, based upon the GHS suggest that participation in football will remain static (although junior football is likely to increase). Participation in hockey is expected to increase due to the provision of more artificial turf pitches (ATPs). Participation in rugby and cricket could start to fall or, at best, remain static.
- 3.25. To place these levels of participation in context it is only football that appears in the 'top ten' participation sports for either sexes, (for men football was the fourth most popular sport or physical recreational activity).
- 3.26. Pitch sports (as with other sports activities with a high club membership) also have a high proportion of participants who take part in organised competitions.

3.27. Participation by children

3.28. The GHS results are based upon responses from adults aged between 16 and 44 years of age. Importantly, because the GHS concentrates on

adult participation it provides no information on participation by children and youths. Although no firm evidence exists, it would appear from discussions with relevant governing body representatives that participation within these age groups is growing for some sports. The most notable example of this is football; especially with the advent of the 'mini soccer' initiative, which will be discussed further later in this section (para. 3.32.31).

3.29. The local picture

3.30. The findings of the study with regard to participation within the study area are now considered on a sport-by-sport basis.

3.31. Analysis of local supply of and demand for pitches

3.32. Football

- 3.32.1. **Number of clubs and teams.** The study identified 89 football clubs based within the study area. On the evidence of league handbooks, allied to the responses from the club questionnaire survey, these clubs generated an estimated 245 teams.
- 3.32.2. **Membership.** The average size of club playing membership, based on the questionnaire returns is just over 50, which suggests that most clubs tend to support at least three teams. However, this average membership conceals a significant range. The number of playing members per club based upon those responding to the questionnaire survey ranged from 15 to 240.
- 3.32.3. Overall, there are estimated to be approximately 4,000 - 4,500 active footballers (outside of the professional and educational sectors) within the study area.
- 3.32.4. Not all clubs responding to the questionnaire survey indicated playing membership over recent years. However, based on those that did provide such information it would appear that overall playing membership appears to have remained fairly static over the last six years, which is broadly consistent with national trends.
- 3.32.5. Most of the respondent clubs claimed to promote 'special policies' benefiting young and disadvantaged groups. Those that did offered such inducement as reduced matchday fees for un-waged and low income earners; and, reduced annual membership for senior citizens.

- 3.32.6. The majority of members travel less than 5 miles to their home club, although a significant number travel between 5 and 10 miles.
- 3.32.7. **Composition of membership.** The 'average' club has 46 males (all ages); and, 3 females (all ages).
- 3.32.8. In terms of age groups the average club profile is 25 juniors and youths; 23 seniors; and, 1 veteran.
- 3.32.9. However, the above profile conceals wide variations in the composition of individual clubs. For example, it suggests a strong and widespread representation of juniors and youths, in practice many clubs are composed only of senior players. Junior footballers tend to be concentrated within a small number of 'colt' clubs running multiple teams.
- 3.32.10. It is difficult to provide a more detailed analysis of club membership because of patchy information provided through the club survey; and, a varied approach which tends to exist in football in demarcating between 'junior', 'youth' and 'senior' football.
- 3.32.11. **Games played.** Based upon the response from the club questionnaire survey, the number of games played by each club per season varies greatly between from club - to - club as follows.

Table 3.4: games played per season by respondent football clubs

Category	Games/Season (range)
Males	9 - 261
Females	6 - 25
Juniors	10 -126
Youths	3 - 30

- 3.32.12. The upper range for males and juniors is due to the existence of a number of large clubs running several junior teams.
- 3.32.13. **Team Generation Rates (TGRs).** A TGR is the ratio of the number of teams within a given area to the total population within a given age group for that same area.
- 3.32.14. Identifying TGRs provides the means to:-
 compare participation in competitive soccer (and other pitch sports) between the study area and other parts of the country where similar studies have been undertaken; and,

- assist modelling future demand for pitches.
- 3.32.15. Caution is advised in using TGRs, as over-reliance on them at the expense of drawing upon qualitative evidence can lead to an under-estimation of demand. Essentially, TGRs reflect the current status quo as they are based on existing teams and may therefore ignore the needs of any 'potential' clubs that cannot affiliate to leagues because they lack access to a home ground.
- 3.32.16. The importance of taking into account 'latent demand' is considered more fully later in this section (para. 3.62).
- 3.32.17. An estimated 56% of the study area's total population falls within the age range of 10 - 44 years, which is the age group tending to yield the vast majority of pitch sport players.
- 3.32.18. Dividing the estimated number of football teams within the study area by the total study area population aged between 10 - 44 years (79,923) gives a **TGR of 1:326**. To enable comparison with TGRs generated from similar studies elsewhere, the above ratio can be reduced to approximately **1:158** to reflect the estimated male population within the study area between 10 - 44 years.
- 3.32.19. On this basis the following comparisons can be made.

Table 3.5: comparison of local team generation rates for football with the results of studies conducted elsewhere

Local Authority/Area	TGR
<i>The Study Area</i>	<i>1: 158</i>
Kennet District	1: 183
Crawley, Horsham, Hastings, Bexhill and Maidstone	1: 183
Portsmouth	1: 236
Tyne and Wear	1: 290

- 3.32.20. The estimated TGR for the study area compares well with those derived from comparable studies. The variance in these TGRs will be as a result of several factors which might include:-
- contrasting demographic characteristics, (populations dominated by the very old or the very young may not generate as many teams as those dominated by a young adults;

- varied sports development campaigns, (local authorities and others running active sports development initiatives will probably encourage increased levels of participation);
 - the existence of an adequate supply of playing pitches; and,
 - other factors such as those considered under the heading 'Future and Latent Demand' later in this section (para. 3.62).
- 3.32.21. In order to plan effectively to meet estimated demand it is worth identifying the respective TGRs for 'junior' and 'senior' teams. For this purpose the age groups of 10 - 14 years, and 15 - 44 years tend to be used. It is inappropriate to attempt to measure demand for pitches below this age group because most such activity takes place within curriculum time. However, it is recognised that this may change in future years if the growth in children's 'mini-soccer' (see para. 3.32.31) continues.
- 3.32.22. On this basis the following TGRs can be generated for males and females combined in the following age groups:- 10 - 14 years = 1: 629; and, 15 - 44 years = 1: 695.
- 3.32.23. **Estimated demand for football pitches.** In order to identify the weekly demand for football the total number of known teams is multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play 'at home' each week.
- 3.32.24. Analysis of the club survey and booking records suggests that the daily demand for soccer occurs largely over the weekend, with only a small percentage of matches being played during the week. Nationally, there has been a trend towards Sunday as the most popular day for playing football, reflected in an approximate 20/80% split of matches between Saturday and Sunday respectively. However, local findings suggest that the daily demand within the study area is not so heavily skewed towards Sunday with the split being closer to 35% on Saturdays and 65% on Sundays. If this daily demand for pitches is analysed by age group the evidence suggests that the demand for junior pitches is distributed more evenly between Saturday and Sunday.
- 3.32.25. The above assessment of daily demand suggests that the resultant distribution of demand for the various age groups would be broadly as follows.

