Meeting of Cabinet to be held at 7pm, on Monday 7 December 2026, at The Guildhall, St Peter's Place, Canterbury CT1 2DB

Agenda

Cabinet

The Guildhall
St Peter's Place
Canterbury
CT1 2DB

Please note at 7pm there will be a representation from the public session with the Cabinet prior to the commencement of the meeting. It will last for a maximum of 20 minutes

Membership of the Cabinet

Alan Baldock (Chair)
Charlotte Cornell
Chris Cornell
Mel Dawkins
Pip Hazelton
Connie Nolan
Paul Prentice

Quorum:
4 councillors

1. Members of the public may speak at meetings of the Cabinet so long as the item has not already been heard at the Overview Committee. They must contact Democratic Services by 12.30pm the working day before the meeting to register to speak.

2. The venue for the meeting is wheelchair accessible and has an induction loop to help people who are hearing impaired.

3. Everyone is welcome to record meetings of the Council and its Committees using whatever non-disruptive methods you think are suitable. If you are intending to do this please mention it to the Democratic Services Officer and do not use flash photograph unless you have previously asked whether you may do so. If you have any questions about this please contact Democratic Services (members of the press please contact the Press Office).

Please note that the Chair of the meeting has the discretion to withdraw permission and halt any recording if in the Chair's opinion continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting. Reasons may include disruption caused by the filming or recording or the nature of the business being conducted.

Anyone filming a meeting is asked to only focus on those actively participating but please also be aware that you may be filmed or recorded whilst attending a council meeting and that attendance at the meeting signifies your agreement to this if it occurs. You are also reminded that the laws of de-famation apply and all participants whether speaking, filming or recording are reminded that respect should be shown to all those included in the democratic process.

Persons making recordings are requested not to put undue restrictions on the material produced so

that it can be reused and edited by all local people and organisations on a non commercial basis.

If a meeting passes a motion to exclude the press and public then, in conjunction with this, all rights to record the meeting are removed.

Notes for the Representation from the Public session

1. Members of the public must live or work within the district and they must contact Democratic Services to register to speak prior to 12.30pm the working day before the meeting.

2. Representations will be limited to three minutes, and called in order, at the discretion of the Chair.

3. No discussion will follow the representations, Cabinet Members may later refer to issues raised if they are pertinent to that meeting's agenda. The Chair may give an indication if an issue raised will be considered for discussion at a future meeting.

4. This section of the meeting will be recorded and live streamed but will not be minuted as it does not form part of the formal meeting.

5.The information contained within this agenda is available in other formats, including Braille, large print, audio cassettes and other languages.

Contact: Democratic Services 01227 862 009, democracy@canterbury.gov.uk

Date : Monday 7 December 2026
Start : 19:00
Location : The Guildhall, StPeter's Place, Canterbury CT1 2DB

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1 Apologies for absence

2 Declarations of Interests by Members or Officers

TO RECEIVE any declarations for the following in so far as they relate to the business for the meeting:-

a. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

b. Other Significant Interests (what were previously thought of as non-pecuniary Prejudicial interests)

c. Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests

Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests not required to be disclosed as DPI's or OSI's, ie announcements made for transparency reasons alone, such as:

• Membership of outside bodies that have made representations on agenda items, or

• Where a Councillor knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person, or

• Where an item would affect the well-being of a Councillor, relative, close associate, employer,

etc but not his/her financial position.

[Note: an effect on the financial position of a Councillor, relative, close associate, employer, etc; OR an application made by a Councillor, relative, close associate, employer, etc, would both probably constitute either an OSI or in some cases a DPI].

3 Announcements

To receive any announcement from the Leader or Cabinet Members.

4 Public Participation

Members of the public may speak on any item in Part A of the agenda, for a maximum of three minutes, provided that notification has been given to Democratic Services by 12.30pm on the working day before the meeting.

5 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2026

TO CONFIRM as a true record the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2026.

Committee Report - Printed minutes 03112026 1900 Cabinet(pdf) (Page 7 To 14)

6 References from Committees

TO NOTE the minutes of the Overview Committee on 26 November 2026 (rescheduled from 5 November), to follow in an agenda supplement.

Part A - Items to be considered with public participation

7 Annual Corporate Plan Performance Report

TO CONSIDER the report from the Joint Chief Executives and Head of Data, Digital and Improvement

Committee Report - Annual Performance covering report for Cabinet and appendix 1 and 2(pdf) (Page 15 To 33)

Committee Report - Appendix 3 Annual report 2026(pdf) (Page 34 To 58)

Committee Report - Appendix 4 Draft Outturn tables(pdf) (Page 59 To 90)

8 UNESCO City of Literature bid

TO CONSIDER the report from the Director of Place and Head of Culture, Leisure and External Development

Committee Report - Cabinet Report UNESCO City of Literature Bid and Appendices 1 to 3(pdf) (Page 91 To 110)

9 Revenue and Capital Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring Forecast Report

TO NOTE the report from the Service Director Finance and Procurement and S151 Officer

To follow in an agenda supplement

10 Contracts Performance six-month update

TO NOTE the report from the Service Director Finance and Procurement

To follow in an agenda supplement

11 Six-monthly Housing Performance KPI update

TO NOTE the report from Director of People, Head of Facilities Management, and Head of Housing & Community

Committee Report - 2026-27 Q1 - Q2 Housing Performance Report and Appendices 1 and 2(pdf) (Page 111 To 134)

Committee Report - Appendix 3 2026-27 Q1 - Q2 Housing Performance Data(pdf) (Page 135 To 146)

Committee Report - Appendix 4 2026-27 Housing Complaints Q1 - 2 Performance Report & Analysis(pdf) (Page 147 To 159)

12 Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042

TO CONSIDER the report from the Director of Place and Head of Transport and Environment

Committee Report - Cabinet Report Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042(pdf) (Page 160 To 171)

Committee Report - Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042(pdf) (Page 172 To 495)

Part B - Items for consideration with no public participation

These items have already been considered at the Overview Committee with public participation. Therefore, there is no further public participation for the items listed in Part B of the agenda.

13 Tenancy Policy and Tenancy Strategy

TO CONSIDER the report from the Director of People and Head of Housing and Community

Committee Report - Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy and Appendices 1 and 2(pdf) (Page 496 To 507)

Committee Report - Appendix 3 - Draft Tenancy Strategy Nov 26(pdf) (Page 508 To 520)

Committee Report - Appendix 4 - Draft Tenancy Policy Nov 26(pdf) (Page 521 To 544)

Committee Report - Appendix 5 - Summary of amendments to the text(pdf) (Page 545 To 546)

Committee Report - Appendix 6 - Consultation report Tenancy strategy(pdf) (Page 547 To 556)

Committee Report - Appendix 7 - Consultation report Tenancy Policy and Residents Engagement Panel(pdf) (Page 557 To 568)

14 Review of Fixed Penalty Notice Fines For Environmental Crimes

TO CONSIDER the report from the Director of People and Head of Locality Services

Committee Report - Environmental Crime report and Appendices 1 to 5(pdf) (Page 569 To 583)

15 City Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)

TO CONSIDER the report from the Director of People and Head of Locality Services

16 Dog Control Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)

TO CONSIDER the report from the Director of People and the Head of Locality Services

17 Date of next meeting

18 Any other urgent business to be dealt with in public

19 Exclusion of the press and public

TO RESOLVE – That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act or the Freedom of Information Act or both.

Part C - Items likely to be considered in Private

20 Any other urgent business which falls under the exempt provisions of either schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or both

Date Published: 11 November 2026

Any decision in the minutes below will come into force, and may be implemented, on the expiry of three clear working days after the publication of the decision, unless a valid request has been received by a Joint Chief Executive objecting to the decision and asking for it to be called in.

CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday, 3rd November, 2026 at 7.00 pm in The Guildhall, St Peter's Place, Westgate, Canterbury

Present: Councillor Alan Baldock (Chair)
Councillor Charlotte Cornell
Councillor Chris Cornell
Councillor Mel Dawkins
Councillor Pip Hazelton
Councillor Paul Prentice

In attendance Councillor Steph Jupe
Councillor Dan Watkins

Officers:		
Suzi Wakeham	-	Joint Chief Executive
Peter Davies	-	Joint Chief Executive
Lauren Wheeler	-	Democratic Services Officer
William Hicks	-	Director for Place
Nicci Mills	-	Service Director of Finance and Procurement
Gary Peskett	-	Housing Strategy Manager
Marie Royle	-	Director for People
Ruth Goudie*	-	Transportation Team Leader

(*present for part of the meeting)

381 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nolan.

382 DECLARATION OF ANY INTERESTS

Marie Royle, Director for People, made a voluntary announcement that she was a Director of Canenco.

Councillor Charlotte Cornell and Councillor Chris Cornell made a voluntary announcement that they own a beach hut (at agenda item 8).

383 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Chris Cornell provided an update regarding the Sea Street site following a petition earlier this year. He thanked the petitioners and clarified that no tenants had been evicted, and all were now progressing with their onward plans.

Cabinet considers the council's response to the petition concluded. A summary of tonight's statement would be reported to Full Council in accordance with the petition process.

Councillor Chris Cornell thanked those who had applied to join the Place Panels. The applications received exceeded the number of available positions demonstrating a strong level of community interest and engagement. Applicants included a wide range of residents, community volunteers, and those with lived experiences, which reflected a shared commitment to strengthening local communities. Interviews would take place shortly, with the first meetings expected in December and January.

Councillor Cornell would write to the applicants to thank them for their interest and contribution. Councillor Baldock commented that the Council were proud of having progressed the initiative and the level of response from residents.

Councillor Baldock confirmed that a letter had been sent to the Secretary of State seeking further clarity on matters relating to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). It was hoped that a response would be received shortly to assist with future planning.

384 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was one speaker registered to speak on agenda item 8

385 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 OCTOBER 2026**

The minutes of the 5 October 2026 were agreed as a true record by general assent.

386 **REFERENCES FROM COMMITTEES**

The minutes from the Overview Committee on 8 October 2026 published in the agenda supplement were noted.

Councillor Baldock thanked the Committee for its valuable contribution and comments which were incorporated in the officer's reports and would be discussed at the relevant agenda item.

387 **PROPOSED CHANGES TO CHARGES AND CONDITIONS IN COUNCIL CAR PARKS 2027/28 (OSPPO)**

Councillor Prentice, Cabinet Member for Transport and Planning introduced the report that sets out proposed changes to the charges and conditions contained in the Off Street Parking Places Order for 2027/28 and seeks authority to undertake public consultation on those proposals.

There were three options for Cabinet to consider:

a) Commence public consultation on proposals 1 set out in Appendix 1.
b) Amend one or more of proposals set out in Appendix 1 and undertake public consultation.
c) Do not commence public consultation on any proposal set out in Appendix 1.

Cabinet discussed the report including the following points:

- The parking proposals sought to address the cost-of-living pressures faced by the council while maintaining income to support essential services.
- Highlights from the report included a freeze on parking charges, free Sunday parking in Band 5 car parks, increased availability of cheaper parking spaces, and improvements for accessing town centres and local services.
- The measures aimed to encourage sustainable travel through Park and Ride, public transport initiatives, and resident parking discount schemes.
- The resident permit and discount application process would be simplified in response to previous feedback, making the schemes more accessible and reducing administrative requirements.
- Members emphasised the importance of undertaking a comprehensive public consultation and ensuring that a wide range of residents had the opportunity to participate.
- The proposals were intended to provide additional benefits for residents in rural areas by improving access to services and transport options.
- The potential economic, environmental, and social benefits of the proposals were discussed which included supporting local businesses, encouraging alternative travel methods, and giving back to families to help towards other increasing costs.
- Cabinet considered the proposals prioritised residents' needs while supporting the council's wider transport, sustainability, and economic aims.

It was then proposed, seconded and when put to a recorded vote

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet authorises public consultation on proposals as set out in Appendix 1.

Record of the voting:

For (6): Councillors Baldock, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Hazelton, and Prentice
Against (0)
Abstained (0)

Reason for decision:
Consultation (option a) would provide residents, businesses and other affected parties with an opportunity to comment on the proposals before any final decision is made.

388 **DRAFT GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2027/28 AND FINANCIAL OUTLOOK: SEEKING APPROVAL TO CONSULT ON THE BUDGET PROPOSALS**

[Councillor Charlotte Cornell and Councillor Chris Cornell made a voluntary announcement that they own a beach hut.]

Councillor Dan Watkins spoke directly before the item.

Councillor Baldock, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Finance introduced the report that set out the key financial issues facing the council from 2026 to 2029 and advised councillors on key budget assumptions and put forward general fund budget proposals for 2027/28 to 2029/30 for consultation.

Councillor Baldock thanked the officers involved for their work in developing the projections and proposals. The draft budget would be refined as more up to date information was available, and again following consultation and through the decision-making process.

The key elements set out in the proposals were:

- a council tax increase of 2.97% (£7.56 a year for a band D property)
- potential use of reserves to smooth savings across years
- savings being achieved through efficiency
- some increases in fees and charges at the current rate of CPI or cost recovery, with some exceptions

Officers provided clarification and Cabinet discussed the report including the following:

- Members noted that the proposals would allow the council to manage ongoing financial pressures while maintaining services and minimising increases to Council Tax and charges.
- Inflation and wider economic uncertainty continued to create budget challenges. Government funding recently announced for three years would provide some increased certainty.
- Proposals for continued investment in community safety and anti-social behaviour initiatives was welcomed and expected to be positively received by residents.
- Investment in waste, recycling and digital systems were supported to maintain service reliability and efficiency.
- Funding outlined for community, cultural and environmental initiatives was welcomed and the benefits to residents and local communities recognised.
- Provision for a fairer system to process and improve the administration of residential parking permit arrangements was appreciated and considered overdue.
- Residents were encouraged to participate in the consultation, and members hoped that the proposals would deliver positive outcomes for a broad range of residents.

It was then proposed, seconded and when put to a recorded vote

RESOLVED:

a) to endorse the budget assumptions and strategy set out in the report
b) that the public consultation be used to seek views on the significant proposals in Appendices 1 to 4 (as amended to reflect decisions taken at this meeting)

c) that for the cost recovery fees and charges (highlighted in amber in Appendix 4), officers are able to further increase or decrease charges during the year by up to 5% if costs vary, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

And RECOMMENDED (to Full Council):

d) that the Capital Programme for the current year is amended as shown in Appendix 2.

Record of the voting:

For (6): Councillors Baldock, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Hazelton, and Prentice
Against (0)
Abstained (0)

Reason for decision:
The consultation period will be used to obtain views on the options for achieving a balanced budget

389 **DRAFT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2027/28**

Councillor Hazelton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report and Appendices A to C that contain the draft proposals for the housing revenue and capital budgets for 2027/28.

There were three options for Cabinet to consider:

Option 1: Approve the draft housing revenue and capital budget for consultation. This is the recommended option because it ensures continuity of service to tenants and meets the council’s legal obligations as a landlord.

Option 2: Require amendments to the draft housing revenue and capital budget and approve the amended draft budget for consultation.

Option 3: Do not approve the draft housing revenue and capital budget for consultation.

Cabinet were asked to approve the principles of the draft housing revenue and capital budgets for consultation (option 1).

If approved, the results of the consultation and any updated information would be presented to Overview Committee for comment and feedback on 21 January 2027. On 9 February 2027, Cabinet would consider and decide whether to exercise its delegated authority to approve the proposed annual rent increase, provided it is in accordance with Government policy and whether to recommend the draft housing budget to Council.

The decision to approve the draft housing capital and revenue budget would be taken by Council on 22 February 2027.

Cabinet discussed the report including the following:

- The proposals aimed to strengthen the long-term sustainability of the Housing Revenue Account and improve the quality of the Council's housing stock.

- A recent stock condition survey had identified a significant maintenance backlog, and additional investment was proposed to improve housing conditions, address compliance requirements and deliver safer, warmer, and higher-quality homes for tenants.
- The proposed rent increase would support ongoing investment in existing housing stock, housing services, and future housing provision across the district.
- Progress made in reducing the number of vacant garages was welcomed, and there were further plans for investment to improve and bring redundant garages back into use.
- The extensive work undertaken by officers over several months to develop and refine the proposals was acknowledged, and included contributions from finance, housing, and specialist teams.
- Tenant feedback would be sought through the consultation process and Cabinet encouraged residents to participate.

It was then proposed, seconded and when put to a recorded vote

RESOLVED:

To approve the principles of the draft housing revenue and capital budgets set out in the Appendices A to C of this report for consultation.

Record of the voting:

For (6): Councillors Baldock, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Hazelton, and Prentice
Against (0)
Abstained (0)

Reason for decision:
The draft budget was based on the most robust data currently available and ensured that the council can continue to provide services to vulnerable tenants and meet its legal responsibilities as a landlord.

390 **SOUTH EAST WATER STAKEHOLDER GROUP UPDATE**

Councillor Baldock, Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy & Finance introduced the report that updated Cabinet following the well-attended and constructive initial meeting of the South East Water Stakeholder Group.

Cabinet thanked officers for their proactive approach in commencing the Stakeholder Group, welcomed the update, and noted that a number of local authorities were experiencing similar challenges relating to water supply, infrastructure capacity, and service resilience. Discussions at the first meeting had focused on sharing concerns, experiences, and potential solutions.

Members acknowledged the benefits of the collaborative approach between local authorities and the establishment of a smaller working group that would continue discussions on shared issues and priorities. Further updates would be reported to Cabinet as the work progressed.

The report was NOTED by general assent.

391 **HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY AND PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS**

Councillor Hazelton, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report that seeks Cabinet approval of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Homelessness Action Plan.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy online consultation was open between 10 June 2026 and 2 September 2026. Following feedback from Overview on 8th October, additional information on governance was added to the strategy.

There were two options for Cabinet to consider:

Option 1 – approve the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Homelessness Action Plan.
Option 2 – Require amendments to the strategy and or the plan.

The Director of People provided clarification where required, and the Cabinet discussed the following points:

- Members discussed the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026–2030, which set out the Council's vision and priorities for preventing homelessness, reducing rough sleeping, and supporting vulnerable residents.
- Key priorities included improving access to advice and support services, ensuring suitable temporary accommodation, and working collaboratively with stakeholders and strengthening partnership working to deliver positive outcomes across the district.
- Members noted that the accompanying Homelessness Action Plan supported the delivery of the strategy and the council in meeting its statutory duties in line with national policy and local priorities.
- The strategy and action plan acted as a clear framework, and the contributions of officers, partners and stakeholders were acknowledged in their development.
- Thanks were given to Councillor Carnac and Councillor Liz Harvey for bringing the Notice of Motion (NoM) to Full Council in January 2026 - 'Taking a children’s rights-based approach to tackling homelessness". Points raised in the NoM were incorporated in both the strategy and plan, and the NoM was now considered as concluded.
- The targets set would be monitored and Cabinet and officers recognised that preventing homelessness was the preferred approach as it has a positive impact on people’s quality of life.

It was then proposed, seconded and when put to a recorded vote

RESOLVED:

To adopt the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Homelessness Action Plan.

Record of the voting:

For (6): Councillors Baldock, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Hazelton, and Prentice
Against (0)
Abstained (0)

Reason for decision:
To allow us to meet our statutory requirements and ensure a plan is in place before the deadline set by central government (1 December 2026).

392 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 7th December 2026.

393 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS TO BE DEALT WITH IN PUBLIC**

There was none.

394 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not required.

395 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS WHICH FALLS UNDER THE EXEMPT PROVISIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 OR THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 OR BOTH**

There was none.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.39 pm

Cabinet

7 December 2026

Subject: Annual Impact Report 2025-26

Director and Head of Service:

Peter Davies and Suzi Wakeham, Joint Chief Executives

Caroline Marlow, Head of Data, Digital, and Improvement

Officer:

Josie Newman, Corporate Programme and Performance Manager

Cabinet Member:

Councillor Charlotte Cornell, Portfolio Holder for Performance

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Key or Non Key decision: Non-Key

Decision Issues:

These matters are within the authority of Cabinet.

Is any of the information exempt from publication:

This report is open to the public.

CCC ward(s): All

Summary and purpose of the report:

To present the Annual Impact Report 2025/26, which sets out performance against the key performance indicators (KPIs) agreed by Cabinet in January 2026, and to seek approval for the proposed changes to the performance framework.

To Resolve:

(a) Add ‘using funding from the Warm Homes: Social Housing Grant’ to 'Number of council homes achieving an EPC rating of at least a C'
(b) Change the wording of the planning enforcement KPI to 'Percentage of appeals that were dismissed completely or in part by a Planning Inspector'
(c) Remove the 'Number of bus trips on services in the district. Figure provided by Stagecoach' KPI
(d) Remove the KPI 'Number on the Housing Needs Register'
(e) Replace newsroom views with ‘Number of e-newsletter subscriptions’
(f) Remove ‘Number of evictions prevented by the tenancy sustainment team’ and introduce a new measure once the ongoing review of tenancy sustainment has concluded

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(g) Remove ‘Council home new builds started on site’
(h) That KPIs relating to time taken to deliver adaptions and the average number of days to relet council homes are split in to show the difference between major and minor works required
(i) Set new targets for 2026/27 following baseline year as given in the table at 2.5.5
(j) Changes to targets for from 2026/27 onwards as indicated in the table at 2.5.6
(k) That a benchmarking section be added to the annual report as set out in section 2.6
(l) That delegated authority be given to the Head of Data, Digital and Improvements to make changes to the Annual Impact Report 2025/26 in consultation with the portfolio holder for performance.

Next stage in process:

The report will be revised to reflect any changes approved by Cabinet and then published on the council’s website.

1. Introduction

The Annual Impact Report 2025/26 reviews Canterbury City Council’s performance during the 2025/26 financial year.

It presents outturns against the key performance indicators (KPIs) agreed in January 2026 for the life of the Corporate Plan, alongside case studies illustrating the work of council services.

2. Performance review and proposed KPI changes

2.1 Scrutiny Committee comments and officer responses

The Scrutiny Committee considered the report on 2 September 2026 and requested the following comments be forwarded to Cabinet.

Scrutiny comment	Officer comment
Include benchmarking information where possible	See section 2.8 for the proposed approach to benchmarking
Provide additional narrative and explanatory context throughout the report	The report includes case studies that provide more context and detail than previous annual reports. Explanatory narrative also accompanies the performance information in the outturn tables
Review and correct identified inaccuracies before publication	Regrettably there were a number of errors and inaccuracies, these have been addressed in the current draft
Include hyperlinks to relevant supporting information where appropriate	Noted

Please also see section 4 of this report.

2.2 Summary of performance outturns

- Total number of KPIs: 72
- Number of KPIs with targets set in January 2026: 31
- Number of KPIs agreed for trend monitoring only: 35
- Number of KPIs which are baseline year measures waiting for a target: 6

The table below summarises performance against targets. The target assessment applies only to KPIs with an agreed target.

These targets were set in January 2026 and were therefore in place only for the final quarter of the financial year.

Five

KPI category	**List of relevant KPIs**
14 Outturns meeting or exceeding their target	• G4 Net increase in trees (30.5% increase year on year; met directional target) • G8 Internal flooding reports (met zero target) • G11 Park and Ride usage (12% increase; met directional target) • F22 New or improved community sports facilities (50% above target) • S1 Customer telephone wait time (9.4% below maximum) • S2 Customer satisfaction (2.3% above target) • S3 Stage 1 complaints answered within 10 working days (13.4% increase year on year; met directional target) • S4 Stage 1 complaints escalating to Stage 2 (12.1% decrease year on year; met directional target) • S11 Museum and gallery visits (1.3% increase year on year; met directional target) • S18 Litigation resolved in the council's favour (met target exactly; 0% difference) • S24 Major planning applications determined on time (met target exactly; 0% difference) • S25 Minor planning applications determined on time (12% above target) • S27 Planning decisions upheld at appeal (5.7% above target) • S28 Planning enforcement actions upheld at appeal (7.1% above target)
12 Outturns missing their targets	• G3 Open spaces with environmental awards (0% change year on year; increase not achieved) • G6 Council greenhouse gas emissions (provisional) (13% higher than last reported figure, but not directly comparable) • G13 Off-street and Park and Ride parking acts (5.1% lower year on year) • G15 Parking permits (2% lower year on year) • B4 Temporary accommodation homes purchased (30% below target) • F21 New or improved play areas (50% lower year on year) • S7 Newsroom website views (11.4% lower year on year) • S8 Total missed bin rate (38.5% above maximum) • S9 Repeat litter or detritus reports (7.9% above target) • S10 Missed garden waste bin rate (46.2% above maximum) • S16 Council Tax collected (1.5% below target)

	• S17 Business Rates collected (3.9% below target)
5 outturns not assessed against target	• G1 Household waste recycling rate (early, unverified 2025/26 figure: 44.85%. Which is an improvement on the year before; the numerical target was not stated last year, and this is being addressed later in this report. Confirmed figures are due in March 2027.) • G2 Household waste collected separately as food waste (no outturn available yet.) • G7 Council homes improved to EPC C or above (the target is for October 2028; no annual target was set for 2025/26, this is being addressed in this report where a revised target is being recommended for this year) • B3 New council homes started on site (no new builds were planned in the 2025/26 capital programme) • F1 Homes not meeting the Decent Homes Standard (the original target measured survey coverage, not whether homes met the standard. This is being addressed in this report where a new target it sought)

2.3 Changes since January 2026

The KPIs have been assigned new framework references and some measures have moved between themes.

Minor wording changes have also been made to improve clarity.

These changes are recorded in the KPI change log at Appendix 2.

Additionally, questions from some Scrutiny Committee members were received that helped to identify some errors, inconsistences and areas where clarification was needed.

These have helpfully prompted changes to narrative wording or to outturn numbers where appropriate. The current draft tables can be since at appendix 4.

In other cases, the questions prompted some of the changes being requested in this report. Which is agreed to will be reflected in a final version before publication on the council's website

2.4 Further changes recommended for the 2025/26 report

2.4.1 Recommended retrospective changes to targets for 2025/26 onwards to align with policy or budget decisions already made elsewhere

Green shading identifies targets that are harder to meet.

If Cabinet agrees these changes, the KPI change log and Annual Impact Report will be updated accordingly.

KPI Ref	Current KPI Measure	Jan 2026 Target	Suggested Target	Reason for suggested change
B1	Net additional dwellings in the district	Trend for monitoring only	2025/26 LHN target is 1,215. Changes annually until LP adopted	Replace trend monitoring with the existing quantified Local Housing Need (LHN) target.

G11	Increasing Park and Ride usage - Transport strategy	Increase	10% per annum over the life of the strategy	Align the wording with the adopted Parking Strategy. The increases will not be linear.
G13	Parking acts (off street and Park & Ride)	Increase	Annual - in line with parking strategy and budget targets	Replace the directional target with a target linked to the Parking Strategy and annual budget.
F1	Percentage of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	100% of stock is surveyed every five years	0%	The original target did not match the KPI wording. Bringing homes up to the Decent Homes Standard is complex. We are aiming to bring all housing properties identified in August 2026 as non-decent up to the decent standard by the end of 2027/28. But the target should have always been zero
F14	Number of families housed in bed and breakfast for more than six weeks	Monitor trend	Zero	The target should always have been zero.

2.4.2 Recommendation: add ‘using funding from the Warm Homes: Social Housing Grant’ to 'Number of council homes achieving an EPC rating of at least a C'

The new KPI wording would be “Number of council homes where EPC rating has been *improved* to at least a C rating using funding from the Warm Hones: Socal Housing Grant”.

The current wording of the KPI suggests we would regularly apply for EPC certificates on all council homes, but it is not current policy to do this.

The rationale for tracking the original KPI was to monitor performance related to the Warm Home funding bring 818 properties up to EPC of at least a C by the end of October 2028. The proposed wording tightens the KPI to ensure this is clear.

2.4.3 Recommendation: Change the wording of the planning enforcement KPI to 'Percentage of appeals that were dismissed completely or in part by a Planning Inspector'

The current KPI is 'Percentage of planning enforcement actions upheld after appeal'.

Typically, when planning actions are referred to the regulator they have three choices, dismiss the appeal (to uphold completely the original decision), overturn the decision (decision not upheld), or to overturn a part of the decision. This can include minor elements. For this reason, the recommendation is that the wording be changed to make it clear.

2.4.4. Recommendation: Remove the 'Number of bus trips on services in the district. Figure provided by Stagecoach' KPI

The council does not operate bus services and does not have consistent access to passenger data.

The Transport Strategy includes bus usage targets, which are reviewed regularly to assess progress towards modal shift.

However, the council does not control the provision or availability of passenger data.

It is therefore recommended this KPI be removed from the annual monitoring report.

2.4.5 Recommendation: Remove the 'Number on the Housing Needs Register'

Two measures covering the same subject were included last year under different wording. Different figures were reported for each, compounding the error. This appears to have arisen because the measures were interpreted differently.

Remove “Number on the Housing Needs Register” and retain “Total households on the council housing waiting list”, which is clearer for the public.

Future reporting will use the government’s definition and show the position on 31 March, the end of the financial year.

2.5 Changes to KPI framework for 2026/27 onwards

2.5.1 Recommendation: Replace newsroom views with ‘Number of e-newsletter subscriptions’

The current measure (Overall views to the Newsroom website) was introduced to assess engagement, reflecting the Corporate Plan’s ambition to improve communication with residents.

Since the KPI was introduced, the digital communications landscape has continued to evolve.

Visits to the council’s newsroom are increasingly influenced by social media algorithms, rather than solely by the quality, reach or effectiveness of council communications.

Social media channels are now the main route through which residents access council information.

Newsroom traffic therefore depends on users following links from those platforms.

Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram, has begun showing posts containing links to external websites to fewer and fewer people.

This approach discourages users from leaving their platforms and supports their advertising model.

While it is unclear how it will affect government bodies like councils, Meta has also announced organisations will not be able to include more than two links to other platforms or websites per month and will only display posts to those who already follow a page unless they pay a substantial subscription.

Therefore, in order to maximise engagement, the Comms teams has been posting media releases in full on social media which removes any need to click on a link to the Newsroom.

In order to reduce our vulnerability to the whims of the social media platforms and as an effective channel in its own right, the Comms team will rejuvenate our email newsletter offering.

Therefore, the suggestion is to replace the newsroom views KPI with the number of subscribers to council e-newsletters.

This recommendation responds to a material change in the external environment, not a reduction in the importance of effective communication with residents.

2.5.2 Recommendation: Remove ‘Number of evictions prevented by the tenancy sustainment team’ and introduce a new measure once the ongoing review of tenancy sustainment has concluded

This measure was introduced to demonstrate the tenancy sustainment team’s work. However, it does not adequately capture progress on early intervention, an objective of the Corporate Plan.

The measure counts evictions prevented after an eviction notice has been issued.

The council’s approach now places greater emphasis on intervening earlier, before a notice is needed.

Remove the current measure and agree a replacement once the ongoing review of tenancy sustainment has concluded.

2.5.3 Recommendation: Remove ‘Council home new builds started on site’

This measure was introduced to reflect the Local Plan objective of increasing housing supply.

The use of ‘Council home' implies incorrectly that it is measuring homes that are built by the council, when in fact it is registered providers who partner with developers to deliver affordable housing which the council’s is able to nominate new tenants for through the council’s housing waiting list.

In recent years, this council has focused on acquisitions to try and offset the loss of council homes through Right to Buy sales.

The KPI “Number of council housing properties purchased and built” captures both acquisitions and new builds.

2.5.4 Recommendation: That KPIs relating to time taken to deliver adaptions and the average number of days to relet council homes are split in to show the difference between major and minor works required

Original Measure	New wording	Reason
Time taken to deliver major and minor adaptations to council homes	F3 Average Time taken to deliver minor adaptations to council houses F4 Average Time taken to deliver major adaptations to council houses	Major and minor adaptations involve different considerations and timescales.
Average number of days to relet [council homes] all properties including major works	F7 Average number of days to relet council homes where only minor works are required F6 Average number of days to relet council homes where major works are required	Major and minor works involve different timescales. The contractor's categories have now been reconciled with the council's definitions, allowing these figures to be reported separately. An alternative to splitting these would be to exclude major works.

2.5.5 Recommendation: Set new targets for 2026/27 following baseline year as given in the table below

KPI	Measure	Target	Reason for suggested target
S19	Percentage of council owned commercial voids relet within 90 days (excluding where a decision has been taken to hold a property empty)	35%	Reletting commercial property within 90 days is a stretching objective. The 2025/26 outturn was 14%. A new property management system will improve monitoring of lease expiries and voids. The proposed 35% target represents a substantial improvement while remaining realistic and achievable.
S23	Percentage of food premises inspected within risk-based frequency (categories A-C)	85%	The 2025/26 outturn was 85%.
S29	Grounds maintenance: grass cutting compliance - % of areas completed within scheduled frequencies	100%	The 2025/26 outturn was 100%
F7	Average number of days to relet all properties including major	Minor - 40 days	Splitting this measure into separate minor-works and major-works KPIs,

	works	Major - 70 days	as proposed in section 2.5. The 2025/26 combined outturn was 141 days. A dedicated member of staff and a new process are now in place to reduce the time taken. Early indications suggest a figure closer to 102 days for the current year.
G7	Number of council homes where EPC rating has been improved to at least a C rating [using funding from the Warm Homes: Social Housing Grant]	26/27 - 27/28 - 28/29 -	There is process of assessing homes, lining up the work which can include loft insulation, new windows, new doors, etc and then homes are reassessed, this means that for most properties achieving an EPC will fall in the last two years of the programme.

2.5.6 Recommendation: changes to targets for from 2026/27 onwards as indicated in the table

The table below sets out the proposed changes to existing targets, grouped by the reason for each change.

Pink shading identifies new targets that are easier to meet than the original target.

KPI Ref	Current KPI Measure	Jan 2026 Target	Suggested Target	Reason for suggested change
Changes to align with decisions already taken				
B4	Number of temporary accommodation homes purchased	20 per year from 2024/25	10 for 2025/26, as agreed each year by cabinet thereafter	The original target reflected a budget decision for one year only. Current funding supports the purchase of 10 homes.
Changes intended to provide a more meaningful, stretching target				
G2	Percentage of total household waste that is collected separately as food waste	Increase	4.1%	“Increase” was too vague for this measure. A target of 4.1% is slightly above the average of the three years for which data is available and above the outturns for the last two years, making it a

				stretching target.
Changes recommended to address issues with the previous targets				
F21	Number of new or improved play areas	Increase	Two per year subject to S106 and capital funding	The previous target was not sustainable. Improvements vary in scale and cost affecting how many ought to be undertaken each year. The proposed target commits the council to improving play areas each year, or creating new ones where appropriate, subject to available funding.
G3	Number of open spaces awarded with high environmental standard (coastal awards and green and blue flags)	Increase	5 per year	Given the time and resources required, maintaining the current level is more realistic than seeking a year-on-year increase.

