



CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL  
INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT & STRATEGY

NEEDS ASSESSMENT  
DECEMBER 2024

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## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Chelmsford City Council (CCC) commissioned Knight Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) to produce an Indoor & Outdoor Sports Assessment and Strategy (ISAS) and to update its Open Space Study. Collectively, this work has produced the following published documents which will provide evidence to support the development of an updated Chelmsford Local Plan:

- Indoor Sports Needs Assessment
- Indoor Sports Strategy and Action Plan
- Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Assessment
- Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy and Action Plan
- Open Space Study.

This is the Chelmsford City Council (CCC) Indoor Sports Needs Assessment Report for the period 2024-2041. This replaces the previous Indoor Sports Assessment, completed in 2016. The scope of that document included an assessment of all sports halls larger than three courts, swimming pools, health and fitness suites, indoor bowls, indoor tennis, athletics, squash and village/community halls. Since that time there have been numerous changes to provision, along with increasing demand.

This report is, therefore, a detailed assessment of current provision of indoor and built sports facilities within the Chelmsford administrative area, identifying need (demand) and gaps (deficiencies in provision). The 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 Authority with reference to a Toolkit for provision.

The audit was conducted between October 2023 and January 2024. 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.

Separate playing pitch and open space needs assessments have been commissioned and are concurrently being developed. The inter-relationship between the portfolio of documents must be noted as some sports covered by the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOS) also access indoor facilities for matches/training or use such areas on an informal basis. Similarly, there are indoor sports venues which feature playing pitches and/or other outdoor facilities.

### 1.2: Scope of the project

This report provides detail as to what exists in the Authority, its condition, location, availability and overall quality. It considers demand for facilities based on population distribution, planned growth, and takes into consideration 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, combat sports, ice rinks and village halls/community centres. In delivering this report KKP has:

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- ◀ Individually audited identified sports halls (conventional i.e., 3+ court halls) swimming pools (minimum size 160m<sup>2</sup>), 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.
- ◀ Sought to identify the extent to which delivery of leisure facilities is undertaken with full reference to the corporate strategies of the Council and other relevant strategic influences.
- ◀ Identified good practice/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.

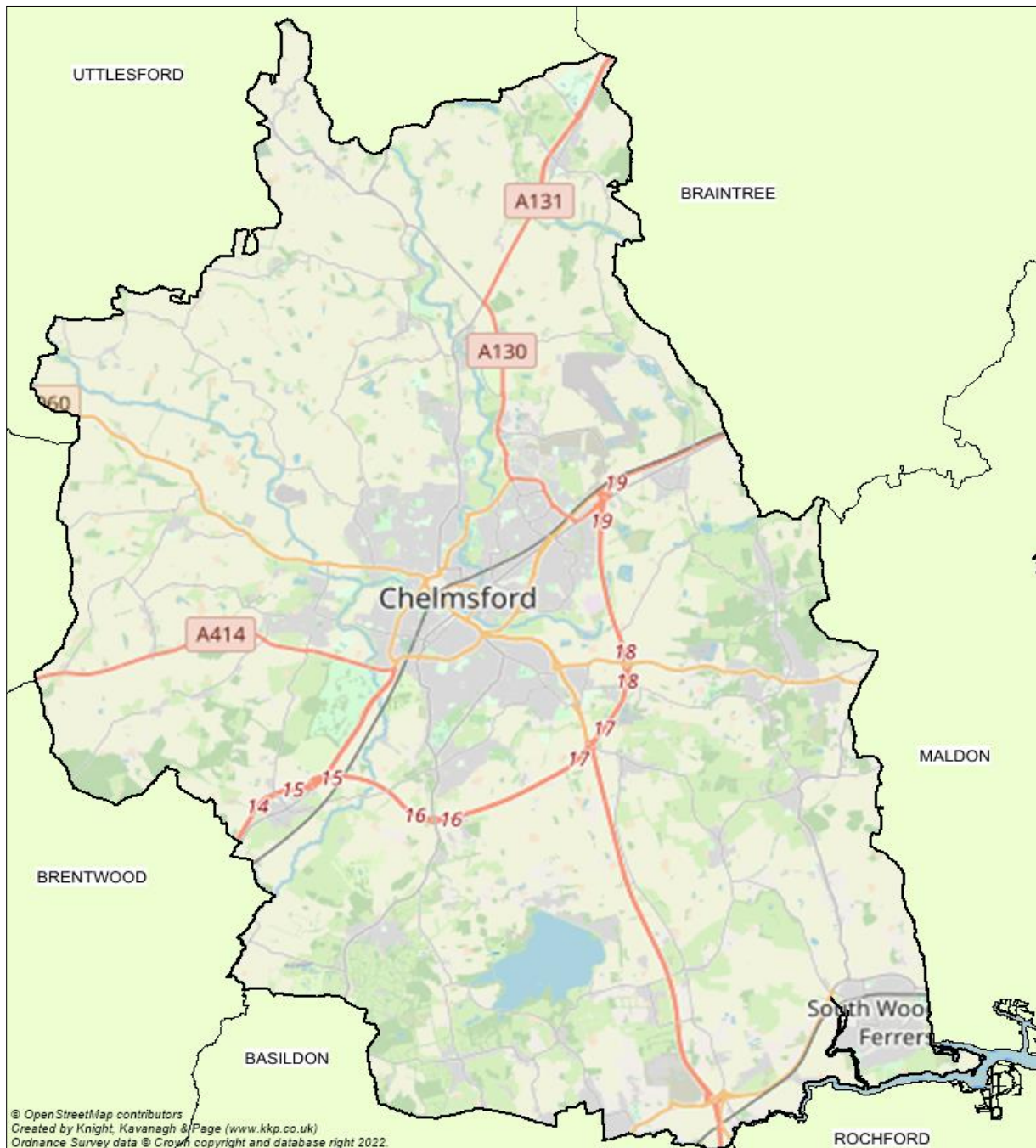
This process follows the Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide (ANOG) methodology for assessing indoor sports need, developed by Sport England. It also accords with relevant paragraphs of the most up-to-date version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

## 1.3: Background

Chelmsford is the County town of Essex, with a strong economy, good transport connections, high quality of life and attractive environment. It is considered a major draw for employment, shopping, leisure and one of the best places to live in the United Kingdom. It is also forecast to be the major growth location for new homes and jobs in Essex over the period of its revised local plan (to 2041). Along with the City of Chelmsford, the Council's administrative area includes the riverside town of South Woodham Ferrers and villages set within attractive countryside, as shown in Figure 1.1 overleaf.

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Figure 1.1: Chelmsford administrative area with main roads



Chelmsford is 30 minutes from London by train, and it is estimated that 14,000 people per day currently commute between the City and the Capital. Major roads in the Authority include the A130/A131, which links Chelmsford to Braintree and southern Essex, and the A414, which travels west linking the City to the M11. The principal roads that connect Chelmsford to the rest of the strategic road network are the A12, A131, A130, A132 and A414. These roads together with the rail network are heavily used, particularly given the proximity to and connectivity with London.

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## 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.

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 Authority.
- ◀ Section 3 - description of methodology employed to assess provision.
- ◀ Section 4 - assessment of sport halls 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.
- ◀ Section 11 – assessment of indoor athletics.
- ◀ Section 12- assessment of combat sports.
- ◀ Section 13- assessment of ice rinks.
- ◀ Section 14- assessment of village/community halls.
- ◀ Section 15 – initial strategic recommendations.

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## SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

### 2.1: National context

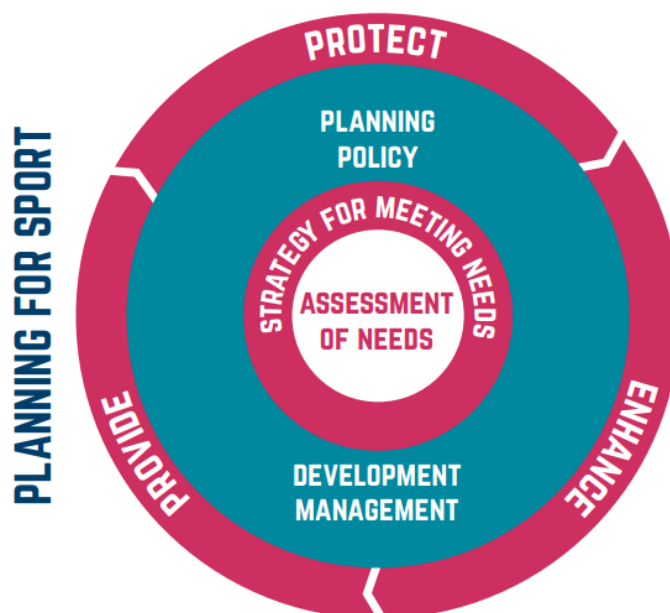
The Government's [Get Active: A strategy for the future of sport and physical activity](#) has a focus on increasing physical activity, making sport more welcoming and inclusive, and ensuring the long-term financial and environmental sustainability of the sector. In addition, the recently launched cross-departmental 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 (see figure 2.1 below), 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 CCC 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 planning-for-sport principles, as set out in Figure 2.2, 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 that the planning system plans positively to enable and support healthy lifestyles, delivers community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs, and provides opportunity for all to experience the benefits that taking part in sport and physical activity brings. They apply to all areas of the planning system and to planning at local authority



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and neighbourhood levels. As such they are of relevance to all involved in, or looking to engage with, the planning system.

Figure 2.2: Sport England's 12 planning principles



## Sport England: Uniting the movement 2021

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, Sport England has recently

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released its new strategy, Uniting the Movement, its 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

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 being an advocate for sport and physical activity, through the building of evidence and partnership development, the Strategy identifies five big issues upon which people and communities 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 greatest opportunities to make a lasting difference. They are designated as 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 and 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 will include a range of actions, including development of effective investment models and applying innovation and digital technology to ensure sport and physical activity are 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.

## **Social and economic value of community sport and physical activity in England 2020<sup>1</sup>**

Over the last three years, Sport England has focused on bringing together evidence on the contribution of community sport and physical activity to the five outcomes identified in the Government's strategy Sporting Future. These are physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development, and economic development.

Sport England's aim was to assess the evidence base with a view to demonstrating the contribution of community sport and physical activity to the outcomes. Building on this foundation and other previous work, Sport England quantified the social and economic impact of

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<sup>1</sup> Link to Social and economic value of community sport and physical activity in England 2020

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community sport and physical activity. There are two complementary parts to the research. Part one measures the social impact (including physical and mental health) of sport and physical activity while part two measures the economic importance.

Findings reveal that community sport and physical activity make an annual contribution of £85.5 billion to the country (in 2018 prices) through social and economic benefits. Its social value – including physical and mental health, wellbeing, individual and community development – is more than £72 billion, provided via routes such as a healthier population, consumer expenditure, greater work productivity, improved education attainment, reduced crime, and stronger communities. It also generates more than £13bn in economic value. The economic value includes more than 285,000 jobs in the community sport and physical activity sector.

Together, both enable Sport England to demonstrate the contribution of sport and physical activity to the five government outcomes. The research revealed that the combined social and economic value of taking part (participating and volunteering) in community sport and physical activity in England in 2017/18 was £85.5bn. When measured against the £21.85 billion costs of engagement and providing sport and physical activity opportunities, for every £1 spent on community sport and physical activity, a return on investment (ROI) of £3.91 was created for individuals and society in 2017/18.

## **Sport England: The Future of Public Sector Leisure**

Engagement by Sport England with the public leisure sector has highlighted that the pandemic has 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.

Key insight from the report ([Sport England: The Future of Public Sector Leisure](#)) includes:

- ◆ 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 2018/19<sup>2</sup>, 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, which included both the statutory learn to swim programme and the water safety curriculum across primary schools. Swimming club usage is also predominantly based at public leisure facilities.

The leisure sector is emerging from the pandemic in a particularly fragile state. Emergency funding<sup>3</sup> helped to avert financial catastrophe and enabled the additional costs of maintaining public assets and reopening services to be met. These funding sources are, however, finite and have now been 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.

In respect of the recovery of the sector to pre-Pandemic participation levels, data generated via the [Moving Communities](#) platform suggests that in October 2021, throughput levels (13.2 million) were still lower than the monthly average in 2019 (17.8 million). Recovery of participation levels across different activities has been imbalanced and has leaned towards those activities which deliver a faster return to pre-pandemic revenue levels.

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<sup>2</sup> 2 Mintel Report on Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools (September 2019)

<sup>3</sup> 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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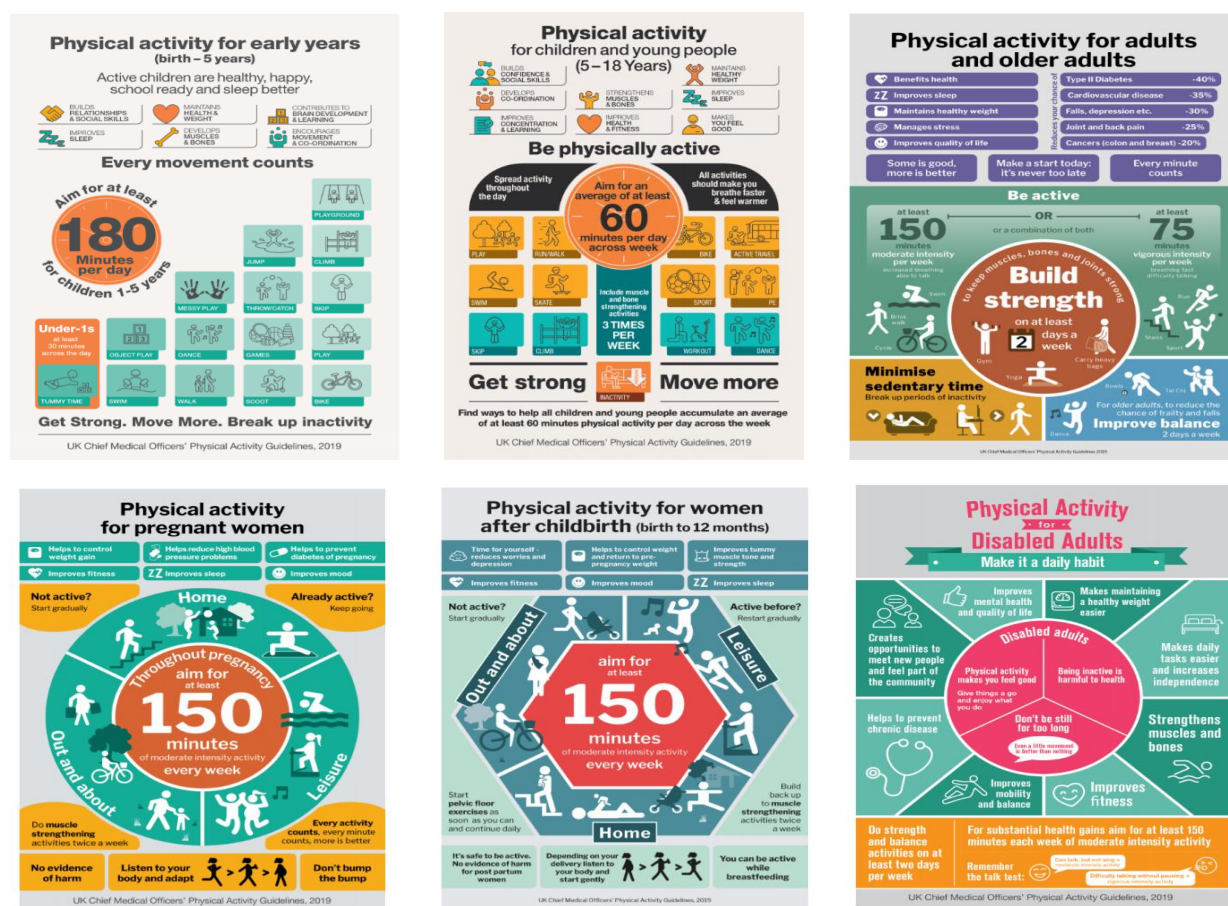
Sites refurbished in the last 10 years are seeing a throughput recovery of 68% compared with a recovery of 62% for those last refurbished 20+ years ago, suggesting that investment in newer facilities creates spaces that have greater appeal, increase user confidence levels and provide a more relevant 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 report 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. These physical activity guidelines are set out in Table 2.3 below.

Table 2.3: Physical activity guidelines



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.



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

Key factors for each age group are as follows:

- ✦ Under-5s: This is broken down into 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.

## **Joseph Rowntree Foundation UK Poverty 2024 report**

This report notes that poverty in the UK has now increased to just below pre-pandemic levels. Available data provides evidence that more than one in five people now live in poverty (including 4.2 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 2021/22 unless otherwise stated):

- ✦ Larger families – where 43% of children in families with 3 or 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 groups – many households have higher rates of child, very deep and persistent poverty.
- ✦ 31% of disabled people are in poverty. This rate is higher (at 38%) for people 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 double that for full-time workers (20% compared with 10%). Self-employed workers are more than twice as likely to be in poverty as employees (23% compared with 10%).

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- 43% of people living in rented accommodation and 35% of private renters are in poverty after housing costs.
- Families claiming income-related benefits.

## Environmental sustainability

The UK Government produced its net zero strategy 'Build Back Greener' in October 2021. This sets out how it intends the UK to meet its target for decarbonisation by 2050. It focuses on interventions such as:

- A fully decarbonised power system by 2035 with all electricity coming from 'low carbon sources'.
- Improved efficiency of heating for homes and buildings, aiming for all new heating appliances to be based on low carbon technologies, such as electric heat pumps or hydrogen boilers.
- Low carbon fuel supply – by scaling up the production of low carbon alternatives including hydrogen and biofuels.

[Sport England](#) reports that <sup>4</sup>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.

It proposes that a wide range of issues should be considered when approaching project development to, and the resultant environmental impact of, say, new swimming pool development. This applies to determining whether to refurbish an existing building with its carbon already embedded or to build anew<sup>5</sup>. 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.

- Reduce energy consumption as the first measure to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs.
- Change 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 Harness a site's natural resources to benefit cross ventilation, natural lighting, solar gain, shelter or shading.
- Fabric efficiency Maximise the building fabric and glazing performance.
- Minimise initial energy demand to reduce demand on plant and technologies incorporated.
- Efficient systems Invest in appropriate energy-efficient products including heating, ventilation, fittings, controls, sensors, heat pumps and recovery systems.
- On-site renewables Incorporate low and zero carbon (LZC) technologies to produce energy on site.
- Off-site renewables - only use energy providers who use renewable energy.

## Investment in school sport

The School Sport and Activity Action Plan (July 2019) sets out the Government's commitment to ensuring that children and young people have access to at least 60 minutes of sport and physical activity per day, with a recommendation of 30 minutes of this delivered during the

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<sup>4</sup><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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school day (in line with the CMO guidelines which recommend an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week).

The action plan has three overarching ambitions - that:

- ▶ All children/young people take part in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.
- ▶ Children/young people have the opportunity to realise developmental, character-building experiences through sport, competition and active pursuits.
- ▶ All sport and physical activity provision for children/young people is designed around the principles of physical literacy, focuses on fun and enjoyment and aims to reach the least active.

The PE and sport premium can help primary schools to achieve this aim, providing primary schools with £320m of government funding to make additional and sustainable improvements to the quality of the PE, physical activity and sport offered through their core budgets. It is allocated directly to schools which have the flexibility to use it in the way that they consider works best for their pupils.

In 2021 the Department for Education announced a £10.1 million funding package to help more schools open their facilities to the public once the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic is over. The funding, which will be administered by Sport England and distributed via the Active Partnership Network will help schools deliver extra-curricular activities and open their facilities outside of the school day during evenings, weekends and school holidays.

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

This has been developed to facilitate a 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 and 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 a total of 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 to be 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.

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## Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund

In 2023, a funding pot of £63 million was announced to ease the pressure on leisure centres with managing the cost of operating, maintaining and heating swimming pools. The funding will be managed by Sport England and is available to all pools run by councils and charities and those run on behalf of local authorities. One facility in the Chelmsford administrative area benefitted from the Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund; this was South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre located in South Woodham Ferrers.

## National Planning Policy Framework 2023

The NPPF sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities. It states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies the need to focus on three themes of economic, social, environmentally sustainable development:

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.

## Summary of national context

In the context both of emergence from the global pandemic 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.



# CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT- DRAFT

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## 2.2: Local context

### Chelmsford Local Plan

The Chelmsford Local Plan (2013-2036) was adopted in May 2020. The Local Plan outlines the strategic priorities and long-term vision for the Chelmsford administrative area along with the locations for delivering housing and other strategic development needs such as employment, retail, leisure, community, and transport development. Strategic Policy S13 committed to commencing a formal review of the Local Plan two years after its adoption.

The Council has begun a review of its adopted Local Plan, further information is available at: <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-local-plan/local-plan-review-2022/>

The review of the Plan is proposing to extend the Local Plan period by a further 5 years, with 1,000 homes being required per annum to 2041. The Indoor & Outdoor Sports Assessment and Strategy will therefore cover the period up to 2041 to form part of the evidence base to support the Review of the Local Plan.

### Chelmsford Garden Community

The Chelmsford Garden Community is set to deliver around 10,000 new homes, 45,000sqm employment space and a wide range of sustainable facilities and services to create a self-supporting community and reduce the need for outward journeys. The community will need to include all the services and facilities required for a development of this size, such as employment spaces, education provision, health and community facilities, and sports, leisure and open space facilities.

The Council therefore requires an up-to-date Sport, Recreation and Open Space evidence base, not only for the new community proposed at the Chelmsford Garden Community but for the whole Local Plan area as well. This evidence is to inform the strategic spatial planning and the approach to the provision of sport, recreation and open space facilities in the Garden Community as well as the authorities wider administrative area.

As well as the study being used as an evidence base document to support the review of the Council's Local Plan it will also be used to inform planning applications, particularly for the emerging Chelmsford Garden Community.

### Chelmsford Corporate Plan<sup>6</sup>

Our Chelmsford, Our Plan sets out the Local Authority's priorities which will improve the lives of all residents. The Council wants to make the Chelmsford administrative area a fairer, inclusive, greener, safer and better-connected place to live, work and visit: The plan outlines a number of priorities under three key themes, as documented in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Chelmsford's Corporate Plan priorities

Themes	Priorities
Fairer and more inclusive place	Promote sustainable and environmentally responsible growth to stimulate a vibrant, balanced economy, fairer society and provide more homes of all types.
A greener and safer place	Creating a distinctive sense of place, making the area more attractive,

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<sup>6</sup> Chelmsford Corporate Plan - <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/media/zrqb5ajo/our-chelmsford-our-plan-2023.pdf>

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	promoting its green credentials and ensuring that people and communities are safe.
A more connected place	Bringing people together and working in partnership to encourage healthy, active lives, building stronger, more resilient communities so that people feel proud to live, work and study in the area.

To promote healthy communities, the Council is committed to improving and enhancing all leisure facilities, including ensuring that the Riverside Leisure Centre (which was completed in 2019) is maintained to the highest of standards.

## Chelmsford Health & Wellbeing Plan<sup>7</sup>

This takes its lead from the Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026. It was refreshed in 2022 and represents a partnership between CCC, Essex County Council, Active Essex and NHS partners. It adopts a preventative approach to reducing levels of health inequality and includes a strategic priority to encourage increased levels of physical activity in the Authority. Within its physical activity theme, the following actions are put forward:

- ◀ Work within the planning system to create healthier built environments designed to support healthy lifestyle choices.
- ◀ Ensure new developments encourage sustainable travel, walking and cycling.
- ◀ To further develop the Sport for Confidence model at Riverside (subject to UK Shared Prosperity Fund) to help a wider range of groups to participate in leisure opportunities, with a specific focus on young people.
- ◀ To appoint an Active Health Coordinator (subject to UK Shared Prosperity Fund) to enhance the exercise referral scheme and develop new opportunities with key health partners, such as the cancer referral scheme and pre/post-op hospital referrals.

## Chelmsford Housing Strategy 2022-2027

The Strategy seeks to create an additional supply of affordable homes to strengthen the strategic response to meeting local need. Its overall priorities are as follows:

- ◀ Increasing the supply of affordable homes with a focus on larger units.
- ◀ Increasing the supply of affordable homes from the existing housing stock.
- ◀ Supporting landlords and tenants of privately rented homes.
- ◀ Enabling the right supply of specialist housing to meet local need.
- ◀ Developing effective partnerships.
- ◀ Monitoring trends and performance to inform future actions.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) considers not only the current position but also factors in population growth, demographic movements of population from other areas and the economic profile of the housing market. Analysing these trends, the SHMA (last updated in 2015) identifies an annual net need for 175 affordable homes for rent. Since the publication of this assessment, the proposed level of supply from new build is now not sufficient to meet current levels of demand, partly because the supply (relets) from the existing stock of affordable homes is much lower than anticipated in the assessment.

## Chelmsford Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan

Chelmsford City Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in July 2019. This declaration represents a commitment to take appropriate action to make the Council's activities

<sup>7</sup>[https://www.livewellcampaign.co.uk/app/uploads/2022/10/Chelmsford-Health-Wellbeing-Plan-2022-updated\\_compressed-1.pdf](https://www.livewellcampaign.co.uk/app/uploads/2022/10/Chelmsford-Health-Wellbeing-Plan-2022-updated_compressed-1.pdf)

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net-zero carbon by 2030. The action plan focuses on 15 priority areas of work for the Council which include integrating on-site renewable energy within new developments in particular the role the Council can have to help deliver low carbon affordable housing – this will set standards for the construction of new homes.

## Essex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026

Every local area must have a JHWS setting out the priorities identified through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) that local government, the NHS and other partners will deliver together through the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB).

Essex JHWS aims to improve the health and wellbeing of all residents in Essex by creating a culture and environment that reduces inequalities and enables residents of all ages to live healthier lives.

To achieve this, the JHWS identifies five key priorities, all of which have specific development outcomes which need to be achieved through partnership work, as outlined in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Essex JHWS priorities and outcomes

Priority	Outcome
Improving mental health and wellbeing	Supported the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and families with a focus on the vulnerable. Reduced loneliness and social isolation. Reduced suicide through a focus on system support
Physical activity and healthy weight	Enabled children, young people and their families to be more physically active. Improved levels of physical activity amongst adults by helping them find ways to integrate physical activity into their daily lives. Improved nutritional awareness, healthy eating, and help low-income households access affordable healthy food options.
Supporting long term independence	Improved access to advice and guidance including financial support so that residents with long-term conditions and their carers can better manage their conditions. Reduced digital exclusion to improve access to advice and support online. Help all residents have better access to opportunities in education, work, skills, housing, and their social lives.
Alcohol and substance misuse	Improve access to advice, support and treatment for residents experiencing alcohol or substance use issues. Work across the system to help address the challenges of county lines and drugs related criminality. Educate children, young people, adults, and families on the risks associated with alcohol and substance misuse.
Health inequalities & the wider determinants of Health	Ensure that all children have access to quality parenting, early years provision and education that provide the foundations for later in life. Address food poverty and ensure that all children can access healthy food. Improve access to employment, education and training for adults and young people in our most deprived communities. Embed the use of health impact assessments in planning practice to ensure new planning proposals do not negatively impact on health, health services or widen health inequalities.

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## Fit for the Future: Active Essex Implementation Plan 2021-31

Launched in July 2021, the Fit for the Future strategy provides a rallying call to action for the thousands of organisations and people across Essex who recognise the enormous contribution physical activity and sport makes to the health and wellbeing of everyone.

As of June 2021, there were over 1.6 million people living in Greater Essex and 901,000 are active adults who participate in over 150 minutes of physical activity per week. Active Essex wants to increase this number, unite in one direction and over the next 10 years, create an active Essex to improve everyone's health and wellbeing. To achieve this, the Local Partnership sets out the following key objectives.

- ◀ **Strengthening communities-** All communities across Essex, Southend and Thurrock use the power of physical activity and sport to build resilience, connection and wellbeing.
- ◀ **Active environments-** To work collectively to develop and provide well connected, accessible places and spaces that encourage people to be active.
- ◀ **Children and young people-** To ensure every child has the best start in life, whereby they are active, healthy and happy.
- ◀ **Levelling up health and wellbeing-** To change behaviours, which will enable and empower people to do things for themselves and their local communities. Physical activity is the highest priority for good health.
- ◀ **Sport and physical activity-** To support the recovery, development and growth of our sport and physical activity sector, in order to collectively increase opportunities for all.

## Summary of local policy

CCC's corporate priorities are to create a City that is fairer, greener, safer and better-connected place to live, work and visit. The current Local Plan then outlines the strategic priorities and long-term vision for the Chelmsford administrative area (including the significant Garden Community developments) along with other locations for delivering housing and strategic development needs such as employment, retail, leisure, community, and transport development.

The importance of physical activity in addressing health inequalities is recognised via health and wellbeing is recognised in Essex's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026 and the Chelmsford Health and Wellbeing plan (2022) which sets out specific interventions around health referral and the role of built facilities such as the recently redeveloped Riverside Leisure Centre.

Partners in Essex, including Active Essex, the County Council and Chelmsford City Council have worked closely together to provide a policy platform which can demonstrate how physical activity can impact on wider health outcomes. There is opportunity for the built facilities evidence base to provide further evidence and insight in support of these plans towards creating a healthier and more active area.

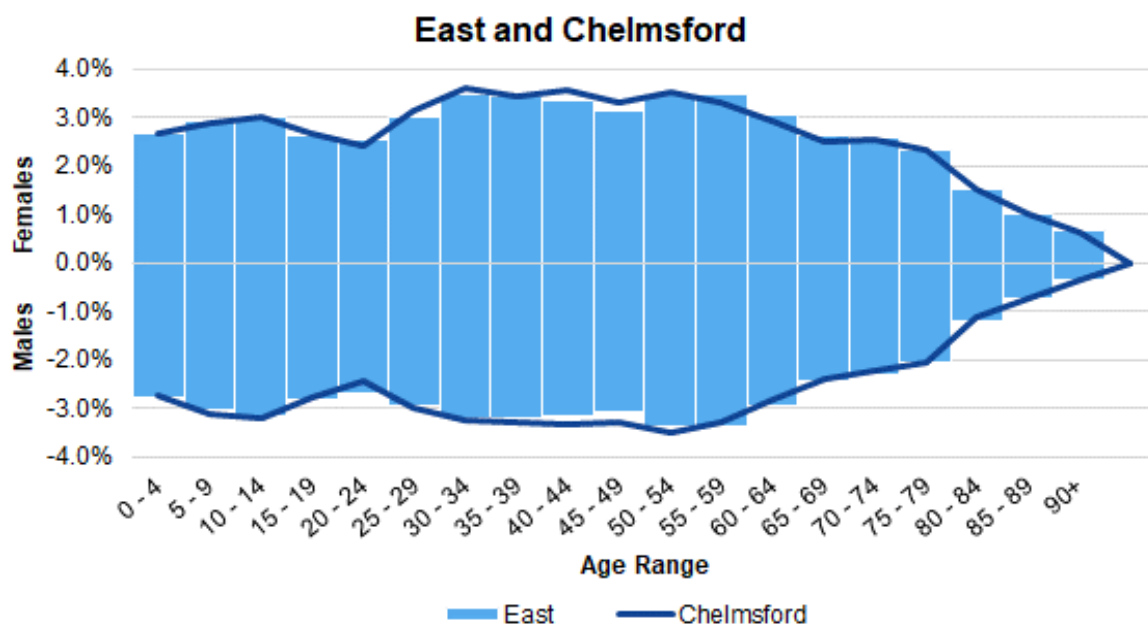
# CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT- DRAFT

## 2.3: Demographic profile

### Population and distribution (Data source: 2021 Census, ONS)

The total population of the Chelmsford administrative area is 183,326. This comprises 89,765 males and 93,561 females. The majority of this population is focused in and around the City Centre (central area), and the smaller towns in the south and the east. The north of the Authority is predominantly rural.

Figure 2.4: Comparative age/sex pyramid for the Chelmsford administrative area and East

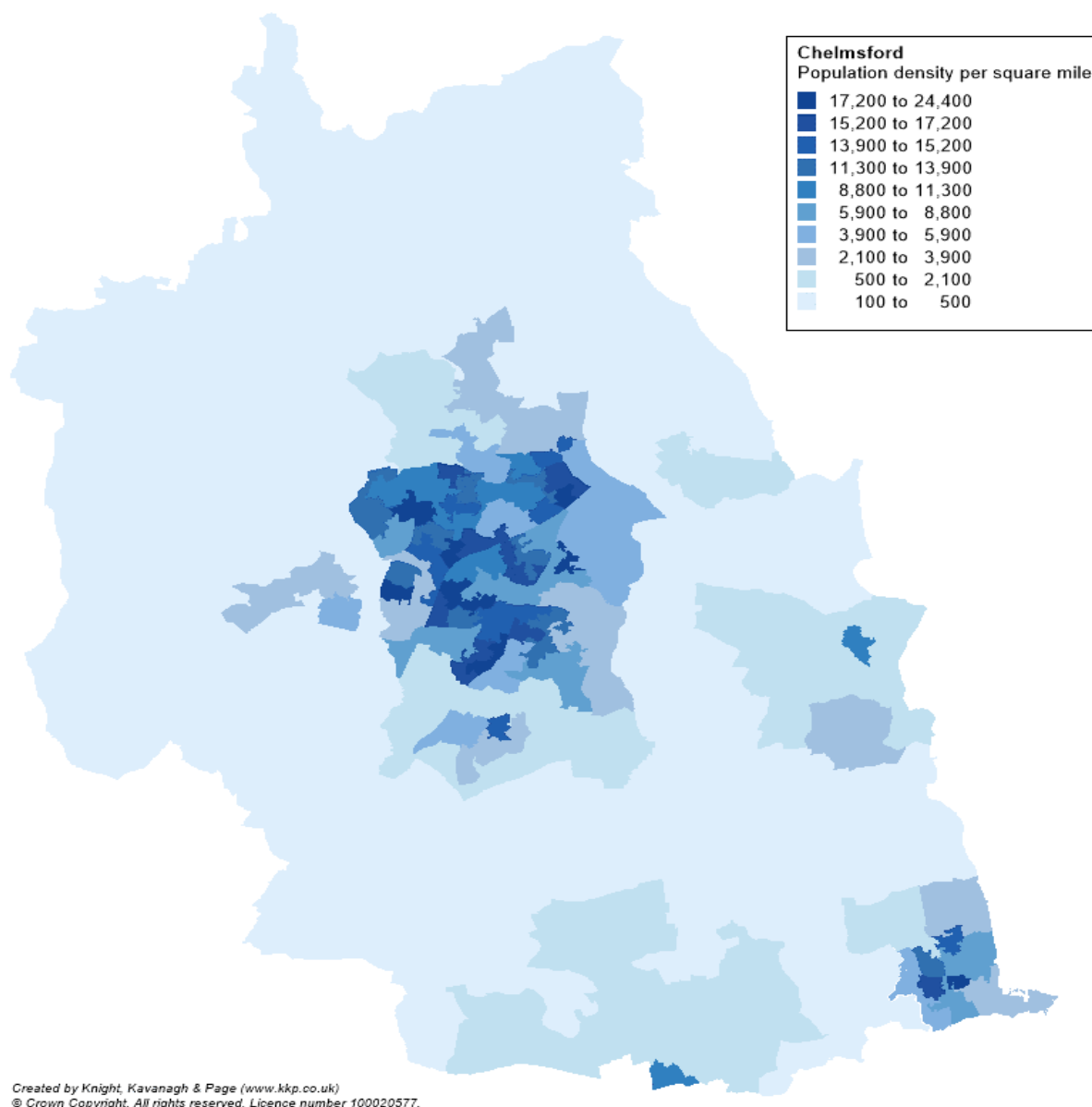


As shown in Figure 2.4, age and sex demographics in the Chelmsford administrative area follows a similar pattern to that of the wider Eastern region. There are a few differences; the proportion of 20-24 year olds in the Chelmsford administrative area (5.0%) is slightly lower than that of the East (5.4%) and there are slightly more people in the age groups from 25-49 (Chelmsford administrative area = 33.5%, East = 32.3%).

The population density map (Figure 2.5) overleaf is based on lower super output areas (LSOAs). It covers all parts of the country irrespective of whether the SOA is in an area of high-density housing and flats or one with farms and rural villages. Map shading allows concentrations of population to be easily identified. Urban areas tend to be illustrated via the darkest shading while rural areas, housing adjoining parks and other non-residential land uses tend to be the lightest shades.

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Figure 2.5: Population density 2021 Census: Chelmsford administrative area (LSOAs)



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

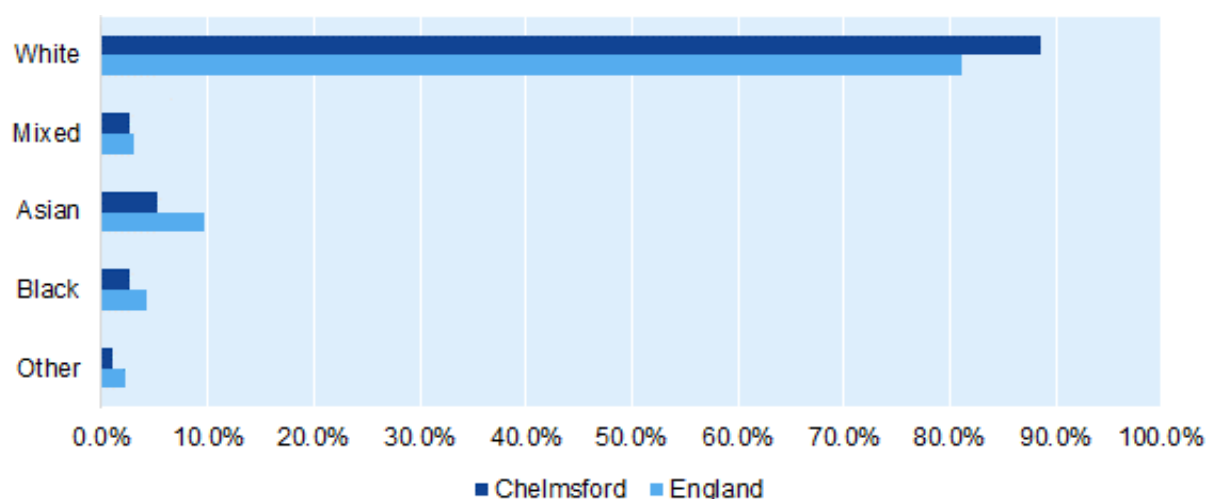
The ethnic composition in the Chelmsford administrative area is set out in Table 2.3 and Figure 2.6 is broadly in line with that of England as a whole. The largest proportion (88.5%) of the local population classified their ethnicity as White; this is higher than the comparative England rate of 81.0%. The next largest population group (by self- classification) is Asian, at 5.3% this is lower than the national equivalent (9.6%).

Table 2.3: Ethnic composition – Chelmsford administrative area and England

Ethnicity	Chelmsford #	Chelmsford %	England #	England %
Asian	9,646	5.3%	5,426,392	9.6%
Black	4,756	2.6%	2,381,724	4.2%
Mixed	4,724	2.6%	1,669,378	3.0%
Other	1,696	0.9%	1,229,153	2.2%
White	160,701	88.5%	45,783,401	81.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>181,523</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>56,490,048</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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Figure 2.6: Ethnicity in the Chelmsford administrative area and England



## Income and benefits dependency (Data source: Nomis 2023)

The median figure for full-time earnings (2022) in the Chelmsford administrative area is £35,506; the comparative rate for the East is £36,696 (+3.4%). For Great Britain is £35,495 (-0.0%)

2,700 people in the Chelmsford administrative area claimed out of work benefits<sup>8</sup> in November 2023. This is an increase of 29.5% when compared to March 2020 (2,085).

## Crime (Data source: Crime in England and Wales year ending June 2023, ONS)

Crime data is only available for police force areas. The Chelmsford administrative area is in the Essex Police Force Area, which comprises 14 local authorities (Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester, Epping Forest, Harlow, Maldon, Rochford, Southend-On-Sea, Tendring, Thurrock, Uttlesford). The Chelmsford administrative area accounts for 9.8% of the population of the Essex Police Force Area.

During the 12 months to June 2023 the number of recorded crimes per 1,000 persons in the Essex was 86.2. (2022 MYE) As shown in Table 2.4 this is markedly lower than the equivalent rate for England and Wales which was 92.5. The number of recorded crimes in the Essex area has fallen (by 4.8%) since June 2022. (2021 Census) The number for England and Wales has risen by 1.1% over the same period.

Table 2.4: Comparative crime rates: Chelmsford administrative area and England & Wales

Authority	Recorded crime (Jul '22 - Jun '23)	Population 2022 MYE	Recorded crime per 1,000 population
Essex Police Force	161,800	1,877,301	86.2
England & Wales	5,572,143	60,238,038	92.5

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 the Chelmsford administrative

<sup>8</sup> This includes both Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and Universal Credit. Universal credit also includes other benefits including employment and support allowance (ESA) and child tax credits.

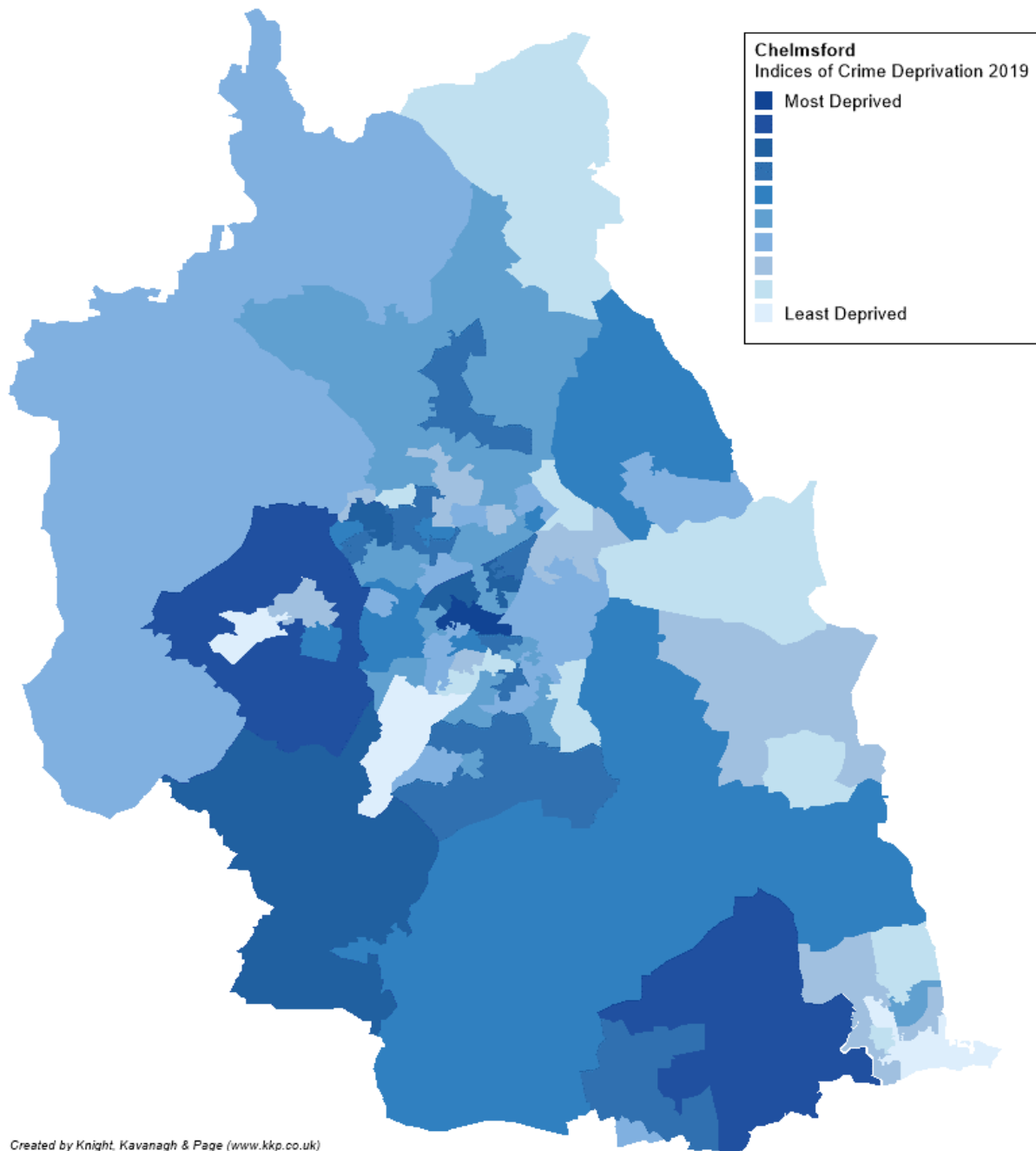


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area, 7.4% of the population are in the top three cohorts most at risk compared to 30.0% nationally. This is illustrated in Figure 2.7.

Figure 2.7: Map of crime deprivation



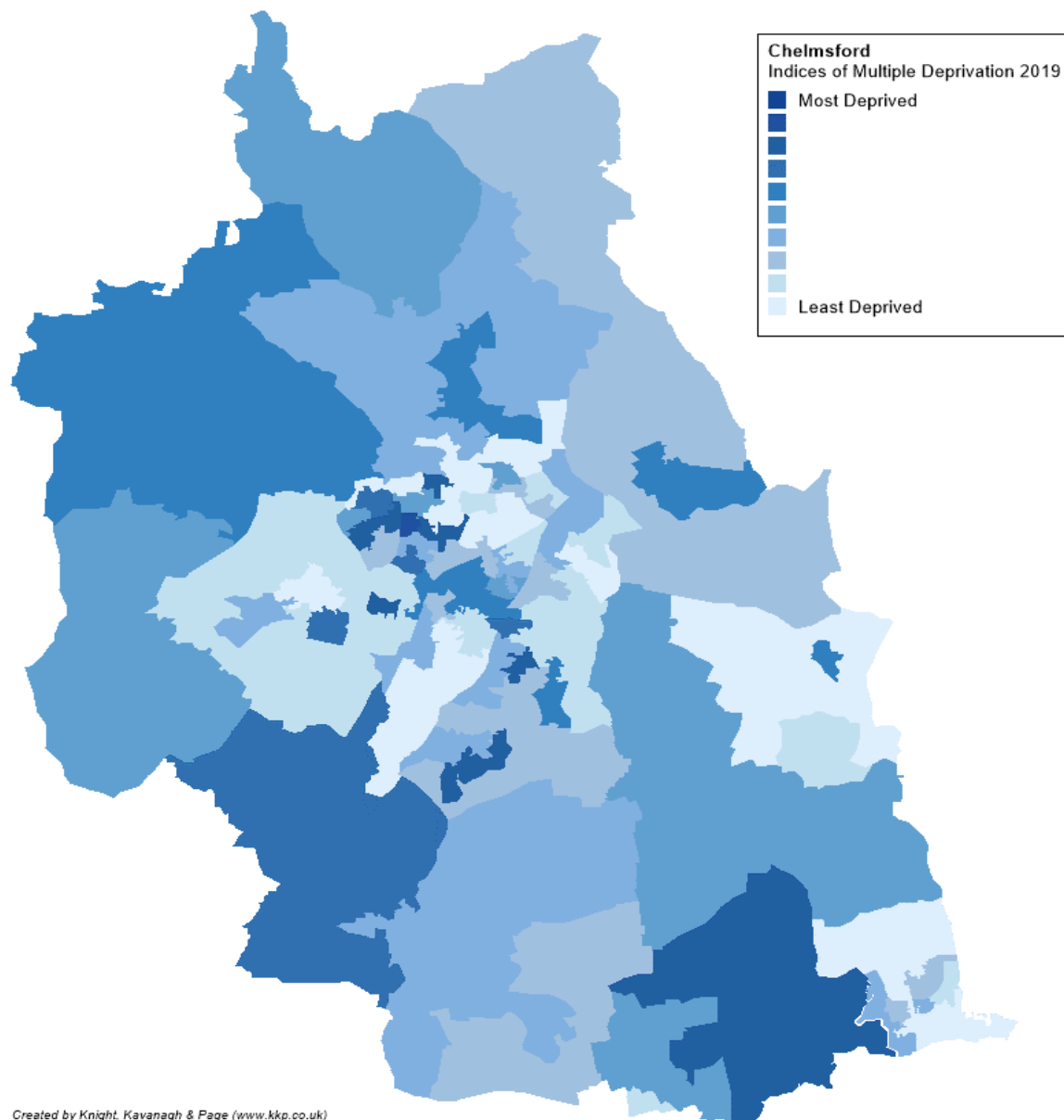


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## Deprivation (Data source: 2019 indices of deprivation, MHCLG)

In reference to Figure 2.8 below, and Tables 2.5 and 2.6 overleaf, relative to other parts of the country the Chelmsford administrative area experiences low levels of deprivation. 8.7% of its population resides in areas covered by the country's three most deprived cohorts compared to a national average of c.30%. Conversely, 55.9% live in the three least deprived groupings in the country, this compares to a 'norm' of c.30%.

Figure 2.8: Map of multiple deprivation



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Table 2.5: IMD cohorts – multiple deprivation in the Chelmsford administrative area

10% bands	Population in band	%	Cumulative %
Most deprived - 10.0	0	0.0%	0.0%
20.0	1,723	1.0%	1.0%
30.0	13,282	7.7%	8.7%
40.0	7,784	4.5%	13.2%
50.0	11,887	6.9%	20.1%
60.0	14,228	8.3%	28.4%
70.0	27,173	15.8%	44.1%
80.0	29,120	16.9%	61.0%
90.0	29,406	17.1%	78.1%
Least deprived - 100.0	37,837	21.9%	100.0%

Table 2.6: IMD cohorts – health deprivation in the Chelmsford administrative area

10% bands	Population in band	%	Cumulative %
Most deprived - 10.0	0	0.0%	0.0%
20.0	0	0.0%	0.0%
30.0	3,297	1.9%	1.9%
40.0	6,826	4.0%	5.9%
50.0	9,011	5.2%	11.1%
60.0	8,557	5.0%	16.1%
70.0	15,413	8.9%	25.0%
80.0	20,534	11.9%	36.9%
90.0	38,240	22.2%	59.1%
Least deprived - 100.0	70,562	40.9%	100.0%

A broadly similar pattern, to that seen for multiple deprivation, is seen in relation to health. Only 1.9% of the Chelmsford's administrative area population lives in areas covered by the three most deprived cohorts (national average; c.30%). Conversely, 75.0% live in the three least deprived groupings.

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Figure 2.9: Map of health deprivation

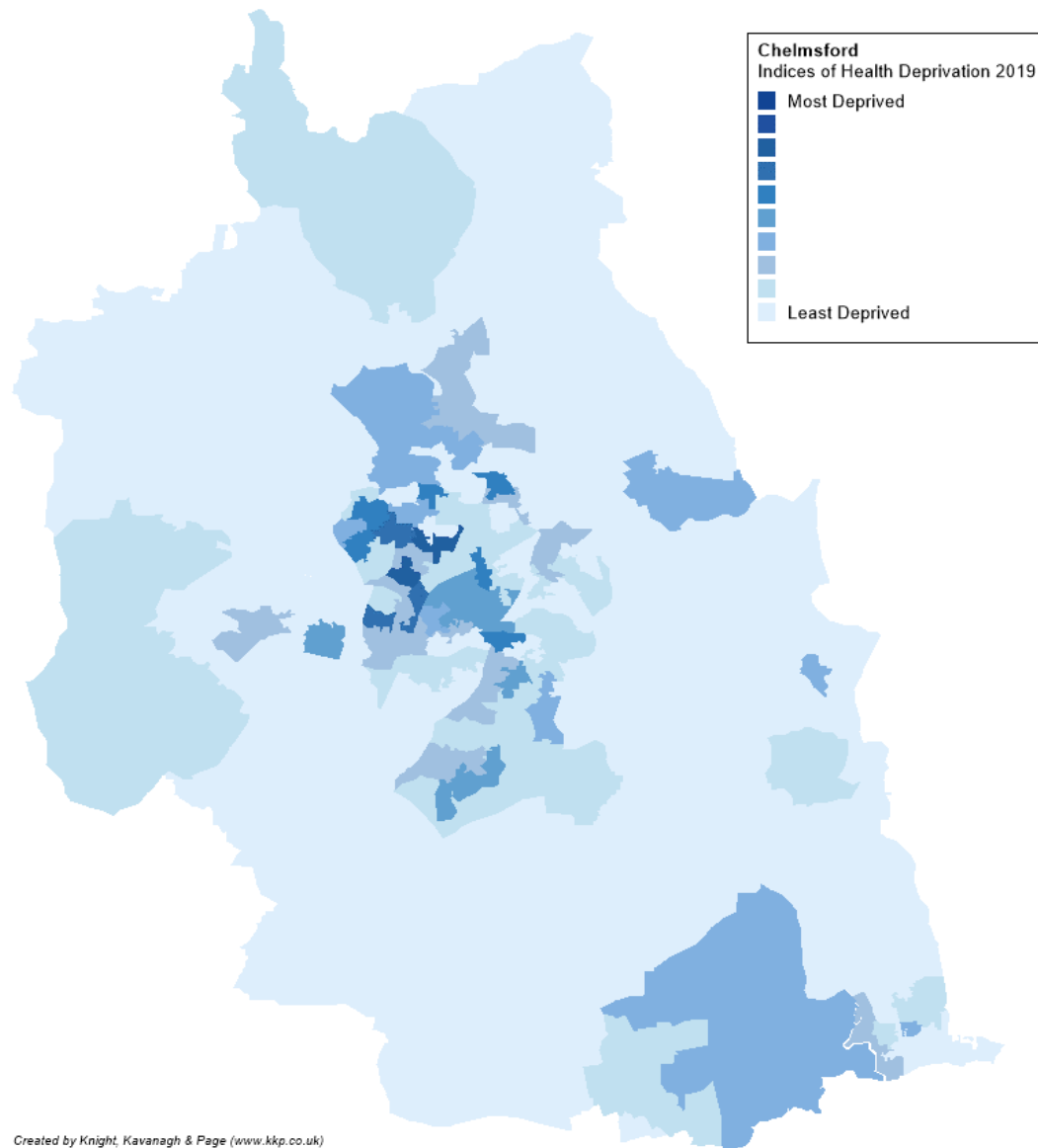
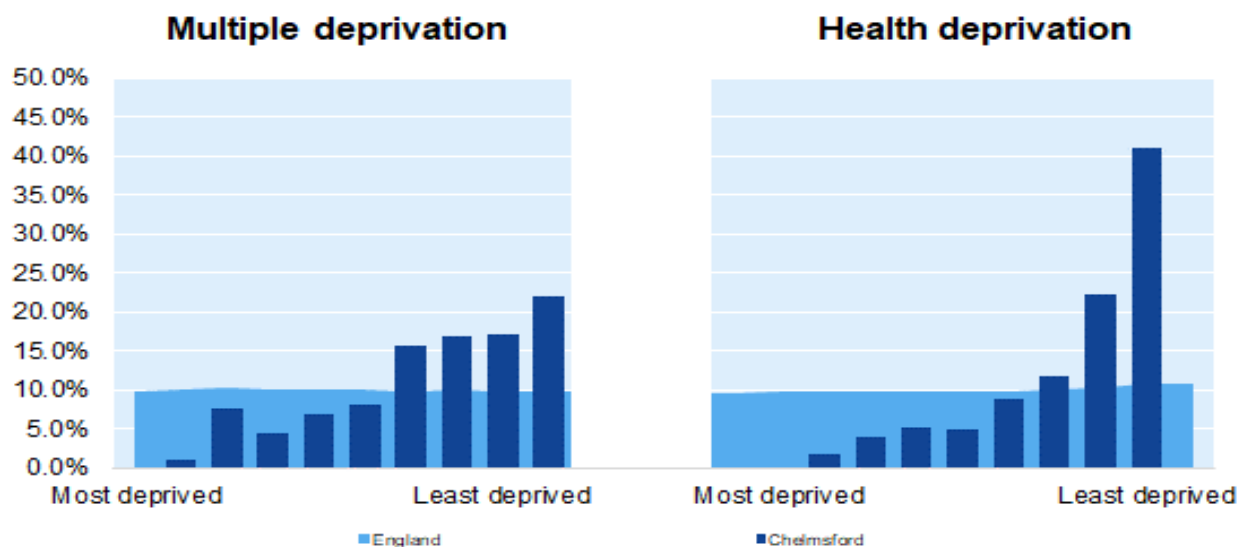


Figure 2.10: Index of multiple and health deprivation



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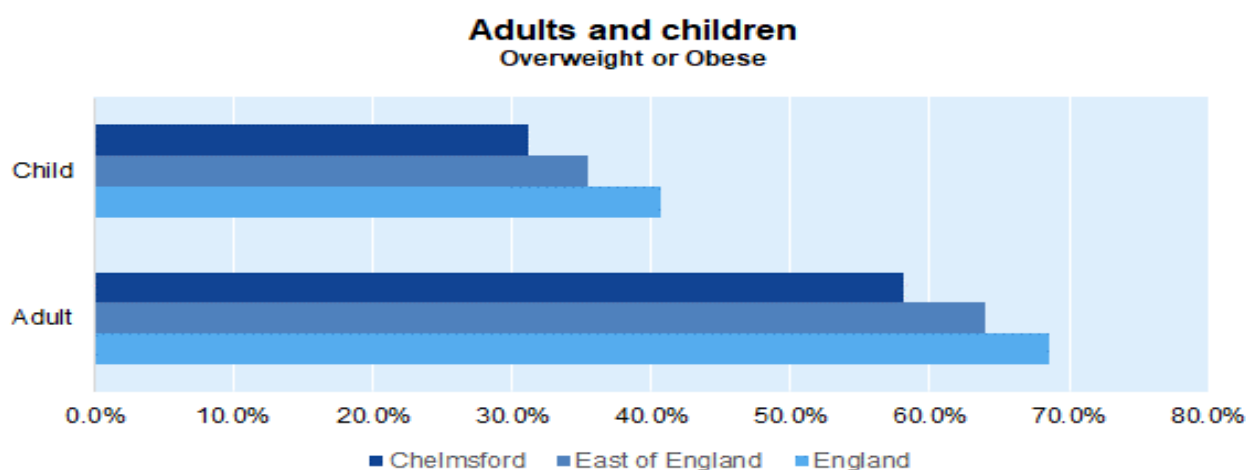
## Health data (Data sources: ONS)

In reference to Figures 2.9 and 2.10/11 (p.27), in keeping with patterns seen alongside lower levels of health deprivation, life expectancy in the Chelmsford administrative area is higher than the national figure; the male rate is currently 81.3 compared to 79.4 for England, and the female equivalent is 84.6 compared to 83.1 nationally.<sup>9</sup>

## Weight and obesity (Data sources: NCMP<sup>10</sup> and NOO<sup>11</sup>)

Obesity is widely acknowledged 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<sup>12</sup> 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. In reference to Figure 2.11 below, adult and child obesity rates in the Chelmsford administrative area are below both the national and regional averages.

Figure 2.11: Adult and child obesity rates



With reference to Figure 2.12 below and in common with many other areas, obesity rates increase significantly between the ages of 4 and 11 years. One in 10 people (9.7%) in the Chelmsford administrative area are obese in reception year at school and 12.0% are overweight. By Year 6 this rises to 18.5% obese and 12.7% overweight. In total by Year 6, almost one third (31.1%) are either overweight or obese.

<sup>9</sup> Office of National Statistics: Life Expectancy at Birth by local areas in the United Kingdom, 2013.

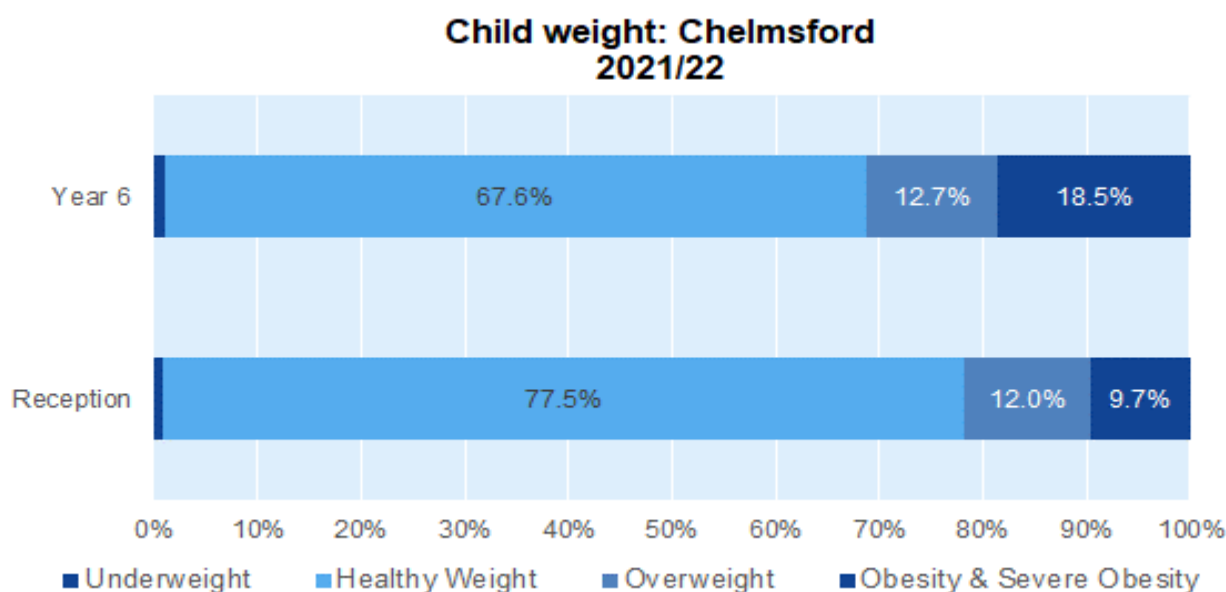
<sup>10</sup> National Child Measurement Program

<sup>11</sup> National Obesity Observatory

<sup>12</sup> Adult Weight Data is for the period 2016-2017. The child data is for the period 2017-2018

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Figure 2.12: Child weight – reception and year 6



## Active Lives Survey (Data Source: Sport England November 2021/22)

This is based on 16+ year olds taking part in walking, cycling, fitness, dance and other sporting activity. As identified in Table 2.7 and Figure 2.13, a lower percentage of the Chelmsford administrative area 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.

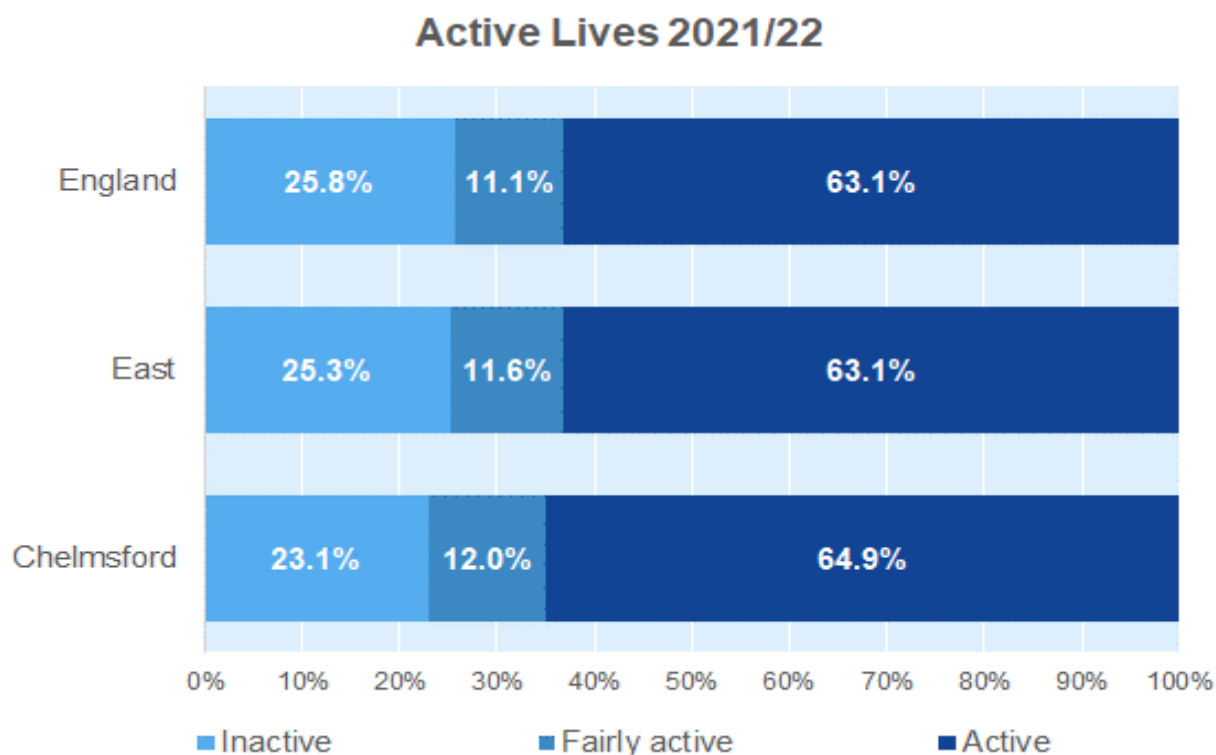
Table 2.7: Active Lives Survey results: November 2021/22.

	Inactive #	Inactive %	Fairly active #	Fairly active %	Active #	Active %
England	11,874,800	25.8%	5,131,700	11.1%	29,062,000	63.1%
East	1,305,500	25.3%	599,400	11.6%	3,257,000	63.1%
Chelmsford administrative area	34,100	23.1%	17,800	12.0%	96,000	64.9%

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

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Figure 2.13: Levels of activity (Active Lives 2020-21)



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

As set out in Table 2.8, in the Chelmsford administrative area around one quarter of adults take part in fitness activity, on average, at least twice a month. The next most popular activity is athletics at 20.1% of adults participating on a relatively regular basis.

Table 2.8: Most popular sports in the Chelmsford administrative area

Sport	Chelmsford #	Chelmsford %	East #	East %	England #	England %
Fitness	38,100	26.3%	1,264,600	25.0%	11,374,600	24.9%
Athletics	29,200	20.1%	694,100	13.7%	6,252,000	13.7%
Cycling	25,000	17.2%	916,500	18.1%	7,472,900	16.4%
Swimming	6,300	4.4%	231,200	4.6%	2,001,600	4.4%
Football	2,800	1.9%	135,700	2.7%	1,451,700	3.2%

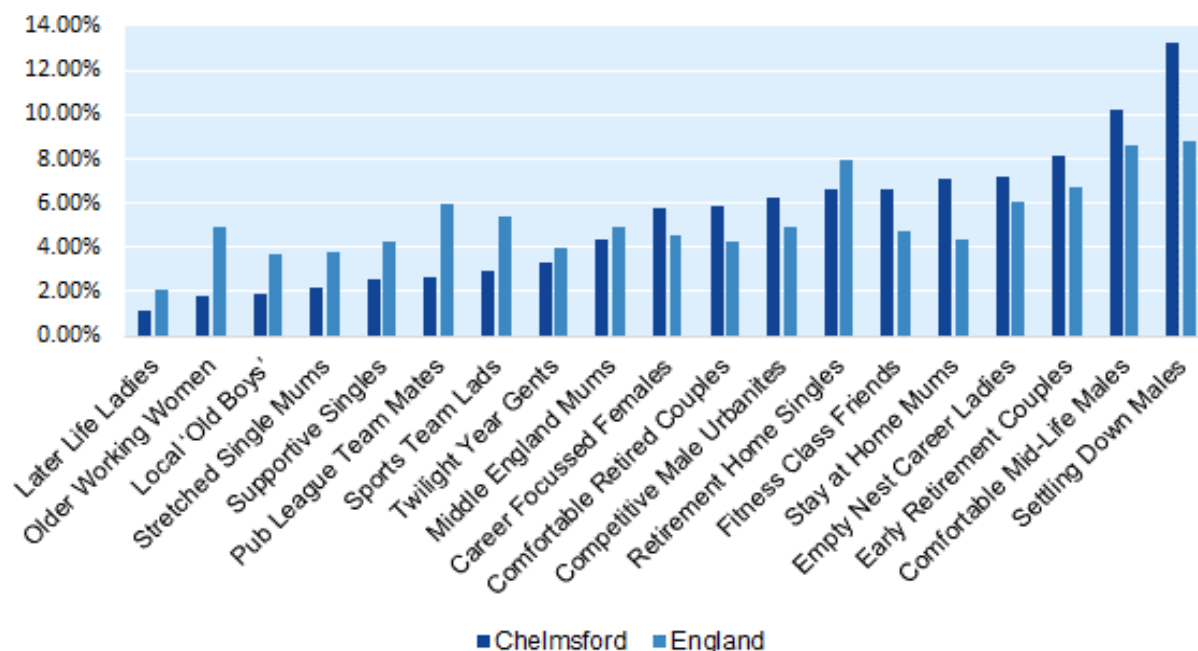
## Sporting segmentation (Data source: Sport England Sports Market Segmentation web tool)

Sport England classifies the adult population via a series of 19 market segments which provide an insight into the sporting behaviours of individuals throughout the country. Knowing which segments are predominant in the local population can help direct provision and programming. Segmentation also enables partners to make tailored interventions, communicate effectively with target market(s) and better understand participation in the context of life stage and lifecycles.

## CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT- DRAFT

The profile for the Chelmsford administrative area is set out in Figure 2.14 and indicates that 'Settling Down Males' is the largest segment of the adult population at 13.28% (17,043) - national average; 8.8%. This is followed by 'Comfortable Mid-Life Males' (10.2%) and 'Early Retirement Couples' (8.1%).

Figure 2.14: Sport England market segmentation – Chelmsford's administrative area compared to England



**Mosaic** (Data source: 2022: Mosaic analysis, Experian)

This product 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 dominance of the top five Mosaic classifications in the Chelmsford administrative area, as set out in Table 2.9, compared to the country as a whole is evident in as much as they represent two thirds (67.1%) of the population compared to a national equivalent rate of 41.1%. The definition of each of these top five Mosaic classifications in the Chelmsford administrative area is set out in Table 2.10, with the distribution of all 15 groups across the Chelmsford administrative area shown in Figure 2.16.

Table 2.9: Mosaic – main population segments in the Chelmsford administrative area

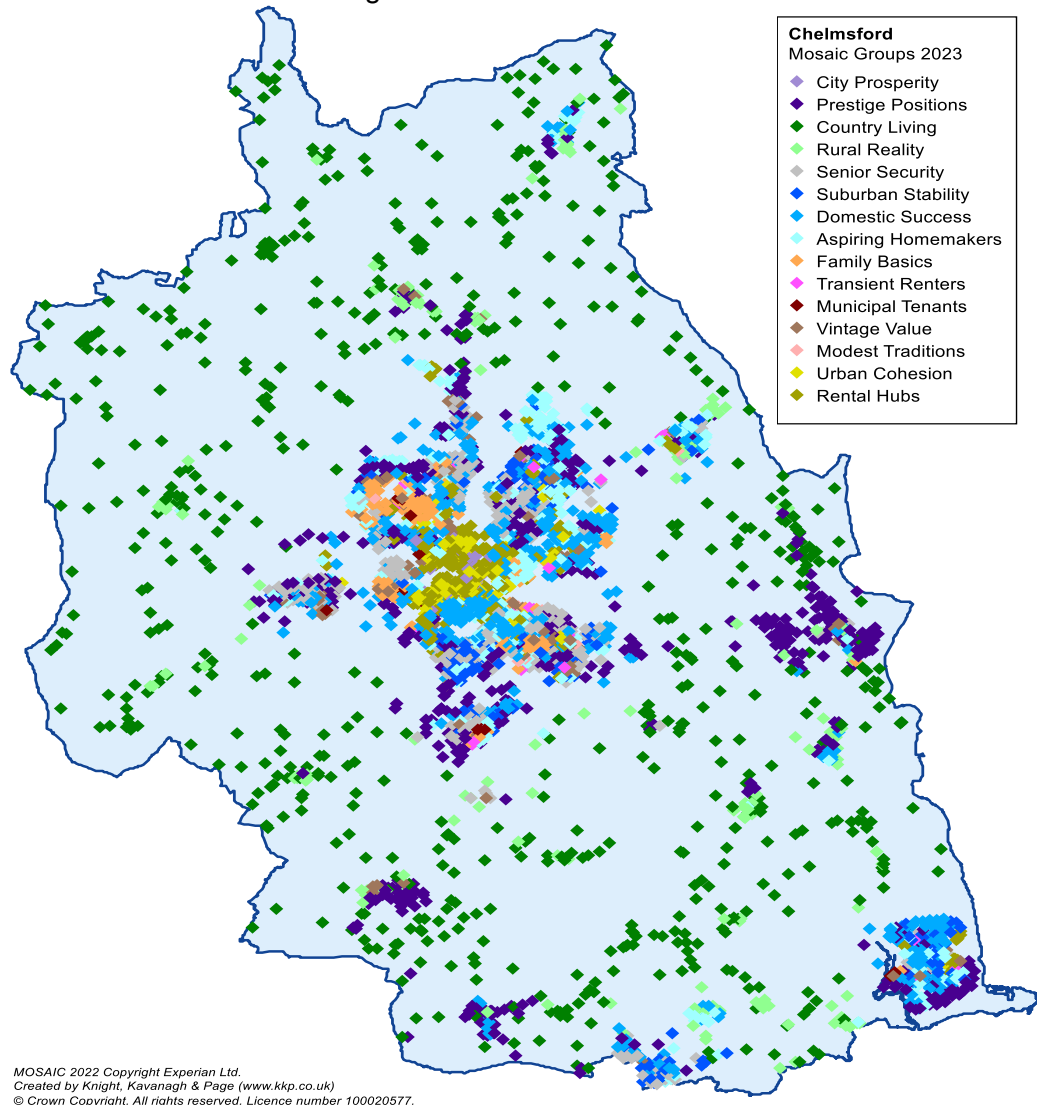
Mosaic group description	Chelmsford #	Chelmsford %	National %
1 - Domestic Success	40,354	21.9%	8.9%
2 - Prestige Positions	24,514	13.3%	7.1%
3 - Aspiring Homemakers	22,398	12.2%	10.5%
4 - Rental Hubs	18,515	10.1%	7.9%
5 - Senior Security	17,605	9.6%	7.0%

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Table 2.10: Dominant Mosaic profiles in the Chelmsford administrative area

Category	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.
Aspiring homemakers	Younger households who have, often, only recently set up home. They usually own their homes in private suburbs, which they have chosen to fit their budget.
Rental Hubs	Predominantly young, single people in their 20s and 30s who live in urban locations and rent their homes from private landlords while in the early stages of their careers or pursuing studies.
Senior Security	Elderly singles and couples who are still living independently in comfortable homes that they own. Property equity gives them a reassuring level of financial security. This group includes people who have remained in family homes after their children have left, and those who have chosen to downsize to live among others of similar ages and lifestyles.

Figure 2.16: Distribution of Mosaic segments in the Chelmsford administrative area





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**Population projections:** (Data source: 2022-2041 housing led projections)

## Strategic planning: Change over 19 years (2022 to 2041)

The projections set out in Table 2.11 and Figure 2.14 indicate a rise of 18.9% in the Chelmsford administrative area population (+34,688) over the 19 years from 2022 to 2041. Over this extended timeframe fluctuations are seen in rise and fall at different points across the majority of age groups. Several key points for the Chelmsford administrative area are outlined below:

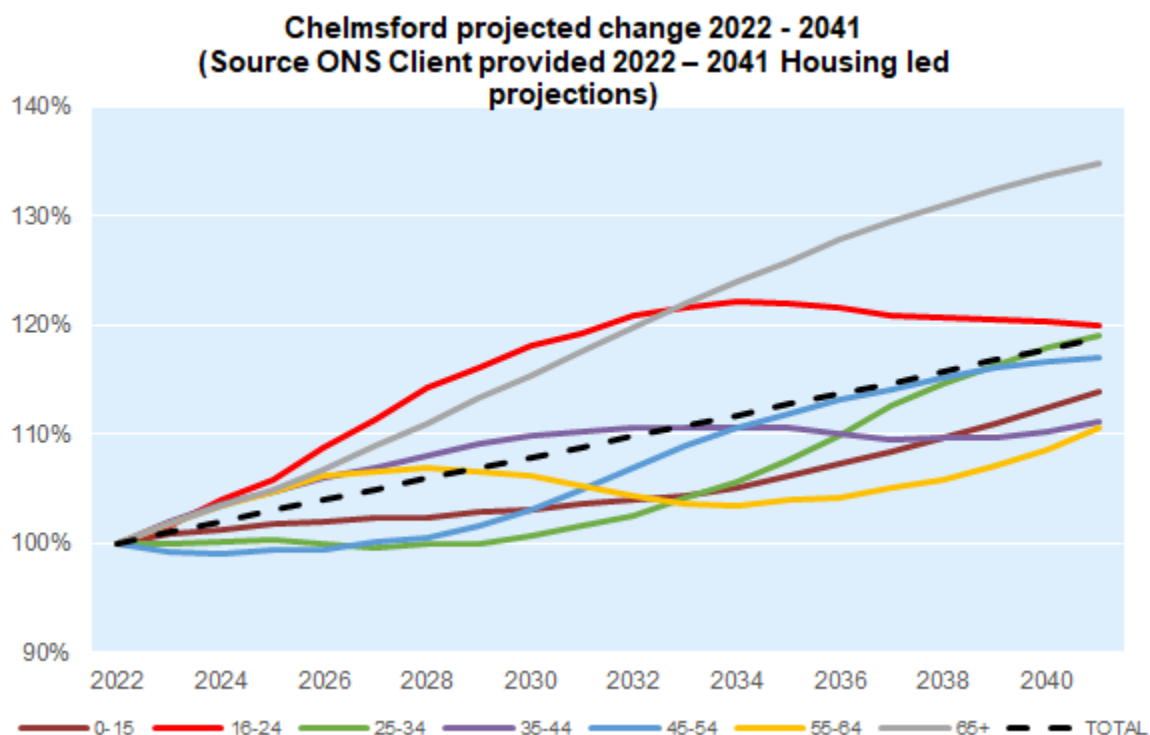
- ♦ The number of 0-15 year olds, rises by +1,195(+3.5%) over the first half of the projection (to 2031).
- ♦ There is predicted to be an increase in the number of 16-24 year olds, +19.3% in the first period (+2,044) followed by a slight rise of +0.5% (+105) in the second period
- ♦ There is a continuous 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 +17.5% (+6,274) in the first period continuing to rise to +34.9% (+12,481) between 2022 and 2041. While the age group represented 19.5% of the Chelmsford administrative area population in 2022 it is projected to be 22.1% of the total by 2041 - this is almost a quarter of the population.

Table 2.11: Chelmsford administrative area – housing-led projected population (2022 to 2041)

Age (years)	2022 #	2031 #	2041 #	2022 %	2031 %	2041 %	2031 Change	2041 Change
0-15	33,976	35,170	38,713	18.5%	17.6%	17.7%	103.5%	113.9%
16-24	17,164	20,478	20,583	9.3%	10.2%	9.4%	119.3%	119.9%
25-34	23,887	24,282	28,439	13.0%	12.1%	13.0%	101.7%	119.1%
35-44	25,015	27,566	27,802	13.6%	13.8%	12.7%	110.2%	111.1%
45-54	24,986	26,222	29,258	13.6%	13.1%	13.4%	104.9%	117.1%
55-64	22,861	24,082	25,300	12.4%	12.0%	11.6%	105.3%	110.7%
65+	35,790	42,064	48,272	19.5%	21.0%	22.1%	117.5%	134.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>183,678</b>	<b>199,865</b>	<b>218,366</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>108.8%</b>	<b>118.9%</b>

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Figure 2.14: Projected population change (2022 – 2041)



### Summary of the demographic profile and population projections

The population of Chelmsford's administrative area is expected to rise by 14.2% by 2041. A significant factor in this is the continuous rise in the number of people aged over 65. By this date 22.1% 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.

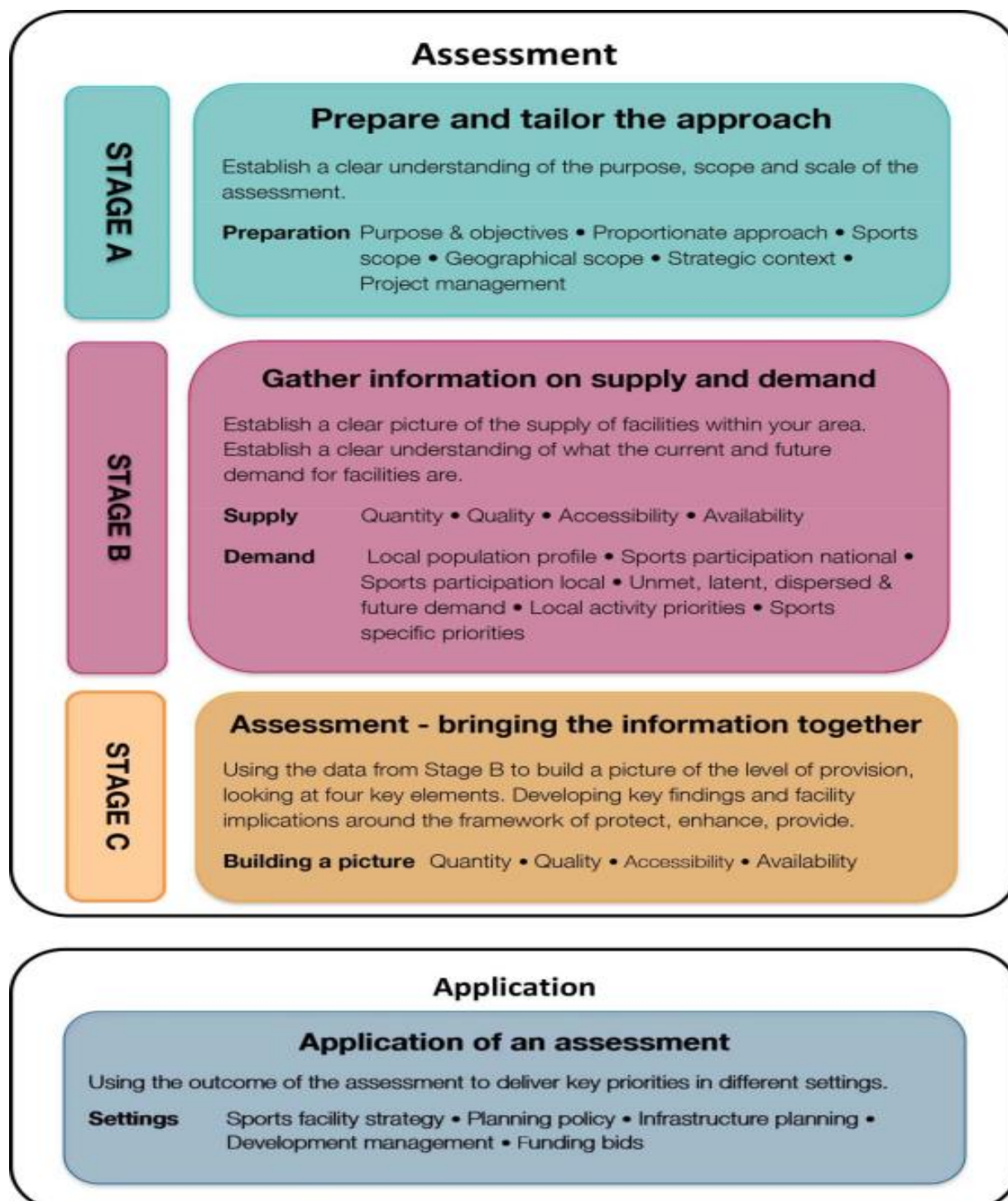
# CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT- DRAFT

## 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 as set out in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Recommended approach



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This is the recommended approach to undertaking a robust assessment of need for indoor and outdoor sports facilities (excluding playing pitch provision which has been assessed separately within the Playing Pitch Strategy and uses Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance).

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 98).

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, 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. Where a physical visit was not possible a telephone consultation with the facility/site manager was delivered. 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 and access arrangements (plus, where available, facility 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.

The assessment forms utilised capture quantity and quality data on a site-by-site basis and feeds directly into the main database allowing information to be stored and analysed. Quality assessments undertaken are rated in the categories set out in Table 3.1. These ratings are applied throughout the report, regardless of facility type.

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Ratings are based on non-technical visual assessments. These consider facility age and condition. Surfaces, tiles and walls, line markings and safety equipment are considered and problem areas such as mould, damage, leaks etc. are noted. The condition of fixtures, fittings and equipment is recorded.

Maintenance and facility 'wear and tear' is considered as is compliant with the Equality Act, although this is not studied in detail for the purposes of this report. When all data is collated, key facility elements receive an overall quality rating.

Table 3.1: Quality ratings of indoor sports facilities using ANOG

Quality rating	Description
<b>Good</b>	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.
<b>Above average</b>	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.
<b>Below average</b>	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.
<b>Poor</b>	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 in Sections 3-15 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 set out in Table 3.2.

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
Dedicated gymnastics centre	20 minutes' drive
Indoor bowls facilities	30 minutes' drive
Boxing facilities	30-minutes' drive
Combat sports facilities	30-minutes' drive
Village / community halls	800m / 10 minutes' walk

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## 3.4: Facilities Planning Model Local Run Assessment

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) helps to assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities. It has been developed as a means of:

- ◆ Assessing requirements for different types of community sports facilities on a local, regional or national scale.
- ◆ Helping local authorities determine an adequate level of sports facility provision to meet local need.
- ◆ Testing 'what if' scenarios with regard to provision and changes in demand, this includes testing the impact of opening, relocating and closing facilities and the impact population changes may have on need for sports facilities.

In its simplest form the FPM seeks to assess whether the capacity of existing facilities for a particular sport is capable of meeting local demand considering how far people are prepared to travel to a facility (using the integrated transport network). To estimate the level of sports facility provision in an area, the model compares the number of facilities (supply) with the demand for that facility (demand) that the local population will generate.

For the purpose of this study, CCC has commissioned an FPM local run assessment for both swimming pool and sports hall provision. Analysis looks at the following aspects :

- ◆ A baseline assessment of existing sports hall provision using 2022 population in order to assess how the supply of facilities in 2022 is meeting demand in the Chelmsford administrative area.
- ◆ A baseline assessment of existing swimming pool provision using 2022 population in order to assess how the supply of facilities in 2022 is meeting demand in the Chelmsford administrative area.
- ◆ A forward assessment of need and an evidence base for swimming pools to 2041, based on the projected population change (using CCC housing led population projections) in the Chelmsford administrative area.

Within this report, FPM national run data (2023) and future population forecast (2041) run data has been sourced for swimming pool provision. Whilst only the FPM national run data (2023) has been sourced for sports hall provision. This is used alongside KKP mapping and audit information to provide a balanced summary of supply and demand across these facility types.



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## SECTION 4: SPORTS HALLS

Indoor multi-purpose sports halls are prime venues for community sport enabling a range of sport and recreational activities to be played. The standard methodology for measuring sports halls is the number of badminton courts contained within the floor area.

Sports halls are generally considered to be of greatest value if they are of at least 3+ badminton court 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 have sufficient length to accommodate indoor cricket nets and indoor athletics and, as such offer greater 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.

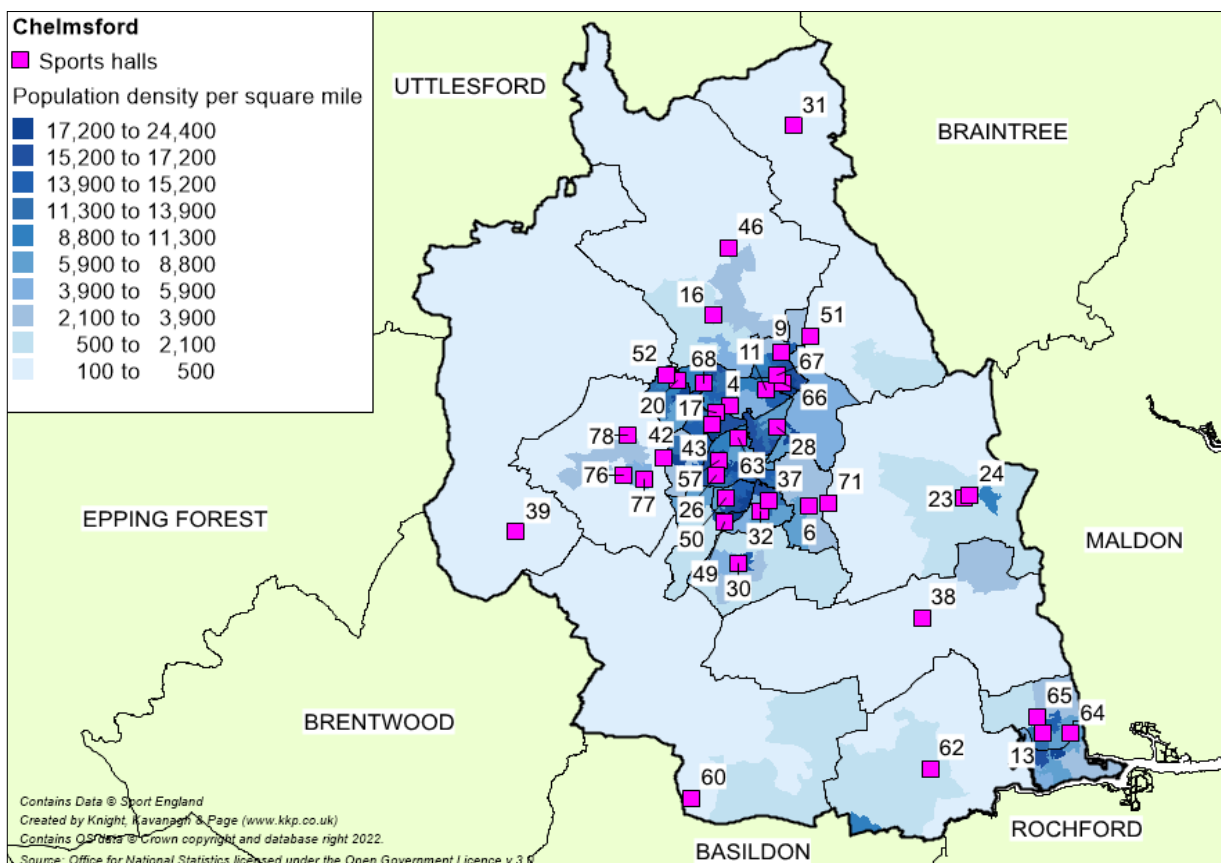
Larger halls, for example those with six or eight courts, can accommodate higher level training and/or competition and meet day-to-day need. They also provide an option for more than one pitch/court increasing flexibility for training and competition and hosting of indoor central venue leagues for sports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

### 4.1: Supply

#### Quantity

Figure 4.1 shows there are 53 sports halls of all sizes in the Chelmsford administrative area accommodating 107 badminton courts. Table 4.1 lists the halls with their Map ID number as shown in Figure 4.1. Some venues have more than one activity/sports hall on site.

Figure 4.1: All sports / activity halls in the Chelmsford administrative area – regardless of size



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Table 4.1: All sports / activity halls in the Chelmsford administrative area

Map ID	Site name	Number of courts
4	Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay)	4
6	Baddow Hall Junior School	2
9	Beaulieu Park School	4
11	Boswells School	4
11	Boswells School	2
13	Champions Manor Hall	0
13	Champions Manor Hall	0
16	Chelmer Valley High School	2
16	Chelmer Valley High School	4
17	Chelmsford County High School for Girls	4
20	Chelmsford Sports & Athletics Centre	4
23	Danbury Sports & Social Centre	2
24	Danbury Village Hall	0
24	Danbury Village Hall	0
26	Dovedale Sports Centre	5
28	Essex Police College	1
30	Galleywood Infant School	1
31	Great And Little Leighs Playing Field	1
32	Great Baddow High School	4
32	Great Baddow High School	1
37	Hamptons Sports & Leisure Ltd	0
38	Hannas Field	1
39	Highwood Primary School	1
42	Hylands School	1
42	Hylands School	4
43	King Edward VI Grammar School	1
43	King Edward VI Grammar School	2
43	King Edward VI Grammar School	5
46	Little Waltham Sports & Social Club	1
49	Mildmay Junior School	1
50	Moulsham High School	0
50	Moulsham High School	4
50	Moulsham High School	3
51	New Hall School	4
52	Newlands Spring Primary School	1
57	Our Lady Immaculate Catholic PS	1
60	Ramsden Hall Academy	1
62	Rettendon Primary School	0
63	Riverside Leisure Centre (Chelmsford)	6
64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	4
64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	2
65	South Woodham Playing Field	0
66	Springfield Parish Centre	1
67	Springfield Primary School	1
68	St John Payne Catholic School	1



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Map ID	Site name	Number of courts
68	St John Payne Catholic School	1
68	St John Payne Catholic School	6
68	St John Payne Catholic School	2
71	The Sandon School	1
71	The Sandon School	4
76	Writtle Junior School	1
77	Writtle Sports & Social Club	0
78	Writtle University College	1
-	<b>Total courts</b>	<b>107</b>

(0-court halls identified in Active Places but not large enough to accommodate 1 badminton court)

Sports halls are well distributed throughout the authority with more located in the more densely populated areas.

The Chelmsford administrative area has 41 sports/activity halls with two or fewer badminton courts marked out. While often appropriate for mat sports, exercise to music and similar provision, the size of smaller (0-2 court) halls limits the range and scale of recreational/sporting activity accommodated.

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

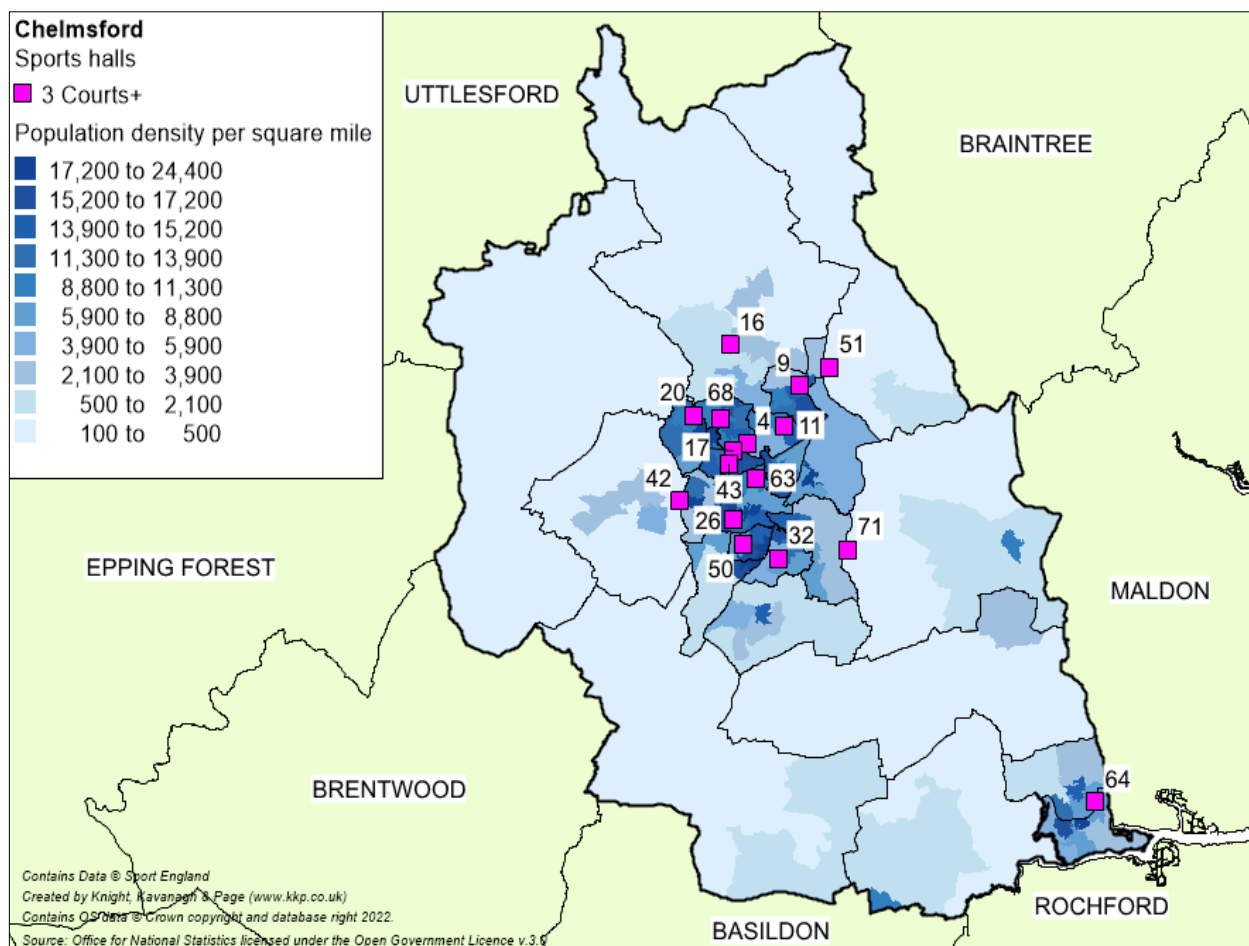
There are 17 sports halls with 3+ marked badminton courts in the Chelmsford administrative area, totalling 73 badminton courts (see Table 4.2). Figure 4.2 shows the location of these venues.

Table 4.2: Sports halls with 3+ badminton courts

Map ID	Site name	Courts
4	Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay)	4
9	Beaulieu Park School	4
11	Boswells School	4
16	Chelmer Valley High School	4
17	Chelmsford County High School For Girls	4
20	Chelmsford Sports & Athletics Centre	4
26	Dovedale Sports Centre	5
32	Great Baddow High School	4
42	Hylands School	4
43	King Edward VI Grammar School	5
50	Moulsham High School	4
50	Moulsham High School	3
51	New Hall School	4
63	Riverside Leisure Centre (Chelmsford)	6
64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	4
68	St John Payne Catholic School	6
71	The Sandon School	4
-	<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>

# CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT- DRAFT

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



There are two 6-court halls in the Authority, (at Riverside Leisure Centre and St John Payne Catholic School), two 5-court facilities (at Dovedale Sports Centre and King Edward VI Grammar school), twelve 4-court halls and one 3-court hall, at Moulsham High School.

Sports halls with 3+ courts are generally concentrated in the centre of the Authority serving its most densely populated area. There is less provision in the south and west and a specific lack of provision in the South Woodham Ferrers area when compared to the Authority's other larger settlements.

## Facility quality

All 3+ court sports halls, shown Figure 4.3 and Table 4.3, were subject to non-technical assessment to ascertain quality. These took place between October and November 2023. Any investment made after this date is not accounted for. Known or planned investment is mentioned in the site notes.

There is one good quality sports hall in the Authority at Riverside Leisure Centre. Nine are rated above average quality and seven are rated below average. Generally, residents in the city centre and to the east of the Authority have better access to sports halls of good and above average quality.

# CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT- DRAFT

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

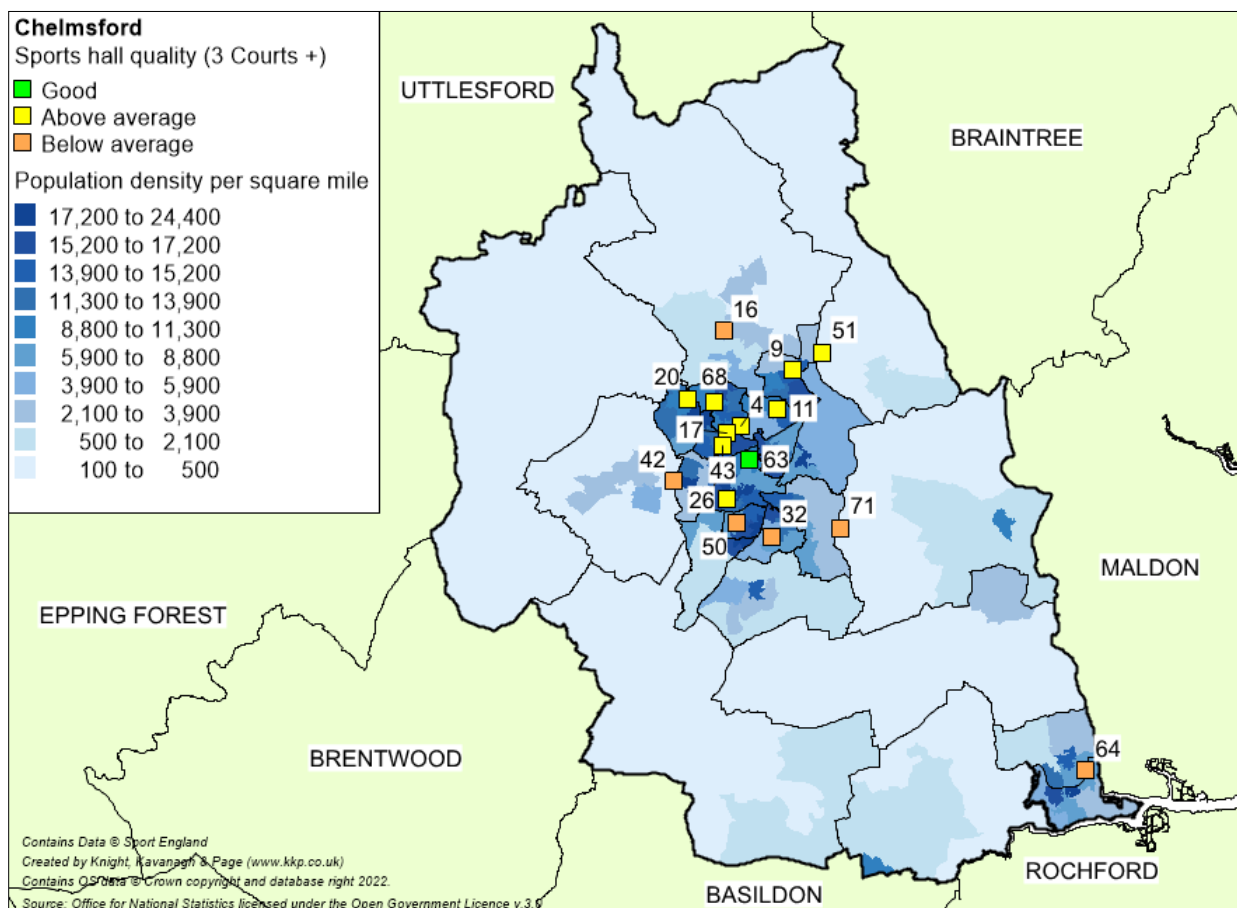


Table 4.3: Quality of 3+ sports halls

ID	Site name	Courts	Court condition	Changing
4	Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay)	4	Above average	Above average
9	Beaulieu Park School	4	Above average	Above average
11	Boswells School	4	Above average	Not assessed
16	Chelmer Valley High School	4	Below average	Below average
17	Chelmsford County High School For Girls	4	Above average	Not assessed
20	Chelmsford Sports & Athletics Centre	4	Above average	Above average
26	Dovedale Sports Centre	5	Above average	Below average
32	Great Baddow High School	4	Below average	Not assessed
42	Hylands School	4	Below average	Not assessed
43	King Edward VI Grammar School	5	Above average	Below average
50	Moulsham High School	4	Below average	Below average
50	Moulsham High School	3	Below average	Below average
51	New Hall School	4	Above average	Above average
63	Riverside Leisure Centre (Chelmsford)	6	Good	Good
64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	4	Below average	Below average
68	St John Payne Catholic School	6	Above average	Below average
71	The Sandon School	4	Below average	Below average

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## Council operated sites

Riverside Leisure Centre's good quality rating reflects that, as part of the redevelopment of the site, with a fully refurbishment of the sports hall in 2019. The sports hall has good run offs surrounding the courts and the general décor of the facility is good, with no visible damage/wear and tear to existing nets, curtains or walls.

The Dovedale Sports Centre sports hall floor was resurfaced in 2022; lines were re-painted and wall décor re-done. It has good quality lighting aligned for badminton. There are wider plans for potential site development and further refurbishment in the near future - exact date and scope to be determined. Reception and changing areas are also in need of modernisation, this is reflected in the changing room quality rating of below average.

Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre has recently had LED lights installed and the quality of its floor and general décor reflect its above average quality rating. At South Woodham Ferrers, the below average quality rating reflects the lack of recent investment - the sports hall floor at this venue requires refurbishment.

## Education sites

In terms of improvements at education sites, reflected in above average ratings Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay Sports Centre), and Moulsham High School have recently had LED lights installed to improve energy efficiency. The sports halls at Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay Sports Centre) have received regular refurbishment, with a new sports hall floor having been installed in 2023. The sports halls at Beaulieu Park School and King Edward VI Grammar School were built in 2019 for the former and 2018 for the latter. The sports hall at Beaulieu Park School, has LED lights and a sprung wood floor.

A prominent factor in Table 4.4 below (quality ratings of sports halls) on school sites is the lack of recent investment. One example is Hylands School (below average quality) where the sports hall has received no major refurbishment since it was built. As a result of this, it is in poor condition and requires replacement. (NB four school changing rooms were unable to be assessed due to pupil use at the time of the site visit).

Table 4.4: Reported quality issues at below average sports halls

Site name	Rating	Audit findings
Chelmer Valley High School	Below average	This has received limited investment in the last decade. A new floor is required due to damage and wear and tear. Ongoing issues with leaking roof which can affect sporting activity.
Great Baddow High School	Below average	Flooring is dated and is need of a refurbishment. It has an issue with a leaking roof and is in the process of sourcing funding to fix.
Hylands School	Below average	The roof is prone to leaks - this is affecting the quality of the sports hall surface. A new floor is required due to its age, damage and general wear and tear.
Moulsham High School	Below average	The building is looking outdated and tired. A new sports hall floor is required due to wear and tear. LED lights were installed in 2022.
South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	Below average	This dual use sports facility sports hall floor has not been refurbished since its construction in 1982. The floor is, thus, dated due to a combination of its age, damage and wear and tear.
The Sandon School	Below average	There are reported issues with the heating system and temperature control which are in the process of getting fixed. Venue décor is old fashioned, and it has low quality lighting.

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Table 4.5: Year of construction and refurbishment of sports halls

Site	Year built / opened	Last refurbished	Age since opened/ refurbished
Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay Sports Centre)	2005	2023	1
Beaulieu Park School	2019	-	5
Boswells School	2002	2009	15
Chelmer Valley High School	1955	2012	12
Chelmsford County High School for Girls	2021	-	3
Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre	2002	2015	9
Dovedale Sports Centre	1974	2002	22
Great Baddow High School	1972	2012	12
Hylands School	1970	-	54
King Edwards VI Grammar School	2018	-	6
Moulsham High School (4 court)	2000	-	24
Moulsham High School (3 court)	2000	-	24
New Hall School	1976	2012	12
Riverside Leisure Centre (Chelmsford)	2019	-	5
South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	1982	-	19
St John Payne Catholic School	2011	-	13
The Sandon School	1998	2016	8

Table 4.5 above illustrates that most sports halls have benefitted from some form of investment/refurbishment in the last 20 years. This is also reflected in audit findings.

### 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 an urban area and a 20-minute drive time for a rural area.

In reference to Figure 4.4 and Table 4.6 overleaf, the Chelmsford administrative area, 68.9% of residents live within a one mile walk of a sports hall, this represents a good level of accessibility. This reduces very marginally to 68.5% of residents (118,184) when applying the same calculation to sports halls with community access (see Figure 4.5 and Table 4.7 overleaf)

Relatively few (15,005) people in the Chelmsford administrative area live in defined areas of higher deprivation (0-30% IMD bands) including, only 1%/1,723 reside in the top 20%. A higher overall proportion (c80%) of these residents live within a one mile walk of a sports hall.

14.9% of the population do not have access to a car (2021 Census). This means that 11,215 people in the Chelmsford administrative area are reliant on public transport or walking/cycling to get to a sports hall. This can add to the cost of participation.

As shown in Figure 4.6, virtually all (99.95%) of the Chelmsford administrative area population live within a 20-minute drive of a publicly accessible sports hall with 3+ badminton courts, or a sports hall of equivalent dimensions.

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Figure 4.4: All sports halls with 3+ courts on IMD with one-mile radial catchments

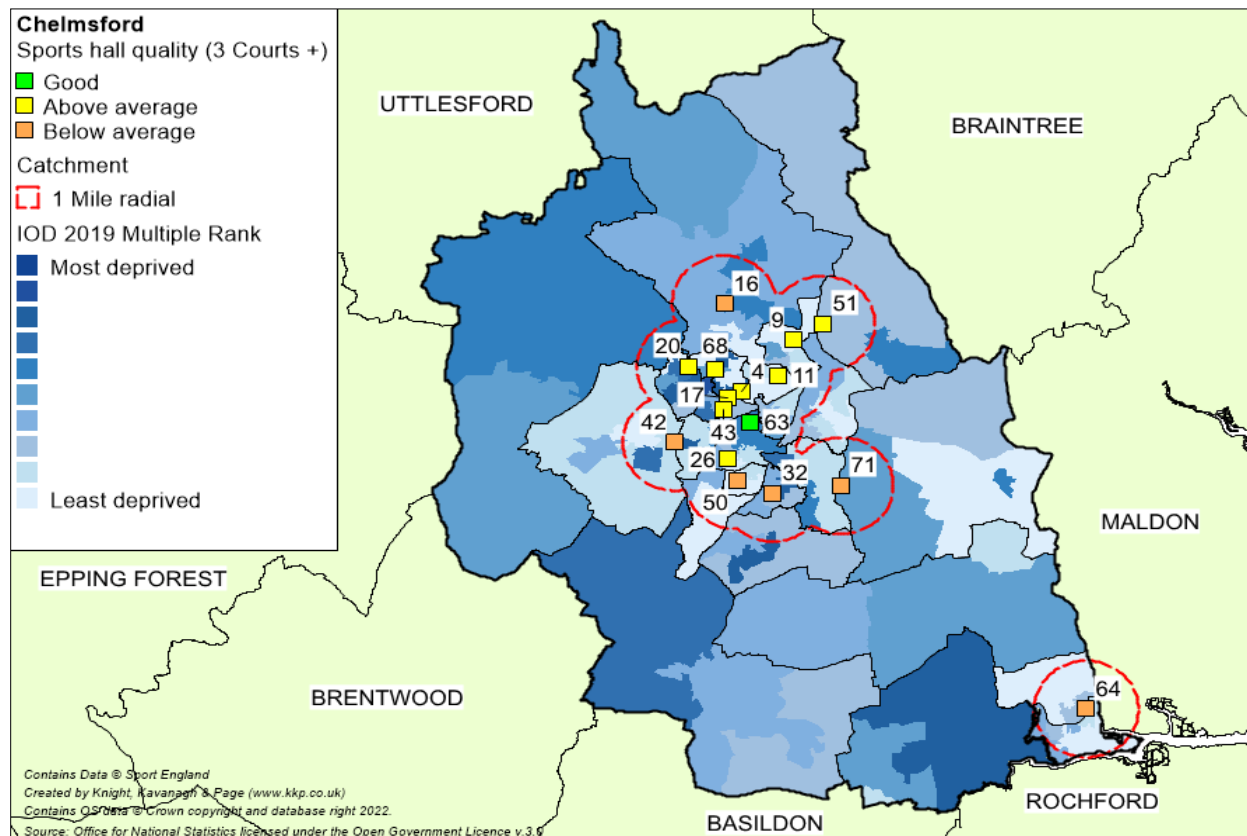
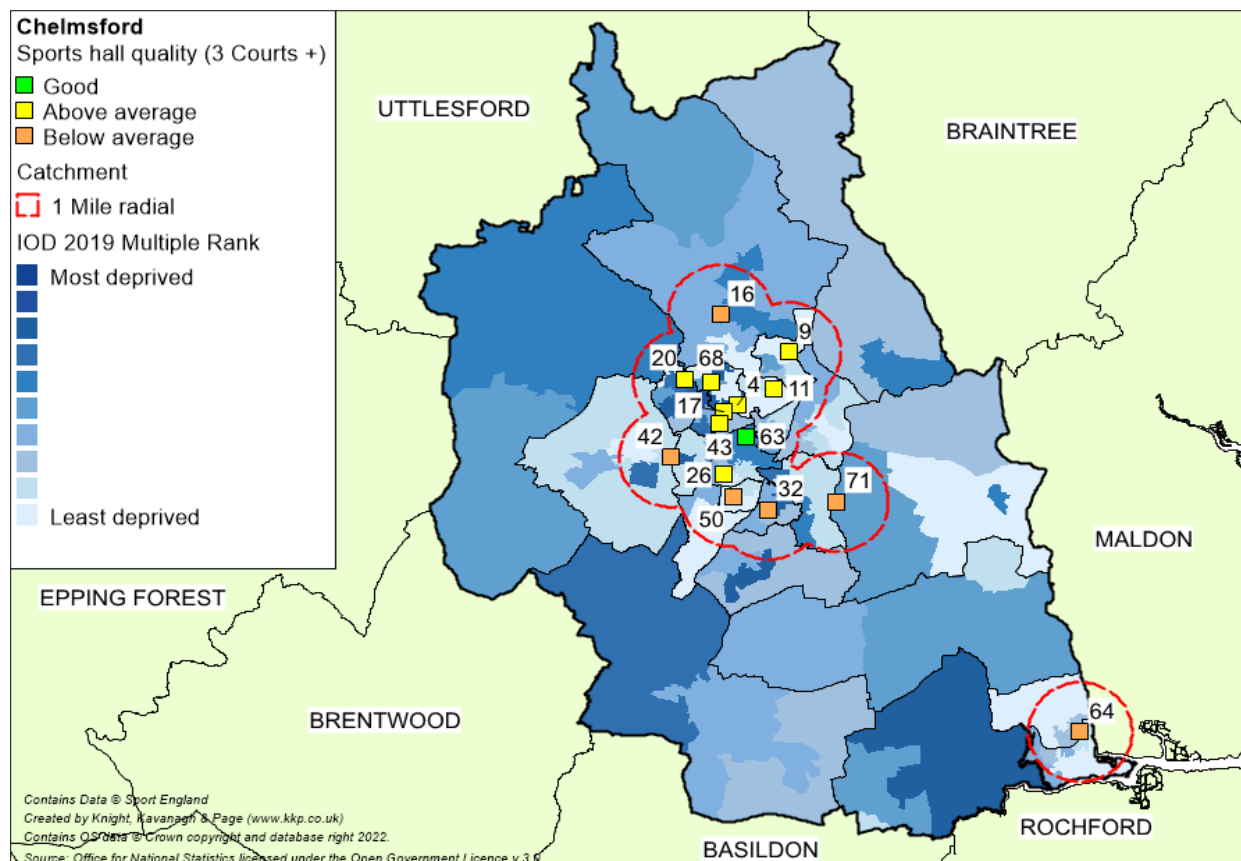


Figure 4.5: Community use sports halls with 3+ courts on IMD with one-mile radial catchments





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Figure 4.6: Sports halls on IMD background based on 20 minutes' drive-time

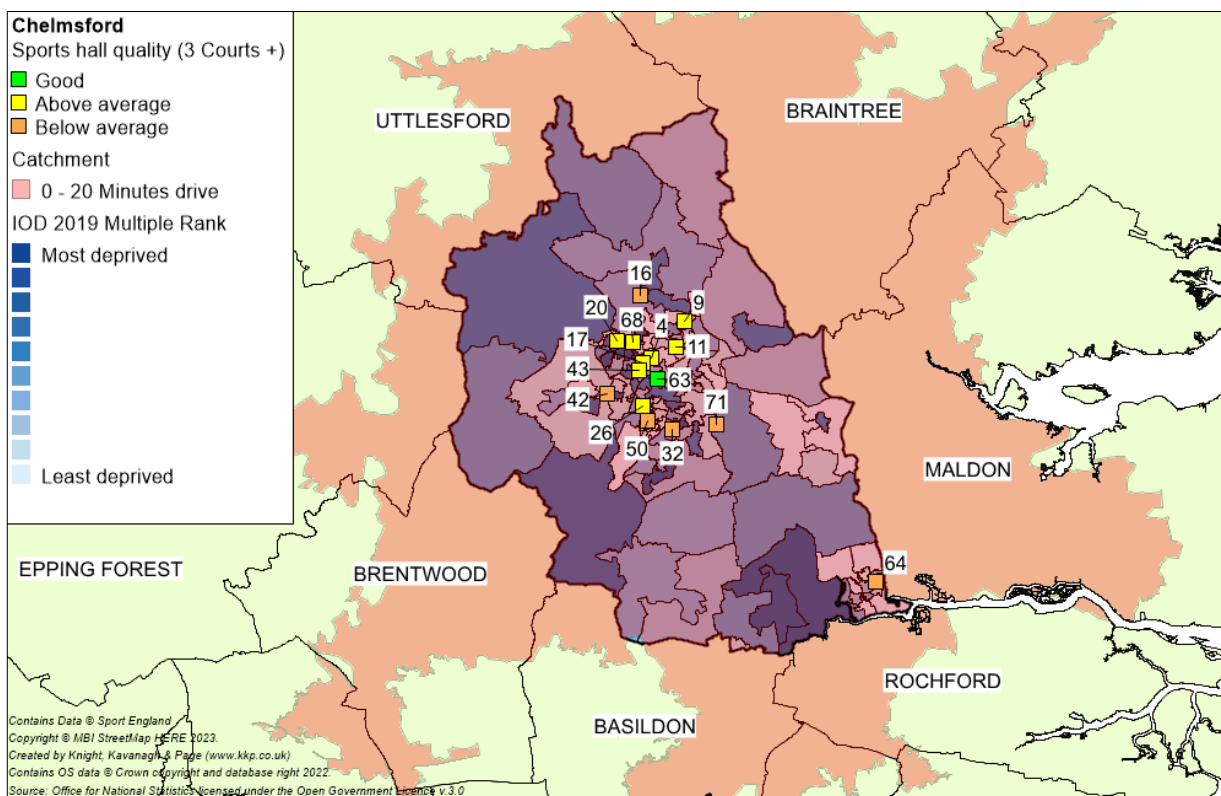


Table 4.6: Accessibility to community use (all sports halls with 3+ courts)

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10.1 - 20	1,723	1.0%	1,723	1.0%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	13,282	7.7%	10,156	5.9%	3,126	1.8%
30.1 - 40	7,784	4.5%	6,044	3.5%	1,740	1.0%
40.1 - 50	11,887	6.9%	7,014	4.1%	4,873	2.8%
50.1 - 60	14,228	8.3%	6,782	3.9%	7,446	4.3%
60.1 - 70	27,173	15.8%	17,653	10.2%	9,520	5.5%
70.1 - 80	29,120	16.9%	18,759	10.9%	10,361	6.0%
80.1 - 90	29,406	17.1%	21,049	12.2%	8,357	4.8%
90.1 - 100	37,837	21.9%	29,627	17.2%	8,210	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>172,440</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>118,807</b>	<b>68.9%</b>	<b>53,633</b>	<b>31.1%</b>



# CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT- DRAFT

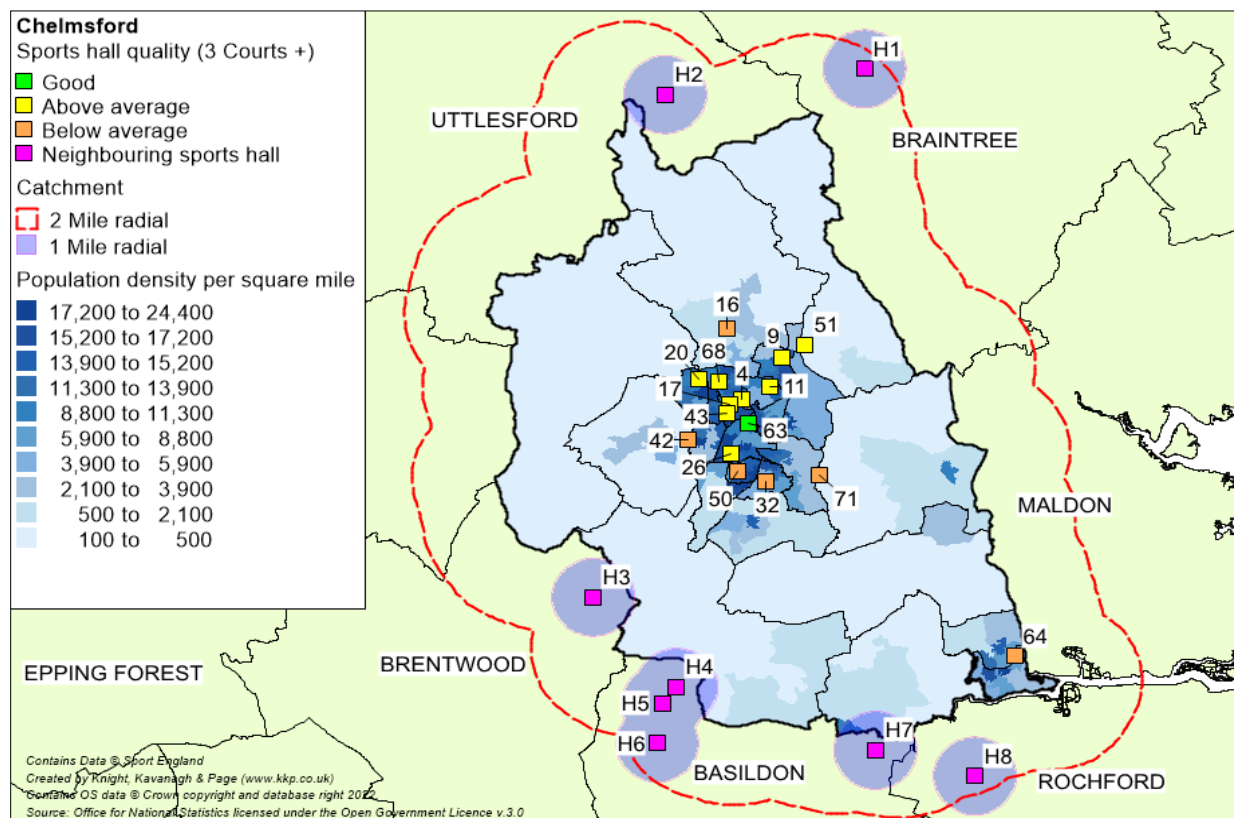
Table 4.7: Accessibility to community use sports halls with 3+ courts

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10.1 - 20	1,723	1.0%	1,723	1.0%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	13,282	7.7%	10,156	5.9%	3,126	1.8%
30.1 - 40	7,784	4.5%	6,044	3.5%	1,740	1.0%
40.1 - 50	11,887	6.9%	6,981	4.0%	4,906	2.8%
50.1 - 60	14,228	8.3%	6,782	3.9%	7,446	4.3%
60.1 - 70	27,173	15.8%	17,516	10.2%	9,657	5.6%
70.1 - 80	29,120	16.9%	18,317	10.6%	10,803	6.3%
80.1 - 90	29,406	17.1%	21,040	12.2%	8,366	4.9%
90.1 - 100	37,837	21.9%	29,625	17.2%	8,212	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>172,440</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>118,184</b>	<b>68.5%</b>	<b>54,256</b>	<b>31.5%</b>

## Facilities in neighbouring authorities

Accessibility is influenced by facilities located outside the authority. Figure 4.7 shows there are 8 sports halls with 3+ courts located within two miles (indicative of how far people may travel) of Chelmsford's administrative area boundary. Table 4.8 shows they offer 40 courts, 4 of which are located in Basildon. One sports hall in a neighbouring authority is larger than any within the Chelmsford administrative area; the 7-court facility at Felsted School in Uttlesford.

Figure 4.7: Sports halls (3+courts) within two miles of the Chelmsford administrative area



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Table 4.8: Neighbouring sports halls – 3+ courts with community use

ID	Site name	Courts	Access type	Local authority
H1	Notley Sports Centre	3 + 5	Sports club / CA	Braintree
H2	Felsted School	7	Sports club / CA	Uttlesford
H3	Anglo European School	4	Sports club / CA	Brentwood
H4	Mayflower High School	4	Sports club / CA	Basildon
H5	St Johns School	4	Sports club / CA	Basildon
H6	Billericay School (Billericay Sports	5	Sports club / CA	Basildon
H7	Beauchamps High School	4	Sports club / CA	Basildon
H8	Rayleigh Leisure Centre	4	Sports club / CA	Rochford

### Availability and facility management

Table 4.9 shows that management and ownership of sport hall facilities vary. CCC owns four facilities with 3+court sports halls, all of which are managed in-house. Sports halls located on school sites in the Chelmsford administrative area tend to be owned and managed in-house; however, Beaulieu Park School, Boswells School and Hylands School use a third-party lettings agent to manage bookings and staffing.

The audit found New Hall School to be private use only. Prior to the Pandemic it did provide community use options for local clubs however this has now ceased with the school having made this decision due to safeguarding issues and the open nature of the site.

Once the sports hall at New Hall School is removed from analysis, there are 16 sports halls across 14 sites in the Chelmsford administrative area with 3+ courts. This equates to 69 community available courts.

Table 4.9: Ownership and management of 3+ sports hall facilities with community access

Site name	Ownership	Management
Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay)	University	In house
Beaulieu Park School	Academy	School Hire
Boswells School	Academy	School Hire
Chelmer Valley High School	Academy	In house
Chelmsford County High School for Girls	Academy	In house
Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre	CCC	Council
Dovedale Sports Centre	CCC	Council
Great Baddow High School	Academy	In house
Hylands School	Foundation school	School Space
King Edwards VI Grammar School	Academy	In house
Moulsham High School	Academy	In house
Riverside Leisure Centre (Chelmsford)	CCC	Council
South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	CCC	Council
St John Payne Catholic School	Voluntary aided school	In house
The Sandon School	Academy	In house

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## Daytime availability

Only two (Chelmsford Sports & Athletic Centre and Riverside Leisure Centre) sites in the Chelmsford administrative area offer daytime (off peak) availability to community 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 Authority is projected to rise from 19.1% in 2018 to 23% in 2041 provision of daytime access is likely to be an increasing priority going forward.

Given the nature of school sites, availability is limited to evenings and weekends. This lowers the number of hours which South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre and Dovedale Sports Centre can offer to the community, as it is part of a dual use site with William De Ferrers School and Dovedale Sports Centre (shared with Chelmsford College). The following six schools provide community use outside of school hours seven days per week:

- ◀ Beaulieu Park School
- ◀ Boswells School
- ◀ Chelmer Valley High School
- ◀ Chelmsford County High School for Girls
- ◀ Moulsham High School
- ◀ St John Payne School

Great Baddow High School provides community access six days per week (closed Sundays), whilst King Edward VI Grammar School and The Sandon School only offer weekday use. The most significant reason given for this is the lack of staffing available.

Table 4.10 details the total community use hours available for each sports hall. Figures are calculated using intelligence gathered throughout the audit and desk research. Table 4.11 details the used capacity at each site. The percentages have been determined based on booking information provided by the site and information gained via consultation. It is not possible to gauge used capacity exactly due to the changing nature of bookings on a week-by-week basis, the seasonality of sports and use of sports halls for school exams.

Table 4.10: Community use hours and activities that take place in sports halls

Community use hours	ID	Site	Courts	Main sports played
None	51	New Hall School	4	None
17.5	43	King Edward VI Grammar School	5	Badminton, basketball, cricket
17.5	42	Hylands School	4	Badminton, netball, cricket
18.0	4	Anglia Ruskin University	4	Badminton, basketball
20.0	9	Beaulieu Park School	4	Badminton, netball, futsal, football and gymkhana
20.0	68	St John Payne Catholic School	6	Badminton, basketball, cricket, wheelchair basketball, fencing, futsal
25.0	32	Great Baddow High School	4	Badminton, basketball, futsal
25.0	16	Chelmer Valley High School	4	Badminton, basketball, cricket and futsal
33.0	71	The Sandon School	4	Badminton, basketball, cricket, archery and futsal
34.0	17	Chelmsford County High School for Girls	4	Basketball, volleyball, netball and cricket

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Community use hours	ID	Site	Courts	Main sports played
36.0	11	Boswells School	4	Volleyball, cricket, netball
40.5	50	Moulsham High School	4	Badminton, basketball, netball and futsal
40.5	50	Moulsham High School	3	Badminton, basketball, netball and futsal
45.5	26	Dovedale Sports Centre	5	Badminton, basketball, netball and martial arts
51.0	64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	4	Badminton, basketball and netball
96.0	20	Chelmsford Sports & Athletics Centre	4	Badminton, table tennis, soccer, futsal, carpet bowls, trampolining.
104.25	63	Riverside Leisure Centre	6	Badminton, basketball, netball, cricket, martial arts

## Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM)

Sport England provided an FPM assessment report for sports halls in the Chelmsford administrative area in March 2024. This provided a baseline position based on 2022 population data.

### Headline position

- ▶ The quantitative findings identify that there is sufficient supply across the Chelmsford administrative area to meet demand in 2022, but there is an uneven distribution in the quality and capacity of the sports halls. Therefore, the first intervention is to increase access for community use at key sites and provide a more balanced distribution of met demand.
- ▶ Riverside Leisure Centre is estimated to be 100% utilised at peak times. It is available for the maximum hours in the weekly peak period and, therefore, there is no scope to increase capacity at peak times.
- ▶ Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre is utilised for 76% of capacity at peak times and has the scope to increase availability by up to two hours, whilst Dovedale Sports Centre is utilised for 66% of capacity at peak times and has the scope to increase availability by up to seven hours. Although the hours of community use would need to be adjusted with Chelmsford College. It is acknowledged that these interventions involve programming and management across three sites, and that the scale of the additional hours and capacity created is limited.
- ▶ The other public sports hall, South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre, is 78% utilised at peak times and close to the considered uncomfortably full level of 80%. There is scope to increase the peak hours by 12 and create more capacity at this site, should this be required.
- ▶ There is more scope to increase capacity at key educational sites and reduce the proportion of used capacity to a comfortable level at peak times. These include Beaulieu Park School which is utilised for 97% of used capacity at peak times and scope to increase availability by up to 14 hours, Chelmsford County High School for Girls utilised at 92% of used capacity and scope to increase availability by up to 7 hours. Whilst King Edward VI Grammar School is utilised at 82% of used capacity at peak times and scope to increase availability by up to 28.5 hours.
- ▶ None of the other educational sports halls are uncomfortably full. Utilisation ranges from 27% at Chelmer Valley High School to 73% at Great Baddow School.

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- ✦ The second intervention is modernisation of sports halls. Of the eight sports halls that opened before 2000, five have been modernised. Examples of unmodernised sports halls include Hylands School (opened 1985), Moulsham High School (opened 1985) and South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre (opened 1982).
- ✦ Modernisation of the sports halls is of increasing importance in order to maintain their attractiveness, ensure equity of provision across the Council area, and continue to retain the very high level of the Chelmsford administrative area's demand met within the Council area.
- ✦ The importance of community access to educational sports halls is evident. If not in place, a community use agreement should be put in place for the current supply. Looking ahead, it will be important to negotiate and secure a community use agreement at any new or replacement educational sports hall site.

## Supply

- ✦ The FPM assessed 15 of the 16 sites covered in the KKP audit, comprising a total of 94.2 badminton courts, of which 59.3 are available for community use in the weekly peak period.
- ✦ The FPM excluded the sports hall at New Hall school on the basis that the KKP audit found that this facility is unavailable for community use.

## Demand

- ✦ FPM demand findings (see Table 4.11 below) suggest that levels of satisfied demand in the Chelmsford administrative area are very high, with most visits to sports halls being met within the Council area.
- ✦ The population in the Chelmsford administrative area generates a demand for 15,315 sports hall visits per week in the FPM peak period. Of this total demand, the vast majority (96%) is able to be met.
- ✦ The Chelmsford administrative area's exported demand is low at 10% of all met demand, with the greatest amount (a third of all exported demand) going to Basildon.
- ✦ Levels of unmet demand are low (4%) and are equivalent to 2.2 badminton courts. All the unmet demand is due to being too far from a facility, and none is due to lack of capacity.
- ✦ 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 used capacity of sports halls in the Chelmsford administrative area in the weekly peak period is estimated to be 67%. A number of facilities (Riverside Leisure Centre, Beaulieu High School, Chelmsford County High School for Girls and King Edward VI Grammar School) are however estimated to be uncomfortably full, with an estimated used capacity of more than 80% at peak times.

Table 4.11: FPM demand findings (2022)

Element	FPM 2022
Total demand	15,315 visits
Satisfied demand	96%
Satisfied demand retained within the Chelmsford administrative area	90%
Satisfied demand exported	10%
Unmet demand	4%
% of unmet demand due to residents outside sports hall catchment (as opposed to no capacity)	100%
Overall average used sports hall capacity	67%

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

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## Used capacity

Non-technical site audits identify the used capacity of each sports hall. Used capacity is assessed as a percentage of available community use hours used. Sport England identifies 80% as a 'comfortably full' benchmark, so, for example, the 17.5 hours available at King Edward VI Grammar School are used for 90% of the time.

Table 4.12 provides a comparison of used capacity at each sports hall site (i.e. percentage of available community use hours used<sup>13</sup>). 'KKP audited used capacity' is an 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 4.12: Used capacity of sports halls

Site	KKP Audited Used capacity	FPM Used capacity
New Hall School	0%	
Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay Sports Centre)	20%	62%
Moulsham High School (three court)	20%	55%
South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	68%	78%
Hylands School	68%	40%
Great Baddow High School	70%	73%
Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre	70%	76%
Chelmer Valley High School	80%	27%
St John Payne Catholic School	80%	50%
Beaulieu Park School	85%	97%
Boswells School	90%	65%
Chelmsford County High School for Girls	90%	92%
Dovedale Sports Centre	90%	66%
The Sandon School	90%	42%
King Edward VI Grammar School	95%	85%
Moulsham High School (four court)	95%	55%
Riverside Leisure Centre	95%	100%

(80% -Sport England's guidance threshold which is considered to be a "comfortably full" sports hall)

Consultation with New Hall School confirmed that there is no community use at the site.

Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay Sports Centre) has the lowest level of community use of all the sports halls in the Chelmsford administrative area. It is unavailable during the week, which is reserved for student activity only.

<sup>13</sup> 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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South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre has the lowest used capacity of the publicly available leisure centres. Although this is operating close to the benchmark at 68%, suggesting there is still high demand for the sports hall but has some spare capacity for an increase in usage. However, consultation with the site manager states the biggest usage is the lack of bookings on Sundays and pulls the overall capacity of the sports hall and activity hall down.

3-court sports halls are not well-suited to accommodate sports such as netball, basketball or handball and clubs are, thus, likely to choose other available venues in the Chelmsford administrative area or neighbouring authorities.

Ten sites in the Chelmsford administrative area are operating above Sport England's 80% threshold where sports halls are deemed to be comfortably full. This demonstrates the high demand for sports hall space. In addition, Great Baddow High School is operating close to the benchmark. Remaining sports halls in the Chelmsford administrative area have capacity to accommodate further demand.

Beaulieu Park School is operating at 85% used capacity although it is only available for 20 hours per week. The Sandon School is operating at 90%; it is available for 33 hours per week. The King Edward VI Grammar School is operating at 90% used capacity but does not currently offer community use at weekends. These are examples of where community use hours could potentially be extended if club demand can be evidenced and other issues such as staffing can be addressed.

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. In this regard, a new 4-court sports hall being included as part of the Chelmsford Garden Community (see detail below) will go some way to catering for increased demand. With it being located at an education site, it is essential that a community use agreement is agreed, especially when considering that the four public leisure centre sports halls are currently operating close to capacity with limited scope to accommodate more demand.

## **Future developments**

The Chelmsford Garden Community in NE Chelmsford will include a new secondary school that is proposed will have a dual use 4-court community sports hall. This is likely to be a long term development in terms of implementation. Outline planning application for this part of the Garden Community is currently being determined and further information is available at:

<https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=externalDocuments&keyVal=S3CLUWBRMLL00>

## **4.2: Demand**

### **NGB consultation**

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

### **Badminton**

Badminton England (BE) is the NGB for badminton. Its latest strategy, Discover Badminton 2017-2025 presents a vision for the sport to become one of the nation's most popular and to consistently win medals at world, Olympic and Paralympic levels. To achieve this, it has identified three key objectives:

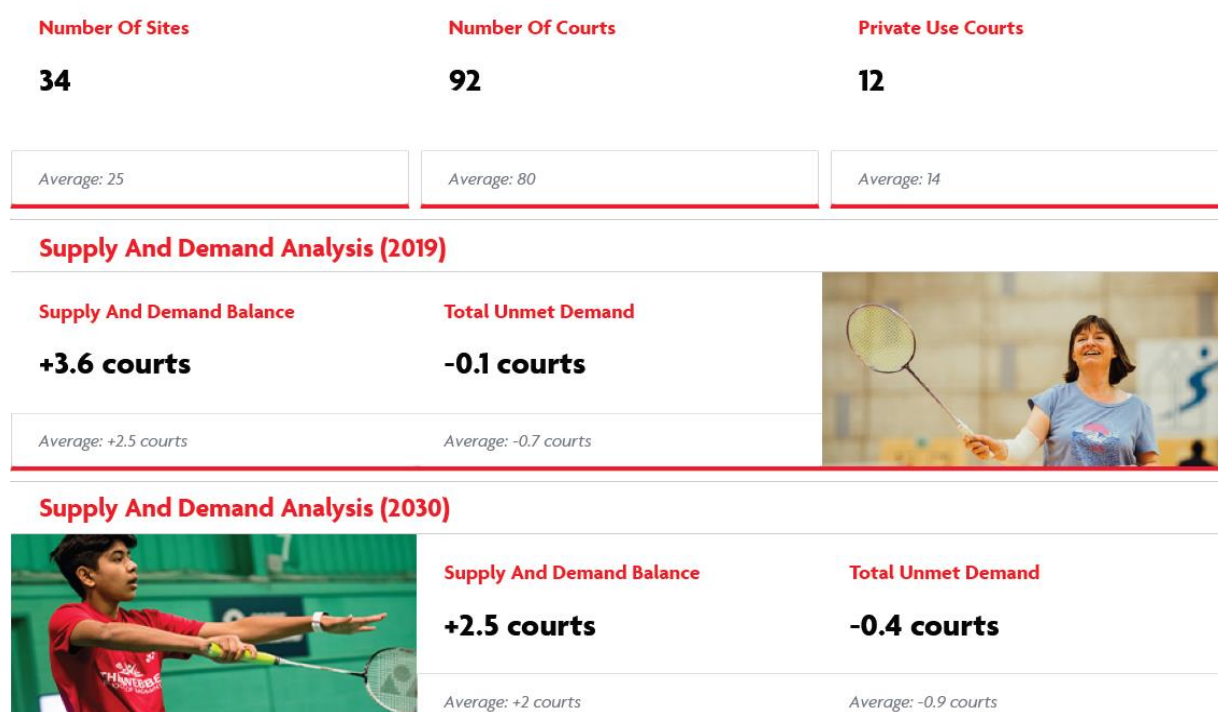


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- ◀ Grow grassroots participation.
- ◀ Create a system that identifies and develops player potential to deliver consistent world class performers.
- ◀ Build financial resilience to become a well governed organisation and demonstrate compliance with the UK governance code.

It applies a specific strategy model to assess court quality and sufficiency by local authority. Figure 4.8 below presents the statistics for the Chelmsford administrative area.

Figure 4.8: Overall statistics for the Chelmsford administrative area



Badminton England facilities modelling indicates that there is a current and future surplus in terms of the supply and demand for badminton courts. It must be noted however, that KKP's needs assessment differs from the findings of the BE model. While BE assumes that there are 92 available courts, KKP's assessment only identifies 69 community available courts. It must be noted that KKP's assessment identifies only 3+ court sports hall facilities, whereas BE's assessment identifies all facilities with halls (sports halls with one and two courts).

Consultation with BE outlined the need for increased quality and availability of badminton courts in the Chelmsford administrative area. BE confirmed that it currently has six affiliated and seven non- affiliated clubs in the area. There are also 120 BE affiliated members and 12 school clubs, of which 11 are based at secondary schools with the other at a primary school.

In terms of workforce, it reports four 'Essentials' endorsed leader, five 'No Strings co-ordinators', four 'Smashup! activators' and two 'The Racket Pack Endorsed'. There are four Level 2 and one Level 3 coaches in the area.

## Club consultation:

All clubs were approached for consultation; no response was received from Chelmsford Spartans Badminton Club and Danbury Badminton Club. A summary of the club consultation is as follows:

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Chelmsford Badminton Academy is a junior club with c.200 members. It accesses multiple venues in the Chelmsford administrative area at Chelmsford County High School on Tuesday evenings, King Edward VI Grammar School on Monday and Thursday evenings and at Riverside Leisure Centre on Fridays and Saturdays. It has seen membership increase post-Pandemic and is now almost at capacity given the facilities to which it has access.

Chelmsford Casuals Badminton Club has c.35 members and uses the sports hall at Dovedale Sports Centre on Monday evenings for matches and Thursday evenings for training sessions. It has a regular booking slot for two (out of five) courts. It reports itself to be operating at more or less peak capacity and it could only expand if given access to additional court time.

Riverside Badminton Club currently has 30 members: 27 of these male. It accommodates adult members only (aged 17+ years). It plays at several venues in the Authority, with its main venue being the 4-court hall at the Riverside Leisure Centre which it uses on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. It also uses Beaulieu Park School on Monday and Wednesday evenings and at Great Baddow High School on Friday evenings.

It reports that the facilities at Riverside Leisure and Beaulieu Park School are ideal offering the required run offs, suitable lighting and appropriate wall décor for badminton. However, the sports hall at Great Baddow High School is used as a last resort and is not suitable for badminton with low ceilings, slippery floor and cream-coloured walls.

## Netball

In November 2021 England Netball (EN) launched its ten-year 'Adventure Strategy' for the game along with a new organization brand identity. Its new strategy 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 the intention to:

- ◆ Accelerate development and growth of the game to every level, from grassroots to 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 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 the country it represents, 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 (EMMNA) 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

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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:

- ◆ 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.

For EN to achieve its ambitions to make the game accessible to wider audiences and in every community, it encourages local authorities to adopt policies within outdoor and indoor sports facilities strategies that:

- ◆ Facilitate informal netball activity within neighbourhood multi-use games areas for example by installing combined outdoor basketball and netball goals and art courts in 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.

EN reports the sport to be growing fast nationally with a YouGov<sup>[1]</sup> report noting that the 2019 World Cup inspired 160,000 adult women to take up the sport. In addition, 71% of clubs reported that more people had shown an interest in playing netball than before the tournament started.

Netball is played indoors and outdoors. For outdoor provision please refer to the PPOS 2024. Current indoor provision in the Chelmsford administrative area is as follows:

- ◆ Back 2 Netball sessions are designed to re-introduce players to the sport. Sessions are run by coaches. There are currently no Back 2 Netball sessions being delivered in the

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<sup>[1]</sup> <https://www.uksport.gov.uk/news/2019/10/02/netball-world-cup>

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Chelmsford administrative area, however desk research evidences that some sessions were previously delivered at Writtle University College.

- Walking Netball (netball played at a walking pace). This is designed so that anyone can play it regardless of age or fitness level. It was indicated during consultation that weekly walking netball sessions are held at Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre, however, these are limited to 20 participants and are reportedly full with a waiting list in place.

Netball clubs in the Chelmsford administrative area compete in the Chelmsford Senior and Junior leagues. These clubs include Brookshaw Stuart Netball Club, Conquerors Junior Netball Club, Dolphins Netball Club and Chelmsford Senior and Junior Netball Club.

The audit identified five clubs within the Chelmsford administrative area, as set out in Table 4.12 - all affiliated to England Netball.

Table 4.12: Netball clubs in the Chelmsford administrative area

Club name	Affiliated	Club response
Brookshaw Stuart Netball Club	Yes	Yes
Chelmsford Netball Club	Yes	No
Chelmsford Junior Netball Club	Yes	No
Conquerors Junior Netball Club	Yes	Yes
Dolphins Netball Club	Yes	Yes

Clubs were approached by both KKP and England Netball to take part in the audit, with the majority responding to consultation requests. Non-respondents were Chelmsford Netball Club and Chelmsford Junior Netball Club. The following summary is based upon netball club feedback and information provided by England Netball:

Brookshaw Stuart NC has c.216 members and participates in the Chelmsford Senior and Junior leagues, utilising facilities at Beaulieu Park School on Friday evenings. Its senior teams also access facilities at Chelmer Valley High School – on its outdoor courts.

Conquerors Junior Netball Club has c.60 members and trains on the outdoor courts at Chelmer Park. It competes in the Chelmsford Junior League. Whilst almost all play is outdoors, the Club would like to train indoors, particularly during the winter months.

Dolphins Netball Club has c.75 members. It caters for juniors (age 5+) and adults. The majority of its activity takes place on the outdoor courts at William de Ferrers School, but it would like access to an indoor facility for training, particularly during winter months.

Chelmsford NC was contacted but declined the opportunity to take part in the study. Desk research suggests that it is based at Felstead School in Uttlesford. However, matches take place at Beaulieu Park School as part of its involvement in the Chelmsford Netball League.

Chelmsford Junior NC are based at Beaulieu Park School. Its training sessions take place on Monday evenings between 18:00-19:00. It accommodates juniors aged 10-16 years and it runs 10 teams which compete in the Chelmsford & District Junior Netball League.

Both the Chelmsford Netball League and the Chelmsford & District Junior Netball League were contacted for consultation; however, no response was received.

Consultation with England Netball states that the Chelmsford administrative area is a priority area for the sport. This is predominantly due to the outdoor courts at Beaulieu Park School

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hosting the Chelmsford Senior League and Chelmsford & District Junior League, which offers both winter and summer options.

Both leagues were contacted for consultation; however, no responses were received.

## Table Tennis

In October 2022, Table Tennis England launched its Strategic Plan 'Table Tennis United'. Its strategy shares the vision for the game which is 'a table tennis nation': Its strategic objectives (pledges) are:

- ◆ Table tennis will be a thriving community – a sport for everyone with no barriers to taking part.
- ◆ Culture change across the pathway that inspires World Class Performances and medal success.
- ◆ Connection across the table tennis community.
- ◆ A high performing organisation that is not just fit for today but is fit for the future.

The audit identified two affiliated table tennis clubs in the Chelmsford administrative area. Chelmsford TTC and Old Chelmsfordians TTC. Both were invited to take part in the consultation, and both responded to consultation requests.

The Table Tennis England, Chelmsford Table Tennis League and Central Essex Summer League were also invited to take part in the consultation however neither responded.

A summary of the club consultation is as follows:

Chelmsford TTC has c. 83 members (50 adults and 32 juniors). It runs eight junior teams which play in the Chelmsford Table Tennis Junior League and 10 adult teams which play in the Chelmsford Table Tennis League. It is predominately based at Chelmsford Sport & Athletic Centre and has access to the sports hall at this venue on Mondays, Fridays and Sundays. The Club state they would ideally like more space and/or a new facility as its membership is constantly increasing.

Old Chelmsfordians TTC has c.30 senior members and utilises provision at Old Chelmsfordians Association. It uses the village hall on Monday and Tuesday evenings. It currently runs five teams and has capacity to increase to a total of eight - but is limited by its number of volunteers and coaches.

## Basketball

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



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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 three affiliated clubs in the Authority, as set out in Table 4.13. All were approached for consultation; however, none were responsive.

Table 4.13: Basketball club responses

Club name	Club response?
Baddow Eagles	No
Essex Charge	No
Essex Wolves	No

A summary of basketball clubs in the Chelmsford administrative area is provided based on information provided by Basketball England and desk research carried out for the audit.

Baddow Eagles has one senior women's team with c.11 members. It competes in the Essex League, utilising facilities at Great Baddow High School on Wednesday evenings.

Essex Charge was established in August 2023. It fields two senior men's teams and one junior team and it has c.33 members. Its senior men's teams compete in the National Basketball League and the junior team in the Essex Junior Basketball League. It uses facilities at Beaulieu Park School.

Essex Wolves runs one senior men's team and has c. 11 members. It competes in Division One of the Essex Basketball League and uses the sports hall at St John Payne School on Thursday evenings.

### Indoor cricket

Working closely with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), Essex Cricket Board is responsible for the management and development of every form of recreational cricket for men, women and children in the County. Indoor cricket is 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 during winter months.

Essex Cricket was also invited to take part in the consultation and identified there is one indoor cricket league taking place in Chelmsford at Riverside Leisure Centre: Riverside Indoor League.

The Riverside Indoor League runs an indoor competition during winter months for senior teams and comprises three divisions. It is hosted at Riverside Leisure Centre in the sports hall. League officials were contacted to discuss this, but no response was received.

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## Volleyball

There are two affiliated volleyball clubs in the Chelmsford administrative area. Chelmsford Volleyball Club and Team Essex Volleyball Club. Both were invited to take part in the consultation, however only Team Essex responded to consultation requests.

Both Volleyball England and Essex Volleyball Association were invited to take part in the consultation but neither organisation responded.

Team Essex Volleyball Club has c.100 members and utilises multiple venues in the Authority including Boswells School, Chelmsford County High School for Girls and Riverside Leisure Centre. It reports a lack of sports halls in the area with floor fittings to support a volleyball net.

Chelmsford Volleyball Club has c.160 (96 senior male and 64 senior female) members. It competes in the Essex Volleyball League and the newly formed Chelmsford Volleyball League and utilises courts at St John Payne School and Boswells School. It states that its growth is slowing down due to the limited number of suitable available courts and the cost of court hire.

## Futsal

The audit identified six facilities in which futsal activity regularly takes place. Chelmsford Futsal Academy delivers indoor sessions for young people up to the age of 16 years. Desk research suggests that sessions take place primarily in the sports hall at Beaulieu Park School.

### 4.3: Future demand and Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC)

This 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 (district) 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 4.14: Sport England: Sports Facilities Calculator

	Population 2022:	Population estimate: 2041
ONS population projections	183,678	218,366
Population increase	-	34,688
Facilities to meet additional demand	-	9.83 courts/2.46 halls
Estimated cost*	-	£7,099,412

Calculations shown in Table 4.14 above 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. The SFC indicates a requirement for an additional 9.83 (badminton) courts, up to 2041.

Investment is required to improve the quality and capacity of existing stock. Given the low used capacity at sites such as Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay Sports Centre), effort should be made to increase the number of hours available to meet future demand prior to considering developing new sports hall provision.



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## 4.4: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Sports halls	-
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
<b>Quantity</b>	The Chelmsford administrative area has 53 sports halls containing 107 badminton courts. There are 16 sports halls with 3+ courts (73 badminton courts).	There is a relatively good range and geographical spread of sports halls in the Chelmsford administrative area. There is spare capacity at some educational sites. A planned 4-court sports hall as part of the Chelmsford Garden Community could help to cater for future demand.
<b>Quality</b>	One is rated good quality (six courts), nine are above average (40 courts) and seven are below average (27 courts).	Minimise disruption to users of the sports hall at Dovedale Sports Centre if potential refurbishment takes place. Address quality issues at South Woodham Ferrers LC. Work with school sites rated poor or below average quality, to identify funding to upgrade the respective facilities.
<b>Accessibility</b>	There are good levels of accessibility - 69% of the Chelmsford administrative area's population lives within a 1 mile walk from a community accessible sports hall. All residents live within a 20-minute drive of a sports hall with community use.	Maintain good relationships with schools to ensure that community access is maintained. Improve community availability of the South Woodham LC. Ensure there are good public transport links to key leisure facilities for those who do not have access to their own vehicle, to ensure they remain as accessible as possible.
<b>Availability</b> (Management and usage)	16 sports halls provide some form of community availability. 10 are operating at the Sport England threshold of 'comfortably full'. Six halls are operating below 70% and have capacity to accommodate increased demand. Four public leisure centres provide daytime availability.	FPM lists average used capacity of hall as 67%; KKP's audit suggests that suggests that average used capacity is c.75%. 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. Ensure schools continue to offer peak time availability to local sports clubs. Consider options to extend school community use hours where used capacity is above 80% e.g. King Edward VI Grammar School, Moulsham High School. Several clubs report losing access to facilities during school exam periods. Seek ways to ensure that sports hall facilities are open/available all year round.
<b>Strategic summary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each facility is important to the community served and all venues need to be protected in accordance with paragraph 98 of the NPPF.</li> <li>The quality of below average sports halls needs to be improved.</li> <li>A good range of sports is available including gymnastics, badminton, netball, football, trampolining, futsal, martial arts, indoor cricket.</li> <li>Educational sites provide a significant proportion of the available sports hall space during peak times. Relationships with these institutions should be maintained to ensure that accessibility remains high with Community Use Agreements completed if possible.</li> </ul>		

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- ◀ Consider whether and how community use can be extended at New Hall School enabling existing sport and physical activity participation to grow.
- ◀ Additional provision to support new sports halls should be considered to help with cross subsidising such facilities and providing a multi-facility offer for users. This will be pertinent in the Chelmsford Garden Community if a new dual use facility including is provided plus a development of this scale would justify its own local on-site health & fitness provision.
- ◀ Accommodate increased demand during peak hours via extending levels of community access at existing venues. Developer contributions could/should thus, be directed at improving the sports hall quality at sites which will enable an increase in community hours.
- ◀ The FPM has identified an uneven distribution in the quality and capacity of sports halls across the Authority. The report has identified three key interventions that should be prioritised:
  - Increase access for community use at key sites and provide a more balanced distribution of met demand.
  - Modernisation of the sports halls is of increasing importance in order to maintain their attractiveness, ensure equity of provision across the Council area, and continue to retain the very high level of Chelmsford's demand met within the Council area.
  - The importance of community access to educational sports halls is evident. If not in place, a community use agreement should be put in place for the current supply. Looking ahead, it will be important to negotiate and secure a community use agreement at any new or replacement educational sports hall site.

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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.

Swim England’s 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 leisure facilities accounting for over 40% cent of some councils’ direct carbon emissions it advocates capital investment into renewal of pool stock in order 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 (no restrictions to accessing the pool as a result of membership criteria). As such, those less than 160m<sup>2</sup> (e.g., 20m x 4 lanes) water space 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.

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## Quantity

The audit (including all pools) identifies 18 swimming pools at 14 sites irrespective of size/access. Table 5.1 lists the swimming pools with their Map ID number as shown in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Swimming pools in the Chelmsford administrative area

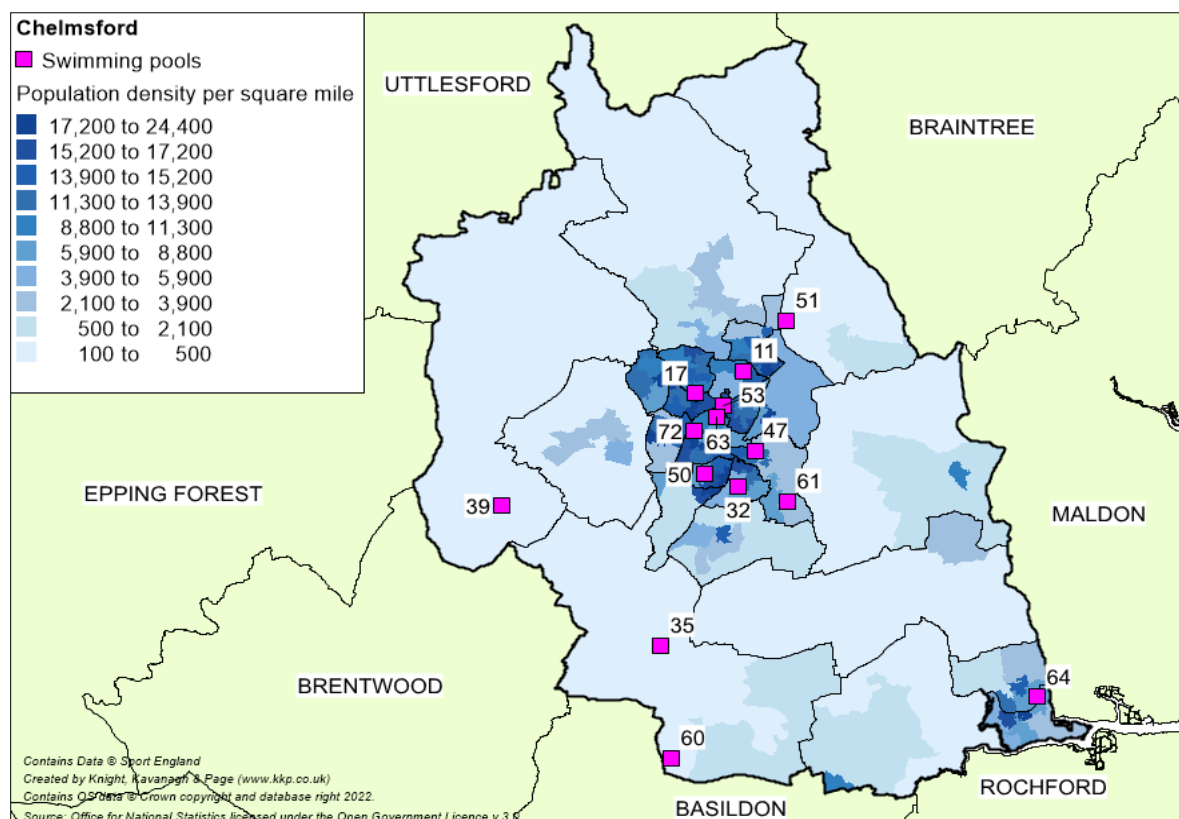


Table 5.1: All swimming pools in the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	Facility type	Lanes/ length	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
11	Boswells School	Main/general	4 x 18m	144
17	Chelmsford County High School For Girls	Main/general	4 x 18m	180
32	Great Baddow High School	Learner/teaching/training	4 x 18m	162
35	Greenwood Estate Health Spa & Retreat	Main/general	1 x 20m	200
39	Highwood Primary School	Main/general	1 x 10m	40
47	Meadgate Primary School	Lido	4 x 20m	140
50	Moulsham High School	Main/general	5 x 20m	200
51	New Hall School	Main/general	6 x 25m	325
53	Nuffield Health	Main/general	2 x 20m	200
53	Nuffield Health	Learner/teaching/training	1 x 10m	50
60	Ramsden Hall Academy	Learner/teaching/training	1 x 15m	90
61	Reflections Spa & Cafe Bar	Main/general	1 x 10m	53
61	Reflections Spa & Cafe Bar	Main/general	1 x 11m	58
63	Riverside Leisure Centre	Learner/teaching/training	1 x 10m	90
63	Riverside Leisure Centre	Main/general	10 x 25m	500
64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	Main/general	6 x 25m	325
72	Virgin Active	Main/general	4 x 20m	300
72	Virgin Active	Learner/teaching/training	1 x 5m	25

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In addition to the above, there is a splash area at Riverside Leisure Centre which adds to the flexibility of the water space.