- 3.32.26. **Supply of pitches.** The following table summarises the number of football pitches within the study area. The table distinguishes between 'senior' and 'junior' pitches, and whether or not they are not in secured public use'. (See definition provided in Section 2).

Table 3.6: estimated daily demand for football pitches in the study area

Age Group	Overall Demand for 'home games'	On Saturday	On Sunday
Senior	58	20	38
U. 16's	27	9	18
U. 12's	37	13	24
Total	122	42	80

Table 3.7: football pitches in the study area

Soccer pitches in secured public use (senior)	Soccer pitches in secured public use (junior)	Soccer pitches not in secured public use (senior)	Soccer pitches not in secured public use (junior)
57	12	43	3

- 3.32.27. In addition to the adult size pitches, the study has identified at least 15 junior size football pitches. The probability is that there are significantly more junior football pitches, located mainly on primary school sites. However, the study yielded no hard evidence of such additional provision because:-

- very few primary schools responded to the questionnaire survey; and,
- the site surveys identified few examples of primary school playing fields being formally marked out as junior football pitches.

- 3.32.28. **Supply of pitches in secured public use compared with demand.** The study suggests that most of the pitches used by football clubs in the study area can accommodate at least two senior matches each week on a regular basis before they deteriorate to an unacceptable standard.

- 3.32.29. Given that the daily demand for pitches is concentrated over the weekend it appears that the supply of senior pitches satisfies the current estimated demand for such pitches *as expressed by senior teams*. However, if it is assumed that youth teams (i.e. under 16s) also prefer to

play on full-size pitches, the supply becomes more tenuous, with overall demand for matches by senior and under 16 teams apparently outstripping demand.

- 3.32.30. Relative demand for and supply of junior pitches presents a worrying picture on paper, with the estimated demand for junior size pitches greatly outstripping the known supply of such pitches in secured public use. However, there are two reasons why this theoretical shortfall may not exist in practice. Firstly, one full-size pitch roughly equates to the area required for two junior pitches. Accordingly, if it is assumed that a senior size pitch can also accommodate junior games in the morning as well as an adult game in the afternoon (or vice versa), the overall demand for pitches of all sizes can be absorbed from the existing stock. This doubling up of pitches can frequently be accommodated simply because the wear and tear on pitches through children's play is far less than that produced by adult teams. The task of meeting the relative demands of the various age groups is therefore fundamentally an issue of efficient management of existing resources (such as remarking playing fields and management of daily use).
- 3.32.31. An important factor in such local decision making and management will be the enforcement of new Football Association regulations covering the playing of mini-soccer. These regulations (to be brought into effect in September 1999) will mean that only mini soccer will be promoted amongst children under ten years of age. The most important implication of this for the planning and provision of sports pitches will stem from the accompanying set of pitch dimensions for the playing of mini soccer, which are as follows. It will be seen from the below dimensions that at least two maximum dimension mini soccer pitches can be accommodated on a full-size senior pitch.

Table 3.8: pitch dimensions for mini-soccer as prescribed by the Football Association (copied verbatim from the Football Association Laws for Mini-soccer)

Age Group	No. per Team	Recommended Pitch Size
Over 6 And Under 8s	4 v 4 and 5 v 5	Min. Length 27.5 m Max. Length 36.6 m Min. Width 18.3 m Max. Width 27.5 m
Over 8 And Under 10s	6 v 6 and 7 v 7	Min. Length 45 m Max. length 55 m Min. Width 27.5 m Max. Width 36.6 m

- 3.32.32. The second reason why the supply picture may not be problematic concerns the *de facto* availability of football pitches not in secured public use. The study has identified that a significant number of schools, universities and other institutes not subject to formal community use agreements do hire out their pitches to outside teams on a regular basis. For example, some of the university colleges (who collectively manage a sizeable proportion of the playing field resource within the study area) have indicated that they hire out their pitches to local teams. Similarly, some of the football clubs responding to the club survey have indicated that they make use of some of the health authority pitches (such as at Fulbourn Hospital) located just outside the City).
- 3.32.33. Outside use of pitches which cannot be classified as being in secured public use also helps to explain why the current demand for senior pitches can be satisfied from the existing stock of pitches.
- 3.32.34. **Other key findings for football.** The overall supply of football pitches in secured public use within the study area therefore appears sufficient to meet existing demand. Any issues that the study has identified concerning football tend to involve matters of 'quality' rather than supply.
- 3.32.35. Of the clubs and parish/town councils responding to the questionnaire surveys, the main problems cited involved:- pitches being difficult and expensive to maintain; and, inadequate or lack of training and other ancillary/off-pitch facilities, and lack of access to social facilities.
- 3.32.36. More specifically, the survey identified the following clubs to have noteworthy problems.

Table 3.9: some specific problems identified by respondent football clubs

Team	Problem
Carlton Rangers FC	Pitches sometimes not marked out. Goalposts need attention
Cambridge Cosmos FC	Access to Clare College limited by cricket season. Goals and nets at St. Bede's School in poor condition
YMCA Cambridge FC	Showers sometimes cold. Pitch is on a slope.
Chesterton FC	No showers or separate changing rooms
Girton United FC	Have to do all pitch markings etc. Pavilion in very poor condition
Cherry Hinton Lion's Colts FC	Adult teams leave the pitches very churned up
South Cams Eagles FC	Holes in goal nets
Long Road FC	Pitch quality has declined "since privatisation"
Girton Colts FC	Pitch in excellent condition but changing facilities poor
Queen Edith FC	Pitch over-used in mid-November, it is either a mud bath or rock hard
Fulbourn Hospital/Falcons FC	Depends on the lease provided by the health authority for long-term security
Cambridge University Women FC	Pitches over-used
Trumpington Tornadoes FC	Goal posts have to be taken down after each match
Fulbourn Institute FC	Pitches are some distance from changing rooms and showers

- 3.32.37. Of the clubs responding to the questionnaire survey, a few claimed to have proposals or aspirations for further development as summarised below.

Table 3.10: some specific plans identified by respondent football clubs

Club	Plans
Cambridge City FC	Looking at prospects for ATP
Girton United FC	Application for Lottery bid for ATP and pavilion being considered
Fulbourn Hospital/Falcons FC	Hoping to apply for planning consent for training lights
Fulbourn Institute FC	Extra land for ATP to replace the present grass training area

3.33. Cricket

- 3.33.1. **Number of clubs and teams.** A count of relevant teams listed in league handbooks, allied to an examination of pitch booking records has identified 15 clubs within the study

area. Based on the responses received from the club questionnaire survey these clubs generated an estimated 44 teams. This total is calculated to comprise of 24 senior men's teams, 18 junior teams, and, 2 womens teams.