There were four further non substantive word changes to targets applied to measures G6, S9, S18, S27, these are detailed in the change log.

2.6 Recommendation: That a benchmarking section be added to the annual report

The Scrutiny Committee felt benchmarking would be a welcome addition to the annual performance report and the portfolio holder agreed.

2.6.1 Suitability of measures for benchmarking

The Annual Impact Report's KPIs reflect this council's Corporate Plan ambitions.

Some are reported consistently across councils but not many, plus differences in service provision and local need can make direct comparisons unhelpful.

The recommendation is that we benchmark only a small number of carefully selected measures. This will include measures that are not currently in the Annual Impact Report.

2.6.2 What we will benchmark against

For each selected measure, we will show the council's outturn alongside the English council average, or the UK average where an English breakdown is unavailable and include the Kent average and neighbouring councils.

2.6.3 Measure selection

In putting together, the recommended list of measures we:

- have considered coverage across a range of areas
- prioritised measures reported to regulators, as these are more likely to use consistent definitions and have readily available data
- used percentages or rates per head of population wherever possible. Absolute numbers are less useful when comparing councils with different population sizes
- Have considered the timing of data availability. Some comparisons may need to use data from the previous year while published comparator figures are awaited.

2.6.4 Recommended measures

Proposed measure	Subject	Data availability	Benchmarking suitability
Percentage of overall turnout for local elections	Elections	Good	Very good. All councils do and report on these key duties. Times of financial hardship effect the outturns, though this is not always felt equally across the councils, benchmarking this helps to make sense of trends over the years where national things impact for example covid and recessions
Council Tax Collection Rate	Tax collection	Good	
Business Rates Collection Rate	Tax collection	Good	
Housing Waiting List per 1,000 Population	Housing provision	Reports a year in arrears due to the population figure	
Total number of children in Temporary Accommodation	Housing provision	Good	Fairly good, although not adjusted by head of population to give a more neatly benchmarkable figure. All councils have the same target – this figure ought to be zero – so it is still useful and relevant in this form.
Percentage of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard	Housing provision	Available every year in November/ December	Fairly good. The decent home standard is made up of many measures including some that require a stock condition survey to assess, council's will have different approaches to how often homes are reassessed. That said, all councils are held to the same government target so with the health warning of laggy data in place this should still serve as a useful metric for benchmarking.
Household Recycling Rate	Waste	Year in arrears	Good. Another key duty of the council is

Waste per households in kg	Waste	Year in arrears	waste collections. These should be broadly the same collections method, using kg per household and rates for recycling helps to mitigate for the differing size of authorities. They are affected by the different regimes at councils – for example some areas still do not collect food waste, but this is itself interesting when looking at benchmarking. An additional benefit is where these outturns are affected by national trends around attitudes and changes to packaging.
Percentage of buildings in the district with an EPC rating of C or above	Climate change	Readily available	Fairly good. There is a standard regime, and this information is easily available. However, the make-up of different building types and qualities will vary dramatically across districts, and the council cannot directly affect the outturn except regarding buildings in its ownership. It provides interesting information about the buildings in our district, and it could inform policy, communications or partnership discussions in the future.
Percentage of non-major planning applications determined on time where an extension of time was not agreed between the applicant and the council	Planning	Good. Includes minor developments, changes of use where the site area is less than one hectare and householder developments.	Very good. A key duty of the council is to deal with planning applications. This information should be readily available for all councils and reported in the same way with the same statutory deadlines. As the numbers of major planning applications for each district tends to be very low – it is less useful to benchmark those applications.
Net additional dwellings in the district	Economic health	Good availability, but typically reports in Dec each year	Given the council's responsibility around the Local Plan this is a logical measure to target, and it is provided each year by all authorities. The data takes a while to filter

			through, and this will be monitor in a year in arrears as a result.
Ratio of median house price (existing dwellings) to median gross annual (residence-based) earnings (from 2020 to 2025)	Economic health	Good	Fairly good. The council cannot directly influence the performance of this. But it provides useful intelligence for councillors about an area of pressure felt by our residents.

3. Relevant Council policy, strategies or budgetary documents

Corporate Plan 2024-28

4. Consultation planned or undertaken

The Scrutiny Committee considered an earlier draft of the Annual Impact Report on 2 September 2026.

The committee's comments for Cabinet, together with officer responses, are set out in section 2.1.

The minutes of that meeting can be found on the council's website.

5. Options available with reasons for suitability

Cabinet can consider each recommendation, and each item within a proposed list of changes, on its own merits.

It may approve a proposal, reject it or propose an alternative. In every case, the implications in section 6 should be considered.

The reasons for each recommendation are set out alongside the proposal to help Cabinet reach its decision.

6. Implications

(a) Financial

Targets should reflect the resources allocated to the activity. Unrealistic targets can undermine public confidence and create conflicting demands for officers. Stretching targets remain appropriate, provided they are achievable within agreed resources.

(b) Legal

Targets should not imply that the council intends to act contrary to its legislative responsibilities.

(c) Equalities

Targets should neither disadvantage people with a protected characteristics nor give the impression that they do so.

(d) Environmental including carbon emissions and biodiversity

No environmental implications are identified in this report.

Contact Officer: Josie Newman, Corporate Programme and Performance Manager

Background documents and appendices

Appendix 1 Climate Change Impact Assessment check list
Appendix 2: KPI change log – January 2026 report to Appendix 4
Appendix 3 Annual Impact Report 2025/26 without the Outturn Tables
Appendix 4 2025/26 Outturn tables with tracked changes

Appendix 1 Climate Change Impact Assessment (Checklist)

Please provide an assessment of the impact of the proposal under each of the headings below. If none, please say so.

1. **Climate Change impacts**

Topic	**Impact of proposal** Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact** If you have any relevant data, please include that in the explanation and reference the source.	**Mitigation**
Impact on the council's target of being carbon neutral by 2030 This applies to emissions of carbon dioxide as a direct result of our **own** activities and services. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals	Neutral	While some of the performance information presented each year might provide useful context for other decisions that impact on the council's emmissions, it does not in itself have any direct impacts	Not applicable
Impact on carbon emissions in the Canterbury district This applies to the carbon dioxide emissions in the district as a result of your proposal. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals.	Neutral		
Emission of other climate changing gases including methane, CFCs, nitrous oxide	Neutral		

2. Adaptation to climate change - Impact on our resilience to the effects of climate change

The greatest risks posed by climate change to the UK are:

- Flooding and coastal changes including erosion from extreme events
- Risks to health caused by high temperatures
- Water shortages and drought
- Risk to natural environments & services - landscape, wildlife, pollinators, timber etc
- Risk to food production & trade
- Emergence of new pests and diseases affecting people, plants & animals

What impact do your proposals have on our ability to resist or tackle these problems in the future?

Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact**	**Mitigation**
Neutral	While some of the performance information presented each year might provide useful context for other decisions that impact on the council's ability to adapt to climate change it does not in itself have any direct impacts	Not applicable

3. Further assessment work

Is a further, more detailed assessment required at a later stage of this proposal? If yes, please give a brief description

No, there is no further detailed assessment planned

Appendix 2: KPI change log – January 2026 report to Appendix 4

This log compares KPI references, measure wording and target wording in the draft Appendix 4 tables with the January 2026 Annual Impact Report.

The first part lists changes to measure or target wording. The final part groups KPIs with newly assigned references and no change to measure or target wording.

Appendix 4 ref.	Measure	January 2026 report	Appendix 4 wording
G4	Net increase in trees	Trees planted or removed on council-owned land	Uses “CCC planted minus CCC removed” and no longer specifies council-owned land.
G6	Council greenhouse gas emissions	Decrease	Less than the previous reporting year.
G11	Park and Ride usage	Target: “Increase”	10% per annum over the life of the strategy.
B2	Council housing properties purchased and built	Measure did not explicitly mention temporary accommodation	Wording now explicitly includes temporary accommodation. Trend monitoring is unchanged.
B3	New council homes started on site	Target: “Project milestones achieved”	85% of those agreed in the capital programme.
F3, F4	Time to deliver minor and major adaptations	One measure for time taken to deliver major and minor adaptations; target to be set after the baseline year	Separate measures for time taken to deliver minor (F3) and major (F4) adaptations. Target wording remains “Will be set after baseline year”.
F6	Evictions prevented by the tenancy sustainment team	Target to be set after the baseline year.	Shows trend monitoring instead of a target to be set after the baseline year.
F7	Average days to relet homes, including major works	Target to be set after the baseline year	Target wording: “This year is the baseline year”. The measure remains combined.
F13	People sleeping rough long term	Number of people sleeping rough over the month who are long term	Adds “(average)” to the measure wording.
F20	Households assisted by hardship funds	Council Tax support and Housing Support funds .	Measure wording explicitly includes food parcels.

S4	Complaints progressing to stage 2	Percentage of complaints becoming stage	Specifies that the denominator is stage 1 complaints. Directional target unchanged.
S6	Consultations targeting younger people	Relevant consultations actively targeting younger people	Specifies the percentage of relevant consultations. Trend monitoring is unchanged.
S9	Repeat litter or detritus reports	125, defined as 10% less than the year before; wording refers to the same street	114 (10% less than the year before). The reduction rule is unchanged.
S12	Children and young people engaged in museum learning	Number and percentage of total visitors for trend monitoring	The target column now says “Trend monitoring” and no longer specifies reporting the percentage of total visitors.
S18	Litigation successfully defended or resolved in the council’s favour	Monitor – but not below 75%	Shows 75%; the threshold is unchanged.
S22	Graffiti and tags removed	Total graffiti items, including tags, removed	Specifies removal by council officers. Trend monitoring is unchanged.
S25	Minor planning applications determined on time	Within eight weeks; target 75%	Explicitly includes an extended period if agreed with the developer. Target remains 75%.
S27	Planning decisions upheld at appeal	Monitor – but not below 70%”	70%; the threshold is unchanged.

New references only — no change to measure or target wording identified.	
Greener	G1 household waste recycled, composted or reused G2 household waste collected separately as food waste G3 open spaces with environmental awards G5 successful waste crime prosecutions G7 council homes improved to EPC C or above G8 internal flooding from coastal or fluvial events G9 cycling journeys G10 train passenger entries and exits G12 Park and Ride parking acts G13 off-street and Park and Ride parking acts G14 city centre parking acts G15 parking permits
Better	B1 net additional dwellings B4 temporary accommodation homes purchased

	B5 value of projects supported by RISE grants
Fairer	F1 homes not meeting the Decent Homes Standard F2 adaptations completed F5 people supported by the tenancy sustainment team F8 households on the council housing waiting list F9 households rehoused F10 homelessness approaches F11 households where homelessness was prevented F12 people sleeping rough on a single night F14 families in bed and breakfast for more than six weeks F15 statutory homeless households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 residents F16 households with children in temporary accommodation F17 out-of-area temporary accommodation placements F18 people supported by the Money and Benefits Team F19 additional income secured by the Money and Benefits Team F21 new or improved play areas F22 new or improved community sports facilities
Stronger	S1 customer telephone wait time S2 customer satisfaction S3 stage 1 complaints answered within 10 working days S5 stage 1 complaints received S7 Newsroom website views S8 total missed bin rate S10 garden waste missed bin rate S11 museum and gallery visits S13 events with over 500 attendees on council land S14 sundry debt outstanding S15 sundry debt recovered S16 Council Tax collected S17 Business Rates collected S19 commercial properties relet within 90 days S20 penalty charge notices issued S21 school parking safety operations S23 food premises inspected within the required timescale S24 major planning applications determined on time S26 planning applications granted S28 planning enforcement actions upheld at appeal S29 grass-cutting compliance S30 High street footfall

canterbury city council

Annual Impact Report

2026

Foreword

Councillors and council staff are there to make a positive impact.

They are there to make the lives of the people they serve just that little bit easier in the face of all of the challenges thrown at them, not least the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

Little changes can and do make a huge difference.

Making those changes isn't easy. But then nothing worthwhile ever is and I am proud to lead an organisation determined to do the right thing and solve as many people's problems as humanly possible within the constraints we face.

There is a huge amount to celebrate in this Annual Impact Report which allows the public and councillors to scrutinise our performance and to check the progress we're making against our corporate plan - Returning Pride To Our District: Our Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028.

We are proud of all the work we do but especially proud of:

- preventing **203** households falling into homelessness
- securing **65** more bed spaces to help people steer away from rough sleeping
- buying **15** more properties for temporary accommodation so as few people as possible are placed outside of the district
- building **11** new bungalows for people with mobility problems
- planting **2,100** new trees and **20km** of new hedgerow
- creating **40** new allotments
- generating **12%** more Park and Ride journeys to reduce congestion and air pollution in the city
- seeing the benefits of the completion of the Canterbury Connected Levelling Up Fund project including wildflower meadows, new ways to promote the city's heritage and history while making it accessible to more people
- the creation, with the help of a whole host of people, of Town Centre Strategies for Canterbury, Herne Bay and Whitstable to provide a blueprint for economic growth and innovation

Of course, with any complex organisation such as ours, there is always room for improvement and this report does not shy away from that.

Honesty, openness and transparency are values dear to us all.

What the corporate plan, with its themes of Greener, Better, Fairer and Stronger, does alongside reporting on our progress is keep our shoulder on the wheel to make sure we continue to deliver high-quality services in a world that is constantly changing around us.

Over the next two years, that will be even more important as we head into local government reorganisation and the creation of unitary councils that deliver all council services for Kent.

While we wait to know how many there will be and the areas they will cover, we stand ready to help create those new councils

And our corporate plan and the Annual Impact Report will ensure we do not take our eye off the ball today while redesigning services so they can be the very best they can be for tomorrow.

Commitment 1
GREENER

Climate change and biodiversity emergencies are at the heart of this.



467

flytipping incidents investigated

SDGs 11, 15



5

open spaces planted with climate resilient plants

SDGs 11, 13, 15



20km

of hedge planting underway

SDGs 11, 13, 15



1 tonne

of carbon saved by switching to smarter fuel



2,100

trees planted net

SDGs 11, 13, 15

Partnership working/ community engagement



40

new allotments in Whitstable

SDGs 3,11,15

Deep dive

Delivering nature recovery across Canterbury district

During 2025/26, we continued to take practical action to help nature recover across the district through woodland management, habitat creation, urban greening projects and community-led environmental initiatives.

By combining large-scale environmental improvements with community action, we are helping to create a more connected, resilient and wildlife-rich landscape.

A major achievement was the completion of winter woodland management works at Curtis Wood and Larkey Valley Wood, two important council-managed sites.

Using traditional woodland management techniques such as selective thinning and coppicing, the work improved woodland health and created better conditions for wildlife.

Allowing more sunlight to reach the woodland floor encourages the growth of native plants and creates valuable habitat for insects, birds and small mammals.

At Curtis Wood, nearby residents were engaged before work began, helping build understanding of how active management supports biodiversity over the long term.

At Larkey Valley Wood, a nationally-important ancient woodland, ongoing management continues to protect species-rich habitats and support protected wildlife, including dormice.

Nature recovery has also been embedded within major regeneration projects through the Connected Canterbury programme.

At Dane John Gardens and along the historic city wall, new pollinator-friendly planting, wildflower meadows and additional trees have been introduced as part of wider public realm improvements.

These projects demonstrate how investment in public spaces can benefit both people and wildlife.

The new habitats provide food and shelter for bees, butterflies and other pollinating insects while creating greener and more attractive places for residents and visitors to enjoy.

We also began implementing the Canterbury Hedge Initiative, supporting the planting of new hedgerows and wildlife corridors across the district.

Hedgerows are one of the UK's most valuable habitats, providing food, nesting sites and safe routes for wildlife to move between habitats.

The initiative supports our wider Pollinator Action Plan and helps strengthen ecological connections across the landscape.

Recognising that successful nature recovery relies on community involvement, the council delivered the second round of its Biodiversity Grants Programme.

Funding was provided to local organisations and community groups for projects including wildlife gardens, pollinator planting, tree planting, pond restoration and habitats for birds and bats.

Importantly, funded projects are required to demonstrate how they will maintain and manage habitats in the long term, helping to ensure lasting environmental benefits.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate our commitment to protecting and enhancing nature.

By investing in habitat management, greener public spaces, wildlife corridors and community-led action, the council is helping to create a greener, healthier and more biodiverse district for future generations.

Bite size case studies – ambitions in action

Tackling Illegal waste activity through partnership working

During 2025/26, our Community Safety Unit worked with Kent Police, the Environment Agency, Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and local enforcement teams to tackle illegal waste activity and protect the environment.

Two joint operations targeted vehicles transporting waste in and around Canterbury.

Across both operations 91 vehicles were inspected, resulting in 44 enforcement actions for offences including overloaded vehicles, worn tyres and untaxed vehicles.

Officers also issued 43 notices requiring operators to provide waste documentation and licenses, while two vehicles were seized.

By working together, partner organisations have helped reduce illegal waste activity, improve road safety and protect the community.

The initiative demonstrates a shared commitment to creating a cleaner, safer and greener district while supporting legitimate businesses.

Reducing carbon emissions through smarter fleet fuel

During 2025/26, we worked with our council-owned waste contractor Canenco to take an important step towards reducing carbon emissions by introducing Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), a renewable alternative to diesel, for part of the council's waste collection fleet.

The new fuel was introduced to four garden waste collection vehicles providing an immediate way to reduce emissions while maintaining reliable frontline services.

Made from waste materials such as used cooking oil and other renewable sources, HVO can be used in existing diesel vehicles without any modifications.

The switch has delivered carbon savings of around one tonne of CO_2 per year, while also helping to improve air quality through cleaner vehicle emissions.

Importantly, the transition was completed without affecting vehicle performance, reliability or service delivery.

By adopting HVO, we are demonstrating how practical innovations can help reduce environmental impact while continuing to deliver essential services for residents.

Making cycling easier and greener

During 2025/26, we invested in new cycling infrastructure to make active travel safer, easier and more accessible.

Improvements included new road markings along 2km of key cycle routes, helping cyclists navigate the city more confidently, as well as additional cycle stands and secure lockers at convenient locations.

A major highlight was the launch of the Beryl Bike Hire Scheme, introducing 100 e-bikes and more than 20 parking bays across the city.

The scheme provides an affordable and flexible way for residents, commuters, students and visitors to travel around Canterbury without relying on a car.

Together, these improvements are helping to reduce congestion, improve air quality and support healthier, more sustainable travel choices across the city.

Creating our first net-zero council home

During 2025/26, we transformed the property known locally as the Elvis House at St Peter's Place into its first net-zero council social home.

The previously-vacant property was fully refurbished using modern energy-saving measures, including high-performance insulation, triple glazing, solar panels and an air source heat pump.

The project reduced the home's heating demand by 91%, making it far more energy efficient while creating a warmer, healthier and more comfortable living environment.

It also addressed common problems found in older homes, such as draughts, cold spots and condensation.

As a pilot project within the council's Climate Change Action Plan, the refurbishment demonstrates how older homes can be successfully modernised to reduce carbon emissions, lower energy costs and improve the quality of social housing.

Tackling flytipping and environmental crime

During 2025/26, we continued to take a strong stance against flytipping and keep public spaces clean.

Our Environmental Crime Team investigated 467 reports of flytipping, gathering evidence and taking action against those responsible.

The team's enforcement work led to a number of successful outcomes.

In one significant case, an offender received a 12-month community order, 100 hours of unpaid work and financial penalties totalling more than £7,600.

Additional cases remained under investigation at the end of the year, demonstrating the council's ongoing commitment to tackling environmental crime.

By pursuing offenders and taking enforcement action, the council is helping to deter illegal waste dumping, protect the environment and maintain cleaner, safer neighbourhoods for everyone.

Commitment 2 BETTER

More council housing, more apprenticeships, and more support for local organisations that run frontline services for our residents when we cannot.

£9.5 million

economic impact generated by the museums service

SDGs 4, 8, 11

£1 invested through our RISE Grants generated £8 of project spend

SDGs 8, 10, 11, 17

New wayfinding installed at

19

sites in Herne Bay

SDGs 9, 11

Secured £445,000 of Brownfield Land Release Funding and £1.672 million of Homes England grant to develop

11

adaptable bungalows

SDGs 3, 8, 10, 11

Filming across the district:

86 days

resulting in £259,000 impact

SDGs 8, 11, 17

Student volunteering enabled by us

4,566 hours

SDGs 4, 8, 17

Partnership working/ community engagement

Deep dive

Connected Canterbury – creating a more vibrant city centre

During 2025/26, we completed the Connected Canterbury programme, a major investment in the city centre designed to create a more attractive, accessible and vibrant place for residents, businesses and visitors.

Funded through the government's Levelling Up Fund, the programme was developed to support the long-term vitality of Canterbury city centre.

A key objective was to encourage people to spend more time in the city, explore a wider range of attractions and support businesses.

By improving links between key destinations and making it easier to discover hidden gems, the programme aims to increase footfall, extend visitor dwell time and strengthen Canterbury's appeal as a destination for both day trips and overnight stays.

The programme delivered improvements across nine locations including Dane John Gardens, Greyfriars Gardens, St Radigund's Garden, Three Cities Garden and the areas surrounding Canterbury Castle.

New story gardens, landscaping, planting, seating, pathways and interpretation have transformed these spaces into attractive destinations where people can relax, meet friends, enjoy events and connect with the city's rich heritage.

Improving accessibility was also a major focus.

Streets and public spaces were upgraded through measures such as widening footways, improving surfaces and removing unnecessary street clutter, making it easier for people of all ages and abilities to move around the city centre.

New wayfinding features, designed specifically for Canterbury, help residents and visitors navigate the city more confidently while encouraging exploration beyond the traditional visitor routes.

By creating stronger links between heritage attractions, public spaces, shopping areas and walking and cycling routes, the programme is helping people discover more of what Canterbury has to offer.

The improvements make it easier to move between destinations and encourage visitors to spend longer enjoying the city.

The programme has also enhanced Canterbury's ability to host events and activities throughout the year. Improved spaces at locations such as Dane John Gardens, Greyfriars Gardens and Westgate Square provide more opportunities for cultural events, family activities, performances and community gatherings, helping to animate the city centre and attract new audiences.

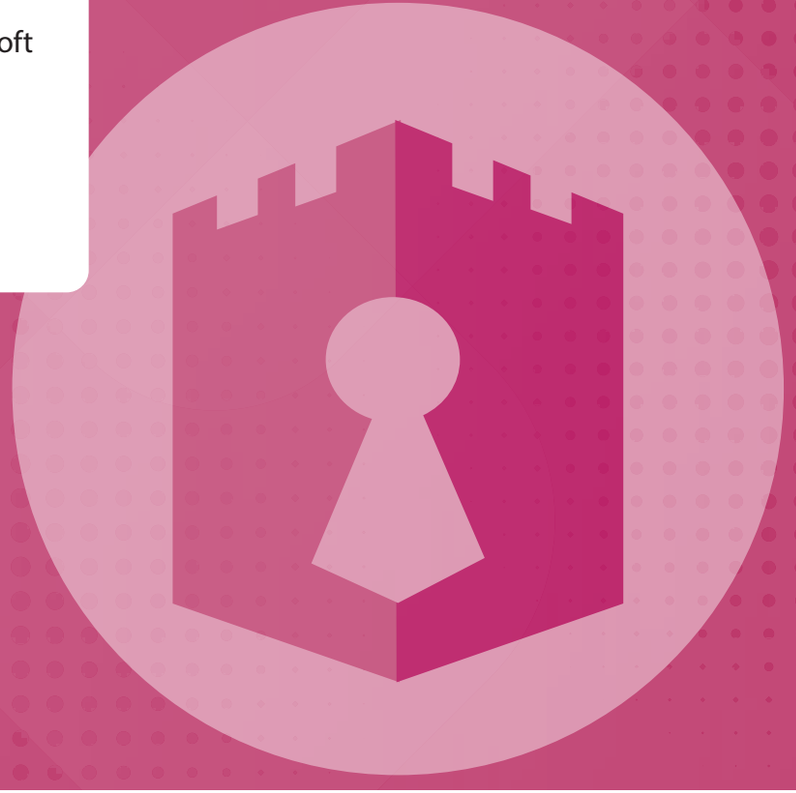
Alongside these social and economic benefits, Connected Canterbury has delivered significant environmental improvements.

New trees, planting and biodiversity enhancements are creating greener spaces, supporting wildlife and helping the city adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Together, these improvements are helping to increase pride in place, strengthen the local economy and create a city centre that is more connected, welcoming and enjoyable.

Connected Canterbury is not only enhancing the city's public spaces today but helping to secure Canterbury's future as a thriving place to live, work, visit and invest.

An online training resource called SEEDL was also made available to 135 businesses across the district with 150 individuals accessing training. A choice of more than 550 courses including sales, customer service, leadership, compliance, health and safety, mental wellness, business growth, upskilling and soft skills were available.



Bite size case studies

Shaping the future of our town centres

In 2026, we adopted new Town Centre Strategies for Canterbury, Whitstable and Herne Bay, setting out a shared vision for vibrant, sustainable and resilient town centres.

A key strength of the process was the extensive engagement with businesses, community groups and partner organisations.

Through workshops, meetings and ongoing discussions, stakeholders were given multiple opportunities to share ideas, provide feedback and help shape the emerging plans.

This collaborative approach ensured the strategies reflected local priorities while building stronger relationships between the council and the communities it serves.

By combining local knowledge with long-term planning, the strategies provide a clear framework for future investment, regeneration and improvements that will help town centres thrive.

Together, the plans create a strong foundation for attractive, prosperous and welcoming centres that support residents, businesses and visitors for years to come.

Bringing partners together to support investment

In May 2025, we hosted the Canterbury Hotel Summit, bringing together representatives from the hospitality, tourism, education and development sectors to explore opportunities for future investment in the district.

Delivered in partnership with Locate in Kent and paid for by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the event highlighted Canterbury's strengths as a visitor destination, including its rich heritage, vibrant economy and strong transport links.

Discussions focused on growing hotel capacity, supporting regeneration and creating jobs.

The summit also helped strengthen partnerships between public and private sector organisations, encouraging collaboration on future developments.

By promoting investment and supporting the visitor economy, the event marked an important step in helping Canterbury remain an attractive destination for both leisure and business visitors.

Supporting community organisations through the Canterbury Community Lottery

During 2025/26, we supported the launch of the Canterbury Community Lottery, creating a new way for charities, community groups and social enterprises to raise money for their work.

Delivered by Social Enterprise Kent in partnership with Gatherwell, the lottery helps organisations generate unrestricted income, reducing reliance on increasingly competitive grant funding.

For every ticket sold, 60% goes directly to good causes, with further funding supporting wider community projects.

Interest in the scheme has been strong, with 82 representatives attending the launch and training event.

Since then, 56 local organisations have signed up as good causes, already exceeding initial expectations.

In its early stages, the lottery sold 159 tickets and raised more than £1,700 for community organisations.

By providing a sustainable source of funding, the lottery is helping local organisations continue delivering vital services and support to residents across the district.

Securing the future of Whitstable Museum

During 2025/26, we transferred ownership of Foresters Hall to the Whitstable Community Museum Trust, helping secure the long-term future of one of the town's most important heritage buildings.

The transfer enabled the trust to access major grant funding for essential restoration work including roof repairs, damp treatment, insulation improvements, restoration of historic features and the addition of an accessible visitor toilet.

By placing the building in the hands of the charitable trust, the council has helped strengthen the museum's long-term sustainability and ability to attract future funding.

The project will protect the historic building and its nationally significant collections, while improving accessibility and enhancing the visitor experience for residents and tourists alike.

Strengthening community partnerships through the RISE grants programme

During 2025/26, we strengthened its partnership with the voluntary sector through the RISE Grants Programme, helping organisations deliver services and support communities across the district.

Three engagement events brought together 136 representatives from community, cultural and sports organisations, creating opportunities for networking, collaboration and shared learning.

Feedback from these events helped shape funding priorities and ensure investment reflected local needs.

Across two funding rounds, 19 projects received funding, including several organisations accessing the programme for the first time.

Together, these projects engaged more than 42,000 residents and generated over 44,000 volunteer hours.

The programme demonstrates how targeted investment and strong partnerships can help community organisations deliver valuable services, strengthen local resilience and improve the lives of residents across the district.

Supporting young people through sport and activity

During 2025/26, we supported a range of low-cost and free sports programmes that helped children and young people become more active, build confidence and improve their wellbeing.

Through Sport Connect and partner organisations, more than 225 children, young people and adults took part in inclusive sporting activities.

Sport Connect alone engaged 112 young people through sports sessions and mentoring, helping participants develop skills, confidence and positive relationships.

Several young people progressed into volunteering and coaching roles.

Additional projects included free activities delivered by Canterbury City Football Club, a pan-disability football programme run by Tankerton Football Club and the launch of Canterbury Junior Parkrun.

Together, these initiatives helped remove barriers to participation, promote healthy lifestyles and create opportunities for people to connect, learn new skills and thrive.

Commitment 3
FAIRER

We can play a big role in supporting services and people most in need.

B&B >6 weeks: 0 (target met)

203

households where homelessness was prevented

SDGs 1, 10, 11

65

supported housing bed spaces secured to help people move away from rough sleeping

SDGs 1, 3, 10, 11, 16

15

properties purchased for temporary accommodation

SDGs 1, 10, 11

805

food parcels funded

SDGs 1, 2, 3

382

households supported by Housing Support Fund grants

SDGs 1, 10,11

Partnership working/ community engagement

Deep dive

Helping residents build safe, stable homes

During 2025/26, we delivered the seventh round of the Household Support Fund (HSF7), providing practical support to residents facing financial hardship and helping some of the district's most vulnerable households create safe, stable and comfortable homes.

Since the fund was first introduced, the council has used it to support residents struggling with the rising cost of living.

However, HSF7 took a different approach.

Rather than focusing primarily on small cash grants, the council recognised that many people were facing longer-term challenges that could not be solved through short-term financial help alone.

Residents moving into unfurnished accommodation, recovering from homelessness, escaping domestic abuse, managing health conditions or raising children on low incomes often lacked essential household items needed to live safely and independently.

To address this, HSF7 focused on providing practical support with items including carpets, white goods, children's beds and furniture.

Referrals were made through trusted partners such as housing officers, social workers, schools, charities and community organisations, helping to ensure support reached those most in need.

The council also worked with a number of businesses to deliver the programme, supporting the local economy while meeting residents' needs.

Demand for the scheme was exceptionally high.

Between July and December 2025, the council accepted 382 referrals and awarded £289,903 of support to households across the district, with an average award of £761 per household.

Demand was so strong that referrals had to close several months before the programme officially ended.

A significant proportion of funding was invested in improving homes.

The scheme provided more than £136,000 worth of carpets for 173 households, helping residents improve warmth, comfort and energy efficiency in their properties.

More than £105,000 was spent on white goods, benefiting 266 households and providing 424 essential appliances, including washing machines, cookers and fridge freezers.

Additional funding supported children's beds and furniture, ensuring families had access to the basic items many people take for granted.

The impact extended far beyond the financial value of the support.

Many recipients were starting again after difficult life events.

Some had moved into empty properties with bare concrete floors and no appliances. Others were rebuilding their lives after homelessness, illness or domestic abuse.

One resident described receiving carpets, a cooker and a washing machine as the moment they finally had "a home, not a shell".

Another explained that the support enabled them to furnish a new home after leaving an abusive relationship, reducing the stress and uncertainty of starting over.

Families reported improvements in wellbeing and comfort, while parents highlighted the positive difference made by providing children with their own beds and suitable living spaces.

Feedback from participants demonstrated the lasting value of the programme.

A total of 90% of respondents said the support would make a difference to their household for a year or more.

Many reported that without the fund they would have gone without essential items, taken on debt or relied on unsuitable second-hand alternatives.

By focusing on practical support that delivers long-term benefits, we maximised the impact of the Household Support Fund.

The programme not only helped households meet immediate needs but also improved wellbeing, stability and resilience, helping hundreds of residents build safer, warmer and more secure futures.



Bite size case studies – ambitions in action

Improving play opportunities at Hampton

We completed a £123,000 refurbishment of Hampton Play Area in Herne Bay, creating a more modern and inclusive space for families.

The project retained popular features, including the play ship, swings and rotating rocker, while introducing new equipment to encourage active play, exploration and social interaction.

The basketball area was also refreshed with new line markings, improving opportunities for informal sport and recreation.

Completed ahead of the summer season, the upgraded play area provides a welcoming and engaging space for children and families to enjoy.

The investment supports health and wellbeing, encourages outdoor activity and helps ensure residents can make the most of high-quality green spaces.

Working together for a healthier Heron ward

The Heron Neighbourhood Team was established in 2024 to bring together local organisations, including the NHS, councils, Kent Police, schools, social care services and community groups, to improve health and wellbeing in Heron ward in Herne Bay.

The partnership focuses on reducing loneliness and supporting the mental health of young people.

Since its launch, it has secured £110,000 of external funding, including support for community projects and funding from the National Lottery Community Power Fund.

The team has supported projects that strengthen community connections and improve wellbeing, while five community researchers are helping gather residents' views and shape solutions to local issues.

Its success has been recognised with a Healthwatch Award for Excellence in Integrated Working at a Local Level, highlighting the positive impact of partnership working within the community.

Protecting green spaces for growing communities

As new homes are built across the district, we are helping to ensure residents have access to high-quality parks, play areas and natural spaces close to where they live.

To support this, the council adopted a new Open Space Strategy setting clear standards for the amount, quality and accessibility of green spaces provided through new developments.

The strategy maintains the requirement for developers to provide eight hectares of open space for every 1,000 new homes built.

This helps ensure growing communities benefit from a range of outdoor spaces, including parks, children's play areas, allotments and nature reserves.

By protecting these standards, we are helping to create healthier, greener and more sustainable neighbourhoods where people can enjoy recreation, nature and community life for years to come.

Reducing out of area temporary accommodation placements

During 2025/26, we made significant progress in reducing the cost of temporary accommodation while continuing to support residents facing homelessness.

The council increased the number of temporary accommodation properties it owns and manages by buying 15 additional homes and developing a pipeline of further properties.

This has reduced reliance on more expensive out of area temporary accommodation.

Using council-owned stock enables the council to provide a temporary home within the district for households in need.

As a result, 96 households were able to stay in the district and maintain their support networks and access to services.

By investing in its own temporary accommodation stock, the council is creating a more sustainable approach to homelessness support, helping vulnerable residents while reducing long-term costs.

Commitment 4 STRONGER

Our council will be inclusive and give the best value services to all our residents.

387,109

visitors to our museums

SDGs 4, 11

622,336

park and ride journeys made (+12%)

SDGs 9,11,13

Green space equivalent to

112

tennis courts improved by the Connected Canterbury project

SDGs 3,11,15

Equivalent to

31

tennis courts of other public realm improved the Connected Canterbury project

SDGs 9,11

989

planning decisions made

SDGs 9,11

Partnership working/ community engagement



10,973

young people engaged in museums activities

SDGs 4, 10, 11

Deep dive

The Beaney: connecting communities through culture and wellbeing

The Beaney continued to demonstrate how museums can be powerful community assets, supporting wellbeing, inclusion, learning and social connection.

Through exhibitions, partnerships and creative wellbeing programmes, the museum placed people and community participation at the heart of its work.

The Beaney welcomed significant audiences throughout the year, with more than 51,000 visits to exhibitions in the Special Exhibition Gallery and more than 115,000 visits to exhibitions in the Front Room Gallery. Community involvement was central to the exhibition programme, ensuring local voices and experiences helped shape the stories being told.

Organisations such as the Kent Refugee Action Network worked alongside the museum to contribute perspectives and interpretation, creating exhibitions reflecting the diversity of the district's communities and encouraged meaningful conversations.

Partnerships continued to play a vital role in extending the museum's impact beyond its walls.

The Be Connected Network helped influence exhibition planning and decision-making, while collaborations with organisations including Kent and Medway Mental Health Trust, Pilgrims Hospices, Strode Park Foundation, schools and the Ukrainian Scout Group enabled The Beaney to reach new audiences and deliver activities in a wide range of settings.

One innovative development was the introduction of Touch and Talk handling boxes, allowing people in healthcare and community settings to engage with museum collections through touch, conversation and reminiscence.

The initiative generated positive feedback from participants, helping to support wellbeing, stimulate memories and encourage social interaction.

Schools participating in wellbeing activities also reported increased engagement and enthusiasm among pupils, including children who had never previously visited a museum.

Accessibility remained a major priority.

During the year, The Beaney introduced and expanded a range of inclusive resources, including sensory trails, SEND backpacks, large-print interpretation, symbol-based information and enhanced audio descriptions.

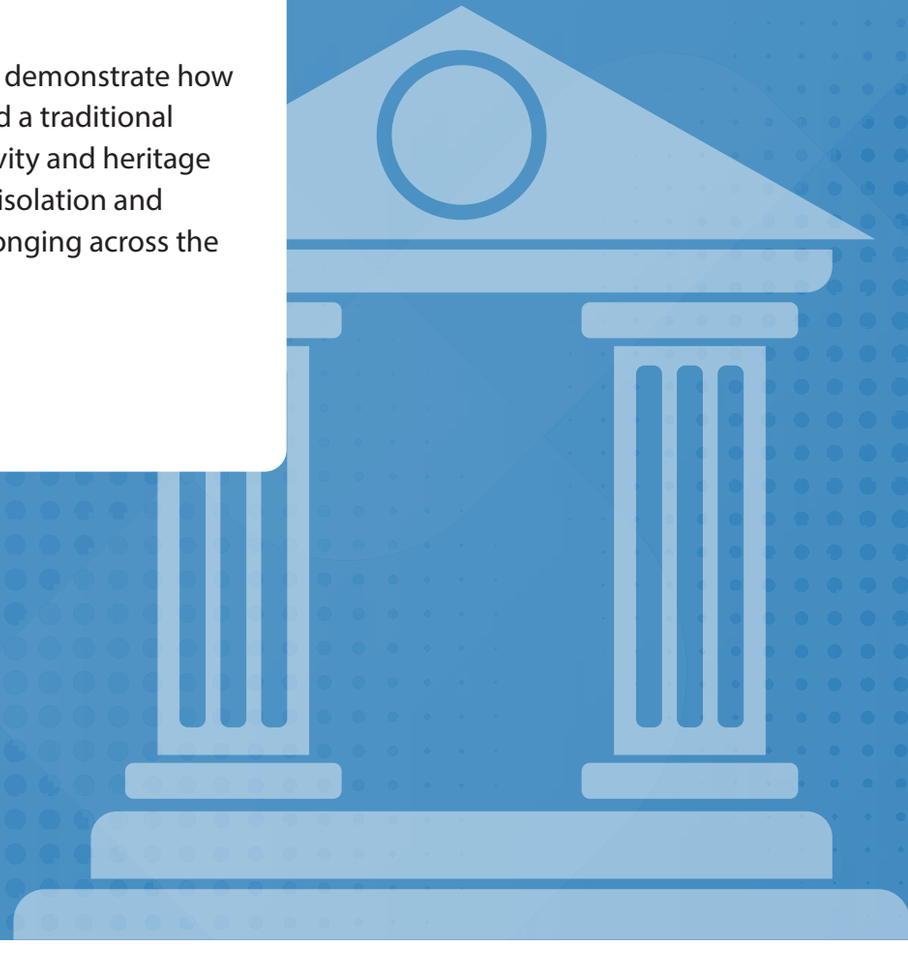
These improvements helped ensure that visitors of all ages and abilities could participate fully and enjoy the museum in ways that met their individual needs.

The museum's achievements in this area were recognised through a nomination for the Kids in Museums Best Accessible Museum Award and a shortlist place in the Kent Dementia Friendly Awards.

Some of the strongest evidence of impact came from the museum's wellbeing programmes. Initiatives such as Sounds Beaney, Sensing Culture and Power of the Object brought people together through creativity, learning and shared experiences.

Participants reported increased confidence, improved wellbeing and stronger social connections, with many describing the groups as welcoming communities where lasting friendships had been formed.

Together, these achievements demonstrate how The Beaney is evolving beyond a traditional museum, using culture, creativity and heritage to improve wellbeing, reduce isolation and create a stronger sense of belonging across the district.



Bite size case studies – ambitions in action

Making better use of parking and Park and Ride

During 2025/26, we continued to encourage greater use of Park and Ride services while reducing pressure on city centre parking.

Through a combination of pricing measures and the introduction of Park and Ride permits for district residents, we have helped make sustainable travel options more attractive and accessible.

The approach delivered encouraging results, with Park and Ride usage increasing while city centre parking demand reduced.

Importantly, this change took place without a decline in city centre activity, with footfall remaining strong throughout the year.

By making better use of existing transport infrastructure and encouraging drivers to switch to Park and Ride, we are helping to manage congestion, improve access to the city centre and deliver better value from its transport network.

The initiative demonstrates how targeted investment and service improvements can support both residents and the economy.

Purple Flag accreditation retained

Canterbury has successfully retained its Purple Flag accreditation, recognising the city as a safe, welcoming and vibrant place to enjoy after dark.

The internationally-recognised award celebrates towns and cities that provide a strong evening and night-time experience, combining culture, entertainment, hospitality and community safety.

The achievement reflects close partnership working between us and Canterbury BID, Kent Police, the universities, businesses and community organisations.

Initiatives including District Watch, Street Pastors, Safe Havens, Best Bar None and Zero Tolerance training have helped create a safer and more welcoming city centre.

Retaining Purple Flag status strengthens Canterbury's reputation as a leading destination for residents, students and visitors, while supporting businesses and community wellbeing.

Give it a Go! Inspires young people through sport

In July 2025, we worked with Kent Police and partners from the Purple Partnership to deliver the successful Give it a Go! event at Canterbury Rugby Club, welcoming more than 800 children and young people.

The free event offered the chance to try a wide range of activities, including rugby, football, boxing, cricket, judo, wheelchair rugby and combat archery.

Families could also access advice and support from emergency services, health organisations and community partners.

Accessibility was a key priority, with a dedicated quiet zone for children and young people with SEND and free transport to help remove barriers to participation.

By introducing young people to new activities and opportunities, the event promoted physical activity, confidence, wellbeing and community engagement in a fun and inclusive environment.

Restoring Herne Bay's iconic bandstand

Significant progress was made in restoring Herne Bay's historic bandstand, an important landmark on the town's seafront.

Supported by a £650,000 investment, the first phase of refurbishment included a new glazed roof, extensive timber repairs, restoration of the iconic bandstand signage, and improvements to the building's exterior.

The former restaurant unit was also fully refurbished and brought back into use, helping to support the site's long-term future.

A major milestone was the appointment of local operator Makcari's to run the refurbished unit, enhancing the visitor experience and supporting community use.

With the first phase now complete, the bandstand has been revitalised and safeguarded for future generations.

Further work will enable the performance area to reopen, restoring the venue as a focal point for events, entertainment and community life.

Tackling serious and organised crime by working together

During 2025/26, we worked with our partners to tackle serious and organised crime through regular multi agency meetings that share intelligence and coordinate action.

This joined-up approach has helped disrupt and close more than four organised crime groups linked to issues such as drug-related activity, exploitation and problematic housing.

By combining the powers, expertise and intelligence of different agencies, partners have been able to identify criminal activity more effectively and provide support to people at risk of harm.

The collaborative approach has strengthened safeguarding, reduced crime and improved community safety across the district.

It demonstrates how organisations can achieve better outcomes by working together to protect residents and create safer communities.

Reported elsewhere

The following performance information is also published by the council in other ways:

Scrutiny Committee
One of the important activities of this committee is to consider performance information regarding the services provided by the council and its companies. A rolling programme of themed meetings enables a deeper dive into a topic area. Details can be found on each of its agendas for its regular meetings. In its capacity as the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee it receives an annual report on the delivery of the Community Safety Action Plan.

Audit Committee
A range or performance reporting is considered by the Audit Committee this includes the Annual Governance Statement, the opinion of the external auditor, Grant Thornton on the financial and governance arrangements, and the Quarterly Internal Audit report which is undertaken by the East Kent Audit Partnership on the council's behalf. Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman is provided, together with Kent-wide comparison figures.

Companies Advisory Committee
The committee receives six monthly reports on the activities of Council owned companies. This includes the annual business plan and an update on the corporate health of the company including commentary on finance, compliance, quality assurance and risk management.

Cabinet
In addition to the annual reports, Cabinet receives six monthly updates on contract performance, housing performance and financial monitoring.

Standards Committee
The committee receives an Annual Ethical Governance statement providing updates on code of conduct complaints and councillor training/briefing information.

Whitstable Harbour Board
An annual report summarising the complaint numbers submitted to the Local Government The Board receives updates on the strategic and business plan delivery and financial monitoring.



Committee reports can be accessed at **democracy.canterbury.gov.uk**

UN Sustainable Development Goals

un.org/sustainabledevelopment



Appendix 4: Draft outturn tables for inclusion in the Annual Impact Report 2025/26

These draft outturns will be updated following any changes approved by Cabinet and combined into the report with the infographics and case studies.

Trend over given years

The trend over given years will be indicated by arrows in the final tables before the final version of the report is published on the council's website following the Cabinet meeting. They will be published along with the following key to arrow colours:

- Black = Trend only
- Red = Performance is below target and static or declining
- Amber = Performance is below target but improving, or is meeting target but showing a declining trend
- Green = Improving or sustaining performance at or above target

Target changes since Scrutiny 2 September 2026

Some of the targets had been erroneously changed since they were adopted in January 2026. They have been reverted back, as shown by the tracked changes here and in some cases recommended changes have been proposed in the main report

Further changes following this draft of the outturns will be made if the recommendations set out in the report are approved.

Corporate Plan Theme Greener Key Performance Indicator Outturns

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
Recycling										
G1	Percentage of total household waste sent for recycling, compost or reuse	% of waste recycled	44.90%	45.72%	41.1%*	43.0%	Data available March 2027	Red Down	This includes food and garden waste. The 2025/26 figures are not yet available as they are published a year in arrears as information is needed from the processors of the waste. Early raw unverified data has the current year years outturn at 44.85% bring performance much closer to the target. Long-term trends are likely to be affected by factors outside of the council's control. For example, the weight of packaging has been reducing. *Recycling rates were in 2023/24 affected by the nine-week strike in summer of 2023 where only some garden waste collections were undertaken and no other recycling.	11,12, 13,15, 17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
G2	Percentage of total household waste that is collected separately as food waste	Increase		4.94%	3.41%	3.82%	Not yet published	Red Down	Our 2024/25 performance is above the average (the mean) for all English authorities at 2.90%. Communal food waste collection was introduced in April this year so an upward trend is forecast for 2026/27.	2,11,12,13
Open space quality										
G3	Number of open spaces awarded with high environmental standard (coastal awards and green and blue flags)	Increase	6	6	6	5	5	Static amber	Green flag sites: Gorrell Valley, Westgate Gardens, Reculver A combined Blue Flag and Seaside Award at Tankerton and a Seaside Award (designated bathing) at Herne Bay Central. From 2024, a decision was made to no longer apply for the Seaside Award (non-bathing) for Reculver as the Green flag status covers the same criteria and it isn't cost effective to also apply for this award.	3,6,11,12,13,14,15,17
G4	Net increase in number of trees in the district (CCC planted minus CCC removed)	Increase	Data not held	990	2,097	1,609	2,100	Upward green	Main tree locations: Plough lane Whitstable skatepark, Radfall Gorrell Valley	3,11,13,15,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
G5	Number of successful prosecutions in relation to flytipping and illegal waste carrying	Trend for monitoring only	Data not held	8	11	7	9	Static black	The Environmental Crime Team secured 9 successful prosecutions for flytipping and waste-related offences during 2025/26, with a further 3 cases awaiting court. Outcomes included significant financial penalties totalling £7,647 and a 12-month community order with 100 hours of unpaid work.	11,12, 15,16, 17
G6	Total emissions footprint for Canterbury City Council (tCO2e) (as defined in the Green House Gas Emissions report)	Less than the previous reporting year	Data not held	Data not held	3,242	Data not held	3,662	Upward Red	The 2025/6 figure is new preliminary data. * We have rebaselined the CCC carbon footprint and this updates and replaces the analysis undertaken in 2023. The work is ongoing and will be made publicly available in due course. While emissions appear to be higher than the 2023 report, there has been a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of circa 25% against the 2019 to 2020 baseline. The Council issued its Net Zero and Adaptation Action Plan Net Zero and Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan in April 2026 and is committed to the twin goals of reaching Net Zero emissions and building resilience to the effects of climate change.	3,7,9,11,12,13,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
G7	Number of council homes where EPC rating has been improved to at least a C rating	Minimum 818 properties by October 2028. Annual profile to be set	* Not applicable	* Not applicable	* Not applicable	* Not applicable	0	Not enough data	* This KPI relates to improvements under the Warm Homes funding which started in 2025/26 Our approach to achieving EPC C is fabric first which prioritises improvements to the thermal efficiency of our properties such as new windows and doors, loft insulation, thermostatic values on radiators. As part of these works, selected homes are assessed at the beginning to confirm their EPC status and then at the end of the project to confirm EPC C has been achieved through the measures proposed at the start. This ordering means that a great deal of activity will have taken place before the outturn reflects the progress. There are a number of stages to the project ensure grant funding is received and to achieve the necessary accreditation.	7,10,11,13
G8	Number of reports of internal flooding due	Zero	0	0	0	0	0	Static green	No reports of internal flooding to date in 25/26 (excludes surface water run-off flooding) Nailbourne flow now likely mid February	3,6,9,11,13,15,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
	to coastal or fluvial flood events									
G9	Number of cycling journeys	Trend for monitoring only	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Not enough data	No data available currently. Funding for multi-modal traffic sensors was approved by Cabinet within the CIL Action Plan. The transportation team will look to procure and install sensors within the next 12 months and baseline data will be available 12 months after installation.	3,9,11, 12,13
G10	Train passenger entry and exit at all stations in the district.	Trend for monitoring	4,080,896	4,827,356	5,369,510	5,992,732	6,252,932	Upward	Main journeys were: • Canterbury West and Whitstable to/from St Pancras • Canterbury East, Herne Bay and Chestfield and Swalecliffe to/from Faversham. • Sturry, Chartham, to/from Canterbury West • Bekesbourne and Adisham to/from Canterbury East Canterbury West 2.8m (up from 2.7m last year).	3,9,11, 12,13

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
									Canterbury East 1.2m. Whitstable 958,304 (up 82,304) Herne Bay 865,304 (up 31,304) Figures can be found here Estimates of station usage | ORR Data Portal	
G11	Increasing park and ride usage - Transport strategy	10% per annum over the life of the strategy	297%	18.90%	7.10%	10.65%	12%	Upward green	12% increase from 24/25: 1.95 passengers per vehicle on average and 622,336 return journeys	3,9,11, 12,13
G12	Parking acts - park and ride	Trend for monitoring only	176,031	209,313	224,212	284,107	318,323	Upward	12% increase from 2024/25.	3,9,11, 12,13
G13	Parking acts (off street + Park & Ride)	Increase	2,224,203	2,317,957	2,669,772	2,640,479	2,505,990	Downward	Park and Ride usage is increasing year on year while city centre parking acts are gradually decreasing in line with the strategy. Coastal parking acts are heavily influenced by weather in the summer months but remain fairly consistent.	3,9,11, 12,13

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
G14	City centre car parking acts	Trend for monitoring only	1,258,327	1,328,901	1,351,907	1,337,250	1,246,925	Downward	There was a 6.75% decrease. There is no specified target but the policy objective in Canterbury is to gradually redistribute parking from city centre car parks to Park and Ride sites. Footfall figures show 1.2% increase demonstrating people are choosing to travel into the city by more sustainable modes	3,9,11, 12,13
G15	Number of parking permits (all)	Increase	Data not held	10,941*	10,937*	14,982*	14,679	Static amber	The modest fall off from last year will be the reaction to various discounts issued two years ago where the initial requirements have peaked and now settled to a more normal requirement. * There are relatively minor numerical differences (66 in 22/23, 62 in 23/24, 44 in 24/25) to the numbers reported last year. That is down to the way figures have been extracted and counted.	3,9,11, 12,13

Corporate Plan Theme Better Key Performance Indicator Outturns

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
Housing supply										
B1	Net additional dwellings in the district	Trend for monitoring	785	693	767	1,232	Available in the winter	Upward	Data is usually available in November each year but has not been published yet this year. The target for 2025/26 LHN target is 1,215 per year. The Local Housing Need target (LHN) for 2026/27 is 1,199. The 2024/25 figures includes 140 older persons and student accommodation.	11
B2	Number of council housing properties purchased and built, including temporary accommodation	Trend for monitoring only	38	5	18*	76*	14	Upwards	* These figures have been updated since the 2024/25 report was published to include homes delivered with funding streams such as the Local Authority Housing Fund. In 2025/26 all 14 properties were purchased and were for temporary accommodation, see KPI B4. There had been negotiations for s106 properties at Blean but we were outbid by a profit making entity. We are still in the running for the final phase	1, 11

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
									of another s106 scheme which should be completed in about two years. There has also been a lot of preparatory work undertaken on the HRA sites at Warwick Road and East Street as well as the affordable housing at Beach Street Phase 2.	
B3	Council home new builds started on site	85% of those agreed in the capital programme	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	0	First year of new measure	No new builds were planned in the capital programme for last financial year or for the current year.	11
B4	Number of temporary accommodation homes purchased	20 per year from 2024/25 onwards	0	0	7	0	14	Upward Amber	The outturn has been recalibrated since they were last published to make sure we have a standard approach to which year a purchase fails in. The target has not been met, but the outturn has improved from previous years. A total of 14 properties have been purchased, three are pending completion and two are approved for purchasing. A business plan has been approved for a further 10.	1, 11

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
Financial support for projects to the community benefit run by other organisations										
B5	Return on Investment: Total value of projects supported by RISE Grants	Trend for monitoring only	1:3	1:7	1:2	1:4	1:8	Upward	Number of organisations supported: 2024/25 - 39 2023/24 - 24 2022/23 - 29 2021/22 - 44	8, 11, 17

Corporate Plan Theme Fairer Key Performance Indicator Outturns

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
Services for council housing tenants										
F1	Percentage of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	100% of stock is surveyed every 5 years	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	16%	First year of recording new measure	The decency rate we are reporting to government and the regulator is 84%. The next step is to work up plans to bring all homes up the decent standard including timescales, budget and resource. We are aiming to have this done by October following completion of all the stock conditions surveys and analysis of the data.	1,3,6,7,10,11,13

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
F2	Number of major and minor adaptations to council housing properties	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	184 (minor) and 59 (major)	115	Downward	The number of adaptations completed during 2025/26 was lower than in previous years; however, this should not be viewed in isolation as a reduction in performance. The service is increasingly delivering more complex major adaptations, which require greater levels of design work, approvals and construction activity. In addition, there was a short delay at the start of the year associated with the mobilisation of a new contractor. Despite this, the service continued to deliver adaptations that enable residents to remain safe, independent and living in their own homes.	1,3,9,10, 11,17
F3	Time taken to deliver adaptations to council housing properties - minor adaptions	Will be set after baseline year		Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	First year of recording new measure	Historic data on adaptation completion times is not available. We recognise the importance of these measures and will continue to develop the reporting framework during 2026/27. Once there is sufficient confidence in the quality and consistency of the data, baseline performance will be established, and appropriate targets will be proposed.	1,3,9,10, 11,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
F4	Time taken to deliver adaptations to council housing properties - major adaptions	Will be set after baseline year		Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	First year of recording new measure	As above	1,3,9,10, 11,18
F5	Number of people who have been supported by the tenancy sustainment team	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	92	37	Downward	We are reviewing the sustainment service as most support is now offered through Neighbourhood Managers rather than the support service.	1,3,10,1 1,17
F6	Number of evictions prevented by the tenancy sustainment team	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	1	First year of recording new measure	It's not clear that this information is being adequately reported through the year as it is difficult to measure and does not reflect the early intervention work. We are reviewing the sustainment service now as most support is offered through Neighbourhood Managers rather than the support service, so not recorded here.	1,3,10,1 1,17
Management of the housing waiting list										
F7	Average number of days to relet all properties including major works	This year is the baseline year	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	141	First year of recording new measure	The high figure is due to a backlog. For properties that have become vacant in year, the average days to let is 82 demonstrating an improvement since processes were streamlined.	1,3,10,1 1,12,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
F8	Total households on the Council housing waiting list	Trend for monitoring	2,809	2,809	1,254*	1,356	1,375	Downward	* Data from 2023/24 is not a reliable figure, as it was not reported that year in the usual way.	1,3,10,11,17
F9	Number of households re-housed per year	Trend for monitoring	113	112	Data not held	225	527	Upward		1,3,10,11,17
Homeslessness										
F10	Number of homelessness approaches made to the council	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	1,917	2,094	Data not held*	1,710	First year of recording new measure	*Data not held for 2024/25 but there were 1,848 homelessness assessments made for that period these so the figure would be above that. Some of the historic data is missing, for context from old reports we can see the yearly average for number of approaches between 2013/14-2016/17 was 1,115. We generally do not have confidence in the old figures being directly comparable with the current year as its unclear how they were generated as systems do not align for historic years.	1,3,5,10,11,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
F11	Number of households where homelessness was prevented	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	Data not held	81	58*	203	Upward	Prevention workshop has taken place and staff are recording preventions correctly. We are looking at options for discharge into the private sector and staff have been given additional options for prevention. Significant increase from last year where there were a total of 58 preventions for the year and for 2023/24 there were 81. *Some of the data from 2024/25 is missing.	1,3,10,11,17
F12	Number of people sleeping rough on a single night	Trend for monitoring	18	22	33	31	29	Downward	Annual rough sleeping snapshot: Canterbury recorded 29 people sleeping rough on a single night in Autumn 2025. While this represents a point-in-time estimate rather than everyone who experiences rough sleeping during the year, it highlights the continued demand for outreach, accommodation and support services. The council continues to work closely with partners through the Rough Sleeping Initiative to help people move away from rough sleeping and into sustainable accommodation.	1,3,5,10,11,16,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
F13	Number of people sleeping rough over the month who are long term (average)	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	Data not held	18*	29	26		The average number of people recorded in a month who were considered long-term during 2025/26 was 26, this compares with an average of 39 when we consider all types of rough sleepers that were recorded during the same period. A long-term rough sleeper is somebody seen within the reporting month who has been seen sleeping rough in 3 or more months out of the last 12 months. * The outturn for 2023/24 is taken from May-Mar only.	1,3,5,10, 11,16,17
Use of Temporary Accommodation										
F14	Number of families housed in bed and breakfast for more than six week	Trend for monitoring	0	1	1	0	0	Static - green	No families in bed and breakfast for more than six weeks in 2025/26. B&B for families is only used in exceptional circumstances.	1,3,5,10, 11,17
F15	Number of statutory homeless households in temporary accommodation - per 1,000 of population of district	Trend for monitoring		2.09	1.8	2.53	Figure not yet available	Upward	Total numbers increased over Christmas/New Year period to more than 200 but has decreased to 177. The increase was due to a number of reasons including notices from landlords due to the	1,3,4,5,10,11,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
									implementation of the Renters Rights Act and Care leavers turning 18 on 01/01/2026. Figure usually available in late November – December each year.	
F16	Total number of households with children in temporary accommodation	Trend for monitoring		70	48	66	Figure not yet available	Static	Figure usually available in late November – December each year.	1,3,4,5,10,11,17
F17	Temporary accommodation out of area placements - Percentage per capita	Trend for monitoring		60%	60%	58%	56%	Downward	The trend is slowly improving. The outturn would have been slightly better but an increase in demand affected the last quarter of the year. (see F15 narrative). Most placements are single people or families with a need to be out of area.	1,3,4,5,10,11,17
Financial hardship support										
F18	Number of people supported by Money and Benefits Team	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	1,212	First year of recording new measure	The Money and Benefits Team help people maximise their income, access welfare benefits and improve their financial resilience. They provided tailored advice and practical support to some of the district's most vulnerable households, securing additional income, reducing financial hardship and	1,3,5,10,11,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
									helping residents maintain their independence. This support played an important role in preventing crisis, sustaining tenancies and improving wellbeing across the community.	
F19	Total amount of additional income that the Money and Benefits Team helped tenants to claim	Trend for monitoring only	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	£182,375	First year of recording new measure	During 2025/26, the Money and Benefits Team helped residents access vital financial support, securing £182,375 in additional income and providing tailored advice to 1,212 residents. This support helped households maximise their income, reduce financial hardship and maintain their independence, contributing to stronger and more resilient communities.	1,3,5,10, 11,17
F20	Number of households assisted by hardship funds including council tax support, Housing Support funds and food parcels	Trend for monitoring only		9,552 council tax support only	12,374	12,161	11,022	Static	Council Tax support fund supported 9,835 households and the council paid for 805 food parcels in 2025/26. Though the Housing Support Fund did not give any cash grants to households, during 25/26 it supported a total of 382 households with items including flooring, white goods and furniture.	1,3,5,10, 11,17
Play and sports provision										

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability Narrative	SDG REF
F21	Number of new or improved play areas	Increase	Data not held	2	6	2	1	Downward - red	This figure will naturally fluctuate with funding and resources available. Improvement is a broad term. In some cases, the improvements may be modest but completed in more areas and at other times the improvements will be more significant such as Hamption in 2025/26 and so fewer can be completed. More details about improvements at Hampton can be seen in the case studies section.	3,4,5,10, 11,13,17
F22	Number of new or improved community sports facilities	Average of 2 per year	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	3	3	Static - green	One at Westmead and two at Herne Bay Memorial Park. The national target is two set per annum, but our target is to be reviewed in the 2026 Play Pitch Strategy.	3,4,5,9,1 0,11,17

Corporate Plan Theme Stronger Key Performance Indicator Outturns

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
Customer Experience										
S1	Customer wait time (telephone) - PartnershipOne (customer services, council tax & business rate collection)	Annual average of no more than 233 seconds	PartnershipOne began operating in 2024/25			170 seconds	211 seconds	Upward - Amber	The 2025/26 performance was in target but performance was worse than the previous year. The outturn was affected by the implementation of the new Revenues and Benefits IT system during the year and waste collection issues at a neighbouring council.	9,10,16
S2	Customer satisfaction score PartnershipOne (customer services, council tax & business rate collection)	96%	PartnershipOne began operating in 2024/25			98.80%	98.21%	Static - green	The target has been exceeded again this year.	9,10,16
S3	Percentage of stage 1 complaints fully responded to within 10 working days	Increase	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	59.50%	67.50%	Upward - green	Complaints were centralised during 2024/25. In the autumn of 2025, a new system was implemented for logging and monitoring complaints.	3,11,16

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
									The indications from the first few months of 2026/27 are that 90% are being dealt with in time.	
S4	Percentage of stage 1 complaints becoming stage 2	Decrease	Data not held	*18.5%**	*13.4%**	29.70%	26.10%	Downward - green	Figures for 2022/23 and 2023/24 relate to housing only. 2024/25 figures include a wider range of complaints. Figures for 2025/26 are from across the whole council.	3,11,16
S5	Number of stage 1 complaints received	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	255	353	Upwards	Last year was the first complete year that complaints have been centrally recorded, though the process began in 2024/25.	3,11,16
Consultation and Communication										
S6	Percentage of relevant consultations which actively targeted younger people	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	15.00%	First year of recording	A total of 22 consultations were carried out over the year. One consultation was discounted as it was focused on older persons' accommodation. We carried out focused consultation with a group representing youngsters with special needs in January 2026 with respect to the Herne Bay Memorial Park Inclusive play area project.	4,10,16, 17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
									The Cultural Strategy consultation included a workshop with students of the Institute of Cultural and Creative Industries. The Consultation and Engagement Strategy consultation also included a workshop at Canterbury Christ Church University. More work is planned on targeting young people since this was added to the consultation policy adopted this financial year.	
S7	Overall views to the Newsroom website	Increase	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	56,777	50,300	Downward - red	When this KPI was conceived, social media was the key way of driving traffic to the newsroom website. When posting newsroom content, we used to summarise the story on the platform and give a link to the newsroom for more information to encourage visits. But the social media companies, in an effort to get you to pay them to push your information higher up in users' feeds, started to use the alogrithm to penalise publishers for linking away from their platform.	11,16,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
									To avoid punishment, publishers started to place links to sites like the newsroom in the comments section of social media posts. And for a while this worked. But social media companies have switched on to this and have started to drag those sorts of posts lower in their feeds so fewer people can see them. The answer has been to publish the full post on socials which disincentivises people visiting the newsroom for more information as it is all there for them. In light of this, just over 50,000 visits is impressive. News publishers need to attract audiences so they can sell advertising and can choose content lots and lots of people will click on. We are not in that position. Engagement of this kind is far better measured by social media and other statistics.	

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
Waste collection										
S8	Total missed bin rates	0.13% of all bins missed where collections due	Data not held	0.14%	0.11%	0.14%	0.18%	Upward - red	Total missed bin rates worsened by 0.04% from previous year, in 25/26 we received 17,327 missed bins an increase of 3,693. This equates to 333 per week or 66 per day. Across 28 collection crews, this is 2.4 missed collections per day for crews averaging 1,000 collections containers per day, and in line with sector norms.	3,11,12, 16
S9	Number of repeat litter/detritus reports within a 1-month period for the same street	114 (10% less than the year before)	Data not held	125	139	126	123	Downward - Amber	The total number of reports was 1,690. The trend is slightly downward which is positive, although the target has still been missed. However, the figure may have been generated slightly differently in the past the current method available to us this year and last is to identify any repeat reports within a 30 day period and within 100 meters of each other, rather than on the same street.	3,11,12, 16

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
S10	Percentage of bins missed where collections were due - Garden Waste	0.13% of bins missed where collections were due	Data not held	0.14%	0.04%*	0.19%	0.19%	Upward - red	There were 562,016 collections planned for 25/26 and total of 1,077 or 0.19% of them were missed. There have been issues with integrations between systems. As new subscribers come on board these are having to be manually added to the rounds, and this takes around 8 weeks to complete. The hope is this will be resolved for 2026/27 *The 2023/24 outturn was lower as people could not report bins missing during the nine-week strike.	3,11,12,16
Museums and events										
S11	Total Number of visitors to museums and galleries	No decrease	188,264	318,521	374,807	382,015	387,109	Upward - green	A 1.3% increase on the previous year	4,8,10,11
S12	Number of children and young people engaged in formal learning opportunities at the Museums	Trend monitoring	2,236	6,848	10,021	11,162	10,973	Downward	Cancellations for international and national school bookings occurred in March due to the meningitis outbreak	4,8,10,11

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
S13	Number of events with over 500 attendance held on council land	Trend for monitoring	39	51	50	57	43	Downward	In addition to events, Canterbury district has hosted more than 86 filming days over 44 productions with an estimated economic impact of more than £259,000 (info Kent Film Office)	8,10,11, 16
Finances and value for money										
S14	Percentage of sundry debt (over 30 days) outstanding - general fund	Trend for monitoring	Data not held *	27.28%	Data not held *	43.43%	44.4%	Upward	The outstanding debt as at 31 March has increased from previous year by £89,000, representing a 7% increase from the previous year. * This figure must be generated based on the outstanding debt at the time, if it is not then the figure isn't easily retrievable at a later date	16,17
S15	Percentage of sundry debt recovered - general fund	Trend for monitoring	Data not held *	79.22%	Data not held *	78.71%	79.7%	Upward	2025/26 had an increase in amount invoiced throughout the year from £13.4m to £14.6m. With outstanding debts as at 31 March at £2.9m from £2.8m. Sundry debt excludes Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Rents and Housing Benefits.	16,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
S16	Council Tax collected	97.4% collected in year	97.45%	97.48%	96.51%	96.62%	95.92%	Downward - red	The collections targets predate the cost-of-living challenges and rather than to force collection for the 31 March, a more appropriate approach is to support customers struggling to pay and take a slightly longer-term of collection. As arrears are collected over a number of years, the original KPI target is not being met. However, the collection funds are in surplus indicating the new approach is working. As at 31 March, Council Tax collections stood at: Canterbury 95.92% (Target 97.39%) Dover 95.97% (Target 96.84%) Thanet 93.97% (Target 94.91%)	1,8,10,16,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
S17	Business Rates collected	99.5% collected in year	96.04%	100.59%*	97.49%	97.46%	95.66%	Downward - red	The lack of dates provided by HM Courts service during the year has impacted the enforcement and collection rate. Historically courts were held monthly, enabling a smooth enforcement process. In 2025/26 only three court dates were provided, of which one was early enough in the year to impact collection by 31 March. The ultimate collection rate for 25/26 business rates is still expected at 99%. *The 2022/23 collection is greater than 100% because it includes unclaimed Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund credits.	8,9,11,16,17
S18	Percentage of litigation matters (where a claim has been issued at court) successfully defended or resolved in favour of the council	75%	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	75%	First year of recording	On target	10,16,17

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
S19	Percentage of council owned commercial voids relet within 90 days (excluding where a decision has been taken to hold a property empty)	Will be set after baseline year	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	14%	First year of recording	Voids are reviewed fortnightly. When the new asset management system is in place it will help by providing triggers ahead of future leasing events. 90 days is a realistic timeframe provided we are able to get on the front foot with reference to identifying when leases are due to expire, whether tenancies are inside or outside the 1954 Act (i.e automatic right to renew) and we therefore need to market etc.	1,3,10,11,12,17
Enforcement and safety										
S20	Total number of PCNs issued for all contraventions	Trend for monitoring	33,418	29,984	31,938	28,566	20,575	Downward	The downturn in performance was primarily due to temporary staffing challenges. This issue has now been resolved and management actions have been put in place to support a return to expected service levels.	3,9,11,16
S21	Number of school safety operations carried out - parking enforcement	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	44	181	76	17	Downward	The downturn in performance was primarily due to temporary staffing challenges. This issue has now been resolved and management actions have been put in	3, 4,11,16

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
									place to support a return to expected service levels.	
S22	Total number of graffiti items including tags removed (by CCC officers)	Trend for monitoring	Data not held	1,757	2,837	3,563	3,846	Upward	The service takes a proactive approach to graffiti removal not solely relying on reporting. This approach over the last few years along with increased awareness of the need to report has led to the increase in recent years.	11,12,15,16
S23	Percentage of food premises inspected within risk-based frequency (categories A-C)	Will be set after baseline year	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	85%	First year of recording		2,3,11,12,16
Town planning and planning enforcement										
S24	Major planning applications dealt with within 13 weeks or an extended period if agreed with the developer	80%	87%	91%	100%	94%	80%	Downward - amber	We are still achieving target levels of performance, though there was a decline in the outturn. The team had been carrying vacancies but has recently been reinforced with two highly experienced consultants who are managing major applications, so we expect performance to improve.	8,9,11,16

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
S25	Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks (or an extended period if agreed with the developer)	75%	80%	80%	75%	78%	84%	Upward - green	The target has been met and there is an improvement on the previous two years.	8,11,16
S26	Percentage of planning applications granted	Trend for monitoring	92.5%	92.0%	89.0%	92.2%	94.8%	Upward	938 approved, 51 refused. Total of 989 planning decisions made. Other applications would have been received and dealt with that did not proceed to decision, for example where they have been withdrawn later. Each planning application is decided on its merits. Further investigation would be needed if there is a change in trend to understand underlying causes, as this figure on its own is not diagnostic.	3, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16
S27	Percentage of planning decisions upheld at appeal	70%	87%	71%	67.5%	78%	74%	Static - amber	Target continues to be met	16,17
S28	Percentage of planning enforcement actions upheld after appeal	70%	Data not held	100%*	100%*	100%*	75%	Downward - amber	The target continues to be met but shows a less favourable outturn this year. In 2025/26 there were 12 appeals. In	11, 15, 16

KPI	Measures	Targets	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend over given years	Outturn or availability narrative	SDG REF
									practical terms, the council: won seven (58.3%) lost three (25%) had mixed result with partial wins in two cases (17%). * In these years all appeals were dismissed by the inspector.	
Grounds maintenance and high street footfall										
S29	Grounds maintenance: grass cutting compliance - percentage of areas completed within scheduled frequencies	Will be set after baseline year	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	Data not held	100%	First year of recording		3,11,12,13,15
S30	Percentage year on year change in footfall in Canterbury high street	Trend for monitoring	22.9%	8.7%	11.9%	6.5%	1.2%	Downward	Footfall in Canterbury City Centre 8,890,685 in 2025/26 - a 1.24% increase from 8,781,717 in 2024/25	8,9,11,12

Cabinet

7 December 2026

Subject: UNESCO City of Literature Bid

Director and Head of Service:

Bill Hicks, Director of Place

Michelle Moubarak, Head of Culture, Leisure and External Development

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Officer:

Michelle Butler, Cultural Development Officer

Cabinet Member:

Cllr Charlotte Cornell, Cabinet Member for council services, culture and heritage

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Key or Non Key decision:
Non Key

Decision Issues:

These matters are within the authority of the Cabinet

Is any of the information exempt from publication:

This report is open to the public.

CCC ward(s): All

Summary and purpose of the report

This report seeks approval for Canterbury City Council to apply for UNESCO City of Literature status in 2027.

It outlines Canterbury's exceptional literary heritage, the opportunities and benefits of joining the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, and a proposed programme combining international cultural exchange with practical aims: strengthening literacy and education, combating loneliness, preserving overlooked lives and community histories, and improving community wellbeing.

The report recommends that the Council endorses the application and supports the development and coordination of a city-wide literary programme from 2028 onwards, designed to strengthen Canterbury's international profile, creative economy and opportunities for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

To Resolve:

To authorise the preparation, completion and submission of Canterbury's application for UNESCO City of Literature status in the next application round, and to support the development and coordination of a programme of literary and related cultural activities, literacy initiatives, social outreach and community events, commencing in 2028. The programme will benefit communities across the district by widening access to literature and culture, improving literacy and bringing people and communities together. (Option 1)

Next stage in process:

To complete and submit an application for UNESCO City of Literature status by the deadline, which has not yet been announced.

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1. Introduction

Storytelling has been at the heart of Canterbury's identity for centuries. Known across the world as the destination of Chaucer's pilgrims in *The Canterbury Tales*, a work that transformed the possibilities of literary expression, Canterbury has inspired generations of writers, attracted visitors and helped shape the literary imagination. From medieval storytelling to contemporary fiction, the city has a literary heritage of extraordinary breadth and international significance.

Canterbury is the birthplace of Christopher Marlowe, one of the greatest dramatists of the Elizabethan age, and Aphra Behn, widely recognised as the first professional female writer in English. Charles Dickens was a frequent visitor, while Virginia Woolf declared that there was 'no place lovelier than Canterbury'. T. S. Eliot stayed in the city while writing *Murder in the Cathedral*, and Joseph Conrad is buried here. Canterbury also has an important place in the development of supernatural fiction, with its associations with the emergence of the modern ghost story.

This remarkable literary tradition continues into the present day. The University of Kent has connections with two Nobel Prize-winning authors, Kazuo Ishiguro and Abdulrazak Gurnah, both of whom studied or worked in Canterbury. Alongside its internationally significant literary figures, the city has a rich heritage of children's storytelling. Beloved characters including Rupert Bear, Bagpuss and the Clangers have their origins in the work of Canterbury creators, demonstrating the city's contribution to literature, illustration, television and storytelling for younger audiences.

Canterbury's literary identity extends far beyond the printed page. From the medieval stained-glass windows of Canterbury Cathedral, which tell stories through images, to contemporary theatre, film and digital media, storytelling in its broadest sense has long been central to the city's cultural life.

Today, Canterbury's literary ecosystem continues to flourish through its universities, theatres, schools, libraries, cultural organisations and creative communities. The Marlowe Theatre is emerging as an important centre for new writing, nurturing the next generation of playwrights and screenwriters through its Writers' Room programme and annual Writers' Room Festival, while increasingly producing and touring original work.

The Gulbenkian Arts Centre also demonstrates a sustained commitment to contemporary writing and performance, with recent productions and commissions including *The Foreign*

Office, the *Danaids Trilogy*, David Greig's UK premiere, 1927's *Please Right Back* and Paul Ready's *Little Animals*, a Fringe First winner in 2026.

Canterbury Christ Church University complements this work through its Creative and Professional Writing programmes and commitment to community engagement. Collaborations with organisations such as Heritage Lab have brought students and local communities together to explore heritage, identity and place through creative writing, demonstrating how literature can connect people with the places and stories around them.

The Council has demonstrated a strong commitment to celebrating and promoting Canterbury's literary heritage through investment in place-based cultural interpretation. As part of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) programme, which secured £19.9 million in Government funding alongside £2.78 million of Council match funding in April 2023, the Council delivered nine Story Gardens (City Wall, Dane John Gardens, St George's Square, Solly's Orchard, Greyfriars Garden, St Mary Bredman Square, St Radigund's Garden, Three Cities Garden and Canterbury Castle) across the city. In each garden/space is an interpretation totem which features a literary figure connected to Canterbury, strengthening public understanding of the city's rich literary heritage and creating meaningful connections between its historic legacy, cultural identity, and place.

These examples represent only a fraction of Canterbury's rich and varied literary landscape. Together, they illustrate a thriving ecosystem that connects internationally celebrated authors and institutions with grassroots creativity, heritage interpretation, education, community participation and the development of new talent.

Our ambition is to use Canterbury's extraordinary literary inheritance to improve lives and ensure everyone can participate in literary and creative activity. UNESCO City of Literature designation would be a means not simply to celebrate world-class heritage, but to strengthen literacy, combat loneliness through shared reading, storytelling, preserve and celebrate the lives and community histories that might otherwise be forgotten. Alongside wider access to literature and support for writers and storytellers, the programme would seek to generate economic activity that supports local livelihoods and creates opportunities for young people and under-represented communities.

Through this ambition, Canterbury seeks to establish itself as one of the world's leading literary cities: a place where historic stories are preserved and shared, new voices are encouraged, and literature continues to shape the identity and future of the city.

This report outlines the process and opportunities for Canterbury to seek designation as a UNESCO City of Literature within the UNESCO Creative Cities Network.

2. Detail

UNESCO City of Literature: The Opportunity for Canterbury

The UNESCO Cities of Literature Network is one of the most established strands of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN). It currently brings together 63 designated cities across 46 countries, creating an international community that uses literature and storytelling to support cultural, social and economic development.

Across the network, cities deliver literary festivals, creative writing programmes, translation initiatives, community storytelling projects, library development and literacy programmes. These activities strengthen cultural identity, encourage civic participation and opportunities to tackle social challenges, by widening access to literature and developing initiatives to tackle inequality in educational attainment. The programmes also create opportunities for

writers, publishers and creative businesses.

UK Cities of Literature, including Edinburgh, Manchester, Norwich, Nottingham, Exeter and Aberystwyth, demonstrate the potential benefits of designation.

In Edinburgh, for example, in addition to the £50 million in GVA annually estimated to have been contributed to the city's economy the programme has developed critical social infrastructure supporting education, wellbeing and community cohesion.

Similarly, Norwich's community programme engaged more than 12,700 adults and young people in participatory and learning activity in 2024–25, while Exeter has used its designation to develop bibliotherapy, communal reading, Warm Space provision and targeted support for low-income readers.

For Canterbury, designation would do more than recognise its extraordinary literary heritage. It would offer an opportunity to tackle entrenched social inequalities through targeted work with schools, families and communities. Literacy remains one of the strongest predictors of life chances, affecting educational attainment, employment prospects, health outcomes and social mobility.

District-wide averages mask pronounced inequalities in literacy-related outcomes. For example, in 2025 in Northgate, Parkside Community Foundation Primary School reported only 23% of the school's pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, compared with 62% across both Kent and England. The school's average reading score was 97, against 106 locally and nationally. Herne Bay Junior School reported that only 56% of pupils met the expected reading standard, 19 percentage points below the national average of 75%.

Whilst at Orion Spires, only 5.4% of disadvantaged pupils achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths, compared with 55.5% of non-disadvantaged pupils across Kent.

These inequalities demonstrate the potential for targeted literary and creative programmes to complement formal education and engage children and families in learning.

In summary, becoming an accredited City of Literature presents an opportunity to be part of an international framework for widening participation, nurturing creative talent, strengthening cultural relationships and translating the city's literary assets into lasting social, cultural and economic benefits.

The application process

Applications to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network must be submitted by a local authority and demonstrate strong support from local communities, cultural organisations and other stakeholders.

The UK National Commission for UNESCO can nominate a maximum of two cities, across all creative disciplines, in each application round. UK applications must therefore secure national endorsement before progressing to international assessment.

The 2027 application round presents an opportunity for Canterbury to put forward a distinctive bid for City of Literature status. The UK National Commission has advised that six UK cities are expected to apply, including two in music, and that Canterbury is currently expected to be the only applicant in literature. The disciplines of the remaining applicants have not yet been confirmed.

While this anticipated field of applicants is encouraging, Canterbury's case must ultimately rest on the strength of its own literary identity, the quality of its partnerships and the ambition and credibility of its proposed programme.

The designation can only be awarded to a city, therefore the application will be framed by

Canterbury’s overall offer, which will include activities across the district. The UNESCO City of Literature designation forms part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, which focuses on urban development, local government infrastructure and city-scale cultural economies.

In preparation, council officers have worked with the Canterbury Tales of England Board and a wide range of cultural and educational partners (see Appendix 3) to map existing literary activity and develop a programme around three principal themes.

Canterbury's Proposed Programme

Our proposal is organised around three complementary themes, each rooted in Canterbury's history while looking towards its future. Together, they aim to celebrate the city's literary inheritance, encourage new creative work, improve literacy and ensure that people of all ages and backgrounds can participate in literary life, reaping the social benefits and opportunities of such inclusion.

1. **Bookends**

   Literature plays an important role throughout our lives. Reading and storytelling begin before formal education and can continue to provide opportunities for learning, creativity, companionship and wellbeing into old age.

   Bookends will bring together schools, universities, libraries and community organisations to encourage reading, improve literacy and widen access to literary culture across generations.

   The ambition is to develop a genuinely lifelong literary offer, from early childhood reading and school-based creative writing to adult learning, intergenerational storytelling and projects addressing loneliness and social isolation.

   <u>Education, literacy and literary excellence</u>

   Canterbury's schools and universities provide a strong foundation for developing the city as a centre of excellence for English studies, creative writing and literary education.

   Working with educational partners, the programme could develop curriculum resources inspired by writers associated with Canterbury and Kent, including Geoffrey Chaucer, Mary Tourtel, Christopher Marlowe and Aphra Behn, connecting local heritage with contemporary learning.

   Attention would be given to schools serving communities experiencing higher levels of deprivation, where targeted literary activity could help improve literacy, creativity and educational attainment.

   Potential initiatives include:

   - Responding to Professor Becky Francis’s recent Curriculum and Assessment Review and its call for a broader choice of texts, we will work with education, cultural and community partners to develop teaching resources drawing on Canterbury’s literary heritage, contemporary voices and local stories. These will help schools prepare for the revised national curriculum from September 2028, with its expected emphasis on local identity and celebrate underrepresented voices.
   - Work with partners to develop best practice and exemplar teaching resources drawing on Canterbury's literary heritage and local stories in advance of revised national curriculum teaching (from September 2028), which brings greater focus on local cultural identity into the local classroom.
   - Author visits, creative workshops and literary projects for children and young people.
   - Programmes promoting reading for pleasure and creative writing, particularly among young people who may face barriers to participation.

Lifelong learning and intergenerational storytelling

Beyond formal education, Bookends will encourage residents of all ages to participate in reading, writing and sharing stories.

Potential activities include partnerships with the University of the Third Age (U3A), community learning resources, intergenerational reading projects, reminiscence writing and creative wellbeing programmes.

These initiatives would bring different generations together, preserve personal and community histories, and demonstrate the role literature can play in tackling isolation and strengthening social connections.

The Lonely Funerals Project

A distinctive flagship initiative within the Bookends theme could explore the role of poetry in dignity, remembrance and human connection.

Inspired by the Dutch Lonely Funerals (*Eenzame uitvaart*) model, the project would commission local Canterbury poets to write and read poems at public health funerals for people who die without family or friends able to attend. There are around 15-20 unattended public health funerals for individuals who die in the Canterbury area each year.

Working with CCC's cemetery team, our contracted funeral providers, poets, and community organisations, the programme would ensure individual lives are acknowledged and remembered through literature, and that no final goodbyes within the Canterbury district are made alone.

The project could provide a model for other local authorities, demonstrating how literature can contribute to compassion, social connection and public service.

Together, the activities within Bookends would create a cradle-to-grave literary programme, connecting education, creativity, heritage and wellbeing while making literature accessible and meaningful throughout people's lives.

Delivering Canterbury's Literary Ambitions

The three themes would provide the framework for a coordinated programme of activity beginning in 2028, with the ambition of delivering lasting benefits for Canterbury and the wider southeast England region.

Alongside existing literary festivals, educational programmes and cultural activity, the bid would seek to develop new international partnerships, author residencies, literary commissions, creative exchanges and flagship initiatives that benefit the whole community and visitors to our wonderful city.

The programme would be guided by a specialist steering group bringing together representatives from key organisations, including Canterbury BID, Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury Festival, East Kent College, Gulbenkian Arts Centre, Kent County Council Libraries Service, The Marlowe Theatre, University for the Creative Arts, University of Kent and other cultural and literary organisations (a full list of those engaged so far see Appendix 3 – Project Partners)

The bid is intended to be a collective undertaking, drawing on the expertise, creativity and commitment of Canterbury's civic institutions, cultural organisations, educational partners and local communities.

The application also requires letters of support from two national organisations operating within the chosen creative discipline. These have been requested from Arts Council England and the English Association, reinforcing Canterbury's position within

the national literary landscape.

2. **Gateway of Stories**

   Canterbury has been a place of arrival, departure and cultural exchange for centuries. Pilgrims have travelled here for more than eight hundred years, while successive generations of migrants, visitors, scholars and writers have contributed to the city's identity.

   Gateway of Stories will explore these journeys, connecting the histories of pilgrimage, migration, sanctuary and belonging with the experiences of people living in Canterbury today.

   A particular opportunity lies in Canterbury's position at the beginning of the Via Francigena, the historic pilgrimage route connecting Canterbury with Rome through England, France, Switzerland and Italy. Recognised as a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe since 1994, the route provides a tangible connection between storytelling, international heritage and cultural exchange.

   This theme would strengthen relationships with European cities, including Canterbury's existing twin cities, communities along the Via Francigena and other members of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. These partnerships could renew cultural exchange and foster collaboration between Britain, Europe and beyond, while creating opportunities to explore shared experiences of migration, sanctuary and belonging.

   This focus on sanctuary and belonging would also build on the motion backed by Canterbury City councillors on 30 October 2025 to sign up to the City of Sanctuary Charter and work towards achieving District of Sanctuary status.

   Potential activities under this theme include:

   - International writer and artist residencies, placements and exchanges.
   - Literary partnerships with European UNESCO Cities of Literature, twin cities (new and existing) and communities along the Via Francigena.
   - Storytelling projects exploring the experiences of pilgrims, migrants, refugees and travellers.
   - Community programmes examining identity, sanctuary and belonging.
   - Cross-cultural projects celebrating Canterbury's historic role as a gateway between Britain and Europe.

   Through these activities, Canterbury could establish itself as an international meeting place for stories, writers and idea-exchange.

3. **Old Tales, New Voices**

   Canterbury's literary heritage is internationally significant, but its future depends on encouraging new voices and making that inheritance accessible and relevant to contemporary audiences.

   Old Tales, New Voices will bring the city's literary past into conversation with its present and future, encouraging creative reinterpretation, contemporary writing and experimentation with new forms of storytelling.

   Accessibility, diversity and representation will be central to this theme. The programme will seek to remove barriers to literary participation, amplify historically overlooked voices and create opportunities for collaboration between writers, artists, researchers and local communities.

   It will also recognise that literature and storytelling extend beyond the printed page, from

the medieval stained-glass narratives of Canterbury Cathedral to theatre, film, performance and emerging digital technologies.

Potential activities include:

- Collaborative projects with under-represented communities to uncover and share overlooked histories.
- Opportunities for emerging writers, playwrights and screenwriters to develop and present new work.
- An International Canterbury Literary Prize building on the success of the long-established Canterbury Festival Poet of the Year, to celebrate literary excellence, encourage new talent and raise the city's international literary profile. The prize would position Canterbury within a global network of literary cities, attracting writers, readers, publishers, and cultural organisations while reinforcing the city's rich literary heritage.
- There may also be opportunities to develop a partnership with the Giovanni Boccaccio Literary Prize (*Premio Letterario Giovanni Boccaccio*)**,** the Italian literary award established in 1982 in Certaldo. Dedicated to celebrating the legacy of medieval writer Giovanni Boccaccio. A collaboration could strengthen cultural ties between Canterbury and Certaldo and create a distinctive connection between the literary legacies of Geoffrey Chaucer and Giovanni Boccaccio**,** both central figures in European literary history.

This theme would strengthen Canterbury's contemporary creative identity while ensuring that its literary heritage remains a living resource, open to reinterpretation by successive generations.

Next Steps and Cabinet Decision

To complete the application, the council must submit a formal decision, signed by the Lord Mayor of Canterbury, confirming its support for UNESCO City of Literature designation, participation in the Creative Cities Network and coordination of the proposed programme.

Cabinet is therefore asked to endorse the submission of Canterbury's application for UNESCO City of Literature status in 2027 and support the development and coordination of a programme of literary activities and events commencing in 2028.

The ambition is not simply to celebrate Canterbury's literary past, but to make literature central to its future: strengthening the city's international identity, supporting its creative economy, improving opportunities for local people and ensuring that Canterbury continues to be a place where stories are told, shared and created for generations to come.

3. Relevant Council policy, strategies or budgetary documents

The ambitions of this proposal support Canterbury district's corporate plan as well as number of other supporting strategies including:

Canterbury City Centre Strategy 2026-2043

"Canterbury will be a world-class visitor destination with a reputation for learning,

literature and its unlocked historic treasures that are inviting, exciting and effortless to explore. Canterbury will encourage visitors to stay longer, students to put down long-term roots and businesses to grow. The city will be a hub for creativity, education and enterprise all year round."

Cultural Strategy 2026-2036

The proposed City of Literature bid and programme would support all five ambitions of the Cultural Strategy 2026-2036, translating its priorities into opportunities for literary participation, talent development, heritage interpretation and partnership working, as set out below.

Ambition 1. Engage children and young people. *SD Goal 4: Quality Education.* The proposed Bookends theme would support this ambition through school engagement, author visits, creative workshops and learning resources linked to Canterbury's literary heritage. Targeted work with schools in areas of higher deprivation, alongside teacher development and partnerships with universities and cultural organisations, would widen access to reading, writing and creative experiences and help introduce young people to pathways into creative careers.

Ambition 2. Celebrate People, place. *SD Goal 11: Shape spaces for community and celebration.* The bid directly supports the strategy's stated aspiration to achieve UNESCO City of Literature status. Story Gateway would connect Canterbury's literary heritage with stories of migration, pilgrimage and cultural exchange, while Old Tales, New voices would reinterpret historic stories through contemporary voices and new media. Proposed commissions, storytelling projects and cultural events would bring people together, celebrate the district's distinctive identity and strengthen community pride.

Ambition 3. Grow the creative economy, build partnerships and secure investment and increasing cultural tourism. The proposed steering group and international literary exchanges would build partnerships between cultural organisations, educational institutions and creative practitioners. New commissions, writer residencies and a potential Canterbury Literary Prize would create opportunities for creative talent and raise the profile of the district's literary offer. Designation would provide a platform to pursue investment and cultural tourism opportunities; these benefits would depend on the programme developed and resources secured.

Ambition 4. Improve health and wellbeing. *SDG Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages.* Bookends would support this ambition through intergenerational reading, reminiscence writing and creative wellbeing activities designed to reduce isolation and encourage connection. The proposed Lonely Death Project would explore how poetry can support dignity, remembrance and care. Together, these activities would offer opportunities for people of different ages to participate and connect through literature.

Ambition 5. Enable participation and promote inclusion. *SD Goal 10: Reduce inequality.* Accessibility and representation are central to Old Tales, New voices, including work with diverse communities to tell underrepresented stories and explore new forms of participation and production. Bookends would complement this through targeted school engagement, adult learning resources and potential partnerships with the University of the Third Age (U3A). Working with cultural organisations, community groups and educational partners, the programme would seek to remove barriers and reach residents least likely to engage in cultural activity.

4. Consultation planned or undertaken

(a) General consultations

Canterbury's ambition to celebrate our literary heritage has been a key part of public consultations for the aforementioned strategies as well featuring heavily in the Connected Canterbury Levelling Up project.

Public participation and feedback have informed the Story Garden totems as well various public art interventions across the city centre.

Collaboration and engagement with stakeholders will continue throughout the development of the project and integrated into project delivery.

5. Options available with reasons for suitability

Option 1:

To approve an application to UNESCO for Canterbury to join the Creative Cities Network as a City of Literature in 2028.

This proposal follows two years of development and stakeholder engagement and is therefore recommended.

Option 2:

To continue to develop Canterbury's literary connections but defer application to the next round of submissions, expected in 2029.

Whilst this option allows for more development time, delaying the application could increase competition to join the network as Literature is already one of the largest networks within the Creative Cities programme. Therefore, this option is not recommended.

Option 3:

To not proceed with an application for formal accreditation. This is not recommended.

6. Reasons for supporting option recommended, with risk assessment

Having developed the proposal with a variety of stakeholders and received advice from UNESCO's national office in the UK applying for accreditation in 2027 is recommended.

Whilst is has not been possible to review the application form for the 2027 round, UNESCO advisors have indicated there is a low probability of significant change to the application form structure and requirements.

If the Canterbury bid is successful at the national stage detailed feedback will be provided by the UK Office prior to submission for the international stage of the process. This provides an opportunity to refine our proposal in Spring 2027.

7. Implications

(a) Financial

The 2027/28 budget consultation includes an allowance for coordination of this programme, including a part-time Co-ordinator post and an initial operating budget to set

up digital infrastructure including a website.

(b) Legal

None identified

(c) Equalities

The programme includes targeted activities to encourage greater participation in literary activities. This includes improving accessibility and work with children and young people as well as older adults.

(d) Environmental including carbon emissions and biodiversity

A small amount of air travel is likely to be a requirement of participation in the international network. However, the majority of international exchange will be digital to mitigate cost and carbon emissions.

Other implications [delete as appropriate]

(e) Staffing resource

As above

(j) Safeguarding children

We will follow CCC's safeguarding policies throughout the application process and, if the bid is successful, during project deliver.

(k) Heritage

The project is closely linked to the city's heritage. Officers will work together to ensure that project delivery aligns with and complements our heritage strategy.

Contact Officer: Michelle Butler

Background documents and appendices

Appendices 1 and 2 – Impact Assessments

Appendix 3 – Project Partners

Additional document(s) containing information exempt from publication:

No

Appendix 1 Climate Change Impact Assessment (Checklist)

Please provide an assessment of the impact of the proposal under each of the headings below. If none, please say so.

1. **Climate Change impacts**

Topic	**Impact of proposal** Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact** If you have any relevant data, please include that in the explanation and reference the source.	**Mitigation**
Impact on the council's target of being carbon neutral by 2030. This applies to emissions of carbon dioxide as a direct result of our **own** activities and services. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals	Neutral	No impact	N/A

Topic	**Impact of proposal** Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact** If you have any relevant data, please include that in the explanation and reference the source.	**Mitigation**
Impact on carbon emissions in the Canterbury district This applies to the carbon dioxide emissions in the district as a result of your proposal. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals.	Neutral	No impact	N/A
Emission of other climate changing gases including methane, CFCs, nitrous oxide	Neutral	No impact	N/A

2. Adaptation to climate change - Impact on our resilience to the effects of climate change

The greatest risks posed by climate change to the UK are:

- Flooding and coastal changes including erosion from extreme events.
- Risks to health caused by high temperatures.
- Water shortages and drought
- Risk to natural environments & services - landscape, wildlife, pollinators, timber etc
- Risk to food production & trade
- Emergence of new pests and diseases affecting people, plants & animals

What impact do your proposals have on our ability to resist or tackle these problems in the future?

Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact**	**Mitigation**
Neutral	No impact	N/A

3. Further assessment work

Is a furthermore detailed assessment required at a later stage of this proposal? If yes, please give a brief description

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

[can be deleted if not relevant after the MT stage]

Please be aware that in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010, this document will be made available to the public.

You should treat this as a live document and keep it under continuous review. You should do this by recording any issues you identify, along with any actions you take to minimise their impact.

Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance to help you in completing this form.

For the purposes of this form, we refer to your policy, function, project or service as a proposal.

We have contact with two groups who can be useful sounding boards as part of any consultation or pre consultation engagement. They are the Disability Advisory Board (DAP) and the Ethnic Minority Independent Council (EMIC), both are local groups. You can contact Matthew Archer for further advice.

Date of initial assessment	Tuesday 10 November 2026
Division	Culture Leisure Economic Development
Proposal to be assessed	UNESCO City of Literature BID
New or existing policy or function?	New
External (i.e. public facing) or internal?	External
Statutory or non-statutory?	Non-Statutory
Your name	Michelle Butler
Your job title	Culture Development Officer
Your contact telephone number	01227 910472
Decision maker (e.g. Community Committee, Management Team etc.)	Management Team
Estimated proposal deadline	January 2027

Please outline your proposal, including: ● Aims and objectives ● Key actions ● Expected outcomes ● Who will be affected and how ● How many people will be affected	**Aims and objectives:** To seek UNESCO City of Literature status for Canterbury and use literature and storytelling to widen participation, improve accessibility and representation, support creative talent, and strengthen learning, wellbeing and cultural exchange. **Key actions:** Prepare and submit the application in 2027; establish a steering group; and develop a programme for 2028 around Story

	Gateway, Old Tales, New voices, and Bookends. Proposed activities include school workshops, author visits, teacher development, accessible storytelling and new commissions, international exchanges, adult learning and intergenerational projects. Work with cultural, education and community partners to identify and address barriers to participation. **Expected outcomes:** Wider access to reading, writing and storytelling; greater representation of underrepresented voices; increased opportunities for local writers and creative practitioners; stronger community connections; and opportunities to support literacy, lifelong learning and wellbeing. These are intended outcomes, dependent on programme development and resources, rather than confirmed impacts. **Who will be affected and how:** The proposed programme is intended to benefit residents across Canterbury district, including children and young people, older adults, readers, writers and creative practitioners. Targeted school engagement would prioritise areas of higher deprivation. Accessible activities and opportunities to tell underrepresented stories would seek to widen participation among people facing barriers to cultural engagement. Schools, universities, libraries, cultural organisations and community groups would be involved in developing and delivering activities. **How many people will be affected:** The potential reach is district-wide,
What relevant data or information is currently available about the customers who may use this service or could be affected? Please give details; for example “x% of customers are female” or “x% of customers are aged over 60”	The City of Literature proposal was informed by the findings from the Cultural Strategy consultation.

Is the decision relevant to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, which are listed below? Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC’s PSED Technical Guidance		
Aim	Yes/No	Explanation
Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation		The project would seek to challenge prejudice and discrimination by giving under-represented communities opportunities to tell their own stories and by exploring migration, sanctuary and belonging through Gateway of

		Stories. These activities would aim to promote respect and understanding. CCC's safeguarding policies would apply throughout the application process and, if successful, during delivery. These measures would support this aim but would not, on their own, eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it		The project would seek to reduce barriers to reading, writing and cultural participation. Old Tales, New Voices would prioritise accessibility and representation, including opportunities for under-represented communities to contribute to new work. Bookends would offer activities for children, young people and older adults, alongside targeted school engagement in areas of higher deprivation. Considering access requirements in programme design would help disabled people participate. The intended benefits would depend on the activities developed and resources secured.
Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it		The project would create opportunities for people of different ages, backgrounds and beliefs to share stories and take part in creative activities together. Gateway of Stories would explore migration, sanctuary, identity and belonging, while Old Tales, New Voices would bring overlooked histories to wider audiences. Bookends would include intergenerational reading and storytelling. These activities would aim to challenge stereotypes, encourage dialogue and strengthen understanding and connections between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.

Assess the relevance of the proposal to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the proposal on people with different protected characteristics.
Your explanation should make it clear who the assessment applies to within each protected characteristic. For example, a proposal may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.

Protected characteristic	Relevance to proposal High/ Medium/ Low/None	Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	Explanation
Age			Seeks to target engagement and activities at children and young people
Disability			Promotes health and wellbeing activities which include consideration of access requirements to remove barriers to engagement.
Gender reassignment			Encourages participation and representation for all members of the community but there are no targeted actions for this characteristic.
Marriage and civil partnership			Encourages participation and representation for all members of the community but there are no targeted actions for this characteristic.
Pregnancy and maternity			Encourages positive action to include and represent diverse communities in cultural activities,
Race			Encourages positive action to include and represent diverse communities in cultural activities
Religion or belief			Encourages positive action to include and represent diverse communities in cultural activities.
Sex			Encourages positive action to include and represent diverse communities in cultural activities.
Sexual orientation			Encourages positive action to include and represent diverse communities in cultural activities.
Other groups: for example – low income/ people living in rural areas/ single parents/ carers and the cared for/ past offenders/ long-term unemployed/ housebound/ history of domestic abuse/ people who			Although the bid is city-led, the proposed programme could also benefit residents across the wider district who face barriers to cultural participation. These may include people on low incomes, rural residents, single parents, carers and those they care for, past offenders, long-term unemployed or housebound people, survivors of domestic abuse, people whose first language is not English and those without computer access. Potential barriers include cost, transport, caring responsibilities, language, digital

don't speak English as a first language/ People without computer access etc.			exclusion and concerns about safety. Programme development should consider affordable activities, accessible local venues, flexible participation, non-digital information and appropriate language support. Specific needs and suitable approaches would need to be explored with community partners and potential participants; benefits would depend on the activities and resources available.

Are you going to make any changes to your proposal as a result of these findings, in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts identified? If yes, what are they? If no, why not?	No
Is there any potential negative impact which cannot be minimised or removed? If so, can it be justified? (for example, on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for another protected characteristic)	No

What additional information would increase your understanding about the potential impact of this proposal?	N/A

If a consultation exercise is required as part of your proposal, please complete the consultation planning form on iCan.

Please update the section below if:

- You have amended your proposal
- You have new information
- You have undertaken consultation

Date of revised assessment	Click here to enter a date.
Have you made any changes to your initial assessment? If so, please give brief details	
Did you undertake consultation? – if yes, give date and the consultation results:	
Do you have new information which reveals any difference in views across the protected characteristics?	
Can any new conclusions be drawn as to how the proposal will affect people with different protected characteristics?	

Are you going to make any changes to your proposal as a result of these findings, in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts identified? If yes, what are they? If no, why not?	
Is there any potential negative impact which cannot be minimised or removed? If so, can it be justified? (for example, on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for another protected characteristic)	

Should you need to revisit your assessment more than once, please ensure that you provide details of any changes or new information and the date these amendments were made

Appendix 3 – Project Partners

The following list sets out the initial partners we are working with to develop the application. We expect this list to expand especially with schools' participation as exploratory work continues during the pre-application stage.

Canterbury Archaeological Trust
Canterbury Business Improvement District (BID)
Canterbury Cathedral
Canterbury Children's Festival
Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU)
Canterbury Commemoration Society
Canterbury Festival
Canterbury Ghost Festival
Canterbury Medieval Pageant
Canterbury Shakespeare Festival
Canterbury Society
Canterbury Tales Steering Group
Catching Lives Bookshop (at the Crooked House)
Centre for Kent History and Heritage
Chaucer Bookshop
Comune di Certaldo, Toscano
Crash Festival
East Kent College (EKC)
East Kent Ensemble
English Heritage
Ethnic Minorities in Canterbury (EMIC)
Independent MP for Canterbury
Institute of Cultural & Creative Industries, University of Kent (ICCI)
Kent County Council
Kent County Council Libraries
Kings School
Loughborough University
Poetry Practice Ltd
Simon Langton School for Boys
The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge
The Canterbury Society
The English Society
The Marlowe Theatre
The Oxfam Bookshop
The Pound
The University of the Third Age (U3A)
University College of the Arts (UCA)
University of Kent (UoK)
Visit Kent
Waterstones

~

Cabinet Committee
7 December 2026

Subject: 2026-27 Q1 - 2 Housing Performance KPI update

Director and Head of Service:
Marie Royle, Service Director, People
Alexis Jobson, Head of Facilities Management
Tracy Chambers, Head of Housing & Community

Officer:
Joshua Pugh, Case Service Officer Level 3 (Complaints)

Cabinet Member:
Cllr Pip Hazelton, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing

Key or Non Key decision:
Non Key

Decision Issues:
These matters are within the authority of the Cabinet.

Is any of the information exempt from publication:
This report is open to the public.

CCC ward(s): All wards

Summary and purpose of the report:

This report is the summary of performance for the Housing (tenancy and facilities management) services for the 2025-26 period.

To Note:

The contents of the Q1-2 2026-27 Housing Performance KPI update

Next stage in process:

The service will continue to monitor operational performance against targets.

Performance will be reported to the Resident Engagement Panel.

1. Introduction

This report summarises the performance for Housing (tenancy and facilities management) services for Q1 – Q2 of the 2026-27 financial year.

2. Detail

Capital maintenance programme expenditure

A total of £3,273,867.31 has been spent from the £7,580,000 planned works capital budget. This excludes budgets for the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund.

Planned maintenance programmes continue to improve tenants' homes. The main areas of expenditure are windows and doors, roofing, disabled adaptations, garages and fire safety works.

The largest current project is the replacement of external wall insulation and associated roof repairs at Windsor House.

Some budgets are being increased for quarters 3 and 4 to reflect capacity for additional works to roofs, fire safety works to Hertford Court, new bin stores and CCTV upgrades.

An additional £900,000 has been added to the capital maintenance budget this year to replace windows and doors on properties that have failed decency.

Work has started on a number of properties to improve thermal efficiency and bring them up to an Energy Performance Certificate rating of EPC C, using funding from the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund.

Aids and Adaptations

During the period, referrals were made for 94 minor and 65 major adaptations to council homes to support tenants to remain independent. This compares with 88 minor and 27 major adaptations for the full 2025/26 financial year. The average time from receipt of a case by the team to completion of the work was 276 days for major adaptations, against a target of 365 days, and 62 days for minor adaptations, against a target of 30 days.

Work is ongoing with the contractor to improve completion times for minor adaptations. The higher average waiting time for minor adaptations is partly attributable to a backlog, which is being addressed this year through an increased budget for aids and adaptations.

The allocated budget is £1,030,000 and £485,610 has been spent. The budget for this year is predicted to be fully spent and is an increase from the allocated £730,000 last year.

We are working with the Disability Forum to create a customer satisfaction survey for the adaptations service to gather feedback to inform service delivery. A presentation was given at the forum in November and we are now in the process of finalising the survey with the anticipation we will be able to go live with this in January 2027.

Payment of contract invoices

Contractual invoices paid on time performance is 93.14% at the end of Q2, this is an increase compared to 72.38% at the end of 2025/26. Although off the target of 99%, good progress has been made, and work continues to increase performance.

Stock condition surveys and decent homes

We have now surveyed or attempted to survey 100% of our HRA properties. We have completed surveys in 4,114 properties, with the remaining 956 being no access.

Our internal surveyors are working through the properties which Savills the external surveyors, were not able to gain access to and progress is being made. Communications with tenants has been reviewed to more clearly explain what the surveys involve and why they are needed.

The decency rate is 79%. This figure is derived from 4,114 physical stock condition surveys and historic asset data. Where historic survey records contained blank condition or hazard fields, these have been assumed to indicate no identified issue in line with the historic recording approach. The figure will be updated as additional survey data is received and validated.

The data from the stock condition surveys is being used to develop plans to bring housing decency up to 100% by the end of 2027/28.

An additional £900,000 has been allocated in the current year's capital budget to replace defective windows and doors in homes that do not meet the decent homes standard.

A further £7 million is proposed for investment in 2027/28.

Prescribed hazards

Awaab's Law is the name commonly used for the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025, which came into force in England on 27 October 2025. It requires social landlords to investigate and address certain serious housing hazards within fixed legal timescales

Phase 2 of this law comes into effect on 30 November this year expands significant hazard duties to additional hazards.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is the risk-based assessment system used to identify the 29 different types of housing hazards (e.g., damp, excess cold, fire risk).

HHSRS defines what a hazard is, while Awaab's Law mandates the time in which it must be fixed.

Damp and Mould

Damp and mould is one of the hazards identified in the legislation referred to above. It continues to be the main area of focus for the service to ensure our data is reliable and reflects the work we are doing on the ground.

The recent audit of the data held within our tracking spreadsheet identified that this was an area that needed improvement and that although we were confident we were dealing with the damp and mould on the ground, getting works done, our data was unable to evidence this.

We currently have 236 open cases of damp, mould and condensation, many of which are historical cases. We are working through these with Cardo to close them down where we can confirm works have been completed and where we have not been able to gain access following at least 2 attempts.

A spreadsheet is used to track and monitor our damp and mould cases and relies on human intervention to keep the spreadsheet up to date. This is because our housing management system is not integrated with our repair contractor's (Cardo) own system. Work is underway with the digital team to review this. In the interim, we are looking to utilise the system we use for tracking compliance (True Compliance) which will provide a greater degree of automation thereby supporting more robust data recording whilst streamlining processes.

High rise blocks

Elizabeth Court

Following the submission of the building safety case for Elizabeth Court, 3 compliance notices were issued to the council setting out what was required to comply and ensure the safety case was approved. These notices have now been lifted as we have provided the information necessary to comply with them. Work is now underway to update the building Safety Case following completion of the surveys needed to do this.

Windsor House – fire safety works

Works are progressing well at Windsor House to replace the external wall insulation and carry out roof and water tank repairs.

During October, scaffold installation was completed and a new roof water tank was installed and commissioned.

The contractor has a dedicated Resident Liaison Officer who provides regular updates and coffee mornings for the residents.

We continue to work with the Building Safety Regulator to complete this project next year.

Compliance

Below is an update on the compliance areas as of 30 September 2026. It is important to note that compliance performance rolls over month by month, and so any targets that have not been hit by 30 September 2026 does not necessarily reflect a failure. Appendix 3 shows the data for this area and further commentary.

Asbestos

The statutory duty of 91.43% compliance for asbestos surveys in applicable stock in accordance with CAR2012 was reached at the end of the period. The target is 100%

The asbestos survey programme has been updated for 2027 to ensure our compliance remains at 100%. Rather than being delivered over a three-month period between October and December, the programme will now be spread across six months, commencing in July and concluding in December. This revised approach will reduce the annual peak workload and minimise the risk of properties falling out of compliance due to survey backlogs.

Electrical Checks

100% compliance in electrical checks in communal areas and 96.37% domestic compliance was reached at the end of the period. The target is 100%.

Most of the properties without a current electrical check are those that are hard to access. Work continues to carry out our ‘best endeavours’ to gain access via the tenant to complete these. This includes working closely with the contractor and with colleagues in Locality and Case to gain access. This process is being reviewed and prioritised across the teams.

Progress has been made over the last 12 months with the compliance figure increasing from 93% to 96.37%

Gas Safety

There is 100% compliance with communal gas safety checks and 98.29% compliance with domestic gas safety checks at the end of the period. The target is 100%.

Work is underway with contractors and colleagues in Case and Locality to gain access to those properties without a current gas safety check, prioritising those that are most overdue. This includes court injunctions where deemed necessary.

Fire Safety

The Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) performance at the end of the financial year is 100%, with a target of 100%.

The number of actions for remedial work is shown below. These actions derive from the fire risk assessments and are given a risk rating which determines the timescale in which the action needs to be completed.

High Risk - 8
Medium Risk– 1
Low Risk – 105

In addition we have 93 overdue actions, 4 of these are high risk and are with contractors. The number of overdue actions has reduced from 390 in September last year and we continue to work through these.

Lifts (including hoists and stairlifts) (LOLER)

There was 100% compliance with communal passenger lifts at the end of September this year. One lift required remedial action, which has now been completed and is compliant. Communal passenger lifts are serviced in line Council policy, and remedial works are monitored separately.

There was 100% compliance in communal stair lifts and communal bath hoist. Domestic stairlifts/hoists were 96.91% compliant at the end of the period. The target is 100%.

Water hygiene

At the end of September, 100% of water hygiene risk assessments were completed for legionella and pseudomonas. The target is 100%.

As of 30 September, there were 48 outstanding actions. Of these, 11 are high risk, 30 medium risk and 7 low risk actions.

All of the 11 high risk actions have been assigned to our contractor for completion.

Over the summer period we had positive legionella results in 3 of the housing schemes at Shalmsford Court, Whitgift Court and Longfield Court. All of the positive samples were located in communal facilities which are more vulnerable because of their infrequent use.

Mitigations were put in place in all three schemes including increased flushing of the taps and cleansing of the water system.

We can now confirm that the mitigation measures undertaken at all 3 schemes have achieved the desired outcome, with all three schemes returning clear sample results on 19 November. Tenants have been advised of the updated results and provided reassurance regarding the effectiveness of the measures implemented.

As a precautionary measure, we will continue with our sampling programme until three consecutive clear results have been achieved, in line with our monitoring requirements.

To reduce the risk of reoccurrence in these communal facilities, we will be increasing the flushing regime and reviewing whether any of the facilities can be closed in schemes where there are more than one and where we know usage is very low. An information leaflet is also being produced to give to residents should there be any further positive readings to provide reassurance where the risk is considered very low and remind residents to

flush their own taps.

Repairs

CARDO (responsive repairs and voids)

CARDO continues to deliver strong performance across a number of key contractual measures, with emergency repairs completed on time consistently achieving 100%, with 100% target and repair appointments kept remaining high at 98.63%, with a target of 95%. Whilst performance against routine repairs completed on time 92.73% (target of 100%) and first-time fix rates 77.59% (target 90%) remains below the contractual target, overall delivery remains stable and demonstrates a consistent level of service for residents.

The first-time fix KPI should be considered in the context of the wide range of repairs undertaken. The measure includes all repairs where follow-on work is required, including those where it is neither practical nor possible to complete the repair during the initial visit. Whilst these repairs are appropriately recorded as not being completed first time in line with the KPI definition, many represent effective diagnosis and progression of works rather than service failure. We continue to work closely with CARDO to identify opportunities to improve first-time completion rates where practicable.

Performance relating to damp, condensation and mould repairs has fluctuated during the reporting period, reflecting changing demand levels. We will continue to monitor delivery closely and work collaboratively with CARDO to drive continued improvement against all contractual KPIs while maintaining a high-quality service for residents.

Sureserve Compliance

Following a period of contractual and operational challenges, Sureserve continues to make positive progress in stabilising service delivery and improving performance against key contractual measures. Whilst several KPIs remain below target, performance has shown greater consistency during the reporting period, particularly in relation to routine repair completion times and appointments kept.

Emergency repairs continue to perform strongly, achieving 97.37% against a target of 98%, whilst routine repairs completed within both 3-day (96.06%) and 7-day (97.7%) timescales remain close to target at 100%. Performance relating to repairs completed in a single visit (79.69%) remains below the contractual requirement (85%); however, this continues to be an area of focus and improvement activity with the contractor.

The Council continues to work proactively with Sureserve through regular contract management arrangements to support service improvements and address areas of underperformance. We are encouraged by the progress made to date and expect to see continued improvement in performance against contractual KPIs over the coming months as improvement plans continue to embed.

Tenancy Audits and Estate Inspections

Tenancy audits are completed with tenants to verify tenant details, check property conditions and ensure social homes are being used correctly.

1.8% of tenancy audits were completed with a target of 10% for the year. There is a plan in place to increase audits for the rest of the fiscal year to meet target.

95% of estate inspections due were completed for the period.

Voids

Between April and September 2026, the voids service continued to experience a high volume of properties entering the void process. During this period, 150 properties were relet, of which 77 required major works prior to reletting. This reflects the challenging nature of the void portfolio, with a significant proportion of properties requiring substantial repairs and investment before they could be returned to occupation.

Performance was influenced by a number of factors, including properties requiring more extensive repairs, the progression of older and more complex void cases, such as deceased tenancies and insurance claims, and the need to wait for legal notice periods, including Notice to Quit and Section 41 notices, to expire before access could be gained. These factors can significantly extend turnaround times before repair works are able to commence.

Whilst some minor works voids require only limited repairs, the overall time taken to return a property to occupation is influenced by a range of factors beyond the repairs process. These include access restrictions, legal notice periods, insurance-related, matters, court proceedings and other property-specific circumstances which can delay progression through the void journey before works commence or a tenancy can begin.

Throughout the period, the service continued to work closely with contractors and internal stakeholders to improve oversight of individual cases, challenge delays where appropriate and ensure properties progress through the void process as efficiently as possible. Regular monitoring has helped identify barriers at an earlier stage and support more timely resolution of issues.

Despite the challenges outlined above, performance improved over the course of the reporting period. Whilst average relet times fluctuated from month to month, the overall trend since May has been positive, with turnaround times reducing and properties being returned to occupation more quickly. Whilst a significant proportion of completed voids required major works, the service has continued to work proactively with contractors and internal stakeholders to address barriers, progress complex cases and reduce delays across the wider void process.

As recommended by Internal Audit and agreed by the Housing Management Team, void performance targets have been established at 40 days for minor works and 70 days for major works. At the end of September 2026, the average relet time was 88 days for minor voids and an average relet time of 114 days for major voids. The overall average was 102 days for all

properties.

A small number of properties have not yet been categorised as major or minor. This is due to works not yet being fully charged, meaning their final classification remains pending. As a result, these figures are subject to change.

Whilst the service has not yet consistently achieved the targets set across all relet categories, the improving performance trend is encouraging and demonstrates that the actions being taken are having a positive impact. Continued focus on reducing long-term voids, progressing complex cases at an earlier stage and removing avoidable delays throughout the void journey will be key to achieving target performance on a sustained basis.

Arrears and Universal Credit (UC) claimants

UC claimants contacted

100% of UC claimants were contacted on time and the target is 100%.

Current tenant arrears

The target for current residential arrears is less than 4.55% and performance is 3.98% of the total expected annual rental income. Although performance is slightly down from the end of 2025/26 at 3.53%, performance is well within the current target at 3.98% of total expected annual rental income.

Former tenant arrears

Former tenant arrears was £1.08m at the end of the period. This is up from £0.95m at the end of 2025/26. This is due to long term absence within the former tenant arrears post.

The service is reviewing how recovery work can be maintained while the former tenant arrears post remains affected by long-term absence. Available resources are being prioritised to support debt recovery and reduce further increases in former tenant arrears.

Garage arrears

The garages were outsourced to Secure Parking and Storage (SPS) in April 2026. The collection of rents for the garages and arrears is now through SPS.

The arrears as of 30 September 2026 were £2,813, 1.1%, with a target of less than 0.39%. The arrears have increased slightly since the end of 2025/26 and this is due to the transition of direct debits for customers to SPS, which was expected. We will continue to monitor the arrears.

Tenancy Sustainment

393 Households were supported to maintain their council tenancy. The team

supported residents to secure £100,040 in additional income.

Complaints

Stage 1

A total of 181 Stage 1 complaints were received during the first six months of the year, an increase of 24.8% compared to the same period last year.

Despite higher complaint volumes, performance remained above target, with 91.7% of complaints closed within timescale against a target of 90%. Complaint volumes increased most significantly within Neighbourhood Management, while Reactive Repairs remained broadly stable. The increase in complaints is likely to reflect both service challenges and improved awareness, accessibility and recording of complaints across the Council.

Complaints were predominantly linked to housing and property related services, with repairs, communication and grounds maintenance accounting for the largest proportion of cases. Analysis of complaint drivers shows that dissatisfaction is often linked to perceived inaction and poor communication rather than the service issue itself. This indicates that improvements in resident engagement, communication and timely updates may help reduce complaint demand, particularly within high volume service areas.
Fig 1

Stage 2

A total of 54 Stage 2 complaints were received during the first six months of the year, an increase of 22.7% compared to the same period last year. Overall performance was 77.8%, with 42 complaints closed within timescale, below the 90% target. Performance improved during Q2 following the resolution of a system issue that had generated incorrect due dates for Stage 2 complaints, with August achieving 100% compliance and September recording the shortest average closure time of the period. While year to date performance remains below target, recent results indicate a positive trajectory towards the required standard. The increase in Stage 2 complaints was driven primarily by Neighbourhood Management, while complaint volumes in Reactive Repairs reduced, continuing the stabilisation seen at Stage 1.

Stage 2 complaints were concentrated around repairs, anti social behaviour and communication issues. However, the most common reason for escalation was dissatisfaction with the outcome or resolution provided at Stage 1, accounting for almost 40% of all Stage 2 complaints. This suggests

that complaints are progressing to Stage 2 less because of the original service issue and more because residents do not feel their concerns have been fully resolved. Strengthening the quality of Stage 1 responses, clearly explaining decisions and managing expectations effectively will therefore be key to reducing complaint escalation.
Fig 2.

A more detailed analysis of complaints performance can be found in Appendix 4. The themes identified through complaints are not new to us, and importantly, work is already underway to address them.

We are strengthening communication with residents by reinforcing expectations around proactive updates, clearer case ownership and better management of expectations. We are also working with contractors to improve information sharing so that residents receive consistent and accurate information.

We have increased our focus on timeliness and the monitoring of outstanding actions. Managers are using performance and case information to identify delays earlier and intervene where necessary, reducing the need for residents to repeatedly contact us for progress updates.

We are also taking a more preventative approach. Complaint information is increasingly being considered alongside repairs, tenancy and wider service information to identify repeat issues and recurring service failures. This allows us to intervene earlier and address the underlying cause rather than simply responding to individual complaints.

Importantly, we are strengthening the way complaint learning feeds into management oversight and service improvement. Recurring themes are being identified, actions are being taken and progress is being monitored.

This means complaints are providing valuable intelligence that is helping us improve our services. Our focus is therefore not simply on reducing complaint numbers, but on reducing repeat service failures, improving the resident experience and demonstrating that we are listening and responding to what residents tell us.

Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)

The introduction of our new tracker system provides enhanced visibility of ASB across our housing stock. Data is segmented by ward, enabling us to identify areas with the highest volume of reports. There have been no reported incidents of hate crime during the period.

Fig 3.

Most cases are resolved early without needing legal action. The main outcomes were:

- No further issues (19 cases)
- No evidence provided (12 cases)
- Warning by housing officer (4 cases)

Appendix 3, page one provides a breakdown of ASB by area and category type, with the highest level of ASB being due to criminal activity with 24.49% of cases, followed by noise with 22.45%.

Of the 66 ASB cases resolved during Q1 and Q2, one case was identified as involving a property or alleged perpetrator where a previous case had closed within the preceding 12 months.

For serious and persistent anti social behaviour, a range of enforcement powers were used during the reporting period to protect residents and communities. Community Protection Warnings were issued as an early

intervention measure to address issues such as nuisance behaviour, untidy properties and other breaches of tenancy conditions, with the aim of securing compliance before formal enforcement became necessary. Where issues persisted, formal notices, injunctions and exclusion orders were obtained in the most severe cases.

Enforcement action remained proportionate and focused on achieving sustainable behaviour change wherever possible, with eviction used only as a last resort. The most serious cases involved persistent and high impact anti social behaviour that continued despite earlier interventions. In these circumstances, legal remedies were used to safeguard neighbouring residents and prevent further harm, while ensuring that individual circumstances, including vulnerabilities and mental health considerations, were taken into account where appropriate.

Housing Fraud

We are actively working with Ashford Borough Council who provide the fraud service for Canterbury City Council. During this period two properties were recovered due to fraudulent activity and brought back to be able to use by households in need.

Fraud training has been completed with staff and proactive fraud prevention activities are taking place, including tenancy audits and we will shortly be working with Ashford Borough Council to fraud check applications coming through the Right to Buy process.

Tenant engagement

Tenant Panels and Forums held:

- Resident Engagement Panel (REP) - four meetings excluding workshops
- Disability Forum – two meetings
- Independent Living Forum – two meetings
- Communications Group – six meetings

These groups worked closely with officers to:

- question and view performance of contractors
- review policies and procedures
- analyse tenant survey results
- write tenant newsletters
- review all contractor letters
- create new satisfaction surveys for tenants

Evidence also shows that feedback from tenant panels led to real service improvements, including changes to contractor performance following tenant concerns.

We also held focus groups with tenants on specific subjects;

- Complaints workshop
- Building Safety Guides – specifically for high-rise buildings
- Competence and Conduct Standard
- TPAS training for all REP members

The council also produced:

- one printed newsletter in August
- two e-newsletters, with content shaped by feedback from the Tenant Communications Group and coordinated with housing team to ensure accuracy and relevance. Newsletters were produced in accessible formats and distributed to all tenants.

Tenants who have made an outstanding contribution to engagement activity were formally recognised through award nominations, reflecting the council's commitment to valuing and sustaining tenant participation.

Community Events and Local Engagement held:

- Monthly Housing hubs in six areas
- Large scale community events in three areas; Whitstable, Herne Bay, Canterbury where we spoke to over 400 residents.
- Estate-based engagement and informal conversations including three events in Military Road Play Park in Canterbury, Spring Lane Neighbourhood Centre in Canterbury and Elizabeth Court in Herne Bay.
- Targeted engagement in response to specific local issues such as Mannock House and Elizabeth Court.

The last six-monthly performance report went to Cabinet on 30 June 2026, and the report can be found on the Canterbury City Council website.

Conclusions

Capital expenditure

Capital investment in tenants' homes is progressing, with £3.27 million spent against the £7.58 million planned works budget to date. Key investment includes windows and doors, roofing, disabled adaptations, fire safety and improvements at Windsor House, with further works planned in quarters 3 and 4. An additional £900,000 has been allocated to replace windows and doors in homes failing the Decent Homes Standard, alongside Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund works to improve energy efficiency and bring properties up to EPC C.

Compliance

Our compliance performance is good and reflects progress in dealing with overdue actions and hard to access properties which remain a priority for the service.

Repairs

CARDO continues to provide a generally strong and reliable repairs service, with excellent performance in emergency repairs and a high level of appointment attendance. While some measures, including routine repairs completed within target timescales and first time fix rates, remain below target, overall delivery has been consistent. The first time fix measure should be viewed in the context of the varied and often complex nature of repairs, where follow on works are sometimes necessary to achieve a lasting resolution rather than reflecting poor performance. Performance in relation to damp, condensation and mould has varied in response to changing levels of demand, and work will continue with CARDO to monitor performance closely and support ongoing service improvements for residents.

Following a challenging period, Sureserve has continued to make progress in improving service delivery, with performance becoming more stable and consistent across a number of key areas. Emergency repairs are performing well and routine repair timescales have shown encouraging improvement, while appointment attendance has remained strong. Although performance on repairs completed in a single visit continues to fall below the required standard, this remains a key focus area and improvement activity is ongoing. The Council continues to work closely with Sureserve through established contract management arrangements and is encouraged by the positive direction of travel, with further improvements expected as current actions and service improvements become embedded.

Voids

The voids service continued to manage a high number of vacant properties during the reporting period, with a significant proportion requiring extensive works before they could be relet. Performance was affected by a range of factors outside of the repairs process, including complex cases such as deceased tenancies, insurance claims, legal notice periods and access restrictions, all of which can delay progress before repairs commence or a tenancy can begin.

Despite these challenges, performance improved over the course of the period, with turnaround times reducing and properties being returned to occupation more quickly. Close working between the service, contractors and internal stakeholders has strengthened oversight of individual cases, enabling barriers to be identified and addressed earlier. While performance has not yet consistently met target levels, the overall trend is encouraging and demonstrates the positive impact of ongoing efforts to reduce delays, progress complex cases and improve the efficiency of the voids process.

Arrears and UC claimants

Income collection performance remains generally positive. 100% of Universal Credit claimants were contacted on time, while current tenant arrears of 3.98% remain comfortably within the 4.55% target. Former tenant arrears

have increased to £1.08m, partly due to a long-term staff absence, and recovery resources are being prioritised to address this.
Garage arrears are 1.1%, above the 0.39% target, following the transfer of garage management to SPS and the transition of customer direct debits.
Tenancy sustainment continues to deliver positive outcomes, with 393 households supported to maintain their tenancies and £100,040 in additional income secured for residents.

Complaints

Complaint volumes increased during the first half of the year across both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints, reflecting ongoing service demand and increased resident engagement with the complaints process. Despite the rise in cases, Stage 1 performance remained above target, demonstrating the ability to manage a higher volume of complaints while maintaining timely responses. Complaints were largely concentrated within housing related services, particularly repairs, communication and grounds maintenance, with analysis showing that dissatisfaction is often linked to communication issues and perceived delays rather than the underlying service itself.

Stage 2 performance remained below target overall, although performance improved during the latter part of the reporting period and showed a positive direction of travel. A key theme emerging from complaint analysis is that many escalations are driven by dissatisfaction with the response or resolution provided at Stage 1 rather than the original issue. This highlights the importance of maintaining high quality complaint investigations, clear communication and effective expectation management to improve resident satisfaction and reduce avoidable escalation.

Anti-social Behaviour

Anti-social behaviour reports were primarily linked to criminal activity and noise nuisance, although most cases were resolved through early intervention without the need for formal enforcement action. No hate crime incidents were reported during the period, and a significant proportion of cases were closed following resolution of the issue or where no further evidence was available to support further action.

For the most serious and persistent cases, the Council used a range of proportionate enforcement powers to protect residents and communities. While the focus remains on early intervention and achieving sustainable behaviour change, legal remedies were utilised where necessary to address ongoing high impact anti-social behaviour and safeguard those affected.

Housing Fraud
The council is working in partnership with Ashford Borough Council to strengthen tenancy fraud prevention and investigation. During the period, two properties were recovered following fraudulent activity, enabling them to be made available to households in housing need.

Tenant Engagement
Tenant engagement remains strong and wide-ranging, with regular panels, forums, workshops and focus groups giving tenants meaningful opportunities to influence services. Tenant feedback has contributed to tangible service

improvements, including changes to contractor performance, policies, communications and satisfaction surveys.

3. Relevant Council policy, strategies or budgetary documents

Corporate Plan
Housing Promise
Service Delivery Plans
HRA Budget
Complaints Policy
Asset Management Strategy

4. Consultation planned or undertaken

No consultation is required. A performance report went to Scrutiny on 25 November 2026 containing some of the data within this report. Questions were asked on a number of topics including planned works, stock condition surveys, voids, complaints, tenant engagement and anti-social behaviour. Answers were provided by the officers at the committee and details can be found in the minutes of the meeting.

5. Options available with reasons for suitability

To note:
The contents of the 2026-27 Q1 – Q2 Housing Performance KPI.

6. Reasons for supporting option recommended, with risk assessment

N/a

7. Implications

(a) Financial
Housing services are delivered in line with the HRA budget.
(b) Legal
It is the responsibility of Heads of Service to ensure service delivery is legally compliant. Any cases where legal action is taken, follows legislation, case law and best practice
(c) Equalities
The individual needs of those with protected characteristics are taken into account on a case basis as well as in policy formulation.
(d) Environmental including carbon emissions and biodiversity
This is considered when developing a capital programme of works.

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Background documents and appendices

Appendix 1 – Climate Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix 3 – Housing Performance Dashboards
Appendix 4 – Complaint Performance Report 2026-27 Q1 - Q2

publication:
No

Appendix 1 Climate Change Impact Assessment

1. **Climate Change impacts**

Topic	**Impact of proposal** Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact** If you have any relevant data, please include that in the explanation and reference the source.	**Mitigation**
Impact on the council's target of being carbon neutral by 2030 This applies to emissions of carbon dioxide as a direct result of our **own** activities and services. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals	Positive	Retrofit works are improving energy efficiency in tenants' homes by bringing the EPC rating up to C.	
Impact on carbon emissions in the Canterbury district This applies to the carbon dioxide emissions in the district as a result of your proposal. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals.	Positive	Retrofit works are improving energy efficiency in tenants' homes by bringing the EPC rating up to C.	
Emission of other climate changing gases including methane, CFCs, nitrous oxide	Neutral		

2. Adaptation to climate change - Impact on our resilience to the effects of climate change

The greatest risks posed by climate change to the UK are:

- Flooding and coastal changes including erosion from extreme events
- Risks to health caused by high temperatures
- Water shortages and drought
- Risk to natural environments & services - landscape, wildlife, pollinators, timber etc
- Risk to food production & trade
- Emergence of new pests and diseases affecting people, plants & animals

What impact do your proposals have on our ability to resist or tackle these problems in the future?

Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact**	**Mitigation**
Neutral		

3. Further assessment work
Is a further more detailed assessment required at a later stage of this proposal? If yes, please give a brief description

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

Please be aware that in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010, this document will be made available to the public.

You should treat this as a live document and keep it under continuous review. You should do this by recording any issues you identify, along with any actions you take to minimise their impact.

Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance to help you in completing this form.

For the purposes of this form, we refer to your policy, function, project or service as a proposal.

We have contact with two groups who can be useful sounding boards as part of any consultation or pre consultation engagement. They are the Disability Advisory Board (DAP) and the Ethnic Minority Independent Council (EMIC), both are local groups. You can contact Matthew Archer for further advice.

Date of initial assessment	16 November 2026
Division	HRA Housing
Proposal to be assessed	N/a
New or existing policy or function?	Existing
External (i.e. public-facing) or internal?	External
Statutory or non-statutory?	Statutory
Your name	Tracy Chambers
Your job title	Head of Housing and Community
Your contact telephone number	
Decision maker (e.g.Community Committee, Management Team etc.)	N/a
Estimated proposal deadline	N/a

Please outline your proposal, including: • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes • Who will be affected and how • How many people will be affected	There are just over 5,000 council owned homes across the Canterbury City Council district. Monitoring performance ensures resources are adequately allocated and monitored, the service we provide to tenants is of a good standard and homes are kept to a good standard.
What relevant data or information is currently available about the customers who may use this service or could be affected? Please give details; for example “x% of customers are	There is a mix of families and single people of different demographics.

female" or "x% of customers are aged over 60"	

Is the decision relevant to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, which are listed below? Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's PSED Technical Guidance		
Aim	Yes/No	Explanation
Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	No	
Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No	
Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No	

Assess the relevance of the proposal to people with different protected characteristics, and assess the impact of the proposal on people with different protected characteristics.
Your explanation should make it clear who the assessment applies to within each protected characteristic. For example, a proposal may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.

Protected characteristic	Relevance to proposal High/ Medium/ Low/None	Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	Explanation
Age	Low	Neutral	
Disability	Low	Neutral	
Gender reassignment	Low	Neutral	
Marriage and civil partnership	Low	Neutral	
Pregnancy and maternity	Low	Neutral	
Race	Low	Neutral	
Religion or belief	Low	Neutral	
Sex	Low	Neutral	
Sexual orientation	Low	Neutral	
Other groups: for example – low income/ people living in rural areas/ single parents/ carers and the cared for/	Low	Neutral	

past offenders/ long-term unemployed/ housebound/ history of domestic abuse/ people who don't speak English as a first language/ People without computer access etc.			

Are you going to make any changes to your proposal as a result of these findings, in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts identified? If yes, what are they? If no, why not?	No, not required as no negative findings.
Is there any potential negative impact which cannot be minimised or removed? If so, can it be justified? (for example, on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for another protected characteristic)	

What additional information would increase your understanding about the potential impact of this proposal?	

If a consultation exercise is required as part of your proposal, please complete the consultation planning form on iCan.

Please update the section below if:

- You have amended your proposal
- You have new information
- You have undertaken consultation

Date of revised assessment	Click here to enter a date.
Have you made any changes to your initial assessment? If so, please give brief details	
Did you undertake consultation? – if yes, give date and the consultation results:	
Do you have new information which reveals any difference in views across the protected characteristics?	
Can any new conclusions be drawn as to how the proposal will affect people with different protected characteristics?	

Are you going to make any changes to your proposal as a result of these findings, in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts identified? If yes, what are they? If no, why not?	
Is there any potential negative impact which cannot be minimised or removed? If so, can it be justified? (for example, on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for another protected characteristic)	

Should you need to revisit your assessment more than once, please ensure that you provide details of any changes or new information and the date these amendments were made

01/04/2026 30/09/2026

Capital Spend - Performance

canterbury city council

Quarter	Total Capital Spend	Latest agreed capital budget
Q1	£644,537.86	£7,580,000
Q2	£2,629,329.45	£7,580,000
Total	**£3,273,867.31**	**£7,580,000**

Contractual Invoices Paid On Time

% of contractual invoices paid on time
93.14%
Target: 99%

Month	Contractual invoices paid on time	Contractual invoices paid in total	Performance
Apr 2026	369	397	92.95%
May 2026	305	320	95.31%
Jun 2026	314	328	95.73%
Jul 2026	333	351	94.87%
Aug 2026	343	367	93.46%
Sep 2026	306	352	86.93%

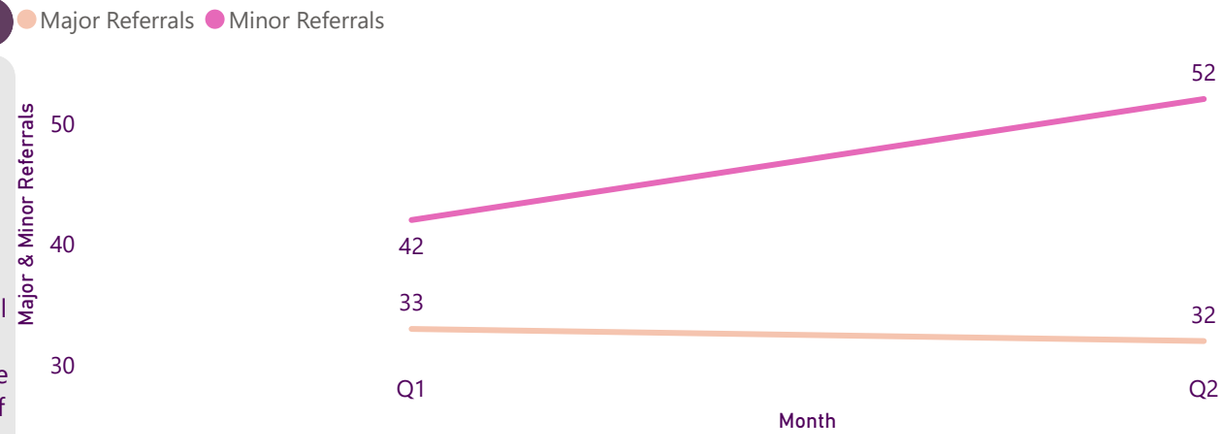
01/04/2026 30/09/2026

Aids & Adaptations - Performance

Commentary

The working relationship with PFL has strengthened significantly during the reporting period, supported by regular contract management meetings and a renewed focus on performance and accountability. While improvements have been required in areas such as invoicing and case reporting, the quality of adaptation installations has remained consistently high, with any defects addressed promptly. Enhanced contract oversight is now delivering tangible improvements and supporting a more effective service for residents. The principal challenge continues to be managing increasing demand for adaptations within available budgets. Maintaining this balance is essential to ensure residents receive the support they need while safeguarding the long term financial sustainability of the service.

Quarterly Major & Minor Adaptions Completed



Quarter	Minor Referrals	Major Referrals
Q1	42	33
Q2	52	32
Total	**94**	**65**

Current Spend
£485.61K

Budget
£1.03M

Number of major adaptation referrals
65

Number of minor adaptation referrals
94

Number of major adaptations completed
12

Number of minor adaptations completed
70

01/04/2026 30/09/2026

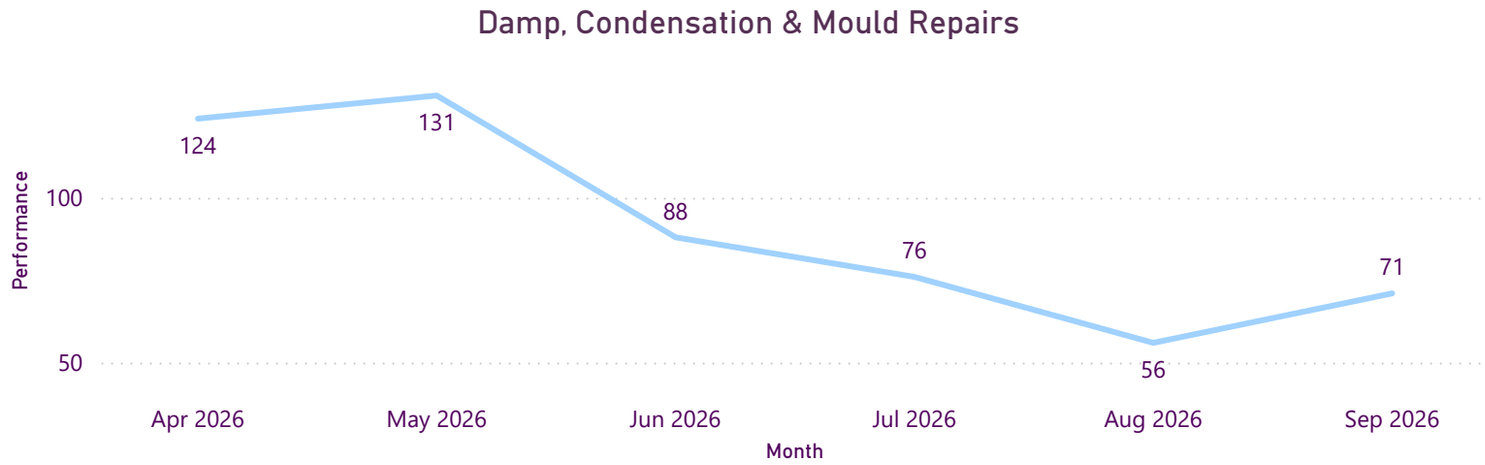
CARDO - Reactive Repairs - Performance

canterbury city council

Commentary

CARDO continues to provide a generally strong and reliable repairs service, with excellent performance in emergency repairs and a high level of appointment attendance. While some measures, including routine repairs completed within target timescales and first time fix rates, remain below target, overall delivery has been consistent. The first time fix measure should be viewed in the context of the varied and often complex nature of repairs, where follow on works are sometimes necessary to achieve a lasting resolution rather than reflecting poor performance. Performance in relation to damp, condensation and mould has varied in response to changing levels of demand, and work will continue with CARDO to monitor performance closely and support ongoing service improvements for residents.

Overall RAG: Amber



CARDO Performance

% of emergency repairs completed on time	% of routine repairs completed on ti...	% of repair appointments kept
100%	92.73%	98.63%
Target: 100%	Target: 95%	Target: 100%

% of repairs fixed the first time	Average number of days to complete routine repairs
77.59%	9
Target: 90%	

Month	Emergency Repairs Completed On Time	Routine Repairs Completed On Time	Appointments Kept	First Time Fix	Avg Days To Complete Routine Repairs
Apr 2026	100.00%	93.08%	97.31%	72.96%	10
May 2026	100.00%	94.62%	97.89%	72.51%	9
Jun 2026	100.00%	93.30%	99.39%	85.32%	9
Jul 2026	100.00%	91.72%	99.06%	74.70%	10
Aug 2026	100.00%	93.02%	98.65%	83.53%	9
Sep 2026	100.00%	90.90%	99.52%	76.86%	10

01/04/2026 30/09/2026

Sureserve - Gas Repairs - Performance

canterbury city council

Commentary

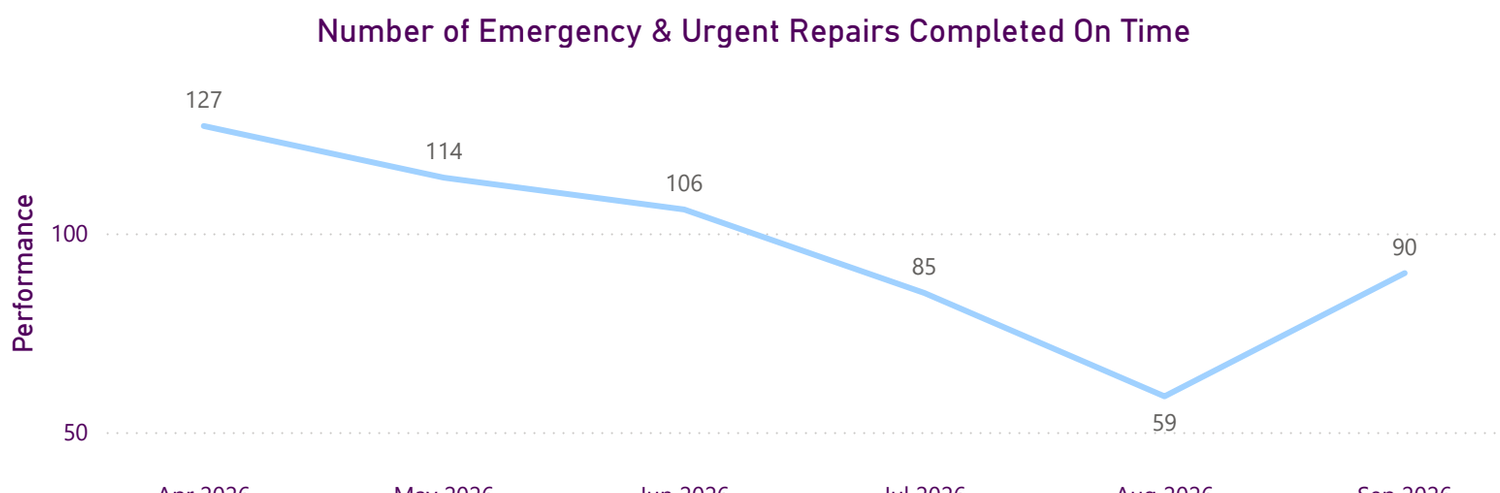
Following a challenging period, Sureserve has continued to make progress in improving service delivery, with performance becoming more stable and consistent across a number of key areas. Emergency repairs are performing well and routine repair timescales have shown encouraging improvement, while appointment attendance has remained strong. Although performance on repairs completed in a single visit continues to fall below the required standard, this remains a key focus area and improvement activity is ongoing. The Council continues to work closely with Sureserve through established contract management arrangements and is encouraged by the positive direction of travel, with further improvements expected as current actions and service improvements become embedded.

Overall RAG: Red

Sureserve Performance

% of emergency repairs completed on time	% of routine repairs completed on time - 3 days	% of repair appointments kept
97.37%	96.06%	93.45%
Target: 98%	Target: 100%	Target: 98%

% of urgent repairs completed on time	% of routine repairs completed on time - 7 days	% of repairs completed in a single visit
94.61%	97.70%	79.69%
Target: 98%	Target: 100%	Target: 85%



Month	Emergency Repairs Completed On Time	Urgent Repairs Completed On Time	Routine Repairs Completed On Time - 3 days	Routine Repairs Completed On Time - 7 Days	Repair Appointments Kept	Repairs Completed In A Single Visit
Apr 2026	100.00%	94.57%	96.49%	98.39%	92.77%	77.83%
May 2026	100.00%	94.44%	95.71%	98.39%	93.17%	79.14%
Jun 2026	100.00%	95.28%	96.97%	97.92%	94.65%	80.13%
Jul 2026	83.33%	95.24%	98.31%	96.15%	94.15%	81.05%
Aug 2026	100.00%	93.10%	94.74%	96.00%	92.59%	81.08%
Sep 2026	100.00%	94.44%	95.35%	97.37%	93.28%	79.69%

01/04/2026 30/09/2026

Compliance - LGSR & EICR

LGSR

Current compliance - Communal	Current compliance - Domestic	Target
100%	98.29%	100%

Commentary

Gas safety compliance continues to perform strongly, with statutory servicing remaining at or near 100% compliance across the housing stock. The team continues to proactively manage access arrangements and contractor performance to ensure annual gas servicing is completed within required timeframes. Robust monitoring processes remain in place to identify upcoming due dates and support early intervention where access difficulties arise, ensuring resident safety remains protected.

EICR

Current compliance - Communal	Current compliance - Domestic	Target
100%	96.37%	100%

C1s from communal EICRs	C2s from communal EICR	C1s from domestic EICRs	C2s from domestic EICRs
0	0	0	15

Commentary

Electrical compliance continues to be effectively managed, with EICR inspections progressing in line with programme requirements. During November, a new five-year EICR delivery programme was completed and will commence in January 2027. The revised programme has been developed to flatten the significant peaks previously forecast in 2028 and 2029, creating a more sustainable inspection profile, improving contractor capacity planning and reducing future compliance risks. The access improvement process introduced earlier this year continues to support reductions in overdue inspections and has improved overall programme performance.

01/04/2026 30/09/2026

Compliance - Lifts, Stair Lifts & Hoists

canterbury city council

Communal Passenger Lifts

Current Compliance - Communal	Target
100%	100%

Outstanding High Risk Defects	Outstanding Medium Risk Defects
0	18

Communal Stair lifts

Current Compliance - Communal	Target
100%	100%

Hoists

Current Compliance - Communal	Target
100%	100%

Current Compliance - Domestic Stairlifts/Hoists
96.91%

Commentary

Lift safety compliance remains strong, with statutory inspections and routine maintenance continuing in accordance with legislative requirements. Any defects identified through inspections are tracked and managed through the Council's compliance management arrangements, with priority given to safety-critical issues. Regular performance monitoring with contractors continues to help ensure lift systems remain safe and available for residents.

01/04/2026 30/09/2026

Compliance - Asbestos & Water Risk Assessments

canterbury city council

Asbestos

Stock with up to date asbestos check
91.43%

Target
100%

Outstanding Communal Asbestos Remedials
9

Commentary

The asbestos management programme remains compliant, with surveys, re-inspections and remedial recommendations progressing as planned. Planning for the 2027 survey programme has now been completed. To improve resource management and contractor performance, the programme will be delivered over a six-month period from July to December rather than the previous three-month delivery window. This revised approach will provide greater flexibility, improve survey quality and reduce operational pressures on both contractors and internal teams.

Legionella and Water Risk Assessments

Compliance
100%

Target
100%

Outstanding Remedials Total
48

Outstanding High Remedial Actions
11

Outstanding Medium Remedial Actions
30

Outstanding Low Remedial Actions
7

Commentary

The water hygiene programme continues to perform well, with routine monitoring, inspection, sampling and remedial work being carried out in accordance with the Council's management arrangements.

01/04/2026 30/09/2026

Compliance - FRA

FRA

Stock with up to date FRA	Target
100%	100%

Communal Smoke Detectors	Communal Fire Doors	Communal Emergency Lighting	Fire Extinguishers
98%	100%	100%	100%

Outstanding Remedials
207

High	Medium	Low
8	1	105

Actions Overdue
93

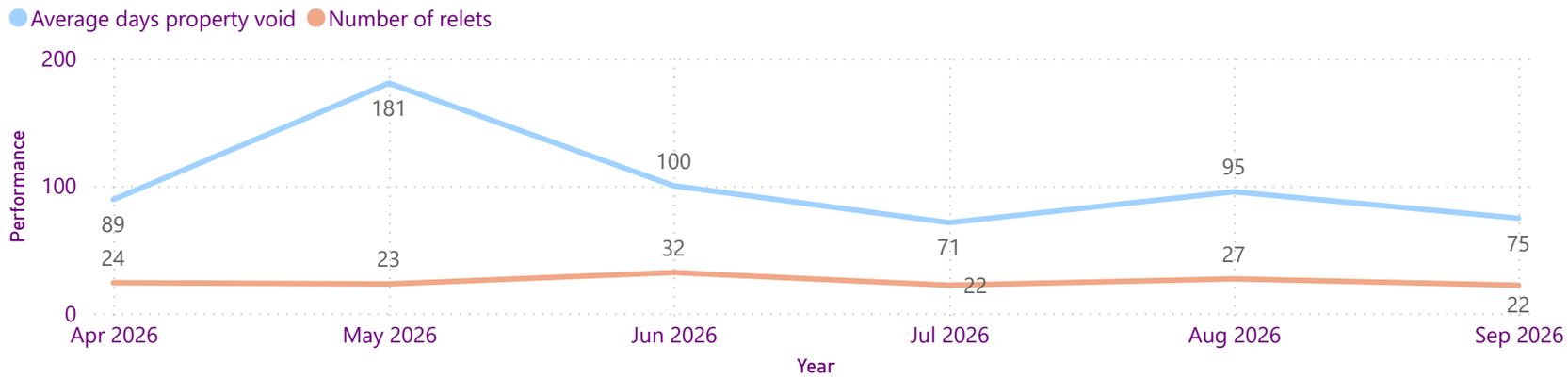
Commentary

The FRA programme remains on track, with routine assessments and action management continuing across the housing portfolio. Progress continues to be made in reducing outstanding FRA actions through targeted monitoring and follow-up with contractors and internal teams.

01/04/2026 30/09/2026

Voids All Relets - Performance

canterbury city council



Overall RAG

Red

Total Terminations

166

Total Relets

150

Contractor Performance

Average days with Contractor

29.33

Average number of days between keys received and contractor start date

21.25

Average number of days between contractor sign off and tenant start date

18.55

Overall Voids Performance

Average relet days for voids with minor work

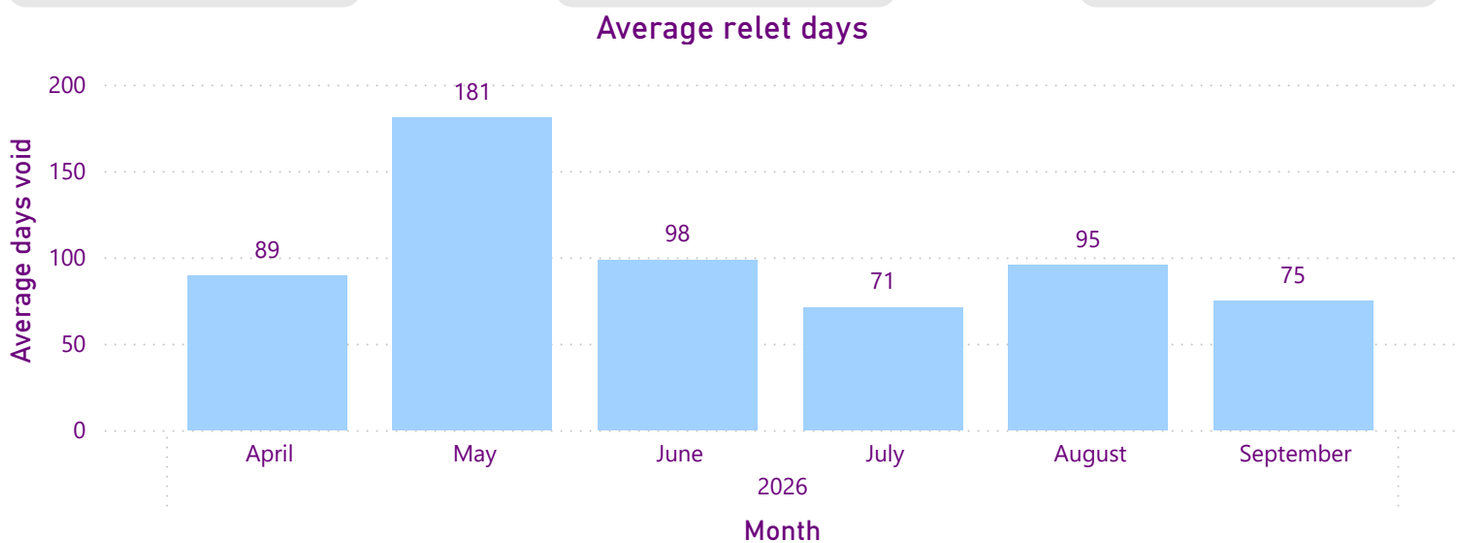
88

Average relet days for voids with major work

114

Average relet days for major & minor work

102



01/04/2026 30/09/2026

Income Recovery- Performance

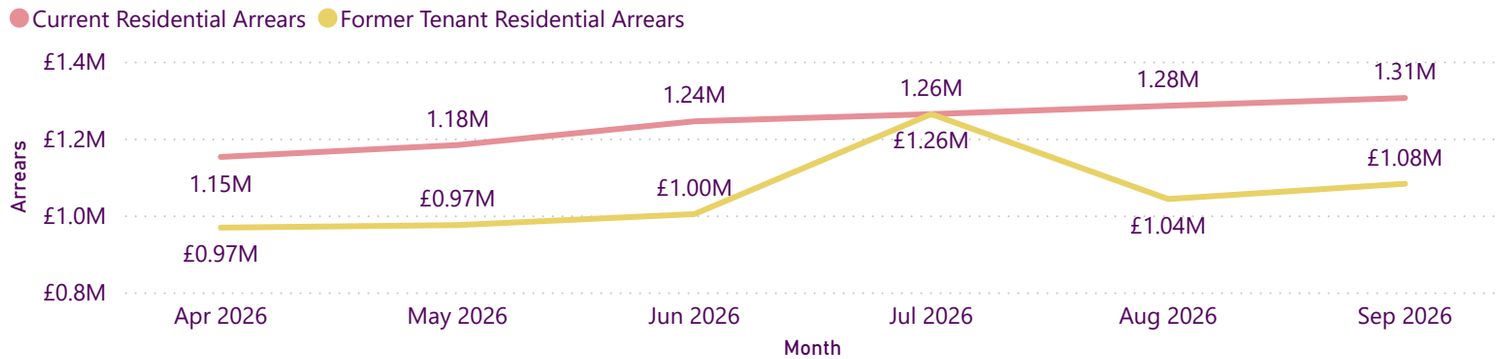
Commentary

Income collection performance remains strong overall, with current tenant arrears remaining within target levels and all Universal Credit claimants contacted within required timescales. The service continues to support tenancy sustainment effectively, helping residents maintain their tenancies and maximise household income, contributing to positive outcomes for both residents and the Council.

While overall performance remains positive, challenges remain in relation to former tenant arrears and garage rent collection. Former tenant arrears have increased during the period, largely as a result of reduced recovery capacity arising from a long term staff absence, and resources are being prioritised to minimise further growth and strengthen recovery activity.

Overall RAG: Green

Arrears across the period



Income Recovery

Residential arrears as a % of annual income
3.98%
Target Less Than: 4.55%

Current value of residential arrears
£1.31M

Month	Total Residential Arrears	Projected Annual Rental Income	Target	Performance
Apr 2026	1,151,837.21	32,831,319.88	4.55%	3.51%
May 2026	1,182,777.00	32,762,538.44	4.55%	3.61%
Jun 2026	1,244,478.23	32,714,515.08	4.55%	3.80%
Jul 2026	1,263,224.49	32,742,431.74	4.55%	3.86%
Aug 2026	1,284,894.21	32,762,210.81	4.55%	3.92%
Sep 2026	1,305,103.70	32,751,781.76	4.55%	3.98%

01/04/2026 30/09/2026

Complaints - Performance

canterbury city council

Commentary

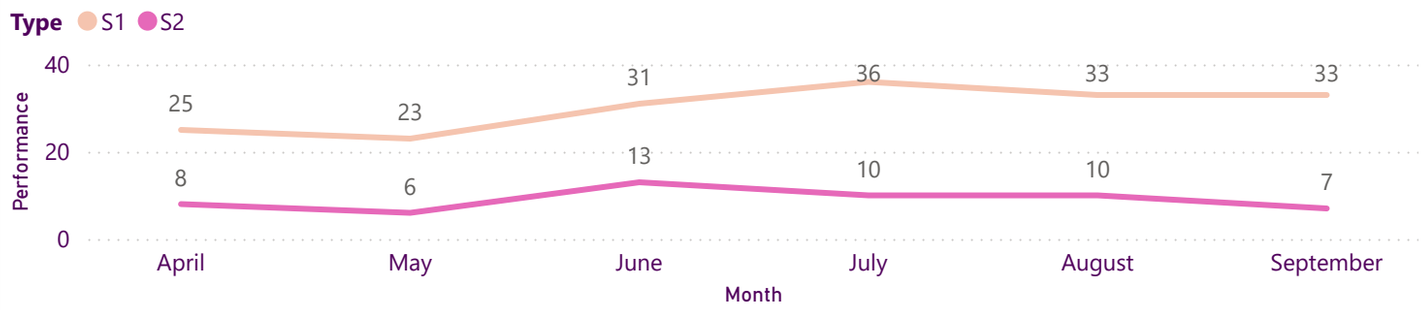
Complaint volumes increased during the first half of the year across both Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints. Despite higher demand, Stage 1 performance remained above target, demonstrating effective complaint handling and a continued ability to respond within timescales. Complaints were primarily linked to housing services, particularly repairs, communication and grounds maintenance, with analysis indicating that resident dissatisfaction is often driven by perceived inaction and poor communication rather than the service issue itself.

Stage 2 performance remained below target overall, although results improved significantly during the latter part of the reporting period and show a positive direction of travel. A recurring theme within escalated complaints was dissatisfaction with the outcome or resolution provided at Stage 1 rather than the original issue, highlighting the importance of clear communication, effective expectation management and high quality complaint responses to reduce avoidable escalation.

Overall RAG

Amber

Number of complaints received in the period



Complaint Performance

% of stage 1 complaints completed on time

91.7%

% of stage 2 complaints completed on time

77.8%

Type	Received Complaints	Assessable Complaints	Closed on time	Average days to close
S1	181	181	166	7
S2	54	54	42	18
Total	**235**	**235**	**208**	**9**

01/04/2026 30/09/2026

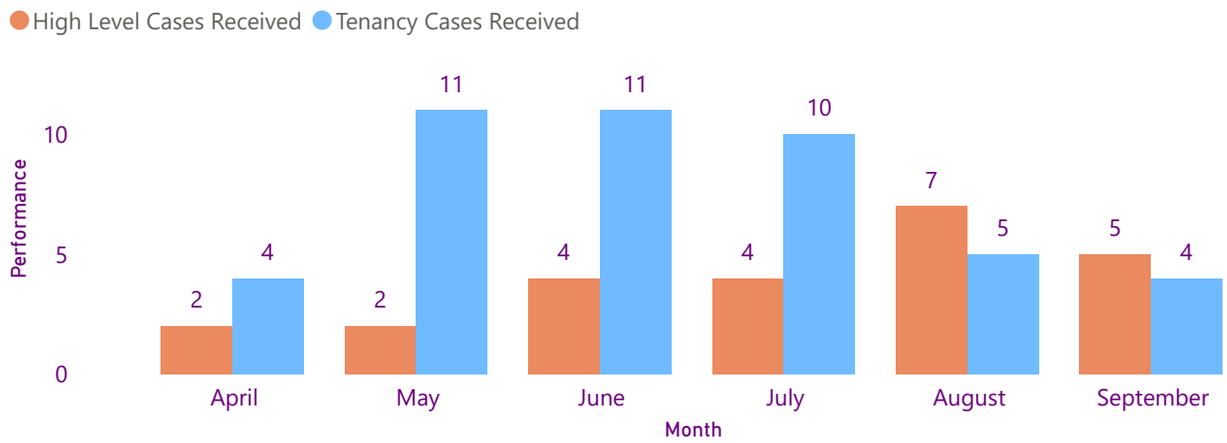
ASB - Performance

Commentary

For serious and persistent anti social behaviour, the Council used a range of proportionate enforcement powers during the reporting period, beginning with early intervention measures aimed at securing behaviour change before formal action became necessary. In the most severe cases, where anti social behaviour continued despite repeated intervention, legal remedies including notices, injunctions and exclusion orders were used to protect residents and communities, with evictions remaining a last resort and individual circumstances taken into account where appropriate.

Closure reason	Closed Complaints by Reason
Warning by Housing Officer	4
Visit with Police	1
Surrender of tenancy	3
Removal of trespasser	1
Referred to Tenancy	1
Notice Served	3
Not ASB, inconsiderate behaviour	5
No further issues	19
No evidence provided	12
No	1
Management transfer	5
Eviction	3
Diary sheets not returned	4
Court action	2
Community Protection Warning	2
Total	**66**

Monthly volume of high level & tenancy ASB cases received



Number of cases opened

69

Number of cases closed

66

ASB Performance

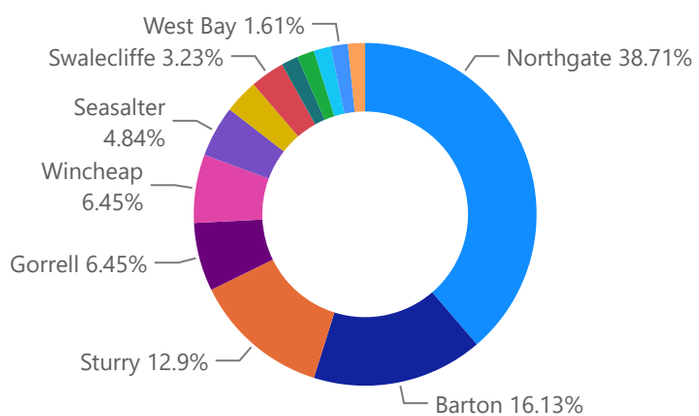
% of complaints per 1000 homes

1.38%

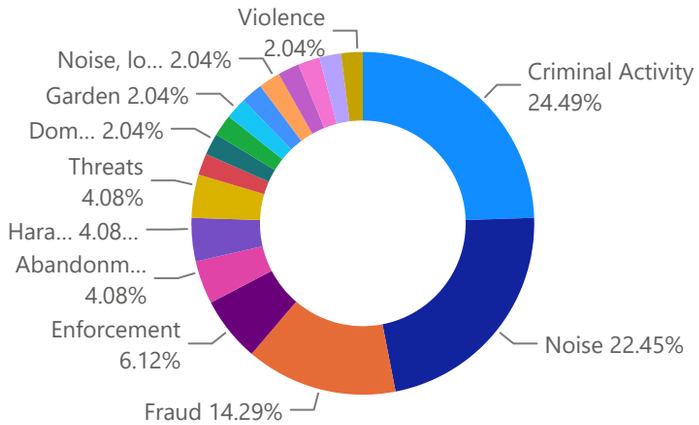
% of cases where eviction used to close case

4.55%

ASB by ward area



ASB by category type



Appendix 4

2026-27 Q1 - Q2 Housing Complaints Performance Report & Analysis

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Introduction

This report is for the end of year complaints performance for Q1 – 2 of the 2026/27 fiscal year. It looks at complaint performance, complaint volume, complaint themes and what conclusions and learnings can be taken from the information.

Overall KPI performance

Performance is calculated by identifying all complaints that are assessable against the KPI, comprising both completed and outstanding complaints. The number of complaints closed on time within the required timescale is then divided by the total assessable complaint cohort. The resulting percentage is presented in the performance column of the tables. The target performance target for both Stage 1 and 2 complaints is 90%.

Stage 1 complaint performance:

A total of 181 complaints were received during the first six months of the year, with 181 assessable against the KPI at the time of writing. Overall performance was 91.7%, meaning the service narrowly exceeded its 90% target, with 166 complaints closed within timescale. Complaint handling was generally timely throughout the period, with acknowledgements issued in an average of 2.4 days and complaints closed in an average of 7 days.

Performance was particularly strong in Q1, achieving 94.9%, with each month exceeding the target. Average acknowledgement and closure times also improved across the quarter, suggesting increasing efficiency in complaint handling. Although complaint volumes increased from 79 in Q1 to 102 in Q2, performance remained resilient in July and August, both of which continued to exceed the target despite the higher caseload.

The overall reduction in performance during Q2 was driven largely by September, when the percentage of complaints closed on time fell to 81.8%. This coincided with an increase in average closure time to 8.7 days, the highest monthly figure in the period. While overall performance remains above target, currently September represents the exception to an otherwise consistent trend of good performance.

Stage 2 complaints performance:

A total of 54 Stage 2 complaints were received during the period. Overall performance was 77.8%, with 42 complaints closed within timescales. This is below the 90% target. Complaints have been acknowledged promptly, with an average acknowledgement time of just 1.8 days.

Performance improved between quarters. In Q1, only 74.1% of complaints were closed on time, with particularly weak performance in May and June. This was the result of a bug in our complaint handling system that generated an incorrect due date for stage 2 complaints. Q2 achieved 81.5%, representing a improvement. This was accompanied by a slight improvement in acknowledgement times, although average closure times remained broadly consistent.

Performance during Q2 was driven by exceptionally strong results in August, achieving 100% complaints closed on time. September also recorded the shortest average closure time of the period at 12.4 days. While overall performance remains below target for the year to date, the data suggests that service performance has improved significantly in recent months and is moving closer to the required standard.

Stage 1 performance by service area

Neighbourhood Management and Reactive Repairs received the vast majority of stage 1 complaints during the period, accounting for 138 of the 181 complaints. Despite these significantly higher volumes, both service areas delivered performance close to or above the 90% target, closing over nine in ten complaints within timescale. This suggests that the services experiencing the greatest customer demand have maintained effective

complaint handling arrangements and that overall performance is being sustained within the council's highest volume services.

The service that fell significantly below target was Homeownership, which achieved 75% performance. However, these areas received a comparatively small number of complaints, meaning that the timeliness of a single case has a disproportionate impact on the overall result. Overall, the service area breakdown shows that the council's strongest performance is being achieved where complaint volumes are highest, providing confidence that complaint handling arrangements remain effective across the organisation.

Stage 2 performance by service area

Reactive Repairs and Neighbourhood Management accounted for the majority of stage 2 complaints, receiving 21 and 16 complaints respectively. Together, these two service areas represented almost 70% of all stage 2 complaints received and therefore had the greatest influence on overall performance. While Reactive Repairs achieved 85.7% of complaints closed within timescale, narrowly below the 90% target, performance in Neighbourhood Management was significantly lower at 56.3%. It also recorded the longest average closure time of any service area at 26 days, suggesting that delays in resolving complaints within this service were a major contributing factor behind the overall stage 2 performance of 77.8%.

Outside of Neighbourhood Management, performance was relatively consistent across services. This suggests that overall stage 2 performance is disproportionately affected by a small number of services, particularly Neighbourhood Management, and that improvements in these areas would have a significant positive impact on the council's overall outturn.

Complaint volume

Stage 1 complaints received:

Based on the complaint volume data for the period, there has been a 24.8% increase in complaints received for the period compared to the same time last year. Neighbourhood Management is the most active service area in terms of complaints received and has seen a 47.1% increase in Stage 1 complaints compared to the same period in the previous year. Reactive Repairs, despite also being one of the highest volume service areas for complaints, has seen only a 1.6% increase in Stage 1 complaint volume. This suggests that the sustained year on year increases in complaints previously experienced within Reactive Repairs may now be beginning to stabilise, with complaint volumes remaining broadly consistent despite continued high levels of service demand.

While the increase in complaints received is likely to reflect some deterioration in customer experience, it may also be influenced by positive organisational changes. Continued work to improve complaint awareness and handling across the council has increased staff confidence in identifying expressions of dissatisfaction and recording them correctly as complaints. In addition, improvements to the accessibility and visibility of the complaints process may have made it easier for residents to provide feedback, resulting in a greater proportion of concerns being formally captured through the complaints framework. As such, increases in complaint volumes should be considered in the context of both service performance and improved complaint recording practices.

Stage 2 complaints received:

Stage 2 complaint volumes have increased by 22.7% compared to the same period last year, rising from 44 to 54 complaints. The majority of this increase occurred during Q1, where volumes were 42.1% higher than the previous year. Growth was particularly pronounced in April and May, although the rate of increase moderated in Q2, where complaint volumes were only 8% higher than the same period last year. Complaint numbers then remained stable in August and September.

At service level, Neighbourhood Management was the largest contributor to the overall increase in stage 2 complaints, recording a 23.1% rise compared to the previous year. Given the relatively high complaint volumes within the service, this increase has had a more significant impact on the council's overall stage 2 position than changes elsewhere. By contrast, Assets & Property recorded a 500% increase; however, this should be viewed in context, as the increase represents a rise from one complaint in the previous year to six this year. While the percentage change is substantial, the actual increase in volume is modest and therefore has a limited impact on overall complaint numbers.

Reactive Repairs saw a reduction of 8.7% in Stage 2 complaints compared to the previous year, continuing the stabilisation seen in Stage 1 complaints. Given that Reactive Repairs has historically experienced some of the highest complaint volumes across the council, this may indicate that previous growth in complaint demand is beginning to level off. Contracts and Sheltered Accommodation also recorded reductions in complaint volumes, although the small number of complaints received within these service areas means that relatively minor changes in numbers can produce large percentage movements. Overall, the data suggests that the increase in Stage 2 complaints is being driven primarily by Neighbourhood Management, while complaint volumes in several other service areas have remained stable or declined.

Complaint themes and outcomes

The following charts show complaint themes first by primary theme of the complaint, and then by driving theme. The primary theme is the broad subject the complaint is centred around, and the driver theme seeks to represent the service failure within that which has driven the resident to complain.

The primary theme data shows that complaints are heavily concentrated around housing management and property related issues. The single largest theme is Repairs Needed, followed by CCC Communication and Grounds Maintenance. Together, these three themes account for more than 40% of all stage 1 complaints, indicating that the majority of dissatisfaction relates either to property condition, estate services, or communication with residents. Anti-Social Behaviour and Repairs Outstanding also feature prominently, reinforcing the extent to which housing and neighbourhood management activities drive complaint demand.

Beyond these headline themes, the data demonstrates that complaint volumes are spread across a wide range of issues, with no other single theme accounting for more than 7% of complaints. This suggests that while certain service areas generate a disproportionate share of complaints, there is no single systemic issue driving dissatisfaction across the organisation. Instead, complaints arise from a broad range of service interactions, reflecting the diverse nature of the council's housing services and responsibilities.

The driver theme analysis provides further insight into why residents decide to complain. The dominant driver is Lack of Action, accounting for more than a quarter of all Stage 1 complaints. This is followed by Failure to Respond, Quality of Work and Failure to Keep Updated.

Collectively, these themes suggest that residents are often motivated to complain not simply because an issue exists, but because they feel insufficient progress has been made, communication has been poor, or expectations have not been managed effectively. The prominence of these themes indicates that resident perceptions are heavily influenced by

responsiveness and communication throughout the customer journey.

Taken together, the primary and driver theme data suggests that while repairs and neighbourhood issues remain the most common subjects of complaint, the underlying causes of dissatisfaction are frequently linked to communication and perceived inaction rather than the service issue itself. This presents an opportunity to reduce complaint demand through proactive resident engagement, clearer communication, and regular updates on service requests, particularly for areas such as repairs, grounds maintenance and anti-social behaviour where complaint volumes are highest.

The Stage 2 theme data provides a useful insight into the issues that residents continue to feel dissatisfied with after receiving a Stage 1 response. The most common primary themes are Repairs Needed and Anti-Social Behaviour, each accounting for 19% of Stage 2 complaints, followed by CCC Communication at 13.8%. This suggests that complaints relating to ongoing service issues and neighbourhood management concerns are more

likely to escalate when residents do not feel that sufficient progress has been made or that their concerns have been fully addressed.

The prominence of Anti-Social Behaviour at Stage 2 is particularly notable, as it represents a significantly larger proportion of escalated complaints than was seen at stage 1, potentially reflecting the complexity of these cases and the challenge of delivering outcomes that fully meet residents' expectations.

The distribution of primary themes at stage 2 is also more concentrated than at stage 1. While stage 1 complaints were spread across a wide range of service areas, stage 2 complaints are focused more heavily on a smaller number of issues, particularly repairs, communication, anti-social behaviour and disputes regarding decisions or processes. This suggests that complaints are not generally escalating because of isolated service failures, but rather where residents have ongoing concerns regarding the handling, progression or outcome of a case.

The driver themes supports this conclusion. By far the most common reason for escalation is Unsatisfactory/Ineffective Resolution, which accounts for 39.7% of all Stage 2 complaints. This is significantly higher than any other driver theme and indicates that many residents escalating complaints to stage 2 remain dissatisfied with the response or resolution provided at Stage 1. Other notable drivers include Lack of Action, Incorrect/Misleading Information and Policy/Procedure Application, suggesting that residents are not only challenging service outcomes but are also questioning whether appropriate action has been taken and whether decisions have been made fairly and accurately.

Taken together, the data indicates that Stage 2 complaints are less likely to be driven by the original service request itself and more likely to be driven by dissatisfaction with how the complaint has been handled or resolved. Whilst repairs, anti-social behaviour and communication remain the most common underlying subjects, the overwhelming prevalence of Unsatisfactory/Ineffective Resolution suggests that improving the quality of stage 1 responses, managing expectations clearly, and providing residents with greater confidence that their concerns have been fully considered will help reduce the number of complaints progressing to stage 2.

Learning and ongoing improvement:

Communication and Resident Engagement:
The most significant learning that appears throughout our individual complaint handling is the need for stronger communication with residents and between teams throughout day to day service delivery. This includes providing regular updates on ongoing cases, responding to correspondence in a timely manner, managing expectations more effectively, explaining decisions clearly, showing empathy when residents are experiencing difficulties, and ensuring communication continues when officers are absent. Several cases also identified failures in communication between Canterbury Council and contractors, resulting in residents receiving inconsistent or incomplete information.

Improving communication remains a key opportunity for service improvement. The learning suggests that many complaints could have been prevented, or their impact reduced, through clearer and more proactive engagement. A more consistent approach to resident updates, expectation management and ownership of customer contact would help improve resident confidence and reduce avoidable escalation into the complaints process.

Timeliness and Responsiveness:
A second major learning relates to delays in responding to residents, progressing cases and completing agreed actions. Learnings repeatedly reference the need for swifter responses, adherence to timescales, quicker communication, reduced processing times, faster action on repairs and inspections, and ensuring actions are completed when promised.

These findings indicate the importance of improving service responsiveness and there is an opportunity to strengthen monitoring and case tracking processes to ensure delays are identified and addressed earlier. Improving timeliness is likely to have a direct impact on customer satisfaction and complaint volumes.

Complaint prevention:
A further learning is the need to be more proactive in identifying and addressing issues before they escalate. This includes increasing inspection frequencies, prioritising recurring repairs, monitoring communal areas more closely, following up after repairs and engaging residents earlier when concerns arise.

This would demonstrate a shift from reactive problem solving towards preventative service delivery. By identifying issues sooner and intervening earlier, services can reduce repeat failures, improve resident outcomes and lower the demand created by recurring complaints.

Individual Case Learnings:
Learning is taken from complaints to create service change and improve outcomes for residents. Below are some examples of learning from complaints in Q1 and Q2.

Example 1 – Following a complaint about a neighbour, which caused a breakdown in the relationship, options have been explored for how these types of situations could be managed better in the future and the use of external mediation services is being considered, a trial will begin shortly.

Example 2 – Following a complaint about the use of communal areas, a more open and collaborative approach to concerns about communal spaces will take place. This includes engaging with residents before formal action wherever it is appropriate and possible to do so, being clear about the reasons for decisions, and explaining the status of any notice or proposed action in language residents can readily understand.

Example 3 – Following a complaint about ASB. Learning was taken back to staff to advise long running ASB investigations require proactive and regular communication, even when there is no substantive change to report. Residents should receive clear explanations of the actions taken, the limitations on what can be disclosed and the evidential thresholds that apply

to further enforcement. Complaint tracking and administration should be robust so that complaints and enquiries are not delayed or confused with the separate ASB case management process.

Conclusions

Performance: Overall complaint handling performance remains positive, with Stage 1 complaints exceeding the 90% target and Stage 2 performance showing a marked improvement during the latter part of the period. While performance was impacted by a decline in timeliness during September and by below target stage 2 results in some service areas, the data demonstrates that most complaints continue to be acknowledged and resolved within expected timescales. Continued focus on services with lower performance, particularly those managing more complex escalated complaints, should help improve consistency and support achievement of targets across all areas.

Volume: Complaint volumes at both stage 1 and stage 2 have increased significantly compared to the previous year, with intake at each stage more than doubling. Most of this increase has been concentrated within the Reactive Repairs and Neighbourhood Management services. Analysis of complaint themes suggests this growth is driven in part by underperformance from third party contractors, inconsistencies in communication with residents across services, and customer dissatisfaction with outcomes. These factors continue to place sustained pressure on complaint handling capacity and highlight areas where targeted service improvement is required.

Themes & outcomes: The thematic analysis highlights that repairs, communication and neighbourhood management issues continue to be the most common subjects of complaint. However, the factors driving dissatisfaction are more frequently linked to perceived inaction, poor communication and ineffective resolution than the underlying service issue itself. This is particularly evident at Stage 2, where dissatisfaction with the resolution provided at Stage 1 is the dominant reason for escalation.

We upheld 60.7% of Stage 1 complaints (110/181) and 57% of Stage 2 complaints (31/54), indicating that service failures or shortcomings are identified in most complaints investigated at both stages. The consistency of the uphold rate across the two stages suggests that the nature and quality of complaints progressing through the process remains broadly similar, with Stage 2 reviews continuing to identify areas where service delivery, communication or complaint handling could have been improved.

The findings therefore reinforce the importance of addressing the underlying drivers of dissatisfaction, particularly lack of action, communication failures and ineffective resolution, as improvements in these areas are likely to reduce complaint demand and improve residents' experience of the complaints process.

Learnings & Ongoing Improvement: Taken together, the learning indicates that the organisation's greatest opportunities for improvement lie in strengthening communication, improving responsiveness and ensuring consistent follow up of cases.

While many of the individual service failures are varied, the underlying causes are remarkably consistent. The learning demonstrates that improving the fundamentals of customer contact and case management is likely to deliver the most significant improvement in resident experience.

Contact Officer:
Joshua Pugh (Case Services Officer L3 – Complaints)
Joshua.Pugh@Canterbury.gov.uk

Cabinet

7th December 2026

Subject: **Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042**

Director and Head of Service:

Bill Hicks, Director of Place

Richard Moore, Head of Transport and Environment

Officer:

Giles Seaford, Leisure Development Officer/Sports Delivery Officer

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Cabinet Member:

Cllr Connie Nolan, Cabinet Member for community safety, engagement and inclusion

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Key or Non Key decision:

Non Key

Decision Issues:

These matters are within the authority of the Cabinet

Is any of the information exempt from publication:

This report is open to the public.

CCC ward(s): ALL

Summary and purpose of the report:

To seek Cabinet approval to adopt the Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy.

To Resolve:

To approve and adopt the Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy as evidence to the local plan

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Next stage in process:

Subject to Cabinet's adoption, the Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy will become a key strategy for the council, its partners and the Canterbury district. The Strategy will be used as evidence for the Local Plan and will be monitored annually through the council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), by the PPS Steering Group and by the Local Plan team.

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1. Introduction

Canterbury City Council (CCC) commissioned a full Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities strategy to provide an up-to-date and robust evidence base to assist the Council in

meeting the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] and associated guidance with regards to their plan making and where relevant, planning decision making.

The strategy is required as Local Plan evidence, in a similar way that the Open Space Strategy, Green Infrastructure Strategy and the draft Nutrient Mitigation Strategy are also evidence documents and is consistent with other evidence-based documents. The Council requires Sport England to support the Local Plan and Sport England requires the strategy to be adopted. Without Sport England providing a Statement of Common Ground or an updated Playing Pitch Strategy, the Local Plan is harder to defend and could therefore be chipped away at through the examination. So, agreement is now sought to formally adopt the strategy.

2. Detail

A robust strategy framework for playing pitches, outdoor sports and their ancillary facilities, guides investment decisions and supports funding bids. The Council last produced a separate Playing Pitch Strategy and a Built Facility Strategy in 2020. In response to comments received from Sport England in relation to the Local Plan, the council committed to producing a single updated strategy.

A delegated decision was made in September 2025 to commence work. The Council, supported by consultants, then undertook in-depth data collection and analysis. This comprised visits to over 90 sites, including those managed/maintained by the Council, Parish Councils, education sites and private or commercial sites. In addition, local sports clubs, Parish Councils, education sites, private and commercial sites and the Council have provided detailed feedback on current indoor and outdoor sports facilities usage and demand, alongside their aspirational growth plans. The document has been drafted in the format specified by Sport England, with a steering group that included representatives from relevant governing bodies of sport.

Methodology: The strategy is robust, based on local needs (current and projected to 2042), and based on the Sport England Framework. To achieve this, the strategy followed Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance' and 'Assessing needs and opportunities guide for indoor and outdoor sports facilities', as outlined below.

Stage A – Prepare and tailor the approach: Establish a clear understanding of the purpose, scope and scale of the assessment.

Stage B – Gather information on supply and demand: Establish a clear picture of the supply of facilities within the area and the current and future demands for facilities.

Stage C – Assessment – Bringing the information together: Using the data from Stage B to build a picture of the level of provision, looking at four key elements. Developing key findings and facility implications around the framework of protect, enhance, provide.

Application – Application of an assessment: Using the outcome of the assessment to deliver key priorities in different settings.

Consultation: A survey was distributed to sports clubs and sports organisations in the area covering details on current facilities, current and future demand and the issues facing each specific sport. 43 individual sports clubs which primarily use playing pitch facilities responded to the invitation to complete the survey, which covers a range of between 85-100% of teams across the different playing pitch sports in the Canterbury

District.

Key findings:

1. Overall, the Canterbury District is well provided for with community accessible sports facilities. The current stock of swimming pools and sports halls meet the majority of current demand across the district, with the supply of sports halls also able to cater for projected future demand.

With 6 pitches on 3 sites, community hockey clubs based in the district have sufficient capacity for current demand and additional capacity available to grow in the future. The current provision of remaining sports facilities should be protected and additional demand over the strategy period assessed as part of ongoing strategy reviews in order to consider changes in demand when planning any proposed changes or development of new sports facilities.

2. There are some key areas where the current supply cannot meet the current or future demand for playing pitches or sports facilities.

3. The grass rugby pitches at both Canterbury RFC and Whitstable RFC are currently used significantly more than their carry capacity due to the pressures of midweek training and matches. There are opportunities to relocate some of this training demand to World Rugby Compliant (WRC) 3G Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP's) should additional hours be secured for Canterbury RFC at the University of Kent pitch and the existing poor quality 3G AGP at the Whitstable School be resurfaced to a WRC 3G shock pad and surface.

4. There is a shortfall of fine turf pitches for cricket to meet current and future demand, which could be met through enhanced maintenance, reinstatement of lapsed pitches at Cherry Orchard Playing Field and Kenfield Cricket Pitch, and the development of new fine turf squares through S106 contributions at Saxon Fields and Brooklands Farm.

5. For football, the recent growth and projected growth in demand will outstrip the existing supply of facilities, leading to a shortfall of grass and artificial pitches over the strategy period (2026 – 2042). This demand for 3G AGPs can met through the ongoing resurfacing of the SD AGP at Herne Bay High School to a 3G surface and the development of a new 3G AGP at Simon Langton Girls Grammar School. For grass pitches, the relocation of Tankerton FC to a new site, which secures the provision of pitches for future use as well as providing additional pitches for community use, will partially meet the projected shortfall of grass pitches, with the remainder developed through S106 contributions at proposed developments.

3. Relevant Council policy, strategies or budgetary documents

This strategy is an evidence based document for the Council's Local Plan. It also supports the Canterbury district's Corporate Plan and links to the adopted CCC Open Space Strategy.

The Playing Pitch and Facilities Strategy action plan will feed into the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which sets out the infrastructure required to support growth in the district and provides a framework to guide decision making relating to infrastructure delivery, including the allocation of monies from the Community

Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

4. Consultation planned or undertaken

(a) General consultations

The document was informed by in-depth data collection, site visits, and by working closely with local sports clubs, facility leads and national governing bodies of sport being consulted throughout the 12 month period in which the data was collected. This was carried out in line with Sport England's step by step framework for Playing Pitch Strategies. No further consultation is required or planned.

5. Options available with reasons for suitability

Option 1 - To formally adopt the strategy as an evidence document for the local plan. The Council has committed to producing a Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy, as evidence to the local plan that follows Sports England's guidance. Recommended

Option 2 - To not adopt the strategy as evidence of the local plan. The impact is that Sport England won't provide a statement of common ground for the Local Plan making it less robust through the Local Plan examination process. Not recommended.

Option 3 - To not proceed with formally adopting the strategy and carry out further consultation. The impact would be that the Local Plan is delayed. Not recommended.

6. Reasons for supporting option recommended, with risk assessment

Option 1 - To formally adopt the strategy as an evidence document for the local plan. The Council has committed to producing a Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy, as evidence to the local plan that follows Sports England’s guidance. Not adopting the strategy will weaken the draft local plan examination in public.

7. Implications

(a) Financial

The strategy will be used to seek external funding and inform requests for S106 contributions towards pitches and outdoor sports facilities district wide, including those managed/maintained by the Council, or those owned by the Council and leased to clubs.

(b) Legal

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

(c) Equalities

The strategy includes upgrading facilities that encourage greater participation in sport and physical activity. This includes improving accessibility and supporting children and young people, as well as older adults.

(d) Environmental including carbon emissions and biodiversity

The strategy references climate and BNG guidance where relevant to the development of pitches. There is a section that discusses the impact of climate change on pitch provision.

Other implications [delete as appropriate]

(g) Planning including building regulations

Supports the draft Local Plan and would be part of the evidence base for the Local Plan examination.

Contact Officer: Giles Seaford, Leisure Development Officer/Sports Delivery Officer

Background documents and appendices
Appendix 1 and 2 below
Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042

Additional document(s) containing information exempt from publication:

No

Appendix 1 Climate Change Impact Assessment (Checklist)

Please provide an assessment of the impact of the proposal under each of the headings below. If none, please say so.

1. **Climate Change impacts**

Topic	**Impact of proposal** Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact** If you have any relevant data, please include that in the explanation and reference the source.	**Mitigation**
Impact on the council's target of being carbon neutral by 2030 This applies to emissions of carbon dioxide as a direct result of our **own** activities and services. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals	Positive	Through the rearrangement of sports pitches in the future including leasing of 'home' grounds to local clubs and a geographical spread of ATP's close to the communities they serve will lessen the need to travel.	N/A
Impact on carbon emissions in the Canterbury district This applies to the carbon dioxide emissions in the district as a result of your proposal. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals.	Neutral	The overall impact of the recommendations / actions within this strategy on the environment and climate is low and will not negatively impact carbon emissions.	N/A
Emission of other climate changing gases including methane, CFCs, nitrous oxide	Neutral	The strategy will not increase the council's emissions of other climate change gases.	N/A

2. Adaptation to climate change - Impact on our resilience to the effects of climate change

The greatest risks posed by climate change to the UK are:

- Flooding and coastal changes including erosion from extreme events
- Risks to health caused by high temperatures
- Water shortages and drought
- Risk to natural environments & services - landscape, wildlife, pollinators, timber etc
- Risk to food production & trade
- Emergence of new pests and diseases affecting people, plants & animals

What impact do your proposals have on our ability to resist or tackle these problems in the future?

Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact**	**Mitigation**
Positive	Works in harmony with the Open Space Strategy and the local plan to protect improve the quality and quantity of sports provision	n/a

3. Further assessment work

Is a further more detailed assessment required at a later stage of this proposal? If yes, please give a brief description

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

[can be deleted if not relevant after the MT stage]

Please be aware that in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010, this document will be made available to the public.

You should treat this as a live document and keep it under continuous review. You should do this by recording any issues you identify, along with any actions you take to minimise their impact.

Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance to help you in completing this form.

For the purposes of this form, we refer to your policy, function, project or service as a proposal.

We have contact with two groups who can be useful sounding boards as part of any consultation or pre consultation engagement. They are the Disability Advisory Board (DAP) and the Ethnic Minority Independent Council (EMIC), both are local groups. You can contact Matthew Archer for further advice.

Date of initial assessment	13/11/2026
Division	Place – Culture, Leisure and External Development & Transport and Environment
Proposal to be assessed	Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042
New or existing policy or function?	Existing
External (i.e. public-facing) or internal?	External
Statutory or non-statutory?	Both
Your name	Giles Seaford
Your job title	Leisure Development Officer/Sports Delivery Officer
Your contact telephone number	01227 207415
Decision maker (e.g.Community Committee, Management Team etc.)	Cabinet
Estimated proposal deadline	

Please outline your proposal, including: • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes	The strategy is a district wide document that seeks to providing the right facilities in the right place to help people take part in physical activity. The strategy provides recommendations and actions to protect, enhance and provide sports facilities across the district. It will impact

• Who will be affected and how • How many people will be affected	anyone that uses indoor and outdoor sports facilities.
What relevant data or information is currently available about the customers who may use this service or could be affected? Please give details; for example “x% of customers are female” or “x% of customers are aged over 60”	The strategy doesn't aim to provide the number of people participating but it does consider the increase in women and girls participation. These numbers are not a percentage but the increase in the number of teams.

Is the decision relevant to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, which are listed below? Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC’s PSED Technical Guidance		
Aim	Yes/No	Explanation
Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	No	
Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No	
Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No	

Assess the relevance of the proposal to people with different protected characteristics, and assess the impact of the proposal on people with different protected characteristics. Your explanation should make it clear who the assessment applies to within each protected characteristic. For example, a proposal may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.			
Protected characteristic	Relevance to proposal High/ Medium/ Low/None	Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	Explanation
Age	Medium	Positive	The strategy considers facilities for all ages and the changing patterns within the local community for older adults as well as new programmes for young people
Disability	Medium	Positive	The strategy considers facilities that would protect, enhance and provide for those with a disability

Gender reassignment	Low	Neutral	The strategy doesn't cover this level of detail but enhancing facilities would improve the offer
Marriage and civil partnership	None	Neutral	This characteristic is not considered in the strategy as there are no perceived differences between this audience and their use of sport and leisure facilities
Pregnancy and maternity	Low	Neutral	The strategy doesn't cover this level of detail but enhancing facilities would improve the offer
Race	Low	Neutral	The strategy doesn't cover this level of detail but enhancing facilities would improve the offer
Religion or belief	Low	Neutral	The strategy doesn't cover this level of detail but enhancing facilities would improve the offer
Sex	Medium	Positive	The strategy looks at the changing and growing demands for female participation and recommends enhancements to facilities accordingly
Sexual orientation	Low	Neutral	The strategy doesn't cover this level of detail but enhancing facilities would improve the offer
Other groups: for example – low income/ people living in rural areas/ single parents/ carers and the cared for/ past offenders/ long-term unemployed/ housebound/ history of domestic abuse/ people who don’t speak English as a first language/ People without computer access etc.	Medium	Positive	Protecting and enhancing facilities ensures that local residents don't have to travel long distances to be active. Without a Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy a strategic approach wouldn't be considered that supports various groups of people.

Are you going to make any changes to your proposal as a result of these findings, in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts identified? If yes, what are they? If no, why not?	N/A

Is there any potential negative impact which cannot be minimised or removed? If so, can it be justified? (for example, on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for another protected characteristic)	N/A

What additional information would increase your understanding about the potential impact of this proposal?	N/A

If a consultation exercise is required as part of your proposal, please complete the consultation planning form on iCan.

Please update the section below if:

- You have amended your proposal
- You have new information
- You have undertaken consultation

Date of revised assessment	Click here to enter a date.
Have you made any changes to your initial assessment? If so, please give brief details	
Did you undertake consultation? – if yes, give date and the consultation results:	
Do you have new information which reveals any difference in views across the protected characteristics?	
Can any new conclusions be drawn as to how the proposal will affect people with different protected characteristics?	
Are you going to make any changes to your proposal as a result of these findings, in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts identified? If yes, what are they? If no, why not?	
Is there any potential negative impact which cannot be minimised or removed? If so, can it be justified? (for example, on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for another protected characteristic)	

Should you need to revisit your assessment more than once, please ensure that you provide details of any changes or new information and the date these amendments were made

Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042



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Abbreviations

3G	Third Generation (artificial grass pitch)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
ALS	Active Lives Survey
BC	Bowls Club
CC	Cricket Club
CCC	Canterbury City Council
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
COE	Church of England
CUA	Community Use Agreement
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EA	England Athletics
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FL	Football League
FTP	Fine Turf Pitch (Cricket)
GMA	Grounds Management Association
HC	Hockey Club
IMD	Indices of Multiple Deprivation
LA	Local Authority
LED	Light Emitting Diode
LFFP	Local Football Facility Plan
LSOAs	Lower Layer Super Output Areas
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MES	Match Equivalent Sessions
MUGAs	Multi Use Games Areas
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NTP	Non Turf Pitch (Cricket)
OHID	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
PF	Playing Field
PP	PitchPower
PPC	Playing Pitch Calculator
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RAG	Red Amber Green
RC	Roman Catholic
RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RFC	Rugby Football Club
SC	Sports Club
SD	Sand Dressed (Hockey)
SE	Sport England
StE	Stoolball England
SG	Sports Ground
SFC	Sports Facilities Calculator
SFS	Sports Facilities Strategy
S106	Section 106
TBC	To Be Confirmed
U	Under
WRC	World Rugby Compliant



Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch and Sport Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042

Section 1: Introduction and Background

canterbury city council

continuum SPORT & LEISURE LTD

1. Introduction and Background

This strategy was completed during the period where Local Government Reorganisation in Kent had been paused. Should a new unitary authority structure be implemented within the timescale of this strategy, then this strategy, and the priorities and recommendation therein, should be adopted by that unitary authority as the on-going position for playing pitches and sports facilities in the Canterbury area until any such new strategy is commissioned for the new authority.

1.1 Background

a. Canterbury City Council (CCC) commissioned a full Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities strategy to provide an up-to date and robust evidence base to assist the Council in meeting the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated guidance with regards to their plan making and where relevant, planning decision making.

b. This Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026-42 has been produced in line with national guidance from Sport England and aims to provide an up-to-date and robust assessment identifying needs for sport and recreation and to support the development of Canterbury City Council's Local Plan, covering the period to 2042. Canterbury City Council's Corporate Plan 2024-2028 outlines a commitment to improving public health and working to make the community more liveable. The Council also highlighted an ambition to support free access to sport and low-cost facilities for the community in order to achieve good health and wellbeing.

c. Continuum Sport and Leisure (Continuum) were commissioned by Canterbury City Council to lead on the production of the new strategy, which has been agreed by all the key indoor and outdoor national governing bodies of sport following the Sport England process[1]. Each local authority in the country is encouraged to produce this evidence base to inform future decisions regarding the demand and supply of existing and new playing pitches and sports facilities in their area. The strategy informs an action plan which details potential facility developments based on the demand and supply analysis, as set out in Section 6. This action plan will be reviewed and amended, in partnership with stakeholders and the Strategy Steering Group where necessary on an annual basis.

d. The supply side information contained in the strategy is generated through standard facility audits used for all levels of facility from parks to elite sport, with findings then validated by the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) of that sport. Site audits were undertaken by CCC and University of Kent students following training from the Consultant Team. The demand side information is generated from surveys of current and potential users including local sports clubs as well as club and team data provided by the relevant NGBs and facility booking records where available. The Council's Leisure, External Development, Planning, and Environment teams have provided context and a local perspective on the overarching vision and principles driving the strategy and the outcome objectives.

e. The resulting action plan is a guide on how enhanced and new facilities might be developed, pending viability testing, funding confirmation and planning permission, if necessary, where they might be developed and the lead organisation to meet identified demand and provide sustainable management and operational models. Often projects are delivered through the council, or the sport's governing body engaging with voluntary, education or commercial partners. Each potential project identified in the action plan will

[1] https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/planning-sport

be reviewed and re-evaluated considering the situation at the time and be subject to consultation and planning processes as applicable. The strategy and action plan provide a 'snapshot' of the position at the time of writing. Factors on both the demand and supply side may have changed as well as the cost and viability of the project at the point when an individual project is being considered during the life of this strategy.

f. When applying for funding to develop new facilities or improve current facilities, Sport England, NGBs, and most other funding organisations, require evidence of the current demand and supply of facilities in an area to justify the proposed project. This strategy, developed and agreed in partnership with these same organisations, is the document that provides this information on playing pitches, built sports facilities and ancillary facilities and is vital to the success of any funding bid.

g. Through the implementation of this strategy, the council has a leading role to play in enabling access to sporting opportunities at a cost that is acceptable to the wider community, including entry level facilities such as free to use open space and multi-use games areas (MUGA's) as well as pay and play summer and winter sports pitches and leisure facilities with changing and toilet facilities to allow communities to participate and clubs to play competitively.

h. The strategy document comprises two parts – Playing Pitch Strategy (Section 3) and Sports Facilities Assessment (Section 4) with an action plan at the end covering all facility types assessed in this strategy (Section 6).

1.2 Why the strategy has been developed

a. Alongside the need for the council to ensure an up-to-date evidence base, the purpose of the strategy is to assess the quality, quantity and accessibility of existing provision for playing pitches and sports facilities in Canterbury. This provides a clear needs analysis to help guide the future sports and recreational facility provision in Canterbury.

b. The council's main rationales for producing this updated strategy and associated action plan are detailed below:

- To determine whether there are sufficient playing pitches of sufficient quality to meet local demand and future growth demand.
- To determine whether there are sufficient sports facilities of sufficient quality to meet local demand and future growth demand.
- To identify priority projects which will help to meet any current deficiencies and provide for future demands.
- To provide a strategic framework for the provision and management of pitches District wide, and a basis for ongoing monitoring and review.
- Provide information to enable policies to be developed to safeguard existing and provide for new pitches, and associated facilities through the emerging Draft Local Plan.
- To provide planning guidance, inform land use decisions, and direct open space and sports contributions secured through development (S106).

c. The vision for Canterbury City Council's Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy is to provide an assessment of the needs for playing pitches, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessment identifies specific needs and

quantitative and/ or qualitative deficits or surpluses of playing pitches and sports facilities across Canterbury District.

d. The key deliverables of each strategy are as follows:

The Playing Pitch Strategy:

- Follows Sport England: Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance – An approach to developing and delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy (2013).
- Facilities include football pitches, rugby union pitches, cricket pitches, and artificial pitches.
- All stages of Sport England's guidance document are followed with the exception for stage E (step 10) which will be the responsibility of the Steering Group once the final updated strategies are adopted.

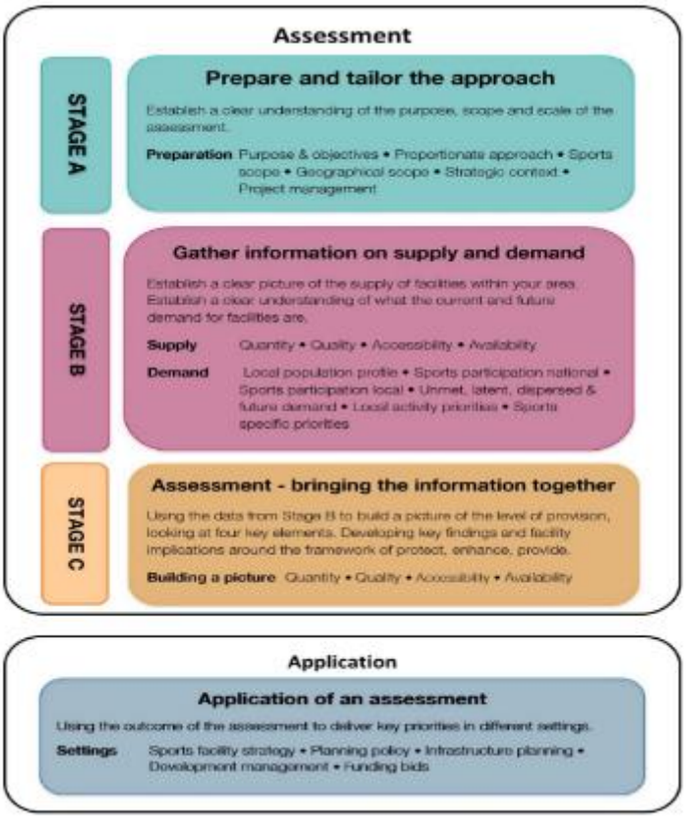
The Sports Facilities Assessment:

- Follows Sport England guidance for Sport England: Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for indoor and outdoor sports facilities – how to undertake and apply needs assessments for sport (2014).
- Facilities will include indoor swimming pools, sports halls, health and fitness suites, squash courts, tennis courts, gymnastics facilities, boxing facilities, basketball facilities, watersports, and athletics facilities.
- Other sport areas which are identified as part of the project consultation are included where significant supply or demand has been identified.
- All stages of the Sport England guidance are followed.

1.4 The approach to developing the strategy

a. The strategy is based on local needs (current and projections to 2042) and sets out deliverable actions. This objective is assured by adhering to the 'Assessing needs and opportunities guide for indoor and outdoor facilities and the further application of the 'ten steps' advocated in the current Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance'. This guidance is detailed below.

Figure 1.1- Assessing needs and opportunities guide for indoor and outdoor sports facilities (ANOG)



Stage A – Prepare and tailor the approach: Establish a clear understanding of the purpose, scope and scale of the assessment.
Stage B – Gather information on supply and demand: Establish a clear picture of the supply of facilities within the area and the current and future demands for facilities.
Stage C – Assessment – Bringing the information together: Using the data from Stage B to build a picture of the level of provision, looking at four key elements. Developing key findings and facility implications around the framework of protect, enhance, provide.
Application – Application of an assessment: Using the outcome of the assessment to deliver key priorities in different settings.

Figure 1.2 - Ten stage approach to a PPS



Stage A - Step 1: Prepare and tailor the approach.
Stage B - Step 2: Gather supply information and views.
- Step 3: Gather demand information and views.
Stage C - Step 4: Understand the situation at individual sites.
- Step 5: Develop the current and future pictures of provision.
- Step 6: Identify the key findings and issues.
Stage D - Step 7: Develop the recommendations and action plan.
- Step 8: Write and adopt the strategy.
Stage E - Step 9: Apply and deliver the strategy.
- Step 10: Keep the strategy robust and up to date.

b. This 10-step approach is split into 5 key stages of the strategy process. This report covers stages A – D, with Stage E, the application, delivery, and renewal of the strategy, being the responsibility of the council, with support from the playing pitch NGBs, Sport England, and wider funding partners.

National policy adherence

a. The strategy also adheres to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Policy HC1 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning for healthy communities should be informed by an understanding of any existing deficits in the availability of community facilities and additional requirements expected over the plan period arising from proposed development and wider changes in the local provision. It states plans should take into account both quantitative and qualitative aspects of provision, identified local health needs and opportunities to reduce inequalities through the availability of facilities.

c. Sport England's guidance highlights the importance of undertaking detailed assessments of sports facility needs and the benefits of sports and physical activity within local authority areas (as well as considering the range of possible options and scenarios for meeting priority needs and achieving positive outcomes identified through this process), before making recommendations for future action. Specifically, the guidance recommends

that local authorities:

1. Recognise and give significant weight to the benefits of sport and physical activity.
2. Undertake, maintain and apply robust and up-to-date assessments of need and strategies for sport and physical activity provision, and base policies, decisions and guidance upon them.
3. Plan, design and maintain buildings, developments, facilities, land and environments that enable people to lead active lifestyles.

d. The guidance published by Sport England also advocates that strategic recommendations and action planning consider the following hierarchy of needs:

1. **Protect** existing sports facilities where these are sustainable and continue to perform a valuable role in meeting community needs.
2. **Enhance** existing facilities that meet these criteria but need improvement to continue to be of value; and, lastly,
3. **Provide** new or extended facilities where there is found to be substantial unmet needs currently or predicted for the future.

1.5 Tailoring the approach - Which sports to include?

a. The council agreed that the playing pitch sports to be included in the strategy are:

- Football
- Rugby (Union & League)
- Cricket
- Hockey
- Other additional playing pitch sports played in the district

The indoor and outdoor facilities to be included in the Sports Facilities Assessment were agreed as:

- Swimming Pools
- Sports Halls
- Multi courts
- Health and Fitness facilities
- Athletics
- Bowls
- Boxing
- Cycling facilities
- Climbing walls
- Gymnastics and Trampolining
- Golf
- Netball
- Ice rinks
- Tennis
- Padel
- Pickleball
- Squash
- Watersports

b. Within these sports and facilities, the strategy seeks as far as is practicable, to include consideration of all forms of play, whether:

- Club and league based (formal) play and training (including reference to indoor nets for cricket),

- Less formal programmed forms of the respective sports (e.g., friendly and recreational game formats outside the sport's governing bodies affiliated structures), and
- Un-programmed play by groups of residents, workers, students out of school.

c. The strategy considers the accessibility of facilities, in terms of availability, cost and location as well as considering the ancillary facilities of any provision. Ancillary Facilities refer mainly to the changing provision and showers on site including suitability for women and girls and disability access where required but also includes references to car parking and other associated facilities such as sports lighting and stadia provision where specific issues are raised through consultation that could be a barrier to participation.

1.6 Management and delivery

a. The development of the strategy has been managed by the Canterbury Playing Pitch Strategy and Sports Facilities Assessment Steering Group. Internal stakeholders within the steering group include representatives from the Council's Leisure, Planning, Environment, and External Development teams, members of the Active Kent and Medway.

b. The external stakeholders included in the Steering Group are made up of representatives from The Kent Football Association, Football Foundation, Kent Cricket, England & Wales Cricket Board, England Rugby, England Hockey, England Athletics, England Netball, Lawn Tennis Association, Sport England, and Continuum Sport & Leisure Ltd, the consultants appointed to co-ordinate the strategy development to the point of the recommendation and action plan. The strategic lead for partnerships and community from Active Kent & Medway was also involved in the steering group.

c. As part of the process the consultant team engaged with the following other National Governing Bodies: Badminton England, British American Football, British Cycling, British Equestrian, British Mountaineering Council, England Golf, England Netball, England Squash, Paddle UK, Rugby League, Swim England, RYA, and Skateboard GB. The views of the National Governing Bodies who responded to consultation are reflected in the sport specific sections where relevant.

d. Town and Parish councils across Canterbury were consulted via online survey and in person during the site visit process.



Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch and Sport Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042

Section 2: The Study Area

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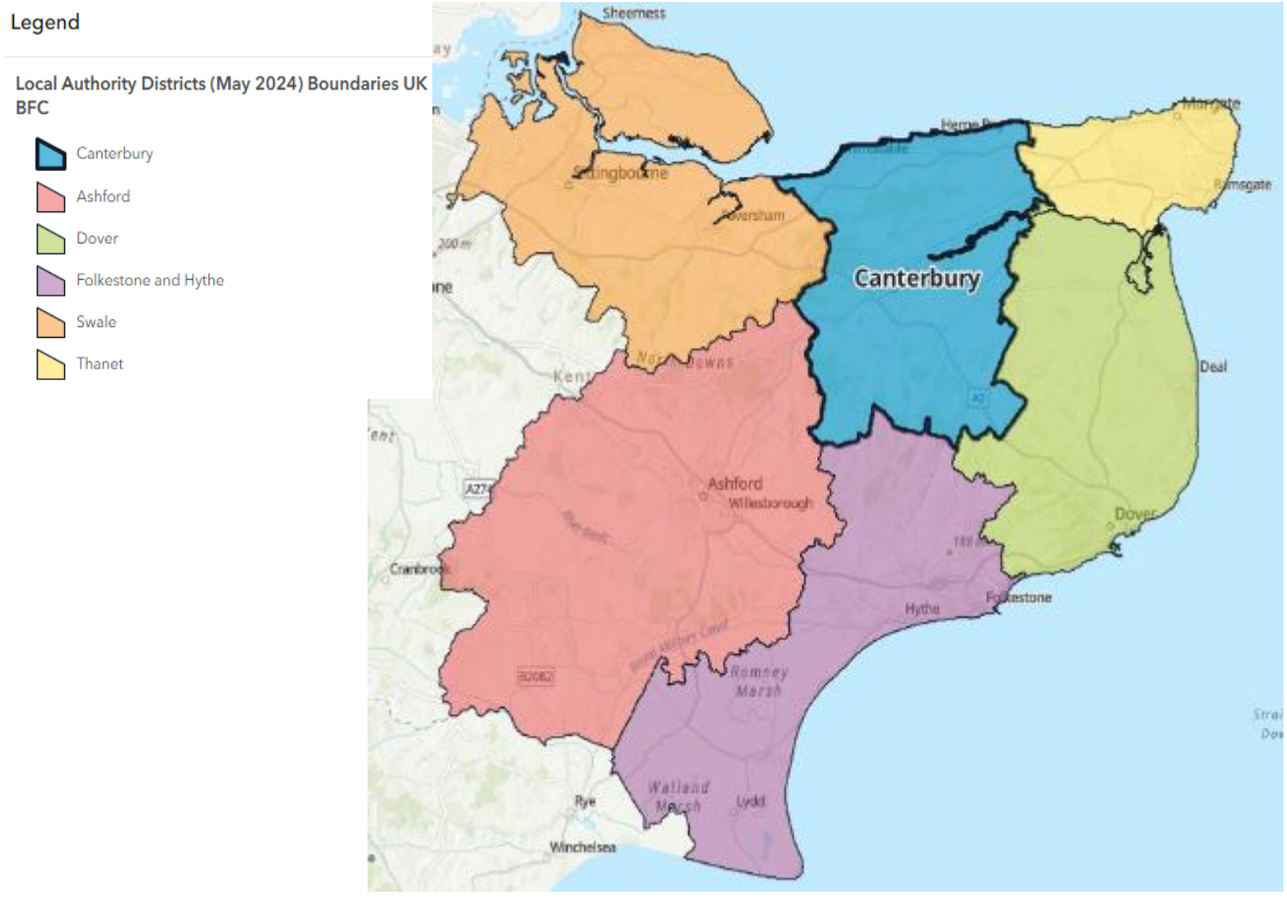
2. The study area

2.1 The extent of the study area

a. The study area for the full strategy covers the administrative area of Canterbury City Council, which includes Canterbury, the two coastal towns of Whitstable and Herne Bay as well as 27 parishes. The three urban areas of Canterbury City, Whitstable, and Herne Bay all have similar populations with Canterbury City increasing in population between May and September due to students studying at the three university sites (University of Kent, Canterbury Christchurch University, and UCA Canterbury).

b. Canterbury has five neighbouring local authorities, Ashford, Dover, Folkestone & Hythe, Swale, and Thanet. An important aspect of this strategy is to quantify imported demand from the neighbouring and nearby authorities highlighted in figure 2.2 and assess the impact of this additional use on facilities in the Canterbury District. There is cross boundary movement by clubs based in neighbouring authorities regularly using the facilities in Canterbury, particularly from areas such as Thanet on the Eastern boundary, Dover on the Southeastern boundary and Folkestone located to the south of Canterbury.

Figure 2.2 – Map of Canterbury District and nearby Local Authorities



c. There are also sports teams based in Canterbury that use facilities outside the district. This cross-boundary movement has been taken into consideration when considering future needs for each sport both in terms of specialist and strategic facilities that serve a sub-regional catchment area, and the local community sporting needs for Canterbury District's residents.

d. Canterbury City Councils draft Local Plan (2025 - 2043) - Regulation 19 outlined a need to develop 23,085 additional homes for the period 2025 43. This consists of 1,215 additional homes in 2025, 972 each year between 2025 to 2032, 1,370 between 2033 to 2042 and 1,366 homes in the year of 2042/43. Canterbury Urban Area will be the principal focus of development with Whitstable and Herne Bay Urban Areas being the secondary focus for developments across the District. The projected growth suggests that the demand for sports facilities across Canterbury will increase over this strategy period and emphasises the need to protect playing pitch and sports facilities in the Canterbury District. The impact of population growth on demand for facilities is explored further throughout sections 3 and 4 of this report.

e. In tailoring the approach, it is important to understand the following unique aspects of the area.
   - There are three urban areas, Canterbury, Whitstable and Herne Bay, all of which have similar populations.
   - Canterbury is home to three universities and welcomes thousands of new and returning students each year.
   - Canterbury is renowned for being a historic city and is famous for having a UNESCO World Heritage site which incorporates three areas across the city, Canterbury Cathedral, Church of St Martin and the ruins of St Augustine's Abbey.
   - Due to Canterbury being a famous part of the history of England, tourism is a hugely important sector in the city and supports 8,166 jobs in the city of canterbury according to data from 2024.

Population Profile and Growth

f. Any facilities which are developed from the study will need to meet the needs of the District's future populations as well as its current population. Figure 2.3 summarises the most up to date population projections which are available for Canterbury. These projections are from 2026 to 2042 and demonstrates that Canterbury District's population is projected to grow by 12.3%, which is higher than the national average of 6.5% (as projected by the ONS). An increase of over 22,781 residents will not only increase the demand for sport and recreation facilities in the district but also put pressure on the current facility stock. This is considered in more detail later in this strategy.

Figure 2.3 Population projection for Canterbury 2026 – 2042 (Canterbury Local Plan)

	2026 Population	2042 Population	% increase
Canterbury	162,100	184,881	12.3%
England	59,137,052	63,261,579	6.5%

Health

g. It is useful to understand the health profile of Canterbury both in regard to identifying health issues which new or improved facilities can contribute to addressing and understanding the propensity of a local population to be active. Canterbury District Local Authority Health Profile (statistics ranging from 2024 to 2025) highlights that the health of residents is better than the national average, in all but one area.

h. Figure 2.4 provides an overview of the performance of the District across several Department of Health key health indicators in comparison with regional and national averages. This shows that Canterbury performs worse in comparison to the regional averages for % obesity in children and under 75 mortalities caused by cardiovascular issues or cancer. The life expectancy of both males and females in Canterbury matches the average across Kent and performs better than the regional average when compared to % obese or overweight adults and under 75 mortality rates by all causes.

Figure 2.4 Table of health indicators in Canterbury, Kent, and England (OHID LA health profiles)

	Canterbury	Kent	England
% Obese children (Year 6) (2024/25)	**21.7%**	20.9%	22.2%
% Obese or overweight adults (2024/25)	**61.4%**	66.5%	64.6%
Life expectancy: male (2025)	**80.3**	80.3	80
Life expectancy: female (2025)	**84**	84	83.8
Under 75 mortality: all causes (2025)	**311**	313.2	321
Under 75 mortality: cardiovascular (2025)	**69.4**	66.1	71.5
Under 75 mortality: cancer (2025)	**119.4**	117.7	114.6

i. Whilst the % of obese adults is lower in Canterbury than regional and national figures, it recorded higher levels of obesity in children (year 6) when compared to Kent. This highlights the importance of maintaining healthy weight initiatives for adults across the Canterbury District and improving the initiatives and environments which children can be active and get healthy.

j. The wider determinants of health which are considered when assessing opportunities for the development of new sports facilities include economic inactivity, proportion of population age 65+, and disability. Within Canterbury, 46.2% of residents are economically inactive (with 11.4% of these being student population), 21.8% are over the age of 65, and 19% are considered to be disabled.

k. As detailed later in this strategy, it is vital that facilities for sport are maintained and developed so they can help contribute to retaining the positive health indicators reported. Sport England research has found that increased physical activity can help reduce the risk of developing a range of negative health risks, therefore providing a suitable supply of accessible, high-quality sports pitches and facilities is essential to protecting the health of Canterbury residents.

Deprivation

l. Deprivation, and the social and economic factors behind the figures, directly affect the propensity and ability of the local population to access and use facilities and be active. Investment into community sports facilities can also form an important element of the regeneration of deprived areas and provide more accessible opportunities for movement and physical activity. An awareness of how deprivation affects a local population can also influence how activities are delivered and what type of initiatives are launched to reduce inactivity.

m. Figure 2.5 illustrates Canterbury District's deprivation rank against other neighbouring areas according to the ONS indices of deprivation 2025. Canterbury District ranks 142 out of 296 LAs, showing that it is the least deprived district when compared with neighbouring areas. Residents of high deprivation areas are often faced with challenges relating to the cost of living and propensity to participate and be physically active.

Figure 2.5 Canterbury District and nearby areas deprivation rank[2]

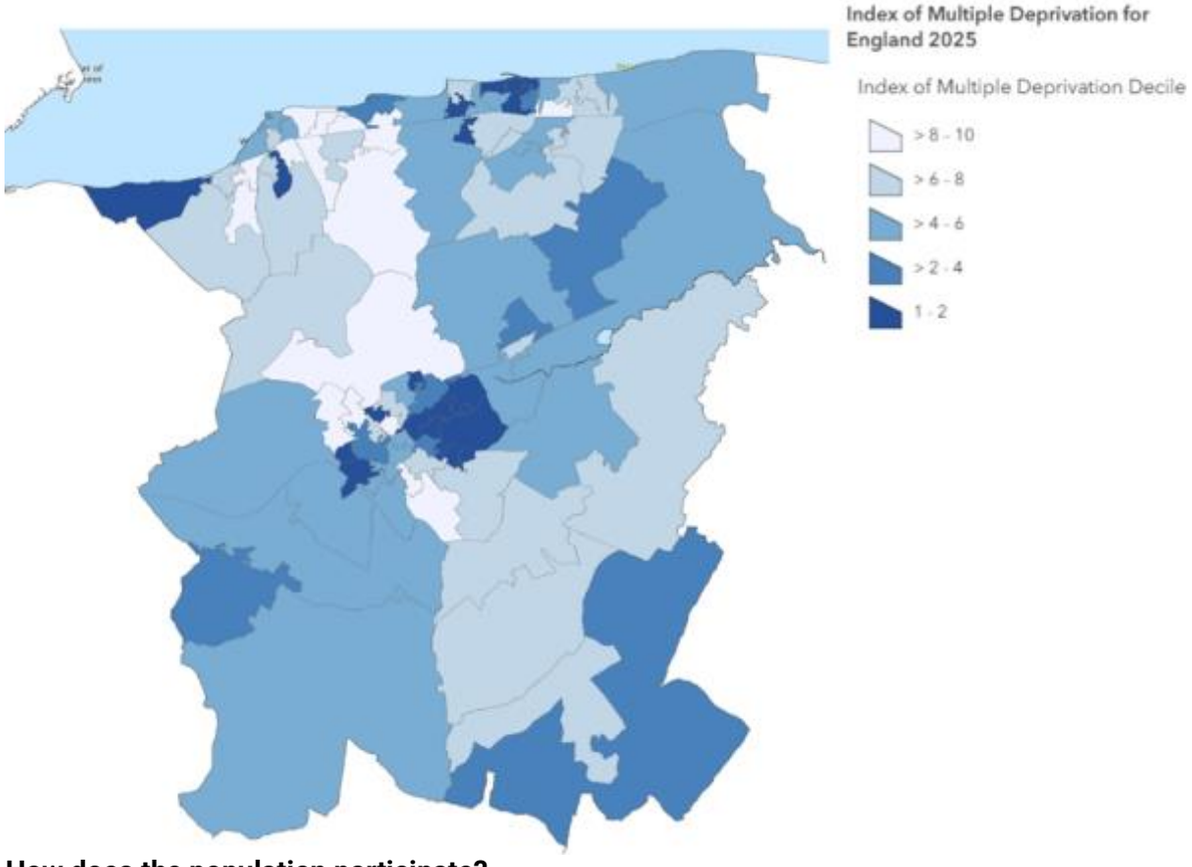
	IMD 2025 (296 LAs)	National Decile
Canterbury District	**142**	**5**
Thanet	**96**	**1**
Dover	**81**	**3**

[2] *ONS English indices of deprivation 2025*

Folkestone and Hythe	**79**	**3**
Ashford	**139**	**5**
Swale	**62**	**3**

n. Figure 2.6 shows a map of Canterbury District split up into Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) with different colours outlining their relative Index of Multiple Deprivation (the darker blue areas are the most deprived Local Super Output Areas, whilst lighter are the least deprived). Areas of higher deprivation are more prevalent in Canterbury City centre, west of Whitstable and Herne Bay. Lower levels of deprivation are highlighted in the northwest and southeast. Areas and neighbourhoods with higher deprivation should be considered in relation to any current or future development opportunities for sports facilities and initiatives to impact positively on levels of participation and accessibility.

Figure 2.6 Levels of deprivation across Canterbury District by lower layer super output areas (IMD 2025)



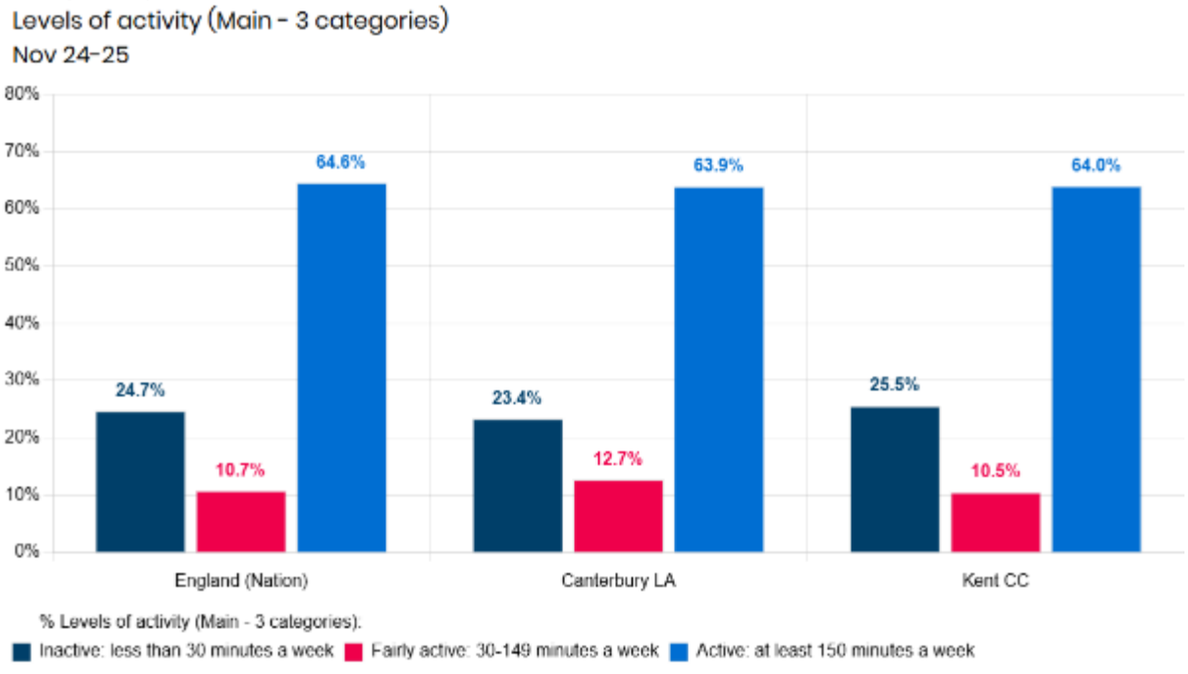
How does the population participate?

o. Sport England's Active Lives Survey provides a comprehensive assessment of physical activity and sports participation at a local authority, county, and national level. Active Lives measures a range of performance indicators including activity rates, indoor and outdoor activity, and satisfaction with local sports provision. Active Lives also provides analysis of activity across a range of demographics including gender, deprivation levels and age.

p. Figure 2.7 outlines the percentage of the population of Canterbury, Kent, and England who are physically active (150+ minutes per week), fairly active (30-149 minutes per week), and inactive (less than 30 minutes per week). The graph shows that Canterbury District reports similar active residents (63.9%) to Kent (64.0%) however is below the national average (64.6%). Canterbury does have a lower proportion of inactive residents (23.4%) compared

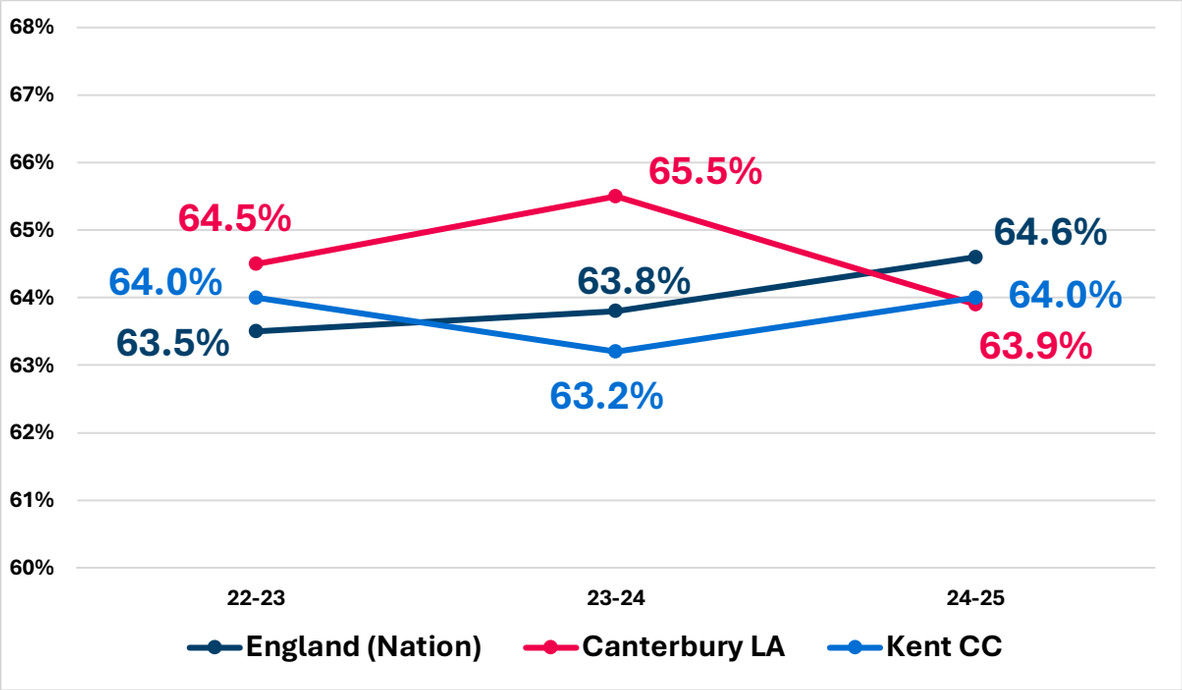
to Kent (25.5%) and the nation (24.7%). This suggests that residents in Canterbury have a similar propensity for physical activity compared to other local authorities in the region, but with 23.8% of the population inactive the development of new or improved sports facilities and playing pitches are vital considerations for the council and partners to help tackle this issue and reduce inactive residents in Canterbury.

Figure 2.7 Activity levels in Canterbury, Kent and England 2024-25 (Sport England Active Lives survey 2025)



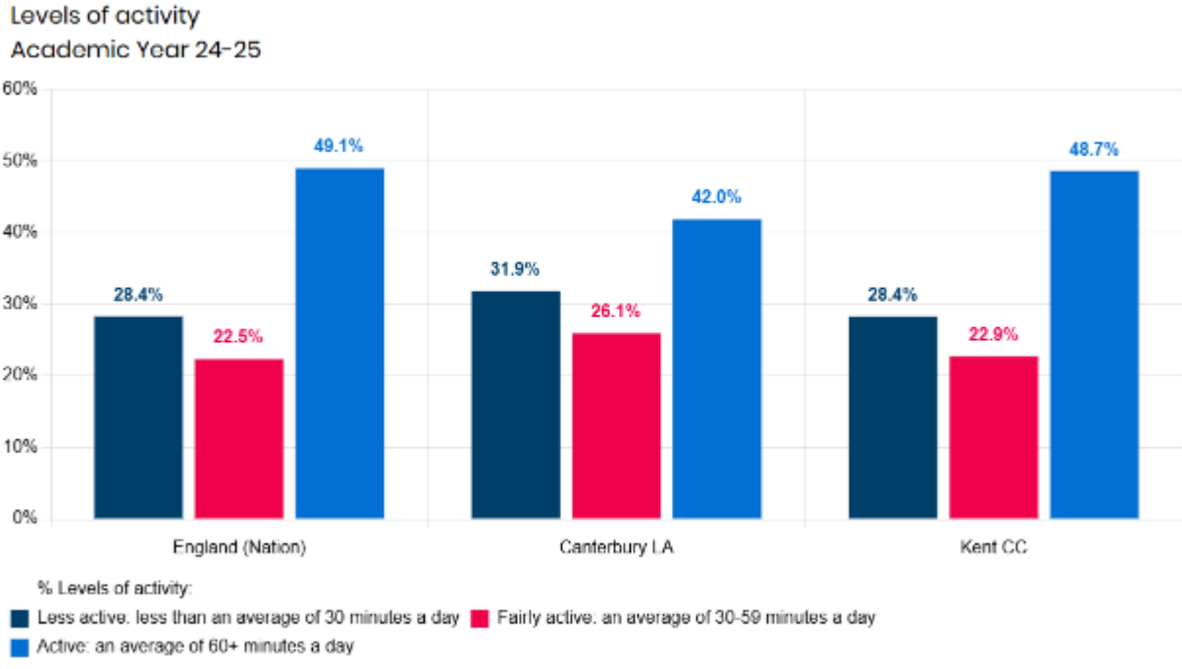
q. Figure 2.8 shows that Canterbury reported a higher proportion of active residents between 2022-23 and 2023-24 however fell below both Kent and England in 2024-25. It is important to note that the number of active residents reduced by 1.6% from 2023-24 to 2024-25. This decrease is in contrast to Kent and England, which have both seen a slight increase in physically active residents (0.8%), over the same period. Whilst current physical activity levels remain in line with regional averages, the declining trend of activity highlights the importance of enhancing the existing facilities as well as investing into new sports facilities to reverse this trend and encourage further participation.

Figure 2.8 Activity Levels in Canterbury, Kent and England between 2022-23 and 2024-25 (Sport England Active Lives survey 2025)



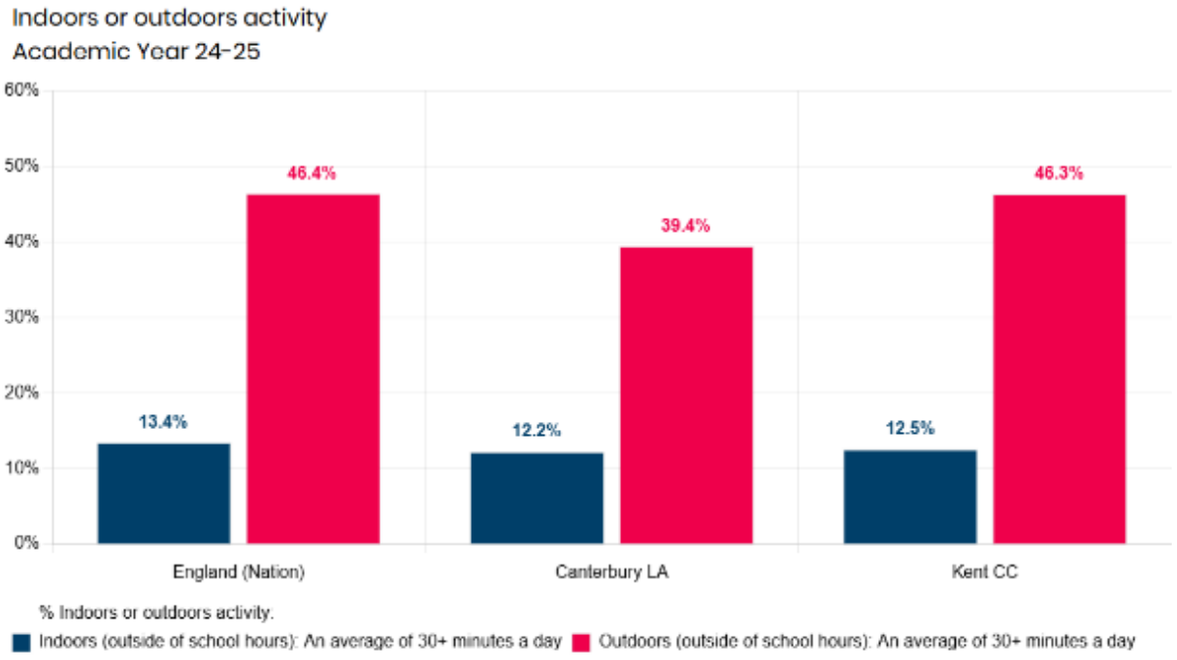
r. Children's physical activity rates in Canterbury are significantly lower than both the regional and national average, with a lower proportion of physically active children (42%) than the regional (48.7%) and national (49.1%) rates (figure 2.9). Canterbury also has a higher proportion of inactive children (31.9%) than both national (28.4%) and regional averages (28.4%).

Figure 2.9 Levels of children's physical activity in Canterbury, Kent and England between 2022-25 (Sport England Active Lives survey 2025)



s. 39.4% of children's physical activity outside of school hours in the Canterbury District takes place outdoors, where they perform an average of 30+ minutes per day of physical activity (figure 2.10). This proportion is significantly lower than both the national average (46.4%) and regional average (46.3%). This highlights the importance of providing and enhancing high quality community outdoor sports facilities, including playing pitches, in enabling children to be physically active. In contrast just 12.2% of children undertake 30+ minutes per day of physical activity indoors outside of school hours (figure 2.10). This proportion is slightly less than the rates in Kent (12.5%) and less than the national average (13.4%).

Figure 2.10 Children's physical activity out of school hours (Sport England Active Lives survey 2025)



2.4 Summary

a. The information outlined in this section has provided a key insight into the Canterbury District and its residents including, understanding health inequalities, propensity for activity and future population growth. A notable concern is the significantly lower activity rates of children in Canterbury when compared to regional and national averages. This highlights the imminent need to invest in high quality community sport and physical activity facilities to ensure children are able to access safe and accessible opportunities to be physically active. The development of high quality sport and leisure facilities can influence the propensity for residents to be physically active.

b. The key heath indicators for Canterbury varies when compared with the County and National averages. Whilst they perform better for the percentage of obese or overweight adults, the percentage of obesity in children is slightly higher when compared to the average across Kent. This highlights a need for the council to invest in initiatives and programmes specifically promoting physical activity at those currently inactive children in order to improve their overall health and wellbeing.

c. The key sections that follow for the Playing Pitches and Sports Facilities support the need for Canterbury City Council to protect and where needed, enhance existing sports facilities as well as explore opportunities to invest into new sports facilities provision, to address

the overall decline in participation and meet the needs for the different sports detailed later in this strategy. The next section examines the supply and demand for playing pitches and is followed by section 4 which covers the needs for sports facilities. The strategic recommendations and priority projects to address the need identified throughout the strategy is covered in sections 5 and 6.



Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch and Sports Facility Strategy 2026 – 2042
Section 3 – Playing Pitch Strategy

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3. The Playing Pitch Strategy

3.1 Introduction

a. This section is part of Canterbury City Council's overall Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026-2042. The Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) when adopted, will replace the previous Playing Pitch Strategy adopted in 2020.

b. Consistent with the previous strategy, this PPS includes consideration of facility supply, demand, accessibility and availability for the four primary playing pitch sports of Cricket, Football, Hockey and Rugby as well as references to other minor pitch playing sports that take place in the area such as American Football, Rounders, and Lacrosse.

c. Within these sports, the strategy seeks as far as is possible, to include consideration of all forms of play, whether:
   - Club and league based (formal) play and training (including reference to indoor nets for Cricket),
   - Less formal programmed forms of the respective sports (e.g., friendly and recreational game formats outside the sport's governing bodies affiliated structures), and
   - Un-programmed social play by groups of residents, workers, students out of school.

d. In accordance with the national guidance for the development of playing pitch strategies, the Canterbury PPS sets out the findings of the assessment of needs for playing pitch facilities in the study area, both currently and in the future.

e. The findings are presented in summary format and should be read in conjunction with separate appendices for each playing pitch sport (Appendices A – D). These documents provide the findings of the detailed research and consultation undertaken to ensure that the facility needs findings summarised are fully robust.

f. The section concludes with recommendations for the protection and enhancement of existing facilities and for the provision of new facilities, where considered necessary to address identified current or future needs to 2042 the end of the emerging Canterbury Local Plan period.

g. This PPS sets out a range of potential future change scenarios (e.g., loss of key playing pitch sites, new provision, substantial population growth in a particular area) and strategic scenarios for addressing identified needs (e.g., change of use from one pitch sport or pitch surface to another, greater community use of education playing pitches).

h. The PPS scenarios considered have emerged from discussion with the members of the Canterbury District Playing Pitch Strategy Steering Group and inform the policy recommendations and action plan that follow.

3.2 Findings and facility needs

a. Detailed Assessment of Needs reports were undertaken for each of the 4 key playing pitch sports, which assessed the current supply, demand, and future needs for facilities across the district. These reports are summarised in this section, leading to conclusions on playing pitch needs. These reports (covering Stages B and C of Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance) and supporting site-specific audit reports have been checked and challenged by representatives of the relevant sport's governing bodies and are included in full in the appendices to this report as follows:

- Appendix A: Cricket - Assessment of Need Report
- Appendix B: Football - Assessment of Need Report
- Appendix C: Hockey - Assessment of Need Report
- