



HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT & STRATEGY

NEEDS ASSESSMENT – FINAL REPORT MAY 2026

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Hertsmere Borough Council (HBC) has commissioned Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) to produce indoor sport, playing pitch and open space strategies for the authority. This work will provide key evidence to support the development of indoor/outdoor leisure and open space facilities in Hertsmere.

This is the indoor sports needs assessment report for the period 2025-2041. However, the Local Plan period will cover from 2027-2043 subject to annual monitoring and review taking place. For the use of the documents, it has been agreed with the Council to project future population to 2041.

It is key evidence to support development of an updated Hertsmere Local Plan. The stated objectives are to:

- ✦ Undertake a local authority wide assessment of indoor sport and recreation facilities, building upon existing information, to establish the quantity and quality of existing provision and any additional provision required to meet future needs to 2041.
- ✦ Identify particular requirements for sport, recreation and open space, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility.
- ✦ Develop a strategy and action plan for built sports provision. The action plan will be prioritised and realistic in recognition of diminishing public resources and limited budgets.
- ✦ Follow best practice advice including Sport England's "Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance" (ANOG).
- ✦ Provide a robust evidence base to ensure the timely, sound preparation of the Hertsmere Local Plan and other planning policy documents and to provide parameters for developing a toolkit for the council/developers.
- ✦ Enable the Council to plan appropriately for the protection and/or enhancement of existing sport, recreation, and open space facilities and to identify any sites which may provide surplus provision, could support new provision or facilities that could merit refurbishment.
- ✦ Enable the Council to make strategic proposals for local authority controlled facilities, such as investment in new and/or enhanced leisure centres or open spaces or rationalisation if appropriate.
- ✦ Identify the potential for a strategic approach to the role of schools/colleges in meeting community needs in addition for individual sites.
- ✦ Identify whether existing infrastructure (not only indoor and built sports facilities but also playing pitches and open spaces) is fit for purpose to deliver local priorities, corporate priorities and wider health and wellbeing outcomes in an efficient way, now and in the future over the lifetime of the emerging local plans. This also includes consideration of how sport, recreation and open space infrastructure can help deliver Government and Sport England priorities based around the five outcomes (physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and economic development) with recommendations linked to delivery of these outcomes. This might, for example, include provision of a hierarchy of facilities from national to local level.
- ✦ Provide policy recommendations and practical National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consistent proposals to secure investment in sport and open space through planning obligations, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for securing investment.
- ✦ Help direct expenditure of any future CIL monies and other planning contributions and effective for sport, leisure and open space facilities taking account of infrastructure delivery plans and the ECC Developers Guide to Contributions 2020.

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- ◀ Identify possible external capital or revenue funding opportunities for sport, physical activity and recreation facilities (including open space provision).
- ◀ Identify opportunities for efficiency savings at council-owned facilities and for alternative governance via charities, trusts, or community-run organisations, where appropriate.
- ◀ Provide robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for built sports facilities and opportunities for new provision.
- ◀ Provide evidence to help protect and enhance existing sports facility.
- ◀ Identify specific need, quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of sports facilities.
- ◀ Inform the assessment of planning applications.

KKP delivered the borough's previous indoor & built facilities assessment in 2019. Its scope included assessment of 3+court sports halls, swimming pools, health and fitness suites, gymnastics, indoor bowls, indoor tennis, squash and community centres/village halls. Since that time there have been numerous changes to provision, along with increasing demand.

This report is, thus, a detailed up-to-date assessment of current provision of indoor and built sports facilities in Hertsmere identifying need (demand) and gaps (deficiencies in provision).

Evidence about provision and overall need will incorporate:

- ◀ A clear picture of the quantity, quality, accessibility and availability of facilities serving the area within the local authority and adjacent authorities.
- ◀ A clear understanding of existing and future demand for facilities considering local population data, local and national participation rates, unmet, latent, dispersed and future demand, local activity priorities and sports specific priorities.
- ◀ The resultant required level of provision in quantity, quality, accessibility and availability terms and develop key findings and facility implications that could be used by the borough with reference to a toolkit for provision.

The audit was conducted between November-December 2025. Where site access was not available KKP carried out non-technical quality assessments via desk research. Where possible this was supplemented utilising virtual 'walk arounds' of the relevant facilities or videos and photos present on operators' websites or in discussion with operators.

A separate open spaces assessment plus a playing pitch and outdoor sport strategy (PPOSS) is concurrently being developed. The inter-relationship between the portfolio of planning documents must be noted as some sports covered by the PPOSS also need access to indoor facilities for matches/training or use such areas informally. Similarly, there are indoor sports venues adjacent/linked to playing pitches and/or other outdoor sports facilities.

1.2: Scope of the project

This report provides detail as to what exists in the borough, its condition, location, availability and overall quality. It considers demand for facilities based on population distribution, planned growth, taking account of health and economic deprivation. The facilities/sports covered include sports halls (and associated indoor sports), swimming pools, health and fitness, dance/aerobic studios, squash, gymnastics and trampolining, indoor tennis, indoor bowls and community centres and village halls. In delivering this report KKP has:

- ◀ Individually audited identified sports halls (conventional i.e., 3+ court halls), swimming pools (minimum size 160m² which is equivalent to 4 lanes x 20m), health and fitness facilities (including, within reason, dance studios) and the wider range of facilities identified above.
- ◀ Analysed supply and demand to identify gaps and opportunities to improve provision.

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- ◀ Sought to identify the extent to which delivery of leisure facilities is undertaken with full reference to the council's corporate strategies and other relevant strategic influences.
- ◀ Identified areas of good practice and opportunities for improved service to drive up participation levels.

This evidence-based report provides a quantitative and qualitative audit-based assessment of the facilities identified above. It is a robust, up-to-date assessment of need and identifies opportunities for new, enhanced, and rationalised provision. Specific deficiencies and surpluses are identified to inform the provision required. The specific objectives are to:

- ◀ Review relevant council strategies, plans, reports, corporate objectives.
- ◀ Review the local, regional, and national strategic context.
- ◀ Demographic analysis of the local population at present and in the future (up to 2041, in line with the current and future Local Plan timeframes).
- ◀ Audit indoor facilities provided by public, private, voluntary and education sectors.
- ◀ Consider potential participation rates and model likely demand.
- ◀ Analyse the balance between supply of, and demand for, sports facilities plus identification of potential under and over-provision – now and in the future.
- ◀ Identify key issues to address in the future provision of indoor sports facilities.

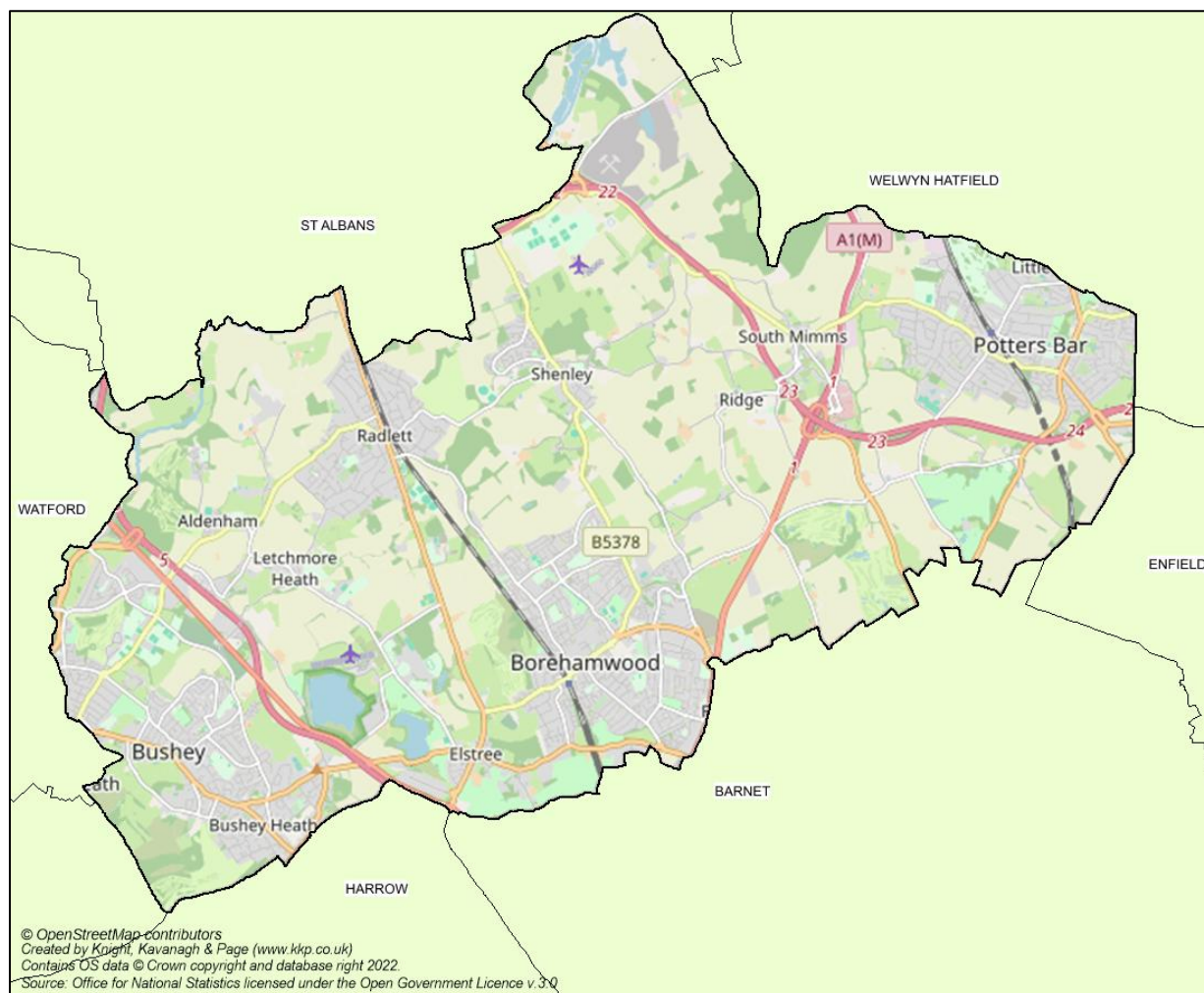
It follows Sport England's Assessment Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG) for assessing indoor sports need and accords with relevant paragraphs of the up-to-date version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

1.3: Background

Hertsmere is located in the south-west of Hertfordshire abutting north-west London.

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Figure 1.1: Hertsmere Borough with main roads and neighbouring authorities



Despite its proximity to Greater London, the 10,116 hectares borough remains largely rural and almost 80% of the land is designated Green Belt. It has five main settlements; Borehamwood, Bushey, Potters Bar, Radlett and Shenley, with other villages and smaller settlements dispersed throughout the rest of the district. As identified in Figure 1.1 above, the borough is dissected by the M1 and M25 and A1000, A5183, A411, A4009 and A5; mostly running in a north to south direction.

Its neighbouring authorities are Watford (northwest), Welwyn Hatfield (northeast), St Albans (north), Barnet (south), Enfield (southeast) and Harrow (southwest).

1.4: Report structure

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) in a report entitled 'Strategic Planning: Effective Co-operation for Planning Across Boundaries (2015)' puts the case for strategic planning based on six general principles:

- ◆ Have focus.
- ◆ Be genuinely strategic.
- ◆ Be spatial.
- ◆ Be collaborative.
- ◆ Have strong leadership and
- ◆ Be accountable to local electorates.

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KKP has paid due regard to these strategic principles and this needs assessment report is, thus, structured as follows:

- ◆ Section 2 - review of background policy documentation (national/regional/local) and a profile of the population and socio-demographic characteristics of the Borough.
- ◆ Section 3 - description of methodology employed to assess provision.
- ◆ Section 4 - assessment of sports hall provision.
- ◆ Section 5 - assessment of swimming pool provision.
- ◆ Section 6 - assessment of health and fitness provision.
- ◆ Section 7 - assessment of squash.
- ◆ Section 8 – assessment of gymnastics and trampolining.
- ◆ Section 9 - assessment of indoor bowls.
- ◆ Section 10 – assessment of indoor tennis and padel.
- ◆ Section 11- assessment of community centres and village halls.
- ◆ Section 12 – Strategic recommendations.

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SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

2.1: National context

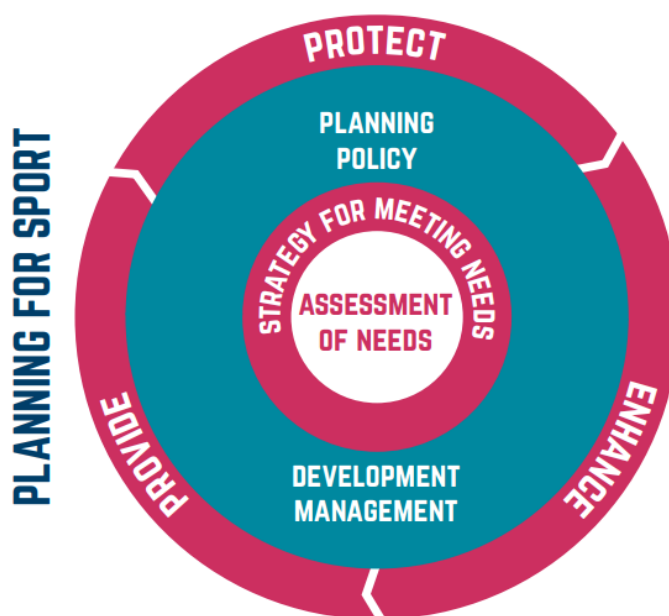
The Government's [Get Active: A strategy for the future of sport and physical activity](#) has a focus on increasing physical activity, making sport more welcoming and inclusive, and ensuring the long-term financial and environmental sustainability of the sector. In addition, the recently launched cross-departmental National Physical Activity Taskforce has a focus on environmental sustainability in the sector, clear targets for increasing physical activity rates and a new vision for leisure facilities from 2023.

Get Active sets out how the government will work with the sector to achieve these aims by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to get active. Central to this is a focus on ensuring that children establish a lifetime of engagement with sport and physical activity. This is accompanied by the introduction of national targets for participation to help hold Government and the sector to account for delivering the change that is needed.

Sport England

Sport England aims to ensure positive planning for sport, enabling the right facilities to be provided in the right places, based on up-to-date assessment of needs for all levels of sport and all sectors of the community. This assessment report has been produced for HBC applying the principles and tools identified in ANOG.

Figure 2.1: The Sport England Planning for Sport Model



Assessment of need is core to planning for sporting provision. It is underpinned by 12 principles which help the planning system to contribute to sustainable development by fulfilling the key role of the NPPF in creating strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

Applying them ensures positive plans to enable and support healthy lifestyles, deliver community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs and provide opportunity for all to experience the benefits that taking part in sport and physical activity brings. They apply to all areas of the system and to planning at authority and neighbourhood levels. They are, thus, relevant to all involved in, or looking to engage with, the planning system.

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Figure 2.2: Sport England's 12 planning principles



Sport England: Uniting the movement 2023

Sport and physical activity have a major role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities, and rebuilding a stronger society for all following the global pandemic. Reflecting this, The Uniting the Movement strategy sets out its 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

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It seeks to tackle the inequalities that it states are long seen in sport and physical activity noting that 'providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important'. The three key Strategy objectives are:

1. Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity.
2. Joining forces on five big issues.
3. Creating the catalysts for change.

As well as advocating sport and physical activity via the building of evidence and partnership development, the strategy identifies five big issues that communities and people need to address by working together. They are described as the major challenges to England being an active nation over the next decade as well as being the main opportunities which will, if taken, make a lasting difference. They are designated as a building-blocks that individually would make a difference but tackled collectively could change things profoundly. The issues are:

- ◀ Recover and reinvent: recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant, and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.
- ◀ Connecting communities: focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
- ◀ Positive experiences for children/young people: unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.
- ◀ Connecting with health and wellbeing: strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health, and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.
- ◀ Active environments: creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

To address these five big issues, the right conditions for change need to be created: across people, organisations, and partnerships to help convert plans and ideas. This includes a range of actions, including development of effective investment models and applying innovation and digital technology to make sport and physical activity more accessible.

The specific impact of the strategy will be captured via funded programmes, interventions made, and partnerships forged. For each specific area of action, key performance indicators will be developed to help evidence the overall progress being made by all those involved in supporting sport and physical activity.

Megatrends – how are leisure demands changing¹

This Savill's report describes how, in (and from) 2025 work and social lives have become even more intertwined. It notes that quality will be key to the attraction and retention of customers at all price points. It then goes on point out that new technological ideas and concepts will be adopted with ease across generations and that the convenience of technology will enhance people's leisure experiences.

This pre-empt the vital point that the out-of-home leisure offer will have to work harder to compete on experience with its in-home counterpart. It suggests that the fitness market will continue to be vibrant and withstand times of economic difficulty stating that new fitness trends, gym proximity and the variety (and quality) of classes and equipment will continue to encourage fitness enthusiasts to forgo home workouts in favour of attending specific venues.

¹ <https://pdf.euro.savills.co.uk/european/europe-retail-markets/megatrends-european-leisure-issue-3-2016.pdf>

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Adding to this it indicates that more fitness classes will open in central locations to better accommodate and respond to the demands of busy consumer.

Going further back in time, Sport England confirmed that, prior to Covid, activity levels had been rising. Over the period when activity was severely affected by the virus there were unprecedented falls in activity levels (by 7.1% - 3 million fewer active adults) and there was a particularly adverse impact on the inequalities between different groups.

While reporting a good general level of recovery in respect of participation numbers, Sport England restated the fact that limited disposable income can lead to a reduction in sports sector spend and adversely impact the take-up of activities which cater for children and young people as well as adults. Its view is that uncertain employment and financial circumstances mean that greater numbers of people will be looking for affordable, flexible opportunities to stay active and fewer people will be in a position to make an ongoing financial commitment to participate.

Total annual social value of sport and physical activity in England 2024²

Sport and physical activity are widely recognised for making people happier, healthier, and fostering stronger communities. That is why creating more opportunities for those who need them most is central to Sport England's Uniting the Movement strategy.

The report on the social and economic value of community sport and physical activity in England 2020³ created an evidence base to better understand the value of taking part in sport and physical activity. Sport England, in partnership with State of Life, developed an updated national model to quantify the social value of community sport/physical activity.

The October 2024 report describes the social and economic impact of community sport and physical activity. Part one focuses on primary benefits, such as physical and mental health improvements, while part two explores the broader value to society.

Community sport and physical activity contributed £107.2 billion annually to the UK in 2023/2024, via both social and economic benefits. Of this, £96.7 billion is attributed to primary value, with individual wellbeing improvements driven by adult volunteering, youth participation, and adult participation. This underscores the profound impact of sport and physical activity on quality of life, as improved health and wellbeing positively influence relationships, social connections, and productivity.

It also generated £10.5bn in secondary value; of which £9.3bn is associated with the 'active population' and £1.2bn with the 'fairly active' population based on fewer GP visits and reduced mental health service usage. More than three million cases of non-communicable diseases or chronic health conditions were reportedly prevented, including depression (1.3 million cases), back pain (0.9 million) and type 2 diabetes (0.6 million). This compares to a total of £130 million spent treating injuries related to sport and physical activity participation.

There would be an estimated £15.6 billion more annual social value created by sport and physical activity if the wider adult population, including those with one or more than two characteristics of inequality, were active at the same levels as those with zero characteristics of inequality. This would equate to over four million more 'active' adults in England.

² [Link to Sport and physical activity generates over £100 billion in social value | Sport England](#)

³ [Link to Social and economic value of community sport and physical activity in England 2020](#)

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Sport England: The Future of Public Sector Leisure (2023)

Engagement by Sport England with the public leisure sector has highlighted that the pandemic accelerated the appetite for local authorities to look at leisure services and re-examine the purpose of their provision, delivery against local community outcomes and consider their alignment with broader strategic outcomes, particularly health.

The [Sport England: The Future of Public Sector Leisure](#) report confirms that:

- ◆ 68% of sports halls and swimming pools were built 20+ years ago. Although more than £150m was invested in the opening of new public leisure and swimming facilities in 2018/19⁴, with another £200m worth of assets in construction or planning there remains significant levels of ageing public leisure stock.
- ◆ 72% of all school swimming lessons take place in a public leisure facility. This includes statutory learn to swim programmes and the water safety curriculum across primary schools. Swimming club use is also predominantly based at public leisure facilities.

It also noted that the leisure sector emerged from the pandemic in a particularly fragile state. Emergency funding⁵ helped to avert financial catastrophe and enabled the additional costs of maintaining public assets and reopening services to be met. Funding sources are, however, finite and are now virtually exhausted. At best, financial pressures risk limiting the ability of stakeholders to deliver against their commitments; at worst they may result in the permanent closure of some services or facilities.

Sites refurbished in the last ten years are seeing a throughput recovery of 68% compared with a recovery of 62% for those last refurbished 20+ years ago, suggesting that investment in newer facilities creates spaces that have greater appeal, increase user confidence levels and provide a more relevant offer to meet current customer demands.

To address these significant challenges, a repositioning of the traditional offer of public leisure into one akin to an active wellbeing service is advocated focusing on added value and supporting the delivery of key local priorities, alongside wider government policy around Levelling Up, net zero and health inequalities.

Chief Medical Officer Physical Activity Guidelines 2019

This updated the 2011 physical activity guidelines issued by the four chief medical officers (CMOs) of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. They drew upon global evidence to present guidelines for different age groups, covering the volume, duration, frequency and type of physical activity required across the life course to achieve health benefits.

Since 2011, evidence of the health benefits of regular physical activity for all groups has become more compelling. In children and young people, regular physical activity is associated with improved learning and attainment, better mental health and cardiovascular fitness, also contributing to healthy weight status. In adults, there is strong evidence to demonstrate the protective effect on physical activity on a range of many chronic conditions including coronary heart disease, obesity and type 2 diabetes, mental health problems and social isolation.

Regular physical activity can deliver cost savings for the health and care system and has wider social benefits for individuals and communities.

⁴ 2 Mintel Report on Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools (September 2019)

⁵ Local authorities invested £160 million The National Leisure Recovery Fund £100m, Leisure operators drew on £171 million of reserves alongside further relief measures such as the Government's furlough scheme.

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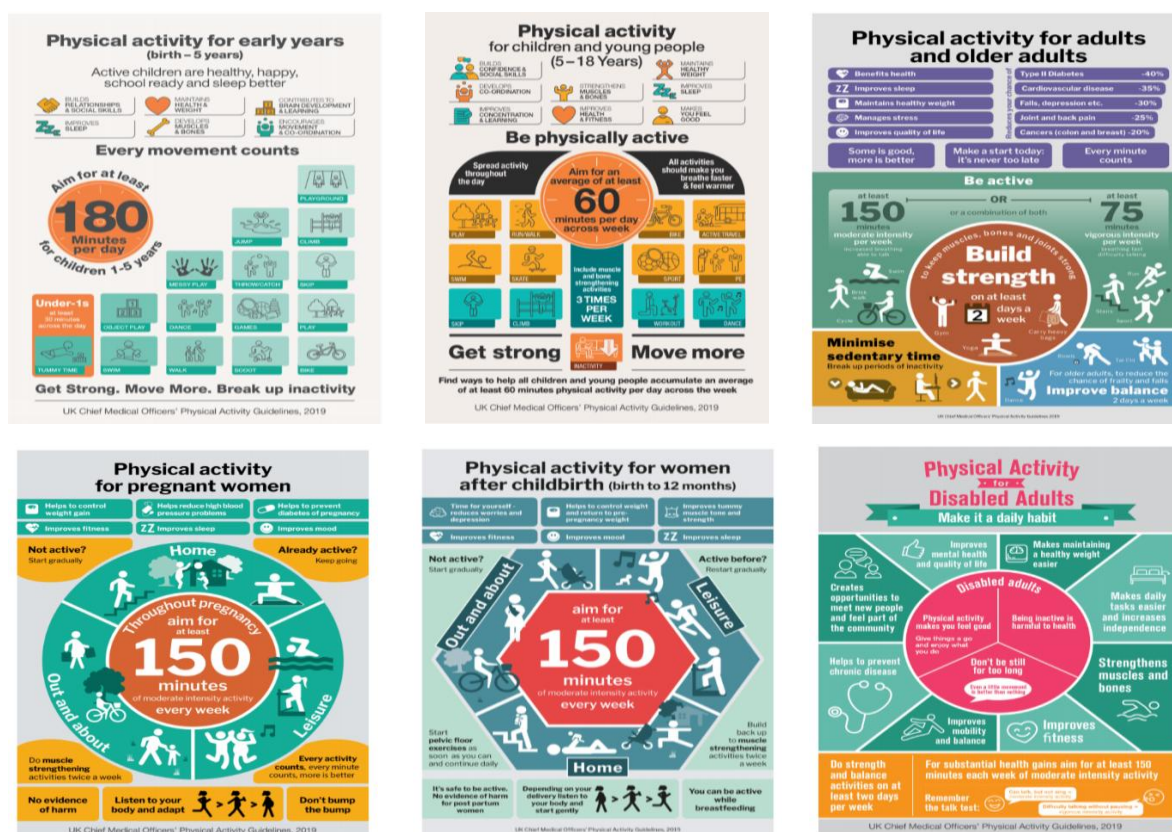
Key factors for each age group are as follows:

- Under-5s: (infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers). They should spend at least 180 minutes (3 hours) per day in a variety of different exercises, whereas infants should be physically active several times every day in a variety of ways, including interactive floor-based activities.
- Children and young people (5-18 years): they should engage in moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week.
- Adults (19-64 years): For good physical and mental health, adults should aim to be physically active every day. This could be 150 minutes of moderate exercise, 75 minutes of vigorous exercise or even shorter durations of very vigorous intensity activity, or a combination of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity.
- Older adults (65+): should participate in daily physical activity to gain health benefits, including maintenance of good physical and mental health, wellbeing, and social functioning. Each week older adults should aim to accumulate 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate intensity aerobic activity.

The report also recognises an emerging evidence base for the health benefits of performing very vigorous intensity activity performed in short bouts interspersed with periods of rest or recovery (high intensity interval exercise, HIIT). Available evidence demonstrates that high intensity interval exercise has clinically meaningful effects on fitness, body weight and insulin resistance. This option has therefore been incorporated into the recommendation for adults.

It, thus, emphasises the importance of regular activity for people of all ages. It presents additional guidance on being active during pregnancy, after giving birth, and for disabled adults. The new guidelines are consistent with previous ones, introducing some new elements and allowing flexibility in achieving recommended physical activity levels for each age group.

Figure 2.3: Physical activity guidelines



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Joseph Rowntree Foundation UK Poverty 2025 report

This report notes that poverty in the UK has now increased to close to pre-pandemic levels. Available data provides evidence that more than one in five people now live in poverty (including 4.3 million children. Of these, 40% are described as being in 'deep poverty', with an income considerably below the standard poverty line. Certain groups of people face particularly high levels of poverty. They include (figures relate to 2022/23 unless otherwise stated):

- ✦ Larger families – 45% of children in families with three more children were in poverty.
- ✦ Families whose childcare responsibilities limit their ability to work – 44% of children in lone-parent families were in poverty.
- ✦ Many minority ethnic group-based households have higher rates of child, very deep and persistent poverty.
- ✦ 30% of disabled people (38% for those with a long-term, limiting mental health condition).
- ✦ 28% of informal carers (those with caring responsibilities). They have limited ability to work and unpaid social-care givers experience an average pay penalty of nearly £5,000/annum.
- ✦ Families not in work – more than half of working-age adults (56%) in workless households are in poverty - compared with 15% in working households. Around two-thirds of working-age adults in poverty actually live in a household where someone is in work.
- ✦ Part-time workers and the self-employed - the poverty rate for part-time workers was nearly triple that of full-time workers (22% compared with 8%).
- ✦ 43% of people in rented accommodation and 35% of private renters (after housing costs).
- ✦ Poverty rates for people claiming different income-related benefits are much higher than the national average poverty rate.

Environmental sustainability

The UK Governments 2025 policy paper sets out its position in respect of implementing clean energy measures in line with the 2008 Climate Change Act. It sets out the following priorities:

- ✦ **Strengthen UK energy security and reduce household bills.** The plan emphasises increasing energy sovereignty through rapid expansion of renewables and nuclear power. This is intended to free households and businesses from reliance on volatile fossil fuel markets, especially in light of gas costs still being significantly higher post Ukraine conflict.
- ✦ **Drive economic growth, innovation, and high quality job creation :** the clean energy transition is positioned as a major economic opportunity. Key ambitions include supporting the UK clean energy sectors (which are growing three times faster than the wider economy), leveraging over £50 billion of private clean energy investment announced since 2024 and Nearly doubling the clean energy workforce to over 800,000 jobs by 2030.
- ✦ **Improve public health, quality of life, and reduce environmental harm.** The document links clean energy with improved living standards through warmer homes, cleaner air, cheaper and cleaner transport, and increased access to nature. These societal benefits are presented as central to supporting communities while tackling climate and nature crises.
- ✦ **Protect and enhance the natural environment.** The plan reinforces alignment with the UK Climate Change Act and broader aims to safeguard land, ecosystems, and biodiversity while delivering decarbonisation.

[Sport England](#)⁶ reports that climate change and the increased occurrence of extreme weather that it brings are already affecting sports facilities, meaning that the sector needs to build greater resilience to counter this very real threat.

⁶<https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2021-01/Environmental%20Sustainability%20check%20list.pdf?VersionId=7XfZPDhHKoKHpfKqk165MMWdxwCmYsPO>

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It proposes that a wide range of issues should be considered when approaching project development to, and the resultant environmental impact of, for example, new swimming pool development.

This applies to determining whether to refurbish an existing building with carbon already embedded or to build a new⁷. In establishing a sustainability strategy early on Sport England suggests some key principles as part of a 'pathway to sustainability' and net zero carbon in respect of building design and operation. These include:

- ✦ Reducing energy consumption as the first measure to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs.
- ✦ Changing behaviour - eliminate energy waste and operate energy control systems more effectively at no extra cost.
- ✦ Passive design - building orientation and placement on site is critical to achieving net zero targets i.e., harnessing sites' natural resources to benefit cross ventilation, natural lighting, solar gain, shelter or shading.
- ✦ Fabric efficiency - maximise building fabric and glazing performance.
- ✦ Minimising initial energy demand to reduce demand on plant/technologies incorporated.
- ✦ Installing efficient systems and investing in appropriate energy-efficient products such as heating, ventilation, fittings, controls, sensors, heat pumps and recovery systems.
- ✦ On-site renewables incorporating low/zero carbon technologies to produce energy on site.
- ✦ Off-site renewables - only use energy providers which use renewable energy.

School sport

In 2023, the last Conservative Government provided an update on the previous (July 2019) School Sport and Activity Action Plan. It set out the Government's then commitments to ensuring quality experiences for young people in respect of enhancing PE and providing extracurricular opportunities. The 2023–2025 program reportedly enabled over 250,000 pupils and 90,000 community members to get active

Key goals of the School Sport and Activity Action Plan were to:

- ✦ Improve the quality of PE and school sport provision: the plan emphasises raising the standard of physical education and ensuring all pupils receive high-quality PE lessons.
- ✦ Ensure every pupil receives at least 2 hours of PE per week: a central goal for all schools to provide a minimum of two hours of PE and sport each week as part of the curriculum.
- ✦ Guarantee equality of access for girls and boys: schools are expected to offer equal opportunities for participation, addressing historic gender imbalances in school sport participation.
- ✦ Increase participation in sport, including meeting curriculum expectations: the plan aims to increase the number of children taking part in regular sport, including ensuring pupils meet requirements for:
- ✦ Support high-quality extra-curricular sport and competitive opportunities: Schools are encouraged to offer a broad range of extra-curricular activities and competitive sport through programmes like the School Games.
- ✦ Increase access for pupils with SEND: The plan recognises the need to make PE and sport inclusive for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, ensuring accessible and adapted opportunities.

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Key actions included:

- ▶ Helping schools make the best use of their sport facilities.
- ▶ Strengthening support from National Governing Bodies (NGBs)
- ▶ Encouraging links with local and national sport organisations.
- ▶ Promote active travel and wider physical activity

The plan encompassed initiatives encouraging children to be physically active beyond PE lessons, such as active travel to and from school. In order to improve monitoring, reporting, and accountability, Government committed to strengthening checks on how schools spend PE and sport funding and improve evaluation processes to ensure effective use of resources.

The Physical Literacy Consensus Statement for England – Sport England (2023)

This was developed to facilitate shared understanding of physical literacy for those working in the sport, education, physical activity, recreation, play, health and youth sectors. It offers a broad overview of physical literacy, why it matters and how it can be developed/supported.

Developing a consensus on the term physical literacy has been a priority, as understanding what impacts people's relationship with movement and physical activity throughout life will enable those working in the sector to ensure their offer is as appealing as possible.

In essence, physical literacy represents the extent to which individuals have a positive relationship with movement and physical activity. The Youth Sport Trust has published findings evidencing that 4,000 hours of physical education (PE) have been lost from the curriculum of state-funded secondary schools. PE hours have fallen victim to more time spent online, poor school attendance and declining health and wellbeing levels in young people. Since 2012, the amount of PE in England has fallen by more than 12%.

Evidence also shows that children with high levels of physical literacy are twice as likely to engage in sport and physical activity. In later life, adults who feel they have the opportunity, ability and enjoy being physically active are more likely to be so. To increase physical activity in both children and adults, it is important to consider the cultural and environmental factors which affect physical activity levels alongside the influence of previous experiences.

Ensuring good quality and regular PE in schools is considered essential to improving the mental and physical wellbeing of young people and will enable young people to develop new skills, achieve greater academic success and live longer, happier, healthier lives.

Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund

In 2023, a funding pot of £80 million (£60 capital and £20m revenue) was announced to ease the pressure on leisure centres with managing the cost of operating, maintaining and heating swimming pools. The funding is available to all pools run by councils and charities. Those run on behalf of local authorities are eligible. No Hertsmere facilities received financial support from via the Swimming Pool Support Fund.

Revised National Planning Policy Framework 2024

This sets out planning policies for England detailing how changes will apply to the planning system. It provides a framework for local people and councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting local communities' needs and priorities. It states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to achieving sustainable development and identifies the need to focus on three themes of economic, social, environmentally sustainable development:

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A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making, the NPPF states that local plans should meet objectively assessed needs. It is clear about sport's role delivering sustainable communities through promoting health and well-being. Sport England, working within the provisions of the NPPF, wishes to see local planning policy protect, enhance and provide for sports facilities based on robust and up-to-date assessments of need, as well as helping to realise the wider benefits participation in sport can bring.

The promoting healthy communities theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust, up-to-date assessment of need for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs, quantitative/qualitative deficiencies and surpluses should be identified and used to inform provision requirements in an area.

Paragraph 96(c) – Presumption in favour of sustainable development reinforces the principle that planning applications which align with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay. This is part of the broader “presumption in favour of sustainable development” approach.

Relevance to sports facilities: if a sports facility proposal is consistent with the local development plan, it should be fast-tracked for approval. This supports timely delivery of community infrastructure like leisure centres and playing fields, assuming they meet sustainability and design criteria.

Paragraph 103 – Promoting healthy and safe communities

This paragraph emphasises the importance of planning policies and decisions that promote social interaction, healthy lifestyles, and safe environments. It encourages the provision of accessible green spaces, sports facilities, and community infrastructure.

Relevance to sports facilities: local authorities are expected to plan for and protect sports and recreational facilities. This includes ensuring that existing facilities are not lost unless replaced or shown to be surplus, and that new developments contribute to community health and wellbeing. This is a key justification for safeguarding and investing in regional sports centres.

Paragraph 104 – Access to open space and recreation

This paragraph requires planning policies to ensure access to high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity, which are essential for the health and wellbeing of communities.

Relevance to sports facilities:

This underlines the strategic importance of sports infrastructure in local plans. It supports the argument that developments like leisure centres should be prioritised and protected, as they contribute directly to public health goals and community cohesion

Upcoming planning changes

As of early 2026, the UK government is implementing significant revisions to the NPPF focused primarily on accelerating housebuilding to meet its target of 1.5 million new homes. The key proposed 2025/2026 NPPF and main planning changes include:

- ◆ Mandatory targets & green belt: reintroduction of mandatory housing targets for local authorities, with a focus on identifying "grey belt" land for development.

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- ◀ Station development: supporting higher-density, mixed-use development near well-connected train stations, with minimum density requirements of 40-50 dwellings per ha.
- ◀ Urban densification: stronger emphasis on densification in urban and suburban areas, including infill and vertical expansion.
- ◀ "Golden rules" for green belt: new requirements for developers to provide essential infrastructure (such as schools or GP surgeries) and a higher proportion of affordable housing when developing on greenbelt land.
- ◀ Small to medium enterprise (SME) developer support: introduction of a "medium development" category (10-49 units) with eased regulations to assist SME housebuilders.
- ◀ Biodiversity net gain (BNG): introduction of area-based exemptions for smaller sites (up to 0.2 hectares) and streamlining BNG delivery for brownfield sites.
- ◀ Local plan pressure: strengthened presumption in favour of sustainable development where local plans are out of date, making it harder to refuse development.

Summary of national context

In the context of both of the above factors and the highly challenging economic environment, there is a need to reconnect communities, reduce inequality and create stronger societies. The aim is to create a catalyst for change, with sport and physical activity a key driver and people in all age groups either getting or remaining active. Ensuring an adequate supply of suitable facilities to support this aim is a key requirement of the planning system in line with national policy recommendations.

2.2: Local context

Hertsmere Local Plan

The council is developing a new Local Plan to guide the borough's long-term strategy for housing, economic growth, infrastructure, and environmental protection up to 2041. This will replace the current local plan (2012-2027) and consolidate a number of existing documents, including the Core Strategy (2013), Elstree Way Corridor Area Action Plan (2015) and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2015). The aim is to produce a coherent plan which sets out how and where new homes, jobs and essential investment can be delivered, along with schools, health facilities and green sustainable transport measures. It will contain the policies upon which the council will base decisions on planning applications.

This requires up-to-date indoor sport, playing pitch and open space strategies to support the delivery of growth in the borough as they progress through the planning system.

Hertsmere Core Strategy (2013-2027)⁸

This seeks to facilitate the land use requirements of local communities, businesses and service providers, including those set out in the Hertsmere Together Community Strategy. The Community Strategy was prepared by a range of partners including the Primary Care Trust, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Hertfordshire County Council and HBC, and recognises that many of the important issues facing the borough cannot be tackled fully by one single organisation.

⁸<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/09-Planning-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/Local-Development-Framework/core-strategy-dpd-2013.pdf>

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Hertsmere Corporate Plan (2024-27)⁹

This sets out the council's vision to "deliver better futures" by focusing on three strategic pillars:

- ◀ Our communities
- ◀ Our places
- ◀ Our services

It aims to create safe, healthy, and inclusive communities, support sustainable growth and environmental protection, and deliver efficient, value-for-money services. Key priorities include promoting creativity and cultural heritage, accelerating progress toward net zero, regenerating town centres, and embracing innovation in service delivery. Underpinned by the key values of *respect, integrity, and making a difference*, it provides a clear framework for annual actions and performance monitoring to ensure that Hertsmere remains a vibrant, resilient, and forward-looking borough.

Hertsmere Physical Activity and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2027¹⁰

The strategy sets out HBC's vision to improve health and wellbeing by promoting physical activity, reducing health inequalities, and supporting mental health. It aligns with the Hertsmere Together Community Strategy and works in partnership with local, regional, and national health bodies. The four overarching strategic priorities identified are:

- ◀ Reducing health inequalities – targeting areas and groups with poorer health outcomes.
- ◀ Improving physical activity levels – encouraging active lifestyles through accessible facilities and programs.
- ◀ Supporting mental health – initiatives to reduce mental health issues and promote resilience.
- ◀ Ensuring equitable access – providing fair access to green spaces, leisure facilities, and wellbeing activities for all residents.

Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026¹¹

This sets high level priorities, to optimise the health and wellbeing of people in the county throughout the course of their lives. It is based on the four life stages of *starting well, developing well, living and working well* and *ageing well*. The vision is "with all partners working together we aim to reduce health inequalities and improve the health and wellbeing of the people in Hertfordshire". The Hertfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board has agreed six principles in respect of its priorities on up to 2020. They are as follows:

- ◀ Aim to keep people safe and reduce inequalities in health, attainment and wellbeing outcomes.
- ◀ Use public health evidence, other comparison information and Hertfordshire citizens' views to make sure that we focus on the most significant health and wellbeing needs in Hertfordshire.
- ◀ Centre strategies on people, their families and carers, providing services universally but giving priority to the most vulnerable.
- ◀ Focus on preventative approaches – helping people and communities to support each other and prevent problems from occurring for individuals and families in the future.

⁹<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/11-Your-Council/Official-Publications-Guides-Policies/hertsmere-vision-2024-27.pdf>

¹⁰<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Documents/05-Health--Wellbeing/Physical-Activity-and-Wellbeing-strategy-2023-2027-pdf-1.03-Mb.pdf>

¹¹<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/data-and-information/public-health/hertfordshire-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-2022-2026.pdf>

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- ◀ Always consider what can be done better together - focusing efforts on adding value as partners to maximise the benefits for the public.
- ◀ Encourage opportunities to integrate services to improve outcomes and value for taxpayers.

Hertsmere Housing Strategy

This sets out the council's approach to meeting housing needs, tackling homelessness, and ensuring access to affordable homes. It prioritises delivering new housing through sustainable development, with clear targets for affordable housing—40% in designated areas and at least 35% elsewhere—across all major schemes.

HBC aims to deliver around 760 homes per year, with some projections rising to up to 959 homes annually based on government housing targets. Over the plan period to 2041, this means approximately 12,000–14,000 new homes, including a major new settlement at Bowmans Cross (up to 5,000 homes) plus additional allocations in Borehamwood, Potters Bar, and Shenley.

Hertsmere Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy (2025-2030)¹²

HBC declared a climate and ecological emergency in July 2019. This represents a commitment to take appropriate action to make the council's activities net-zero carbon no later than 2050. To achieve this, it has the following projects and initiatives to deliver:

- ◀ Reduce council emissions.
- ◀ Promote sustainable transport.
- ◀ Encourage active travel, shared transport, and EV infrastructure.
- ◀ Work with Hertfordshire-wide partnerships for coordinated action.
- ◀ Improve energy efficiency & renewable energy.
- ◀ Domestic and non-domestic energy efficiency programs.
- ◀ Increase renewable electricity and heat generation locally.
- ◀ Minimise waste & circular economy.
- ◀ Reduce landfill, promote reuse and recycling.
- ◀ Support community initiatives for waste reduction.

Hertsmere Sport and Recreation Strategy 2016-2027

The Sport and Recreation Strategy for Hertsmere (2016) identifies that sustainable sport and recreation is not just about the built environment but should embrace:

- ◀ Assets – facilities, natural resources (e.g., countryside, cycle routes) and people (coaches and volunteers).
- ◀ Content – such as activity programmes, events, sports development/outreach programmes.

This strategy focuses on key sports and the development of indoor and outdoor sports builds on the two key priorities of improving health and wellbeing and providing and improving facilities. As such the vision for this strategy centres on the following five key outcomes:

- ◀ Improving the health and wellbeing of the population.
- ◀ Increasing participation in active sport.
- ◀ Enhancing and protecting long term sustainable facilities.
- ◀ Providing easy access to facilities and activities for residents.
- ◀ Providing facilities that are desirable and affordable to both residents and the council.

¹²<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/asset-library/climate-change-and-sustainability-strategy-2025-20303.pdf>

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To make this vision a reality, HBC will seek to deliver the following objectives with local partners over the life of the strategy:

- Enhance existing assets – HBC can achieve this via enhancement or redevelopment of its facilities. Redevelopment of the Furzefield Leisure Centre site should seek to deliver some of the emerging sports.
- Appointment of a key partner post 2032 – HBC's operating contract with InspireAll runs to 2032. HBC should use the opportunity to develop a long-term focus on not only facility provision but the need for a partner to develop and work closely with it to support development of sport and recreation across the borough.
- Support development of community focused facilities (including sports pitches and ancillary indoor facilities) for the growing population, ensuring that they link to the overall network within Hertsmere.
- Support and develop volunteers and coaches to increase the numbers of people able to participate in supporting structures, through supporting community clubs.
- Increase participation among people of all ages and particularly using opportunities in sport and recreation for young people (14-25 year-olds) to create a sporting habit for life.
- Enhance and promote the access to the natural environment, such as running groups, cycling routes and networks which encourage physical activity and use of natural resources.
- Support and encourage the growth of new activities (such as extreme sports) which can deliver physical activity to groups who wouldn't normally participate in sport. These could be developed commercially.

Hertsmere Together Community Strategy 2023-2027

This is the borough's overarching plan for partnership working to improve quality of life. It was developed by Hertsmere Together, the Local Strategic Partnership, which brings together public, private, voluntary, and community sectors. Its overarching aim is, working in partnership, to empower HBC's communities and make Hertsmere a great place to live, work, and visit, with strong health, safety, and resilience. It has the following aims:

Table 2.1: Hertsmere Community Strategy (2023-2027) aims and priorities

Challenges	Priorities
Keeping our communities healthy and well	Promote physical activity and wellbeing. Improve access to health services and tackle health inequalities. Support mental health initiatives.
Keeping our communities safe	Work with police and community safety partners. Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Improve community reassurance and cohesion
Building a resilient community	Support residents through cost-of-living challenges. Strengthen local networks and voluntary sector. Encourage economic growth and job creation

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

Hertfordshire County Council is in the process of developing its JSNA and working with leads across health to produce a report on the health and wellbeing needs of people in the county. The JSNA informs the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

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South West Hertfordshire Joint Strategic Plan (JSP)

The ten Hertfordshire local authorities, together with the County Council, established the Hertfordshire Growth Board in 2019. Its purpose is to collaborate on place-based working across Hertfordshire to address sustainable growth. This joint approach is the development of two Joint Strategic Plans (JSPs), for South West and NEC Hertfordshire.

The purpose of the JSPs is to provide a long-term growth strategy where future collaboration is needed to deliver strategic-scale growth. The polycentric geography of Hertfordshire, with no dominant town or city, together with a number of tightly constrained new towns lends itself to a strategic approach that considers growth needs across administrative boundaries. The plans will identify a joint vision, long-term development needs, strategic development locations and strategic transport infrastructure, green infrastructure and climate change issues and policy responses.

The authorities undertook a comprehensive scoping exercise to understand better some of the challenges and issues associated with the preparation of a JSP, including the issues where support was needed. These include the relationship of a JSP to local plans, the type of strategic plan that would best meet the area's needs and how its preparation would be resourced, as well as how long it would take.

The local authorities of Dacorum, Hertsmer, St Albans, Three Rivers and Watford together with the County Council make up the group for South West (SW) Hertfordshire. Part one of a growth study to evaluate the strategic elements affecting these authorities was completed in October 2022. Following this, visioning work was undertaken in late 2023-early 2024. Following public consultation it was expected to have been finalised in 2025.

Herts Sport and Physical Activity Partnership

This is the active partnership that covers the borough. It is one of 43 across England funded by Sport England to locally deliver the Uniting the Movement Strategy. Its vision is to 'strategically and collaboratively to improve the lives of the people of Hertfordshire, by using the power of sport and physical activity to tackle inequality and disadvantage'. Key insights which have informed its Strategic Plan 2022-2027 summary are:

- ◀ The need for a joined-up approach between schools and community sport.
- ◀ The impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the county's most disadvantaged communities.
- ◀ Taking opportunities to use sport and physical activity to tackle the number of long-term health conditions and wider societal issues.
- ◀ Addressing widening inequality gaps.
- ◀ The need for well-designed spaces to increase physical activity levels and improve mental health.

Place partnership expansion¹³

In November 2025, Sport England announced a major expansion of its Place Partnerships Programme, naming 27 new locations across the country where it will be working to tackle high rates of inactivity. Each of these ranks in the top 20% nationally for inactivity, social need, deprivation and health inequality. The ambition is to ensure that those in greatest need are able to play sport and be physically active. This will see £190 million of National Lottery and Exchequer funding invested in 80-100 new places in England over the next five years.

¹³ <https://makingourmove.org.uk/>

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The intention is that targeted local investment and resources will help to increase activity levels, decrease inactivity and breakdown the barriers and inequalities that prevent people from playing sport or being active.

Since 2018, Sport England has tested place partnerships via a place-based approach-working with 'local delivery pilots' in 12 of the country's most disadvantaged and least active communities. Sport England has not selected Hertsmere for this initiative. Despite this, it has been identified that Cowley Hill in Borehamwood is a supported place from Sport England via Herts Sports and Physical Activity Partnership.

Leisure operator- InspireAll

InspireAll is a local charitable trust founded in 2002 to provide/manage leisure facilities and family services for the communities throughout the Southeast of England. It manages HBC's three leisure centres; Bushey Grove Leisure Centre, Furzefield Leisure Centre and The Venue Leisure Centre. In addition, InspireAll run and manage the facilities at Three Ways Community Centre and Bushey Community Centre. There are seven years left on the management contract (expires in 2032).

Summary of local policy

HBC has identified several initiatives to create a borough which is an attractive place to live, work and visit. The current Local Plan features a series of strategic objectives to achieve this, including creating suitable housing, good public transport, protecting the environment and reducing health inequalities.

The council will continue to work with InspireAll and the Herts Sport and Physical Activity Partnership to ensure that even the most disadvantaged members of society have the opportunity to participate in sport and physical activity to tackle health and other societal issues.

Overall, partners, including Herts Sport and Physical Activity Partnership, the County Council and HBC have worked closely together to provide a policy platform to demonstrate the potential impact of physical activity on wider health outcomes. This built facilities strategy can provide further evidence and insight in support of these plans to create a more active, healthier area.

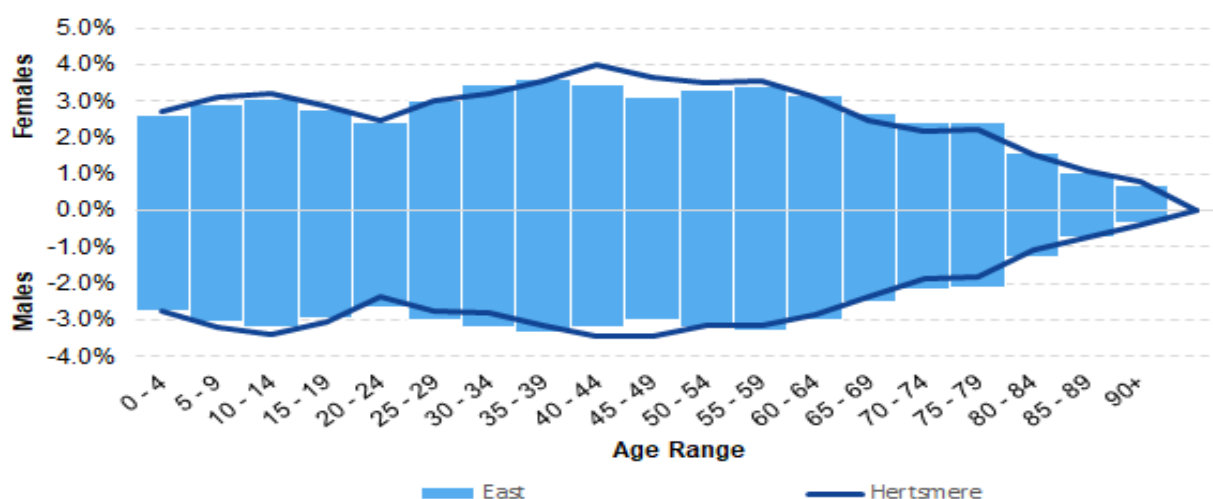
2.3: Demographic profile

Population and distribution (Data source: 2024 Mid-Year Estimate (MYE), ONS)

The Hertsmere population is 110,212 (males: 52,744, females: 57,438). Main population centres are Borehamwood, Elstree, Bushey and Potters Bar. Age/gender composition is shown below.

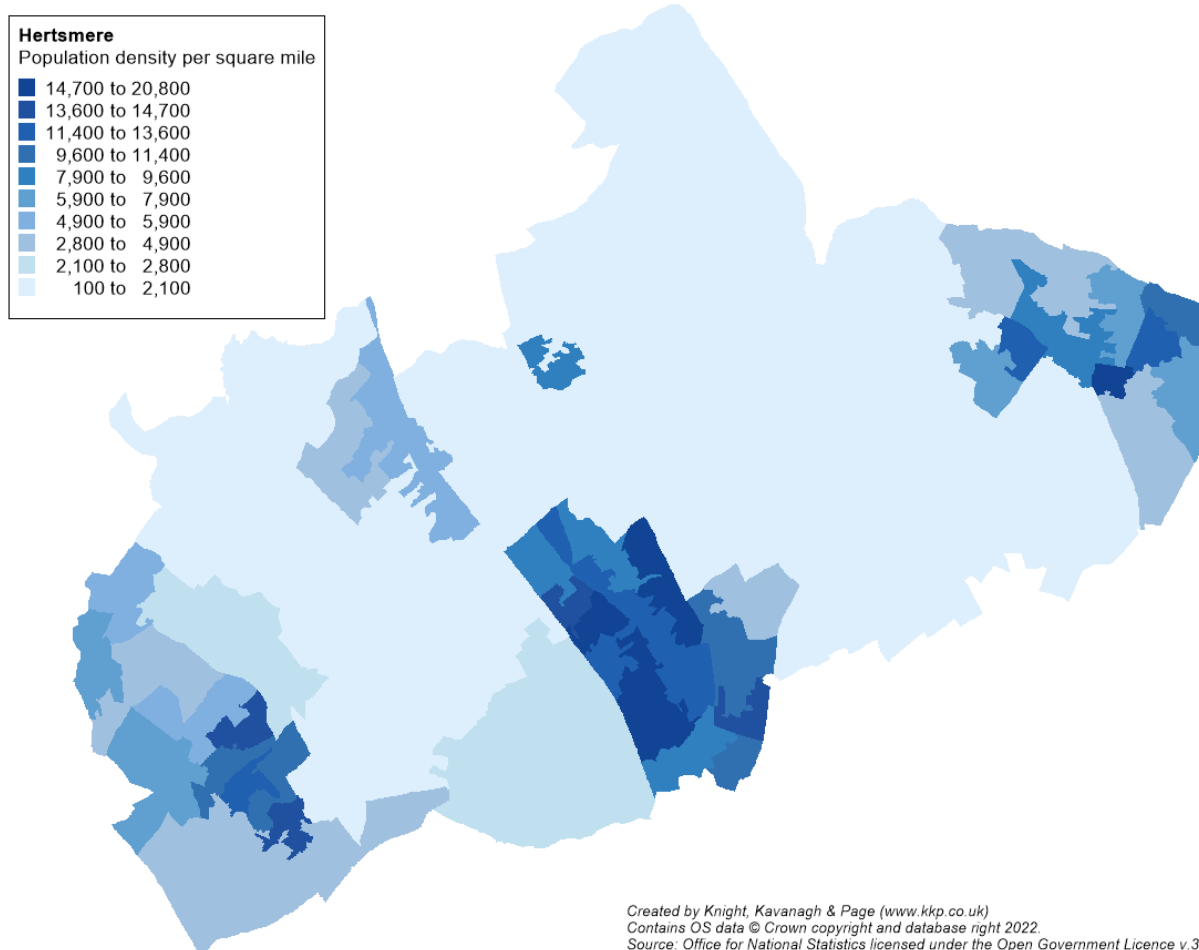
Figure 2.4: Comparative age/sex pyramid for Hertsmere and East

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There is a slightly lower proportion of 30-34 year olds (Hertsmere: 27.3%, East: 26.4%) but slightly more in the age groups from 45-49 (Hertsmere: 7.1%, East: 6.1%).

Figure 2.5: Population density 2024 MYE: Hertsmere (LSOAs)



Population density maps are based on lower super output areas (LSOAs). Map shading allows population concentrations to be easily identified; major urban areas (flats, terraced houses and estates) have the darkest shading while rural areas/non-residential land uses are lightest.

Ethnicity (Data source: 2021 census of population, ONS):

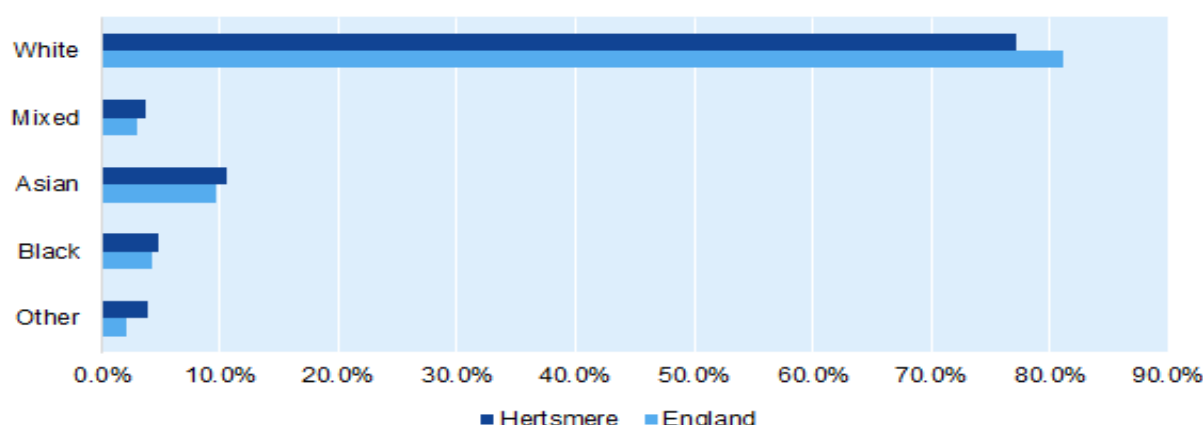
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Hertsmere's ethnic composition reflects that of England. 77.1% of the population classified its ethnicity as White (lower than the comparative England rate: 81%). The next largest group (by self-classification) is Asian, at 10.5% this is higher than the national equivalent (9.6%).

Table 2.3: Ethnic composition – Hertsmere and England

Ethnicity	Hertsmere #	Hertsmere %	England #	England %
White	83,145	77.1%	45,783,401	81.0%
Mixed	4,038	3.7%	1,669,378	3.0%
Asian	11,320	10.5%	5,426,392	9.6%
Black	5,181	4.8%	2,381,724	4.2%
Other	4,143	3.8%	1,229,153	2.2%
TOTAL	107,827	100.0%	56,490,048	100.0%

Figure 2.6: Ethnicity in Hertsmere and England



Car and van ownership (Data source: 2021 Census, ONS)

In total 36,063 households (84.5%) in Hertsmere have at least one car/van in the household. This is lower than the East (83.2%) and England and Wales (76.8%). While there is a spread, the highest proportion of households in Hertsmere (42.3%) have one car or van.

Table 2.4: Comparative car and van ownership: Hertsmere, the East and England & Wales.

Car / Van Ownership	Hertsmere #	Hertsmere %	East #	East %	England #	England %
No cars or vans	6,619	15.5%	442,121	16.8%	5,777,962	23.3%
1 car or van	18,044	42.3%	1,092,400	41.6%	10,236,901	41.3%
2 cars or vans	13,248	31.0%	789,796	30.0%	6,485,729	26.2%
3 or more cars or vans	4,771	11.2%	304,466	11.6%	2,282,601	9.2%
Total	42,682	100.0%	2,628,783	100.0%	24,783,193	100.0%

Crime (Data source: Crime in England and Wales year ending March 2025, ONS)

Hertsmere is in the Hertfordshire Police Force Area, which comprises ten local authorities and the borough population accounts for 9.0% of the overall area. During the 12 months to March 2025 the number of recorded crimes per '000 persons in the county was 67.9 (2023 MYE). Whilst the recorded crime per '000 persons in Hertsmere was 69.9 (2023 MYE). The figures

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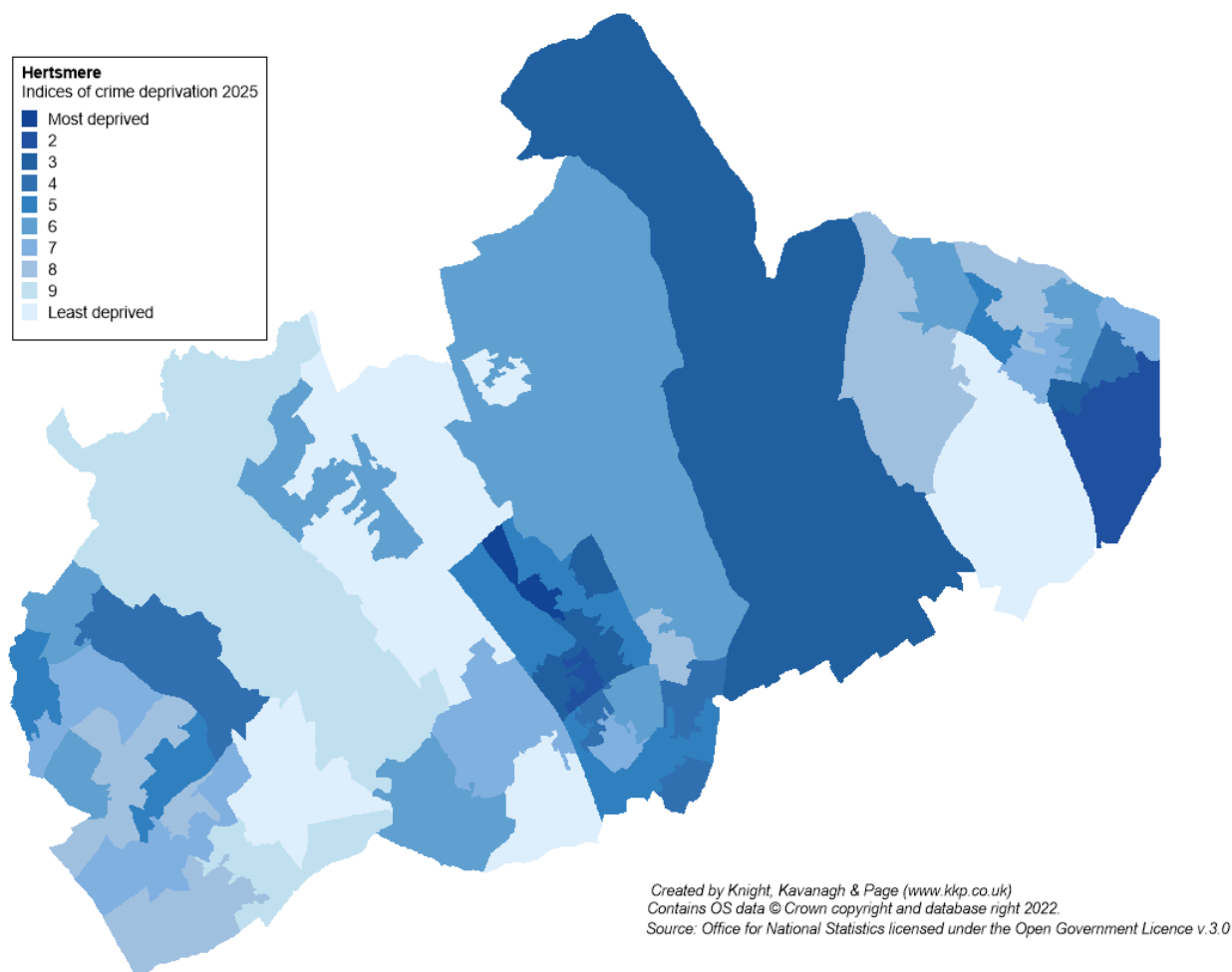
for Hertsmere and Hertfordshire are markedly lower than the equivalent rate for England and Wales (87.2). This said, the number of recorded crimes in the Hertfordshire area has risen significantly (by 9.2%) since March 2024 (2022 MYE). The number for England and Wales has fallen by 3.8% over the same period.

Table 2.5: Comparative crime rates: Hertsmere, Hertfordshire Police Force area and England & Wales.

Authority/area	Recorded crime (Apr '24 – Mar '25)	Population 2023 MYE	Recorded crime per 1,000 population
Hertsmere	7,547	108,311 (2022)	69.9
Hertfordshire	82,516	1,215,387	67.9
England & Wales	5,309,536	60,854,727	87.2

As an alternative to the crime figures for police force areas the Index of Deprivation measures the risk of personal and material crime at a more local level. In Hertsmere, 13.1% of the population are in the top three cohorts most at risk compared to 30.0% nationally.

Figure 2.7: Map of crime deprivation



Income and benefits dependency (Data source: Nomis 2025)

The median figure for full-time earnings (2025) in Hertsmere is £45,869; the comparative rate for the East of England is £41,855 (-8.8%) and for Great Britain is £39,863 (-13.1%). 2,410

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people in Hertsmere claimed out of work benefits in October 2025, an increase of +2.1% when compared to October 2024 (2,360).

Deprivation (Data source: 2025 indices of deprivation, MHCLG)

Relative to other parts of the country Hertsmere experiences low levels of deprivation; one in ten of the district's population (10.9%) falls within areas covered by the country's three most deprived cohorts compared to a national average of c.30.4%. Conversely, 43.7% live in the three least deprived groupings in the country, this compares to a 'norm' of c.29.4%.

The pattern is broadly replicated for health but not quite to the same extent. Around three in ten of Hertsmere's population (3.5%) falls within the areas covered by the three most deprived cohorts, this compares to a national average of c.29.7%. Conversely, 40.5% live in the three least deprived groupings compared to a 'norm' of c.30.4%.

Figure 2.8: Map of multiple deprivation

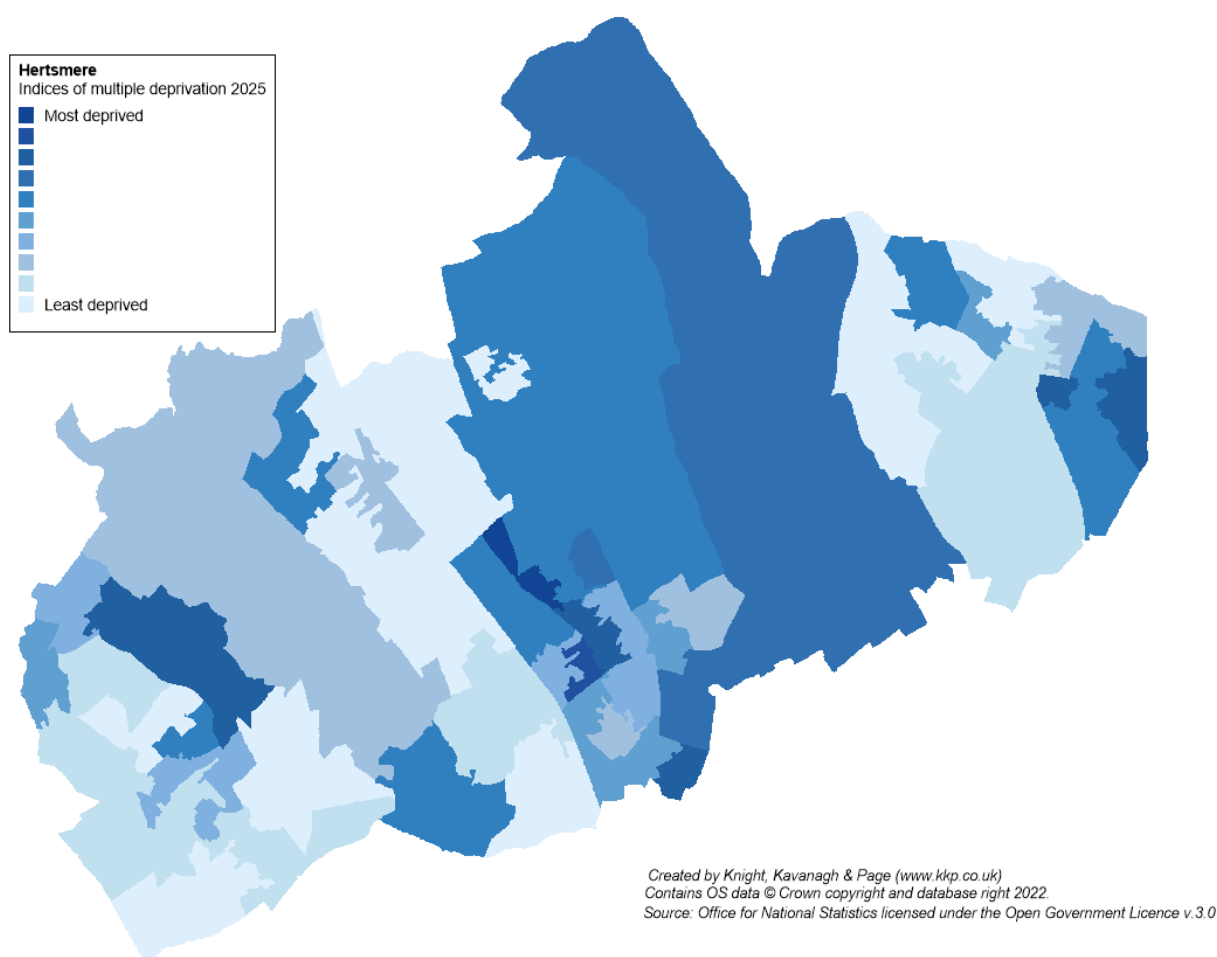


Table 2.6: IMD cohorts – multiple deprivation in Hertsmere

10% bands	Population in band	%	Cumulative %
Most deprived - 10.0	1,665	1.5%	1.5%
20.0	1,303	1.2%	2.7%
30.0	8,832	8.2%	10.9%
40.0	6,747	6.2%	17.1%
50.0	19,763	18.2%	35.4%

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60.0	10,274	9.5%	44.9%
70.0	12,396	11.4%	56.3%
80.0	9,485	8.8%	65.1%
90.0	19,539	18.0%	83.1%
Least deprived - 100.0	18,307	16.9%	100.0%

Health data (Data source: ONS)

In keeping with patterns seen alongside lower levels of health deprivation, life expectancy in Hertsmere is higher than the national figure; the male rate is currently 80.7 compared to 79.1 for England, and the female equivalent is 84.9 compared to 83.1 nationally¹⁴.

Figure 2.9: Map of health deprivation

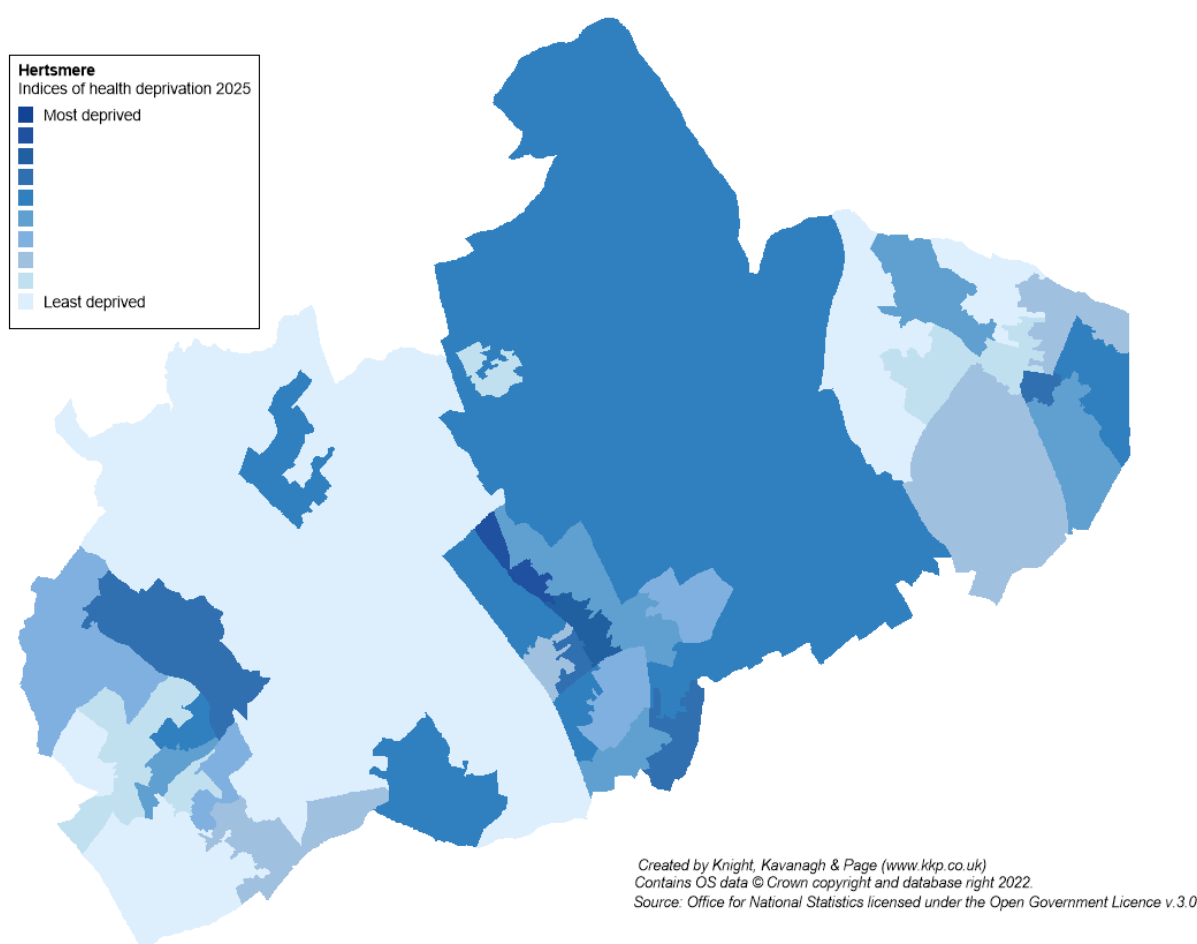


Table 2.7: IMD cohorts – health deprivation in Hertsmere

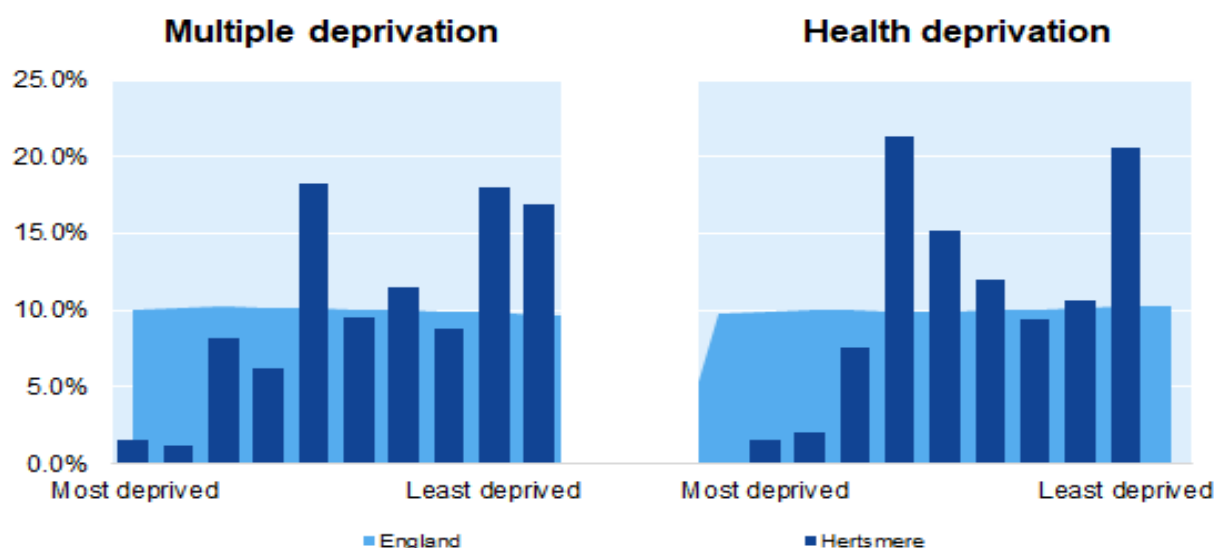
10% bands	Population in band	%	Cumulative %
Most deprived - 10.0	0	0.0%	0.0%
20.0	1,665	1.5%	1.5%
30.0	2,162	2.0%	3.5%
40.0	8,132	7.5%	11.0%
50.0	23,110	21.3%	32.4%

¹⁴ Office of National Statistics: Life Expectancy at Birth by local areas in the United Kingdom, 2023.

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60.0	16,404	15.1%	47.5%
70.0	13,011	12.0%	59.5%
80.0	10,128	9.4%	68.9%
90.0	11,467	10.6%	79.5%
Least deprived - 100.0	22,232	20.5%	100.0%

Figure 2.10: Index of multiple and health deprivation



Weight and obesity (Data sources: NCMP¹⁵ and NOO¹⁶)

Obesity is widely recognised to be associated with health problems such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer. At a national level, the resulting NHS costs attributable to overweight and obesity are projected to reach £9.7 billion by 2050, with wider costs to society estimated to reach £49.9 billion per year. These factors combine to make the prevention of obesity a major public health challenge.

Adult and child rates of obesity or overweight in Hertsmere are below national and regional rates. However, child rates are below both national and regional rates.

¹⁵ National Child Measurement Program

¹⁶ National Obesity Observatory

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Figure 2.11: Adult and child overweight/obesity rates

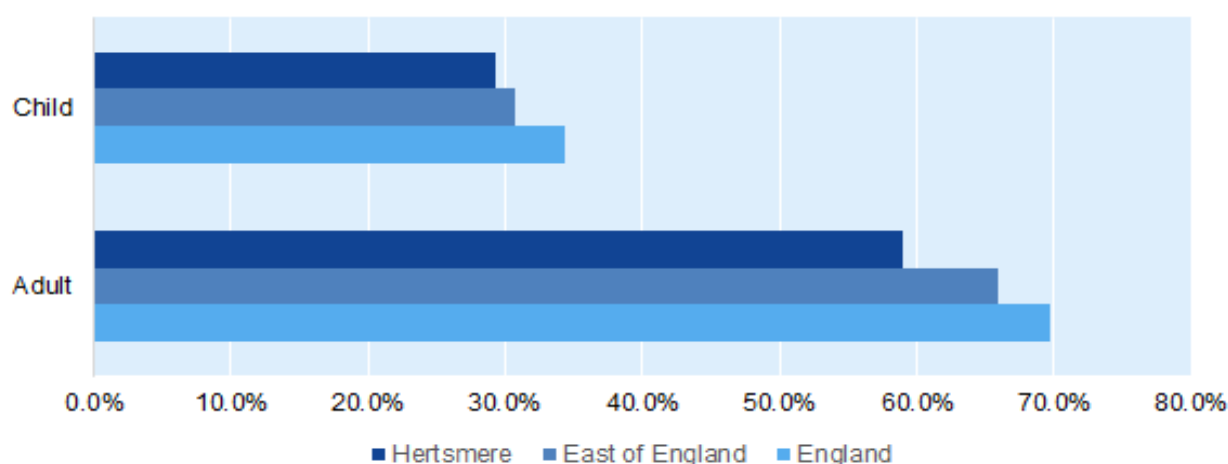
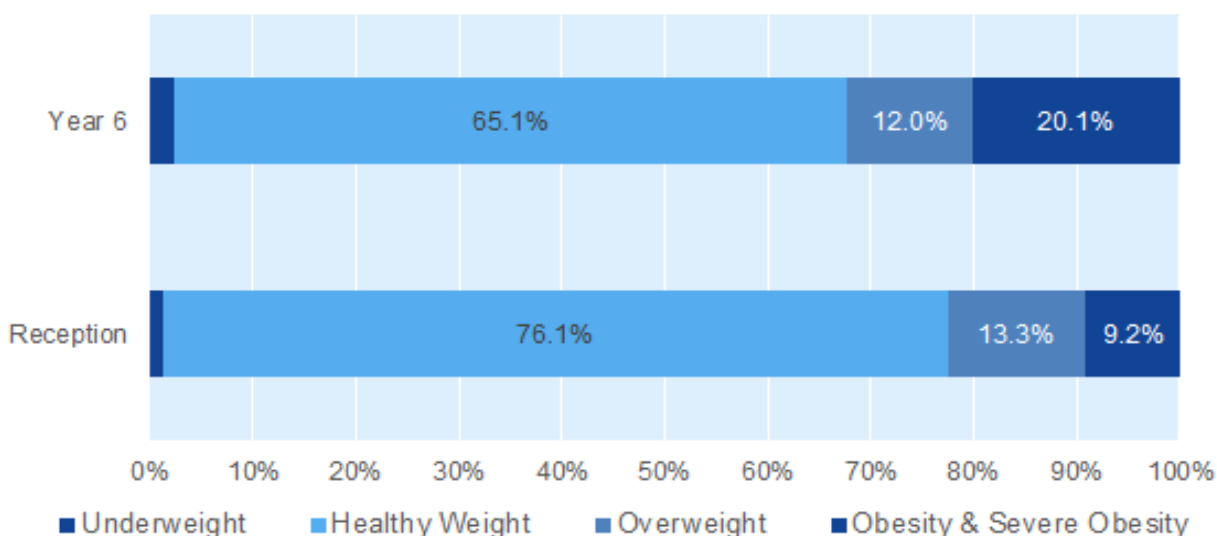


Figure 2.12: Child weight – reception and year 6 (2023/24)



As with many other areas, obesity rates increase significantly between the ages of 4-11. Almost one in 10 children (9.2%) in Hertsmere are obese in their reception year at school and 13.3% are overweight. By year 6 these figures rise to one in five (20.1%) obese and 12.0% overweight. In total by year 6 almost one third (32.1%) are either overweight or obese.

Active Lives Survey (Data Source: Sport England - November 2023/24)

This is based on 16+ year olds taking part in walking, cycling, fitness, dance and other sporting activity. As identified in Table 2.8, a lower percentage of the Hertsmere population is inactive compared to England and the East and a higher percentage is considered to be active. This is specified by Sport England as follows:

- ✦ Inactive - <30 minutes per week.
- ✦ Fairly Active – 30-149 minutes per week.
- ✦ Active – 150+ minutes per week.

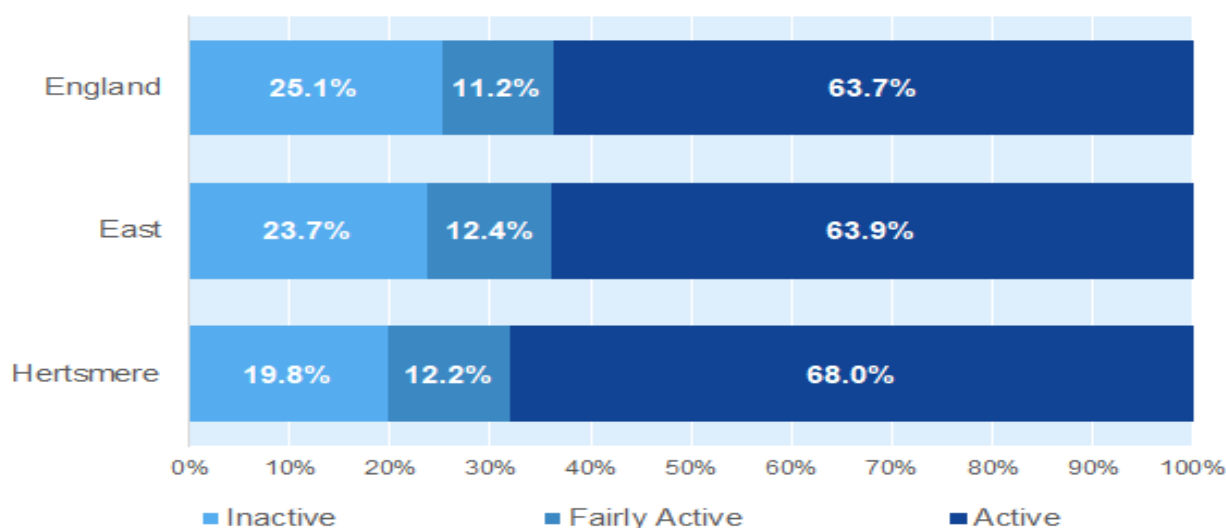
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Table 2.8: Active Lives Survey results: November 2023/24.

	Inactive #	Inactive %	Fairly active #	Fairly active %	Active #	Active %
England	11,826,300	25.1%	5,252,800	11.2%	29,962,800	63.7%
East	1,246,200	23.7%	650,900	12.4%	3,355,100	63.9%
Hertsmere	17,300	19.8%	10,700	12.2%	59,300	68.0%

Rate/population totals for sport and physical activity levels (excluding gardening) of adults (16+) in English local authority areas.

Figure 2.13: Levels of activity (Active Lives 2023/24)



Popular sports (Data source: Sport England Active Lives Survey November 2020/21)

This enables identification of the top five sports within Hertsmere. As with many other areas, fitness and athletics are among the most popular and tend to cut across age groups and gender; in Hertsmere nearly one third (29.9%) of adults take part in fitness activities, on average, at least twice a month. The next most popular is athletics (15.7% of adults participate in on a relatively regular basis.

Table 2.9: Most popular sports in Hertsmere

Sport	Hertsmere #.	Hertsmere %	East #	East %	England #	England %
Fitness	24,800	29.9%	1,264,600	25.0%	11,374,600	24.9%
Athletics	13,000	15.7%	694,100	13.7%	6,252,000	13.7%
Cycling	9,800	11.8%	916,500	18.1%	7,472,900	16.4%
Swimming	4,300	5.2%	231,200	4.6%	2,001,600	4.4%
Football	2,300	2.7%	135,700	2.7%	1,451,700	3.2%

Social value of sport and physical activity (Data Source: Sport England Active Lives 2023-24)

This shows the direct benefit and value to individuals of improved wellbeing and the wider value to society, including the state. Value is determined using Active Lives data and detail

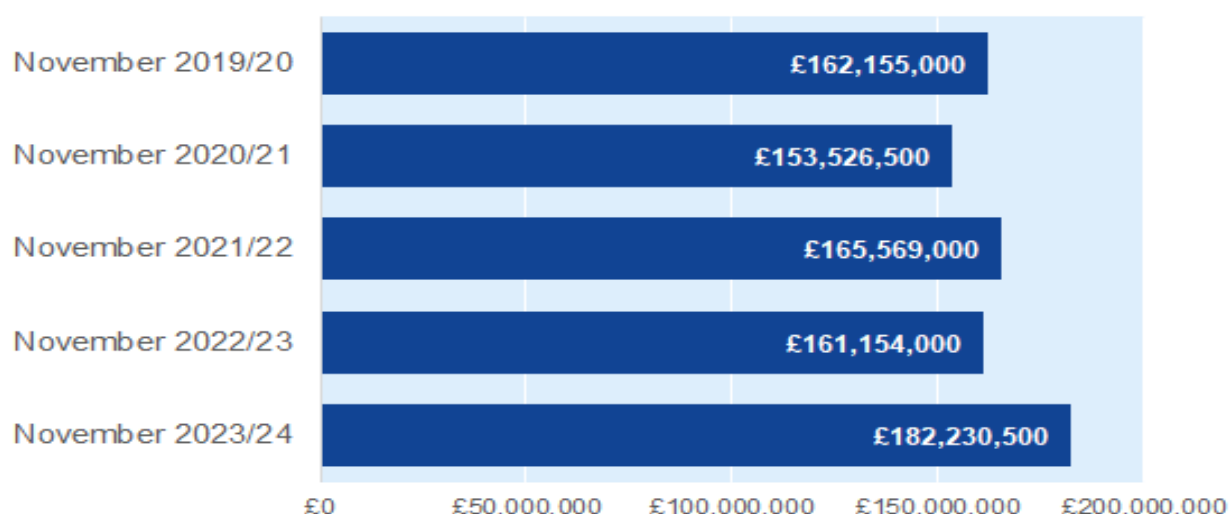
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derived from participation frequency¹⁷. Figures below are calculated using data. In Hertsmere the total social value is £182,230,500 (£161,090,000 primary and £21,140,500 secondary). This rose by 12.4% between November 2019/20-November 2023/24.

Table 2.10: Social value of sport and physical activity

	Primary value	Secondary value	Total
Hertsmere	£161,090,000	£21,140,500	£182,230,500
East	£9,168,830,000	£1,206,563,500	£10,375,393,500
England	£81,210,360,000	£10,646,426,000	£91,856,786,000

Figure 2.14: Social value of sport/physical activity: November 2015/16- November 2023/24



Mosaic (Data source: 2024 Mosaic analysis, Experian)

Mosaic 2024 classifies all 28.6 million households into 15 groups, 66 household types and 238 segments. This data is then used to paint a picture of UK consumers in terms of their social-demographics, lifestyles, culture and behaviour. The table below shows the top five Mosaic classifications in Hertsmere compared to the country as a whole. They represent more than three quarters (77.3%) of the population compared to a national equivalent rate of 44.3%.

Table 2.11: Mosaic – main population segments in Hertsmere.

Mosaic group description	Hertsmere #	Hertsmere %	National %
1 - Domestic Success	25,811	23.6%	9.1%
2 - Prestige Positions	23,550	21.5%	7.1%
3 - Family Basics	13,668	12.5%	9.1%
4 - Rental Hubs	11,423	10.5%	8.0%
5 - Aspiring Homemakers	10,033	9.2%	10.9%

The largest segment profiled for Hertsmere is the Domestic Success group. It comprises 23.6% of the adult population in the area, three times the England rate (9.1%).

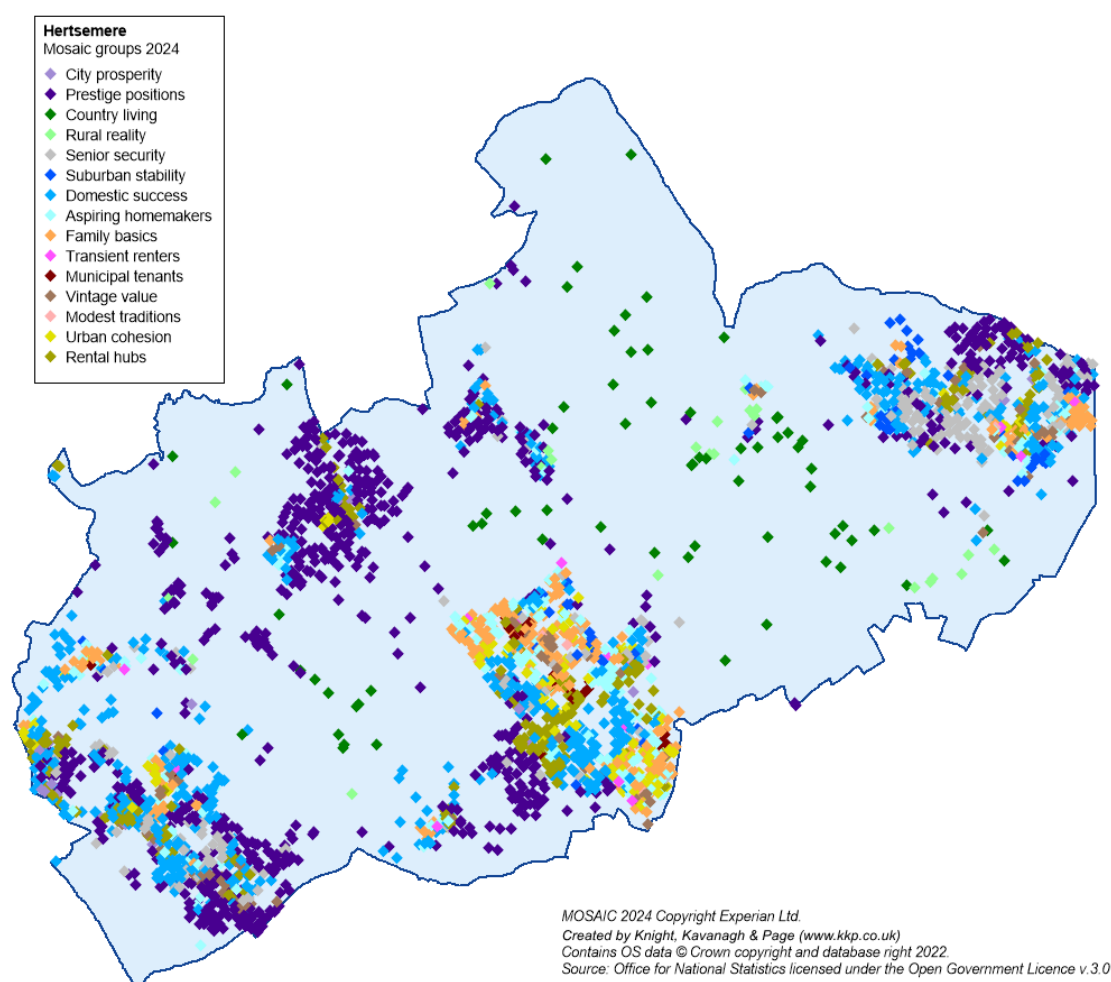
¹⁷ Primary values (active £2,500, fairly active £1,200, inactive £0) and secondary values (active £315, fairly active £230, inactive £0).

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Table 2.12: Dominant Mosaic profiles in Hertsmere

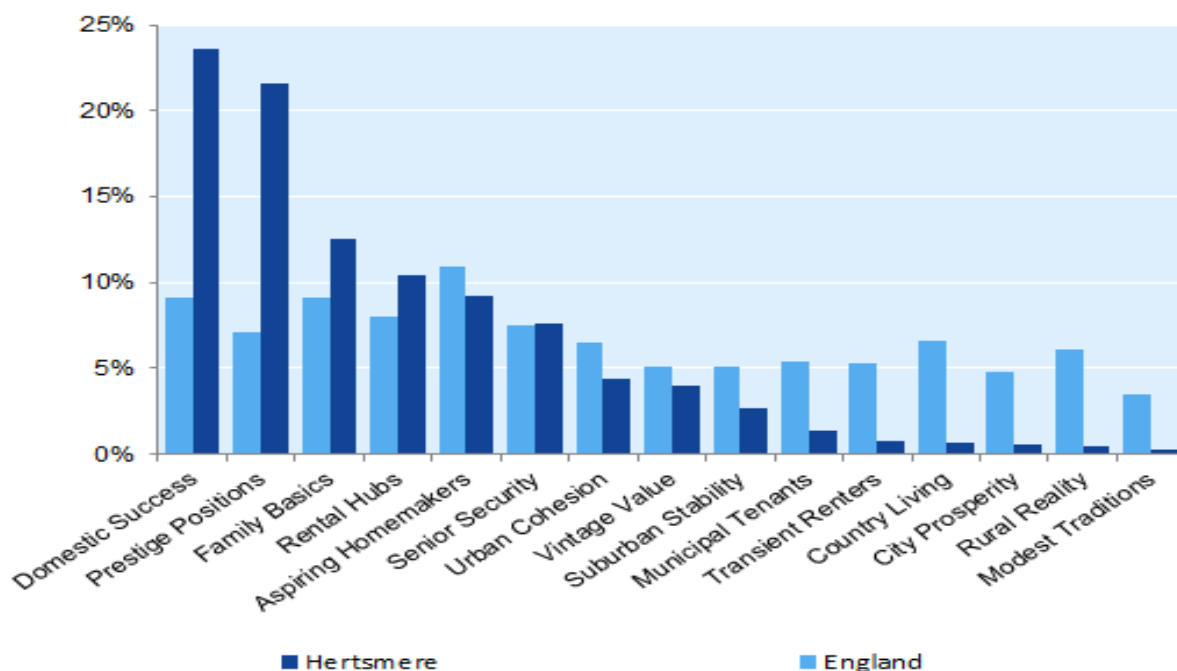
Mosaic group	Description
Domestic Success	High-earning families who live affluent lifestyles in upmarket homes situated in sought after residential neighbourhoods. Their busy lives revolve around their children and successful careers in higher managerial and professional roles.
Prestige Positions	Affluent married couples whose successful careers have afforded them financial security and a spacious home in a prestigious and established residential area. While some are mature empty-nesters or elderly retired couples, others are still supporting their teenage or older children.
Family Basics	Families with children who have limited budgets and can struggle to make ends meet. Their homes are low cost and are often found in areas with fewer employment options.

Figure 2.15: Distribution of Mosaic segments in Hertsmere



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Figure 2.16: Mosaic groups segmentation – Hertsmere compared to nationally (2024)



Population projections: (Data source: 2022-based population projections, ONS)

Strategic planning: Change over 19 years (2022-2041)

The most recent ONS projections indicate a rise of 3.4% in Hertsmere's population (+3,715) over the 19 years from 2022 to 2041. Over this extended timeframe there will be fluctuations at different points across the majority of age groups. Key points are outlined below:

- ✦ The number of 0-15 year olds, falls by -1,387 (-6.4%) over the first half of the projection (to 2034).
- ✦ There is a predicted in the number of 16-24 year olds, -0.3% in the first period (-26) followed by a further decline of -9.7% (-990) in the second period.
- ✦ There is a continuous increase in the numbers of persons aged 65+ and a need to consider varying sports offers for this age group. This represents an increase of +18.9% (+3,727) in the first period continuing to rise to +33.5% (+6,602) between 2022 and 2041. While the age group represented 18.2% of Hertsmere's population in 2022 it is projected to be 23.5% of the total by 2041 - this is approaching one quarter of the population.

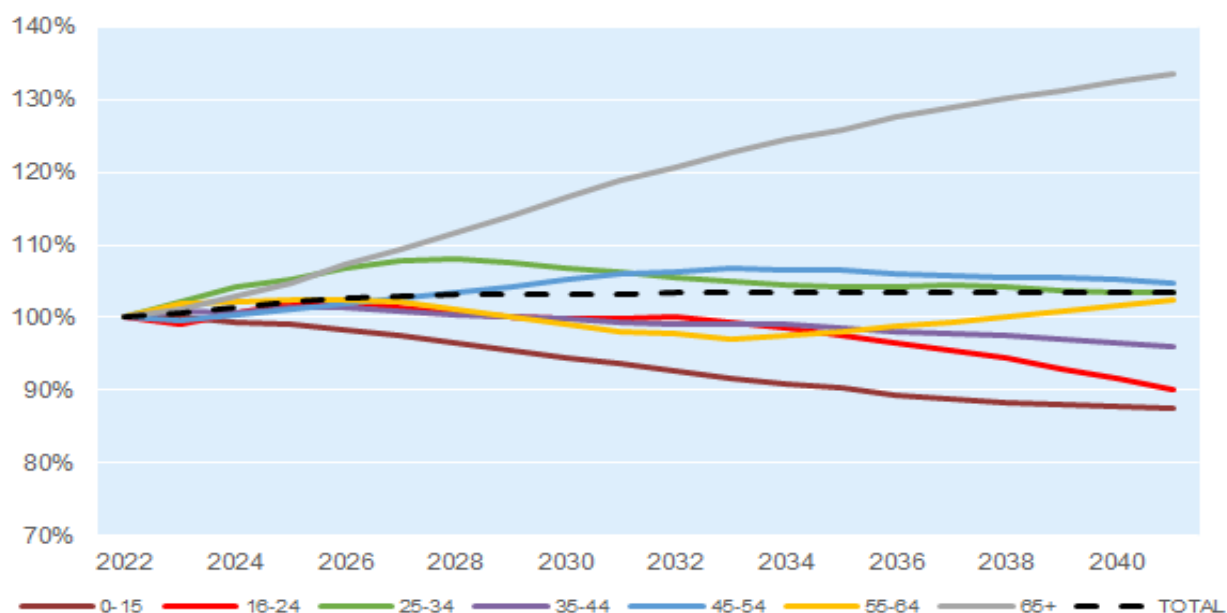
Table 2.13: Hertsmere– ONS projected population (2022 to 2041)

Age (years)	2022 #	2031 #	2041 #	2022 %	2031 %	2041 %	2031 Change	2041 Change
0-15	21,710	20,323	18,975	20.0%	18.2%	16.9%	93.6%	87.4%
16-24	10,231	10,205	9,215	9.4%	9.1%	8.2%	99.7%	90.1%
25-34	12,626	13,415	13,063	11.7%	12.0%	11.7%	106.2%	103.5%
35-44	15,491	15,368	14,872	14.3%	13.7%	13.3%	99.2%	96.0%
45-54	14,920	15,804	15,639	13.8%	14.1%	14.0%	105.9%	104.8%
55-64	13,652	13,369	13,980	12.6%	11.9%	12.5%	97.9%	102.4%
65+	19,681	23,408	26,283	18.2%	20.9%	23.5%	118.9%	133.5%

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Total	108,311	111,892	112,026	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	103.3%	103.4%
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Figure 2.17: Hertsmere- ONS 2022 projected population (2022 – 2041)



Summary of the demographic profile and population projections

The population of Hertsmere is expected to rise by 3.4% by 2041. A significant factor in this is the continuous rise in the number of people aged over 65. By this date 23.5% of the population will be over 65.

A key issue to consider is whether the current stock of facilities will be able to accommodate this increase or whether there is sufficient demand in specific areas to justify the development of new leisure facilities. There will also be a need to consider how the ageing population will choose to use its leisure time; this may well lead to changes in levels of demand for different activities.

The importance of ensuring that the proportion of the population which is currently active remains so and that more of the presently inactive become active (sustaining and improving the general health of the local population) will become increasingly relevant.

There will be greater need for daytime available facilities to accommodate the number of older people.

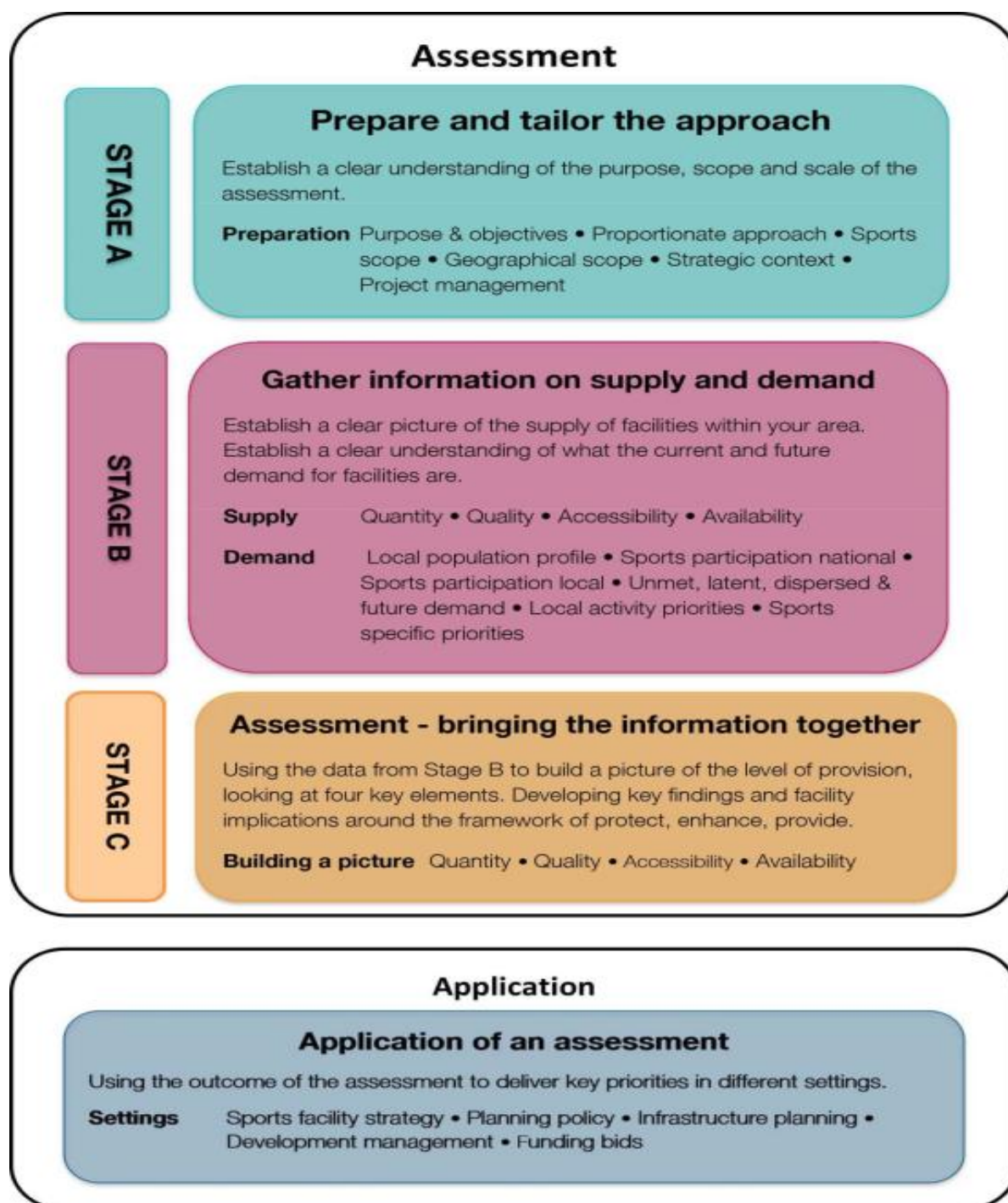
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SECTION 3: SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

3.1: Methodology

As noted above, the assessment of provision is based on the Sport England Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide (ANOG) for indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

Figure 3.1: Recommended approach



This is the recommended approach to undertaking a robust assessment of need for indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

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ANOG has been produced to help (local authorities) meet the requirements of the Government's NPPF, which states that: 'access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities'.

Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.' (NPPF, Paragraph 104).

Provision assessment involves analysis of quality, quantity, accessibility and availability for the identified facility types (e.g., sports halls and swimming pools). Each venue is considered on a 'like for like' basis within its own facility type, to enable it to be assessed for adequacy.

Demand background, data and consultation is variable, depending upon levels of consultation garnered. In some instances, national data is available whilst in others, it is possible to drill down and get some very detailed local information. This is evident within the demand section.

The report considers the distribution of and interrelationship between facility types in the authority and provides a clear indication of areas of high demand. It will identify where there is potential to provide improved and/or additional facilities to meet this demand and to, where appropriate, protect or rationalise the current stock.

3.2: Site visits

Active Places Power (APP) is used to provide baseline data to identify facilities in the study area. Where possible, site assessments are undertaken in the presence of facility staff. This tends to add value as it enables access to be gained to more areas within venues and more detailed *in-situ* discussion of issues such as customer perspectives, quality, maintenance etc. Where possible it adds value to the audit (which is a 'snapshot' visit) enhancing the accuracy of insight gathered about the general user experience.

Site visits to key indoor facilities, those operated by other partners and the voluntary sector were undertaken. Via the audit and via informal interviews with facility managers this report identifies 'relevance' and 'condition' and describes (e.g.):

- ◀ Facility and scale.
- ◀ Usage/local market.
- ◀ Ownership, management/access arrangements (plus, as applicable, owner aspirations).
- ◀ Management, programming, catchments, user groups, gaps.
- ◀ Location (urban/rural), access and accessibility.
- ◀ Condition, maintenance, existing improvement plans, facility 'investment status' (lifespan in the short, medium and long term).
- ◀ Existing/ planned adjacent facilities.

Assessment captures quantity and quality data on a site-by-site basis. This is fed directly into the main database allowing information to be stored and analysed. Quality assessments are rated based upon the categories shown in Table 3.1 overleaf. These, based on non-technical visual assessments, are applied throughout the report regardless of facility type.

Facility age and condition is assessed. Surfaces, tiles and walls, line markings and safety equipment are considered and problem areas such as mould, damage, leaks etc., noted. The condition of fixtures, fittings and equipment is recorded. Maintenance and facility 'wear and tear' is considered in terms of compliance with the Equality Act, although this is not studied in detail for the purposes of this report. Overall facility quality ratings are based upon all data collated.

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Table 3.1: Quality ratings of indoor sports facilities using ANOG

Quality rating	Description
Good	Facility is new (less than 10 years old) or recently invested in, up to date, clean, well maintained and presented. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are new or relatively new with little if any wear and tear. They are well-lit with a modern feel. Ancillary facilities are new or well maintained, fit for purpose, modern and attractive.
Above average	Facility is in reasonable condition and is well maintained and presented. May be older but it is fit for purpose and safe. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are in an acceptable condition but may show some signs of wear and tear. Ancillary facilities are good quality, but potentially showing signs of age and some wear and tear.
Below average	Facility is older and showing signs of age/poor quality. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces show signs of wear and tear. It is usable, but quality could be improved. The facility is not as attractive to customers and does not meet current expectations. Ancillary facilities are deteriorating, reasonable quality, but usable.
Poor	The facility is old and outdated. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are aged, worn and/or damaged. The facility is barely usable and at times may have to be taken out of commission. The facility is unattractive to customers and does not meet basic expectations. Ancillary facilities are low quality and unattractive to use.

3.3: Catchment areas

Applying catchments areas for facility types listed enables identification of areas currently not served. These vary from person to person, day to day, hour to hour. This problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchment'; the distance travelled by around 75-80% of users (used in the Sport England Facilities Planning Model - FPM).

Sport England data indicates that most people will travel up to 20 minutes to access sports facilities. This, coupled with KKP's experience of working in/with leisure facilities and use of local data enables identification of catchment areas for sports facilities as follows.

Table 3.2: Facility catchment areas

Facility type	Identified catchment area by urban/rural
Sport halls	20-minutes' walk/ 20 minutes' drive
Health and fitness	20-minutes' walk/ 20 minutes' drive
Swimming pools	20-minutes' walk/ 20 minutes' drive
Squash courts	20 minutes' drive
Gymnastics	30 minutes' drive
Indoor bowls facilities	30 minutes' drive
Indoor tennis courts	30 minutes' drive
Community centres/village halls	10-minute walk (800m radial)

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SECTION 4: SPORTS HALLS

Indoor multi-purpose sports halls are prime venues for community sport catering for a range of sport and recreational activity. The standard methodology for measuring sports halls is based on the number of badminton courts contained within the floor area.

They are generally considered to be of greatest value if of at least 3+ badminton courts in size with sufficient height to allow games such as badminton to be played. However, 4+ court sports halls provide greater flexibility as they can accommodate major indoor team sports such as football (5-a-side and training), basketball and netball.

They also tend to have sufficient length to accommodate indoor cricket nets and indoor athletics and, thus, offer more sports development flexibility than their 3-court counterpart. There is often variance in the dimensions of 4-court halls, and only those which meet current Sport England Design Guidance of 34.5m x 20m can accommodate the full range of indoor sports, especially competition/league activities.

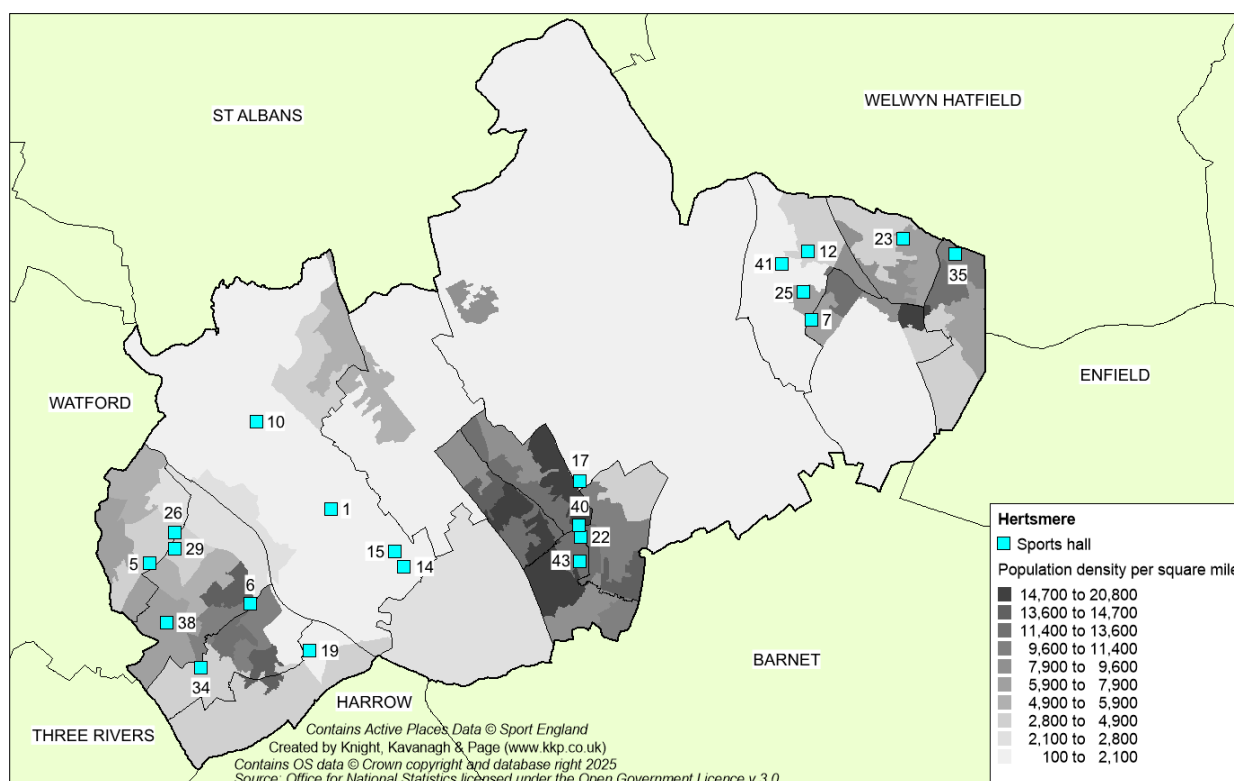
Larger halls, for example those with six or eight courts can accommodate higher level training/competition and meet day-to-day need. They also provide an option for more than one pitch/court increasing flexibility for training and competition and hosting of indoor central venue leagues for sports such as netball. This assessment considers all 3+ court facilities in Hertsmere. Halls that function as specialist sports venues (e.g., dance studios) are excluded.

4.1: Supply

Quantity

There are 22 sports halls in Hertsmere accommodating 81 badminton courts. Half of them (11) are located in the west of the Borough, servicing residents of Bushey or Aldenham.

Figure 4.1: All sports / activity halls in Hertsmere– regardless of size



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There are 16 sports/activity halls which have two or fewer badminton courts marked out. While often appropriate for mat sports, exercise to music and similar provision, their size can limit the range and scale of recreational/sporting activity that can be accommodated. Several sites have more than one activity/sports hall.

Table 4.1: All sports / activity halls in Hertsmere

Map ID	Site name	Number of courts
1	Aldenham Sports Centre	9
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	4
6	Bushey Meads School	4
6	Bushey Meads School	2
7	Dame Alice Owen's School	2
7	Dame Alice Owen's School	5*
10	Edge Grove Preparatory School	2
12	Furze field Leisure Centre	5
14	Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	0
14	Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	1
14	Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	4
15	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	1
15	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	6
17	Hertswood Academy	4
19	Immanuel College	3
22	Maxwell Park Community Centre	0
23	Mount Grace School	3
23	Mount Grace School	2
23	Mount Grace School	1
23	Mount Grace School	1
25	Potters Bar Evangelical Free Church	0
26	Purcell School	1
29	Queen's School (South)	6
34	St Margarets Sports Centre	4
35	Stormont School	1
38	The Grange Academy	4
40	The Venue Leisure Centre	0
41	The Wroxham School	2
43	Yavneh College Sports Centre	4
-	Total courts	81

(0-court halls identified in Active Places insufficiently large to accommodate 1 badminton court)

(* new 5 court hall under construction)

Only sites with halls containing three or more marked badminton courts were subject to assessment for the needs assessment as these can accommodate a range of sports and offer potential use by the community depending on the access policy.

As shown in Figure 4.2 (overleaf), 14 sports halls in Hertsmere have 3+ marked badminton courts offering a total of 65 badminton courts. Sports hall with 3+ courts are generally located in the west of the borough (eight sports halls). Two sports halls serve each of the borough centre (Elstree and Borehamwood) and east (Potters Bar). This may be limiting indoor sporting opportunity in these parts of the authority where more residents are required to travel to access a sports hall.

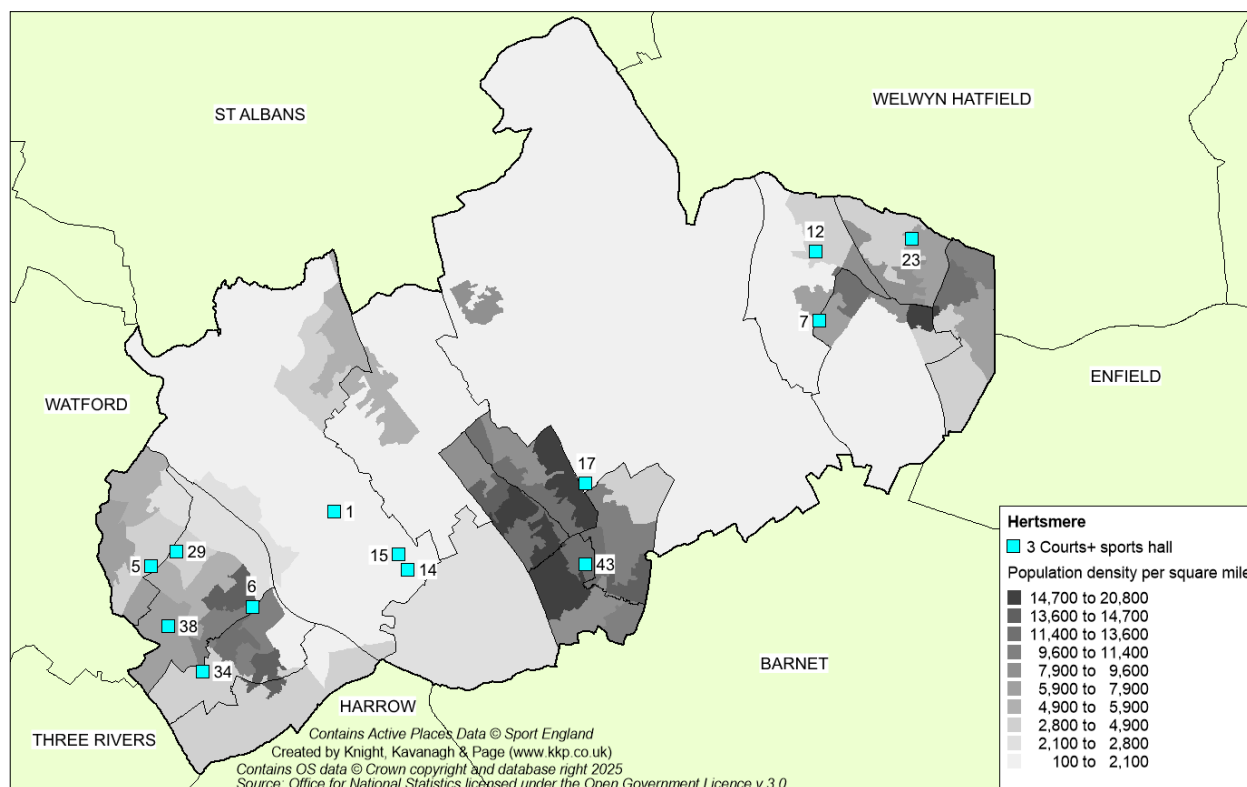
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As is the case in most local authorities the 4-court sports hall is the most common size. A larger sports hall (one of 4+ courts in size) can cater for sports that require more floor space such as netball, basketball, futsal and handball or can offer multiple courts for events and competitions. The largest sports hall is at Aldenham Sports Centre - it has nine marked badminton courts.

Table 4.2: Sports halls with 3+ badminton courts

Map ID	Site name	Courts
1	Aldenham Sports Centre	9
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	4
6	Bushey Meads School	4
7	Dame Alice Owen's School	5*
12	Furzefield Leisure Centre	5
14	Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	4
15	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	6
17	Hertswood Academy	4
19	Immanuel College	3
23	Mount Grace School	3
29	Queen's School (South)	6
34	St Margarets Sports Centre	4
38	The Grange Academy	4
43	Yavneh College Sports Centre	4
-	Total	65

Figure 4.2: Sports halls with 3+ courts on population density



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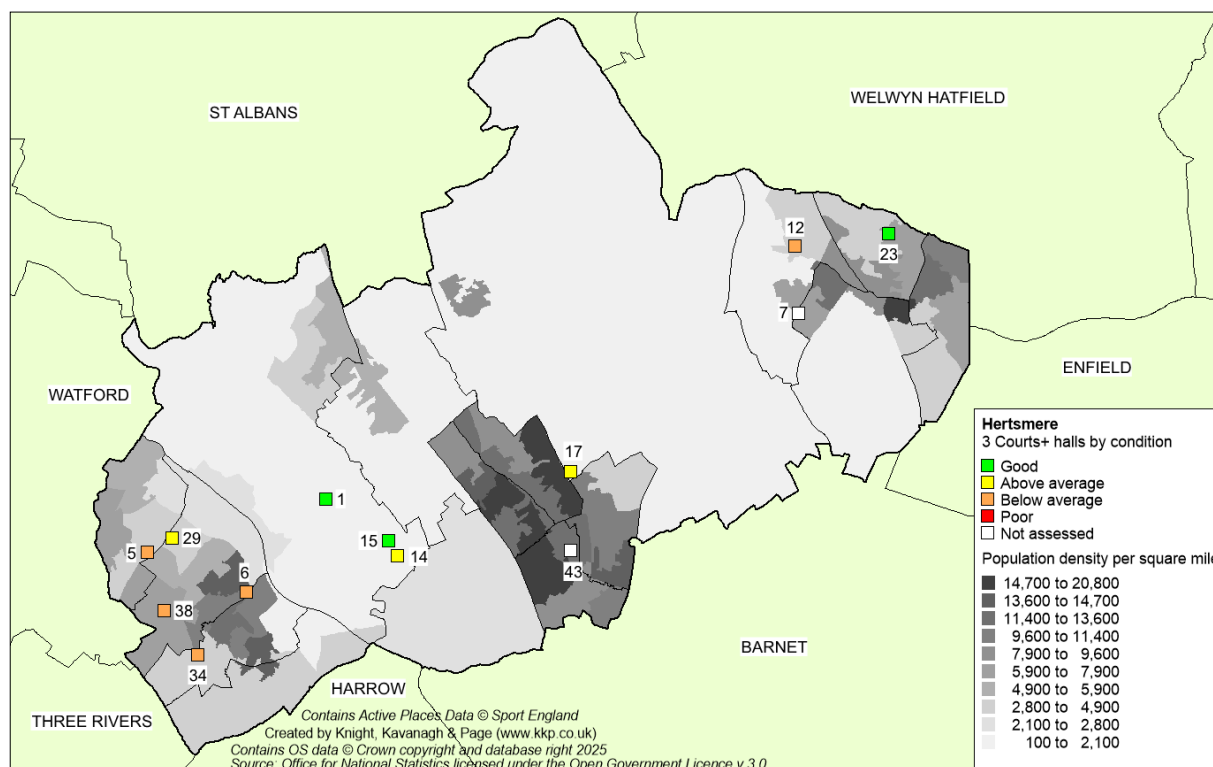
Facility quality

All 3+ court sports halls were subject to non-technical assessment to ascertain quality. Assessments took place in November 2025. Any investment made after this date is not accounted for. Planned investment is mentioned where known.

Table 4.3: Quality of 3+ court sports halls

ID	Site name	Courts	Court condition
1	Aldenhams Sports Centre	9	Good
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	4	Below average
6	Bushey Meads School	4	Below average
12	Furzefield Leisure Centre	5	Below average
14	Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	4	Above average
15	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	6	Good
17	Hertswood Academy	4	Above average
19	Immanuel College	3	Not assessed
23	Mount Grace School	3	Good
29	Queen's School (South)	6	Above average
34	St Margarets Sports Centre	4	Below average
38	The Grange Academy	4	Below average
43	Yavneh College Sports Centre	4	Not assessed

Figure 4.3: Quality of 3+ sports halls on population density



Access was not obtained to Immanuel College and Yavneh College. Despite numerous attempts to contact them, no response was received. In addition, at the time of the audit in November 2025, refurbishment of the sports hall at Dame Alice Owen's School was being carried out. This is not included in the overall supply equation. However, it can be reasonably assumed that, once open following this refurbishment the sports hall will be of good quality.

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There are three good quality sports hall (18 courts), three above average (14 courts) and four below average (16 courts). As noted above, three sports halls (12 courts) were not assessed.

A higher proportion of the 3+ court sports halls in Hertsmere is located to the west of the borough. This reflects the larger population in towns such as Bushey.

The two public leisure centre based sports halls at Bushey Grove Leisure Centre (4-courts) and Furzeffield Leisure Centre (5-courts) are both of below average quality.

Bushey Grove Leisure Centre is located in the west of the borough, while Furzeffield Leisure Centre is situated in the east, where sports hall provision is limited. As a result, Furzeffield Leisure Centre is a key facility for serving this part of the authority.

Residents located in the centre and east of Hertsmere, where population density is high, have to travel further than residents in other parts of the borough to access above average or good quality provision.

In general, changing room quality is commensurate with sports hall quality, and those at school sites tend to be less modern than changing facilities at public leisure sites. Assessing changing provision quality at school sites can be difficult due to them being inaccessible due to pupil use during the site visit. Where relevant information with regard to changing room quality was collected, it is detailed below.

Table 4.4: Reported quality issues at below average quality sports halls

Site name	Rating	Audit findings
Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	Below average	The sports hall was last refurbished in 2021 but has several markings due to high usage from multiple sports. There are some issues with the leaking roof.
Bushey Meads School	Below average	The 4-court hall has had LED lighting installed and the surface has been maintained. The general décor and structure of the building lacks modernisation. It has reportedly not been refurbished since it opened in 1985.
Furzeffield Leisure Centre	Below average	Despite the sports hall floor being last resurfaced in 2021, it is lifting in numerous places and is showing significant wear and tear. The building suffers with leaking roof issues, in part due to the age of the facility. InspireAll reports exploring options to fix the roof.
St Margarets Sports Centre	Below average	This 4-court hall has had little refurbishment since it opened in 2002. It has a sprung wooden floor which is showing signs of wear and tear.
The Grange Academy	Below average	The floor is worn and in need of modernisation. While line markings are in acceptable condition, the surface itself has visible damage and clear signs of wear and tear.

Aldenham Sports Centre had a new sports hall floor installed in 2023. The hall is modern with a good heating and cooling system and green walls suitable for traditional sports hall sports. The roof is good with no structural issues. The facility is good quality.

Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School has a good quality sports hall. It opened in 1980 and was refurbished in 2022 and remains a modern and attractive facility. It features good LED lighting (installed in 2022) and sprung wooden floor with good line markings. Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School) sports hall is of above average in quality. Its 4-court sports hall which was resurfaced in 2021, has a sprung wooden floor which is displaying some wear and tear; however, the line markings are clear. It has good LED lighting and sufficient run off space surrounding the courts.

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Hertswood Academy also has an above average quality 4-court sports hall. It opened in 2018 and has clear floor line markings. Although there are slight scruff marks on floor and the School note plans to refurbish the flooring over the next few years. It has white walls which is not conducive for all sports and is unattractive for sports such as badminton and table tennis.

Mount Grace School has a good quality 3-court sports hall. It opened in 2022 and remains a modern and attractive facility. The run-off space is good and the walls are a suitable colour to accommodate traditional sports hall sports.

Queen's School (South) has an above average 6-court sports hall. It has a blue polymeric floor, which is well maintained on a regular basis and good clear line markings. The lights were converted to LED in 2025. The run-off space is good and the walls are a suitable colour to accommodate traditional sports hall sports. The school reported some issues with the underfloor heating which it is looking to fix over the coming months.

Table 4.5: Date of opening and refurbishment of sports halls

Site	Year built / opened	Last refurbished	Age since opened/ refurbished
Aldenham Sports Centre	1998	2023	3
Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	2001	2021	5
Bushey Meads School	1989	-	36
Furze field Leisure Centre	1991	2019	7
Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	1980	2021	5
Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	1980	2022	4
Hertswood Academy	2019	-	7
Immanuel College	1965	-	61
Mount Grace School	2023	-	3
Queen's School (South)	2008	2022	4
St Margarets Sports Centre	2002	-	24
The Grange Academy	2013	-	13
Yavneh College Sports Centre	2006	-	20

Seven of the sports halls were built between 2000-2010. These have reached a point where refurbishment (where it has not already been carried out) is required to modernise and improve facility quality. At sites where access could not be gained, refurbishment may have taken place more recently than suggested.

Accessibility

Sports hall accessibility is influenced by how far people are willing and able to travel to and from them. Walk and drive-time catchments are applied to determine facility accessibility to different communities. The normal (industry) standard is a 20-minute walk time (one-mile radial catchment) for urban areas and a 20-minute drive time for rural areas. 15.5% of the population do not have access to a car (2021 Census) so 6,619 people in Hertsmere may be reliant on public transport or walking/cycling to get to a sports hall. This can add to the cost of participation.

In Hertsmere, 78.2% live within a one-mile walk of a sports hall with 3+courts and community use. This increases to 100% when applying a 20-minute drivetime catchment.

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Community use is defined as facilities in public, voluntary, private or commercial ownership or management (including education sites) recorded as available for hire and currently in use by clubs.

9,540 people in Hertsmere live in defined areas of higher deprivation (0-30% IMD bands); 7,272 of them live within one mile of a 3+ court sports hall. The high level of car ownership and strong drivetime catchment figures suggests that sports hall provision is sufficient in the west and centre of the borough. The challenge is for those in the north where they are on the outskirts of the drive time. It may be more convenient for these residents to access facilities in neighbouring authorities than it is to drive east, west or south.

Figure 4.4: Accessibility of all sports halls in Hertsmere

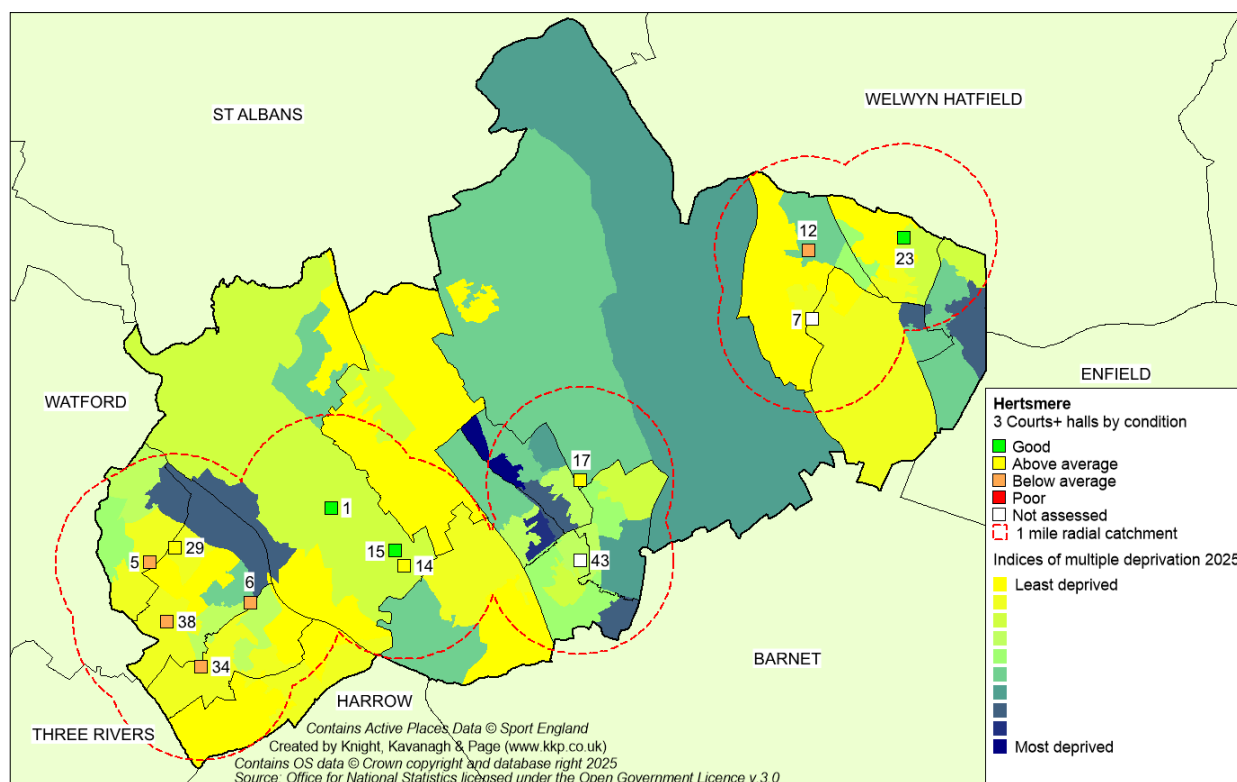


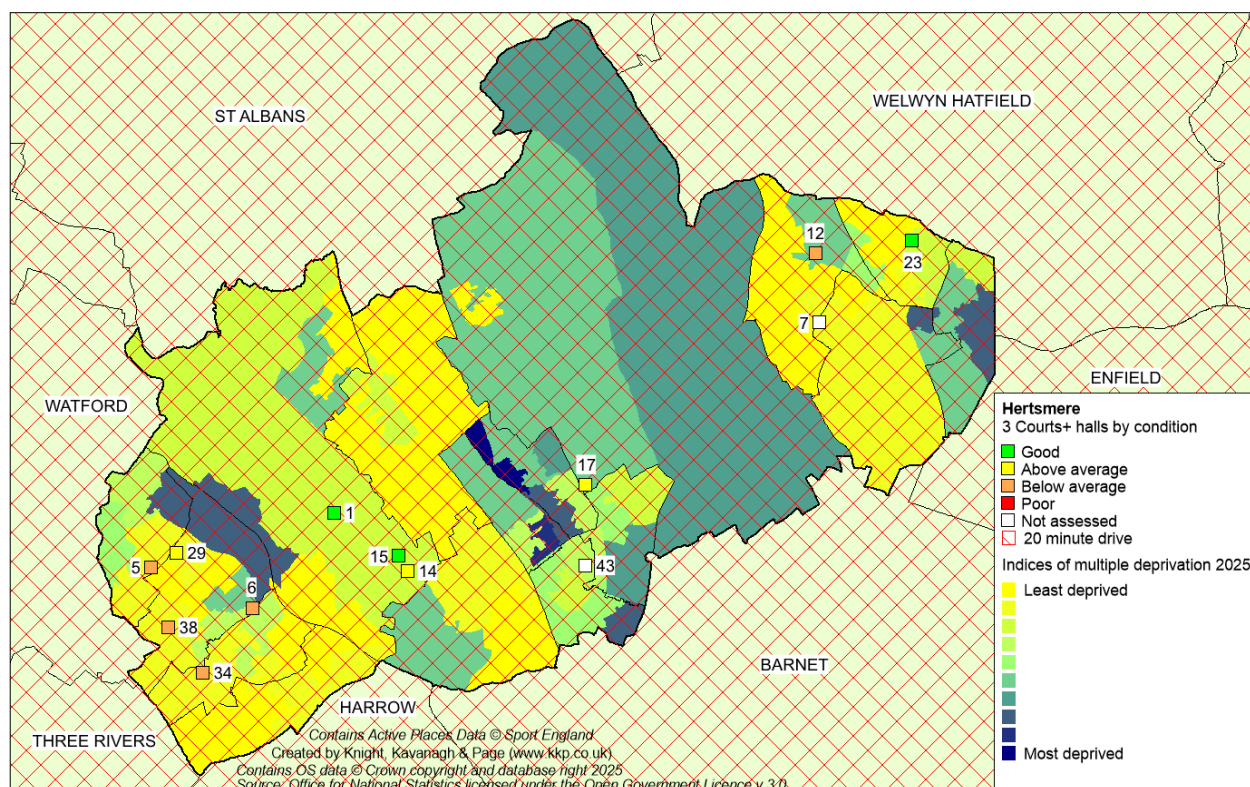
Table 4.6: Accessibility of all sports halls in Hertsmere

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	1,665	1.5%	833	0.8%	832	0.8%
10.1 - 20	1,303	1.2%	1,303	1.2%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	6,572	6.1%	5,136	4.7%	1,436	1.3%
30.1 - 40	9,007	8.3%	8,108	7.5%	899	0.8%
40.1 - 50	18,125	16.7%	8,994	8.3%	9,131	8.4%
50.1 - 60	8,744	8.1%	8,744	8.1%	0	0.0%
60.1 - 70	13,875	12.8%	13,875	12.8%	0	0.0%
70.1 - 80	9,413	8.7%	8,378	7.7%	1,035	1.0%
80.1 - 90	16,294	15.0%	12,414	11.5%	3,880	3.6%
90.1 - 100	23,313	21.5%	16,930	15.6%	6,383	5.9%

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Total	108,311	100.0%	84,715	78.2%	23,596	21.8%
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Figure 4.5: Sports halls on IMD background based on 20-minute drive time catchment.



Facilities in neighbouring authorities

Accessibility is influenced by facilities located outside the borough. There are 28 3+ court sports halls located within two miles of Hertsmere's boundary. They offer 129 courts (16 in Barnet, 19 in Harrow, 10 in St Albans, 14 in Three Rivers, 40 in Watford and 23 in Welwyn Hatfield).

Table 4.7: Sports halls (3+ courts) located in neighbouring local authorities (2-mile catchment).

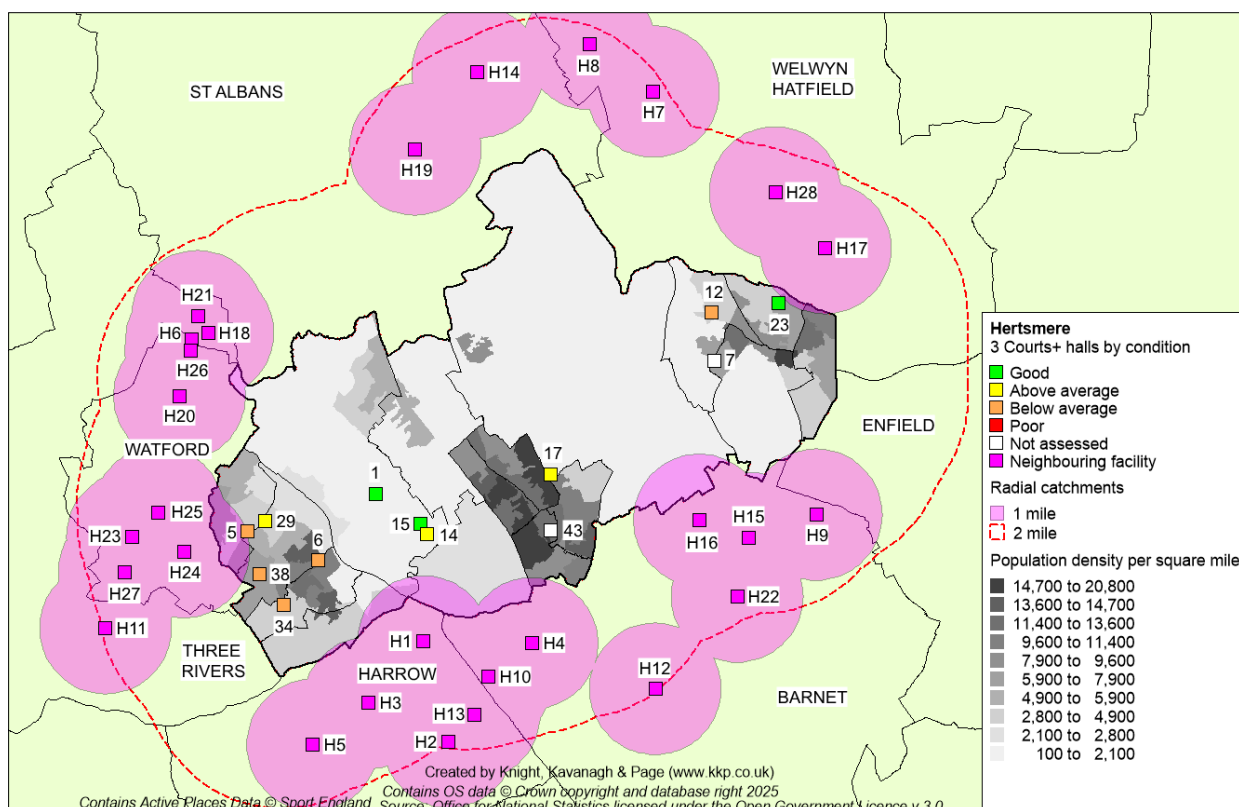
ID		Courts	Access	District
H1	Aspire Leisure Centre	4	Sports club / CA	Harrow
H2	Avanti House Secondary School	4	Sports club / CA	Harrow
H3	Bentley Wood High School for Girls	4	Sports club / CA	Harrow
H4	Broadfields Primary School	4	Sports club / CA	Barnet
H5	Cedars Youth & Community Centre	3	Sports club / CA	Harrow
H6	Future Academies	4	Sports club / CA	Watford
H7	Hatfield Leisure Centre	5	Pay and play	Welwyn Hatfield
H8	Hertfordshire Sports Village	12	Sports club / CA	Welwyn Hatfield
H9	Jewish Community Secondary School	4	Sports club / CA	Barnet
H10	London Academy	4	Sports club / CA	Barnet
H11	Merchant Taylors' School	4	Sports club / CA	Three Rivers
H12	Mill Hill School Sports Centre	4	Pay and play	Barnet
H13	North London Collegiate School	4	Sports club / CA	Harrow

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ID		Courts	Access	District
H14	Oaklands College (St Albans Campus)	6	Sports club / CA	St Albans
H15	Queen Elizabeth Sports Centre	4	Pay and play	Barnet
H16	Queen Elizabeth's School	4	Sports club / CA	Barnet
H17	Queenswood School	6	Sports club / CA	Welwyn Hatfield
H18	Saint Michaels Catholic High School	6	Sports club / CA	Three Rivers
H19	Samuel Ryder Academy	4	Sports club / CA	St Albans
H20	Stanborough Secondary School	4	Sports club / CA	Watford
H21	Thomas Parmiter Sports Centre	4	Pay and play	Three Rivers
H22	Totteridge Academy	3	Sports club / CA	Barnet
H23	Watford Grammar School for Boys	4	Sports club / CA	Watford
H24	Watford Grammar School for Girls	4	Sports club / CA	Watford
H25	Watford Leisure Centre - Central	4	Pay and play	Watford
H26	Watford Leisure Centre - Woodside	8	Pay and play	Watford
H27	Westfield Academy	4	Pay and play	Watford
H28	Chancellor's School	4	Sports club / CA	Welwyn Hatfield
Total courts		125		

CA – community association

Figure 4.7: Sports halls (3 court+) within two miles of the Hertsmere boundary



Availability and facility management

Management and ownership vary. HBC's main sports halls are managed by the council's leisure operator InspireAll. The remainder are at education sites of which eight are managed in house.

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The halls at Bushey Meads School, Hertswood Academy and The Grange Academy are managed by third party letting companies.

Table 4.8: Ownership and management of 3+ sports hall facilities

Site name	Ownership	Management
Aldenham Sports Centre	Independent School	In house
Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	Council	InspireAll
Bushey Meads School	Academy	School Hire
Dame Alice Owen's School	Academy	In house
Furzeffield Leisure Centre	Council	InspireAll
Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	Independent School	In house
Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	Independent School	In house
Hertswood Academy	Academy	Bookings Plus
Immanuel College	Academy	In house
Mount Grace School	Academy	In house
Queen's School (South)	Academy	In house
St Margarets Sports Centre	Independent School	In house
The Grange Academy	Academy	School Space
Yavneh College Sports Centre	Academy	In house

HBC has limited influence over sports hall programming and pricing.

As noted earlier, Immanuel College and Yavneh College do not currently offer community use. Neither responded to consultation requests and no evidence could be found of community use taking place in their sports halls.

Daytime availability

Bushey Grove Leisure Centre and Furzeffield Leisure Centre offer daytime sports hall availability, providing access for both registered members and pay and play users. Availability during the day and relevant programming can be attractive for residents who wish to use facilities at such times (such as older people and shift workers). Given that the proportion of older people (aged 65+) in the borough was projected to rise by 23.5% between 2022-2041, daytime access is likely to be an increasing priority going forward.

As noted, the public leisure centre sites are located in the east and west of the borough. There is no public leisure based sports hall provision in the centre or north of Hertsmere and the need for daytime access should be taken into account should the opportunity to develop new provision in the centre or north arise.

Given the nature of school sites, availability is limited to evenings and weekends. Of the education sites available for community use, all provide community use outside school hours seven days per week.

Peak period hours are calculated using Sport England guidance in line with its Facilities Planning Model. Peak hours are deemed to be between 09:00-10:00 and 17:00-22:00 on weekdays and 08:00-16:00 at weekends. The maximum number of peak period hours a facility can be open per week is 46 hours.

Table 4.9 details used capacity at each site, based on hours per week. The percentages were determined based on booking information provided by the venue and information

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generated via consultation. It is not possible to gauge exact used capacity due to the changing nature of bookings on a week-by-week basis, the seasonality of sports and the interruption of use caused by (e.g.) school exams.

It is important to consider the significant impact that exam periods have on the availability, appeal, and accessibility of sports halls for community use. While many of these facilities may appear underutilised, this is often due to them being withdrawn from community bookings for approximately 12 weeks each year to accommodate school exams. For example, Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School, listed in Table 4.9, reports ceasing to offer public access during exam periods.

Table 4.9 details the community use hours available base on audit findings.

Table 4.9: Opening hours and activities in sports halls 3+ courts in Hertsmere

Total CU hours	Peak CU hours	Site	Courts	Main sports played
0	0	Immanuel College	3	N/A
0	0	Yavneh College Sports Centre	4	N/A
0	0	Dame Alice Owen's School	4	N/A
36	36	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	6	Netball, badminton, cricket and pickleball.
36	36	Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	4	Badminton, netball, cricket, pickleball.
36	36	Bushey Meads School	4	Badminton, basketball, cricket.
38	38	Queen's School (South)	6	Basketball, badminton, volleyball, cricket.
39.5	36.5	Hertswood Academy	4	Gymnastics, badminton.
41	32	Mount Grace School	3	Badminton, basketball, cricket, football and netball
46	44	The Grange Academy	4	Badminton, basketball, cricket, netball.
48.5	40.5	St Margarets Sports Centre	4	Football, netball, badminton and cricket.
50.5	48.5	Aldenham Sports Centre	9	Badminton, basketball, futsal, netball.
104	68	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	4	Gymnastics, trampolining, pickleball, five a side football, futsal.
105.5	68.5	Furzefield Leisure Centre	5	Badminton, gymnastics, trampolining, basketball, netball and cricket.

This illustrates the sports being accommodated in school sports halls outside education use hours. Leisure centres tend to have more varied programme.

Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM)

Sport England provided headline data taken from the FPM 2025 National Facilities Audit for Hertsmere, which is based on data that was correct at January 2025. Please note the KKP audit was undertaken in November 2025 and may be some discrepancies between the FPM and the KKP audit. For example, the 2025 FPM audit included Dame Alice Owen's School and in the 2026 KKP audit the sports hall was out of use due to a new one being installed (see future developments for further information).

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Headline position

- ◆ The quantitative findings identify that almost all of the demand for sports halls in the Authority are met by the accessible supply.
- ◆ The total sports hall space in Hertsmere is the equivalent of 50 badminton courts. The space available for community use in the weekly peak period is the equivalent of 26.3 courts. Therefore, unavailable court space equates to 24% of the total supply.
- ◆ The overall estimated used capacity of the sports halls in Hertsmere during the weekly peak period is 63%. This is higher than the regional average of 64% and the national average of 66%.
- ◆ There is a high commitment to community use at most of the educational sites. If there is no Community Use Agreement (CUA) in place, this should be negotiated and agreed. Sport England can advise on a CUA, and it will be important to ensure delivery is monitored by Hertsmere Borough Council.

Supply summary

- ◆ In terms of the general supply and demand balance in Hertsmere, the resident population generates demand for 26.3 badminton courts including an applied comfort factor. This is 12.7 courts less than Hertsmere's available supply in the peak period.
- ◆ Hertsmere has an ageing stock; the average age of sports halls in the Borough is 26 years old.
- ◆ The educational provider is the major provider with 11 of the 13 sites and accounts for 60% of the available capacity in the peak period. Hertsmere is dependent on the educational sector to provide for community use and this supply needs to be protected.
- ◆ Of the total courts modelled, 24% (equivalent to 38 badminton courts) are unavailable for community use in the peak period. There is scope to increase capacity by increasing the hours available for community use.

Demand summary

- ◆ Of the total courts modelled, 24% (equivalent to 38 badminton courts) are unavailable for community use in the peak period. There is scope to increase capacity by increasing the hours available for community use.
- ◆ FPM demand findings (see Table 4.10 below) suggest that satisfied demand in Hertsmere are very high.
- ◆ The population in Hertsmere generates a demand for 13,964 sports hall visits per week in the FPM peak period. Of this total demand, the vast majority (97%) is able to be met.
- ◆ 66% of this satisfied demand is met at sports halls located within the Authority. Exported demand equates to 34% / 2,555 visits in the peak period per week.
- ◆ The 3% of unmet demand is equal to 227 visits in the peak period, 95% cannot access a facility due to travel distance.
- ◆ There is a large proportion of utilised capacity being imported into Hertsmere at 43%.
- ◆ There is no location in the Council area where sufficient unmet demand could be met to consider the provision of a new sports hall to improve accessibility for residents.
- ◆ The overall estimated peak period used capacity of sports halls in Hertsmere is 63%. This is lower than the regional average of 64% and the national average of 66%. This suggests that some sites have capacity to accommodate additional users.

Table 4.10: Demand findings from the FPM (2025)

Element	FPM 2025
Total demand	26.3 courts
Satisfied demand (%)	97%

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Satisfied demand retained within Hertsmere	90%
Satisfied demand exported	34%
Levels of unmet demand	3%
% of unmet demand (residents living outside hall catchment; as opposed to no capacity)	95%
Used capacity of facilities	63%

Whilst the FPM does not state current need for new provision in the Borough, it does not factor in the high levels of club demand and housing growth projections.

Used capacity

Non-technical site audits identify the used capacity of each sports hall. Used capacity is the percentage of available community use hours used. Sport England identifies 80% as a 'comfortably full' benchmark.

Table 4.11 provides a comparison of used capacity at each sports hall site (i.e. percentage of available community use hours used¹⁸). As noted, 'KKP audited used capacity' is our assessment based on booking information provided by each site and information gained via consultation with schools and sports clubs. It accepts that numbers of bookings can vary on a week-by-week basis, according to the seasonality of sports and due to the use of sports halls for school exams.

'FPM used capacity' figures for sports halls are an estimation based on a number of set parameters including each facilities relative attractiveness. It assumes for example that local authority operated sports halls will have a more balanced programme and are therefore more attractive than sports halls on education sites, which are more likely to have a programme limited to block bookings by sports clubs and therefore are less attractive to the pay and play user. It also considers a figure of 80% used capacity as a 'comfortably full' benchmark.

Table 4.11: Used capacity of sports halls

Site	KKP Audited Used capacity	FPM Used capacity
The Grange Academy	50%	65%
Bushey Meads School	60%	-
Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	75%	22%
Queen's School (South)	75%	67%
Furze field Leisure Centre	80%	68%
Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	80%	-
St Margarets Sports Centre	80%	42%
Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	90%	100%
Aldenhams Sports Centre	95%	40%
Hertswood Academy	95%	100%
Mount Grace School	95%	-

(80% -Sport England's guidance threshold for a "comfortably full" sports hall).

**Usage provided by Sport England Active Places Power database

Representatives from Immanuel College and Yavneh College did not confirm sports hall usage rates so an accurate used capacity could not be generated.

¹⁸ NB the FPMs estimation of used capacity considers **all** sports hall space on a particular site i.e. main and activity halls where appropriate, whereas KKP's audited figure is based on 3 + court halls only.

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The audit identified, of the 11 sports halls available for community use, seven are currently operating at or above the Sport England threshold. The rest are operating below the threshold and have capacity to accommodate an increase in demand.

The audit found that all sports halls have good availability for community use, all being available for 30+ hours per week.

The Grange Academy has the lowest levels of community use of all 3+court halls in Hertsmere. It does not actively advertise and only has limited availability at weekends. It is also likely that the below average quality of the sports hall has an effect on demand levels. The school did not note any intent to significantly increase community use despite low usage.

Bushey Meads School provides an option to extend community use hours, as it is currently only available for 36 hours a week during the peak period. This comprises 12 hours on weekday evenings and 16 hours on Saturday and Sundays.

As a public leisure centre, Bushey Grove provides daytime usage for residents. The site is well used during peak community use hours in the midweek mornings and evenings. However, at weekends, it could accommodate a slight increase in demand. This is mainly midweek afternoons.

Furzefield Leisure Centre provides daytime access for the community. However, similar to Bushey Grove Leisure Centre, it experiences high demand during peak periods, particularly on midweek mornings and evenings. Consultation with InspireAll highlight it has some availability on weekend afternoons for an increase in demand.

Of the seven facilities operating above Sport England's 80% threshold, two (Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School) and St Margarets Sports Centre) have scope to increase the number of community use hours for which they are available during the peak period.

Several schools report being at capacity during peak weekday periods but could accommodate bookings at less popular peak period times such as Friday evenings and weekend afternoons.

There is a need to seek solutions to this, to ensure continuity for clubs when they are at the peak playing season and to maximise income for school and long-term sustainability. An example of a solution could be the use of lightweight foldaway desks and trolleys to make the manual tasks related to setting up/demounting desk and chairs for exams much easier.

As seen above, FPM modelling is in broad agreement with KKP audit findings in estimating high levels of used capacity currently, which are projected to increase further in line with housing growth. Although there are some discrepancies for sites such as Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School and Aldenham Sports Centre where the FPM audit reports a lower used capacity percentage compared to the KKP audit.

Future developments

At the time of the audit (November 2025), the 4-court sports hall at Dame Alice Owen's School was closed and in the process of being rebuilt. Works are due to be completed and it should be in a position to re-open for curricular and community usage by September 2026. It is anticipated that a community use agreement (CUA) will be implemented, and existing users (pre-works) will be given priority access.

4.2: Demand

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NGB consultation

National governing bodies of sport (NGBs) and active clubs were consulted to ascertain current use, participation trends and the needs/challenges facing sports halls in the area.

Badminton

Badminton England (BE) is the NGB for badminton. Its latest strategy, Badminton – A Sport for Everyone - presents a vision for the sport to become the most inclusive and accessible sport in England – a sport for everyone – by 2033. Young people and inclusion are the two strategic priorities guiding the focus of the strategy to ensure the best possible future for the sport of badminton in England, driven by five strategic pillars:

- ◀ **Inspire** – increase the visibility and profile of badminton and consistently deliver inspirational moments, nationally and locally, that inspire, promote and celebrate a deeper engagement in badminton at every level.
- ◀ **Thrive** – building a thriving badminton community that optimises local delivery and supports player development.
- ◀ **Develop** – a badminton pathway that connects thrive and perform, enabling everyone involved in badminton to maximise their potential and involvement.
- ◀ **Perform** – a system and environment that enables players to maximise their potential and perform at the highest level.
- ◀ **Places** – protecting and opening places to play.

Badminton England confirmed that it has six affiliated clubs in Hertsmere. Through consultation with clubs, undertaking site visits and desk research, KKP identified a further four unaffiliated clubs. All 10 were invited to consultation; however, uptake was poor despite cooperation from BE which sent out the initial request to consult on behalf of KKP, and the despatch of several chase-up emails and calls from KKP.

Club consultation:

Borehamwood Shuttlers Badminton Club is a well-established club with c.40 members. It caters for both senior and junior members. It currently accesses the sports hall at Hertswood Academy on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. It reports losing access to the hall due to exam periods, mainly over the summer term.

Hazelwood Badminton Club presently has c.20 members but has seen numbers decline in recent years. This decrease (in members and volunteers) is attributed to the impact of the Pandemic with some older members deciding to stop playing or volunteering. It utilises the indoor hall at Elm Court Youth and Community Centre on Monday evenings.

Oaklands Badminton Club is a social badminton group which uses the sports hall at Dame Alice Owen's School on Wednesday evenings and Mount Grace School on Tuesday evenings. Both venues meet the club's needs, and no issues have been reported.

Potters Bar Indians Badminton Club is a not-for-profit social group based in Potters Bar.

Radiant Badminton Club is a longstanding club, currently operating out of Queens School (Bushey Badminton Hub). It reports being satisfied with the amount of court space and availability.

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Watford Badminton Club was formed in 2011 and is one of the largest clubs in the area. It now has c.70 members comprising players from 18-60 years of age. It operates from Queens School and accesses the courts on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Through further desk top research and consultation with the Council, it has been identified that Abbey Badminton Club, who identify as a St Albans based club, utilise the sports halls at The Grange Academy on Monday, Tuesday and Friday evenings and Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School) on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings.

Netball

The England Netball (EN) ten-year 'Adventure Strategy' for the game along with a new organisation brand identity was launched in 2021. This shares a purpose-led ambition for the game, to build on the momentum the sport has seen in recent years and to take it to new heights for the decade ahead. The strategy outlines its intention to:

- ▶ Accelerate the development/growth of the game to every level, from grassroots to the elite.
- ▶ Elevate the visibility of the sport, and;
- ▶ Lead a movement to impact lives on and beyond the court.

At the heart of its purpose, EN commits to remaining dedicated to increasing opportunities for women and girls to play the game as a priority and to work to address the gender participation gap in the sport which has widened since the Covid -19 Pandemic. Underpinned by years of engaging with and delivering netball for female communities, EN pledges to understand, support and nurture women and girls more deeply at every life stage, at every age.

It is committed to opening the sport to new audiences in every community, so netball better represents the rich diversity of England and continues to evolve, adapt and thrive in the future, helping to create a truly inclusive sport for all where everyone can belong, flourish and soar. A recent partnership announcement with England Men's and Mixed Netball Association to help develop and grow male participation in the game, supports this commitment as EN pledges to promote difference and embrace the opportunity to make the sport available to all.

Transforming netball for children and young people is a strategic priority to help protect the future of the sport. EN is working with schools and policy makers to extend physical literacy within, and after the school day with a focus on netball specific provision. It is committed to accelerating the expansion of its Bee Netball programme for young children, whilst supporting teens and young women to stay in the game.

The elite game is also a focus. EN's ambition is that the Vitality Roses will be the best female sports team in the world. It thus has to support the national team to win consistently on the world stage and to have an outstanding talent pathway in place to fuel sustainable successes on court and set new standards. Professionalisation of the game over the next decade is a priority – with a specific focus on growing world-leading international and domestic competitions and events and creating more careers in the sport.

The Adventure Strategy was developed on the back of feedback from the Netball Family, with over 3,000 members and stakeholders consulted as part of the strategic process to understand what they wanted netball to 'look like' in 2031, the plan is aspirational and ambitious and sees EN pledge to continue as a trailblazer for women's sport.

Facility development

Facility development aspirations stated within EN's Strategy are to:

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- Take a fresh look at the spaces required to support the sport, creating accessible places in every community to allow netball to be incorporated into how and where women and girls live their lives.
- Protect, enhance, and extend the network of homes that house the sport at a local and regional level.
- Develop an elite domestic professional competition that supports full-time athletes underpinned by a world-class infrastructure and environments.

EN encourages local authorities to adopt policies for indoor sports facilities strategies that:

- Facilitate informal netball activity within neighbourhood multi-use games areas. neighbourhood equipped areas for play (NEAPs).
- Incorporates the cultural and health needs of women and girls within any designs for improved or new facilities.
- Protects and enhances netball facilities within all primary and secondary school environments so they offer a positive first experience of the sport for students and the wider community during out-of-school hours.
- Supports the installation of floodlights on outdoor courts to increase all-year-round use.
- Facilitates the development of netball growth programmes, club training and competition within public leisure centres.
- Where appropriate, supports development of netball homes and performance environments to enable local women and girls to pursue a career in netball as an elite athlete, official, coach or administrator.

According to England Netball, participation in England is experiencing record growth. It had over 122,000 official members in the 2024-25 season and just fewer than 350,000 adults are reported to be playing regularly. It also reports that its 'Back to Netball' initiative is engaging over 100,000 women. Overall, it is estimated that, as of the 2024-2025 season, c.820,000 adults and children were playing netball on a weekly basis.

Netball is played both indoors and outdoors. For outdoor provision please refer to the 2026 Hertsmere PPOSS.

Most affiliated netball in Hertsmere is taking place on outdoor courts, with some training taking place indoors where facilities are available. EN is currently delivering some walking netball sessions in the borough, with these taking place in the sports hall at Furzefield Leisure Centre on Tuesday mornings. Back 2 Netball sessions are also being delivered at Grange Academy on Tuesday evenings.

Two clubs were identified during the audit: Breezers Netball Club and JSNA Netball Club. Both clubs were invited to take part in consultation, however only Breezers was responsive.

Breezers Netball Club has three senior teams and previously trained on the outdoor courts at St Margarets School Sports Centre on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. For the 2025/26 season, it exports its training demand to the outdoor courts at Westfield Community Sports Centre, although still classes itself as a Hertsmere based club as this is where the majority of its members reside. Furthermore, it exports match play demand into Welwyn Garden City in the Hertfordshire County Netball League.

JSNA Netball Club was contacted but declined the opportunity to take part in the study. Desk research suggests that it trains on the outdoor courts at Aldenham School, with training taking place on Tuesday evenings.

Basketball

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Basketball England (BBE) is the NGB for the sport in England. Its latest strategy, Transforming Basketball in Britain Together (2016 - 2028) aims to improve basketball from grassroots to GB teams, by adopting a whole sport approach and working closely with the basketball community. To achieve this, a series of key objectives have been identified:

- ◆ Develop successful GB teams.
- ◆ Build high-quality men's and women's leagues and teams.
- ◆ Support talented players, officials and coaches and coach development pathways.
- ◆ Drive increased awareness and profile of the sport.
- ◆ Increase opportunities to play the game at every level.
- ◆ Transform the leadership and culture of the sport.

To increase the opportunities to play the game at every level, BBE has produced a facilities strategy which aims to create community hubs including, where appropriate, arenas that sit at the heart of communities and are homes for the leading British Basketball League (BBL), Women's British Basketball League (WBBL) and community clubs. The stated intent is that as part of its facilities strategy implementation, BBE will regularly monitor provision in schools, colleges, universities, clubs and at local authority sites and identify any gaps, looking to improve connections between these organisations to increase the availability and affordability of facilities of the right quality.

BBE reports having one affiliated club in the authority; West Herts Warrior Basketball Club.

West Herts Warrior Basketball Club has c.80 members and runs two senior and two junior teams. Its training and matches take place at The Queens School.

Table Tennis

Table Tennis England is the governing body of table tennis in England, responsible for representing, co-ordinating, administering, marketing and developing the sport in close co-operation with related bodies such as British Para Table Tennis (BPTT). Its most recent strategy Table Tennis United launched in October 2022 outlines a series of bold targets across the breadth of the sport and its vision to turn England into a 'Table Tennis Nation'.

Figure 4.8: A summary of TTE's purpose

Our purpose

Table Tennis England exists to create an increasing number of outstanding and exciting opportunities for everyone to enjoy and achieve in table tennis.

Our vision	Our values	Our strategy
Everybody is talking about table tennis. Table Tennis England aspires to be recognised as a world leading National Governing Body, delivering a diverse and dynamic sport that transforms lives, connects communities, achieves excellence and inspires medal-winning performances.	Respect Ambition Inclusion Teamwork Focus Excellence	Our strategy is based on four pillars that underpin the whole purpose of Table Tennis England. Our four P's are: 1. Participation 2. People 3. Places 4. Performance Each pillar supports the structure – if one is weak, the others will wobble.

Key to delivering this are schools and young people. TTE recognises that getting schools and young people to embrace table tennis is paramount to its long-term growth. TTE aims to offer table tennis for young people in 500 additional community venues and get it played in 1,000 more schools than in 2015. It has a plan to re-launch a new school-club link programme to provide a vital and sustainable partnership. A key target is that by 2025 there should be a club and/or league within 30 minutes' drive of 80% of the population.

The audit identified two affiliated table tennis clubs in Hertsmere. Both were invited to take part in the consultation, and one responded to consultation requests.

The Table Tennis England was invited to take part in the consultation, however it did not respond to consultation requests.

A summary of the club consultation is as follows:

Elstree and Borehamwood TTC has c.80 members. It runs six adult teams and plays in the Barnet & District Table Tennis League. It is based at Maxwell Park Community Centre. The club also runs junior training sessions which take place on Monday evenings. It is looking to recruit more members and expand its teams.

Hertsmere Women's TTC has c.30 members and operates as a social based club. It utilises the hall at Borehamwood Baptist Church and runs club sessions on Tuesday evenings.

Indoor cricket

Hertfordshire Cricket Board is responsible for the management and development of every form of recreational cricket for men, women and children in Hertsmere. Working closely with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), it is responsible for the management and development of every form of recreational cricket for men, women and children in the county. Indoor cricket primarily takes place in two forms: winter training and indoor competitions.

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Several school sports halls have been designed with indoor cricket in mind, and as such, are key sites for both club training and competitions over the winter months. Haberdashers School for Boys is one example of a key strategic facility for indoor cricket. It is used by local clubs and by the school as a 'centre of excellence'.

Indoor training primarily takes place throughout the winter months in the build up to the cricket season. Clubs seek indoor facilities to prepare for the start of the season, making use of dedicated indoor cricket facilities or sports halls with sufficient space. They also hire these spaces at short notice during the summer when weather conditions do not allow the use of outdoor training facilities.

Other non-dedicated provision, such as school sports halls, are frequently used throughout the winter months for junior and senior cricket net training. Hertfordshire Cricket Board confirmed that several clubs report facing difficulty gaining access to these facility types to the seasonal nature of demand. Generally, the peak period for indoor cricket facilities is January to March, following which time clubs return to train and play outdoor. Better quality school facilities will be popular venues with sports such as netball and badminton, which require year-round access, which often get priority at school sites for convenience and commercial reasons. Additionally, clubs report that the cost of hiring school sports halls for nets is rising.

Indoor cricket leagues

Indoor cricket competitions are most often played between two teams of six or eight players. It can take place in any suitably sized multi-purpose sports hall, offering amateur and professional cricketers an option to play the game competitively during winter months.

Winter training

Clubs rely on indoor facilities for winter training and preparation for the start of the season. Generally, sports halls are used for net practise for senior teams and cricket related games for junior training. As part of PPOSS development, all clubs within Hertsmerere have been contacted with regard both indoor and outdoor facility usage. Surveys are sent during the season for optimal response rates, and as such, findings are not currently available. This report will be updated with findings from the PPOSS surveys when they are available. Indoor cricket nets were found to be available at the following education sites:

- ◀ Bushey Meads School.
- ◀ Dame Alice Owen's School.
- ◀ Hertswood Academy.

Volleyball

The audit identified one active volleyball club in Hertsmerere. Herts Ladies Volleyball Club currently delivers sessions at The Queens School. It was invited to take part in consultation, as was Volleyball England, however, KKP did not receive a response.

Futsal

The audit identified one futsal club currently operating in Hertsmerere. Pro Futsal Academy (Bushey), which delivers sessions at the Grange Academy.

Pickleball

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Pickleball is a sport that combines elements of badminton, tennis, and table tennis. It is played both indoors and outdoors on badminton sized courts and a slightly modified tennis net. Pickleball England are a not-for-profit organisation set up to promote the sport of pickleball and encourage in every way at local, national, and international level and to act as the sole governing body for the sport in England.

The audit identified three pickleball group in Hertsmere, of which two are affiliated to Pickleball England. Bushey Pickleball Group has c.30 members. It utilises Bushey Grove Leisure Centre on Monday evenings. It noted an interest in delivering more sessions and is actively encouraging more members to join the group.

Jimmy Pickleball runs social sessions for beginners and intermediate players utilising the sports hall at Haberdashers' Boys School on Monday and Thursday evenings. Similarly, Mad About Pickle offers weekly social play pickleball sessions at Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School) and utilises the sports hall on Sunday mornings.

4.3: Future demand and Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC)

The SFC helps quantify additional demand for community sports facilities generated by new growth populations, development and regeneration areas. It is used to estimate facility needs for whole area populations but should not be applied for strategic gap analysis as it has no spatial dimension and does not take account of:

- ◆ Facility location compared to demand.
- ◆ Capacity and availability of facilities – opening hours.
- ◆ Cross boundary movement of demand.
- ◆ Travel networks and topography.
- ◆ Attractiveness of facilities.

Table 4.12: Sport England: Sports Facilities Calculator

	Population 2022:	Population estimate: 2041
ONS population projections	108,311	112,026
Population increase	-	3,715
Facilities to meet additional demand	-	0.92 courts
Estimated cost*	-	£756,690

(Build costs as of Q3 2025)

Calculations assume that the current sports hall stock remains available for community use and the quality remains the same. It appears that the projected increase in population will lead to an increase in demand for sports hall space across the borough. The SFC indicates a requirement for an additional 0.92 (badminton) courts, up to 2041. This does not take account of the replacement of the 4-court sports hall located at Dame Alice Owen's School.

Whilst the figure for increased sports hall provision is high, investment is required in improving the quality of existing stock prior to development of any new sports hall provision.

However, currently underutilised sports halls have the capacity to meet this future demand. This could be achieved by increasing support for schools to make their facilities more accessible for community use. Improvements to the existing stock would likely encourage higher take up of available sports hall space, particularly at the larger sports halls in the Borough. The space capacity at existing sites suggests the existing stock in the borough could accommodate demand caused by natural population increase.

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The use of sports halls for exams is having a significant adverse impact on community sport due to the large periods of time for which they are unavailable during key parts of the playing season for a number of key sports. There is a need to seek practical ways (and funding) solutions to enable exams to take place while allowing community sport to continue largely unabated.

The above figures do not take account of housing development. Once this is determined through the Local Plan process, an updated review should take place.

When available, it would be advisable to undertake a Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM) analysis to calculate future sports hall demand in relation to current provision, current hall capacity and population growth. This will enhance understanding of the number of courts required to accommodate said growth.

Utilising ONS population projections, Hertsmere's population is set to increase by 3.1% by 2041. As such, SFC calculations assume that only a small amount of additional sports hall space will be required by this date – presuming that the current sports hall stock remains available for community use.

ONS based population growth does not account for growth generated through housing growth (shown in Table 4.13). It is, thus, useful to show the demand generated via both ONS projections and housing growth. When combining the two, it is calculated that there will demand for c.10.48 additional courts by 2041, although some of the existing supply may be able to meet some of this demand.

In the proceeding Strategy document, the new settlement at Bowmans Cross in the north of the Borough will be run as a scenario to understand the additional demand generated.

Table 4.13: Likely demand for dwellings across the Local Plan period

Housing growth increases across the Local Plan period	Average number of people per owner occupying household (England)	Population increase due to proposed housing	Additional sports hall space required	Estimated cost (£)
16,160	2.4	38,784	9.56 courts / 2.39 halls	£7,899,724

(Build costs as of Q3 2024)

4.4: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Sports halls	-
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	Hertsmere has 22 sports halls (81 badminton courts). There are 14 sports halls with 3+ courts (65 badminton courts).	There is spare capacity at some school sites. Based on future population growth, the SFC, indicates a need for c.0.92 additional badminton courts up to 2041. The increase in population due to housing growth will require further provision to be developed. The spare capacity at some educational sites may be able to accommodate the increased demand, as this will depend on factors such as the operators being willing to increase the hours of community use and the location of the facilities.

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Quality	Three sports halls are rated good quality, three above average and four below average. Two were unassessed.	Investment is needed in the below average quality sports halls. This is particularly relevant at sports halls with lower used capacities as this could be hindering demand levels.
Accessibility	71.8% of Hertsmere residents live within a 1-mile walk of a community accessible sports hall. All residents live within a 20-minute drive of a sports hall with community use.	Accessibility levels are strong in Hertsmere. Sports halls are generally well located in line with the areas of higher population density. Provision is sufficient in the west and centre of the borough - the primary challenge is in the north where sports halls are on the outskirts of the drive time and it may be more convenient for residents to access facilities in neighbouring authorities.
Availability (Management and usage)	11 3+ court halls provide some level of community use; all have some spare capacity. Seven are operating at Sport England's 'comfortably full' threshold of 80%+ used capacity. Only Bushey Grove and Furze field Leisure Centre offers daytime sports hall availability.	Ensure schools continue to offer peak time availability to local clubs. Extend school community use hours where used capacity is high, yet peak period availability (number of hours) is low. Ensure that school sports hall facilities are open/available for the maximum number of weekday evening hours all year round. Increase the number of weekly community hours available at school sports halls and bring down the number of weeks when they are unavailable. FPM lists average used capacity of hall as 78%; KKP's audit suggests that suggests that average used capacity is c.63%. Some discrepancies in used capacity at sites were identified between the FPM and KKP's audit, however, this is not uncommon as the FPM is a theoretical model, whereas this audit is based on live information.

Strategic summary

- Each facility is important to the community served and all venues need to be protected in accordance with paragraph 104 of the NPPF.
- A good range of sports is available including basketball, badminton, netball, football, pickleball, and indoor cricket.
- Improve the quality of below average quality sports halls. This is particularly important at sites where below average quality is adversely affecting facility hire (such as Bushey Grove Leisure Centre, Bushey Meads School, Furze field Leisure Centre, St Margarets Sports Centre and The Grange Academy).
- Maintain good relationships with schools as their venues represent a significant proportion of the available sports hall space during peak times. It is crucial that relationships with these institutions are maintained to ensure that accessibility remains high and is reinforced by binding community use agreements (CUAs).
- Accommodate increased demand during peak hours via extending levels of community access at existing venues. Consideration should be given to directing developer contributions at improving sports hall quality particularly at sites which could enable an increase in midweek evening community hours and the number of weeks available throughout the year.
- The FPM has identified that almost all of the demand for sports halls in the Borough are met by the accessible supply.
- Despite FPM finding that sports halls are operated at 50% used capacity, KKP's audit suggests demand is considerably higher.

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- ◀ Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School and Aldenham Sports Centre, for example, have a used capacity of 75% and 95% respectively. Whilst the FPM notes used capacity of 22% and 40% respectively.
- ◀ Review whether a solution can be found to reduce the significant impact that exam periods have on the availability, appeal, and accessibility of sports halls for community use (e.g., foldaway lightweight examination desks and chairs – and schemes whereby clubs help clear sports halls before and reformat them after use).
- ◀ Ensure good public transport links to key facilities for those without access to their own vehicle, to optimise accessibility.

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SECTION 5: SWIMMING POOLS

A swimming pool is defined as an “enclosed area of water, specifically maintained for all forms of water-based sport and recreation”. It includes indoor and outdoor pools, freeform leisure pools and specific diving tanks used for general swimming, teaching, training and diving. Many small pools are used solely for recreational swimming and will not necessarily need to strictly follow the NGB recommendations. It is, however, generally recommended that standard dimensions are used to allow appropriate levels of competition and training and to help meet safety standards. Relatively few pools need to be designed to full competition standards or include spectator facilities.

Training for competition, low-level synchronised swimming, and water polo can all take place in a 25m pool. With modest spectator seating, pools can also accommodate competitive events in these activities. Diving from boards, advanced synchronised swimming and more advanced sub-aqua training require deeper water. These can all be accommodated in one pool tank, which ideally should be in addition to the main pool.

The NGB responsible for administering diving, swimming, synchronised swimming and water polo in England is Swim England. Its report ‘A Decade of Decline: The Future of Swimming Pools in England’ provides a national analysis of the current swimming pool stock across England. It notes that the average age of a pool built from 1960 onwards is 43 years. On this basis it suggests that many of these pools are now coming to the end of their lifespan.

Many pool operators were placed in a serious financial situation during the pandemic, when many local authorities provided emergency financial support through direct grants, deferred payments or loans to subsidise pool operators who had suffered loss of income due to pool closures.

UK Government’s £100 million National Leisure Recovery Fund also provided assistance to enable pools to re-open once restrictions had been lifted. Despite this, Swim England reports that 206 pools (including 68 public pools) closed, either permanently or temporarily over the period of the Pandemic.

In preparing for the future, Swim England recommend that local authorities conduct analysis of their pool stock to understand if they have the right pools in the right places to meet the needs of the local community. In the light of the fact that leisure facilities account for over 40% cent of some councils’ direct carbon emissions it advocates capital investment in the renewal of pool stock to support efforts to reach net zero targets, alongside combating the predicted overall future deficit of water space nationally.

5.1: Supply

This assessment is mostly concerned with larger pools available for community use for lane swimming/swimming lessons (no restrictions to accessing the pool as a result of membership criteria). Those with less than 160m² (4 lanes x 20m in length) and/or located at private member clubs are deemed to offer limited value in relation to community use and delivery of outcomes related to health and deprivation. It is recognised that smaller pools can accommodate learning/teaching sessions, but they are, for modelling/needs assessment purposes, deemed unable to offer a full swim programme and, thus, eliminated from the supply evaluation, when considering accessibility and availability later in this section.

Initially, all pools are listed to illustrate the overall supply, however, pools greater or equal to 20m in length or 160m² which are available for community use are taken forward as part of the study. Further analysis of these is undertaken when considering the various access policies.

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Quantity

The audit identifies 17 swimming pools (including all pools irrespective of size and access) at 13 sites including nine main pools, five learner/teaching pools and three lidos.

Figure 5.1: All swimming pools in Hertsmere

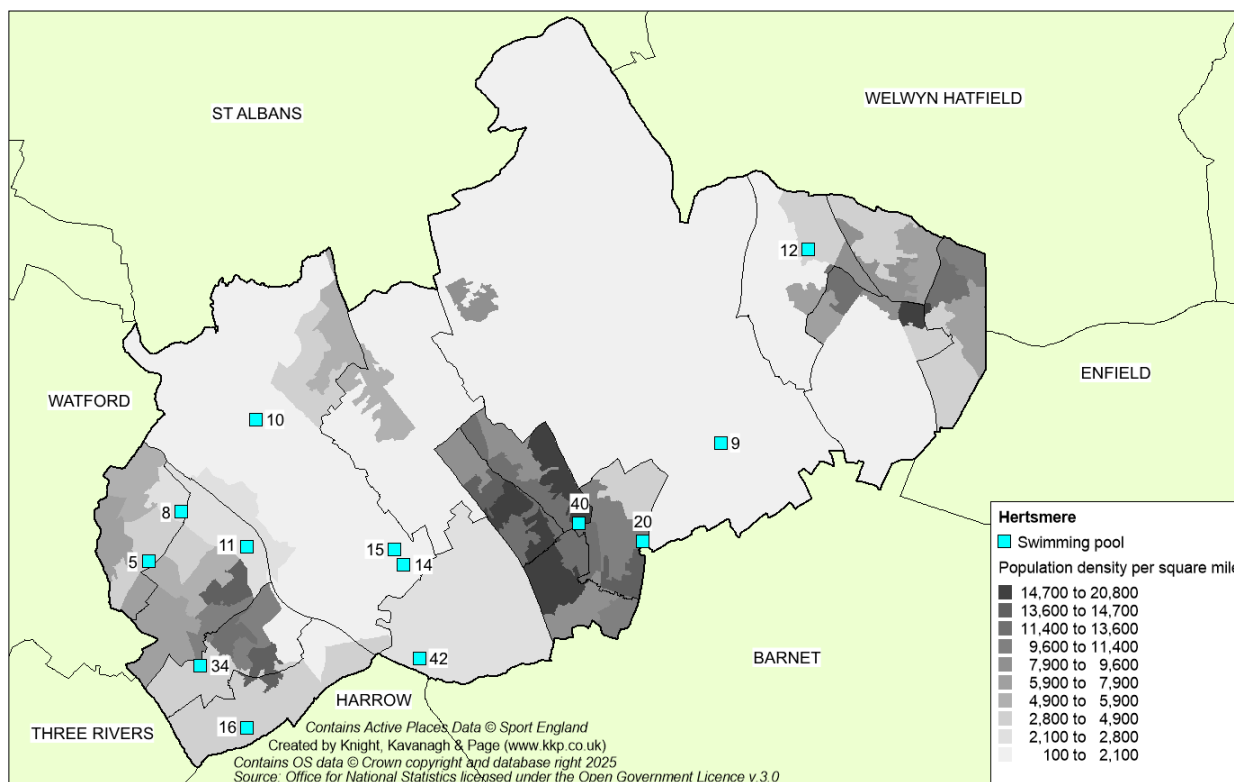


Table 5.1: All swimming pools in Hertsmere

ID	Site	Type	Lanes	Length	Area
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	Main/general	6	25	313
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	Learner/teaching/training	0	16	128
8	David Lloyd (Bushey)	Main/general	3	25	150
8	David Lloyd (Bushey)	Lido	2	25	125
9	Dyrham Park Country Club	Main/general	2	15	60
10	Edge Grove Preparatory School	Lido	0	20	160
11	Feel Good Health Club (Mercure London Watford Hotel)	Learner/teaching/training	0	12	72
12	Furzefield Leisure Centre	Main/general	6	33	396
12	Furzefield Leisure Centre	Learner/teaching/training	4	12	108
14	Haberdashers Askes School for Girls	Main/general	6	25	300
15	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	Main/general	8	25	450
16	Hartsbourne Golf and Country Club	Lido	0	18	270
20	James Rattery Elstree	Learner/teaching/training	0	11	55
34	St Margarets Sports Centre	Main/general	6	25	350
40	The Venue Leisure Centre	Main/general	8	25	438
40	The Venue Leisure Centre	Learner/teaching/training	0	12.5	94
42	Village Gym (Watford)	Main/general	3	25	250

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The largest pool is located at The Venue Leisure Centre; it has eight lanes x 25m and has a learner/teaching pool. Its site has a total of 532m² of water space (14% of the Borough's water provision) and is a key strategic site.

Lidos are not included from this point in the assessment. It is recognised that they can offer a flexible programme of learn to swim, casual swimming and competitive club swimming, however their availability is limited normally to spring/summer opening hours - which is the case in Hertsmere.

Although stand-alone smaller/learner teaching pools smaller than 20m in length or 160m² total area are discounted they can be important particularly where they accommodate swimming lessons or, as is the case at Bushey Grove and Furze Field, underpin broader flexible programming and income generation.

Once lidos and smaller pools are removed from the analysis, seven pools across seven sites remain in the audit.

Quality

Of the seven swimming pools included in this assessment, two are good quality, four are above average in quality and one is below average (St Margaret's Sports Centre). KKP's non-technical visual assessments include review of changing provision as this plays a significant role in influencing and attracting users. In general, changing facilities are of a similar standard to the pool quality.

Figure 5.2: 20m+ pools (excluding lidos) by condition population density (MYE 2024)

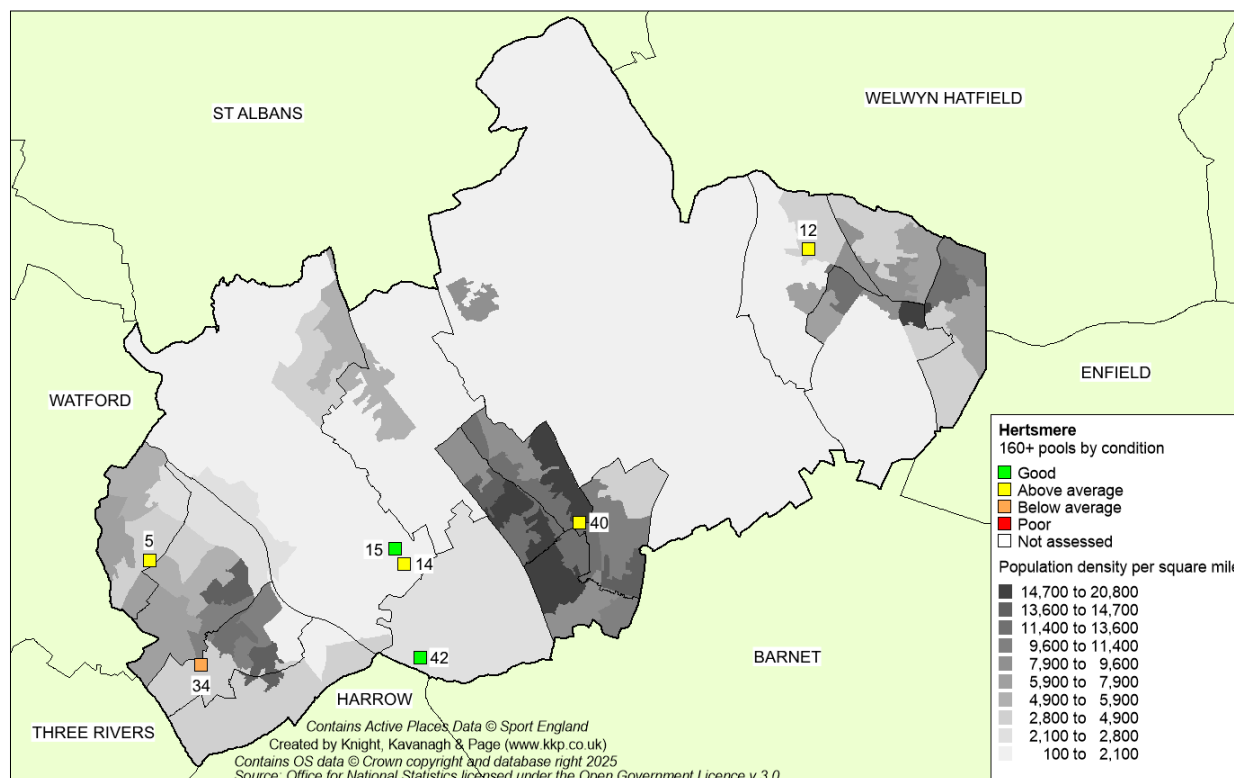


Figure 5.2 illustrates that the majority of residents have access to either above average or good quality facilities.

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Table 5.2: Quality of 160m²+ swimming pools in Hertsmere

ID	Site name	Facility type	Lanes/ length	Pool condition	Changing condition
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	Main/general	6 lanes x 25m	Above average	Above average
12	Furzeffeld Leisure Centre	Main/general	6 lanes x 33m	Above average	Above average
14	Haberdashers Askes - Girls	Main/general	6 lanes x 25m	Above average	Above average
15	Haberdashers' Askes -Boys	Main/general	8 lanes x 25m	Good	Good
34	St Margarets Sports Centre	Main/general	6 lanes x 25m	Below average	Above average
40	The Venue Leisure Centre	Main/general	8 lanes x 25m	Above average	Above average
42	Village Gym (Watford)	Main/general	3 lanes x 25m	Good	Good

The Venue Leisure Centre provides an 8-lane swimming pool which is rated as above average quality. It was refurbished in 2019, has been regularly maintained by InspireAll over the last seven years and remains bright and attractive.

The six-lane swimming pool at Furzeffeld Leisure Centre is of above-average quality. It was last refurbished in 2019 and continues to be well maintained. It features a moveable floor and there is an adjacent teacher/learning pool. The seated view area is utilised for galas and other events.

Similarly, Bushey Grove Leisure Centre has a 6-lane swimming pool of above-average quality. It was last refurbished in 2019, which involved some improvements to the pool side area.

The 8-lane swimming pool at Haberdashers' Aske' Boys' School is a bright and attractive facility rated as good quality. It appears to have been well maintained by the school, since its last refurbishment in 2016. It offers a seated view area which are used for school galas.

The 6-lane swimming pool at Haberdashers Askes School for Girls is of above average quality. It was last refurbished in 2016.

The pool at St Margarets Sports Centre is of below average quality. It has dated poolside décor with some cracked tiles and the roof leaks. The lighting system is also need of modernisation. Some work is required in the plant room; this reportedly includes replacement of both the filtration pumps and the dosing system. It has not been refurbished since it opened in 2002. The changing rooms are of below average quality, as both the male and female areas are small and feature outdated décor.

The Village Gym (Watford) provides a good quality swimming offer, as a result of recent investment in the facilities.

Table 5.3: Age of swimming pools (160m²+) and refurbishment dates (where applicable)

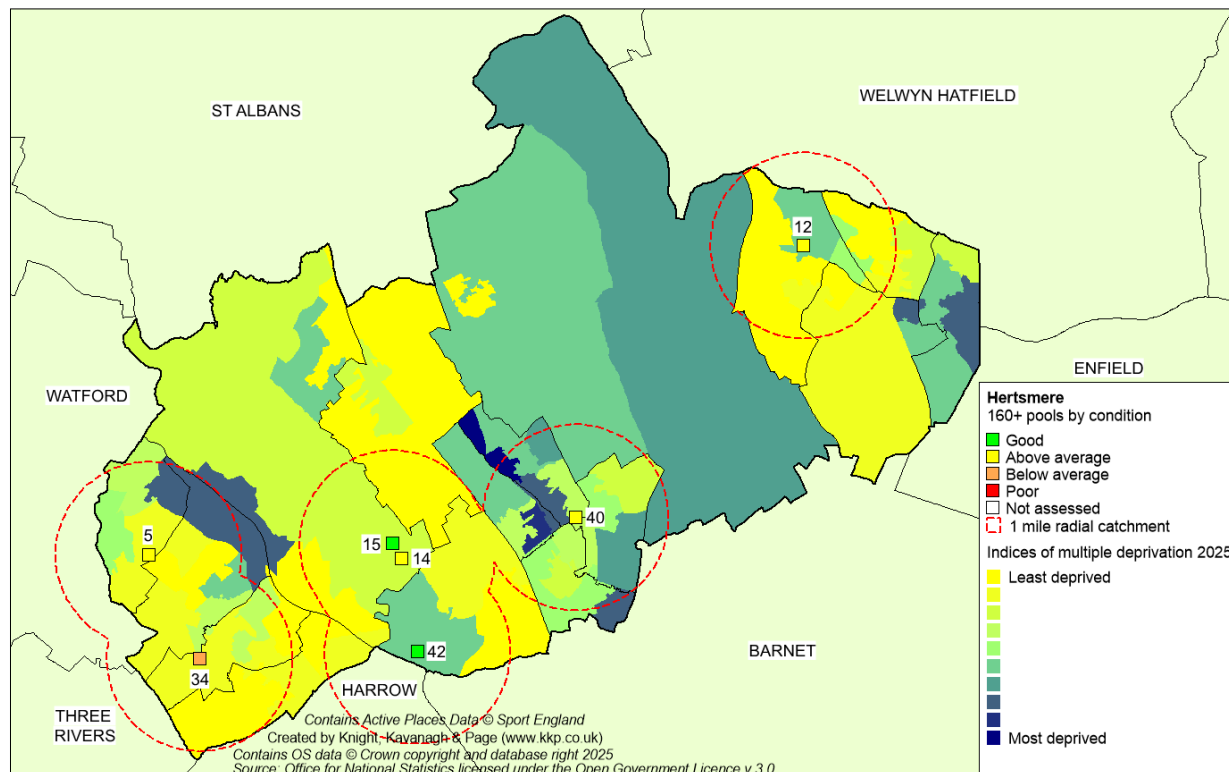
Site name	Year built/ opened	Year last refurbished	Age (years) since built/refurbished
Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	2001	2019	7
Furzeffeld Leisure Centre	1968	2019	7
Haberdashers Askes School for Girls	2008	2016	10
Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	2016	-	10
St Margarets Sports Centre	2002	-	24
The Venue Leisure Centre	2000	2019	7
Village Gym (Watford)	2008	2023	3

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Accessibility

Swimming pool accessibility is influenced by physical factors (i.e. built environment). Appropriate walk and drive-time catchments are applied to determine accessibility to communities. The normal acceptable standard is 20-minutes' walk time (1-mile radial catchment) for an urban area and 20-minutes' drive time for a rural area. This enables analysis of coverage adequacy and helps identify areas currently not serviced by existing provision.

Figure 5.3: Accessibility of swimming pools in Hertsmere (with a one-mile radial catchment)



Two thirds (65.7%) of the population lives within one mile of a 20m/160m²+ swimming pool. Of the 9,540 people living in areas of high deprivation in Hertsmere (i.e. those in the 30% most deprived areas nationally), 4,256 (36%) live within one mile of a swimming pool.

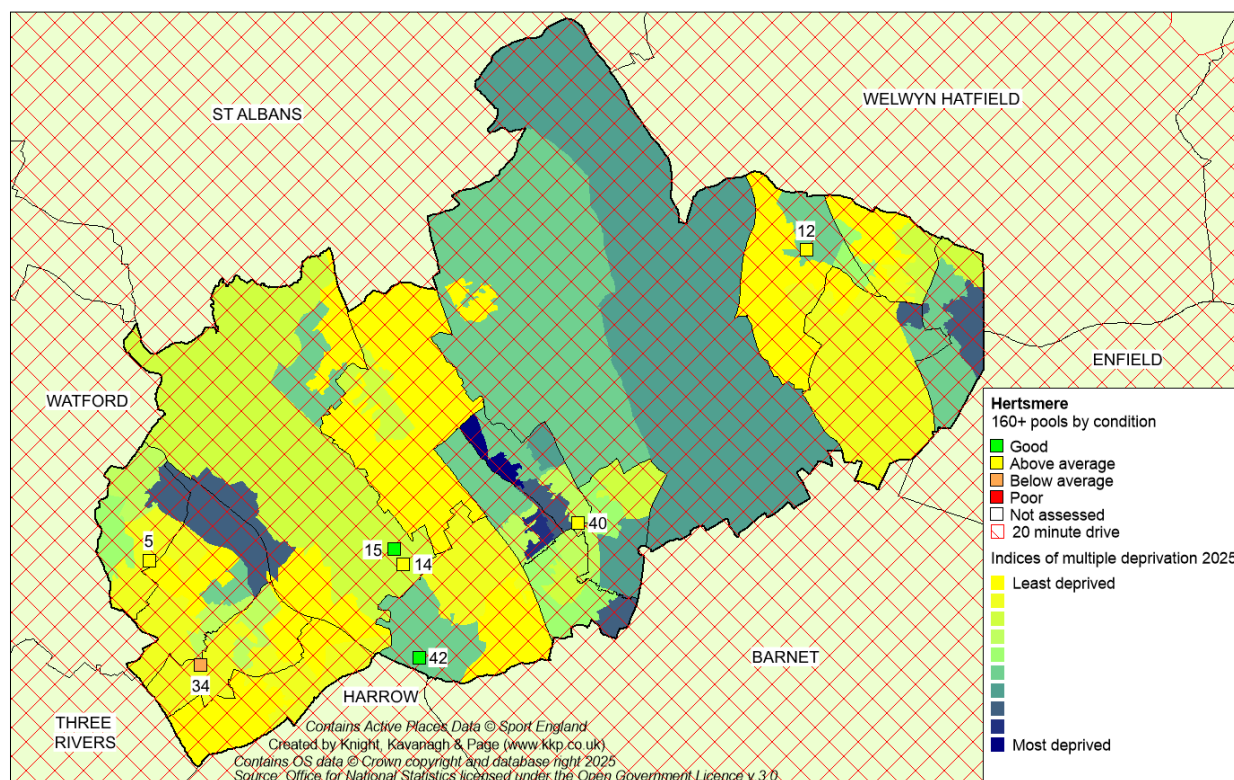
Table 5.4: Accessibility of swimming pools in Hertsmere

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	1,665	1.5%	472	0.4%	1,193	1.1%
10.1 - 20	1,303	1.2%	1,303	1.2%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	6,572	6.1%	2,481	2.3%	4,091	3.8%
30.1 - 40	9,007	8.3%	6,479	6.0%	2,528	2.3%
40.1 - 50	18,125	16.7%	8,227	7.6%	9,898	9.1%
50.1 - 60	8,744	8.1%	6,230	5.8%	2,514	2.3%
60.1 - 70	13,875	12.8%	13,584	12.5%	291	0.3%
70.1 - 80	9,413	8.7%	4,606	4.3%	4,807	4.4%
80.1 - 90	16,294	15.0%	12,152	11.2%	4,142	3.8%
90.1 - 100	23,313	21.5%	15,580	14.4%	7,733	7.1%
Total	108,311	100.0%	71,114	65.7%	37,197	34.3%

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The three public leisure centres in Hertsmere are well placed to accommodate people living in these areas; however, people who reside in the north and northeast of Hertsmere may require access to a car to access pool provision – a factor which can increase the cost of participation.

Figure 5.4: Accessibility of swimming pools in Hertsmere (20-minute drivetime catchment)



The whole Hertsmere population resides within 20-minute drive of a swimming pool within Hertsmere, with the pool having an area of at least 160 square metres.

Availability of swimming pools

Swimming pool availability differs dependent upon ownership and/or management. All facilities audited all offer some form of public access. The access policy for each site is detailed below.

Table 5.5: Access policy of swimming pools

Site name	Access policy
Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	Pay & play
Furzefield Leisure Centre	Pay & play
Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	Sports club/CA
Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	Sports club/CA
St Margarets Sports Centre	Sports club/CA
The Venue Leisure Centre	Pay & play
Village Gym (Watford)	Registered membership

(NB: Sports club/CA = Sports club/community association use)

Three pools can be accessed on a pay and play basis: the public leisure centre sites (Bushey Grove, Furzefield and The Venue leisure centres). The pools at Haberdashers Askes Girls and Boys schools and St Margarets Sports Centre are only available via pre-arranged block bookings and are mainly used hired by swimming clubs and private swim school operators.

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Commercial health and fitness operators which provide pools offer access via registered membership only. This is the case for The Village Gym (Watford). While acknowledging that they can cater for specific market segments, they are not always available to all sections of the community and may not necessarily be affordable to all households.

Figure 5.5: One mile radial catchment-based accessibility of pay and play provision

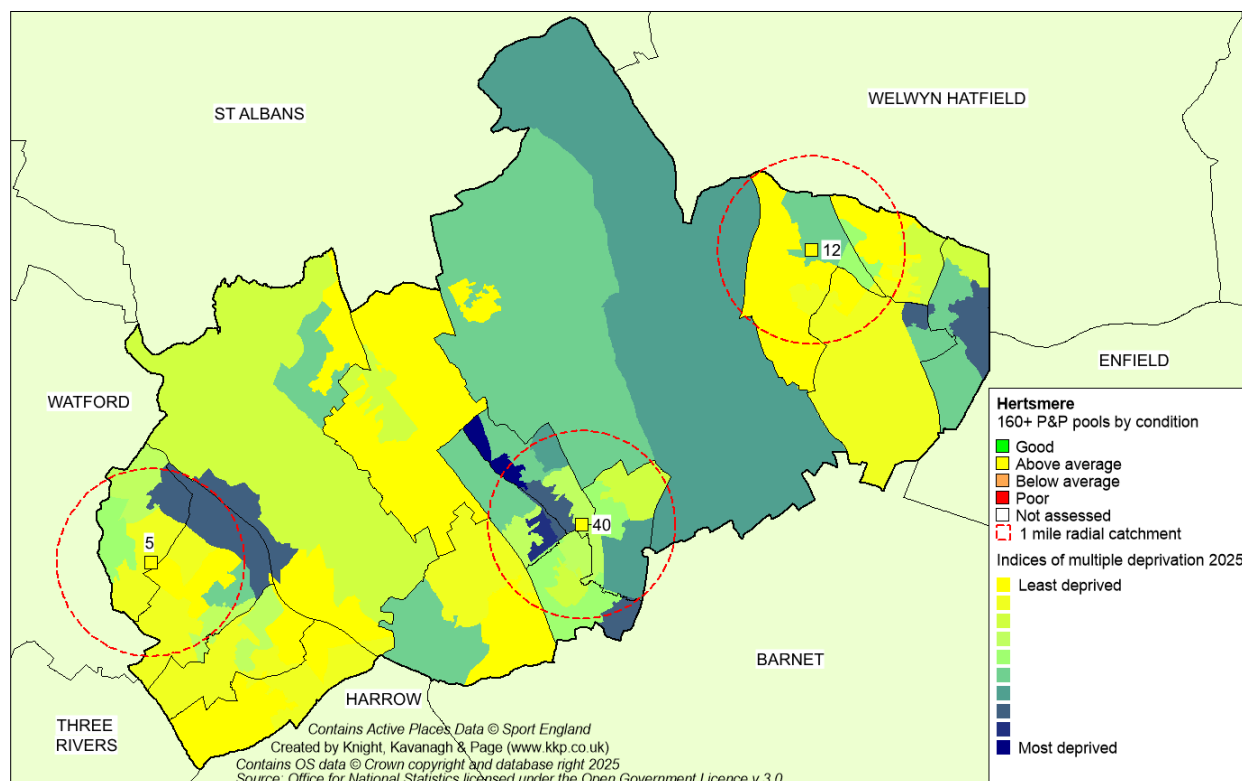


Table 5.6: Accessibility of pay and play swimming provision

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	1,665	1.5%	472	0.4%	1,193	1.1%
10.1 - 20	1,303	1.2%	1,303	1.2%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	6,572	6.1%	2,481	2.3%	4,091	3.8%
30.1 - 40	9,007	8.3%	6,467	6.0%	2,540	2.3%
40.1 - 50	18,125	16.7%	6,042	5.6%	12,083	11.2%
50.1 - 60	8,744	8.1%	6,230	5.8%	2,514	2.3%
60.1 - 70	13,875	12.8%	11,040	10.2%	2,835	2.6%
70.1 - 80	9,413	8.7%	4,222	3.9%	5,191	4.8%
80.1 - 90	16,294	15.0%	6,129	5.7%	10,165	9.4%
90.1 - 100	23,313	21.5%	8,365	7.7%	14,948	13.8%
Total	108,311	100.0%	52,751	48.7%	55,560	51.3%

Three pools (across three sites) can be accessed on a pay and play basis – all public leisure centres. These also have membership options which are (for regular users) more cost-effective than pay and play. As evidenced in Figure 5.4 (below) just under half, 48.7% of the Hertsmere population lives within one mile of a pay and play accessible swimming pool.

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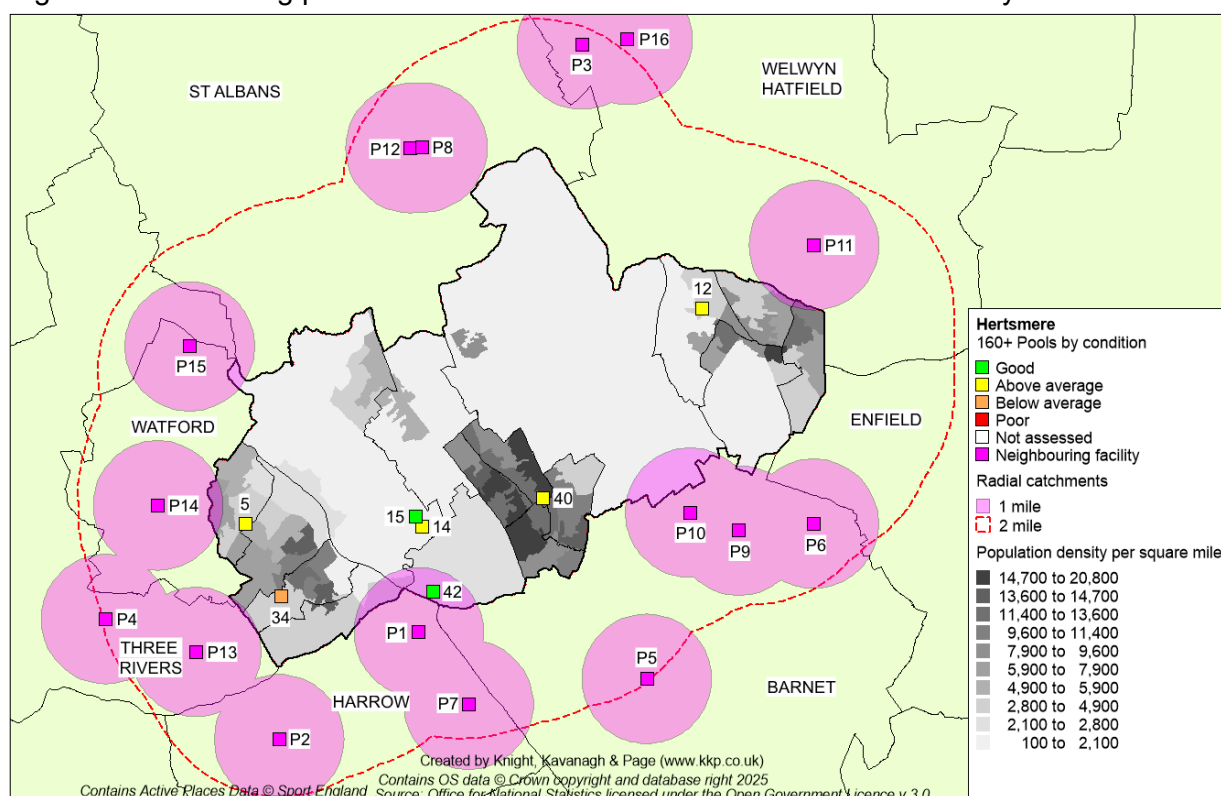
Facilities in neighbouring authorities

Accessibility is affected by facilities located outside an authority. Of the 16 pools (160m²+) within two miles of the Hertsmere boundary, nine are available for casual use/ pay and play accessible, six are available on a block bookings basis and mainly used by swimming clubs and private swim school operators. The other two are accessible via registered membership.

Table 5.7: Community available pools within 2-miles of Hertsmere boundary.

ID	Site	Lanes	Access	District
P1	Aspire Leisure Centre	3	Sports club /CA	Harrow
P2	Hatch End Swimming Pool	3	Pay and play	Harrow
P3	Hertfordshire Sports Village	8	Pay and play	Welwyn Hatfield
P4	Merchant Taylors' School	6	Sports club /CA	Three Rivers
P5	Mill Hill School Sports Centre	0	Pay and play	Barnet
P6	New Barnet Leisure Centre	6	Pay and play	Barnet
P7	North London Collegiate School	0	Sports club /CA	Harrow
P8	Nuffield Health (St Albans)	6	Reg. membership	St Albans
P8	Nuffield Health (St Albans)	0	Reg. membership	St Albans
P9	Queen Elizabeth Sports Centre	0	Pay and play	Barnet
P10	Queen Elizabeth's School	8	Sports club /CA	Barnet
P11	Queenswood School	4	Sports club /CA	Welwyn Hatfield
P12	Samuel Ryder Academy	0	Sports club /CA	St Albans
P13	South Oxhey Leisure Centre	4	Pay and play	Three Rivers
P14	Watford Leisure Centre - Central	6	Pay and play	Watford
P15	Watford Leisure Centre - Woodside	8	Pay and play	Watford
P16	Hatfield Swim Centre	6	Pay and play	Welwyn Hatfield

Figure 5.6: Swimming pools located within 2 miles of the Hertsmere boundary



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Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM)

Sport England provided headline data taken from the FPM 2025 National Facilities Audit for Hertsmere, which is based on data that was correct at January 2025. Please note the KKP audit was undertaken in November 2025 and may be some discrepancies between the FPM and the KKP audit.

Headline position

- ✦ The quantitative and spatial findings interact to identify that Hertsmere's supply available in the peak period exceeds demand. There is a high proportion of satisfied demand and unmet demand is low. However, the swimming pool stock is very old and, while there have been recent refurbishments, this is of some concern.
- ✦ The estimated utilisation of the swimming pools in Hertsmere at peak times ranges is 61%. The pool at Bushey Grove and The Venue are estimated to be uncomfortably full at peak times (over 70% of capacity used), with 81% at Bushey Grove and 88% at The Venue. Both pools are available for the maximum 52.5 hours in the weekly peak period. There is no scope to increase availability and capacity at these pools so as to reduce peak time utilisation.
- ✦ The pool at Furzelefield Leisure Centre is estimated to have 23% used capacity.

Supply

- ✦ The total water space in Hertsmere is 2,346 sqm of water. When scaled against the amount available during the weekly peak period, this reduces to 2,217 sqm. The water space unavailable for community use is 5%.
- ✦ The swimming pool stock is old with an average age for all the sites of 30 years and 36 years for the public sites. The oldest site is Furzelefield Leisure Centre which opened in 1968.
- ✦ The high level of utilisation of the ageing public leisure centres is most likely impacting on their condition. The pools at Bushey Grove and The Venue were modernised in 2019, but the need for further refurbishment or replacement should be considered in the future.

Demand

Table 5.8 below illustrates that:

- ✦ 98% of the demand for swimming pools from Hertsmere residents is met, however only 76% are satisfied by swimming pools located within the Borough.
- ✦ Total unmet demand is equal to 24m2 of water (2% of total demand). Residents who are too far from a swimming pool account for 99% of unmet demand. However, this is insufficient unmet demand to justify the provision of a new swimming pool to improve accessibility for residents.
- ✦ There is a large proportion of utilised capacity being imported into Hertsmere at 55%.
- ✦ The estimated utilisation of the swimming pools in Hertsmere at peak times ranges is 61%. The pool at Bushey Grove and The Venue are estimated to be uncomfortably full at peak times (over 70% of capacity used), with 81% at Bushey Grove and 88% at The Venue. Both pools are available for the maximum 52.5 hours in the weekly peak period. There is no scope to increase availability and capacity at these pools so as to reduce peak time utilisation.
- ✦ The pool at Furzelefield Leisure Centre is estimated to have 23% used capacity and is the oldest pool in the Borough. This suggests that investment will be required in refurbishment/replacement to help ensure it continues to meet current and future needs.

Table 5.8: FPM demand findings (2025)

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Element	FPM 2025
Total demand (visits per week in the peak period)	7,193
Satisfied demand	98%
Satisfied demand retained within Hertsmere	76%
Satisfied demand exported	24%
Unmet demand	2%
% of unmet demand due to residents outside swimming pool catchment (as opposed to no capacity)	99%
Overall average used swimming pool capacity	61%

Used capacity

'FPM used capacity' figures for swimming pools (see Table 5.9 below) are an estimation based on a number of set parameters including each facilities relative attractiveness. The FPM assumes for example that older swimming pools will be less attractive to users and therefore adjusts assumed used capacity figures accordingly. It also assumes that commercially operated pools will be less attractive in areas containing higher concentrations of deprivation as measured by the IMD. It also considers a figure of 70% used capacity as a 'comfortably full' benchmark.

Table 5.9: Used capacity

Site	FPM Used capacity 2025
Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	81%
Furzefield Leisure Centre	23%
Haberdashers Askes - Girls	-
Haberdashers' Askes -Boys	-
St Margarets Sports Centre	66%
The Venue Leisure Centre	88%
Village Gym (Watford)	68%

Future enhancements/new developments

As of the audit date, no known new swimming pool developments are planned in the area.

5.2: Demand

Swim England was consulted to inform the audit. Based on the Hertsmere population, the borough should have a target water supply of 1,293m² at public leisure sites. When accounting for Bushey Grove Leisure Centre, Furzefield Leisure Centre and The Venue Leisure Centre there is currently a surplus of 184m². This is based on its recommendation of 12m² water space per '000 population. It also notes that the average build year of existing sites is 2003, showing the age of the existing stock.

Swim England recommends that all pools need to remain community accessible, including those at educational sites, making water space available for everyone. If required, its Business Engagement Team is available to assist agencies to maximise operations at sites struggling to offer community access.

Club consultation

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Broomfield Park Swimming Club- has 278 members and utilises the facilities at The Venue Leisure Centre on Sunday mornings and evenings for approximately 2.5 hours. It also accesses some other sites, although these are situated outside Hertsmere at Queen Elizabeth School for Boys (Barnet) and Whiting's Hill Primary School (Barnet). It offers a wide range of squads. It reports 'tension' with regard to its midweek evening access at the Venue Leisure Centre, hence it accessing additional sites to accommodate its preferred swim times.

It accommodates senior and junior demand, offering coaching and training sessions for swimmers and is also a competitive club. It has no waiting list, but to continue to grow, it will require more pool time.

Bushey Amateur ASC is based at Bushey Grove Leisure Centre in Hertsmere. It also accesses St Margarets Sports Centre and uses other facilities outside of the Borough at St Helen's School (Brentwood), Merchant Taylors School Sports Complex (Dacorum) and Luton Sports Village (Luton). It has 265 active swimming members and a broad squad structure, including para and masters' swimmers.

It runs regional, county and development squads including masters' competitive swimmers. It accesses Bushey Grove Leisure Centre for approximately eight hours a week on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings as well as Saturday mornings. It reports that it is currently operating a waiting list of c.100 members.

Potters Bar Swimming Club - operates out of Furze field Leisure Centre and has c.402 members. It reports being at capacity and unable to secure additional pool time. It trains six days a week (12 hours), in the evenings and weekends. It would like to have additional early morning swimming sessions (currently has access on Tuesday and Thursday mornings), however, it is reported that leisure centre has to balance public swim lessons and recreational usage on the remaining days. It considers pool hire costs to be high and reports that the venue is unsuitable to host galas due to pool depth and the diving boards.

Potters Bar Artistic Swimming Club operates from Furze field Leisure Centre and has c.69 members. It accesses the pool for approximately 4.5 hours across Monday, Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings.

Watford Swimming and Water Polo Club did not respond to consultation requests. Desk research suggests that it is primarily based in Watford, although it does access the pool facilities at Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School and St Margaret's Sports Centre. Desk research suggests it has c.343 members and is currently not accepting additional members, hence its need to hire multiple venues.

Through further desktop research and consultation with the Council, it has been identified that Barracuda Swimming Club utilise the facilities at Furze field Leisure Centre on Sundays afternoons. The Club offers sessions to individuals with disabilities and is open to all ages and abilities.

Swimming lessons

Children's swimming lessons are delivered at all publicly accessible pools in Hertsmere. Current lesson volumes are as follows:

Table 5.10: Capacity levels of swimming lessons at publicly accessible pools

Facility	Participants	Used capacity (%)
Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	1,423	78%
Furze field Leisure Centre	1,798	90%

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Facility	Participants	Used capacity (%)
The Venue Leisure Centre	1,255	70%

5.3: Sport England's Facilities Calculator (SFC)

As noted above, this aids local planning authorities to quantify additional demand for community sports facilities generated by new growth populations, development and regeneration. It can be used to estimate facility need for whole area populations but should not be applied for strategic gap analysis as it has no spatial dimension as it does not take account of:

- ✦ Facility location compared to demand.
- ✦ Capacity and availability of facilities – opening hours.
- ✦ Cross boundary movement of demand.
- ✦ Travel networks and topography.
- ✦ Attractiveness of facilities.

Table 5.11: Sport England: Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC)

	Population 2022:	Population estimate: 2041
ONS population projections	108,311	112,026
Population increase	-	3,715
Facilities to meet additional demand	-	0.78 lanes
Estimated cost*	-	£981,029

*based on Q3 2025 build costs

Note that the SFC is purely based on population growth and does not account for existing provision and how that provision is currently used (whether it is under or over capacity).

Calculations assume that the current swimming pool stock remains available for community use and the quality remains the same. It appears that the projected increase in population will lead to an increase in demand for pool space. The SFC indicates a requirement for an additional 0.78 lanes up to 2041 (estimated cost: £981,029).

Whilst the figure for increased swimming pool provision is high, investment is required in improving the quality of existing stock prior to considering the development of any new provision. Concentration should also focus on the recruitment/training/retention of swim teachers. This would help to accommodate more sessions at existing sites prior to developing new provision.

The borough's swimming provision includes three public leisure pools all of which deliver swimming lessons. These sites currently accommodate existing demand and are likely to be able to cope with the additional demand generated by the increased local population, it will be important to continue to maintain the quality of current pool provision.

Programming at all the public leisure sites should be continually reviewed to ensure that the most popular activities are available at peak times. This should include options for pay and play swimming, learn to swim and club use.

Utilising ONS population projections, Hertsmere's population is set to increase by 3.1% by 2041. As such, SFC calculations assume that only a small amount of additional pool space will be required assuming that the current swimming pool stock remains available for community use and the quality remains the same.

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ONS based population growth does not account for growth generated through housing growth (shown in Table 5.12). It is, thus, useful to show the demand generated via both ONS projections and housing growth. When combining the two, it is calculated that there will demand for c.8.89 additional lanes by 2041, although some of the existing supply may be able to meet some of this demand.

In the proceeding Strategy document, the new settlement at Bowmans Cross in the north of the Borough will be run as a scenario to understand the additional demand generated.

Table 5.12: Likely demand for dwellings across the Local Plan Period

Housing growth increases across the Local Plan period	Average number of people per owner occupying household (England)	Population increase due to proposed housing	Additional sports hall space required	Estimated cost (£)
16,160	2.4	38,784	8.11 lanes / 2.03 pools	£10,241,782

(Build costs as of Q3 2024)

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5.4: Summary of key facts and issues – swimming pools

In summary, the above consultation and analysis indicates that Hertsmere is in the following position with regards to its swimming pool provision:

Facility type	Swimming pools	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are 17 pools across 13 sites. Once smaller pools and lidos are removed from the analysis (i.e. those less than 20m in length or lidos), seven pools remain in the audit.	The SFC suggests a demand of 0.92 lanes for additional capacity based on the population increase to 2041. The increase in population due to housing growth will require further provision to be developed. Clubs report needing more access to pool time. KKP audit and FPM modelled findings find that supply for swimming in Hertsmere exceeds demand in the peak period. The audit also identified high demand particularly from the significantly sized club and that the FPM does not take into account future housing projections.
Quality	Two pools are good quality, four pools are above average and one is below average. There are teaching/learner pools at each of the three leisure centres.	Whilst the public leisure centres are of above average quality, HBC should work with InspireAll to ensure that facilities are maintained at their current quality.
Accessibility	65.7% of the population live within a one-mile walk of a swimming pool in the borough. All residents live within a 20-minute drive of a pool with community access. Pay and play access is available within a 1-mile walk for approximately 4.8% of residents.	Swimming pool accessibility is reasonably good. Increasing the scale of learn to swim programmes (adults/children) is a priority. 36% of the 9,540 people living in areas of higher deprivation in Hertsmere live within one mile of a swimming pool. The north and northeast of the borough lack access to a publicly accessible pay and play swimming pool facility.
Availability (Management and usage)	Three pools are available for pay and play access. Three pools can be accessed for swimming lessons on a block booking basis Village Gym Watford) is accessible via registered membership.	The public leisure centres are operating near to capacity. This correlates with FPM findings estimating that the two of the three public pools are uncomfortably busy in Hertsmere between 81% and 88% used capacity. Whilst the pool at Furzefield Leisure Centre has 23% used capacity suggesting it has capacity to accommodate further demand. Review public leisure centre pool programming to ensure a balance between club, learn to swim and casual swimming. Ensure that the school pools which are available through a block booking basis remain accessible, as this provides additional learn to swim capacity.

Strategic summary

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- ◀ Each facility is important to the community served and should be protected in accordance with Paragraph 104 of the NPPF.
- ◀ There is a need to maintain swimming pool quality via good maintenance programmes.
- ◀ Regular review of public pool programming is required to ensure that learn to swim, casual, club swimming and cultural needs are catered for at times which meet local community need.
- ◀ Consider the refurbishment/replacement of the Furzefield Leisure Centre pool, given its quality and age to help ensure it continues to meet current and future needs.
- ◀ In order to accommodate future population growth and housing growth, Hertsmere should investigate, through a bespoke FPM assessment, to better understand where future provision should go to best meet the needs of Hertsmere residents. Scenarios could be run to refurbish/replace leisure centres as all existing pools are operating at capacity, satisfied demand is high and the extent of additional demand is not sufficient to justify new pool provision.
- ◀ Population increases and housing growth will create additional demand that more provision may be needed to accommodate.

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SECTION 6: HEALTH AND FITNESS SUITES

According to the most recent Active Lives Survey data¹⁹, around 9.8 million adults regularly engage in some form of fitness type activity (i.e., using gym equipment, a weights session, fitness class, or interval session). The popularity of fitness is reflective of it taking place across wide range of facilities including larger gyms (run by local authorities or for them by commercial leisure operators and/or trusts plus other smaller activity spaces such as village and community halls.

Fitness studios also vary in their size and function, from relatively large rooms within leisure centres often containing a sprung floor, to smaller spaces (often within community and village halls) which may serve as dedicated spinning (indoor cycling) studios or to hold virtual fitness classes. Studio based timetabled classes such as Pilates, yoga, dance, step, boxercise and Zumba usually generate a significant amount of activity within publicly operated provision and comprise a core benefit of a health and fitness membership.

The State of the Fitness Industry Report UK (2024) noted that the number of gym and leisure facility members in the UK reached **11.5 million** in 2024, an increase from previous years (e.g., 9.9 million in 2022). Leisure DB reported a figure of 10.7 million, indicating a consistent upward trend.

The penetration rate (percentage of the UK population with a gym membership) reached **16.9%** in 2024, which is one of the highest in Europe and surpasses pre-Pandemic levels (15.6% in 2019). Leisure DB reported a slightly lower but still strong 15.9%. Trends noted included:

- ◀ Low-cost operators have successfully capitalised on consumers looking for more affordable options. Mid and premium market operators are also improving their value propositions, often by adding services like spa facilities and social spaces.
- ◀ There is increasing engagement across all age groups, but particularly among younger adults (16-34). This suggests a generational shift where gym membership is seen as a "must-have."
- ◀ While improving strength and fitness remains the primary reason for joining (83%), mental health support is a growing motivation, cited by 76% of members. Improving confidence and physical appearance also rank highly.
- ◀ Despite growth, the industry still faces cost pressures due to inflation and rising operating costs. Gyms are exploring innovative strategies to increase revenue per site, such as offering custom training, nutrition coaching, and more group classes, rather than solely relying on new openings.

Health and fitness facilities are a core element within the transitioning of public leisure facilities towards delivering on wider health improvement outcomes. A leisure operator's role in providing for people with long term health conditions, including via exercise referral is critical. Fitness studios may 'double up' as spaces where NHS services such as physiotherapy, health screening, and weight management can take place alongside gentle exercise classes.

Larger health and fitness gyms with a mix of flexible spaces (such as cardio, free weights and boxing equipment, (80 stations +²⁰) remain central to the financial viability of public sector leisure centres. When combined with studio facilities and offering a good mix (and sufficient number) of classes, they are usually offer the most surplus-generating spaces in a typical leisure centre.

¹⁹ [Active Lives adult survey Nov 23-24 report](#)

²⁰ A health and fitness 'station' is defined as a piece of static fitness equipment – KKP normally audits facilities of 20 stations or more.

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The past decade or so has also seen a growth in the prevalence of operators offering 'functional fitness' type equipment and activities. This is a type of strength training that readies your body for daily activities and includes lifting, loading, pushing, pulling, squatting and hauling. This is manifested both in terms of small private facilities, and the incorporation of functional fitness spaces within publicly operated health and fitness facilities.

6.1: Supply

Quantity

There are 24 health and fitness gyms in Hertsmere: a total of 1,517 stations. Generally, they are well-distributed, located in the more densely populated areas such as Borehamwood, Bushey, Elstree and Potters Bar. Spatially, there is a good spread across the borough, with all main population centres being served.

Figure 6.1: All health and fitness gyms on population density

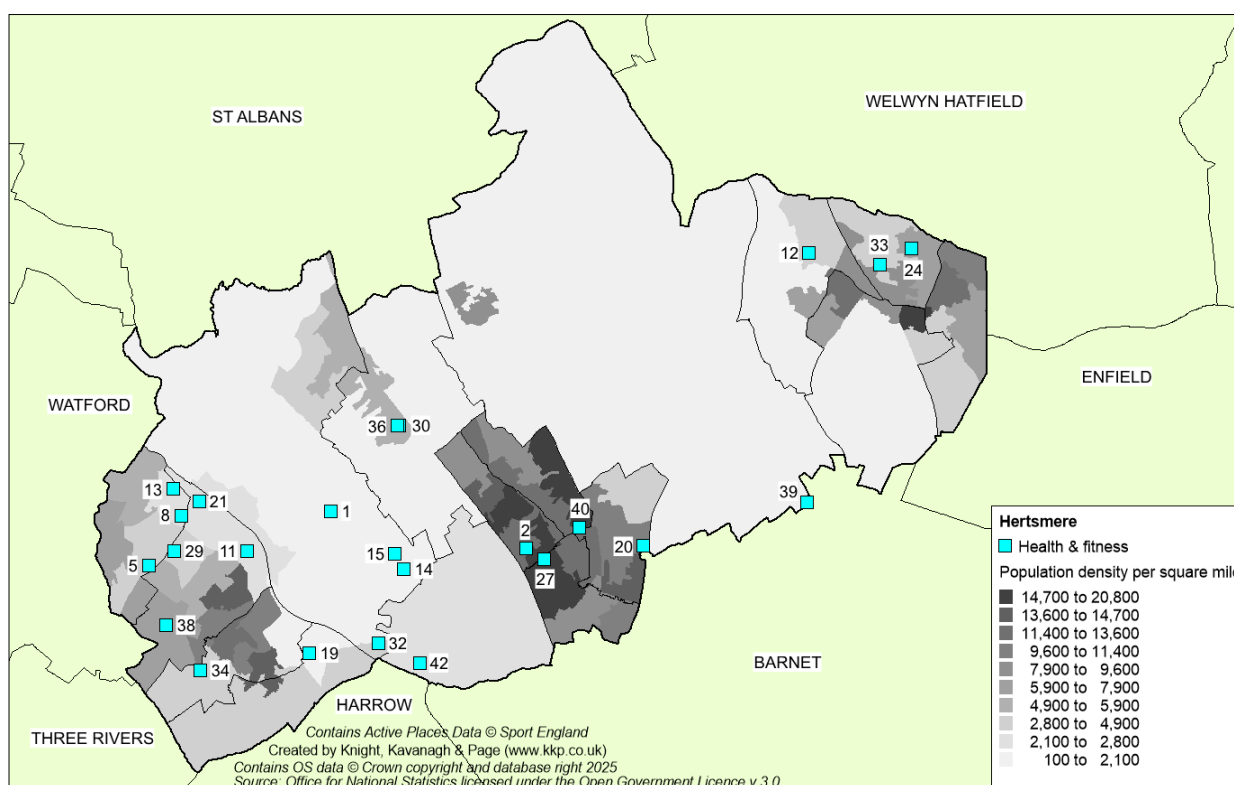


Table 6.1: All health and fitness gyms in Hertsmere

ID	Site name	Stations
1	Aldenham Sports Centre	21
2	Anytime Fitness (Borehamwood)	150
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	81
8	David Lloyd (Bushey)	250
11	Feel Good Health Club (Mercure London Watford Hotel)	25
12	Furzefield Leisure Centre	130
13	Graftism Gym	60
14	Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior School)	10
15	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	25
19	Immanuel College	18

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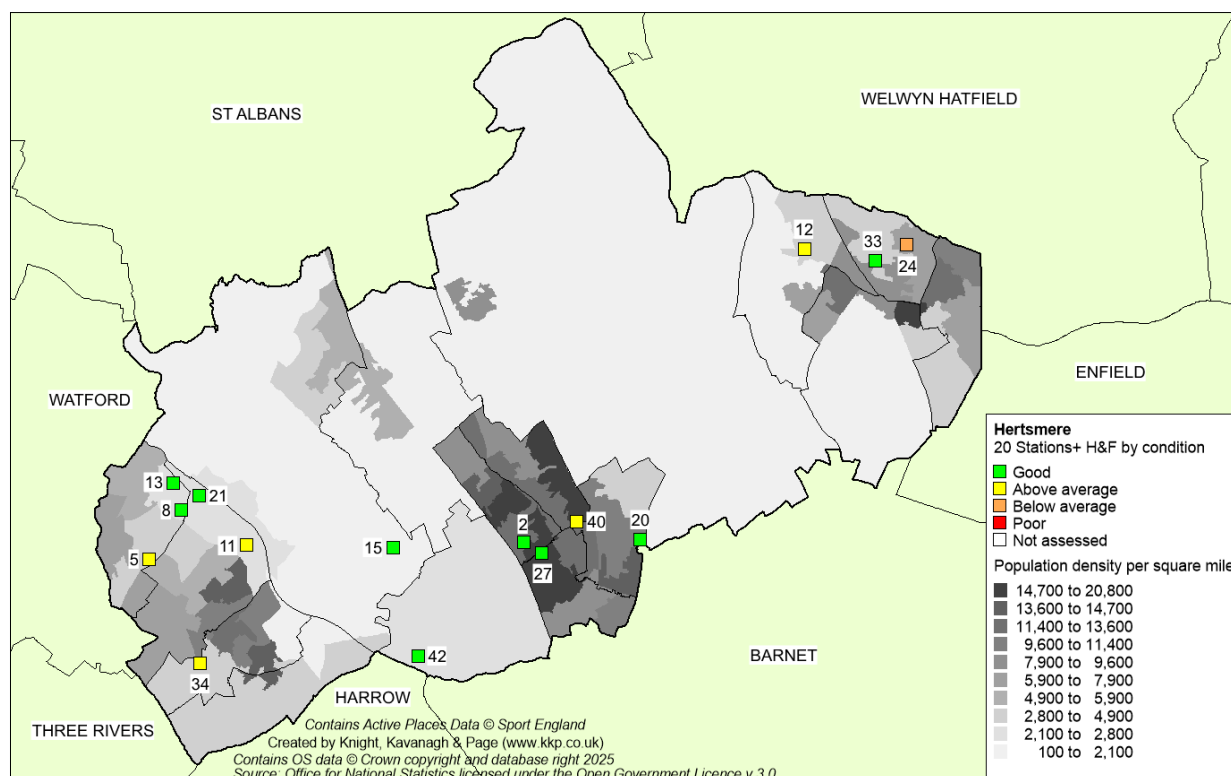
ID	Site name	Stations
20	James Rattery Elstree	28
21	Livingwell Fitness (Watford)	20
24	Next Gen Fitness	60
27	Puregym (Borehamwood)	160
29	Queen's School (South)	20
30	Radlett Cricket Club	8
32	Rebourne Health and Fitness	30
33	Revive Fitness & Spa Ltd	130
34	St Margarets Sports Centre	30
36	Tabard RFC	5
38	The Grange Academy	20
39	The Shire London	16
40	The Venue Leisure Centre	140
42	Village Gym (Watford)	80
-	Total	1,517

Fitness facilities with fewer than 20 stations are typically not assessed/considered sufficiently large to be a community gym although they can service small sections of the community. When smaller facilities are removed from the supply calculation, 19 facilities with 20+ stations which offer 1,460 stations in total, remain. Six gyms are of significant size (100+ stations). There is a considerable local competition from a number of national chain providers.

Quality

All health and fitness sites received a non-technical quality assessment.

Figure 6.2: Health and fitness gym quality (20+ stations)



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All 20+ station health and fitness sites received a non-technical quality assessment. 10 are rated as good quality, six are above average and three are below average quality.

Table 6.2: Health and fitness gyms (20+ stations) by condition

ID	Site	Stations	Condition
1	Aldenham Sports Centre	21	Above average
2	Anytime Fitness (Borehamwood)	150	Good
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	81	Above average
8	David Lloyd (Bushey)	250	Good
11	Feel Good Health Club (Mercure London Watford Hotel)	25	Above average
12	Furzeffield Leisure Centre	130	Above average
13	Graftism Gym	60	Good
15	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	25	Good
20	James Rattery Elstree	28	Good
21	Livingwell Fitness (Watford)	20	Good
24	Next Gen Fitness	60	Below average
27	Puregym (Borehamwood)	160	Good
29	Queen's School (South)	20	Below average
32	Rebourne Health and Fitness	30	Good
33	Revive Fitness & Spa Ltd	130	Good
34	St Margarets Sports Centre	30	Above average
38	The Grange Academy	20	Below average
40	The Venue Leisure Centre	140	Above average
42	Village Gym (Watford)	80	Good

The Venue Leisure Centre has the largest public health and fitness facility in the area. It was refurbished in 2019 and had new equipment installed. Consultation with InspireAll indicated that there is strong demand and that the site was extended and refurbished to reflect this. InspireAll reports that membership increased as a result of this.

The health & fitness suite at Furzeffield Leisure Centre was also refurbished in 2019. New flooring, and LED lighting was installed alongside new equipment. The health & fitness offer at Bushey Grove Leisure Centre was also refurbished in 2019 and new equipment was added.

Given the high level of local competition, there is a need for a high-quality offer with high-quality changing provision to enable public leisure centres to compete effectively and attract new users.

Accessibility

The Sport England classification of access type defines registered membership use facilities as being publicly available. For health and fitness suites, this generally means payment of a monthly membership fee which can vary considerably. Private operators have no contractual obligation to, for example, offer exercise referral nor do they necessarily actively target people/communities who face barriers to participation. It is acknowledged that some memberships are expensive while others are cheaper than those offered by public sector venues. There is little doubt that various private operators can take pressure off more available public facilities.

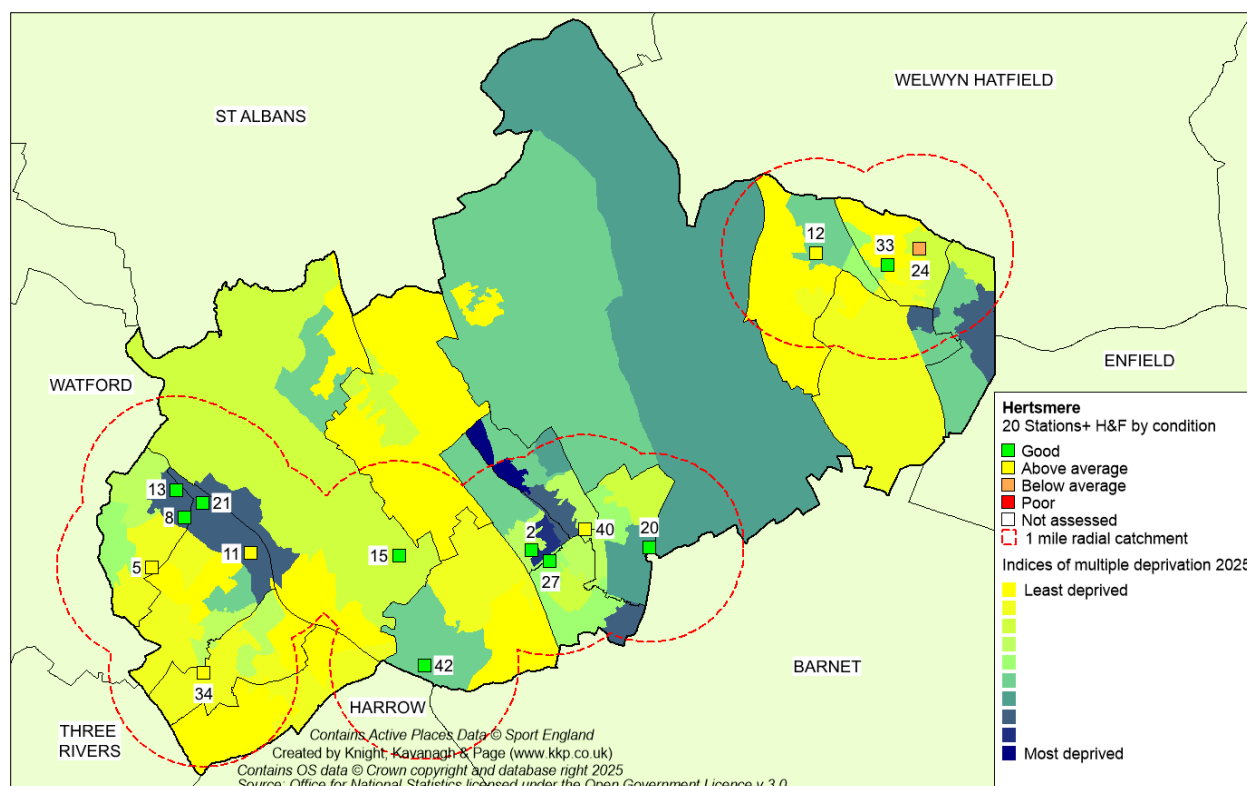
As with pools and sports halls, appropriate walk and drive-time accessibility standards are applied to health and fitness suites to determine provision deficiencies or surpluses. The normal acceptable standard for an urban area is a 20-minutes' walk time and 20-minute drive time for a rural area.

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Table 6.3: Health and fitness 20+ stations with 1-mile radial catchment

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	1,665	1.5%	830	0.8%	835	0.8%
10.1 - 20	1,303	1.2%	1,303	1.2%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	6,572	6.1%	5,378	5.0%	1,194	1.1%
30.1 - 40	9,007	8.3%	7,687	7.1%	1,320	1.2%
40.1 - 50	18,125	16.7%	10,318	9.5%	7,807	7.2%
50.1 - 60	8,744	8.1%	8,744	8.1%	0	0.0%
60.1 - 70	13,875	12.8%	13,875	12.8%	0	0.0%
70.1 - 80	9,413	8.7%	8,868	8.2%	545	0.5%
80.1 - 90	16,294	15.0%	12,621	11.7%	3,673	3.4%
90.1 - 100	23,313	21.5%	16,886	15.6%	6,427	5.9%
Total	108,311	100.0%	86,510	79.9%	21,801	20.1%

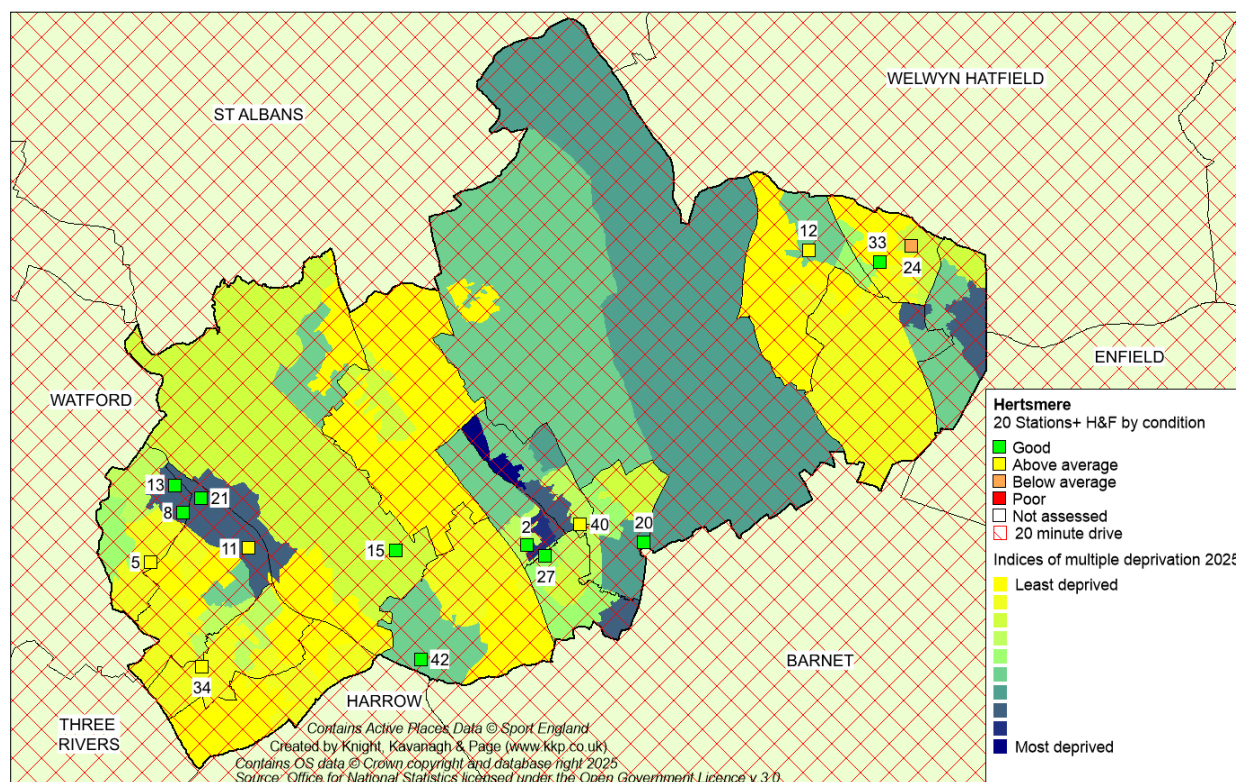
Figure 6.3: Health and fitness gyms 20+ stations+ with 1-mile radial catchment



Just under 80% of Hertsmere's population lives within a one-mile walk of a health and fitness facility. For the 9,540 residents living in areas of higher deprivation (0-30 IMD bands) in Hertsmere, (79%-7,511 people) live within a 20-minute walk of a health/fitness facility.

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Figure 6.4: Accessibility of 20+ health and fitness stations in Hertsmere (20-minute drivetime)



The whole Hertsmere population lives within a 20-minute drive of a 20+ station health and fitness facility within the authority.

Neighbouring facilities

Health and fitness facility users do not just use venues in their own authority. As a consequence, facilities located within two miles of the authority border are considered.

There are 26 health and fitness venues in this catchment. Three offer pay and play access, 20 are available via registered membership and two are accessed via a sports club/ community association. Four are located in Barnet, two in Harrow, six in St Albans, three in Three Rivers, eight in Watford and three in Welwyn Hatfield. Six are national chains, this suggests high demand and competition for health and fitness provision in the area.

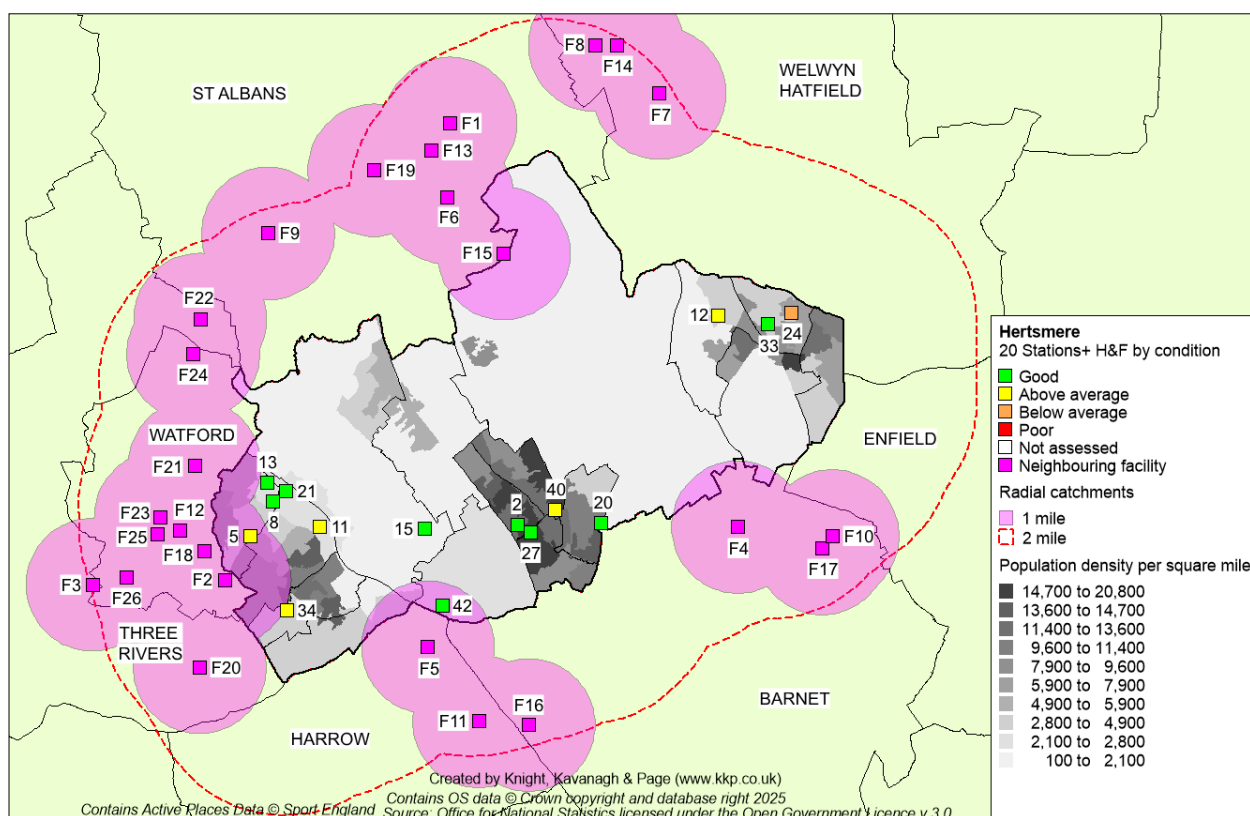
Table 6.5: Community available health/fitness (20+ stations) within 2 miles of Hertsmere

ID	Site	Stations	Access	District
F1	AB Salute Gym (St Albans)	42	Reg. membership	St Albans
F2	Anytime Fitness (Bushey)	80	Reg. membership	Watford
F3	Anytime Fitness (Croxley Park)	200	Reg. membership	Three Rivers
F4	Anytime Fitness (London High Barnet)	30	Reg. membership	Barnet
F5	Aspire Leisure Centre	33	Sports club /CA	Harrow
F6	Cotlandswick Leisure Centre	60	Reg. membership	St Albans
F7	Hatfield Leisure Centre	51	Reg. membership	Welwyn Hatfield
F8	Hertfordshire Sports Village	73	Reg. membership	Welwyn Hatfield
F9	Mercure St Albans Noke Hotel	24	Reg. membership	St Albans
F10	New Barnet Leisure Centre	80	Reg. membership	Barnet

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F11	North London Collegiate School	21	Sports club /CA	Harrow
F12	NRG Gym (Watford)	200	Pay and play	Watford
F13	Nuffield Health (St Albans)	270	Reg. membership	St Albans
F14	Puregym (Hatfield)	200	Reg. membership	Welwyn Hatfield
F15	Puregym (London Colney)	200	Reg. membership	St Albans
F16	Puregym (London Edgware)	220	Reg. membership	Barnet
F17	Puregym (New Barnet)	220	Reg. membership	Barnet
F18	Puregym (Watford)	220	Reg. membership	Watford
F19	Sopwell House Country Club & Viverano Spa	40	Reg. membership	St Albans
F20	South Oxhey Leisure Centre	51	Reg. membership	Three Rivers
F21	The Gym Group (Watford)	121	Reg. membership	Watford
F22	Thomas Parmiter Sports Centre	23	Pay and play	Three Rivers
F23	Watford Leisure Centre - Central	80	Reg. membership	Watford
F24	Watford Leisure Centre - Woodside	140	Reg. membership	Watford
F25	West Herts Sports Club	60	Reg. membership	Watford
F26	Westfield Academy	29	Pay and play	Watford

Figure 6.5: Health and fitness suites with walk and drive time catchment on IMD



Availability and programming

Sport England's classification of access type defines registered membership use facilities as publicly available. However, the cost of monthly membership fees can vary considerably. It is acknowledged that those which may be considered expensive offer access to different market segments and can ease pressure on facilities which offer cheaper membership options.

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Of the 19 health and fitness suites in Hertsmere with 20+ stations, 16 offer some form of community use. This equates to 1,374 stations. The three not currently providing community use are all located at school sites. The three which offer some element of pay and play do so via the pre-purchase of a one-day pass or pay on arrival. Twelve venues require a registered membership and the remaining one at St Margaret's Sports Centre can be accessed via a sports club/community association.

Table 6.6: Access policy of fitness gyms (20+ stations)

ID	Site	Access policy
1	Aldenham Sports Centre	Private use
2	Anytime Fitness (Borehamwood)	Reg. membership
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	Pay and play
8	David Lloyd (Bushey)	Reg. membership
11	Feel Good Health Club (Mercure London Watford Hotel)	Reg. membership
12	Furzeffield Leisure Centre	Pay and play
13	Graftism Gym	Reg. membership
15	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	Reg. membership
20	James Rattery Elstree	Reg. membership
21	Livingwell Fitness (Watford)	Reg. membership
24	Next Gen Fitness	Reg. membership
27	Puregym (Borehamwood)	Reg. membership
29	Queen's School (South)	Private use
32	Rebourne Health and Fitness	Reg. membership
33	Revive Fitness & Spa Ltd	Reg. membership
34	St Margarets Sports Centre	Sports club/ CA
38	The Grange Academy	Private use
40	The Venue Leisure Centre	Pay and play
42	Village Gym (Watford)	Reg. membership

Table 6.7: Pricing structure of health and fitness suites with community use and 20+ stations

Site name	Pay & play	Annual	12-month DD
Anytime Fitness (Borehamwood)	-	£449.95	£42.95
Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	£8.00	£582.89	£68.99
David Lloyd (Bushey)	-	-	£96.00-£229.00
Feel Good Health Club (Mercure London Watford Hotel)	-	£500	£45
Furzeffield Leisure Centre	£8.00	£582.89	£68.99
Graftism Gym	£5.40	-	£51.75
James Rattery Elstree	£9.99	-	£35.00
Livingwell Fitness (Watford)	£8.95	-	£35.00
Next Gen Fitness	£7.50	£350	£35.00
Puregym (Borehamwood)	£8.99	-	£25.99-£32.99
Rebourne Health and Fitness	Not disclosed	Not disclosed	Not disclosed
Revive Fitness & Spa Ltd	Not disclosed	Not disclosed	Not disclosed
St Margarets Sports Centre	-	-	£27.99
The Venue Leisure Centre	£8.00	£582.89	£68.99
Village Gym (Watford)	-	£50.00	£40.00

*Pricing as advertised in January 2026

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Bushey Grove, Furzefield and the Venue leisure centres offers the most comprehensive memberships. These include gym, swim and class use and prices varying dependent upon age- junior, concessionary, etc., and provide access to all three InspireAll sites.

(It is recognised that well run health and fitness facilities with studios can offset the costs and enhance the financial viability of other venue elements such as swimming pools and in many instances are used to cross subsidise such facilities).

These centres also technically offer pay and play use; however, access requires online registration, and places can only be guaranteed when booked via the website. This could discourage potential users from purchasing memberships and disadvantage those who are not digitally skilled or do not readily have access to online services. Other operators within the industry promote pricing structures and enable users to sign up online with a simpler process for the user.

Pay and play facilities are well located – there are facilities which offer this in each of the high population density areas. The cost of a pay and play session in the city varies between £8.99 (Pure Gym Borehamwood) and £5.40 (Graftism Gym).

The entity charging the most expensive monthly membership in the borough is David Lloyd Bushey. It offers a combination of gym, swim, fitness classes and racquet sports as part of its membership structure. The cheapest are Livingwell Fitness (Watford) and Next Gen Fitness with monthly membership costs of £35.00 for an adult.

InspireAll currently operates an exercise referral scheme in partnership with Herts Sport and Physical Activity Partnership. This is a 12-week programme designed to help individuals over the age of 16 self-manage long-term health conditions such as asthma, arthritis, high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity. GP referral data was not supplied by InspireAll but it is understood that GP referral is delivered at Bushey Grove, Furzefield and the Venue leisure centres.

Future developments

There are no known potential health and fitness developments in Hertsmere identified during consultation or site audits.

6.2: Demand

InspireAll confirmed that since the refurbishment of the health and fitness facilities in 2019 membership levels at the three public leisure centres has risen. However, data with regard to this has been requested on several occasions but still not received. InspireAll confirmed that the health and fitness suites across the three centres are currently busy on weekday mornings and evenings.

It's important to note, that the public sites offer multi memberships and no gym only memberships. It should, thus, be noted that not all members will be solely accessing the health and fitness suites at these facilities.

Health and fitness via exercising in a gym or class environment is a highly popular form of exercise, appealing to men and women across a range of age groups. To identify the adequacy of provision a demand calculation based upon the assumption that 'UK penetration rates' will increase slightly in the future is applied. Population increases are also factored in to enable a calculation of whether current supply will meet future demand.

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Table 6.8: UK penetration rates²¹; health/fitness in Hertsmere (ONS data)

	Current (2022)	Future (2041)
Adult population (16+ years)	86,601	93,052
UK penetration rate	16.0%	17.0%
Number of potential members	13,856	15,819
Number of visits per week (1.75/member)	24,248	27,683
% of visits in peak time	65	65
No. of visits in peak time (equated to no. of stations required i.e., no. of visits/39 weeks*65%)	404	461
Number of stations (comfort factor applied)	606	692

*Applies 1.75 visits/week by members and 65% usage for 39 weeks of the year. (Figures rounded up/down).

Based upon UK penetration rates there is current need for 606 stations in Hertsmere. This will grow to 692 by 2041, taking account of a comfort factor (particularly at peak times). Given that there are 1,460 stations in the borough (taking account only of those of 20+ stations) this equates to a current positive supply/demand balance of 854 stations. When factoring in population growth to 2041, there is still a positive supply of 768 stations indicating existing capacity to accommodate future demand from projected population growth.

The current and future surplus of health and fitness provision in the authority does not negate the need to modernise both public leisure centre health and fitness facilities. The additional revenue generated from an improved fitness offer at the public leisure centres will help offset the cost of running services such as swimming pool provision and enable further delivery of the GP referral offer, which currently has limited uptake. It should also enable the council to work with InspireAll to develop an improved concessionary pricing offer for fitness (and swimming) memberships to make this more accessible to people living in poverty and in the authority's most deprived localities.

The public leisure centres in the borough operate both a cash and cashless system. The price point and the requirement to register, book and pay online in order to access 'pay and play' sport and leisure provision means that this option can be, and probably is, restrictive for some people. It is important to enable residents, in particular those who face additional barriers to access including poverty and disability, to be able to access council leisure centre-based provision with the least difficulty. Whilst Hertsmere's public leisure centres are generally well used, there is a need to create more equitable opportunity for the whole community and, for example, those who may be digitally excluded.

It is presumed that there will be some import and export of demand whereby residents in the authority access facilities in neighbouring authorities (especially larger sites) and vice versa. It is not uncommon for the private sector to identify niche markets and fill them with stations which make the market appear congested. The key issue is that while some of these may be budget operators this does not necessarily make them available to people/communities who face barriers to participation and people from areas of (relative) disadvantage - as cost is only one factor which may hinder usage. It could be argued that this applies particularly to those who require transport to access such facilities.

²¹ A set out in leisure database UK state of the industry report <https://www.leisuredb.com/2023-fitness-press-release>

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6.3: Fitness studios

Dance studios are an important element of the wider health, fitness and conditioning market. They vary in size, shape, quality of environment, access to sprung wooden floors and quality of ancillary facilities. There has been an increase in the number of people accessing fitness classes as identified in increased UK penetration rates. Activity types offered also vary from low impact classes such as Pilates and yoga to dance, step, boxercise and Zumba. It is worth noting that dance classes/clubs are key users of studio spaces throughout the country. Of the 33 studios in Hertsmere across 19 sites; 32 were subject to a non-technical assessment.

Figure 6.6: Studios in Hertsmere

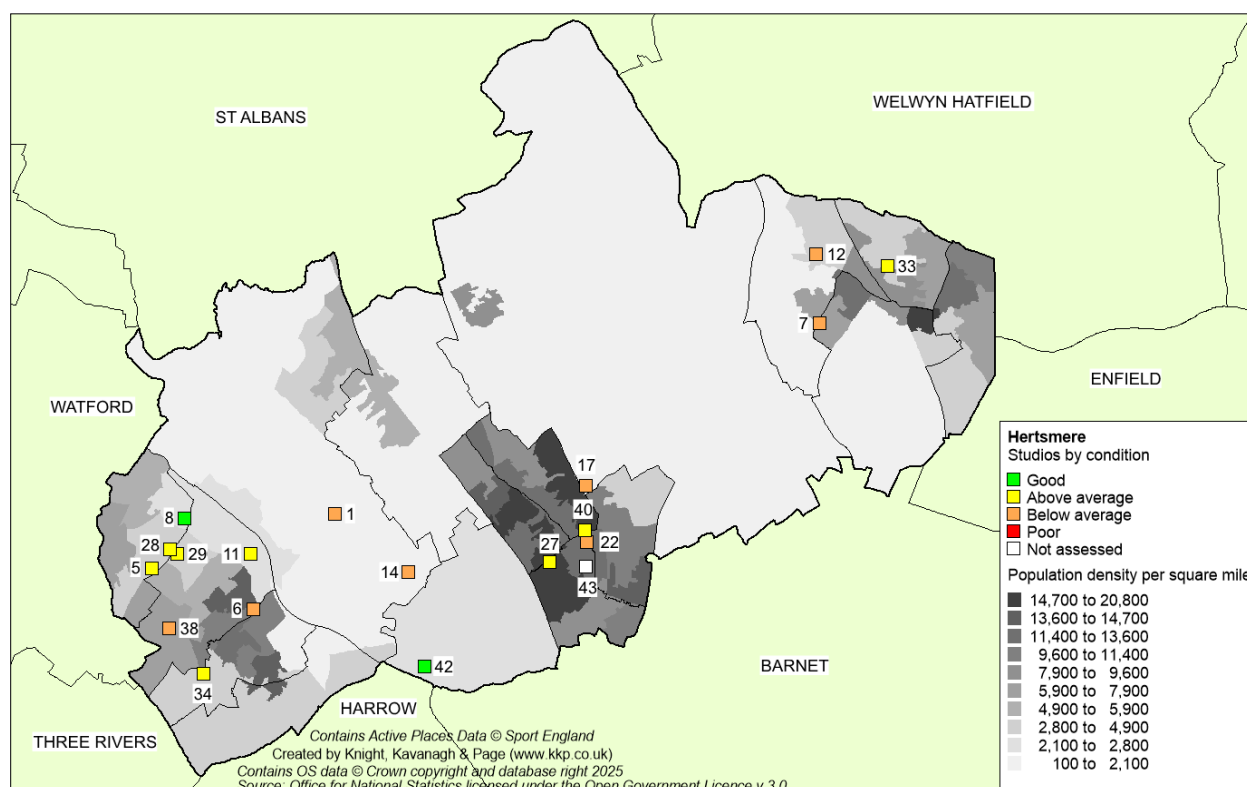


Table 6.9: Table of studios in Hertsmere

ID	Site	Access	Condition
1	Aldenham Sports Centre	Sports club / CA	Below average
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	Pay and play	Above average
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	Pay and play	Above average
6	Bushey Meads School	Private use	Below average
7	Dame Alice Owen's School	Sports club / CA	Below average
8	David Lloyd (Bushey)	Reg. membership	Good
8	David Lloyd (Bushey)	Reg. membership	Good
8	David Lloyd (Bushey)	Reg. membership	Good
11	Feel Good Health Club (Mercure London Watford Hotel)	Reg. membership	Above average
12	Furzeffield Leisure Centre	Pay and play	Above average
12	Furzeffield Leisure Centre	Pay and play	Above average
12	Furzeffield Leisure Centre	Pay and play	Below average
14	Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior)	Sports club / CA	Above average
14	Haberdashers Askes School for Girls (Senior)	Sports club / CA	Below average

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17	Hertswood Academy	Sports club / CA	Below average
22	Maxwell Park Community Centre	Sports club / CA	Below average
27	Puregym (Borehamwood)	Reg. membership	Above average
27	Puregym (Borehamwood)	Reg. membership	Above average
28	Queen's School (North)	Sports club / CA	Above average
29	Queen's School (South)	Sports club / CA	Above average
29	Queen's School (South)	Sports club / CA	Above average
33	Revive Fitness & Spa Ltd	Reg. membership	Above average
33	Revive Fitness & Spa Ltd	Reg. membership	Above average
33	Revive Fitness & Spa Ltd	Reg. membership	Above average
34	St Margarets Sports Centre	Reg. membership	Above average
38	The Grange Academy	Sports club / CA	Below average
40	The Venue Leisure Centre	Pay and play	Above average
40	The Venue Leisure Centre	Pay and play	Above average
40	The Venue Leisure Centre	Pay and play	Below average
42	Village Gym (Watford)	Reg. membership	Good
42	Village Gym (Watford)	Reg. membership	Good
42	Village Gym (Watford)	Reg. membership	Good
43	Yavneh College Sports Centre	Private use	Not assessed

(NB: Sports Club/CA= Sports club / Community association use)

There are six good quality, 17 above-average and nine below average condition studios. One site was unassessed. In terms of access, eight studios (at public leisure sites) can be accessed on a pay and play basis. A further 13 are accessed via a registered membership and 11 via a sports club/community association. Two (on school sites) are private use only.

6.4: Summary of key facts and issues – health & fitness

Facility type	Health & fitness	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	The 24 health/fitness suites contain 1,517 stations. 19 have 20+ stations (1,460). 16 of the 19 are available to the community. 33 studios offer community access. There is a large positive supply/demand balance in the area both now and accounting for population growth to 2041.	-
Quality	16 of the 19 fitness suites with 20+ stations are good or above average in quality. Three are below average quality. With high demand for facilities and a large number of national chain operators in the area and close by the public leisure centres need to have high quality facilities to enable them to compete and be financially sustainable.	There is a need to provide and maintain high quality provision across the stock.
Accessibility	Just under 80% (79.9%) of Hertsmere's residents live within one mile of a health and fitness suite. This increases to 100% for those within a 20-minute drive of a community accessible facility. 26 gyms are located within 2 miles of the Hertsmere boundary.	To ensure that harder to reach groups and people with specific health needs can access facilities. Radlett and Shenley resident in particular need their own transport to access health and fitness facilities.

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Facility type	Health & fitness	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Availability (Management and usage)	There are three publicly accessible pay and play health and fitness facilities with 20+ stations in Hertsmere. A further 12 can be accessed via registered membership and one via a sports club/ community association use.	Ensure that information about membership options/costs is readily available without the need to submit online enquiries.

Strategic summary

- ◀ There is a positive supply of facilities in respect of both current and future demand.
- ◀ The importance of the financial contribution that health and fitness make to the viability of other facilities such as swimming pools is an important facet.
- ◀ The borough is well catered for, with three public leisure located across the authority, accommodating most demand.
- ◀ There is a need to provide and maintain high quality provision across the stock.
- ◀ Introduce transparent membership pricing and a direct online sign-up feature on the website, removing the enquiry step, to enable direct online sign up. It is vital to ensure that options are available for those actually/potentially digitally excluded.

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SECTION 7: SQUASH

Squash is now on a new strategic path, implementing a rebrand and undergoing a major restructure. England Squash (ES) has achieved core strategic goals agreed with Sport England and is committed to supporting the traditional infrastructure of county associations, clubs, coaches and officials to grow the game via key programmes (e.g., Squash101) and campaigns (e.g., Squash Girls Can) but will be apportioning resources in a significantly different manner. England Squash strategic aims are set out in the table below.

Table 7.1: England Squash strategic aims:

Element	Aim
Governance	Adhere to the highest standards of organisational governance.
Membership	Provide a membership model that caters to and provides benefits for anyone interested in playing and coaching squash irrespective of their ability.
Programmes	Enabling and supporting partners to be at the forefront of adult and player recruitment and retention.
Talent & high performance	Provide a support and development programme that identifies, develops and delivers world leading individuals and teams.
Commercial	Create a diversified and effective revenue model that minimises risk and reduces dependency on funding.

Squash In a Changing World (2021-2025) outlines the vision, principles and strategic pillars for ES. Its vision for the future of squash in England is a thriving, diverse and growing community. Its Purpose is to serve as custodians of the game's past, its present and its future. It is to serve as a catalyst for positive change across the sporting community at home and abroad. The 2021-2025 strategy sets six key objectives:

- ◆ Drive increased participation in the game, with a radical advance in equality, diversity and inclusion.
- ◆ Inspire and train a community of world class coaches, referees and volunteers at every level, who drive participation and increase engagement in the game.
- ◆ Sustain world-leading talent pathways and programmes for high performing players who achieve success on the global stage and inspire others to realise their potential.
- ◆ Empower creativity and innovation in the game and in our organisation's culture, using ideas and technology to support the squash community and to engage with new audiences.
- ◆ Spearhead new and creative ways to enhance the visibility and appeal of squash at local, national and international levels, including the pursuit of Olympic inclusion.
- ◆ Provide leadership for the game nationally and internationally, including addressing the Climate and Ecological Crisis.

ES has set a benchmark of one court per 10,000 people in each local authority in order for squash to thrive. It estimates that there is currently one court per 12,617 people in England. This reflects the significant number of court closures and/or non-replacements when new facilities are developed to replace older venues - seen over the past two decades.

7.1: Supply

Quantity and quality

There are 16 squash courts across six sites in Hertsmere, of which 10 are traditional and six are glass-backed.

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Table 7.2: Squash courts in Hertsmere

ID	Site	Courts	Type	Condition
5	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre	2	Normal	Below average
12	Furzefield Leisure Centre	2	Normal	Below average
15	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School	2	Glass-backed	Good
17	Hertswood Academy	2	Normal	Below average
24	Next Gen Fitness	4	Normal	Below average
31	Radlett Lawn Tennis and Squash Club	4	Glass-backed	Above average

Figure 7.1: Location of squash courts in Hertsmere and neighbouring authorities

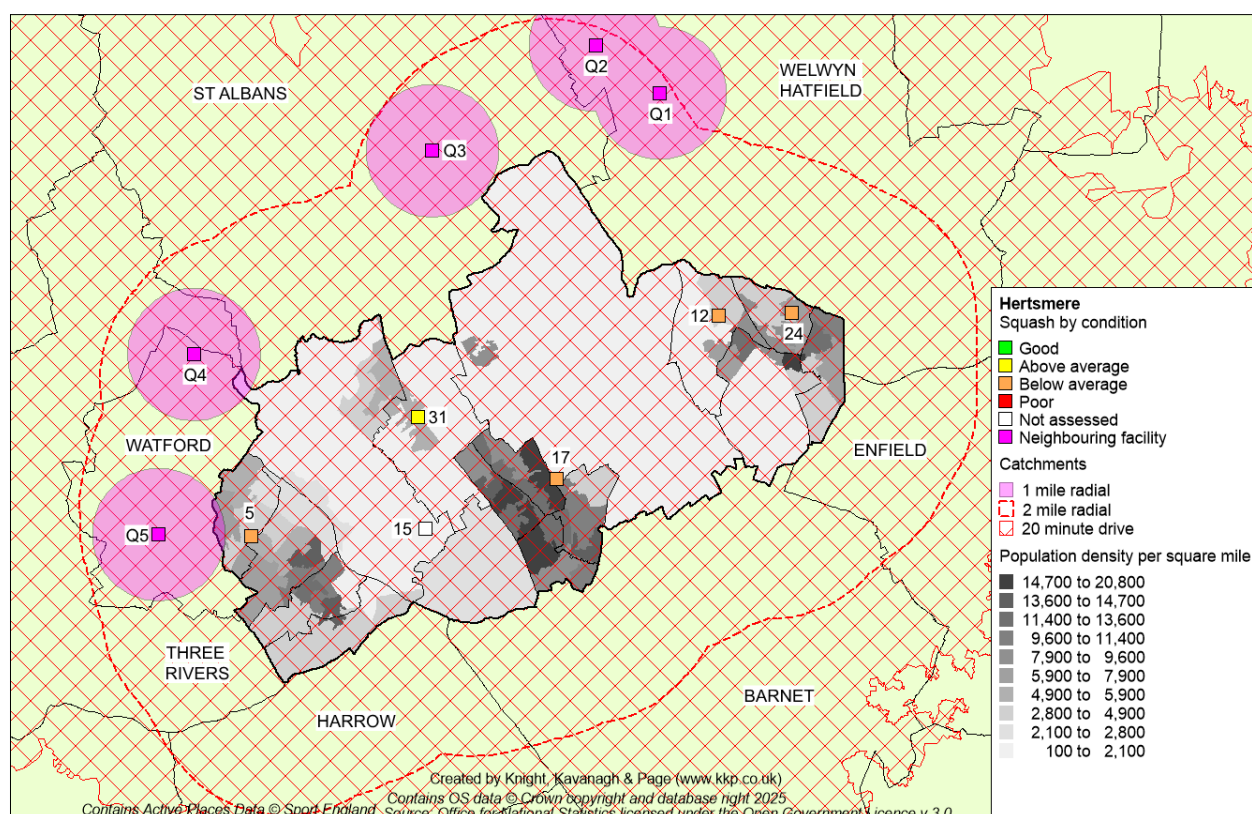


Table 7.3: Squash courts in neighbouring authorities within 20 minutes' drive time of Hertsmere

ID	Site	Type	Courts	Access	District
Q1	Hatfield Leisure Centre	Glass-backed	2	Pay and play	Welwyn Hatfield
Q2	Hertfordshire Sports Village	Normal	6	Pay and play	Welwyn Hatfield
Q3	Nuffield Health (St Albans)	Glass-backed	2	Reg. membership	St Albans
Q4	Watford Leisure Centre - Woodside	Normal	3	Pay and play	Watford
Q5	West Herts Sports Club	Normal	4	Reg. membership	Watford

Quality

Squash court quality in Hertsmere varies. Both Bushey Grove and Furzefield leisure centres each have two below average courts. They lack squash wall markings and the floors look tired and dated. The décor is also dated and they have poor quality halogen lighting. (It is important to note that squash court condition is a factor when considering demand and usage levels).

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Accessibility and availability

The whole Hertsmere population lives within a 20-minute drive of a squash facility within the borough. All courts can be accessed during the day, evenings and at weekends. Courts at Bushey Grove and Furzelefield leisure centres are accessible on a pay and play basis. Those at Next Gen Fitness and Radlett Lawn Tennis and Squash Club are accessible via a registered membership.

7.2: Demand

England Squash was invited to consult with regard to squash provision. Despite multiple attempts to contact, no response was received.

As noted, there are squash courts at Bushey Grove Leisure Centre and Furzelefield Leisure Centre. At the time of the audit, InspireAll highlighted that the limited use being made of the courts at Furzelefield Leisure Centre and that it would ideally re-purpose the courts to create a multi-purpose studio space. The courts at Bushey Grove Leisure Centre are well used by members and approximately 12 compete in the social league in place.

The one squash club in Hertsmere is Radlett Squash Club. It was invited to take part in consultation but no response was forthcoming. The following was obtained via desk research.

It is based at Radlett Lawn and Squash Club and has c.129 senior members. It plays and organises games both recreationally and competitively. It affiliates to England Squash and competes in the Herts and Middlesex Leagues. It operates seven days a week and utilises both courts for its programme, which includes training matches, box leagues, inter leagues and coaching. Alongside squash provision, the site has tennis courts and a fitness suite, which squash members also have access to as part of their membership.

7.3: Summary of key facts and issues – squash courts

Facility type	Squash	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are 16 squash courts at six sites in Hertsmere; 10 are traditional and six are glass-backed.	There is sufficient supply of squash courts to meet demand.
Quality	There are two good quality, four above average courts and 10 below average.	Continue current maintenance programme to ensure court quality remains high at Radlett Lawn Tennis and Squash Club. Improve court quality at Bushey Grove LC, Hertswood Academy and Next Gen Fitness.
Accessibility	All Hertsmere residents live within a 20-minute drive of a squash court.	-
Availability (Management and usage)	Pay and play options are available at two sites – Bushey Grove and Furzelefield leisure centres.	Continue to ensure that courts are well used and available at peak and off-peak times.

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Strategic summary

- ◀ Sites offering squash provision all report having spare court capacity on weekday daytimes.
- ◀ The public leisure sites could be encouraged to consider making a more accessible 'pay and play' offer and pricing option.
- ◀ Improve the quality of courts at Bushey Grove Leisure Centre, Hertswood Academy and Next Gen Fitness to increase their quality and attractiveness.
- ◀ Support the aspiration to convert the squash courts at Furze field Leisure Centre into an activity studio, given the courts are below average and receive limited usage.

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SECTION 8: GYMNASTICS AND TRAMPOLINING

In 2023 British Gymnastics released its new strategy – Leap Without Limits: A New Vision for a New Era. The strategy is developed as a shared vision for gymnastics across all four home nations.

To help achieve the vision It focuses on five ‘leaps’:

- ◆ **The Why Leap** - Nurturing and celebrating the positive impact of gymnastics on individuals, communities and wider society.
- ◆ **The Empowerment Leap** – Supporting everyone involved in gymnastics to play their part in making a positive difference.
- ◆ **The Experience Leap** – Making positive experiences and memories central to everything we do, at every stage, in every role.
- ◆ **The Creative Leap** – Encouraging and welcoming new ideas to support meaningful change.
- ◆ **The Together Leap** – Uniting the community, existing and new partners to maximise impact, learning and growth.

To bring the vision to life, British Gymnastics are working on the following actions:

- ◆ **Membership** – Develop a new more relevant membership offer that provides value for all its members, and an improved membership system.
- ◆ **Education** - Implement a reformed and reimagined approach to supporting the learning and development of the gymnastics workforce, ensuring it feels valued and supported by British Gymnastics and the clubs and delivery environments you operate within.
- ◆ **Community** – Celebrate and recognise the contribution and stories of those in the gymnastics community on British Gymnastics channels and more widely, including further developing the British Gymnastics Awards as an annual platform for this.
- ◆ **Reform** - Deliver all of the 40 actions British Gymnastics has committed to in Reform '25 over the next two years to create safe, positive and fair experiences for all in gymnastics, including a major Safe Sport campaign.
- ◆ **Events** - Work with its Technical Committees to agree a clearly defined and sustainable long-term national event programme for each discipline and develop new competitions and events at a recreational level.
- ◆ **Disability** - Work to build international support for our ambition for gymnastics to become a Paralympic sport, with the aim of agreeing a plan and pathway for this to become a reality.

The new strategy outlines six key impacts:

- ◆ More people enjoying the sport and its benefits, across all abilities, ages, and backgrounds, and as a gymnast, coach, club owner, official or fan.
- ◆ Everyone is safe, supported and is able and confident to speak up, whatever their role or involvement in gymnastics.
- ◆ More inspirational moments that are seen, shared and enjoyed by more people.
- ◆ The NGB membership experience is a positive one, which meets your needs, is easy from start to finish. and being a member of British Gymnastics is something that provides you with both pride and value.
- ◆ Members/participants feel connected to British Gymnastics and trust it to be positive custodians of this incredible sport.
- ◆ A united sport, where everyone is working together to ensure that collectively we deliver an uplifting gymnastics experience for all.

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8.1: Supply

Eight sites provide gymnastics in Hertsmere; of which none are dedicated facilities.

Figure 8.1: Gymnastics provision in Hertsmere

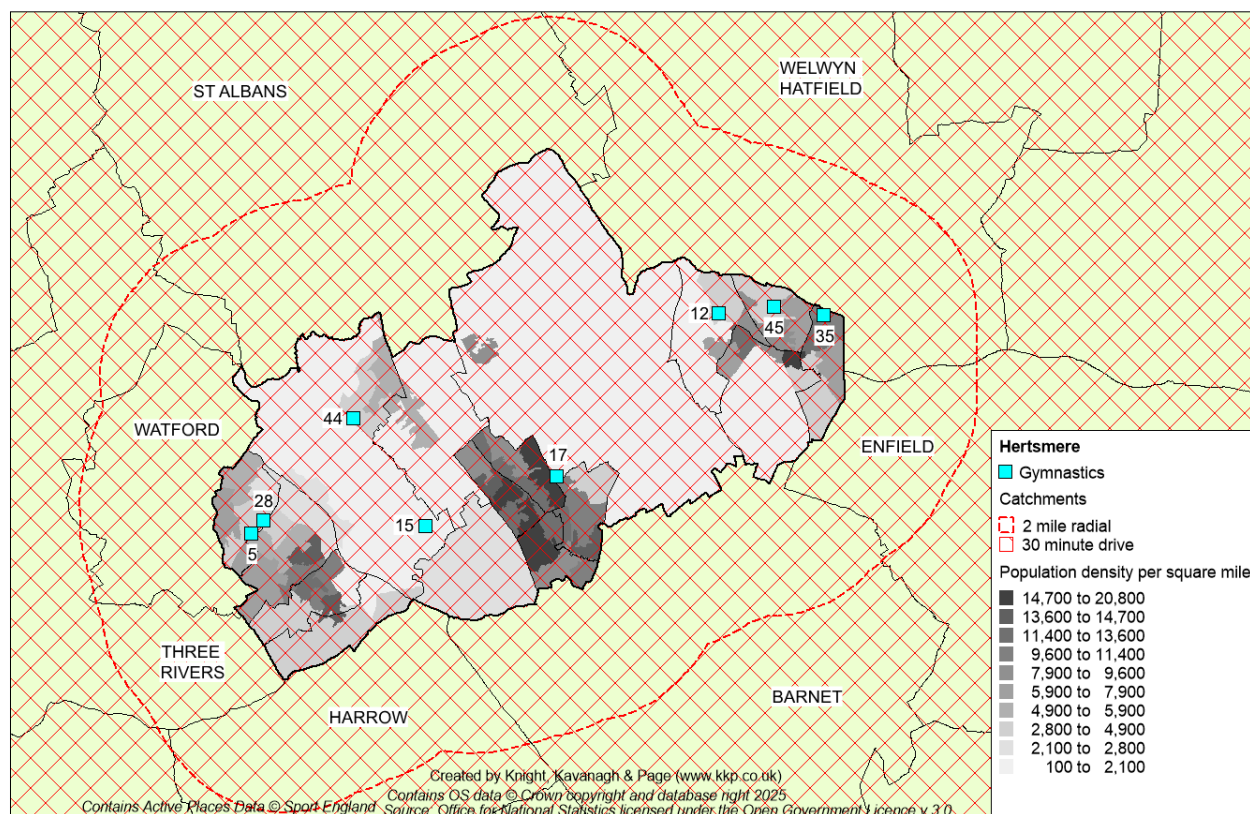


Table 8.1: Gymnastics facilities in Hertsmere

ID	Club	Dedicated	Site
5	High Springers Trampoline & Gymnastics Club	No	Bushey Grove Leisure Centre
12	Potters Bar Gymnastics Club	No	Furzeffield Leisure Centre
12	Zenith Trampolining Club	No	Furzeffield Leisure Centre
12	Elstree School of Gymnastics	No	Furzeffield Leisure Centre
15	E.J.B Gymnastics Club	No	Haberdashers' Askes Boys'
17	Elstree School of Gymnastics	No	Hertswood Academy
28	Osiris School of Gymnastics	No	Queens School
35	Rotate Gymnastics Club	No	Stormont Primary School
44	Radlett Gymnastics Club	No	Fairfield Junior School
45	Leaps and Bounds Gymnastics Club	No	Potters Bar United Reformed Church

Leisure centre in-house gymnastics provision if offered at Furzeffield Centre and Bushey Grove Leisure Centre catering for beginners pre-school to advanced.

The audit identified nine clubs in Hertsmere, of which all currently operate out of non-dedicated facilities. Facilities catering for gymnastics/trampolining are generally well located across the borough. Of these, six are British Gymnastics registered clubs with Potters Bar

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Gymnastics Club Osiris School of Gymnastics and Radlett Gymnastics Club not being currently regulated. Consultation with British Gymnastics confirm it is unable to support unregulated activity. However, it is open to conversations with clubs wishing to register with British Gymnastics in the future.

Accessibility and availability

The whole Hertsmere population lives within a 30-minute drive of gymnastics provision.

8.2: Demand

British Gymnastics reports that participation in gymnastics is increasing rapidly. It also reports substantial demand and that many clubs have waiting lists - restricting access to gymnastic activity due to lack of time within dedicated and generic facilities.

A key part of the NGB's strategy to increase participation is to support clubs, leisure providers and other partners to move to their own dedicated facilities, offering more time and space for classes.

It provides a range of products and programmes and expert assistance to support local delivery; gymnastic activities which are successfully driving membership growth and retention across the country.

British Gymnastics confirmed that supporting clubs to increase participation and expand provision as well as establishing dedicated facilities to further support clubs in their future development. It is aware that clubs in Hertsmere (in line with the national picture) are experiencing issues recruiting and retaining qualified coaches to deliver sessions.

Club consultation

There are nine gymnastics clubs in Hertsmere, who were invited to take part in consultation as part of the audit process. Five did so. British Gymnastics was also consulted so as to better understand each club's demand levels and facility requirements.

E.J.B Gymnastics Club was established in 2002. It reports that demand has increased in recent years. It uses the facilities at Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School as its main facility but also delivers sessions at Dr Challoner's Grammar School in Buckinghamshire to extend its delivery time. It currently runs sessions at Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings. Its Monday evening sessions run at Dr Challoner's Grammar School. The clubs would like gain access to a facility that allows for daytime sessions, particularly to enable it to cater to younger age groups.

It has c. 250 members, with a further 100 on its waiting list. It has considered moving to a dedicated facility; however, such spaces are not regularly available within the club's catchment.

Elstree School of Gymnastics has c.450 members and operates at Furzelefield Leisure Centre delivering daytime, evening and weekend classes. It also uses Hertswood Academy sports hall for additional evening and weekend classes. It offers a variety of sessions for toddlers, beginners, and advanced gymnasts and reports that membership has increased over the last three years taking it to capacity. It is actively seeking a larger and dedicated facility so that specialist equipment (such as sprung flooring and foam pits) can be permanently set up.

Leaps and Bounds Gymnastics Club is predominantly a recreational gymnastics club; however, some members have recently begun to compete in local competitions. It has c.150

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members, a number which has steadily increased over the last few years. It is currently located at Potters Bar United Reformed Church which it rents from the United Formed Church. The size of the hall at the venue limits attendance capacity.

Potters Bar Gymnastics Club has c.300 members and has a waiting list in place of c.100 members. It reports that its membership base has risen steadily over the last six years (since the pandemic). It operates out of the sports hall at Furzefield Leisure Centre on Monday evenings in Hertsmere. However, it mainly utilises facilities at Chancellor School in Hatfield (exported demand) on Tuesday and Friday evenings as well as Saturday mornings. It reports wanting some additional sessions at Furzefield Leisure Centre; however, it is competing with several sports on midweek evenings, hence it having to hire an additional facility.

Zenith Trampoline Club welcomes children and adults and those with disabilities and accommodates both recreational and competitive performers. It trains at the sports hall at Furzefield Leisure Centre running sessions on Mondays and Fridays 16.00-22.00 and Saturdays and Sundays between 09.99 and 13.00. It reports having sufficient access to the hall when required and is actively looking to increase its membership base.

8.3: Summary of key facts and issues - gymnastics

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific needs
Quantity	Five non-dedicated sites host gymnastics provision in Hertsmere.	Ensure that clubs which access dedicated provision have secure tenures and sufficient workforce capacity to futureproof continued access.
Quality	No quality issues were reported.	-
Accessibility	The whole of Hertsmere's population lives within a 30-minute drive of gymnastics provision.	-
Availability (Management & usage)	All clubs in Hertsmere report having capacity issues as a result of outgrowing their current facilities.	Support clubs to move to dedicated facilities to reduce waiting lists/increase participation.

Strategic summary

- ◆ The Council, in conjunction with clubs and British Gymnastics, should collaborate to ensure that clubs have access to dedicated provision and/or larger facilities to better meet demand and future access.
- ◆ HBC should consider how to encourage development of additional recreational gymnastics provision across the Authority, based on current demand.

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SECTION 9: INDOOR BOWLS

The five forms of bowls that are played indoors (flat/level green, crown green, long mat, short mat and carpet mat) each require a different venue and each format of the game has a different technical specification for their indoor facility.

Indoor flat/level green bowls is played on a purpose-built indoor green which complies with the laws of the sport of bowls. The NGB is English Indoor Bowling Association (EIBA). It requires a standard bowling green; a flat area 31-40 metres long divided into playing areas called rinks. The number of these varies, depending on the width of the green.

Crown green bowls requires a standard crown green, artificial grass (carpeted) area of approximately 38m square which is crowned i.e. higher in the centre than round the perimeter. Indoor crown greens are relatively rare – substantially less common than those provided for flat green bowls. The NGB is the British Crown Green Bowling Association (BCGBA).

Carpet bowls is played on a rectangular carpet (45 x 6 feet) that is rolled out. It can be accommodated in any indoor space large enough to accommodate the mats which come in different lengths. It tends to be played at a recreational level. The NGB is the English Carpet Bowls Association (ECBA).

Short mat bowls is typically played in sports halls, parish council rooms, outdoor bowls club pavilions and on indoor flat green bowls club greens. The NGB is the English Short Mat Bowling Association (SMBA). Long mat bowls is played on a rolled carpet typically laid on a sports hall floor. There are no ditches in this game. It is typically found in areas of low flat-green supply and/or where crown green bowls is played outdoors. There is no NGB for this version of the game.

An indoor bowling centre typically comprises a single flat green with a number of rinks and ancillary accommodation such as changing rooms, lounge/bar, viewing area, kitchen, office/meeting rooms and stores plus designated car parking. Ancillary accommodation scale varies according to the number of rinks available. A successful indoor bowls centre requires a combination of the right location, design, and financial and general management. Sport England²² guidelines on catchment for indoor bowls centres are set out to be interpreted in the light of local circumstances:

- ◀ Assume the majority of users live locally and not travel more than 30 minutes.
- ◀ Assume that 90% of users will travel by car or public transport, with the remainder by foot.
- ◀ As a guide, calculate demand on the basis of one rink per 14,000-17,000 total population.
- ◀ The number of rinks required can be related to the estimated number of members, assume 80-100 members per rink.

EIBA stated priorities are:

- ◀ Recruitment of participants.
- ◀ Retention of participants.
- ◀ Clubs are recommended to:
 - ◀ Develop and implement a robust sports development plan
 - ◀ Actively review the Sport England 'Buddle' website.
 - ◀ Actively promote the club in the local community amongst those who are able bodied and disabled. Wheelchair users and visually impaired people are particularly keen on the sport of bowls.
- ◀ Retention and improvement of facilities.
- ◀ New indoor facilities in areas of low-supply and high-demand.

²² Sport England Design Guidance Note Indoor Bowls 2005

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EIBA Vision 2025-2027

This plan focuses on: recruit and retain 45+ and recruit and retain 70+. Both markets require growth. The idea is that people aged 45+ need new versions/formats of the game to play and the 70+ will wish to continue with current formats. Its focus areas are:

- ◀ Recruit and Retain.
- ◀ Facilities – Build, Improve, Retain
- ◀ Inclusion
- ◀ Communications
- ◀ Commercial Activities
- ◀ Competitions
- ◀ Performance
- ◀ Governance

The EIBA “Recruit and Retain Strategy” advocates concentration on the family aspect of the sport. It is keen for its clubs to avail themselves of opportunities to “increase participation” and “improve the experience” of all able-bodied/disabled participants in bowls across all ages and gender.

Running alongside this is the Sport England funded development work provided jointly by the Indoor NGB (EIBA); Outdoor NGB (Bowls England) and the “Bowls Development Alliance” (BDA). Each NGB has two directors on the Board of BDA.

The Sport England funding for the 2022-2025 period, focuses on the delivery of:

- ◀ **Club hubs:** ensure that all clubs remain sustainably positioned at the heart of the communities, and there are good pathways to increase membership.
- ◀ **Communities:** develop healthy bowling communities, with good quality competitions, options to increase coaches and volunteers and healthy relationships between clubs.
- ◀ **Health and wellbeing:** support clubs promote health and wellbeing of members with a range of programmes and activities.
- ◀ **Inclusion:** ensure clubs are as inclusive as possible, promoting the sport to all including females and people from diverse communities.

Alongside these core objectives the BDA works with key partners on:

- ◀ **Safeguarding:** ensuring the sport is safe for everyone to play by working across all five NGBs (BE, EIBA, British Crown Green BA, English Short Mat BA and English Bowling Federation] to have policies and processes in place. Training is available to support the network of club safeguarding officers.
- ◀ **Disability:** the BDA works in partnership with Disability Bowls England, Activity Alliance, BE and the EIBA to ensure everyone regardless of disability can access the sport of bowls.
- ◀ **Women Can:** the BDA is driving a campaign alongside BE and the EIBA to encourage more women to play bowls, coach bowls and volunteer in bowls.
- ◀ **Equality & Diversity:** the BDA, BE and the EIBA are all striving to ensure the sport of bowls is as diverse as it can be.

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BDA Vision and Strategy 2022-2027

This Strategy focuses on the new era of collaboration across the bowls network. Its vision is to place bowls at the heart of every community as an accessible sport for all. It has also outlined strategic priorities, which are as follows:

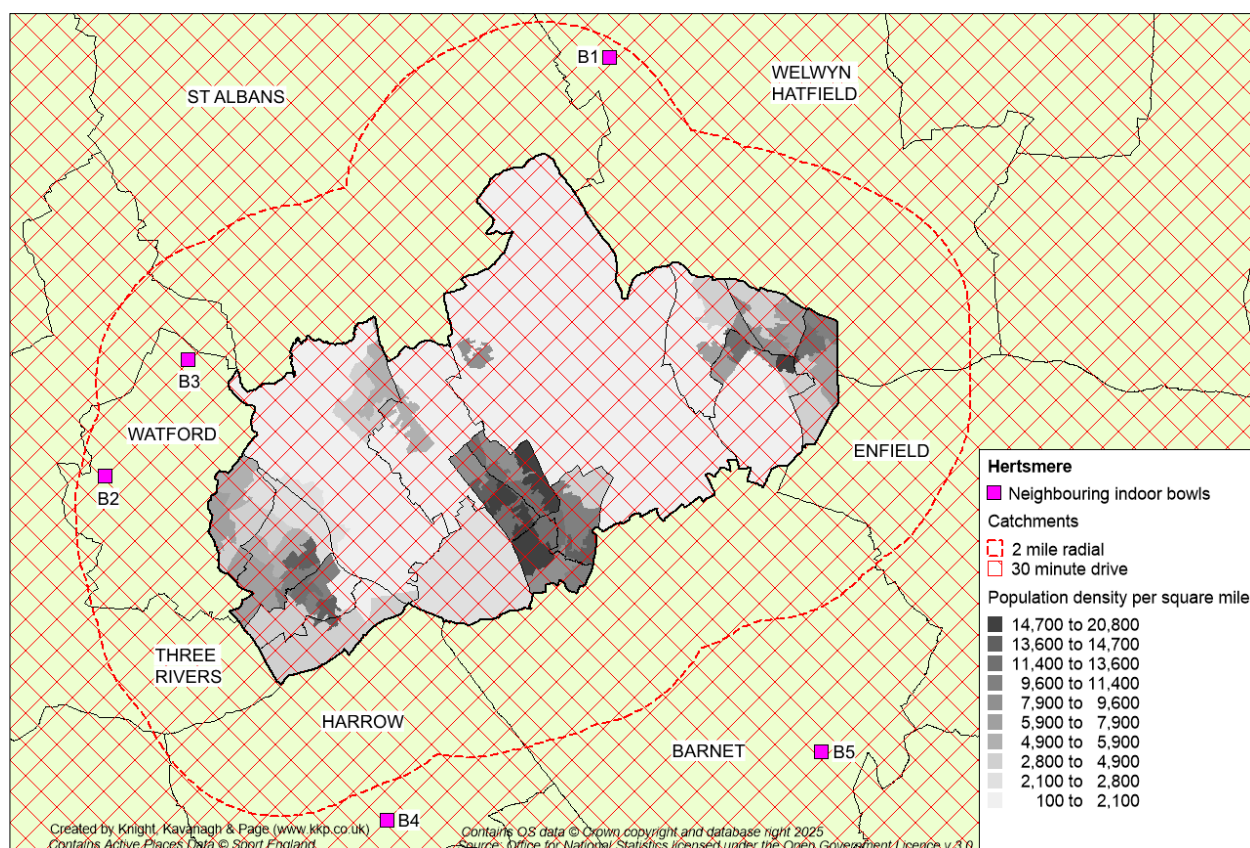
- ▶ **Build partnerships and communities:** to ensure that its role in the 'bowls family' preserves the important connection with our partners and key stakeholders through the continuation of shared goals and objectives, aligning to our organisation's vision of transforming bowls into an accessible sport for all.
- ▶ **Educate and empower:** to Increase the impact we have on tackling inequalities through a more connected and educated volunteer workforce who fully support our efforts at a local level and who represent a younger, more diverse group of people, ensuring the sport has sustainability into the future.
- ▶ **Diversify and innovate:** to continue to take the lead on driving inclusion with the view to improving the culture of our sport through more inclusive and innovative practices on the ground, linking into the whole sport inclusion strategy.
- ▶ **Sustain and grow:** to ensure we have tried and tested sustainability plans in place to recruit and retain volunteers and grow participation at our clubs, working closely with our wider network to broaden our reach and influence.

9.1: Supply

Quantity and quality

There is no dedicated indoor bowls facility in Hertsmere. There are, however, five indoor bowls facilities within 30 minutes' drive time of the Borough, as shown in the figure and table below.

Figure 9.1: Indoor bowls facilities within a 30 minutes' drive time of Hertsmere



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Table 9.1: Indoor bowls facilities within a 30-minutes' drive

ID	Site	Rinks	Access	District
B1	Hatfield Bowls Club	3	Sports club / CA	Welwyn Hatfield
B2	Herts Bowling Club	6	Sports club / CA	Watford
B3	Watford Indoor Bowls Club	6	Sports club / CA	Watford
B4	Herga Indoor Bowls Club	6	Sports club / CA	Harrow
B5	Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club	8	Sports club / CA	Barnet

Accessibility

The whole Hertsmere's population lives within a 30-minute drive of an indoor bowls facility. Existing facilities in neighbouring authorities are located to the west and north of the authority boundary, meaning residents in the centre and east of the borough have to travel further to access provision. The more densely populated town of Borehamwood, Elstree and Potters Bar are impacted by this.

Availability

The indoor bowls facilities at Hatfield Bowls Club, Herts Bowling Club, Watford Indoor Bowls Club, Herga Indoor Bowls Club and Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club can be accessed via membership of the relevant sports club/community association.

9.2: Demand

Consultation with EIBA suggests that there is currently sufficient provision within the recommended 30 minutes to accommodate both current and future demand. (Demand for indoor bowls facilities identified from outdoor bowls clubs will be captured in the Hertsmere PPOSS 2026).

9.3: Summary of key facts and issues – indoor bowls

Facility type	Indoor bowls	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There is no indoor bowls facility in Hertsmere. Three sites in neighbouring authorities are accessible to district residents.	There is no identified need for indoor bowls provision within the area, there is sufficient within 30 minutes' drive time catchment.
Quality	-	-
Accessibility	All residents live within a 30-minute drive of an indoor bowls facility in a neighbouring authority.	
Availability (Management and usage)	Hatfield Bowls Club, Herts Bowling Club, Watford Indoor Bowls Club, Herga Indoor Bowls Club and Glebelands Indoor Bowls Club are within 30-minutes of the Hertsmere border.	-

Strategic summary

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- ◀ The increasing number of older people makes it likely that demand will increase but not to the extent that a new indoor centre can be justified.

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SECTION 10: INDOOR AND COVERED COURT TENNIS

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) governs tennis in Britain, from grassroots participation through to the professional game. The work that it does includes a focus on the following areas:

Making tennis a sport for anyone to play, through increasing participation and access– for instance, through **LTA Youth**, its innovative junior programme created to help more children enjoy the benefits of playing and staying in tennis; through **Open Court**, its disability tennis programme which has helped a record number of disabled people enjoy the benefits of tennis; through **SERVES**, its programme that takes tennis right in to the heart of new communities across Britain; or through the range of national, regional and local tennis **competitions** that it delivers for hundreds of thousands of players throughout the year.

Transforming tennis in Britain by working with everyone in the sport– for instance, through its **Inclusion Strategy** for tennis in Britain that aims to see tennis to lead the way for inclusion and diversity in sport; through its **safeguarding**, ensuring it remains safe for all; by working with Government and local authorities to deliver a multi-million pound investment programme in **parks tennis facilities** for local communities across the country; and through the development of **padel** as an exciting new form of tennis that's easy to play, fun for all ages and abilities and extremely sociable, and will help to engage new audiences.

Tennis Opened Up

The LTAs strategic vision is 'Tennis Opened Up'. This is based on an approach that anyone can play; whatever their motivation or ability, from all communities and backgrounds. At any age and for a whole lifetime, tennis provides physical, social and mental rewards both on and off the court. The LTA wants tennis and the benefits it provides to be open to as many people as possible, across the whole of Britain.

The LTAs mission is to grow tennis by making it welcoming, enjoyable and inspiring to everyone.

Volunteers, coaches, officials and tennis venues all play an essential role in the future of the sport; without them, tennis can't exist. It is committed to supporting them and working with a whole range of other organisations and individuals connected to tennis, so that together it can grow tennis and open it up to many more people.

10.1: Supply

Indoor tennis is based on specialist facilities which appeal beyond local authority boundaries. This report considers provision within a 30-minutes' drive time catchment to demonstrate accessibility. There is one indoor tennis facility in the Borough at David Lloyd (Bushey) it has 15 courts.

Quality

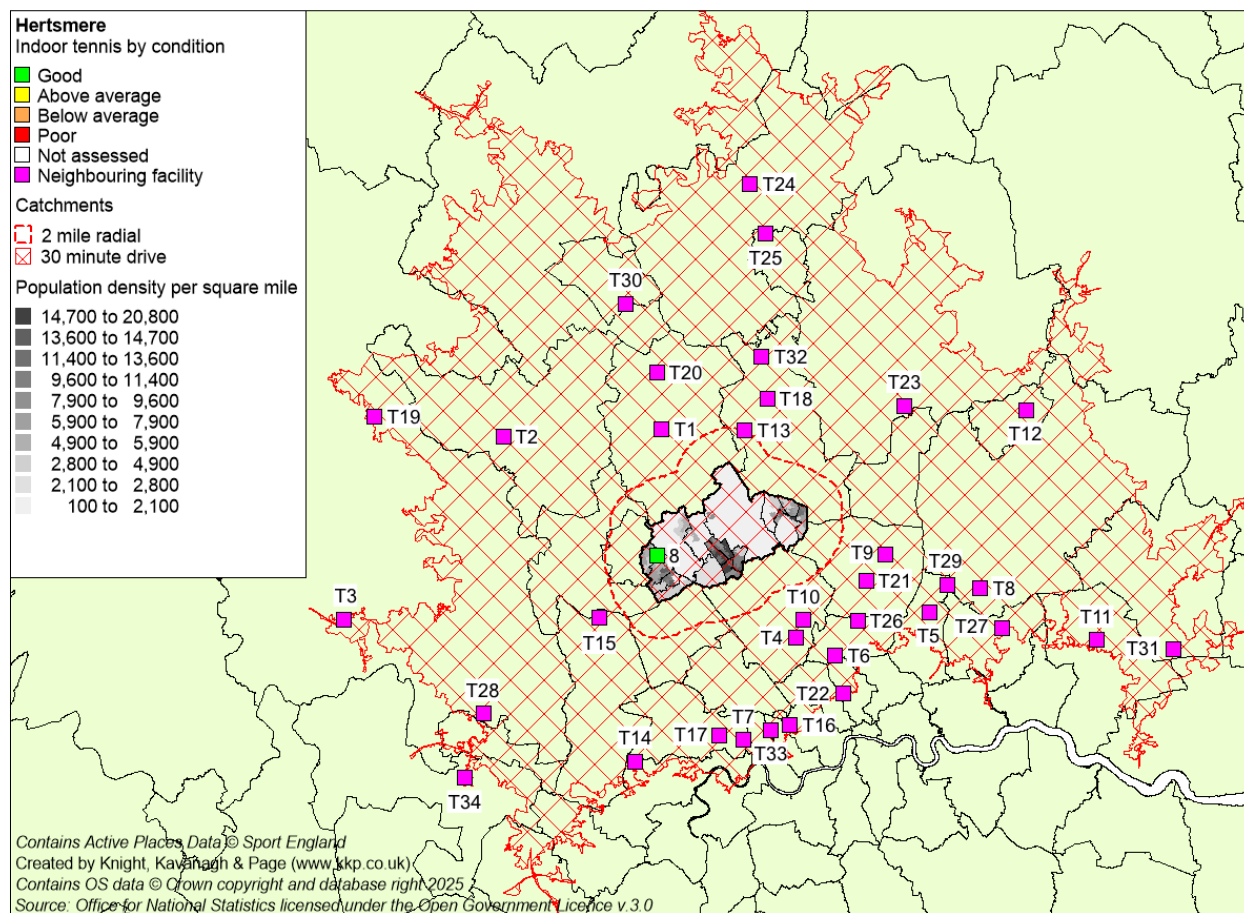
The 15 courts at David Lloyd (Bushey) are good quality and have been in receipt of significant refurbishment and regular maintenance. They were last resurfaced in 2025. The acrylic surface is still in good condition, with good quality LED lighting, modern décor and good condition nets.

Table 10.1: Indoor tennis courts in Hertsmere

ID	Site name	Type	Courts	Access type	Condition
8	David Lloyd (Bushey)	Acrylic	15	Reg. membership	Good

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Figure 10.1: Indoor tennis facilities in Hertsmere and within 30 minutes' drive time



34 facilities are located within a 30-minute drive of the Hertsmere boundary.

Table 10.2: Indoor tennis provision in neighbouring authorities

ID	Site	Type	Courts	Surface	Access	District
T1	Batchwood Golf and Sports Centre	Traditional	6	Acrylic	Pay and play	St Albans
T2	Berkhamsted Lawn Tennis & Squash Rackets Club	Traditional	2	Acrylic	Sports club/ CA	Dacorum
T3	Bucks Indoor Tennis Centre	Traditional	4	Acrylic	Pay and play	Bucks
T4	Chandos Lawn Tennis Club	Airhall	4	Acrylic	Sports club/ CA	Barnet
T5	Chingford School of Tennis Club	Airhall (seasonal)	3	Macadam	Pay and play	Waltham Forest
T6	Coolhurst Lawn Tennis and Squash Rackets Club	Airhall (seasonal)	2	Macadam	Sports club / CA	Haringey
T7	David Lloyd (Acton Park)	Airhall (seasonal)	4	Artificial grass	Reg. membership	Ealing
T8	David Lloyd (Chigwell)	Airhall (seasonal)	2	Macadam	Reg. membership	Epping Forest

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T8	David Lloyd (Chigwell)	Airhall (seasonal)	2	Artificial grass	Reg. membership	Epping Forest
T8	David Lloyd (Chigwell)	Traditional	8	Textile	Reg. membership	Epping Forest
T9	David Lloyd (Enfield)	Traditional	6	Textile	Reg. membership	Enfield
T10	David Lloyd (Finchley)	Airhall (seasonal)	5	Artificial grass	Reg. membership	Barnet
T10	David Lloyd (Finchley)	Traditional	10	Textile	Reg. membership	Barnet
T11	David Lloyd (Gidea Park)	Traditional	7	Textile	Reg. membership	Havering
T12	David Lloyd (Harlow)	Traditional	3	Acrylic	Reg. membership	Harlow
T13	David Lloyd (Hatfield)	Traditional	3	Textile	Reg. membership	Welwyn Hatfield
T13	David Lloyd (Hatfield)	Traditional	7	Acrylic	Reg. membership	Welwyn Hatfield
T14	David Lloyd (Heston)	Airhall (seasonal)	3	Macadam	Reg. membership	Hounslow
T14	David Lloyd (Heston)	Traditional	7	Textile	Reg. membership	Hounslow
T15	David Lloyd (Northwood)	Airhall	3	Acrylic	Reg. membership	Hillingdon
T15	David Lloyd (Northwood)	Traditional	11	Textile	Reg. membership	Hillingdon
T16	David Lloyd (Notting Hill)	Traditional	3	Acrylic	Reg. membership	Westminster
T17	Ealing Lawn Tennis Club	Airhall	3	Macadam	Sports club / CA	Ealing
T18	Gosling Sports Park	Airhall	4	Acrylic	Pay and play	Welwyn Hatfield
T18	Gosling Sports Park	Frame & fabric	4	Clay	Pay and play	Welwyn Hatfield
T18	Gosling Sports Park	Traditional	9	Acrylic	Pay and play	Welwyn Hatfield
T19	Halton Tennis Centre	Airhall	3	Acrylic	Reg. membership	Buckinghamshire
T19	Halton Tennis Centre	Airhall	3	Clay	Reg. membership	Buckinghamshire
T20	Harpenden Lawn Tennis Club	Airhall (seasonal)	3	Artificial grass	Sports club / CA	St Albans
T21	Hazelwood Sports Club	Airhall (seasonal)	3	Acrylic	Sports club / CA	Enfield
T21	Hazelwood Sports Club	Airhall (seasonal)	3	Clay	Sports club / CA	Enfield
T21	Hazelwood Sports Club	Traditional	3	Acrylic	Sports club / CA	Enfield
T22	Islington Tennis Centre and Gym	Traditional	6	Acrylic	Reg. membership	Islington

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T23	Legends Tennis Centre	Airhall	4	Acrylic	Sports club / CA	East Hertfordshire
T24	Letchworth Sports and Tennis Club	Traditional	3	Acrylic	Pay and play	North Hertfordshire
T25	Lister Tennis Club	Airhall	2	Acrylic	Pay and play	Stevenage
T26	New River Sport and Fitness	Airhall	4	Other	Pay and play	Haringey
T27	Redbridge Sports & Leisure	Traditional	8	Acrylic	Reg. membership	Redbridge
T28	Stoke Park Club	Traditional	3	Textile	Reg. membership	Buckinghamshire
T29	The Connaught Club	Airhall (seasonal)	2	Acrylic	Reg. membership	Waltham Forest
T29	The Connaught Club	Traditional	2	Macadam	Reg. membership	Waltham Forest
T30	Venue 360	Traditional	2	Acrylic	Sports club / CA	Luton
T31	Virgin Active Clearview Health & Racquet Club	Airhall (seasonal)	1	Artificial grass	Reg. membership	Brentwood
T31	Virgin Active Clearview Health & Racquet Club	Traditional	6	Textile	Reg. membership	Brentwood
T32	Welwyn Tennis Club	Airhall (seasonal)	2	Artificial grass	Reg. membership	Welwyn Hatfield
T33	Westway Sports & Fitness Centre	Traditional	7	Acrylic	Pay and play	Kensington and Chelsea
T34	Windsor Lawn Tennis Club	Traditional	3	Acrylic	Sports club / CA	Windsor and Maidenhead

Accessibility and availability

Almost the whole Hertsmere population lives within a 30-minute drive of a facility with indoor tennis courts. There are no known new indoor tennis facility developments in the borough.

10.2: Demand

The LTA has recently restructured its strategic approach to target key national focus areas, ultimately to grow participation. Future investment in facilities will be based on detailed analysis of potential demand throughout the UK. It has identified 72 priority target areas for development of new indoor courts in the UK of which Hertsmere is not one.

Demand for indoor tennis provision at David Lloyd (Bushey) is unknown due to a lack of response to the consultation requests. It is presumed that courts are well used by members.

There is a need to monitor demand for indoor tennis courts at outdoor court venues. This will be captured in the Hertsmere PPOSS 2026.

10.3: Padel tennis

Padel tennis is relatively new to Great Britain and is growing in popularity, particularly since its recognition as a sport and integration within the LTA. It is played mainly in a doubles format on an enclosed court and can be played in groups of mixed ages and abilities.

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To grow the sport, the LTA is focused on improving the infrastructure and the coach education pathway. At the end of 2020, there were 87 courts, whereas there were 688 at the end of 2024 and this will grow significantly over the next 5 years. The current figure has now passed 1,100 courts in the UK (approx. 400 venues).

The LTA became the governing body for Padel in 2020 and is committed to a vision of padel opened up. The LTA's mission is to grow it by making it accessible, welcoming, enjoyable and inspiring. It is working to grow the visibility of padel and increase the annual number of players from 129,00 to 400,000 with 1,000 courts in the UK by 2026.

Padel court supply and demand

To assist local authorities to strategically plan for padel provision across the authority, the LTA has established the number of courts that can be sustained – based on population density and padel demand. Figures provided form a start point for conversation and strategic planning. The suggested number is not a target or a cap, simply an indication that the LTA has confidence that there is sufficient demand for the number of courts identified. In areas where the sport is more established there is likely to be higher demand. The current LTA estimate of the number of courts for which there is demand in Hertsmere is nine. At present, there are three covered padel courts (at David Lloyd Bushey) and three outdoor padel courts at Bushey Grove Leisure Centre, meaning a current shortfall of three.

Planning permission has been granted for the installation of a canopy over the three outdoor padel courts at Bushey Grove Leisure Centre (23/0375/FUL). Similarly, planning permission has been approved for two outdoor courts at Borehamwood FC.

There are also planning applications that have been submitted at Metropolitan Police Sports Club (25/1322/FUL- nine outdoor courts), Tabard Rugby Club (four outdoor courts).

Once the above courts have been considered, this will mean an oversupply of padel courts in Hertsmere (total 21 padel courts). Although, it should be noted only the courts at Bushey Grove Leisure Centre will be covered (indoor provision), whilst the remaining courts will be located outdoors and uncovered. For further information, see the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy.

Demand at David Lloyd Bushey is high with few courts available from 18:00 on weekday evenings, however, weekend afternoon demand is lower. Courts at David Lloyd are only available to members, so demand levels were not obtained. Based on LTA calculations and demand at David Lloyd Bushey, there is sufficient demand to validate the development of additional padel courts in the borough.

10.3: Summary of key facts and issues – indoor tennis

Facility type	Indoor tennis	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	David Lloyd (Bushey) is the sole facility offering indoor tennis in Hertsmere, with 15 courts.	Indoor tennis provision is in reasonable supply. No planned changes to the level of provision are evident. Hertsmere is not an LTA priority area for investment in indoor tennis. There is calculated demand for six more padel courts.
Quality	All 15 courts are rated as good quality having been refurbished in 2025.	-

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Accessibility	All residents live within a 30 minutes' drive time of an indoor tennis facility.	-
Availability (Management and usage)	David Lloyd (Bushey) offers access via registered membership. There is no pay and play access facility.	-

Strategic summary

- ♦ The LTA has not identified Hertsmere as a priority area for an indoor tennis facility. However, the LTA is looking at all potential sites across the Country that could become covered and floodlit to enable more year-round play.
- ♦ There is no additional specific demand for indoor tennis provision in the borough, although there is calculated demand for six more padel courts. If the above planning permission is applied, this will mean an oversupply of padel courts in Hertsmere.
- ♦ HBC should monitor demand for indoor tennis facilities at outdoor court venues (see the PPOSS 2026).

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SECTION 11: COMMUNITY CENTRES AND VILLAGE HALLS

11.1: Introduction

Community and village halls often fulfil an important role providing informal physical activity opportunity for residents who are unable or lack the confidence/means to access larger more formal leisure facilities. They are usually multi-functional, providing places for meetings, socialising and for sports and recreational clubs and activities. In more isolated areas, a church hall or a sports pavilion can also serve a range of functions depending on its size.

11.2: Supply

The 20 village/community halls in Hertsmere received physical or virtual assessment plus consultation to assess community use. Where not feasible, desk research informed the audit.

Figure 11.1: Village and community halls in Hertsmere

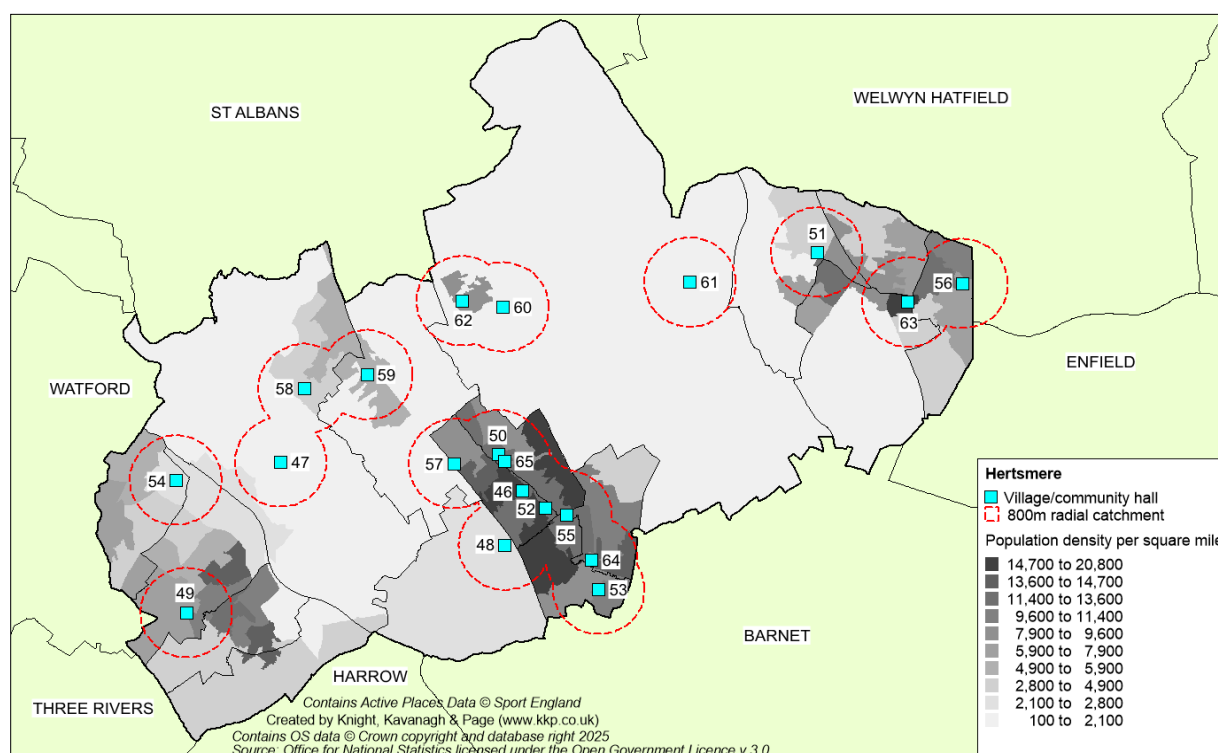


Table 11.1: Village halls/community centres in Hertsmere

ID	Name	ID	Name
46	Aberford Park Community Centre	56	Oakmere Youth and Community Centre
47	Aldenham War Memorial Hall	57	Organ Hall Community Centre
48	Allum Hall & Manor House	58	Phillimore Community Centre
49	Bushey Community Centre	59	Radlett Village Institute
50	Community Hub	60	Shenley Village Hall
51	Elm Court Youth & Community Centre	61	South Mimms Village Hall
52	Fairway Hall	62	The Chapel
53	Farriers Way Community Centre	63	The Clayton Centre
54	Hartspring Lane Community Centre	64	Three Ways Community Centre
55	Maxwell Park Community Centre	65	Windsor Hall

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Many of the 20 village/community halls in the borough serve less densely populated areas and settlements. All sites provide some form of community use. Radial catchment modelling demonstrates the good access to village and community hall provision in Hertsmere. Approximately 54.7% of the borough population live within 800 metres (a 10-minute walk) of a village or community hall with community access. They potentially offer different types of physical activity which are relevant to the local communities which they serve.

Availability

A wide range of providers own/operate village/community halls across the faith, charitable and education sectors providing a similarly wide range of physical, arts and cultural activity. Patterns of community use vary according to geographic location, local demand and provider agency orientation. Community/village halls tend to be able to provide opportunity during daytimes when venues such as schools are not available. They also cater for substantial weekend use and can be more cost effective than hiring facilities on school sites.

Desk research was undertaken to ascertain levels of facilities' use across the borough. Although community centres generally rely on volunteers to operate, many offer facilities to the community at the times needed i.e. morning, afternoon and evening. Activities tend to reflect the needs of the local community; the different types include:

Dance	Fitness	Physical activity	Sport
Tea dance Rock and roll dancing Children's dance Adult tap dance	Zumba Pilates Boot camp Keep fit	Aerobics (legs bums & tums) Yoga Tai Chi	Martial arts Karate Table tennis Badminton Indoor bowls

11.3: Demand

Audit research indicates that a good range of local sport, physical activity, arts and cultural activity is on offer for residents in Hertsmere. Despite this, many community centres have spare capacity. They can play an important role in ensuring older people, women and other under-represented groups have access to facilities and contribute to increasing physical activity among the inactive or retaining those already involved. Further analysis is required to understand whether, and the extent to which, activities in these facilities can further meet the needs of the local population.

11.4: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment finding	Specific facility needs
Quantity	The 20 village and community halls in Hertsmere are distributed across the borough, generally serving smaller population areas.	Ensure that smaller halls located within community centres continue to serve the local community.
Quality	No quality rating has been produced for any site.	Ensure that halls are regularly refurbished to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
Accessibility	There is a good level of accessibility; 54.7% of the population lives within 800m of a smaller hall.	Identify options to make more use of existing and/or to develop new community provision to serve current/future demand.
Availability (Management and usage)	All sites appear to have some level of spare capacity.	Support the work of village/community hall managers to ensure that usage levels are optimised and that activities at each reflect/support the need of local people.

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SECTION 12: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategy which follows will take account of the findings of this needs assessment, the district's demographic make-up and the council's vision. There is a general requirement to continue to invest in sports facilities in Hertsmere to ensure that they are fit for purpose for the 21st century (e.g., welcoming, clean, attractive, flexible spaces, wide programme offer, ability to learn to swim cost-effective to manage and operate etc). This should lead to increased participation and a more active borough. Strategy recommendations are likely to be predicated upon some or all of the following:

- ◀ In line with the HBC's carbon reduction targets, ensure that existing facilities are made as energy efficient as possible, and that any new development considers energy efficiency as a high priority.
- ◀ Develop a more comprehensive system to, as early as possible, identify and tackle ongoing investment, maintenance, and refurbishment requirements to protect and improve existing sports facilities.
- ◀ Undertake a management options appraisal to determine who will operate the leisure centres post InspireAll contract end in 2032.
- ◀ At an early stage, invest in the public leisure centre sports hall stock. Both Bushey Grove Leisure Centre and Furzefield Leisure Centre are below average in quality.
- ◀ Develop a medium/long term approach of refurbishing/replacing the public leisure centres, given the age of provision especially Furzefield Leisure Centre. This should be prioritised rather than investment into new facilities. Hertsmere's centres are operating beyond their reasonable life expectancies, inefficient (albeit that they are well used and in high demand) and require investment to improve quality and remain operational.
- ◀ Based on the KKP audit and FPM analysis, it is crucial that the existing supply of sports hall and swimming pool provision is invested in to improve quality of these facilities rather than the development of new provision.
- ◀ In the proceeding Strategy document, the new settlement at Bowmans Cross in the north of the Borough will be run as a scenario to understand the additional demand generated and potential provision required as well as the other housing growth areas across Hertsmere.
- ◀ Continually review programming at all public leisure sites to ensure that the most popular activities are available at peak times. This should include options for pay and play swimming, learn to swim and club use.
- ◀ Collaborate with school sites to ensure that sports hall quality remains at/rises to an appropriate standard and that their venues continue to be made available for community use.
- ◀ Collaborate with educational sites to look at operational processes whereby, wherever possible, they remain open for the maximum possible period of time for community use throughout the year. In addition to seeking to apply innovative solutions to help tackle this issue, clubs need to be supported and offered alternatives during the periods in which exam tables take up sports hall space.
- ◀ Given the projected population increase in those residents over 65 years of age, seek opportunities to support providers to increase activities and opportunities for this group.
- ◀ Ensure that potential members can easily view the cost of leisure centre membership and complete an online sign-up process without the need to wait to be contacted by a staff member. This would fall more in line with competitors' membership strategies.
- ◀ Building on the above, ensure that public leisure centre memberships and specific activities are available to people living in the Borough's more deprived communities at an appropriate price point and that the mechanisms used to promote this are more prominent.
- ◀ Ensure that any future facilities meet local authority carbon reduction targets whilst meeting the needs of local clubs e.g., via provision of adequate changing facilities and meeting sport-specific specifications such as suitable run off spaces in sports halls for basketball, wall colouring appropriate for badminton, volleyball line markings and posts.

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- ◀ When available, commission a Sport England Facilities Planning Model assessment for sports halls and swimming pools to provide an additional layer of insight to the above assessment by measuring the potential impact of new population growth at a spatial level.
- ◀ Look to support clubs seeking to access different facilities to enable them to continue to grow participation. Sports to which this applies include badminton, basketball, archery, table tennis, gymnastics & trampolining and swimming.
- ◀ Consider whether health/physical activity referral activity could be delivered in village and community halls due to the large supply and good distribution of facilities.
- ◀ Where new developments generate an increase in demand secure capital sums to contribute to providing additional facilities and secure community use agreements at any new or replacement educational sports hall site.
- ◀ Support other developments (via planning, developer contributions and officer expertise) to increase levels of sport and physical activity in the wider community.