- 3.33.2. **Membership.** Unlike soccer, cricket teams cannot be divided so easily into precise age groups as it is a widespread practice for young cricketers to be incorporated into senior teams.
- 3.33.3. The average club size based upon the questionnaire returns is 44 playing members. However, this hides a considerable variation between individual clubs, ranging between 24 to 100 members.
- 3.33.4. Overall there are estimated to be between 600 and 700 active cricketers (outside the professional and educational sectors) within the study area.
- 3.33.5. Although not all respondent clubs indicated membership trends over recent years, those that did suggest that general membership levels have experienced a steady increase in recent years (which is contrary to identified national trends).
- 3.33.6. Only two female clubs were identified through the survey (Cambridge Ladies and Cambridge University Ladies Cricket Clubs).
- 3.33.7. Most of the cricket clubs responding to the questionnaire survey claim to promote 'special policies' benefiting young and disadvantaged groups. These offer inducements such as reduced matchday fees for un-waged and low income earners, students and young people.
- 3.33.8. The majority of club members travel less than 5 miles to their home club, although a significant proportion travel between 5 and 10 miles.
- 3.33.9. **Games played.** The total number of games played by each club per season varies greatly as follows. The respondent clubs indicated the following ranges.

Table 3.11: games played per season by respondent cricket clubs

Age/gender groups	Games/season (range)
Males	8-60
Females	22
Juniors/youths	4-30

- 3.33.10. **Team Generation Rates (TGRs).** The concept of TGRs and their value as a component of demand modelling are explained fully earlier in the earlier sub-section dealing with football (para. 3.32.13).
- 3.33.11. The TGR for cricket is computed by dividing the estimated number of cricket teams within the study area by the population between 10 – 44 years of age (79,923). This produces a **TGR of 1:1816**.
- 3.33.12. To enable comparison with TGRs generated through similar studies elsewhere. The number of male teams can be divided into the total male population between 10 - 44 years. This gives a TGR of 1: 908.

Table 3.12: comparison of local team generation rates for cricket with the results of studies conducted elsewhere

Local Authority/Area	TGR
Mid Devon	1: 271
North Devon	1: 298
Torbay	1: 463
Kennet District	1: 407
<i>The Study Area</i>	<i>1: 908</i>
Portsmouth	1: 2,808

- 3.33.13. The local TGR does not compare favourably with those derived from other studies. However, it should be pointed out that there are far fewer comparable TGRs to choose from than for football.
- 3.33.14. Unlike soccer, it is not felt to be appropriate to compute individual TGRs for 10 – 14 and 15 – 44 age groups because:- cricket teams are frequently comprised of mixed age groups; and, there are no separate pitch dimensions for senior and junior cricket.
- 3.33.15. **Estimated demand for cricket pitches.** In order to identify the weekly demand for cricket total number of teams has to

be multiplied by 0.5 to reflect the fact that only half the teams will play 'at home' each week.

- 3.33.16. The findings of the club survey as well as the booking records of both the City and parish councils suggests the daily demand for cricket to be focused over the weekend, with only a small number of matches being played during the week (short evening matches).
- 3.33.17. Interestingly, the club survey allied to an examination of pitch booking records suggests that most games (perhaps as many as 80%) are played on Saturdays. This contrasts with the national picture where there seems to be a fairly even distribution over the weekend period. A possible reason for this variance from the national pattern is discussed later (para. 3.33.21).
- 3.33.18. The estimated number of 'home games' each week needs to be divided over the weekend (80% on Saturday and 20% on Sunday). The resultant distribution of demand is as follows.

Table 3.13: estimated temporal demand for cricket pitches in the study area

Overall demand for 'home games'	On Saturday	On Sunday
23	18	5

- 3.33.19. **Supply of pitches.** The following table lists the number of cricket pitches within the study area according to whether or not they are deemed to be in secured public use.

Table 3.14: cricket pitches in the study area

Cricket pitches in secured public use	Cricket pitches not in secured public use
16	21

- 3.33.20. **Supply compared with demand.** The above figures would suggest that there are insufficient pitches in secured public use to satisfy demand on Saturdays.
- 3.33.21. However, as with football there are other factors to take into account that may in practice mean that no acute shortage exists:-

□ as with football, some pitches that cannot be classified as being in secured public use are in practice used on a regular basis by local cricket teams. Evidence suggests that the use of university pitches by outside teams may be relatively high. The manager responsible for letting City Council pitches believes that many local clubs prefer to use university pitches and will only resort to using Council pitches if they cannot gain access to their preferred facilities. This preference for using private pitches may explain the apparently high local demand for pitches on Saturdays, if it is the preference of university teams to play their matches on Sundays; and,

□ if the distribution of daily demand for pitches over the weekend period more closely reflected the national pattern (i.e. 50% Saturday and 50% Sunday), there would be sufficient pitches to meet demand.

3.33.22. **Other key findings for cricket.** As with football, most of the clubs responding to the questionnaire survey were more concerned about the quality of playing facilities, rather than the supply of supply of pitches *per se*. However, as listed below, one club did express concern about the supply of pitches within the City which had forced them to play their matches in the outlying villages.

3.33.23. Some clubs identified conflict with other public users of recreation grounds as a problem (as cricket teams can take up a large portion of a recreation ground). This problem was also raised by the manager responsible for letting City Council pitches, who believes that the Council pitches located in the City centre are unpopular because of the conflict between cricket and other users of public open space.

3.33.24. Specific problems identified by respondent clubs include the following.

Table 3.15: some specific problems identified by respondent cricket clubs

Team	Pitch Sector	Problem
Little Shelford CC	LA	Pavilion is old. Conflict with other public use on recreation ground.
Great Shelford CC	LA	Conflict with other public use.
Coton CC	LA	Pavilion is dilapidated and a source of embarrassment.
Cambridge Ladies CC	LA School	Vandalism of buildings and trespass onto pitches. Pitches in Cambridge in short supply and difficult to get hold of short of "knowing the right people". Have to go to the villages to secure use of pitches.

3.33.25. Of the clubs responding to the questionnaire survey, a number claimed to have proposals or aspirations for further development as summarised below.

Table 3.16: some specific plans identified by respondent cricket clubs

Club	Plans
Little Shelford CC	Improvements to pavilion
Milton CC	Provide sight screens
Coton Cricket CC	Plans for a replacement pavilion and re-laid cricket square and a synthetic cricket square.
Cambridge Ladies CC	Have development plan covering children from 10 years of age.

3.34. Rugby.

3.34.1. **Number of clubs and teams.** The Study identified a total of 5 rugby clubs within the study area. Based on the response from the club questionnaire survey, these clubs generate an estimated 35 teams.

3.34.2. Three clubs responded to the club questionnaire survey, namely Cambridge RFC, Shelford RFC, and Cantabrigian RFC. Between them, these clubs generated the following numbers of teams:- 16 male teams; and, 4 female teams; or, 11 senior teams; and, 9 junior teams. Cambridge University Rugby Club did not respond to the questionnaire survey, although it is assumed that this last club has a playing membership composed largely of students.

3.34.3. **Membership.** The three clubs between them have 867 playing members, an average of 289 members per club. If this average is also applied to the non-respondent clubs it would generate an estimated 1400 - 1500 regular rugby players within the study area.

Table 3.17: playing membership of respondent rugby clubs

Club	Members
Cambridge RFC	426 members
Shelford RFC	365 members
Cantabrigian RFC	76 members

3.34.4. Overall membership levels appear to have remained fairly steady over recent years, which is broadly consistent with national trends.

3.34.5. The respondent clubs all claimed to promote 'special policies' benefiting young and disadvantaged groups including the unemployed, low-paid, and students.

3.34.6. **Games played.** Based on the answers of the three respondent clubs, the number of games played each season varies as follows.

Table 3.18: games played per season by respondent rugby clubs

Age/gender groups	Games/season (range)
Males	20 – 70
Females	16
Juniors/youths	20 – 40

3.34.7. The higher end of these ranges is obviously influenced by the contrasting size of the respondent clubs.

3.34.8. **Team Generation Rates (TGRs).** The TGR for rugby within the study area is computed as **1:2283**

- 3.34.9. It is not possible to compare this TGR with those generated elsewhere as they have not tended to be produced for other studies.
- 3.34.10. **Supply compared with demand for rugby pitches.** There are estimated to be 26 rugby pitches in secured public use, and 24 further pitches not in secured public use.
- 3.34.11. Identifying the weekly demand for rugby pitches is not such a relevant exercise for rugby as it is for football and cricket. This is because the rugby clubs identified within the study area tend to own their home facilities. No clubs appear to be dependent on pitch provision either by the City Council or the various parish councils or 'community schools'. There does not appear to be a shortage of rugby pitches in terms of current demand. The problems faced by local rugby clubs instead relate to issues of 'quality' rather than 'quantity', as identified below.
- 3.34.12. **Other key findings for rugby.** The clubs responding to the survey identified the following specific problems.

Table 3.19: some specific problems identified by respondent rugby clubs

Team	Pitch	Problem
Cambridge RFC	Trust	Recent long, hot summers have caused the pitch to crack.
Cantabrigian RFC	Owner-occupied	Showers and off-pitch facilities are spartan and out-of-date.

- 3.34.13. The respondent clubs claimed to have the following development plans.

Table 3.20: some specific plans identified by respondent rugby clubs

Club	Plans
Cambridge RFC	Rebuild clubhouse with weights and medical room.
Shelford RFC	Wish to further develop facilities for youths and ladies and provide disabled access.
Cantabrigian RFC	Wish to build own changing facilities and improve clubhouse.

3.35. Hockey

- 3.35.1. **Number of clubs and teams.** Although the study identified 4 hockey clubs, only one (Cambridge Hockey Club) responded to the questionnaire survey. Cambridge Hockey Club is probably the largest club based in the study area, and it runs:- 5 male teams; and, 3 female teams.
- 3.35.2. If these figures are similar for other teams in the study area, it would suggest a total of 32 teams. This is probably an over-estimate given the relative size of Cambridge Hockey Club.
- 3.35.3. **Membership and games played.** Based on an extrapolation of figures provided by the single returned questionnaire, there are an estimated 500 - 600 regular hockey players within the study area, with about 60% of these members being male, and about half being junior or youth players. However, for reasons already stated this may be an over-estimation of actual participation levels.
- 3.35.4. If trends in Cambridge Hockey Club are indicative of other clubs, there has been a gradual increase in the number of regular players over recent years.
- 3.35.5. Collectively, teams affiliated to Cambridge Hockey Club play a total of around 180 games a season.
- 3.35.6. Compared with other pitch sports, club members appear to travel greater distances to reach their home facilities, with over 50% of members living more than 5 miles away from their home base.
- 3.35.7. **Supply compared with demand for hockey pitches.** There are estimated to be 11 hockey pitches in secured public use, with a further 30 pitches not being in Secured Public Use. These include the ATPs.
- 3.35.8. The main issue affecting the supply of and demand for hockey pitches within the study area is not so much the actual supply of pitches, but rather what type of surface is provided. There has been a major trend towards the use of ATPs over the last decade, to the extent that most competitive games now have to be played using such facilities.
- 3.35.9. Many community clubs (like Cambridge Hockey Club) which are unable to develop ATPs of their own, either have to make do with grass pitches (stopping them from aspiring to very high standards of competitive play); or else have to

secure access to ATPs controlled by others. Cambridge Hockey Club tends to rely on ATPs controlled by private schools or universities. This means that the Club may only be allowed to use facilities when the primary users do not require them. In fact, the Club has stressed that it would very much prefer to develop its own ATP, perhaps in partnership with the City Council or the university.

3.35.10. This reliance on access to facilities owned by the public and educational sectors reflects what is happening nationally. Historically, hockey (as with rugby and, to an extent, cricket) has tended to be a 'self-sufficient' sport in that many clubs have acquired and manage their own facilities. However, the requirement for clubs now to have access to ATPs in order to play league hockey has meant that many instead must now rely on securing access to education or council-owned pitches.

3.35.11. The issues surrounding the present and future demand for hockey and ATPs are discussed further later in this section (para 3.38).

3.36. **Other pitch sports.** Football, rugby, cricket and hockey are by far the most popular pitch sports, both nationally within the study area and nationally.

3.37. The study identified only a few examples of other 'minority' pitch sports taking place within the study area. Those identified include:- american football (which is documented to take place at Coldhams Common and Cambridge Rugby Club); and, lacrosse (which takes place on at least one of the university sports grounds).

3.38. Artificial turf pitches (ATPs)

3.39. ATPs, whilst being the preferred surface upon which to play hockey, are not generally acceptable for competitive play in football, cricket and rugby. However, for all these sports ATPs represent an important training resource as they offer a robust and even surface, playable in all conditions, and which can theoretically be used 24 hours/day if floodlights are provided.

3.40. Because ATPs can be used intensively for football and rugby training this can reduce wear and tear on grass pitches, which can therefore be maintained in a better state for formal matches, as well as reduce the necessary maintenance costs.

3.41. The study has identified 5 full-size (i.e. at least 100 x 50 metre) ATPs within the study area, which are located at:- Coldhams Common (local authority controlled, floodlit, and in secured public use; St. Catherines College (Grantchester Meadows (university controlled, not floodlit, and

not in secured public use)); the Leys School, (private school controlled, floodlit and not in secured public use); the Perse School, (private school controlled, not floodlit, and not in secured public use); and, the University pitch (Wilberforce Road), (university controlled, not floodlit, and not in secured public use).