There are four learner/teaching pools, one lido, one diving pool and nine main pools (20m+ and larger than 160m<sup>2</sup>). Learner/teaching pools assist with programming (and income generation) at the public leisure centre sites in particular.

Swimming facilities are well distributed well across the more densely populated central part of the Authority as shown in Figure 5.1 above which outlines the location of all swimming pools.

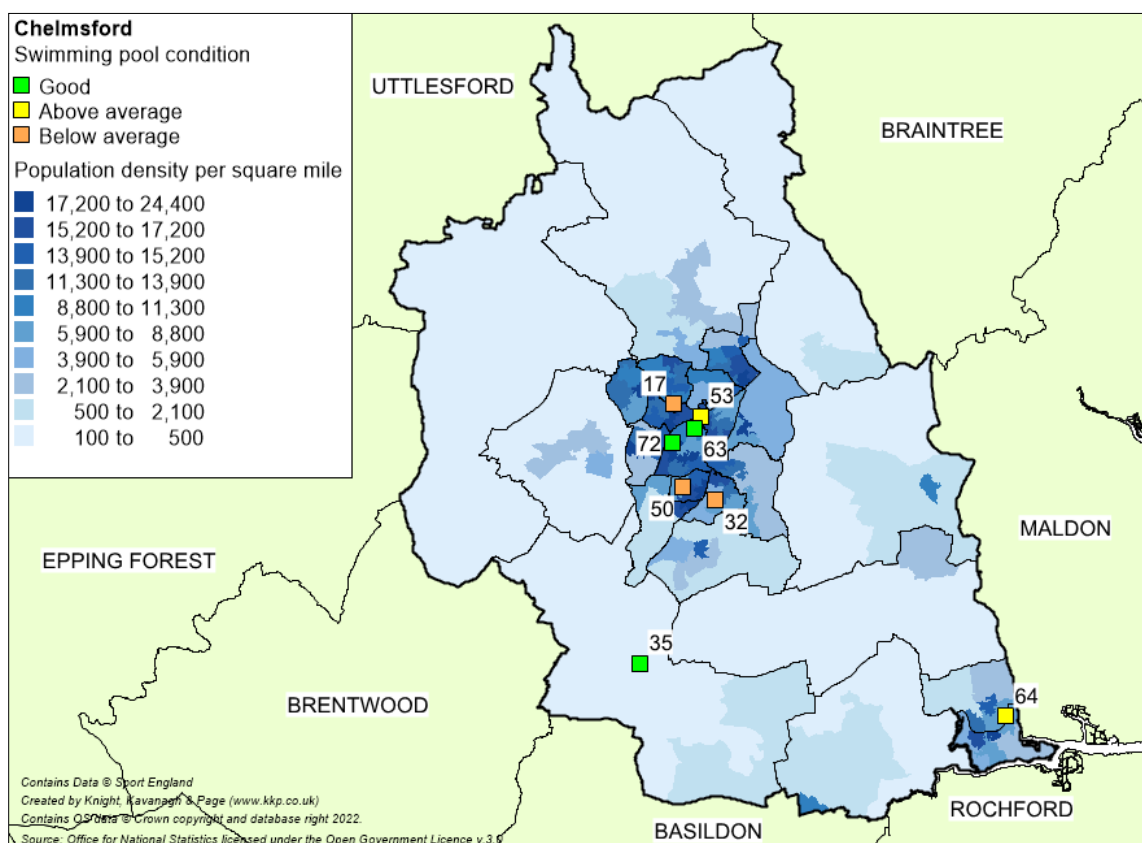
The largest (10-lane x 25m) pool is located at Riverside Leisure Centre. This is situated in Chelmsford city centre and contains a total supply of water amounting to 590m<sup>2</sup> across its main (10 lane x 25m) and learner (10m x 9m) tanks as well as a splash area making it the key strategic hub site for swimming in the Authority. Riverside is one of two Council operated pools in the Chelmsford administrative area, the other being the 6-lane x 25m pool at South Woodham Ferrers in the Southeast of the Authority.

Although Boswells School is not included within the audit (as it is less than 160m<sup>2</sup> (e.g., 20m x 4 lanes) water space), it still plays an important role in accommodating community usage, particularly from swim schools.

## Quality

Three of the nine main pools are good quality, two are above average, three are below average and one could not be assessed due to a lack of response to visit/consultation requests. KKP's non-technical visual assessments also encompass review of changing provision as this also plays a significant role in influencing and attracting users. In general, changing facilities are of similar standard to pool quality.

Figure 5.2: Swimming pools larger than 160m<sup>2</sup> with quality ratings



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As shown in Figure 5.2, the supply of good and above average quality swimming pools is well distributed throughout the Authority. Quality assessments are set out in Table 5.2. Some changing rooms could not be assessed due to them being in use at the time of audit.

Table 5.2: Quality of 160m<sup>2</sup>+ swimming pools in the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	Facility type	Lanes/length	Condition	
				Pool	Changing
17	Chelmsford County High School for Girls	Main/general	4 x 18m	Below average	Below average
32	Great Baddow High School	Main/general	4 x 18m	Below average	Not assessed
35	Greenwood Estate Health Spa & Retreat	Main/general	1 x 20m	Good	Good
50	Moulsham High School	Main/general	5 x 20m	Below average	Below average
53	Nuffield Health	Main/general	2 x 20m	Above average	Above average
63	Riverside Leisure Centre	Main/general	10 x 25m	Good	Good
64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	Main/general	6 x 25m	Above average	Above average
72	Virgin Active	Main/general	4 x 20m	Good	Good

Overall, the current supply of swimming pools in the Chelmsford administrative area is well maintained and receives regular refurbishment (see Table 5.3 overleaf).

Riverside Leisure Centre and Greenwood Estate Health Spa & Retreat both provide a good quality swimming offer, as a result of recent investment and the relatively recent construction of these facilities. Riverside in particular, can via its moveable boom, separate learner tank and splash pad provides a very attractive, flexible pool programme.

South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre is an attractive modern community swimming facility, incorporating spectator seating, rated above average quality. The changing rooms were refurbished in 2019. Although other areas have not been refurbished since 2005, no issues were reported in respect of its plant room and regular maintenance is reportedly undertaken. It is recognised that it requires investment to improve its energy efficiency. Given that it is nearly twenty years old and is well used, it is likely to require a programme of refurbishment in the short/medium term to maintain its level of quality.

Moulsham High School provides community accessibility in the form of club and commercial swimming lesson use. It is of below average quality primarily due to its age and décor. Tiles surrounding the pool are in need of re-grouting to improve pool aesthetics. The changing facilities are of a similar age and quality standard to the swimming pool, due to both community use access and school access.

Chelmsford County High School for Girls provides community use access and is in below average condition having not been refurbished since 2010. It has experienced ongoing issues including with the pool heating system which struggles to maintain a consistent temperature. The School reports that this is at the top of its priority list but that it is struggling to source funding to do so.

The oldest pool in the Authority is situated at Great Baddow High School. It has not been refurbished since 1972. This is reflected in its quality rating.



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Nuffield Health is identified in Sport England's Active Places database as last having been refurbished in 1999. However, given the commercial nature of the facility and the high quality offering the Nuffield Health brand has, it is considered unlikely that it has not received some upgrading/refurbishment over this time period.

Table 5.3: Age of swimming pools (160m<sup>2</sup>+) and refurbishment dates (where applicable)

Site name	Year built/ opened	Year last refurbished	Age (years) since built/refurbished
Chelmsford County High School for Girls	1980	2010	14
Great Baddow High School	1972	-	51
Greenwood Estate Health Spa & Retreat	2002	2014	10
Moulsham High School	1985	2000	24
Nuffield Health (Chelmsford)	1999	-	25
Riverside Leisure Centre	2019	-	5
South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	2005	-	19
Virgin Active (Chelmsford)	2001	2015	9

### Accessibility

Swimming pool accessibility is influenced by physical (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 a 20-minutes' drive time for a rural area. This enables analysis of the adequacy of coverage and helps identify areas currently not serviced by existing provision. Figure 5.3 and 5.4 below illustrate the walk-time based accessibility of all swimming pools in the Chelmsford administrative area, meanwhile Figure 5.4 and Table 5.5 illustrate the accessibility of 'pay and play' community accessible sites. Finally Figure 5.5 (p.75) illustrates the 20 min drive time accessibility of pool sites.

Catchment analysis indicates that 52.4% of the Chelmsford administrative area population lives within one mile of a swimming pool that is 160m<sup>2</sup> or larger and has some level of community use. Of the 15,005 people living in areas of higher deprivation in the Chelmsford administrative area (i.e., those living in the 30% most deprived areas nationally), 10,857 (72%) live within one mile of a swimming pool. When considering the two 'pay and play' accessible swimming pools, this drops to 26.3% of the overall population. Drive time catchment suggests that all of Chelmsford administrative area's population lives within a 20-minute drive of a swimming pool larger than 160m<sup>2</sup> as evidenced in Figure 5.5.

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Figure 5.3: All swimming pools quality on IMD 1-mile catchment

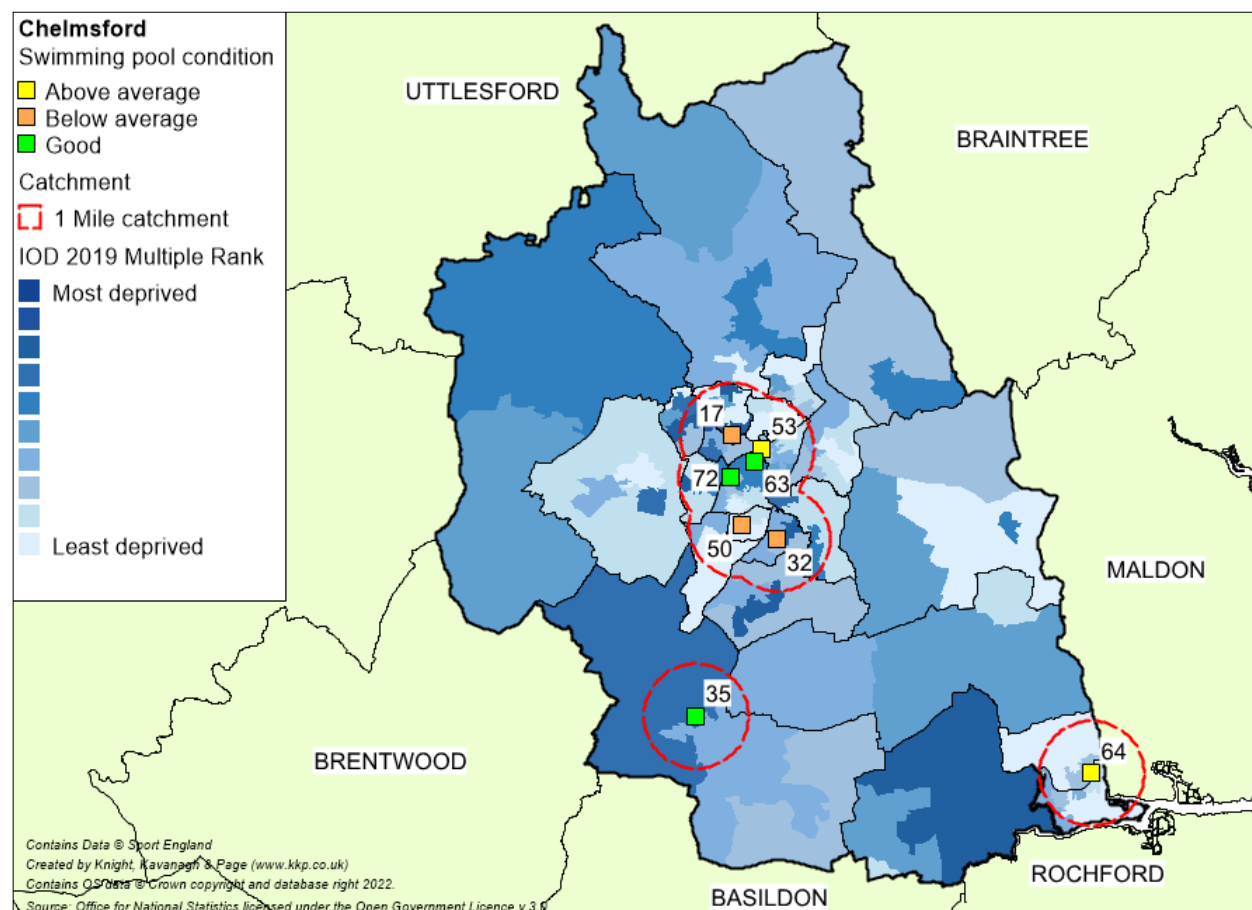


Table 5.4: Accessibility of swimming pools in the Chelmsford administrative area

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10.1 - 20	1,723	1.0%	1,723	1.0%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	13,282	7.7%	9,134	5.3%	4,148	2.4%
30.1 - 40	7,784	4.5%	4,276	2.5%	3,508	2.0%
40.1 - 50	11,887	6.9%	5,501	3.2%	6,386	3.7%
50.1 - 60	14,228	8.3%	3,275	1.9%	10,953	6.4%
60.1 - 70	27,173	15.8%	13,158	7.6%	14,015	8.1%
70.1 - 80	29,120	16.9%	15,292	8.9%	13,828	8.0%
80.1 - 90	29,406	17.1%	14,468	8.4%	14,938	8.7%
90.1 - 100	37,837	21.9%	23,521	13.6%	14,316	8.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>172,440</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>90,348</b>	<b>52.4%</b>	<b>82,092</b>	<b>47.6%</b>

# CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT- DRAFT

Figure 5.4: Pay and play pools quality on IMD 1-mile catchment

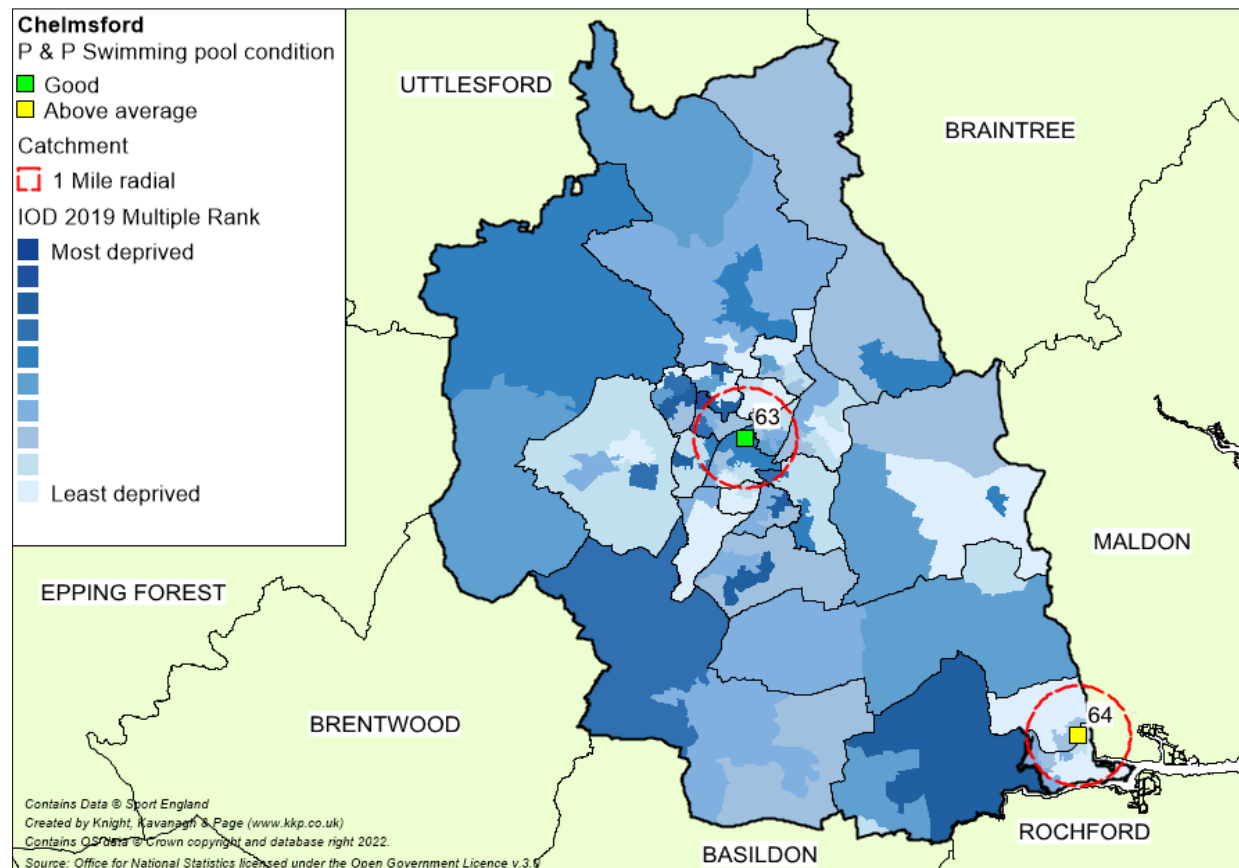
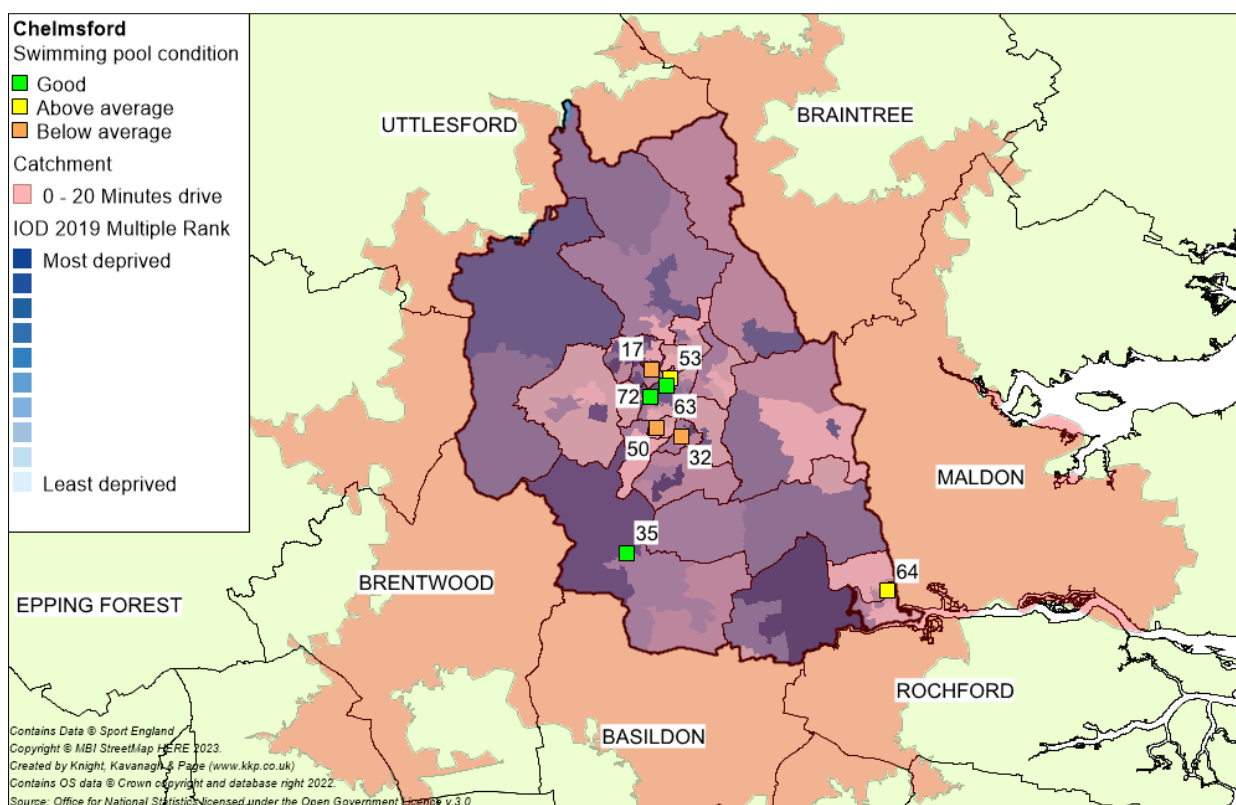


Table 5.5: Accessibility of pay and play pools in the Chelmsford administrative area

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10.1 - 20	1,723	1.0%	33	0.0%	1,690	1.0%
20.1 - 30	13,282	7.7%	1,601	0.9%	11,681	6.8%
30.1 - 40	7,784	4.5%	2,607	1.5%	5,177	3.0%
40.1 - 50	11,887	6.9%	3,784	2.2%	8,103	4.7%
50.1 - 60	14,228	8.3%	1,737	1.0%	12,491	7.2%
60.1 - 70	27,173	15.8%	6,185	3.6%	20,988	12.2%
70.1 - 80	29,120	16.9%	10,781	6.3%	18,339	10.6%
80.1 - 90	29,406	17.1%	7,298	4.2%	22,108	12.8%
90.1 - 100	37,837	21.9%	11,298	6.6%	26,539	15.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>172,440</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>45,324</b>	<b>26.3%</b>	<b>127,116</b>	<b>73.7%</b>

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Figure 5.5: Swimming pools within 20 minutes' drive time



Consideration should be given to how the new Garden Community development on the North Eastern Fringe of Chelmsford City will affect levels of accessibility. There may be a need to improve access to (and the condition of) existing school sites such as Chelmsford High School for Girls. There may also be a need to consider new provision in this part of the Authority, given current levels of used capacity.

## 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 in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Access policy of swimming pools

Site name	Access policy
Chelmsford County High School for Girls	Sports club / CA
Great Baddow High School	Sports club / CA
Greenwood Estate Health Spa & Retreat	Registered membership
Moulsham High School	Sports club / CA
Nuffield Health (Chelmsford)	Registered membership
Riverside Leisure Centre	Pay and play
South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	Pay and play
Virgin Active (Chelmsford)	Registered membership

(NB: Sports Club / CA = Sports Club / Community Association use)

Two pools can be accessed via pay and play, both public leisure centres. They offer memberships which may be a more cost-effective option than pay and play depending on usage.

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Commercial health and fitness operators which provide pools offer access via registered membership only. This is the case for two; Nuffield Health and Virgin Active (Chelmsford). While acknowledging that commercially managed facilities 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. The three pools located at school sites, offer community use in the form of swim schools or swimming club use but do not offer individual pay and play access.

Prior to the Pandemic, New Hall School offered community use access but reviewed this and took the decision to not re-open to clubs, due to the open access nature of the site and the safeguarding measures required to accommodate users. It previously accommodated Chelmsford Swimming Club for some midweek sessions.

The following facilities in Table 5.7 are available for general public use and pay and play access.

Table 5.7: Swimming pools with pay and play access

Site name	Access policy
Riverside Leisure Centre	Pay & play
South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	Pay & play

## Facilities in neighbouring authorities

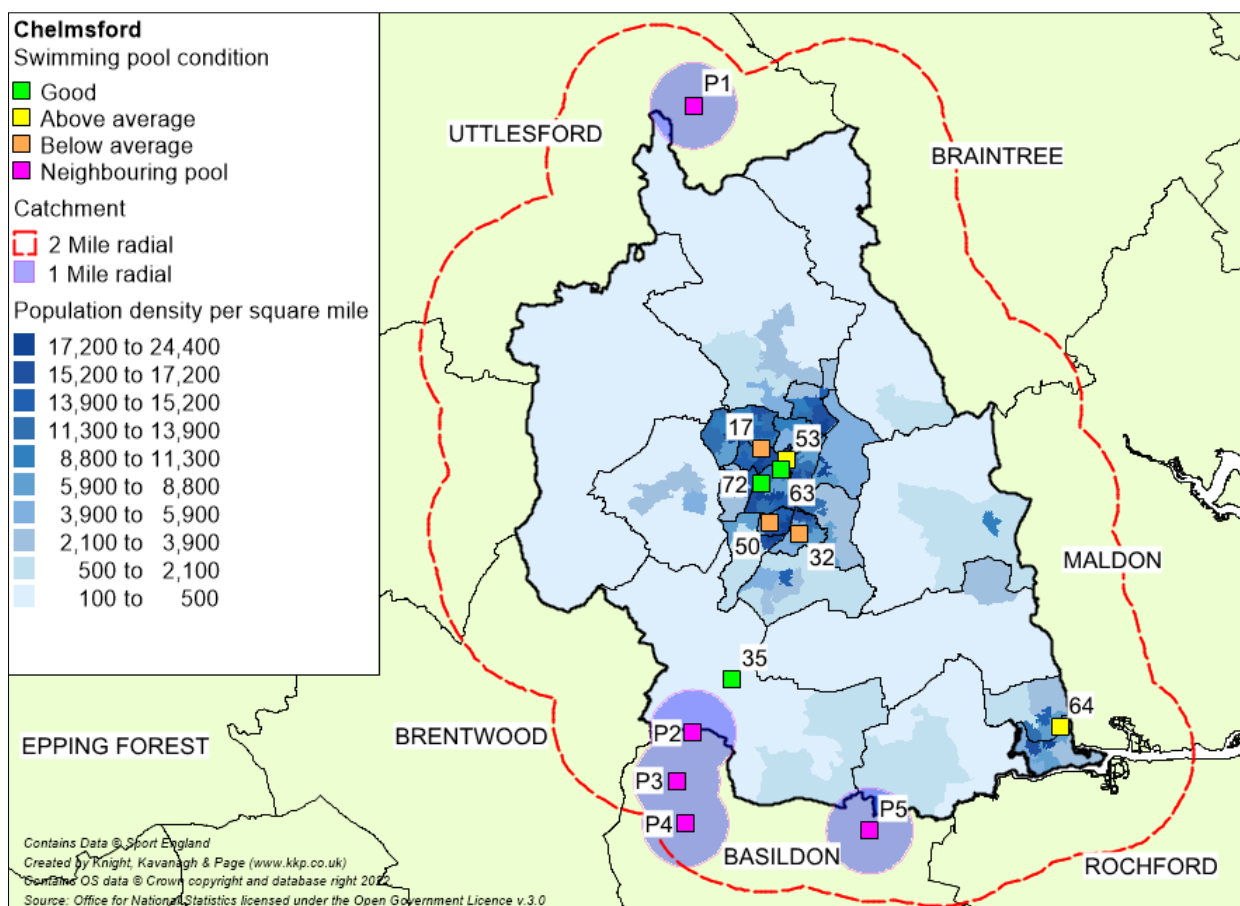
Accessibility is influenced by facilities located outside an authority. As set out in Table 5.8 and mapped in Figure 5.6, five pools (160m<sup>2</sup>+) at five sites are located within two miles of the Chelmsford administrative area boundary; four in Basildon and one in Uttlesford. Two require registered membership, two can be accessed via sports club or community association and one site offers pay and play access.

Table 5.8: Neighbouring community available pools within 2-mile radial of the Chelmsford administrative area boundary

ID	Site name	Lanes/length	Access type	Authority
P1	Felsted School	4 x 23m	Sports Club / CA	Uttlesford
P2	Stock Brook Country Club	5 x 23m	Registered membership	Basildon
P3	Billericay Swimming Pool	4 x 25m	Pay and play	Basildon
P4	Billericay School (Billericay Sports Centre)	4 x 22m	Sports Club / CA	Basildon
P5	Wickford Swim & Fitness Centre	4 x 25m	Registered membership	Basildon

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Figure 5.6: Swimming pools located within 2 miles of the Chelmsford administrative area boundary



## Future enhancements/new developments

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

## Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM)

Sport England provided an FPM assessment report for swimming pools in the Chelmsford administrative area in March 2024. This provided both a baseline position based on 2022 population data, and a projected position for 2041 using housing led population data supplied by CCC.

### Headline position

- ♦ The quantitative and spatial findings interact to identify that demand for swimming can be met, but some swimming pools are uncomfortably full. There is insufficient unmet demand to justify further provision. However, there is limited scope to increase availability and capacity at the current sites to reduce the proportion of utilisation to a comfortable level at peak times. Therefore, the intervention is about trying to achieve a better balance between the distribution of supply and demand by increasing availability and capacity at key sites where possible:
  - ♦ South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre: it is estimated to be utilised at 76% of used capacity at peak time in 2022 and 79% in 2041. Availability could be extended by 5.2 hours to increase capacity by 282 visits at peak times. Although, this may have a



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limited impact, but it is important to maximise availability in an area with only one pool site and reduce utilisation to a comfortable level.

- ✦ Chelmsford County High School for Girls: it is estimated to be utilised at 100% used capacity in both 2022 and 2041 and located in an area of high demand. Despite its size (18m x 10m) it has a varied programme of use (swim lessons, aqua classes, water polo and synchronised swimming), however the scale of the pool does limit its suitability for club development, and it is unavailable for pay and play. Its availability could be increased by 24.5 hours and would increase capacity by 735 visits at peak times. However, the pool is only hired out for organised use and therefore increasing availability peak hours requires either direct management of the programme by the school or by an external operator.
- ✦ An alternative intervention could be to increase the hours for community use at the other educational pool sites:
  - ✦ Great Baddow High School: it is estimated to be utilised at 59% in 2022 and 80% in 2041. It is a small pool but provides for recreational swimming. Availability could be extended to 26 hours per week and would increase capacity by 566 visits at peak time. However, the pool will need modernisation to both accommodate more use and increase its attractiveness. Possible scope for a partnership between Chelmsford City Council and the school with use of developer contributions to modernise the pool, in return for a community use agreement securing increased access for community use long term.
  - ✦ Moulsham High School: it is estimated to be operating at 62% used capacity in 2022 and 67% in 2041. It is available for 15 hours per week and could be extended to 31 hours a week and would increase capacity of visits to 1,033 in the peak period. This would be a very extensive increase and would require a more dynamic management approach than the present promoting hire of the pool, if it is to provide for the current range of activities. The pool will need further modernisation to both accommodate more use and increase its attractiveness. Possible scope for a partnership between Chelmsford City Council and the school with use of developer contributions to modernise the pool in return for a community use agreement securing increased access for community use long term.
- ✦ Some swimming pools are uncomfortably full at peak times, with two sites being completely full in both years, Riverside Leisure Centre and Chelmsford County High School for Girls.

## Supply

- ✦ The FPM assessed the same 11 swimming pools across 8 sites as the FPM needs assessment.
- ✦ In the weekly peak period, 16% of the total supply is unavailable for community use. The greatest scope to increase capacity for community use at peak times is at the three educational pool sites.
- ✦ The two public leisure centres cater for all swimming activities and provide 47% of the Chelmsford administrative area available swimming pool capacity in the weekly peak period.

## Demand

Table 5.9 below illustrates that:

- ✦ Chelmsford's administrative area population is projected to increase by 19% between 2022 and 2041, which produces a 16% increase in demand for swimming pools.
- ✦ A very large proportion of the Chelmsford administrative area demand is met, at 96% in 2022 and 94% in 2041.
- ✦ Of the Chelmsford administrative area's satisfied demand, 89% is met within the Council area in 2022, and 85% in 2041.

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- Unmet demand is low, and virtually all is demand that is located too far from a facility. Unmet demand is 4% of demand in 2022, and 6% in 2041. All the unmet demand in 2022 (equivalent to 88 sqm of water) is too far from a facility. In 2041, unmet demand that is too far from a facility is 133 sqm of water, and that due to lack of swimming pool capacity is 8 sqm.
- The largest amount of unmet demand is in Runwell, on the Southern periphery of the Chelmsford administrative area (equivalent to 43 sqm of water in 2022 and 2041). However, this is insufficient unmet demand to justify the provision of a new swimming pool to improve accessibility for residents.
- The overall estimated used capacity of swimming pools in the Chelmsford administrative area in the weekly peak period is 71% in 2022 and 78% in 2041. Three swimming pool sites are estimated to be uncomfortably full in 2022 i.e. operating at above 70% capacity (Riverside LC, Chelmsford School for Girls and South Woodham Ferrers LC) , with Great Baddow high school also exceeding 70% in 2041.

Table 5.9: FPM demand findings (2022)

Element	FPM 2022	FPM 2041
Total demand (visits per week in the peak period)	12,028	13,997
Satisfied demand	96%	94%
Satisfied demand retained within the Chelmsford administrative area	89%	85%
Satisfied demand exported	11%	15%
Unmet demand	4%	6%
% of unmet demand due to residents outside swimming pool catchment (as opposed to no capacity)	100%	89%
Overall average used swimming pool capacity	71%	78%

## Used capacity

'FPM used capacity' figures for swimming pools (see Table 5.10 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 5.10: Used capacity

Site	FPM Used capacity 2022	FPM used capacity 2041
Chelmsford County High School for Girls	100%	100%
Great Baddow High School	59%	80%
Greenwood Estate Health Spa & Retreat	34%	39%
Moulsham High School	62%	67%
Nuffield Health (Chelmsford)	43%	64%
Riverside Leisure Centre	100%	100%
South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	76%	79%
Virgin Active (Chelmsford)	53%	65%

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As the FPM projects to 2041, it does factor in housing growth projections. This differs to the FPM in the Sports Hall section which only provides a projection based on 2022 population data.

## 5.2: Demand

Swim England was invited to part in the consultation during the audit however a response was not offered by the NGB.

### Club consultation

The audit identified three swimming clubs, two diving clubs, one commercial swimming school provider and one canoe club currently utilising swimming pools with community access in the Chelmsford administrative area. All clubs and organisations were invited to take part in consultation. KKP received responses from four as detailed below.

**Chelmsford Swimming Club** currently has 250 members, 188 of which are juniors. It is operating at capacity, having retained almost all members during Covid restrictions and lockdowns. It hires two facilities in the Authority, with sessions taking place at Riverside Leisure Centre for 22 hours a week and Moulsham High School on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays for a total of five hours a week.

The Club historically split its pool time between New Hall School and Riverside Leisure Centre. Despite this, Riverside Leisure Centre fully satisfied their needs when the pool opened in 2019. The Club reports having lost access to New Hall School after Covid-19 which has placed increased pressure on demand as it is unable to source additional pool time at the Riverside Leisure Centre. It requires additional pool time to be able to meet demand, however consultation with the site manager states this is the maximum number of hours the site can offer the club and would be difficult to offer any more hours without unbalancing the timetable.

**Maldon Sharks** is based at South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre, despite its name suggesting otherwise, has c.62 members, of which 52 are juniors. It has capacity to cater for a small increase in demand, i.e., an additional 10 juniors and five adults. Its training sessions run for 1.5 hours at South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays and Blackwater Leisure Centre in Maldon on Mondays and Fridays.

**South Woodham Ferrers Swimming Club** is a competitive club, affiliated to Swim England which competes at regional level. It has c.155 members, 125 of whom are juniors. Its junior section is at capacity and has a waiting list of approximately 15, however it does have slight capacity (of 3-4 members) to expand its senior section. It operates from South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday and has a total of 15 hours of pool time.

**Marlins Swim School** currently use the swimming pool at The Boswells School on Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and Moulsham High School on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays to run a learn to swim programme. No response to consultation was received so this information was obtained via desk research.

**Chelmsford Scuba and Diving Club** uses the wet facilities at Riverside Leisure Centre. It hires the venue on Friday evenings.

**Orca Scuba Diving** uses facilities at South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre on Thursday evenings.

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**Maldon Canoe Club** uses facilities at South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre. It hires the pool on the last Saturday of each month for a one-hour session and uses this to run beginner and advanced skill training sessions. It reports that it would ideally like storage on site for its boats but states that there is insufficient space.

The Club reports the facilities to be of good quality and suitable for its needs. It previously hired Riverside Leisure Centre and had storage for its boats at the venue. However, used capacity at the facility is very high and it found it difficult to obtain a weekly slot.

## Swimming lessons

Children's swimming lessons are delivered at the two publicly accessible pools in the Chelmsford administrative area. Current lesson volumes are as follows:

- ◆ Riverside Leisure Centre– c.1825 (95% full)
- ◆ South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre – c.1160 (85% full)

On average swim programmes at the public leisure centres are operating at 90% capacity. Both sites are, thus, close to capacity with limited slots.

## 5.3: Sport England's Facilities Calculator (SFC)

As noted earlier, this assists local planning authorities to quantify additional demand for community sports facilities generated by new growth populations, development and regeneration areas. It can be used to estimate facility needs 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: Sports facilities calculator

Factor	Population 2022:	Population estimate: 2041
ONS population projections	183,678	218,366
Population increase	-	+34,688
Facilities to meet change in demand	-	+7.07 lanes/1.77 pools
Estimated Cost		+£7,786,317

\*based on Q3 2022 build costs

Calculations set out from the SFM are set out in Table 5.11 and assume that the current swimming pool stock remains available for community use and the quality remains the same. The projected increase in population will lead to an increase in demand for swimming space. The SFC indicates a requirement for an additional seven lanes (equivalent to 1.77 swimming pools, up to 2041 (estimated cost: £7,786,317).

In the shorter term, programming at all the public leisure sites should be investigated to ensure that the most popular activities are available at peak times.

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## 5.4: Summary of key facts and issues – swimming pools

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

Facility type	Swimming pools	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
<b>Quantity</b>	There is good geographic distribution of pools (16 across seven sites), including two publicly operated sites in the City centre (Riverside) and South Woodham Ferrers. Eight are main pools larger than 160m <sup>2</sup> .	The FPM indicates that current and future provision is adequate for the population and recognises that existing leisure centre pools are full. The audit also identified high demand particularly from the significantly sized club and that the FPM does not take into account future housing projections.
<b>Quality</b>	Residents have access to good quality swimming pools located at public leisure centres. Three pools are rated good quality, two are above average, three are below average.	There is a need for a programme of refurbishment at South Woodham Ferrers LC in the short / medium term to maintain current quality levels. This is planned in part using SPSF grant funding. Investment is needed to improve and maintain the quality of swimming pools located at school sites as they provide community use to clubs and swimming lesson providers during peak hours.
<b>Accessibility</b>	Accessibility generally to swimming pools in the Chelmsford administrative area is good. 62.2% of Chelmsford administrative area's population lives within one mile of a swimming pool that is 160m <sup>2</sup> or larger that has some level of community use. This increases to 100% when calculating the number of residents in the Chelmsford administrative area who live within a 20-minute drive of a swimming pool.	The FPM and audit identify that overall average used capacity for the Chelmsford administrative area pools is 71% in 2022 and 78% in 2041. Three sites are currently operating above the Sport England 70% comfort threshold. Used capacity at public leisure sites (at Riverside Leisure and South Woodham Ferrers Leisure) should be monitored closely. Relative access to pay and play sites is much lower, with 26.3% of the population living within a 1-mile walk of a pool. There is likely to be a need to consider how accessibility can be improved in the Northeast of the City given the new Garden City development and associated population growth.
<b>Availability (Management and usage)</b>	Two pools are available for pay and play use. A further four can be accessed via registered membership. Four facilities, both located at schools, offer pool access to swimming clubs and commercial learn to swim schools.	The public leisure centres are operating near to capacity. Consider options to reduce school time and increase community usage hours at South Woodham LC. Maintain good relationship with educational providers to ensure existing sites with community use remain accessible. There is a need for regular reviews of programming at leisure centre pools to ensure a balanced programme which means the whole community (including casual swims) is suitably provided for.

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## Strategic summary

- ◆ According to the FPM, the area of Chelmsford with the largest amount of current unmet demand, or when factoring in population growth, is Runwell, on the Southern periphery of the Authority. The level of unmet demand here (equivalent to 43 sqm of water in 2022 and 2041) is insufficient to justify the provision of a new swimming pool to improve accessibility for residents.
- ◆ Each facility is important to the community served and should be protected in accordance with Paragraph 103 of the NPPF.
- ◆ There is a need to maintain and improve the quality of swimming pools in the area via good maintenance programme.
- ◆ In the short term, programming at key sites should be investigated to ensure the most popular activities are available at peak times.
- ◆ The FPM concluded that current and future demand can be met, but that several pools are uncomfortably full at present. It identified that the following key interventions that should be prioritised:
  - Achieve a better balance between the distribution of supply and demand by increasing availability and capacity at the key sites (South Woodham Ferrers Leisure centre and Chelmsford County High School for Girls).
  - Increase the hours for community use at the other educational pool sites, in particular Great Baddow High School and Moulsham High School.



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## SECTION 6: HEALTH AND FITNESS SUITES

According to the most recent ALS data<sup>14</sup>, around 11.4 million adults regularly engage in some form of fitness type activity (i.e., using gym equipment, a weights session, fitness class, or interval session). It is offered at/across wide range of facilities including larger gyms (run on behalf of the local authority by companies and/or trusts, managed in-house or private sector operators), and also other smaller activity spaces such as village and community halls.

Fitness studios vary in size and function, from relatively large rooms in leisure centres to smaller spaces (often in community/village halls) which serve as dedicated spinning studios or accommodate 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.

Prior to the Pandemic, the UK health and fitness industry was enjoying a strong period of growth. It had more gyms, more members and a greater market value than ever before. The State of the Fitness Industry Report UK for 2022 found that membership levels have dropped by c. 5% since 2019 and the number of facilities has also reduced. This correlates with ALS data which measured regular pre-Pandemic activity levels at around 14 million. Pure Gym and GLL remain the UK's leading operators (by number of gyms and members).

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 containing a mix of flexible spaces (such as cardio, free weights and boxing equipment, (80 stations +<sup>15</sup>) remain central to the financial viability of public sector leisure centres. When combined with multiple studio facilities offering a good mix (and sufficient number) of classes, these usually offer the most profitable spaces within a typical leisure centre.

The past decade or so has also seen a growth in the prevalence of operators offering 'functional fitness' type equipment and activities. This form of fitness 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

As set out in Table 6.1 there are 22 health/fitness gyms in the Chelmsford administrative area with a total of 1,391 stations. Spatially, there is a good even spread across the Authority, with all main population centres being served. Table 6.1 lists the health/fitness gyms and their map ID number as shown in Figure 6.1

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<sup>14</sup> [Active Lives adult survey Nov 20-21 report](#)

<sup>15</sup> A health and fitness 'station' is defined as a piece of static fitness equipment – KKP normally audits facilities of 20 stations or more.

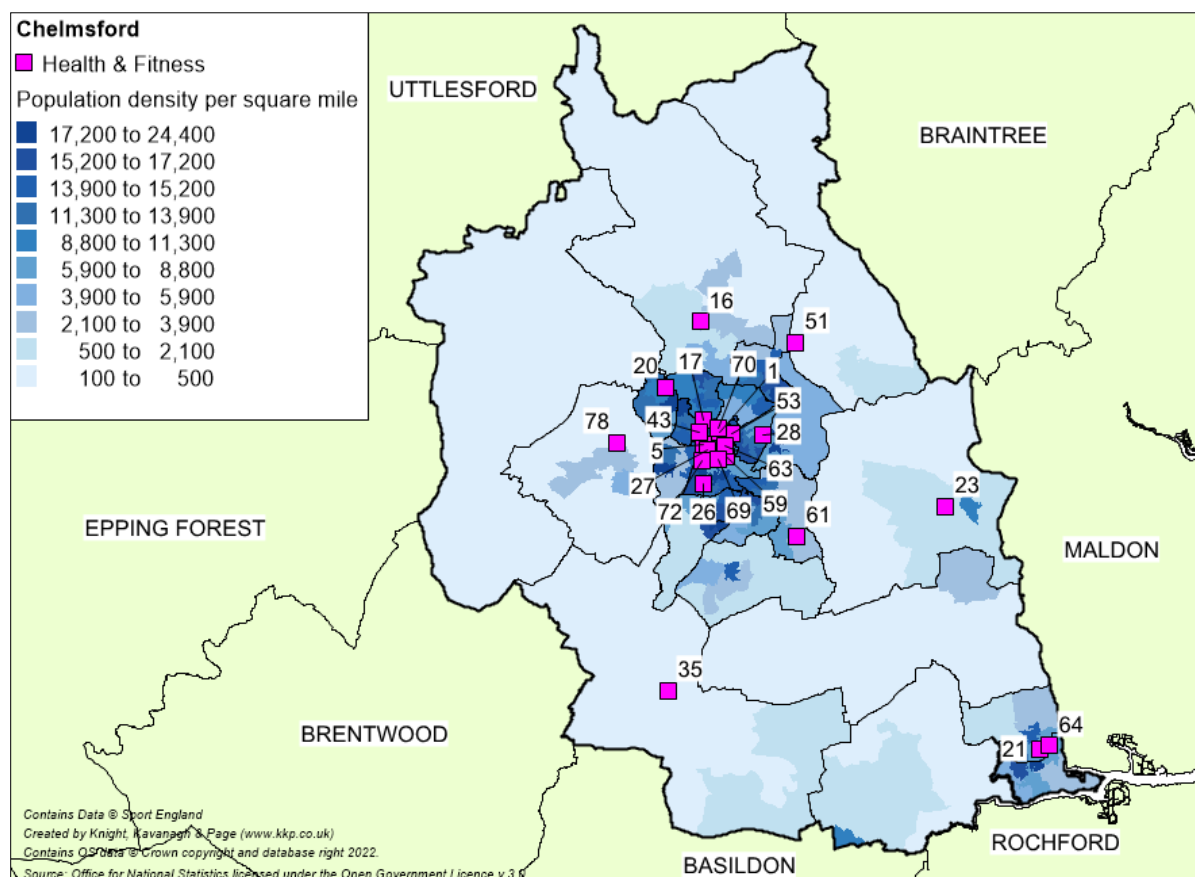
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Table 6.1: All health and fitness gyms in the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	Stations
1	Ab Salute Gym LTD (Chelmsford)	80
5	Anytime Fitness (Chelmsford)	25
16	Chelmer Valley High School	14
17	Chelmsford County High School for Girls	5
20	Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre	70
21	Club Woodham	85
23	Danbury Sports & Social Centre	36
26	Dovedale Sports Centre	16
27	Energie Fitness (Chelmsford)	60
28	Essex Police College	14
35	Greenwood Estate Health Spa and Retreat	21
43	King Edward VI Grammar School	16
51	New Hall School	40
53	Nuffield Health (Chelmsford)	116
59	Puregym (Chelmsford Meadows)	220
61	Reflections Spa and Café Bar	6
63	Riverside Leisure Centre (Chelmsford)	132
64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	26
69	The Gym Group (Chelmsford)	118
70	The Old Factory	75
72	Virgin Active (Chelmsford)	195
78	Writtle University College	21
-	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,391</b>

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Figure 6.1: All health and fitness gyms on population density



Fitness facilities with fewer than 20 stations are typically not assessed/considered to be 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, 17 facilities with 20+ stations (which offer 1,320 stations in total), as shown in Table 6.2, remain.

Table 6.2: Health and fitness suites (20+ stations)

ID	Site name	Stations
1	Ab Salute Gym Ltd	80
5	Anytime Fitness (Chelmsford)	25
20	Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre	70
21	Club Woodham	85
23	Danbury Sports & Social Centre	36
27	Energie Fitness (Chelmsford)	60
35	Greenwood Estate Health Spa and Retreat	21
51	New Hall School	40
53	Nuffield Health (Chelmsford)	116
59	Puregym (Chelmsford Meadows)	220
63	Riverside Leisure Centre (Chelmsford)	132
64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	26
69	The Gym Group (Chelmsford)	118
70	The Old Factory	75
72	Virgin Active (Chelmsford)	195
78	Writtle University College	21
-	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,320</b>

# CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT- DRAFT

There are five gyms of significant size with 100+ stations. There is substantial competition in the area for good quality provision from a number of national chain providers.

## Quality

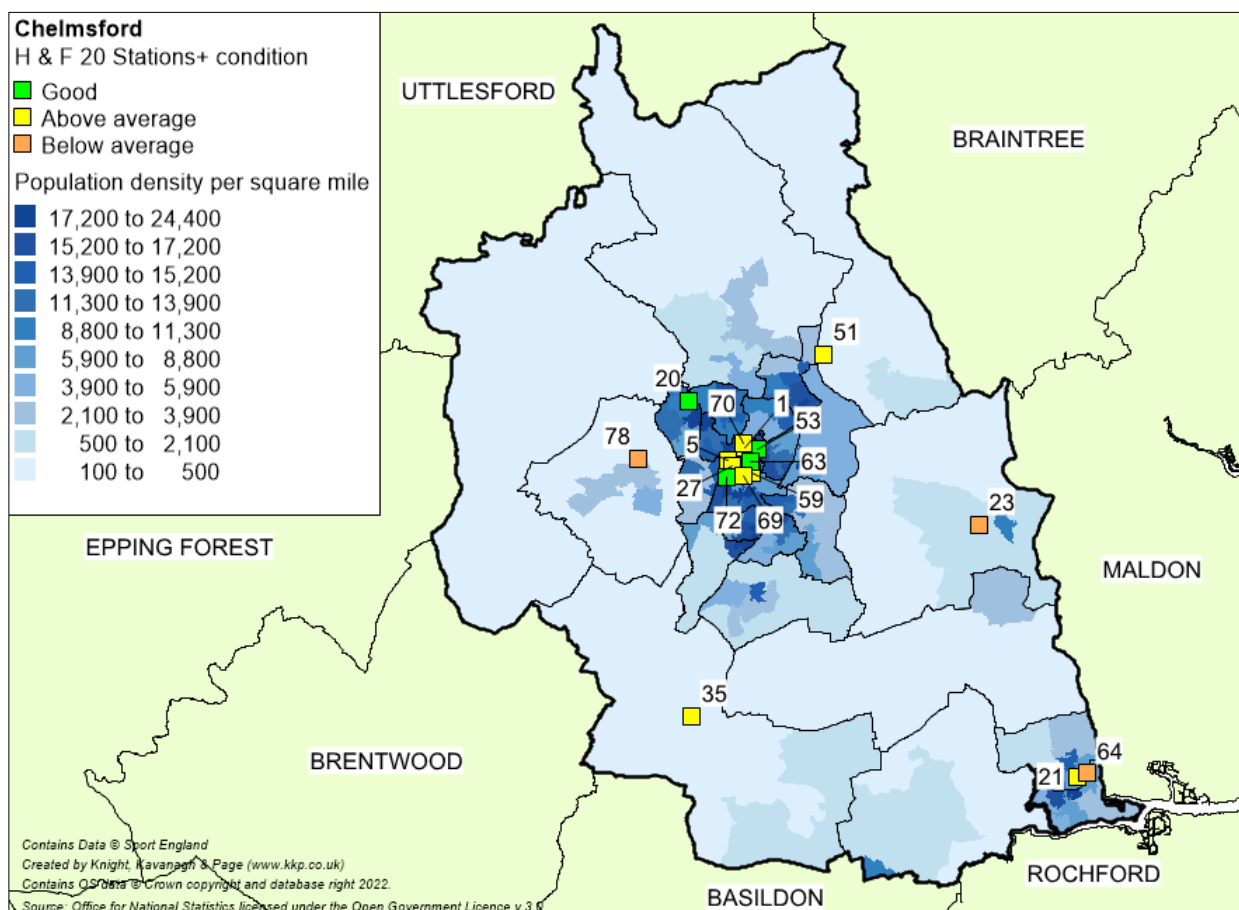
All health and fitness sites received a non-technical quality assessment. Four are rated as good quality, 9 above average and three below average. These are shown in Figure 6.2 and Table 6.3.

Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre is the newest facility, it was refurbished in November 2023. During consultation, it was indicated that the site experiences strong demand and that the site was extended and refurbished due to this demand. Its capacity has increased by 28 stations, with 42 previously provided and 70 now available.

Riverside Leisure Centre is the largest public health and fitness facility in the area. The site was a brand new facility, which was built in 2019. The health and fitness offer were also brand new and as a result membership has increased significantly. As part of this, new equipment was installed.

The Old Factory (operated by Anglia Ruskin University) is the largest publicly accessible health and fitness facility on an education site. It was refurbished and new equipment installed in 2020, with changing rooms also refurbished to match fitness suite quality. Given the high levels of competition in the area, there is a need for a high-quality offer and high-quality changing provision is considered to be important to enable the facility to compete commercially.

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



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Table 6.3: Health and fitness gyms (20+ stations) by condition

ID	Site name	Stations	Condition
1	Ab Salute Gym Ltd	80	Above average
5	Anytime Fitness (Chelmsford)	25	Above average
20	Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre	70	Good
21	Club Woodham	85	Above average
23	Danbury Sports & Social Centre	36	Below average
27	Energie Fitness (Chelmsford)	60	Above average
35	Greenwood Estate Health Spa and Retreat	21	Above average
51	New Hall School	40	Above average
53	Nuffield Health (Chelmsford)	116	Good
59	Puregym (Chelmsford Meadows)	220	Above average
63	Riverside Leisure Centre (Chelmsford)	132	Good
64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	26	Below average
69	The Gym Group (Chelmsford)	118	Above average
70	The Old Factory	75	Above average
72	Virgin Active (Chelmsford)	195	Good
78	Writtle University College	21	Below average

### 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 do not have a contractual obligation to, for example, offer exercise referral nor do they necessarily actively target people / communities who face barriers to participation. It is also acknowledged that some memberships are expensive while others are cheaper than those offered by public sector venues. There is little doubt that the various private operators can take pressure off the 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 (1-mile radial catchment) and 20-minute drive time for a rural area. These are shown in Figure 6.3.

As set out in Table 6.4, 56% of the Chelmsford administrative area's population lives within 20-minute walk time (1-mile radial catchment) of a health and fitness facility with 20+ stations and community access. Consequently, 43.6% of the population is likely to need to use a car or public transport to access facilities. All residents in the Chelmsford administrative area live within a 20-minute drive of a community accessible facility with 20+ stations.

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

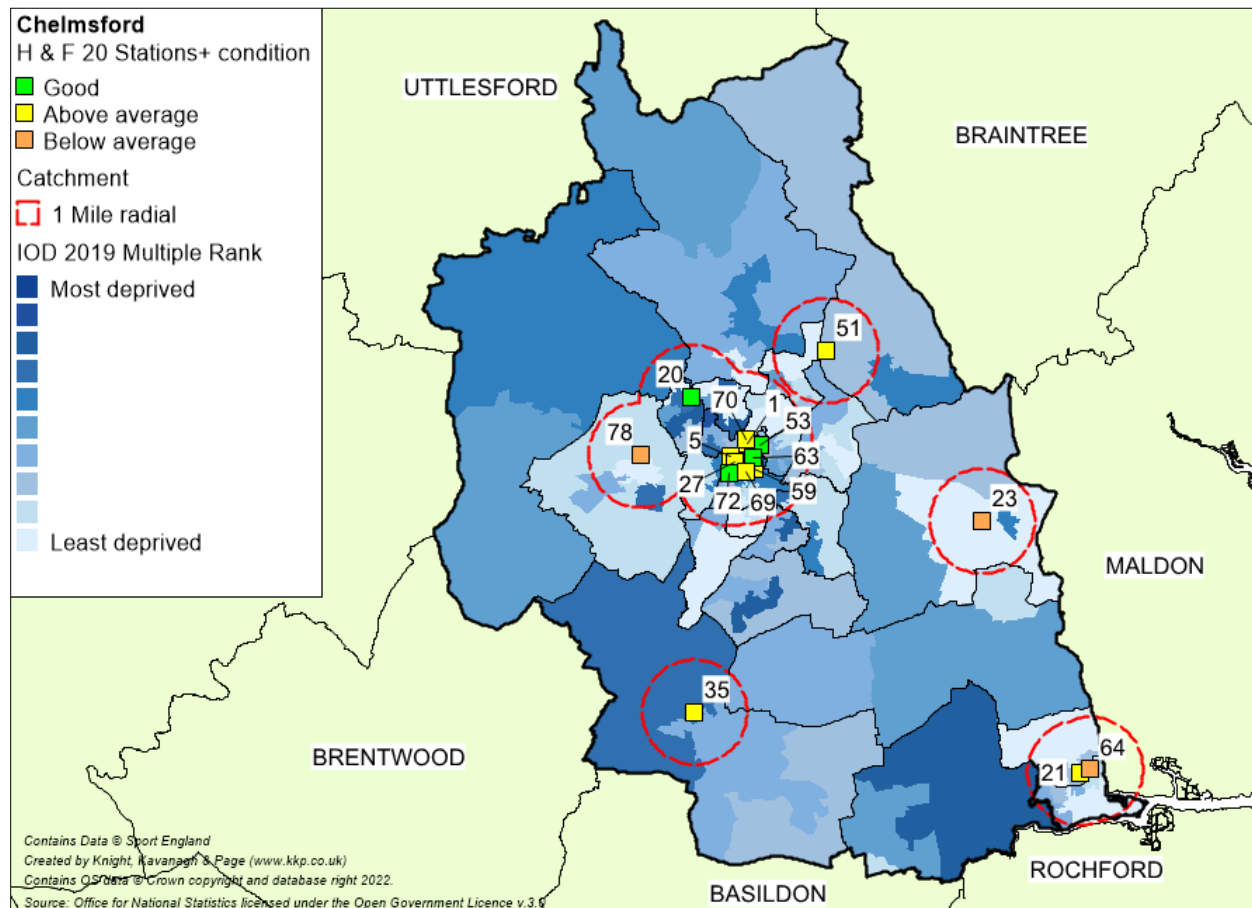


Table 6.4: Health and fitness 20+ stations with 1-mile radial catchment

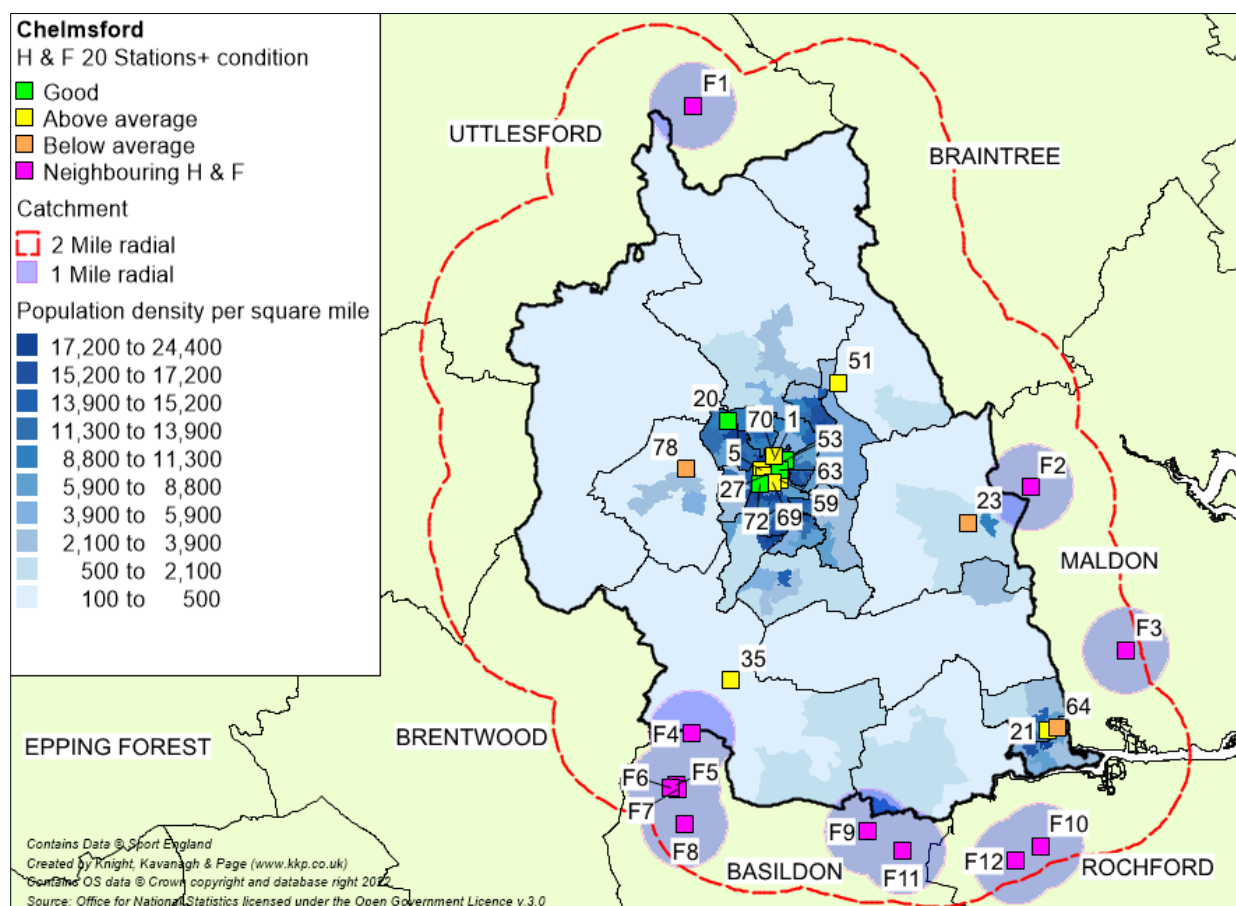
IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10.1 - 20	1,723	1.0%	1,723	1.0%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	13,282	7.7%	8,361	4.8%	4,921	2.9%
30.1 - 40	7,784	4.5%	6,261	3.6%	1,523	0.9%
40.1 - 50	11,887	6.9%	5,871	3.4%	6,016	3.5%
50.1 - 60	14,228	8.3%	5,453	3.2%	8,775	5.1%
60.1 - 70	27,173	15.8%	12,956	7.5%	14,217	8.2%
70.1 - 80	29,120	16.9%	15,411	8.9%	13,709	8.0%
80.1 - 90	29,406	17.1%	15,638	9.1%	13,768	8.0%
90.1 - 100	37,837	21.9%	25,546	14.8%	12,291	7.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>172,440</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>97,220</b>	<b>56.4%</b>	<b>75,220</b>	<b>43.6%</b>



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## Neighbouring facilities

Figure 6.4: Health and fitness suites with walk and drive time catchment on IMD



Users do not just visit facilities in their own local authority area so those located within two miles of the border are considered. As shown in Figure 6.4, there are 12 within two miles of the Chelmsford administrative area. Table 6.5 lists the facilities with their relevant map ID set out in Figure 6.4 and shows two offer pay and play access, one (Billericay Sports Centre) can be accessed via sports club or community association, whilst the remainder all require some form of membership.

Table 6.5: Community available health and fitness (20+ stations) within 2 miles of the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	Stations	Access type	Authority
F1	Felsted School	33	Reg. membership	Uttlesford
F2	The Warren Estate	60	Pay and play	Maldon
F3	Three Rivers Golf & Country Club	40	Reg. membership	Maldon
F4	Stock Brook Country Club	75	Reg. membership	Basildon
F5	Agila Gym	100	Reg. membership	Basildon
F6	Studio 360 Fitness	70	Reg. membership	Basildon
F7	Puregym (Billericay)	220	Reg. membership	Basildon
F8	Billericay School (Billericay Sports Centre)	24	Sports Club / CA	Basildon
F9	Wickford Swim & Fitness Centre	65	Reg. membership	Basildon
F10	Leeman Fitness	40	Reg. membership	Rochford

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ID	Site name	Stations	Access type	Authority
F11	The Gym Hub	95	Reg. membership	Basildon
F12	Rayleigh Leisure Centre	42	Pay and play	Rochford

Source: Active Places Power 25/01/2024

## 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.

As set out in Table 6.6, of the 16 health and fitness suites with 20+ stations, three offer some element of pay and play, through the pre-purchase of a one-day pass or pay on arrival. All three of the gyms offering pay and play also offer a monthly membership scheme, which may work out as a more cost-effective option based on usage. 12 gyms in the Chelmsford administrative area offer access via registered membership. New Hall School is the only site with 20+ stations that offers no community use.

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

ID	Site name	Stations	Access type
1	Ab Salute Gym Ltd	80	Registered membership
5	Anytime Fitness (Chelmsford)	25	Registered membership
20	Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre	70	Pay and play
21	Club Woodham	85	Pay and play
23	Danbury Sports & Social Centre	36	Registered membership
27	Energie Fitness (Chelmsford)	60	Registered membership
35	Greenwood Estate Health Spa and Retreat	21	Registered membership
51	New Hall School	40	Private use
53	Nuffield Health (Chelmsford)	116	Registered membership
59	Puregym (Chelmsford Meadows)	220	Registered membership
63	Riverside Leisure Centre (Chelmsford)	132	Registered membership
64	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	26	Pay and play
69	The Gym Group (Chelmsford)	118	Registered membership
70	The Old Factory	75	Registered membership
72	Virgin Active (Chelmsford)	195	Registered membership
78	Writtle University College	21	Registered membership

The Old Factory was opened in 2020 and is operated by Anglia Ruskin University. It attracts sufficient demand from the community and currently has c.1500 members with the capacity to increase to c.3500.

Future population growth in South Woodham Ferrers would see SWFLC fitness facilities benefit from an increase in size and the availability of daytime community access.

An increased size and daytime community use at Dovedale Sports Centre (shared with Chelmsford College) would help to satisfy the high demand for Council pay and play health and fitness facilities. This is currently being explored as part of a potential wider centre refurbishment.

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All other education sites proffered staffing as the main reason for not offering community use at school's health and fitness suites. In total, 16 health and fitness suites contain more than 20 stations and offering some form of community use, this equates to 1,280 stations.

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

Site name	P&P	Annual	12-month DD	Notes
Ab Salute Gym LTD (Chelmsford)	£7.50	£440.00	£39.50	£50.00 per month option for cash payment
Anytime Fitness (Chelmsford)	-	£384.95	£34.95	24-hour use
Chelmsford Sports and Athletics Centre	-	-	£45.00	Multi-site (£49.99), off peak (£39.00), young adult (£32.00), family (£107.00), /£39.00 (discounted).
Club Woodham	-	-	£49.00	Daytime (£37.50), Weekend (£25.00), student full (£35.00), Student daytime (£30.00), Club pass (£60.00)
Danbury Sports & Social Centre	-	Unknown	Unknown	The pricing structure for this facility could not be identified during audit.
Energie Fitness (Chelmsford)	-	-	£21.99	24-hour use
Greenwood Estate Health Spa and Retreat	-	£781.99	£71.99	Price includes gym access and classes.
New Hall School;	-	-	-	Solely available to school students
Nuffield Health (Chelmsford)	-	-	£69.00/ £59.00	Off peak membership is available for £59
Puregym (Chelmsford Meadows)	£8.99	-	£18.99	24-hour use
Riverside Leisure Centre (Chelmsford)	-	-	£45.00	Multi-site (£49.99), off peak (£44.00), Family (£107.00 for two adults and one child), young adult (£32.99), Ice patch (£49.00), student (£43.00), Forever Active swim (£20.00), £39.00 (discounted).
South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	-	-	£45.00	Multi-site (£49.99), anytime (£41), off peak (£34), Family (£107), student (£43), Forever Active swim (£20), £39.00 (discounted)
The Gym Group (Chelmsford)	£9.99	£299	£21.99	24-hour use
The Old Factory	-	£234 (public)	£25.00 (public)	ARU students (£19.00), ARU Staff (£21.50). Annual membership involves £10 joining fee.
Virgin Active (Chelmsford)	-	-	£60.00	Involves £20.00 joining fee.
Writtle University College	-	-	-	Gym Membership is available solely to university students at a cost of £20 per term.

\*Pricing as advertised in February 2024

As shown in Table 6.7, the cost of accessing health and fitness facilities varies across the Authority. The four sites managed by the Council offer the most comprehensive membership, offering gym, swim and class use with a varying price depending on age. The public leisure

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centre sites also offer pay and play use; however, access requires online registration, and places can only be guaranteed when booked through the website.

Ab Salute Gym provides the cheapest pay and play option in the Chelmsford administrative area at £7.50 per session. At the opposite end of the scale, The Gym Group is the most expensive, at £9.99 per session.

The membership at Nuffield Health enables users gain access to private GP access, free guest passes and a free PT session every three months amongst other benefits.

Membership at the public leisure centres offer multi activity options (e.g., swimming and fitness classes) and multiple site usage. It is recognised that well run health and fitness facilities with studios can offset the costs/enhance the financial viability of other venue elements such as swimming pools and in many instances cross subsidise such facilities.

Table 6.9 sets out the membership and programme of studio-based classes at CCC leisure centres. This shows the significance of the Riverside Leisure Centre which has 5,000+ members and runs 160 fitness classes, suggesting that it is approaching capacity.

The Council delivers a GP referral programme across three of its public leisure centre sites (Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre, Riverside Leisure Centre and South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre). This aims to provide opportunities for people with underlying medical conditions, or those at risk of developing conditions to become more active in a safe and welcoming environment and raise awareness of the benefits of physical activity, helping to create long-term behaviour change. The programme runs for 12 weeks and is designed to help individuals self-manage conditions more effectively and with more confidence. Following the 12-week programme, individuals are offered a further two supervised sessions with progress reviewed at four, eight and twelve weeks. In addition, individuals benefit from subsidised membership, with a multi-site membership costing £73.50 for three months (half price).

## **Future developments**

Plans are being prepared to potentially refurbish Dovedale Sports Centre, including the health and fitness suite and accompanying changing rooms. An additional c.32 stations are to be provided. If the refurbishment is approved, this would commence in June 2025 and be completed early 2026 and will create some additional daytime access, which is currently unavailable.

The Chelmsford Garden Community in NE Chelmsford will include a new secondary school that is proposed will have a dual use fitness and studio facilities. This is likely to be a long term development in terms of implementation. Outline planning application for this part of the Garden Community is currently being determined and further information can be found at: <https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=externalDocuments&keyVal=S3CLUWBRMLL00>

## **6.2: Demand**

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 rates; health/fitness in the Chelmsford administrative area (ONS data)

	2022	2041
Adult population (16+ years)	183,678	218,366
UK penetration rate	16.0%	17.0%
Number of potential members	29,388	37,122
Number of visits per week (1.75/member)	51,430	64,964
% 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%)	857	1083
<b>Number of stations (with comfort factor applied)</b>	<b>1286</b>	<b>1624</b>

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

As set out in Table 6.8, based upon UK penetration rates<sup>16</sup> there is current need for 1,286 stations in the Chelmsford administrative area. This will grow to 1,624 by 2041, taking account of a comfort factor (particularly at peak times). When comparing the current number of community available stations (1,280) and accounting for the comfort factor, there is a negative supply balance of c.6 stations. This indicates capacity to accommodate future demand from projected population growth, however, the audit has identified high participation rates across the authority. Furthermore, it is presumed that there will be some import and export of demand whereby residents in the Authority will access facilities in neighbouring local 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.

The price point and the requirement to register, book and pay online for 'play and play' access at public leisure facilities in the Chelmsford administrative area means that the option is somewhat restrictive. This could in effect be deterring some residents (such as those without access to IT) from accessing Council leisure centres.

The Council has noted an increase in 16–18-year-olds health & fitness use in recent years, which creates pressure on facilities, especially at particular times of day.

## Supply and demand analysis

Fitness facilities are an important facet of leisure provision and have been a successful addition to sports centres over the past three decades. As noted, income derived can help offset the cost/underpin the viability of other areas of provision such as swimming pools or targeted physical activity programmes (i.e., GP referral). In the Chelmsford administrative area the challenge is to provide opportunity for people from areas of higher deprivation who are less likely to be able to afford or choose to access provision and do not have the transport to access them.

<sup>16</sup> 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

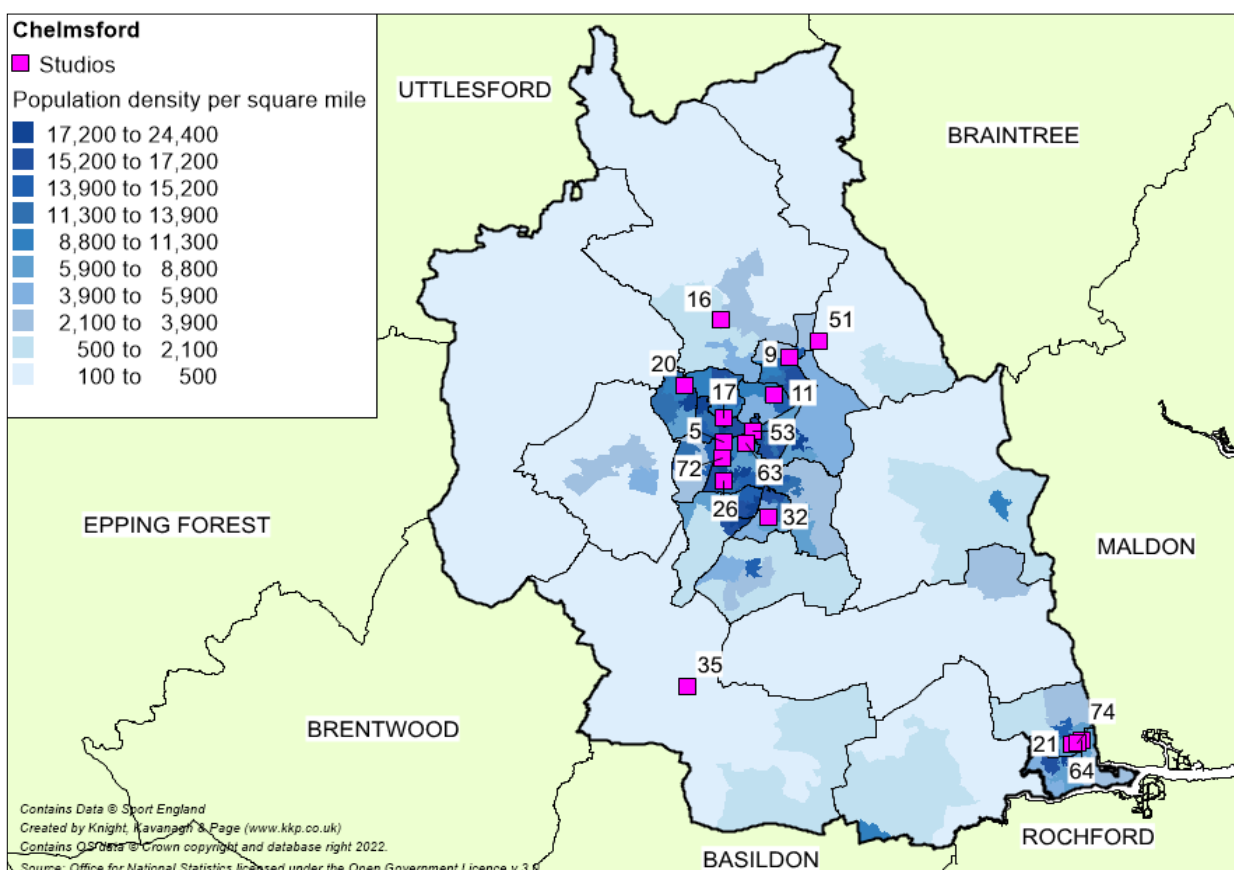
Fitness studios are an important element of the wider health, fitness and conditioning market. They vary in size, shape, quality of environment, access to sprung wooden floors and quality of ancillary facilities. There has been an increase in the number of people accessing fitness classes as identified 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.

There are 26 studios in the Chelmsford administrative area at 16 sites, set out in Figure 6.6 and listed with their map ID in Table 6.10. 25 were subject to a non-technical assessment. 16 are assessed above average, nine below average and one could not be assessed. Consultation with centre managers at the public leisure sites confirms that demand is generally high for available classes, particularly for the cycle studio at Riverside Leisure Centre. Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre also has potential to accommodate further growth following investment in the new health and fitness suite which is attracting new members to the site. Figures of demand for these sites are set out in Table 6.9.

Table 6.9: CCC in-house fitness membership & studio demand

Site	Number of fitness members	Fitness classes/week
Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre	911	72
Riverside Leisure Centre	5,096	160
Dovedale Sports Centre	88	7
South Woodham Ferrers LC	592	17

Figure 6.6: Studios in the Chelmsford administrative area





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Table 6.10: Table of studios in the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	Sub- type	No.	Access	Condition
5	Anytime Fitness	Studio	1	Registered membership	Below average
9	Beaulieu Park School	Dance	1	Sports Club / CA	Below average
9	Beaulieu Park School	Multi-	1	Sports Club / CA	Below average
9	Beaulieu Park School	Studio	1	Sports Club / CA	Below average
11	Boswells School	Studio	1	Sports Club / CA	Below average
16	Chelmer Valley High School	Studio	1	Sports Club / CA	Below average
17	Chelmsford CHS For Girls	Studio	1	Sports Club/CA	Above average
20	Chelmsford Sports/Athletics Centre	Studio	2	Pay and play	Above average
21	Club Woodham	Studio	3	Registered membership	Above average
26	Dovedale Sports Centre	Studio	1	Pay and play	Below average
32	Great Baddow High School	Studio	1	Sports Club / CA	Below average
35	Greenwood Estate Health Spa	Studio	1	Registered membership	Above average
51	New Hall School	Studio	1	Private	Above average
53	Nuffield Health	Studio	2	Registered membership	Above average
63	Riverside Leisure Centre	Studio	2	Registered membership	Above average
63	Riverside Leisure Centre	Cycle	1	Registered membership	Above average
64	South Woodham Ferrers LC	Studio	1	Sports Club / CA	Below average
72	Virgin Active	Studio	3	Registered membership	Above average
74	William De Ferrers School	Studio	1	Sports Club / CA	Not assessed

(NB: Sports Club/CA= Sports Club / Community Association use)

In terms of access policy, nine are via a sports club / community association, seven studios can be accessed via a registered membership and two via pay and play access. One studio, located at and New Hall School, is private use only and not available to the community.

Notwithstanding the above, at Chelmsford County High School for Girls, a community use agreement was established as part of the development of the site.

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

Facility type	Health & fitness	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
<b>Quantity</b>	<p>There are 22 health and fitness suites containing 1,391 stations. 17 of the 23 have 20+ stations, totalling 1,320.</p> <p>16 sites providing 1,280 stations are available to the community.</p> <p>There are 32 studios, 30 offer some form of community access.</p> <p>There is a current positive supply demand balance in the area.</p> <p>The audit identified high local demand and participation rates.</p> <p>There is likely to be imported demand from neighbouring authorities.</p>	<p>Whilst there is currently sufficient supply, should the upward participation trend continue, there will be a need to increase provision in the area.</p> <p>Membership numbers at Riverside LC in particular suggest that the site is approaching capacity.</p>
<b>Quality</b>	<p>The majority, 14 of the 17 health and fitness suites are good or above average in quality. (Three are below average quality).</p>	<p>Potential refurbishment at Dovedale LC. Provide high quality provision and maintain quality across the stock.</p>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<p>56% of the Chelmsford administrative area residents live within a one-mile radius of a health and fitness suite. This increases to 100% when considering those who live within a 20-minute drive of a community accessible facility.</p> <p>There is a large supply (14) of gyms located in neighbouring authorities within 2 miles of the Chelmsford administrative area boundary.</p>	<p>Accessibility in the Chelmsford administrative area is good, with each of the main settlements in the Chelmsford administrative area having access to a good quality health and fitness facility.</p> <p>Given scale of development and population growth in the area SWFLC would benefit from a larger fitness facility which includes daytime community access.</p>
<b>Availability</b> (Management and usage)	<p>There are four publicly accessible pay and play health and fitness facilities with 20+ stations in the Chelmsford administrative area.</p> <p>Nine require a membership to access.</p>	<p>Ensure that health and fitness facilities continue to cater to a range of market segments.</p> <p>The public leisure offer could be made more accessible via clearer marketing and promotion of concessionary rates and programmes to enable people with barriers to participation to engage.</p>
<b>Strategic summary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current and future demand is well catered for, with Riverside LC handling the vast majority of demand within publicly operated sites.</li> <li>The aging demographic profile should be strategically planned for with consideration to a health and wellbeing hub in the city.</li> <li>Future population growth, particularly in respect of the Garden Village development is likely to generate a requirement for additional provision in the short/medium term.</li> <li>Future population growth in South Woodham Ferrers would see SWFLC fitness facilities benefit from an increase in size and daytime community access.</li> </ul>		

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- ▶ CCC should consider a clearer / more proactive way of offering its 'pay and play' membership options for those who do not wish/cannot afford to commit to registered memberships.
- ▶ Additional provision to support new sports halls should be considered to help with cross subsidising such facilities and providing a multi-facility offer for users. This will be pertinent in the Chelmsford Garden Community if a new dual use facility including is provided plus a development of this scale would justify its own local on-site health & fitness provision.
- ▶ 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.

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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 Table 7.1.

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 an 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 decade.

The Chelmsford administrative area has a population of 183,678 people (2022) and has 10 courts. This suggests that there is a demand for an additional five courts in the area to meet local community needs. When taking future population growth (to 2041) into account there is a need to increase this total number to 17.

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## 7.1: Supply

### Quantity and quality

There are ten squash courts in the Chelmsford administrative area at four sites as set out in Table 7.2 and mapped in Figure 7.1 with their relevant ID number.

Table 7.2: Squash courts within the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	Normal	Glass backed	Total	Condition
21	Club Woodham	2	1	3	Above average
26	Dovedale Sports Centre	3	0	3	Below average
37	Hamptons Sports & Leisure	1	2	3	Above average
78	Writtle University College	1	0	1	Below average

Figure 7.1: Location of squash courts in the Chelmsford administrative area with 20-minute drive time

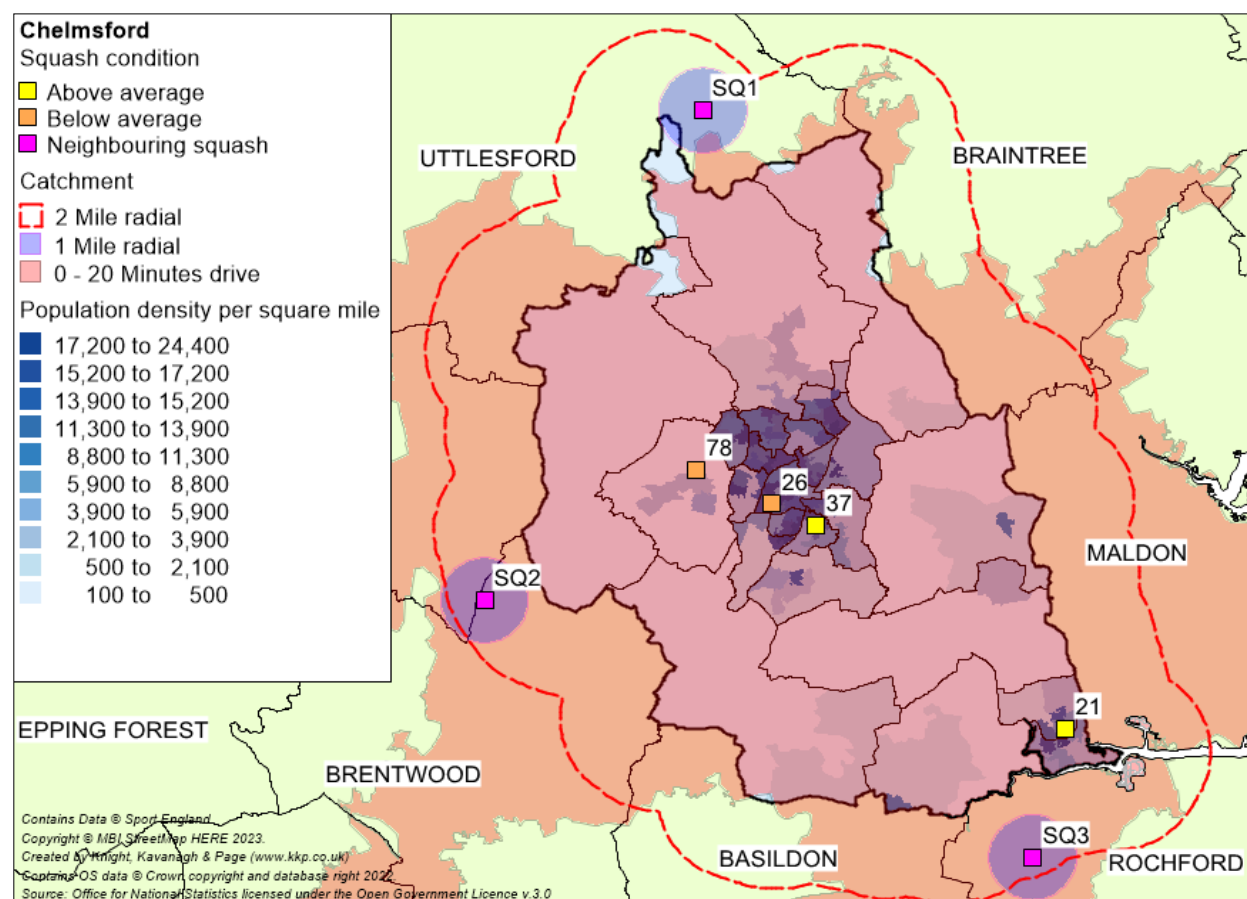


Table 7.3: Squash courts in neighbouring authorities within 20 minutes' drive of the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	Number of courts	Court type	Local authority
SQ1	Felsted School	2	Normal	Uttlesford
SQ2	Blackmore Sports & Social Club	1	Normal	Brentwood
SQ3	Rayleigh Leisure Centre	2	Glass-backed	Rochford

Source: Active Places Power 25/01/2024

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## Quality

Consultation with Dovedale Sports Centre confirmed that as part of a potential wider centre refurbishment the Council is considering the conversion of one squash court into an activity space for which it considers there is high demand. All three courts have had recent lighting improvements and repainted wall markings and are classified as being in below average condition.

The courts at Club Woodham and Hampton Sport & Leisure Centre are assessed as being of above average quality.

The single squash court at Writtle University College is assessed as being of below average quality. The décor is old fashioned, and it has poor-quality halogen lights.

## Accessibility and availability

Approximately 99% of the Chelmsford administrative area's population lives within a 20-minute drive time of a squash court facility. Five courts located at three sites are located outside of the Authority within a 2-mile drive time catchment, as shown in Figure 7.1 and listed in Table 7.3.

As set out in Table 7.4, squash facilities at Dovedale Sports Centre offer pay and play access, whilst the facilities at Club Woodham and Hamptons Sport & Leisure can only be accessed via the purchase of a membership. The remaining site offering squash courts at Writtle University College is private use only and offers no community use.

Outside the Borough, Felsted School and Rayleigh Leisure Centre offer pay and play provision within a 20-minute drivetime. Blackmore Sports & Social offers squash provision via a club membership.

Table 7.4: Access policy of squash courts

ID	Site name	No. of courts	Access type	Authority
21	Club Woodham	3	Reg. membership	Chelmsford
26	Dovedale Sports Centre	3	Pay and play	Chelmsford
37	Hamptons Sports & Leisure	3	Reg. membership	Chelmsford
78	Writtle University College	1	Private Use	Chelmsford
SQ1	Felsted School	2	Pay and play	Uttlesford
SQ2	Blackmore Sports & Social	1	Sports Club / CA	Brentwood
SQ3	Rayleigh Leisure Centre	2	Pay and play	Rochford

## 7.2: Demand

England Squash was invited to take part in consultation with regard to squash provision in the Chelmsford administrative area. Despite multiple attempts to contact, no response was received.

Consultation with Dovedale Sports Centre identified that there is limited use of the courts at the venue. Its courts are generally used for pay and play activity and no club is based at the venue. Based on average weekly pay and play bookings, the courts at Dovedale Sports Centre receives c.51 bookings, with the highest volumes on Mondays and Tuesdays.



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## Club consultation

The audit identified one affiliated squash club within the Chelmsford administrative area (Hamptons Sport & Leisure Squash Club). It was invited to take part in consultation; however, no response was received. The following information has been obtained via desk research.

It is based at Hamptons Sport & Leisure and has c.116 senior members. It plays and organises games both recreationally and competitively. It affiliates to England Squash and competes in the Essex Squash League.

It operates seven days a week and utilises all three courts for its programme, which includes training matches, box leagues, inter leagues and coaching. It reports having managed to return its membership to pre Covid levels and aspirations to increase this further. However, it is constrained by the fact that it has just the three courts to utilise and may need additional courts to maintain its growth.

## 7.3: Summary of key facts and issues – squash courts

Facility type	Squash	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
<b>Quantity</b>	There are 10 traditional squash courts in the Chelmsford administrative area at four sites. (Of these, three are glass-backed and the others are traditional). A further five courts can be accessed within a 20-minute drivetime.	Based on England Squash's benchmark of one court per 10,000 people, the Chelmsford administrative area has an under supply of four courts. This under-supply is likely to increase to 6 by 2041. This theoretical position does not necessarily currently transfer to activity on site as the courts are reportedly underutilised and booking levels are relatively low.
<b>Quality</b>	Six courts are assessed as above average and the remaining four courts as below average.	Improve the quality of the courts at Dovedale Sports Centre (potential refurbishment) and Writtle University College.
<b>Accessibility</b>	Over 99% of the Chelmsford administrative area's population lives within a 20-minute drive of a squash facility.	-
<b>Availability</b> (Management and usage)	Pay and play opportunities are available at one site - Dovedale Sports Centre. Two are accessible via registered membership and the court at Writtle University College is private use only.	Consider the implementation of squash provision at existing leisure centres or during future developments subject to sufficient demand and viability being identified.
<b>Strategic summary</b> There is a court undersupply based on the England Squash court per population ratio. Levels of demand reported at facility level suggest current available capacity. The majority of courts require access via registered membership. There is a need to consider installing squash courts as part of any new leisure development subject to the identification of demand. Work closely with ESR and deliver targeted initiatives such as Squash 101 to grow engagement. Consider retaining (and upgrading) the squash courts at Dovedale Sports Centre to maintain levels of pay and play court access and/or assist Hamptons Sport & Leisure Squash Club to add capacity.		

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## SECTION 8: GYMNASTICS AND TRAMPOLINING

The 2023 British Gymnastics 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

There are two sites providing gymnastics provision in the Chelmsford administrative area, as shown in Figure 8.1 and listed with their relevant map ID in Table 8.1, both dedicated facilities.

Figure 8.1: Gymnastics provision in the Chelmsford administrative area

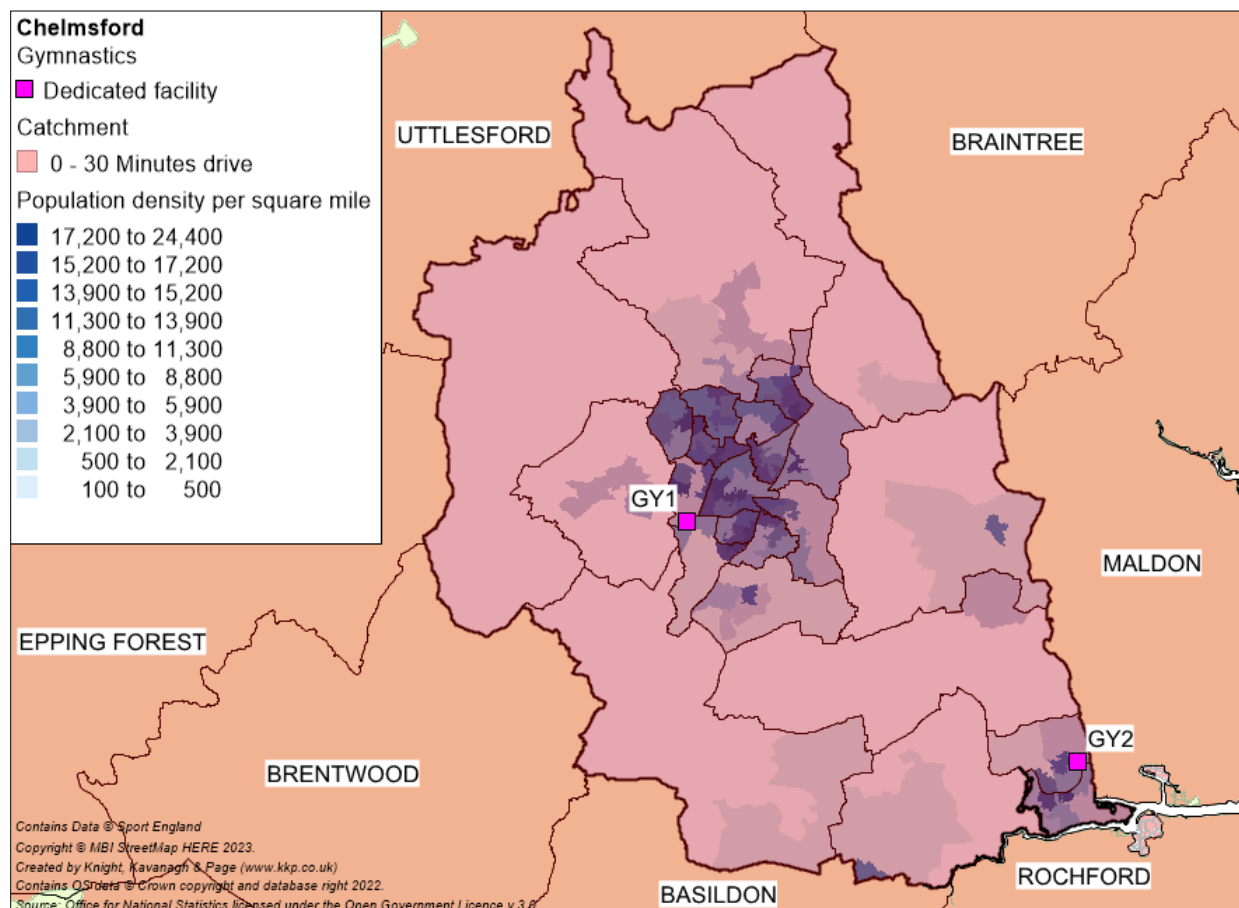


Table 8.1: Gymnastics provision in the Chelmsford administrative area

Map ID	Site name
GY1	Chelmsford Gymnastics Club
GY2	Swallows Gymnastics Club

## Accessibility and availability

Gymnastics facilities appeal beyond a local authority boundary. Consequently, this report considers provision within a 30-minutes' drive time catchment to demonstrate accessibility (Sport England suggests that drive time to specialist sports facilities can be modelled at 30 minutes as opposed to the 20 minutes modelled for sports halls and swimming pools). As shown in Figure 8.1 the whole of the Chelmsford administrative area population live within 30 minutes of a dedicated gymnastics facility.

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## 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. As with most indoor based sports, membership levels were impacted by the Pandemic although British Gymnastics reports that the sport is experiencing a strong recovery with current membership numbers tracking at c.5% below 2019 levels.

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 is a priority in the Chelmsford administrative area. It also highlighted that the quantity of qualified coaches is a limiting factor in clubs delivering additional sessions. Chelmsford Gymnastics Club has been on the project list for a number of years and is identified as a priority for facility development.

The two clubs in the Chelmsford administrative area were invited to take part in the consultation, both responded.

**Chelmsford Gymnastics Club** operates from a leased industrial unit which has experienced issues commonly associated to ageing industrial buildings including water ingress. Its lease expires in 2028 and the Club is looking at potential options for the future. It is considering going off site should an opportunity arise and would welcome a collaborative approach to this with the Council and other partners. Ensuring that it has access to appropriate dedicated space beyond 2028 is a priority.

It has a waiting list of 1000 and membership has reduced since 2016 due to a reported change in the programme. It is not thought that space is the barrier to growth here more so the availability of coaches.

**Swallows Gymnastics Club** has c.500 members and reports having a waiting list of more than 500 young people. It currently hires two units on the Redhills Industrial Estate in South Woodham Ferrers. However, this is insufficient to meet its demand and it requires a larger dedicated facility to accommodate all members. It is currently leasing the units on a yearly basis but states it would like a long-term lease agreement.

The Club reports facing ongoing issues with a leaking and corrugated roof which it is in the process of acquiring the funds to address.

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## 8.3: Summary of key facts and issues - gymnastics

Facility Type	Gymnastics	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific needs
<b>Quantity</b>	There are two dedicated gymnastics facilities in the Chelmsford administrative area. These are used by Chelmsford Gymnastics Club and Swallows Gymnastics Club.	All clubs report a requirement for larger scale facilities to accommodate demand.
<b>Quality</b>	The roof of Swallows Gymnastics Club's leaks.	Investment is needed to fix the roof at this facility.
<b>Accessibility</b>	All residents in the Chelmsford administrative area reside within a 30-minute drive time of a club/venue within the Authority.	-
<b>Availability</b> (Management & usage)	Both clubs in the Chelmsford administrative area report having capacity issues as a result of outgrowing their current facilities.	Support clubs to move to larger, dedicated facilities to reduce waiting lists/increase participation.
<b>Strategic summary</b>  Work with British Gymnastics to help to ensure that clubs can gain to suitable facilities (improving/expanding existing venues or move the new premises to accommodate the expansion of their operations and help reduce the very long waiting lists.		

# CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL INDOOR SPORTS ASSESSMENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT- DRAFT

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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 England<sup>17</sup> 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, 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 obtaining "Clubmark Accreditation".
- ◀ Retention and improvement of facilities.
- ◀ New indoor facilities in areas of low-supply and high-demand.

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<sup>17</sup> Sport England Design Guidance Note Indoor Bowls 2005



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## EIBA Outline Plan 2017 - 2021

It was reported during consultation with EIBA that an updated development strategy is due to be released imminently. This will have the following additions and amendments.

- ◀ Recovery from the Covid-19 Pandemic (return to play).
- ◀ Increasing 40–59-year-old participants.
- ◀ Increasing volunteers
- ◀ Health and wellbeing
- ◀ Inclusivity

It will replace the current EIBA plan which focused 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+ wish to continue with current formats. Focus areas are:

- ◀ Facilities: build, improve, retain
- ◀ Youth and the family
- ◀ Women – increase participation and retention.
- ◀ Disability
- ◀ Competitions
- ◀ Internationals
- ◀ Promotion
- ◀ Commercial partnerships

The “Recruit and Retain Strategy” is to concentrate on encouraging and supporting clubs to increase participation and improve the experience of all participants. Its objectives include:

- ◀ Growing participation across the adult population in local communities. Targeted work to increase female participation.
- ◀ Growing participation in the 12-18 age range as part of the EIBA Development Pathway.
- ◀ The provision of an excellent sporting experience for new and existing participants.
- ◀ A growth in indoor bowls participation by people who have disabilities.

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

The Sport England funding for the 2017-2021 period, focuses on the delivery of:

- ◀ Club Development Programme: supports clubs across the country where they have identified greatest need.
- ◀ Play Bowls Package Scheme: supports clubs with their recruitment.
- ◀ Coach Bowls: providing qualifications for coaches and developing the best tutor workforce to deliver these qualifications across the whole sport including BE, EIBA, British Crown Green BA and English Short Mat BA
- ◀ Facilities: providing funding support for BE and EIBA to research the facility requirements of their clubs.

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 National Governing Bodies (NGBs) [BE, EIBA, British Crown Green BA, English Short Mat BA and English Bowling Federation] to have policies and processes in place. Training is also 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.

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- 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.

The BDA vision statement for 2022-2025 notes that its work with the bowling NGBs will include:

- Club hubs – to encourage growth of membership and the retention of facilities.
- Communities.
- Health.
- Inclusion.

## 9.1: Supply

### Quantity and quality

There is one indoor bowls facility in the Chelmsford administrative area: Falcon Bowls Club, as shown in Figure 9.1 and Table 9.2. It has eight rinks. There are two indoor bowls facilities within 30 minutes' drive time, as shown in Figure 9.1 and Table 9.2

Figure 9.1: Indoor bowls facilities in the Chelmsford administrative area and within 30 minutes' drive time

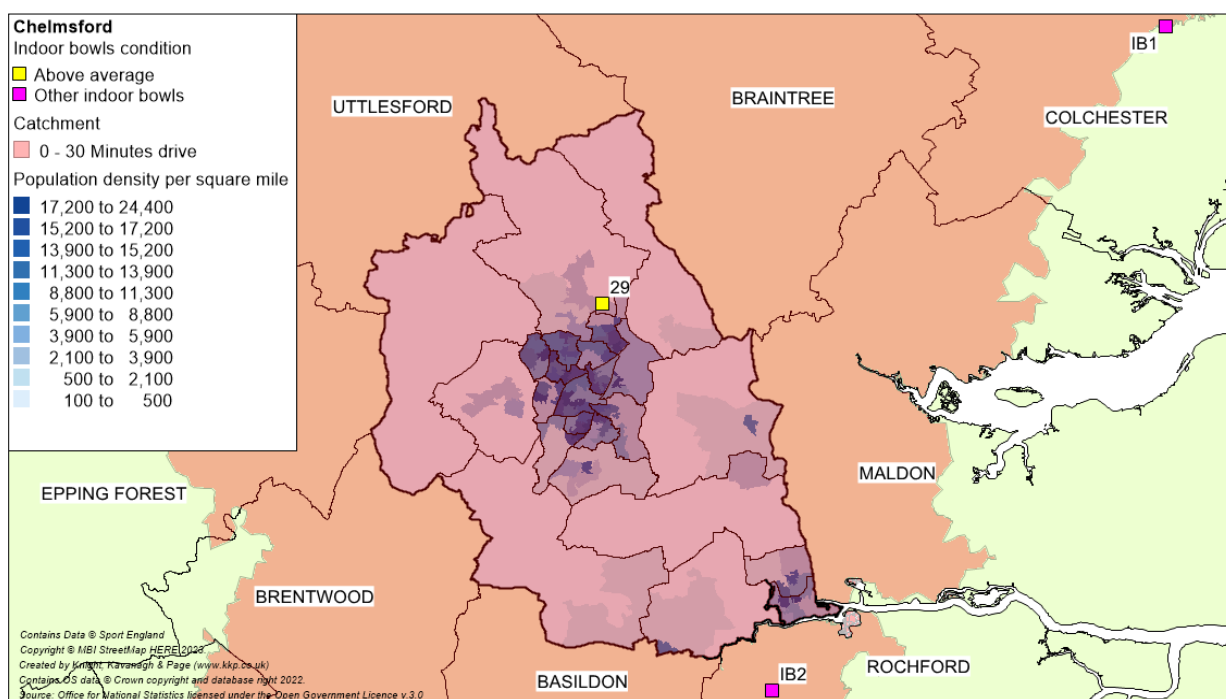


Table 9.1: Indoor bowls facilities in the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	Rinks	Access type	Condition
29	Falcon Bowls Club	8	Sports club / CA	Above average

Table 9.2: Indoor bowls facilities within a 30-minutes' drive

ID	Site name	Rinks	Access type	Authority
IB1	Colchester Indoor Bowls Club	6	Sports Club / CA	Colchester
IB2	Rayleigh Leisure Centre	4	Pay and Play	Rochford

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Falcon Bowls Club is rated as above average in quality. Its carpet was last resurfaced in 2016 and will soon need to be replaced (depending on wear and tear) even though it is well maintained by the club. LED lights have been installed above the playing surface and throughout the rest of the building to reduce energy consumption. The changing facilities are in above average condition and are maintained on a regular basis by the club.

## Accessibility

The whole population within the Chelmsford administrative area live within 30 minutes' drive of Falcon Bowls Club.

## Availability

Falcon Bowling Club requires a membership to access facilities. It is available during the day and in the evening, seven days per week. The indoor bowls facility at Rayleigh Leisure Centre offers a pay and play option while the other (Colchester indoor Bowls Club) can be accessed via membership of the sports club/community association.

## 9.2: Demand

Consultation with EIBA and Falcons Bowls Club suggests that there is currently sufficient provision in the Chelmsford administrative area and adjoining local authority areas. The Club offers two membership types to accommodate indoor bowling with competitive and social members. Current membership stands at c.620, of whom 500 are playing members. Consultation with the Club suggests that it could accommodate a further 200 playing members before reaching capacity.

Overall, membership has been decreasing since the Pandemic. The Club reports gaining a couple of new members each month generally via word-of-mouth promotion. In addition, it is working with local schools to offer children free sessions at the venue. Despite increased facility running costs, the Club has attempted to make bowls affordable, charging £60 per year and £4 per week. It would like assistance in marketing and advertising to attract new members. (Demand for indoor provision identified via outdoor bowls clubs will be captured in the PPOS).

## 9.3: Summary of key facts and issues – indoor bowls

Facility type	Indoor bowls	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There is one indoor bowls facility in the Chelmsford administrative area, containing 8 rinks.	Retain and support the existing facility.
Quality	The 9-rink facility is above average quality.	Create a sinking in fund to ensure the carpet can be replaced at an appropriate time.
Accessibility	All residents live within a 30-minute drive of an indoor bowls facility.	-
Availability (Management and usage)	Falcon BC provides access via a reasonably priced membership. Colchester Indoor Bowls Club and Rayleigh Leisure Centre are within 30-minutes of the Chelmsford administrative area border.	This is a key facility offering daytime activity. Seek opportunities to diversify the offer to the wider community to increase participation to remain viable.

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## **Strategic summary**

There is no requirement for increased indoor bowling facilities in the Authority. Falcon Bowls Club has spare capacity to accommodate new members.

The increasing number of older people makes it likely that demand will increase but not to the extent that new provision is required.

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## SECTION 10: INDOOR TENNIS

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the NGB for all tennis provision within the UK. It administers the sport at national and regional level. One of its key objectives is to get more people playing tennis more often. To achieve this, through its most recent Investment Framework (Vision 2019 – 2023), priorities will be given to the following sites:

- ◆ New and existing indoor tennis centres
- ◆ Park tennis
- ◆ Tennis clubs
- ◆ Schools and other educational establishments

This will be supported through the following key funding objectives:

- ◆ Funding through interest free loans.
- ◆ Investing in venues that have a proven record of increasing participation.
- ◆ Investing where there is thorough community engagement.
- ◆ Support venues that encourage participation growth.
- ◆ Target investment that is demand led.
- ◆ Invest in venues that are financially sustainable.
- ◆ Support venues that have successfully sourced partnership funding.

Central to any investment will be the provision of a sustainable business case.

This section considers indoor tennis facilities provision in the Chelmsford administrative area. It uses two terms to describe indoor building types:

**Traditional** - A permanent structure made of traditional materials using traditional construction techniques. This commonly takes the form of steel or timber portal frame spanning the full length of the court (including run backs) clad in a material to suit local conditions e.g. metal cladding, brickwork or timber boarding.

**Non-traditional** - A permanent or non-permanent structure made of non-traditional materials using non-traditional construction techniques. Three types of structure fall into this category:

- ◆ Air supported structures (air halls).
- ◆ Framed fabric structures.
- ◆ Tensile structures.

The LTA identifies 72 target locations for new community indoor tennis venues in England. The Chelmsford administrative area has been identified as a priority area.

### 10.1: Supply

Indoor tennis is based on specialist facilities which appeal beyond local authority boundaries. This report considers provision within with a 30-minutes' drive time catchment.

#### Quantity and quality

There are no indoor tennis courts within the Authority. There are 14 facilities located within 30 minutes' drive time of the Chelmsford administrative area, as shown in Figure 10.1 and listed with their relevant map ID number in Table 10.1.

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Figure 10.1: Indoor tennis courts within 30-minute drive time of the Chelmsford administrative area

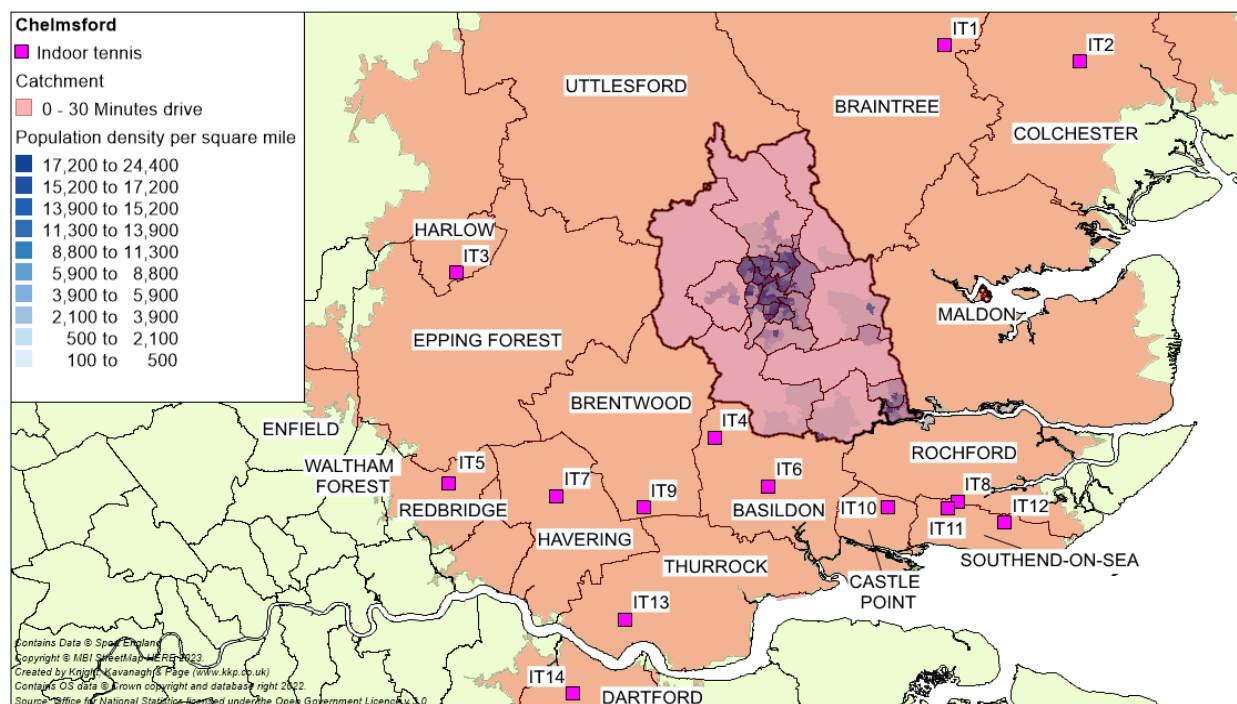


Table 10.1: Indoor tennis provision within 30 minutes' drive time of the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	Courts	Access type	Authority
IT1	The Essex Golf & Country Club	3 + 3	Reg. membership	Braintree
IT2	Lexden Racquets & Fitness Club	2	Reg. membership	Colchester
IT3	Harlow Lawn Tennis Club	10	Sports club / CA	Harlow
IT4	Billericay Lawn Tennis Club	3	Reg. membership	Basildon
IT5	Redbridge Sports & Leisure	8	Reg. membership	Redbridge
IT6	David Lloyd	2 + 6	Reg. membership	Basildon
IT7	David Lloyd (Gidea Park)	7	Reg. membership	Havering
IT8	Athenaeum Club Ltd	3	Reg. membership	Rochford
IT9	Clearview Health & Racquets Club	6 + 1	Reg. membership	Brentwood
IT10	Deanes School Sports Centre	3	Sports club / CA	Castle Point
IT11	David Lloyd (Southend)	5	Reg. membership	Southend-on-Sea
IT12	Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre	4	Pay and play	Southend-on-Sea
IT13	Bannatyne Health Club	2	Reg. membership	Thurrock
IT14	David Lloyd	6	Reg. membership	Dartford

## Accessibility and availability

Drive time catchment modelling confirms that all residents within the Chelmsford administrative area live within a 30-minute drive of an indoor tennis facility. The courts are located in neighbouring local authorities and are accessible to Chelmsford administrative area residents (within 30-minutes' drive time).



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Of the 14 facilities in neighbouring authorities, 11 require a registered membership to access.

One facility (Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre) offers pay and play provision.

## 10.2: Demand

The LTA recently set out its revised 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 the Chelmsford administrative area is one.

As noted above, no site has as yet been identified and it is the responsibility of the Authority and the LTA to explore potential sites and sources funding for a potential venue.

As there are no indoor venues in the Authority, no club/organisation consultation was undertaken. The nearest pay and play facility is at Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre in Southend (IT 12), which is towards the edge of the 30 min catchment, and of the nearest private facilities, Billericay Lawn Tennis Club (IT4) only has 3 courts and the other is a David Lloyd facility i.e. fairly exclusive. Overall, this supports the LTA making the Chelmsford administrative area a priority location and to increase accessibility to courts.

There is also a need to monitor demand for indoor tennis courts at outdoor court venues. This will be captured within the PPOS.

## 10.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility Type	Indoor Tennis	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are no indoor venues in the Authority. 14 sites in neighbouring authorities are accessible for a proportion of the Chelmsford administrative area residents.	The LTA has identified the Authority as an investment priority for an indoor venue.
Quality	N/A.	-
Accessibility	All residents within the Chelmsford administrative area live within a 30-minute drive time of an indoor tennis facility in a neighbouring authority.	-
Availability (Management & usage)	Pay and play access is available outside the Authority at Southend Leisure & Tennis Centre.	-
Strategic Summary	There are no indoor tennis facilities in the Authority, however, the LTA has identified the Chelmsford administrative area as a priority area for one. No work has to date, been undertaken to identify a potential site. In the near future, CCC and the LTA should commence the formal process of identifying a site and undertaking a feasibility study. The Authority should also monitor demand for indoor tennis facilities at outdoor court venues. (See PPOS 2024).	

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## SECTION 11: INDOOR ATHLETICS

As a Governing Body, UK Athletics is responsible for developing and implementing the rules and regulations of athletics, including everything from anti-doping, health and safety, facilities and welfare, to training and education for coaches and officials as well as permitting and licensing. Locally, the sport is governed through England Athletics, which is the development and membership body for athletics and running clubs in England. It has a National Head of Clubs and Participation as well as a team of five club support managers in England; the East region covers the Chelmsford administrative area. This section refers to indoor athletics provision in the Chelmsford administrative area. Detail and analysis of outdoor provision in the Authority can be found in the PPOS.

### 11.1: Supply

The Authority has one indoor athletics track - at the Chelmsford Sport and Athletics Centre, mapped in Figure 11.1. It houses a six-lane 60 metre Mondo track. In addition, it has long jump, triple jump pit, pole vault and high jump area. It supplements/supports the outdoor athletics facility offer at the venue. England Athletics report the track to be of key strategic significance regionally and nationally.

The ancillary facilities at Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre generally in good condition and are reportedly regularly maintained.

Figure 11.1: Indoor athletics tracks in the Chelmsford administrative area

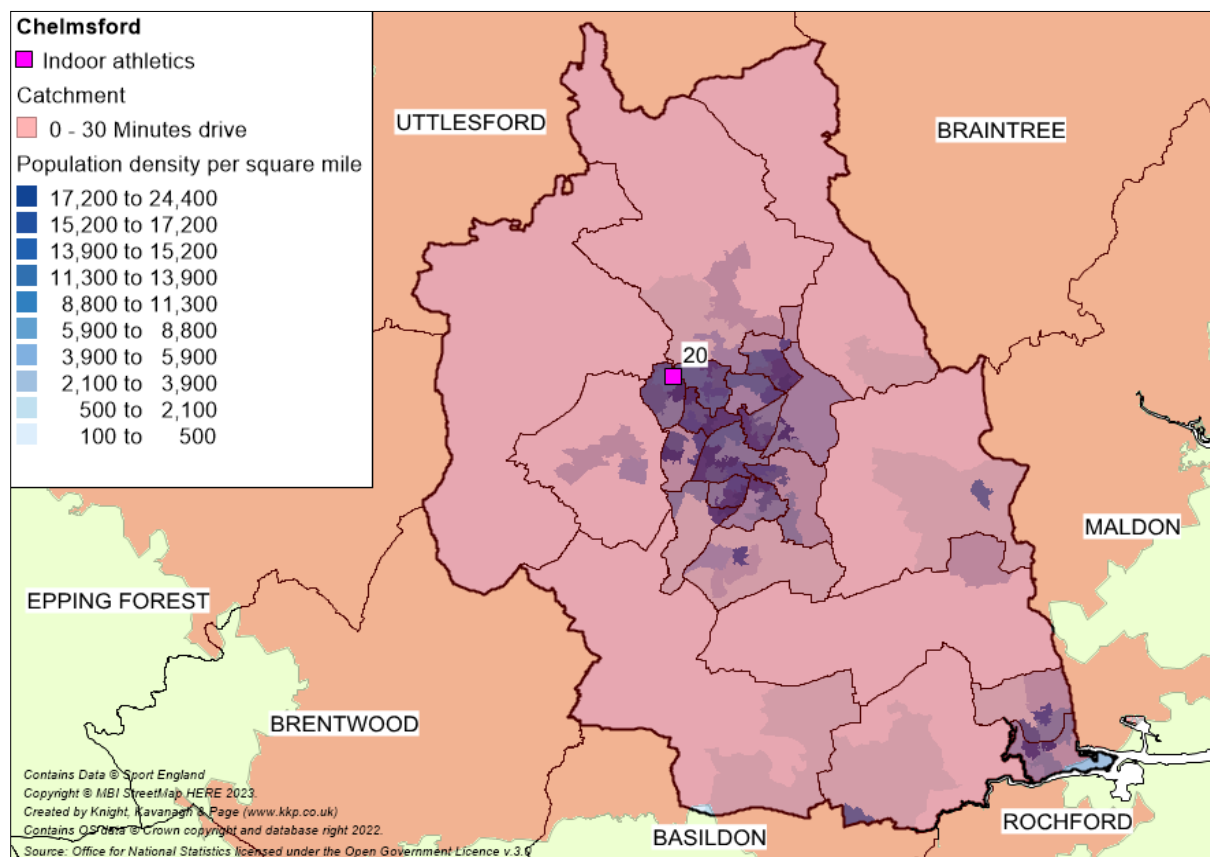


Table 11.1: Indoor athletics track

ID	Site name	Access type	Condition
20	Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre	Pay and play	Good

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The Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre indoor track is of good quality as set out in Table 11.1. It was last resurfaced in 2015. During consultation, it was identified that the long jump pit does not have the correct run offs. Discussion is ongoing with England Athletics on how to best resolve this issue but for competition a sufficient run off can be achieved by opening the shutter at the end of the pit.

## Accessibility and availability

The whole Chelmsford administrative area population lives within 30-minutes' drive of the Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre. The site is managed by the Council and can be booked on a pay and play basis.

## 11.2: Demand

There are two athletics clubs in the Chelmsford administrative area. Springfield Striders Athletics Club is a road running club and primarily uses outdoor facilities. The indoor track at Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre is used by Chelmsford Athletics Club. It runs training at the facility on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and is, in addition, used by local schools on a bi-weekly basis and by a range of personal trainers and elite performance trainers - in the daytime during the week. It is routinely booked for regional and national athletics events. Summary of membership of the clubs is set out in Table 11.2.

Table 11.2: Summary of track and field club membership

Name of club	Home site	Number of members			
		Senior male	Senior female	Juniors	Total
Chelmsford AC	Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre	48	56	172	276
Springfield Striders AC	Coronation Park	172	112	3	284
<b>Total</b>				<b>175</b>	<b>509</b>

England Athletics report the Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre to be of high strategic importance as it offers athletics clubs and other groups a training solution throughout the year.

## 11.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Indoor athletics	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
<b>Quantity</b>	The one indoor athletics facility in the Authority, contains a 60m sprinting straight, long jump and triple jump pit, a high jump area.	There is no requirement for more indoor athletics provision.
<b>Quality</b>	The track surface is in good condition and was resurfaced in 2022. The indoor long jump pit does not have the correct run offs.	Maintain facility quality. Consider solutions (with England Athletics) to resolve indoor long jump run off issue.
<b>Accessibility</b>	All residents live within a 30 minutes' drive time of the Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre.	There is no requirement for more provision.
<b>Availability</b> (Management & usage)	The venue is managed by the Council and accommodates good levels of usage from Chelmsford Athletic Club. It is booked for regional and national events throughout the year.	-
<b>Strategic Summary</b>	Continue to work with England Athletics and partners to drive up participation and ensure the facilities are financially viable.	

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## SECTION 12: COMBAT SPORTS

This section focuses on the supply and demand position for combat sports in the Chelmsford administrative area. Supporting data sets for provision of combat sports clubs and facilities are limited and as such KKP undertook a desk research exercise to identify combat sports activity present at facilities in the authority. It was identified that there is significant activity in nine<sup>18</sup> disciplines. Below is summary outlining various forms and definitions of each martial arts discipline<sup>19</sup>:

### Karate

Karate originated in Japan. It emphasises striking techniques, such as punches, kicks, knee strikes, and elbow strikes, as well as open-handed techniques like palm strikes and knife-hand strikes. Karate training also includes blocking, evading, and grappling techniques. It has both physical and mental aspects. It promotes physical fitness, strength, flexibility, and co-ordination, while also focusing on discipline, respect, self-control, and personal development.

It is often practiced as a competitive sport and has been included in the Olympic Games since 2020. Different styles of karate exist, including Shotokan, Goju-Ryu, Wado-Ryu, Shito-Ryu, and Kyokushin, each with its own unique techniques, training methods, and philosophies. Karate in England is governed by The English Karate Federation, Karate England, and the Karate Union of Great Britain.

### Tai Chi

Tai Chi, also known as Tai Chi Chuan, is an ancient Chinese martial art that combines gentle physical movements, deep breathing, and mental focus. It is practiced for its health benefits, meditation, and self-defence. The philosophy behind Tai Chi is rooted in Taoism, an ancient Chinese philosophy that emphasizes harmony, balance, and the cultivation of internal energy or "qi" (pronounced "chee"). By practicing Tai Chi, individuals learn to redirect and neutralize incoming attacks using circular and yielding movements, rather than relying on brute force.

There are several different styles of Tai Chi, with the most widely practiced ones being the Yang, Chen, Wu, Sun, and Hao styles. Each style has its own distinctive characteristics, forms, and training methods, but they all share the fundamental principles and philosophy of Tai Chi. The recognised governing bodies for Tai Chi in England are The Tai Chi Union for Great Britain and the British Council for Chinese Martial Arts (BCCMA).

### Taekwondo

Taekwondo is a Korean martial art which involves a combination of physical training, self-defence techniques, forms or patterns (known as "poomsae" or "hyeong"), sparring, and breaking boards or other materials to demonstrate power and precision. Taekwondo practitioners also focus on discipline, respect, and mental and physical strength. In addition to its martial arts aspects, Taekwondo is an Olympic sport. It made its debut as a demonstration sport in the 1988 Seoul Olympics and became an official Olympic sport in 2000. Olympic Taekwondo competitions involve sparring matches between two opponents, with points awarded for kicks and punches delivered to specific target areas on the opponent's body.

Taekwondo in England is governed by the English Taekwondo Association, British Taekwondo and GB Taekwondo.

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<sup>18</sup> Other disciplines are present in the Authority, these are listed where relevant in Table 9.2.

<sup>19</sup> Descriptions were sourced via desktop research utilising world federations websites.

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## **Judo**

Judo originates in Japan and is a recognised Olympic Sport. It primarily focuses on throws and grappling techniques to overcome an opponent. The goal is to take down the opponent to the ground and immobilise them with pins or submission holds. Judo practitioners, known as judoka, aim to achieve victory through technique, leverage, and timing rather than relying solely on brute strength.

Judo training consists of practicing techniques, throws, grappling manoeuvres, and learning to fall safely (known as "ukemi"). It also includes the study of "katas," which are formal exercises that simulate self-defence situations. Judo places great emphasis on discipline, respect, mutual welfare, and personal development. In England, The sport is governed by British Judo.

## **Ju-Jitsu**

Ju-Jitsu is a Japanese martial art and self-defence system that focuses on close combat techniques. Techniques include strikes, kicks, joint locks, throws, sweeps, grappling, and ground fighting. It involves using leverage, timing, and technique to overcome an opponent regardless of their size or strength. Practitioners learn to efficiently utilise joint manipulation, pressure points, and immobilisation techniques to control or incapacitate an adversary.

Modern Jujitsu encompasses a wide range of styles and approaches. Some styles focus more on stand-up techniques, throws, and strikes, while others emphasise ground fighting, submission holds, and grappling manoeuvres. Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, a popular variant, is known for its emphasis on ground fighting and submission holds. Ju-Jitsu in England is governed by Great Britain Jiu-Jitsu.

## **Mixed Martial Arts (MMA)**

MMA is a full-contact combat sport that allows a wide range of fighting techniques from various martial arts and combat sports disciplines. MMA combines striking techniques (such as punches, kicks, knees, and elbows) with grappling techniques (such as throws, takedowns, joint locks, and submission holds) both standing and on the ground.

In modern MMA competitions, fighters compete inside an octagonal cage or a ring, and they wear gloves specifically designed for striking and grappling. Matches are typically divided into rounds, and fighters aim to win by knockout, submission, or judges' decision based on criteria such as effective striking, grappling, aggression, and control. MMA requires fighters to be well-rounded and proficient in multiple aspects of combat. Many MMA athletes train in various martial arts disciplines, such as Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Muay Thai, boxing, wrestling, judo, and others, in order to be prepared for different situations and opponents.

It has gained global popularity primarily through the success of Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC). MMA in England is governed by the English Mixed Martial Arts Association (EMMAA).

## **Kickboxing**

This is a combat sport that combines elements of boxing with kicking techniques. It involves both punches and kicks, making it a hybrid striking-based martial art. Kickboxing originated in the 1960s in Japan and the United States and has since gained international popularity. Participants use a combination of punches (using fists) and kicks (using legs and feet) to strike their opponents. Techniques employed are derived from various martial arts styles, including karate, boxing, and Taekwondo. The rules and regulations of kickboxing can vary depending on the organisation or governing body overseeing the sport.

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Competitive kickboxing matches typically take place in a ring, similar to boxing. Participants wear protective gear, such as gloves, shin guards, and mouthguards. Matches are typically divided into rounds, with fighters aiming to score points by landing strikes on specific target areas of the opponent's body, such as the head, torso, and legs. The sport is governed by Kickboxing England.

## Boxing

The NGB for Boxing in England is England Boxing. There are currently 900+ affiliated boxing clubs with over 21,000 formal members. EB has 11 regional boxing associations, which work with clubs across the full spectrum of development matters. It employs a team of club support officers (one per region), to assist clubs with (e.g.) day-to-day facility operation, seeking and securing funding for new projects ranging from providing mental health awareness and tackling knife crime to putting on sessions for individuals with disabilities.

The vision of EB's strategic plan<sup>20</sup> (2022-2027) is "inspiring and transforming lives through boxing". To achieve this, it has identified four key objectives which are accompanied by specific strategies, as set out in Table 21.1. The objectives are:

- ♦ A thriving boxing community.
- ♦ An inclusive, diverse and accessible sport.
- ♦ An inspirational and aspirational competition and talent pathway.
- ♦ A respected and valued NGB.

Table 12.1: EB strategies attached to the four key objectives

Objective	Strategies
A thriving boxing community	Strong resilient clubs An enhanced and diverse workforce Engaged, supported and valued volunteers Accessible environments and facilities
An inclusive, diverse and accessible sport	Inclusive boxing opportunities Increased membership and servicing Non-contact/recreational opportunities
An inspirational and aspiration competition and talent pathway	An enhanced competition framework An inclusive and accessible pathway An enhanced and diverse talent workforce
A respected and valued NGB	Governance, leadership and integrity Partnerships and collaboration Insight, research and innovation Driving profile and income

## 12.1: Supply

KKP's audit identified four dedicated combat sports venues in the Chelmsford administrative area. A further eight non-dedicated venues are identified as accommodating combat sports activity. Tables 12.2 (Dedicated combat sports facilities) and 12.3 (Non-dedicated combat sports facilities) below outline activity across the Authority. Combat sports facilities are not included in the Active Places database as a facility type, and thus this report focuses on facilities within the Chelmsford administrative area only.

<sup>20</sup>[Link to England-Boxing-2022-27 Strategy](#)



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Figure 12.1: Combat sports facilities in the Chelmsford administrative area with drive time catchment (30-minutes)

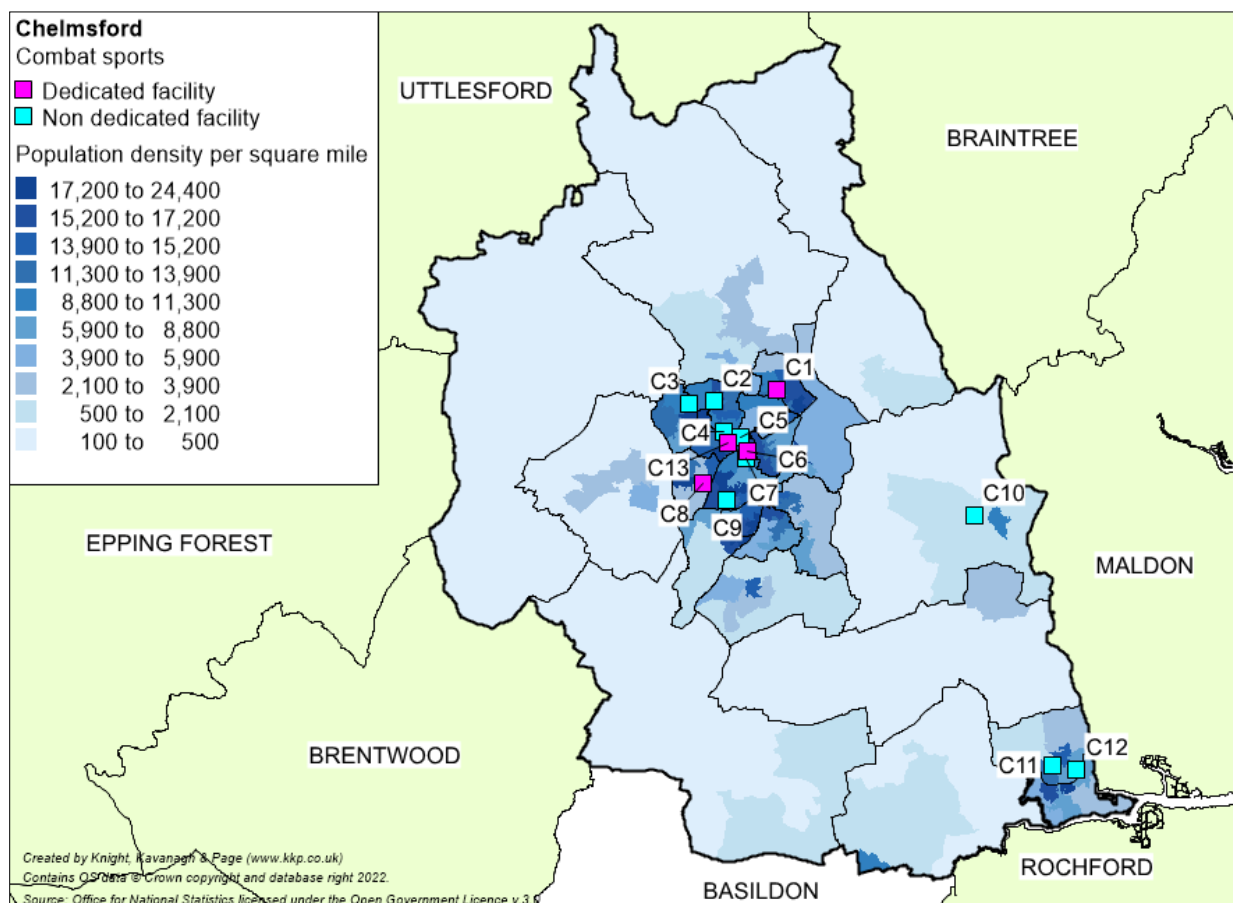


Table 12.2: Dedicated combat sports facilities in the Chelmsford administrative area

Map ID	Site name
C1	Kaurai Aikido Club
C6	Gracie Barra Chelmsford
C8	Combat Academy Chelmsford
C13	Chelmsford Boxing Club

Table 12.3: Non-dedicated combat sports facilities in the Chelmsford administrative area

Map ID	Site name	Resident club/operator
C2	St John Payne School	Chelmsford Tae Kwon-do
C3	Chelmsford Sports & Athletics Centre	Bushi Judo HGD Wadokai Karate Association Wakarishin Jujitsu
C4	Chelmsford County High School for Girls	Chelmsford Karate Club
C5	Anglia Ruskin University (Mildmay Sports Centre)	Chelmsford Karate Club
C7	Riverside Leisure Centre	Chelmsford Judo Club Chelmsford Tang Sou Dou

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C9	Dovedale Sports Centre	Essex Martial Arts Chelmsford Karate Club
C11	Champion Manor Hall	McAllister Kickboxing SWF
C12	South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre	Team Pedro Sauer UK Wakarishin Ju Jitsu Association

Figure 12.1 illustrates that there would appear to be a good supply of combat sports facilities in the Chelmsford administrative area. There are fewer facilities in the south of the Authority, however, this area is more sparsely populated.

### Accessibility and availability

All residents live within a 30-minute drive of a combat sports facility. All are accessible via pay and play or membership arrangements via the resident club/operator at each venue.

### 12.2: Demand

All 15 clubs/operators were approached for consultation, five responded. The remaining 10 did not despite numerous requests.

**Chelmsford Karate Club** has c.178 members (120 junior and 58 senior). This represents a recovery to pre-Pandemic levels and it is continuing to grow. Members travel from as far away as Portsmouth, London and Suffolk due to the elite performance level of the club.

It is based at Dovedale Sports Centre and utilises the sports hall. It reports the hall to be in good condition but that it is often not clean enough. It has access to the changing rooms and toilets but considers these to be dated. In addition, the centre only has a small car park which can be an issue at peak times.

It also makes regular use of the sports hall at Chelmsford County High School for Girls on Thursday evenings. On occasion, it accesses the sports hall at Anglia Ruskin University which has recently been refurbished and had a new floor installed.

**Chelmsford Tang Sou Dou** has c.60 members, with 40 junior and 20 senior members. It has capacity to take on a further 40 members. It has been growing since the Pandemic and typically adds an extra 8-9 members per year. Prior to the Pandemic and centre refurbishment, it was based in one of the studios at Riverside Leisure Centre. It reports this having been ideal as it had a sprung floor and was enclosed. It now only has access to the sports hall and although the hall is in good condition, due to the nature of the club's activity the studio is considered to be much more suitable and would be its preference if possible.

**Chelmsford Tae Kwon Do** has c. 20 members and has room to expand its membership base. It reports that it has been harder to recruit junior members since the Pandemic. It holds classes at St John Payne School gymnasium. It notes that the facility is outdated and in poor condition and not fit for purpose. The Club's main issue is hire costs and, as a result, it has moved one of its classes to a venue outside the Chelmsford administrative area. It has aspirations to be located in a dedicated central venue in Wickford, as the majority of its members are based there.

**Essex Martial Arts** has c.20 members and is based at Dovedale Sports Centre using the studio space. The Club reports that this space is dated and in poor condition [noted a site visit showed the space in reasonable condition with air-conditioning, heating and storage for club equipment]. The dance studio was ideal for the club but since the sprung floor has been removed, floor

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condition has deteriorated. The Club has access to the Centre's shower and toilet facilities but considers them to be in poor condition and dated. As part of the potential refurbishment of the site, the council will be reviewing availability within its centres to house current clubs and endeavour to find a temporary home. The club requires a secure, air-conditioned venue with ample car parking.

The Club reported a small increase in interest following the Pandemic and expects to see a 10% increase over the next year.

**Gracie Barra Chelmsford** has c. 300 members 90% of which are juniors. It has access to its own dedicated facility which it has rented for the last 10 years and has aspirations, over the next year, to expand the facility to accommodate the increased demand. It reports that drainage from the unit is poor and that refurbishment is needed to address this issue.

The Club reports that demand has increased steadily in recent years and that it is nearing capacity – it does, however, have space to take on an additional 20 members.

## 12.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Combat Sports	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific needs
<b>Quantity</b>	There are eight dedicated combat sports venues in the Chelmsford administrative area. In addition, combat sports activity is delivered in some form at five non-dedicated venues.	Gracie Barra Chelmsford indicate aspirations to source a larger venue to increase capacity.
<b>Quality</b>	The non-dedicated venues are assessed as poor quality.	Invest in the facilities at Dovedale Sports Centre (potential refurbishment)
<b>Accessibility</b>	All residents within the Chelmsford administrative area live within a 30 minutes' drive time of either a dedicated or non-dedicated combat sports facility.	None identified.
<b>Availability</b> (Management & usage)	Clubs/operators generally operate on the basis of pay & play access with membership systems in place for regular members.	Several clubs report the lack of suitable facilities in the Chelmsford administrative area. There is a need to support clubs to expand provision where possible to meet demand.
<b>Strategic summary</b> There is a strong combat sports club presence in the Chelmsford administrative area, evidencing high participation levels. Given that clubs tend to be commercial operators, scope for support is limited however, it should be recognised that they can offer alternative routes into sports and physical activity and should therefore be supported where possible. There is a need to ensure where possible clubs have security of tenure, good quality facilities that are fit for purpose and are, thus, able to meet the demands of the population.		

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## SECTION 13: ICE RINKS

This section focuses on supply and demand for indoor winter sports in the Chelmsford administrative area. Indoor ice rinks are used for a range of sports but traditionally focus on ice skating, ice hockey and curling, attracting competitive matches, competitions and recreational use.

### Ice skating

British Ice Skating (BIS) is the NGB for the sport in the UK - it oversees six disciplines:

- ◀ Long track
- ◀ Short track
- ◀ Synchronized
- ◀ Ice dance
- ◀ Pairs
- ◀ Singles

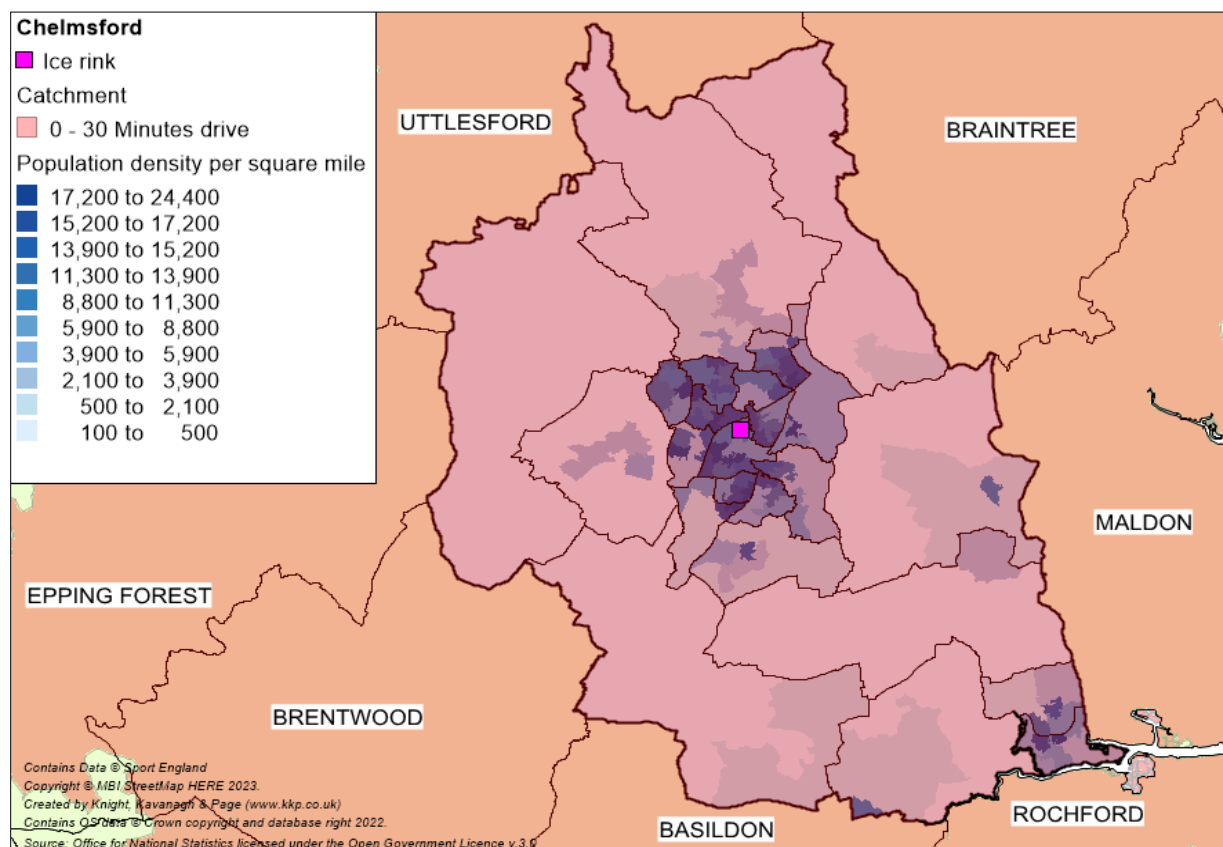
Skate UK, the approved learnt to skate programme developed by BIS, offers teaching techniques across eight stages. Skills developed form the basis of other ice-skating disciplines as well as hockey and curling. Sessions are delivered at local rinks by BIS instructors as part of BIS's initiative to make skating a more inclusive sport.

Ice Hockey UK (IHUK) is responsible for the governance of UK ice hockey. It is currently undergoing a review of leadership and governance requirements. Clubs compete in a pyramid league structure, with the Elite Ice Hockey League being the pinnacle.

### 13.1: Supply

The Chelmsford administrative area has one indoor ice rink, located at Riverside Leisure Centre, as mapped in Figure 13.1 and detailed in Table 13.1.

Figure 13.1: Ice Rink in the Chelmsford administrative area



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Table 13.1: Ice rinks in the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	Rinks	Access type	Condition
63	Riverside Leisure Centre	1	Pay and play	Above average

The Riverside Leisure Centre rink was installed in 1987 and was refurbished as part of redevelopment of the leisure centre in 2019. The rink is located on the second floor of the leisure centre. This can occasionally provide challenges with keeping the facility at the correct temperature and undertaking repair work. The site has 600 spectator seats. All Chelmsford residents live within a 30-minute drive of an ice rink.

## 13.2: Demand

The Council reports that ice skating and ice hockey are the most popular ice activities at Riverside Leisure Centre.

The ice rink meets the needs of the Chelmsford administrative area residents and caters for demand for ice skating from across Essex. This is evidenced by the high level of usage and a full programme. Although there is limited capacity to provide key club and group users with additional ice time, especially during peak periods, there is no realistic possibility of developing another rink in the area. It caters for various activities covering a range of sporting and recreational needs e.g. men's, women's and youth ice hockey, ice figure skating, casual public sessions, ice discos, learn to skate courses, patch time for individuals, holiday skate family sessions and private lessons etc.

This is a well-used and popular facility and it reportedly draws in use from across Essex. Council data indicates that it had 90,371 visits in the year 2022-2023. Public skate sessions feature in morning, afternoon and evening programming, however competitive ice hockey fixtures take priority when scheduled. Parties, community groups, schools and events also have regular slots on its timetable to ensure that all forms of demand are met. Total attendances for these (including spectators) was 21,821 in 2022/2023.

## 13.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
<b>Quantity</b>	There is one ice rink in the Chelmsford administrative area.	There is no requirement for additional ice provision in the Chelmsford area.
<b>Quality</b>	The ice rink is above average in quality.	Undertake necessary refurbishment to ensure that the facility remains good quality for club and recreational use.
<b>Accessibility</b>	All residents in the Chelmsford administrative area live within a 30-minute drive of Riverside Leisure Centre.	-
<b>Availability</b> (Management & usage)	Pay and play, club use and scheduled programmes all feature in the timetable.	-
<b>Strategic summary</b> Continue to work with Ice Hockey UK and BIS to drive up participation. Ensure that Riverside Leisure Centre continues to provide a programme which ensures that club use, learn to skate and pay & play users all have good affordable access to a range of ice activity.		

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## SECTION 14: VILLAGE / COMMUNITY HALLS

Village and community halls are important recreational facilities, especially in rural areas that, in some instances, may lack access to purpose-built sports facilities. They are usually multi-functional, providing places to meet, socialise and for sport/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.

### 14.1: Supply

The audit identified 57 village/community halls, as mapped in Figure 14.1 and listed with their relevant map ID number in Table 14.1, which are spread evenly across the Authority, with understandably greater concentrations in the Authority's more densely populated areas.

Figure 14.1: Village/community halls in the Chelmsford administrative area with 800m radial catchment

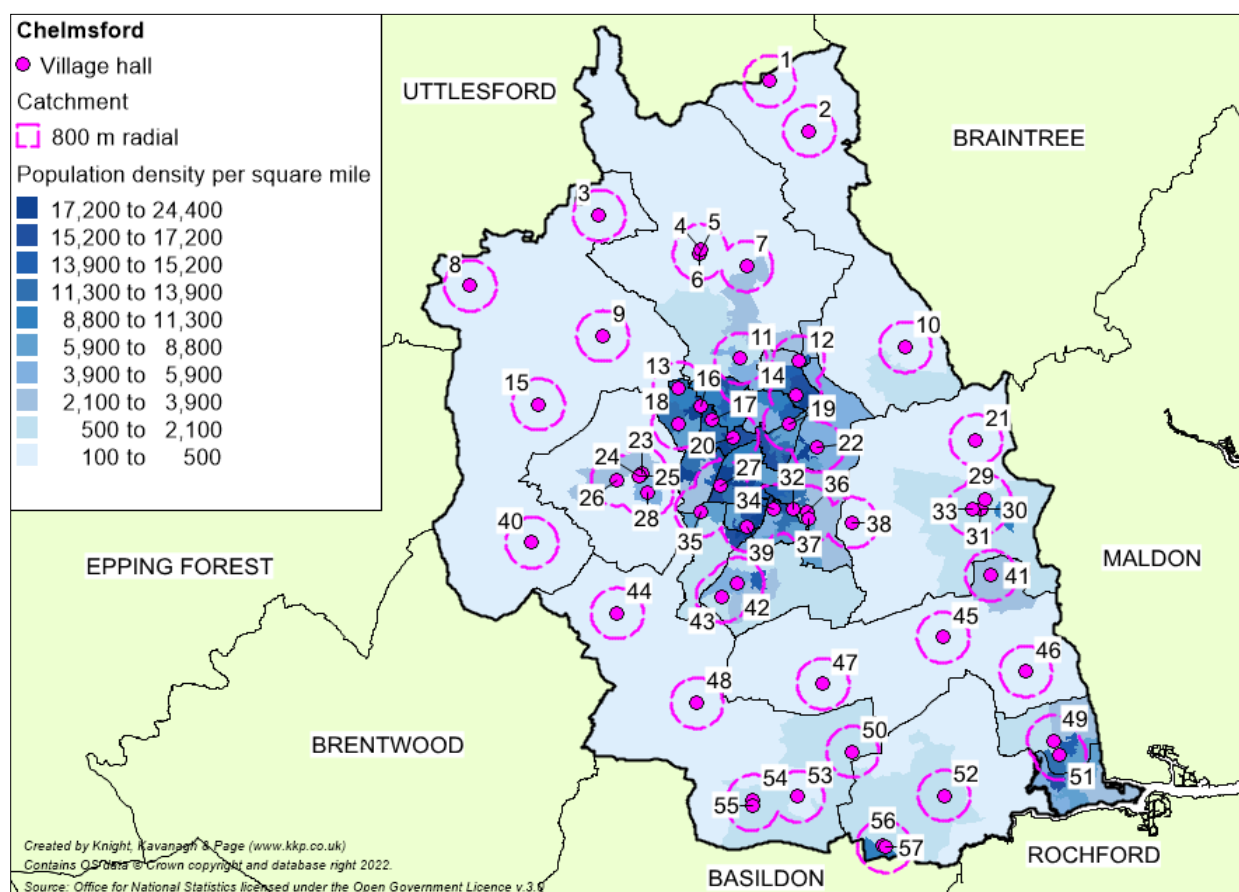


Table 14.1: All village/community buildings in the Chelmsford administrative area

ID	Site name	ID	
1	Memorial Village Hall	29	Leighs Village Hall
2	Boreham Village Hall	30	Hulton Hall
3	Broomfield Village Hall	31	Pavilion - Great Waltham Recreation Ground
4	Springfield Parish Centre	32	The Royal British Legion Hall
5	Springfield WI Hall	33	Highwood Village Hall
6	Beaulieu Community Centre	34	Little Baddow Memorial Hall



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ID	Site name	ID	
7	Chelmer Village Hall	35	St Andrew's Room & Chapel
8	Great Baddow Parish Hall	36	Memorial Hall
9	The Reading Rooms	37	Margaretting Village Hall
10	St Paul's Church Hall	38	Pleshey Village Hall
11	Gt Baddow Millenium Community Centre	39	Ramsden Heath Village Hall
12	Chelmsford Boys & Girls Club	40	Downham Village Hall
13	North Avenue Youth Centre	41	Ramsden Heath Christian Growth Centre
14	Moulsham Lodge Methodist Church Hall	42	Rettendon Memorial Hall
15	Newlands Spring Community Centre	43	Roxwell Memorial Hall
16	The Parkside Community Hub	44	Runwell Village Hall
17	Our Lady Immaculate Parish Hall	45	St. Mary's Church Hall
18	Widford Village Hall	46	Sandon Village Hall
19	Chignal Village Hall	47	South Hanningfield Village Hall
20	Danbury Village Hall	48	South Woodham Ferrers Village Hall
21	The Old Pavilion	49	Champions Manor Hall
22	St John's Church Meeting Room	50	Stock Village Hall
23	United Reformed Church Hall	51	Writtle Village Hall
24	East Hanningfield Village Hall	52	Writtle Sports and Social Club
25	Ford End Village Hall	53	Writtle Community Association using the Beryl Platt Centre on Redwood Drive
26	The Keene Hall	54	Writtle Christian Centre
27	Galleywood Heritage Centre	55	Writtle Parish Office
28	Good Easter Village Hall	56	Woodham Ferrers Village Hall
		57	West Hanningfield Village Hall

### Accessibility

An 800m walk catchment is used to measure accessibility to village hall facilities, reflecting their relevance to a more local catchment than more formal sports facilities. On this measure, 57% of the population lives within an 800m walk of a village or community hall. They offer different types of physical activity relevant to the local communities which they serve.

### Availability

Typically, they rely upon volunteers to operate. Many offer facilities at key times needed i.e., morning, afternoon and evening. Activities tend to reflect local community needs/requirements.

Table 14.2: Types of activities taking place in the Chelmsford administrative area village halls/community centres

Dance	Fitness	Physical activity	Sport
Ballet Ballroom tap Modern (solo, salsa) Contemporary Line Tea dance	Zumba Pilates Boot camp Circuit training Boxercise Aerobics Yoga	Aerobics (legs bums & tums) Karate Tai Chi	Table tennis Badminton Bowls Football Cricket Martial arts (various)

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There has, in recent years, been a marked increase in the number of fitness and physical activity sessions taking place in the centres (and less dance). As set out in Table 14.2, audit research suggests that in addition to sport and physical activity, key services being delivered at these sites include food banks, warm hubs, breakfast clubs and social supermarkets. It is presumed that this reflects the economic and financial constraints being experienced in the communities that many serve. Consultation indicates some spare capacity during the day and at weekends, however, there is reportedly limited capacity on weekday evenings. Given the issues of sports hall capacity and the requirements of some of the area's combat sports clubs, for example, village and community halls may be an ideal environment to provide small halls to cater for very localised badminton demand and combat sports.

## Availability

Village/community halls tend to be open on a needs (booked) basis. Most are available during the day and at evenings/weekends, offering a range of activities serving their respective communities. Management formats vary; processes include village hall committees, local organisations and individuals. Virtually all rely to some degree on volunteer input/goodwill.

## 14.2 Demand

Audit research suggests that demand for village hall/community centre space is high, highlighting the importance of these sites in ensuring a good range of local sport, physical activity, arts and cultural activities for local residents. Desk research indicates nevertheless that the majority of community centres have some spare capacity. These sites play an important role in ensuring that older people or people living in more rural areas have access to facilities and can also contribute to getting the inactive active or retaining those already involved. Further analysis is required to gauge the extent to which, activities in these facilities can meet the needs of the local population.

These types of venue often provide an ideal environment to deliver health referral type activity such as gentle and chair-based exercise. Any future development of community hall provision should investigate the potential for integration with NHS neighbourhood services linked to physical activity and the priorities set out in the Council's Health and Well-being Strategy.

## 14.3 Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Village/Community Halls	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are 57 village / community centres in the Chelmsford administrative area. They serve many more rural parts of the Authority.	No specific deficiency identified.
Quality	Quality was not assessed.	None identified
Accessibility	There is a good level of accessibility: 57% of the population lives within 800m catchment of a venue.	None identified
Availability (Management & usage)	They are often available during the daytime and evenings and at weekends – the operation of virtually all venues is to a degree reliant on volunteer goodwill. Activity on offer varies considerably between halls and is broadly reflective of interpreted local need.	None identified.
Strategic Summary	The opportunity to increase physical activity opportunity provided in village halls and community venues should be a key strategy feature moving forward. Activities tend to reflect the needs of the local community and halls open at time to suit demand.	

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	<p>There may be options to increase physical activity provision and work with service delivery partners (e.g., the NHS) to ensure that all residents, particularly those in rural areas have improved access to sport/physical activity opportunity.</p> <p>Ensure that harder to reach groups and people with specific health needs can access health and wellbeing provision.</p>
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## SECTION 15: INITIAL STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategy which follows will take account of the findings of this needs assessment, the Authority's demographic make-up and the Council's vision. There is a general requirement to continue to invest in sports facilities in the Chelmsford administrative area 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 Authority. Strategy recommendations are likely to be predicated upon some or all of the following:

- ◀ In line with the Council'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 system to, as early as possible, identify and tackle ongoing investment, maintenance, and refurbishment requirements to protect and improve existing sports facilities.
- ◀ Collaborate with education sites to ensure sports hall quality remains at/rises to an appropriate standard and that their venues continue to be made available for community use.
- ◀ FPM findings in relation to sports halls identified an uneven distribution in the quality and capacity of sports halls across the Authority. The report has identified three key interventions that should be prioritised:
  - Increase access for community use at key sites and provide a more balanced distribution of met demand.
  - Modernisation of the sports halls is of increasing importance in order to maintain their attractiveness, ensure equity of provision across the Council area, and continue to retain the very high level of demand from the Chelmsford administrative area being met within the Council area.
  - The importance of community access to educational sports halls is evident. If not in place, a community use agreement should be put in place for the current supply. Looking ahead, it will be important to negotiate and secure a community use agreement at any new or replacement educational sports hall site.
- ◀ FPM findings in relation to swimming pools identified two key interventions that should be prioritised:
  - Achieve a better balance between the distribution of supply and demand by increasing availability and capacity at the key sites (South Woodham Ferrers Leisure centre and Chelmsford County High School for Girls).
  - Increase the hours for community use at the other educational pool sites and this should be investigated at Great Baddow High School and Moulsham High School.
- ◀ Consider whether CCC might be able to play a role brokering constructive links between combat sports clubs seeking new or additional venues at which to train and compete and 'right-sized' parish/village/community hall operators.
- ◀ Ensure that harder to reach groups and people with specific health needs can access health and wellbeing provision.
- ◀ New developments need to contribute towards providing additional capacity for the facility types for which there are deficiencies through financial contributions especially sports halls and swimming pools.
- ◀ Given the projected population increase in those residents over 65 years of age, seek opportunities to support providers to increase activities and opportunities for these people. This may include consideration to a health and wellbeing hub in the city and greater use of local village halls and community centres.
- ◀ Several clubs in the Authority are at membership capacity due to current facility size. Look to support clubs seeking to access new/different facilities to enable them to grow their participation. This applies to sports such as badminton, volleyball and swimming.
- ◀ Consider options to support Chelmsford TTC to find additional space and/or a new facility to accommodate current and future demand.

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- ◀ Ensure that memberships and specific activities are available to people living in the Authority's more deprived communities via enabling increased use of community facilities (e.g., activity halls and community centres).
- ◀ Future population growth in South Woodham Ferrers would see SWFLC fitness facilities benefit from an increase in size and daytime community access (shared with William de Ferrers School).
- ◀ Given demand for Council pay and play health and fitness facilities continue to pursue increased size and daytime community use at Dovedale Sports Centre (shared with Chelmsford College)
- ◀ Review the cost and the processes via which people are able to participate on a casual (pay and play) basis at the Authority's public leisure centres. Ensure that this is straightforward and, for example, that the requirement for online membership and related sign up/booking processes do not function as a deterrent or digitally exclude key groups.
- ◀ Consider options to aid gymnastics clubs to secure larger or new dedicated facilities to accommodate all current and future demand.
- ◀ Amending the Use Classes of existing units could also be explored.
- ◀ Given that CCC is an LTA priority investment authority for an indoor tennis facility, consider where and how it may be feasible to develop indoor tennis courts in the Authority. While it is noted that no site has, as yet, been identified nor has funding been ringfenced, CCC should look to take advantage of this opportunity to work with the LTA to progress this concept – and ensure that should a venue be developed, that it offers affordable pay and play access.
- ◀ Support other developments (via planning, developer contributions and officer expertise) to increase levels of sport and physical activity in the wider community.
- ◀ Work with local sports clubs (with/via the leisure operator) to ensure that facilities and workforce development programmes meet the needs of all clubs and residents.