- 3.42. Only one ATP, at Coldhams Common, is known to be in secured public use. The other facilities are controlled either by private schools or the University, and will only be made available to the public when they are not required by the intended main user. Of these other ATPs it will therefore only be those with floodlighting that will have any significant value for the general public.
- 3.43. There are presently no widely recognised standards governing the provision of ATPs. However, the English Sports Council is shortly to announce its own recommended planning guidance for such facilities, which is anticipated to be 1 ATP per 60,000 population within a 30 minute drive-time catchment. It is understood that the Sports Council will be guided by this figure in helping to identify those projects which will receive Lottery funding. The Sports Council readily accepts that smaller populations may be able to support ATPs; especially where potential club users already exist. For example, research conducted in the English Sports Council (Southern Region), has suggested that such facilities can be sustained by a population of 30,000.
- 3.44. The English Sports Council are publishing the results of the application of their Facilities Planning Model for basic community sports facilities throughout the country in October and November of this year. The purpose of this exercise is to identify areas where there are significant deficiencies in basic sports facilities, to enable Lottery money to be more effectively targeted. The output will be a series of maps highlighting the priority areas for encouraging Lottery applications for ATPs, sports halls, and swimming pools).
- 3.45. Applying the Sports Council's 1 ATP per 60,000 to the present population, suggests that the study area is not under-provided with ATPs in secured public use, as two of the existing facilities can be categorised as such. However, if a higher standard of provision is adopted (as is justified by the English Sports Council (Southern Region), there would be grounds for arguing that an additional two ATPs in secured public use should be provided to meet local needs. These might be secured either through the construction of new facilities; or else through the City Council entering into agreements with existing providers of ATPs to improve access for community teams. In terms of the latter option a satisfactory level of public access will only be achieved if floodlighting is also provided.
- 3.46. Because ATPs are expensive to construct and have to be replaced roughly every ten years, it is very important to locate them where they will be well used, both to help recoup initial capital outlay and to

maximise contributions to the necessary 'sinking fund' to replace the worn out surface.

3.47. The viability of ATPs is also underpinned by the existence of ready and willing users, such as large hockey and football clubs that could block-book sessions. It also helps if off-peak time can be utilised by schools. The optimal locations for such facilities will therefore frequently be school sites located within the larger population centres, and also where community use agreements exist.

3.48. Some general conclusions about the current supply of and demand for pitches

3.49. The project brief required this study to examine the adequacy of playing pitch supply in accordance with the methodology recommended by the Sports Council.

3.50. The contrast in basic approaches underpinning the Sports Council's pitch assessment model and standards, (such as those promoted by the NPFA and the City Council), was discussed briefly in Section 1. It was emphasised that these approaches can yield markedly different conclusions.

3.51. However, although this study (based on the Sports Council method) has identified various supply-related issues in respect of individual pitch sports, the overall picture painted using this method is apparently in marked contrast to that which the simple application of the City Council's standard might suggest. Whether, there are any ground to reconcile these two apparently conflicting sets of conclusions is discussed later in this section (para. 3.70).

3.52. Notwithstanding the specific conclusions for individual sports discussed earlier, the study has identified that the ability of the current stock of pitches to satisfy demand largely depends on the extent to which pitches not in secured public use continue to be made available for use by outside teams. This would appear to be especially the case for cricket; although football teams also appear to depend to some extent on the continued use of such pitches.

3.53. Therefore, although there may presently be no serious, practical shortage of pitches, this will only remain the case if demand to play the major pitch sports does not increase in any significant way; and/or, those pitches which are not in secured public use but which are nevertheless used by outside teams continue to be made available.

3.54. The implications of any future increase in demand for pitches are considered later in this section.

3.55. The continued availability to outside teams of pitches not in secured public use should be a matter of major concern to the City Council,

given the comparatively small percentage of pitches within the study area controlled by the City and parish councils. The management and use of such pitches is something over which the Council presently has little influence. Clearly the managers of these facilities have their own priorities which dictate how much community use (if any) will be allowed. Foremost amongst these will be the needs of those groups which the pitches are primarily intended to serve.

3.56. The study has also made clear that it is not simply the overall *quantity* of pitches which is critical to meeting demand, but also the *quality* of pitches and ancillary facilities. If cost is ignored, teams will prefer to use local facilities of good quality in preference to others of lesser standard. It is also evident that several of the clubs responding to the questionnaire survey are being frustrated in their efforts to develop and improve because they lack access to good quality facilities. The implications for the planning and management of pitches are two-fold:-

3.56.1. if council-controlled pitches are to compete successfully with private pitches for the patronage of local clubs, many will need to be subjected to major improvements of both playing surfaces and ancillary facilities. Such improvements will be necessary not only to attract clubs, but also to provide a back-up resource of sufficient standard to insure against when high quality private facilities are no longer available for public use; and,

3.56.2. aspiring clubs will need to have access to better quality facilities if they are to improve their performance and compete in higher standard leagues which often have stringent requirements in terms of what clubs must provide for their home facilities.

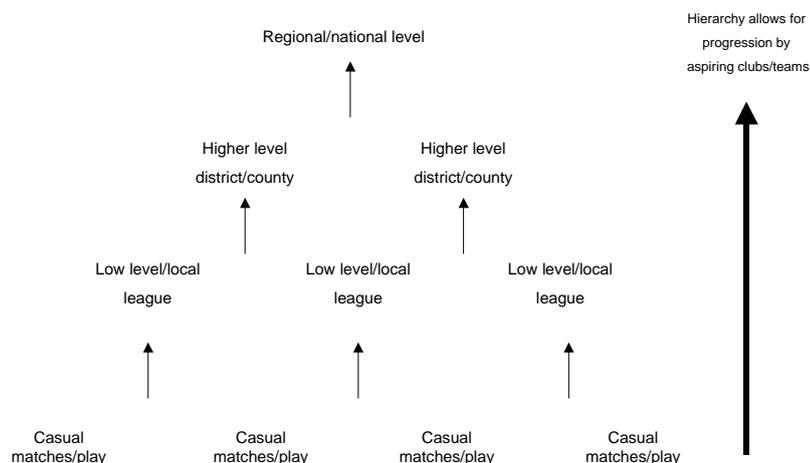
3.57. In terms of the first of above points, several teams have identified the problems associated with uncontrolled access to pitches in public parks and recreation grounds. This can not only lead to vandalism and abuse of the playing surface (dog fouling, rutted surfaces), but also disrupted matches. The physical improvement of council pitches and facilities may therefore need to be considered in conjunction with measures to restrict public access to playing surfaces.

3.58. In terms of the second point, the City Council may feel there would be benefit in developing a conceptual hierarchy to guide any further investment in the improvement of pitches. Such a hierarchy could recognise the role of both public and private pitches, as well as the need to provide facilities enabling progression through various standards of competitive play. It is recognised that the City Council is subject to considerable financial constraints that would limit its own ability to finance the pursuit of such a strategy. However, the existence of a strategy may encourage funding from other sources, such as the

Lottery Sports fund, governing bodies, the Football Trust, local clubs and education authorities.

3.59. Should the City Council see value in pursuing such a strategy it might reflect the following categorisation of and relationship between pitches.

Table 3.21: possible categorisation of pitches to act as a basis for a hierarchical strategy



3.60. Within this diagram:-

- 3.60.1. the *'foundation level'* level of the hierarchy (casual matches/play) would include kick-about areas, 5-a-side pitches, and 'rough' pitches for casual use which cannot be used for competitive matches but nevertheless serve to encourage initial participation;
- 3.60.2. the intermediate *'participation level'* offers facilities for those clubs on the lowest rungs of regular competitive play, where there will normally be a requirement for changing accommodation;
- 3.60.3. the *'performance level'* offers facilities for those teams which have reached a fairly high standard of play and are playing regular league matches where there may be requirements in respect of playing surface, changing facilities etc; and,
- 3.60.4. the *'excellence level'* represents the apex of the hierarchy and might cater for clubs in regional and national leagues at an amateur, professional and semi-professional level. Once

again, facility requirements will be commensurate with the standard of play and might include spectator facilities, floodlighting etc.

- 3.61. This hierarchy can be developed for facilities for both juniors and seniors, and could recognise the value of pitches not in secured public use. It could be further developed for individual sports in conjunction with the Sports Council and the relevant governing bodies.

3.62. Latent and future demand

- 3.63. It is important to recognise that demand can change and may therefore, in time, increase above present levels. This is for a variety of reasons which will now be considered.

- 3.64. **The influence of sports development campaigns, media exposure, and new facilities upon participation.** Demand to take part in sport fluctuates for a variety of reasons, including the following.

3.64.1. *The influence of sports development campaigns.* Initiatives taken by the governing bodies of sport, schools and local authorities may lead to an increased demand to take part in a given sport. Of particular importance is the Football Association's mini soccer initiative. The target date for the implementation of the planned mini soccer programme at under 10 level is the season 1999-2000. A national facilities plan has been prepared by the Football Association, which will be complemented by County Association Action Plans.

3.64.2. The English Sports Council has long-promoted 'school-community' sports initiatives, with the aim of encouraging more young people to continue to play sport beyond school hours and years. This ethos also underpins many of the facility and sports development programmes financed by Lottery Sports Fund money.

3.64.3. It is impossible to predict the effect of such initiatives on future demand for pitches. Neither is it possible to predict the effect which an increased focus on PE within the school curriculum may have upon young people's longer-term fidelity with sport once they have left formal full-time education.

3.64.4. The issue of how best to plan for the uncertain impact of such campaigns and policy initiatives will be considered later in this section (para. 3.70);

3.64.5. *The influence of new facilities in encouraging new teams to form.* New or improved facilities by themselves can

generate demand which may not hitherto have been evident. For example, when local authorities first began to build leisure centres, relatively little prior consumer research was conducted to establish whether such facilities would be well used. The ultimate success of most of these facilities illustrates how demand to participate may not be articulated until opportunities to participate are actually made available.

3.64.6. *Media exposure of individual sports.* For example, national success at events such as the football and rugby World Cups will invariably attract young people into these sports.

3.65. **The influence of population changes on participation.** The main potential determinant of demand is the changing local population. The current estimated population within the study area is 144,730. On the basis of the current development plan framework for the study area (which may change in the future) over the coming years it is anticipated that the population will increase to an estimated 144,830 by 2006, and to 146,830 by 2011. The corresponding population within the 10 - 44 year groups will also expand from the current estimated 79,923, to 85,724 in 2006. However, over the longer term it is projected drop back to 84, 292 in 2011. In overall terms therefore, the population will not greatly increase over the next decade, and that component comprised of the 'team generating' ages will remain fairly steady as a percentage of the overall population (between 55 and 59%) over this period.

3.66. Applying the Team Generation Rates (TGRs) identified for football and cricket earlier in this section to the above projections produces the following estimated number of teams. These estimates can be recalculated as necessary if population growth exceeds the above estimates.

Table 3.22: estimated local increase in teams for 2001, 2006, and 2011

Pitches	Year				+/- Teams
	1998	2001	2006	2011	
Senior Football	115	116	123	121	+ 6
Junior Football	127	129	136	134	+ 7
Cricket	44	45	47	46	+ 2

3.67. Based on the same assumptions concerning the daily demand for pitches and pitch quality discussed earlier in this section, these figures would have the following implications in terms of the demand for football and cricket pitches by 2011 an additional 2 - 3 pitches would be required for senior football; an additional 3 - 4 pitches would be

required for junior football; and, an additional 1 - 2 pitches would be required for cricket.

- 3.68. Participation in other relevant sports (notably hockey and rugby) represents a very small fraction of the overall demand for pitches, Any future increase in demand for pitches emanating from these sports is likely to be insignificant.
- 3.69. The kind of factors which may alter this likely scenario are a higher population growth due to development plan changes, the release of latent demand due to sports development, and improvements to the facility base. With regard to sports development initiatives, discussions with representatives of local authorities and governing bodies have not identified any initiatives likely to impact significantly upon the future demand for pitches in the same way that mini soccer has already influenced the demand for small-size football pitches. However, improvements to the facility base through the construction of additional ATPs may impact upon participation in hockey in particular.

3.70. “Descriptive” vs. “Normative” assessments: a discussion

- 3.71. Earlier in this section the results of this study were contrasted with an assessment of playing fields using both the City Council and NPFA's adopted standards. This exercise highlighted a marked difference in the findings arising out of the use of these two methods.
- 3.72. This contrast in findings can be reconciled if the rationale underlying each of these two methods is understood. The Sports Council method is essentially a tool for assessing and modelling an existing situation; whereas, the City Council's standard is based on a notional 'target' level of provision which is likely to meet all reasonable needs, both present and future.
- 3.73. Given the various factors affecting demand mentioned above, it is obviously very important to provide enough pitches not only to meet current demand, but also to provide for an adequate 'buffer' which would help cater for any future increase in demand, whether predicted or unforeseen. Indeed, this is something which the adopted standard would achieve.
- 3.74. Given what is known about present and anticipated future demand, it is felt that the currently adopted standard, if it were achieved, could accommodate expressed demand, while also incorporating an adequate buffer of provision to cater for any unforeseen increases in demand caused by those factors influencing participation (discussed in para. 3.64).
- 3.75. The existing pitches in secured public use per capita ratio within the study area is 0.87 ha per 000 population. With some reservations, the evidence of this study therefore suggests that there are sufficient

pitches within the study area to accommodate demand at a level of provision significantly lower than adherence to the Council's standard alone would require.

- 3.76. However, continued use of either City Council or NPFA standards can be justified. Both standards provide a sufficient 'buffer' to accommodate any increase in demand for pitches arising from changes in the age structure of the population, or the influence of other factors discussed in para. 3.64.
- 3.77. This study also highlights the importance of the stock of pitches not in secured public use in meeting the current demand; cricket being a case in point. Continued access by the public to such pitches is by no means assured. To safeguard against this eventuality all existing pitches in secured public use should be protected wherever possible against development, unless appropriate alternative provision is offered by way of compensation.

3.78. A single standard vs. a series of standards

- 3.79. Playing pitch studies conducted elsewhere have sometimes recommended the adoption of more than one standard for a given local authority. Sub-local authority standards can sometimes be justified for two reasons:-

3.79.1. to more accurately reflect the characteristics and therefore needs of different parts of the local authority area; and/or,

3.79.2. to reflect the fact that a given local authority area is too large to be interpreted as a single travel catchment area for teams.

- 3.80. It is not considered that the study area is either sufficiently large or diverse in character to justify the adoption of sub-local authority standards.

3.81. The role of school pitches and other pitches not presently in secured public use

- 3.82. The Study has identified a considerable number of sports pitches not presently in secured public use including those controlled by university colleges, private schools, and some Local Education Authority schools.

- 3.83. Given the findings of this study, it will be necessary for the City Council to consider ways of securing public access to sufficient pitches in order to satisfy both present and future demand. One way of achieving this would be to provide additional pitches under City Council control, which might be financed through legal agreements attached to new residential development. However, an alternative approach could be to seek to assure higher community use of pitches controlled by the universities

and private schools in particular, possibly in return for a commitment to invest in improved drainage, ancillary facilities and maintenance regimes. Several local authority schools might also be considered as candidates for similar treatment.

- 3.84. Local authority school playing fields are themselves subject to regulations concerning their size. The 1996 School Premises Regulations (DFEE Circular 10/96) sets out minimum standards relating to school playing fields (or equivalent sporting facilities) which apply to any school where there are pupils aged 8 years of age and over. For a playing field to count towards the minimum requirement it should be able to sustain the playing of team sports for at least 7 hours a week during term time. There are some situations in which a school can have 'fewer pitches' (although by how much is not quantified) if, for example, it has an all weather pitch.
- 3.85. Although the supply of sports pitches and other recreational facilities on school sites is controlled by the above regulations, it is understood that some limited arrangements providing for public access and use are in place between the City Council and various local schools. However, whilst the school questionnaire survey conducted as part of this study suggests that most secondary schools claim to have a community use policy, this often does not manifest itself in terms of usage of school pitches, mainly because of the increased wear and tear it would produce on resources already heavily used by the school during the week.
- 3.86. Given that 'schools' and the 'community' tend to require access to sports pitches at different times of the week, there may be scope for more intensive use of school based pitches over the week, *providing* that the pitches themselves are of sufficient quality to accommodate the extra use.
- 3.87. The capacity of pitches can be improved by upgrading to an ATP standard, but also by improving drainage and levelling etc. Evidence based on tests conducted by Nottingham and Cheshire County Councils suggests that un-drained and pipe-drained pitches tend to be able to absorb only 4 - 5 hours of adult team use each week without detriment to the playing quality of the surface, especially towards the end of the season. However, the same tests suggested that pitches constructed to a superior standard (such as slit drained, sand carpet or suspended water table), were capable of absorbing almost twice this level of use (between 5 and 10 hours).
- 3.88. When the time comes for the City Council to consider the provision of additional public sports pitches, it would seem both sensible and logical to examine whether better access to school facilities can be negotiated as at least a partial alternative to providing entirely new sports pitches. For such an arrangement to work effectively would require significant improvement to school pitch quality in many cases. There may be

scope to fund such works through developer contributions in areas subject to residential growth, especially where these could be allied to wider City Council sports development initiatives (such as projects reflecting the English Sports Council's School-Community Sports Initiative).

- 3.89. It would also be necessary to consider improvements to school-based ancillary facilities, notably changing rooms and showers which are often unavailable or totally unsuited to community use.
- 3.90. Taking all the above into account, it is both clear that many pitches not in secured public use play an important role in meeting local needs; and, that many more offer scope for use by the public subject to appropriate management and investment.
- 3.91. The findings of this study suggest that current demand for pitches is generally being satisfied by the existing stock. However, the current supply of pitches in secured public use still falls well short of that required by either the City Council or NPFA's standard. Over the course of time, the City Council may be able to reduce or eliminate the deficit between current and target ratios of pitches per capita. The principal mechanisms for achieving this will be through implementation of existing and future local plan allocations; and negotiating increased public use of non-council pitches through community use agreements.
- 3.92. Until such time as the target standard of pitches in secured public use is achieved, it is considered that all pitches should be afforded protection similar to that suggested for those in secured public use. In other words, they should be safeguarded from redevelopment wherever possible unless appropriate compensatory provision is offered. Should the Council adopt this approach, they may wish to review the situation when the target level of provision is finally achieved.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTED PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

4.1. Overall findings

- 4.2. In general terms, the study has not identified any apparent overall shortage in the number of pitches available to meet local demand. The main problems facing local users appear to be related more to the quality of facilities, such as the playing surface itself and the existence and standard of ancillary facilities. Because of this, the study provides some justification for reviewing the City Council's existing standard for the planning and provision of pitches in secured public use, as discussed in para 4.27 onwards.
- 4.3. However, the study has also highlighted the importance of pitches not in secured public use in meeting local demand. Although the value of such pitches in the overall 'tapestry' of provision has been recognised, the study has highlighted the danger in assuming their long-term availability, as there can be no guarantee that the managers of these pitches will continue to make them available for public use.
- 4.4. The study has therefore identified the need to protect existing pitches in secured public use from redevelopment wherever possible, unless appropriate compensatory provision is made. Given the existing and potential role of those pitches not in secured public use, the study has also suggested the need to afford similar protection to these facilities, until such time as the adopted notional target level of pitches has been achieved (see para. 4.30).
- 4.5. The value in the City Council developing a hierarchical approach to the planning and management of pitches has also been emphasised. This would not only help to direct and encourage investment in pitches and facilities; but assist in meeting the varied needs of local clubs competing at and aspiring to different standards.
- 4.6. The sports-specific and generic findings, conclusions and suggested priorities are highlighted in the remainder of this section.

4.7. Findings for football

- 4.8. **The current situation.** Overall, there appears to be sufficient football pitches in secured public use to satisfy current demand. The main problems experienced by local clubs instead appear to arise from often-inadequate ancillary facilities.
- 4.9. Mini soccer is a version of the full-size game that is growing in popularity. The demand for small-size pitches arising from mini soccer can probably be absorbed by the existing stock of junior pitches in

secured public use, allied to effective management of the senior pitches (given that two mini soccer pitches can be fitted onto one senior pitch).

4.10. **The future situation.** It is estimated that an additional 2 - 3 senior, and 3 - 4 junior pitches will be required to satisfy any increase in future demand for football brought about by the growing local population.

4.11. **Suggested priorities.** Future emphasis should be placed largely on improving the quality of existing pitches and ancillary facilities (club houses, changing facilities, drainage etc.)

4.12. Findings for cricket

4.13. **The current situation.** On first inspection there are insufficient cricket pitches in secured public use to satisfy existing demand. However, there would appear to be no practical deficit in the supply of pitches due to the fact that a several community teams use university and private school pitches.

4.14. Current demand will only continue to be satisfied if access to the above pitches is maintained for the benefit of external clubs. This is an issue which should be of concern to the City Council.

4.15. The City Council pitches are unpopular amongst local cricket teams, due to the conflict with other users of public open space within the City centre.

4.16. **The future situation.** It is estimated that an additional 1 - 2 cricket pitches in secured public use will be required to satisfy future demand brought about by population growth.

4.17. **Suggested priorities.** As with football, future emphasis should be placed largely on improving the quality of existing public pitches and ancillary facilities to make them more attractive to local teams. The City Council should also consider whether it is desirable to negotiate a level of secured public use to selected university venues.

4.18. Findings for rugby and hockey

4.19. **The current situation.** There do not appear to be any significant problems with the overall supply of rugby and hockey pitches at the present time. Local rugby clubs largely own and manage their own pitches and therefore control access for their own benefit.

4.20. All hockey clubs would benefit from increased access to ATPs

4.21. **The future situation.** No significant increase in participation in either rugby or hockey is anticipated to warrant developing additional facilities in secured public use. However, it is possible that the number of local

hockey teams might expand as a result of increased provision of ATPs in secured public use.

4.22. ATPs

4.23. **The current situation.** Conclusions drawn about the adequacy of ATP provision will vary depending on which 'standards of provision' are adopted:- up to two additional ATPs in secured public use could be justified based upon the application of one acknowledged standard of provision.

4.24. **Suggested priorities.** The City Council may wish to consider the desirability of helping to provide up to 2 more ATPs in secured public use. This might be achieved either through completely new provision, or else through securing greater access to existing ATPs not under local authority control.

4.25. Future provision of sports pitches:- a general point

4.26. The City Council should consider whether future developer contributions arising from planning obligations and unilateral undertakings associated with major residential development may be better utilised in improving *existing* sports pitches and ancillary facilities, rather than in providing entirely new sports fields. All local circumstances should be evaluated before determining requirements.

4.27. Review of the current adopted standard for the provision of sports pitches

4.28. The current supply of pitches in secure public use is 126.64 ha (or 86.34 ha for the City alone). Put another way, there are 0.87 ha/000 of pitches within the study area in secured public use (or 0.78 ha/000 for the City alone), both these ratios are below the adopted City Council standard of 1.12 ha/000 of pitches in secured public use. However, this failure to meet the standard does not appear to cause any obvious problems in meeting current demand as the evidence of this study suggests that a significant level of public demand is met through pitches that cannot be considered to be in secured public use. It follows that if there were at least 1.12 ha/000 of pitches in secure public use, this would meet local demand, whilst also providing a sufficiently large buffer to absorb any anticipated increase in demand brought about through the influence of those factors discussed in this report. Perhaps of even greater importance though is that 'meeting demand' would no longer depend on the continued availability of some pitches not in secured public use.

4.29. Given that the adopted standard is almost the same as that recommended by the NPFA for pitches (1.20 ha/000), the City Council may wish to consider adopting instead the latter standard. In any event,

both standards would provide a sufficient 'buffer' to absorb any relative increase in demand for pitches beyond current levels.

4.30. Irrespective, it is recognised that the current supply of pitches in secured public use does not satisfy either the existing standard or the suggested revision. The Council may therefore wish to safeguard all existing pitches from redevelopment wherever possible unless appropriate compensatory provision is to be provided. Should the Council adopt this approach, it may wish to review this stance as and when the adopted target level of provision is achieved.

4.31. The need for a strategy governing the investment in and management of pitches

4.32. The City Council may wish to consider developing a hierarchical strategy to guide the investment and management of sports pitches. Such a hierarchy might recognise the role of both public and private pitches, as well as the need to provide facilities enabling progression through various standards of competitive play. This strategy could help to release funding from other sources, such as the Lottery Sports Fund, Governing Bodies, The Football Trust and others.

4.33. In conjunction with this strategy the City Council may wish to consider ways of controlling public access to playing surfaces located in council controlled parks and recreation grounds, both to protect any investment in pitch quality and to make such pitches more attractive to local teams.

4.34. The City Council needs to examine the local issues, proposals and concerns identified in this report and accompanying database in the context of a coherent programme of action.

Bibliography

Building Bulletin 82: Area Guidelines for Schools. Department for Education and Employment 1994.

Cambridge Local Plan. Cambridge City Council. 1996.

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The Six Acre Standard. The National Playing Fields Association. 1992

Appendix A

Specimen copies of questionnaires

Appendix B

Summary of Sports Council method

The method used in this study has been based in part on an approach endorsed by the English Sports Council.

A local assessment of supply and need is undertaken using the methodology the Sports Council have developed over a number of years. The method can be summarised as follows:-

- Stage 1** - Identifying teams;
- Stage 2** - Home Games per Team per Week;
- Stage 3** - Total Home Games per Week;
- Stage 4** - Temporal Demand for Games;
- Stage 5** - Pitches Used/ Required on Each Day;
- Stage 6** - Pitches Available;
- Stage 7** - Discussion of any Problems and Issues; and,
- Stage 8** - Discussion of Options.

This method can be tailored to meet local circumstances as well as budgetary and time-scale constraints.

The output from this exercise will be a document with supporting plans identifying playing fields and other relevant open space in the Town and wider area as appropriate.

One of the possible options arising out of this exercise is the production of local standards for the provision of pitches. Such standards need to be based on notional areas for individual pitch types, together with an allowance for the necessary pitch surrounds. The following are based primarily on NPFA guidance.

Pitch Type	Area (ha)
Adult Football	0.9
Junior Football	0.82
Rugby	1.2
Cricket	1.6
Hockey	0.6

Appendix C

Notes on the provision of courts and greens

Although the project brief did not require information to be collected on the provision of other formal outdoor sports provision, the study method used did allow for the collection of information on the location of most existing tennis courts and bowls greens.

Unlike other basic community sports facilities, there is little precise guidance on 'standards of provision' for bowling greens and tennis courts. Although the NPFA does suggest that such facilities form part of their overall 'Six Acre Standard' for recreational space, they do not specify precisely how much space should be devoted to such activities.

The 'Six Acre Standard' is summarised in Table 2.1 within the main report. When the allowance for outdoor pitches is excluded, it suggests a residual allowance of between 0.39 ha and 0.59 ha per thousand people should be made for other facilities, which might include tennis courts and bowling greens.

Information obtained from site and questionnaire surveys, and the City Council's databases suggest the following provision within the study area.

Tennis courts available to the public	29 (8 being grass)
Tennis courts not generally available to the public	96 (26 being grass)
Bowling greens available to the public	13

Only a very small number of the tennis courts are floodlit, and this greatly restricts their utility for much of the year.

The number of tennis courts generally unavailable to the public represents the large majority of local provision, and they are provided largely by the university colleges.

Assuming an average area of 0.06 ha for each tennis court and 0.14 ha for each bowling green, the following ratios of provision can be estimated for both types of facility within the study area.

Facility	Ratio ha/000 people
Tennis courts available to the public	0.0120
Tennis courts not generally available to the public	0.0397
Bowling greens available to the public	0.0125
<i>Overall ratio for facilities available to the public</i>	<i>0.0245</i>
<i>Overall ratio including facilities not generally available to the public</i>	<i>0.0642</i>

These figures suggest that provision for courts and greens is well below the admittedly imprecise guidance level suggested by the NPFA, irrespective of whether or not facilities not generally available to the public are included within the ratio.

It should also be recognised that many existing facilities are located outside the City itself. A total of 26 tennis courts (15 being available to the public) are outside the City boundary. Furthermore, 6 of the 13 bowling greens are located outside the City.

The solution to addressing any perceived deficit in tennis courts should not be to provide single courts in isolation, but rather to provide for multiple courts in the form of multi-use surfaces. The provision of floodlights would also allow for intensive use for basketball, netball and five-a-side football where surfaces are of sufficient dimensions.

Multi-court provision is also essential to the development of viable tennis clubs, and it is suggested that provision should be made in multiples of no less than three or four courts although smaller facilities could be justified in other areas. For example, where an existing tennis club wishes to provide extra courts.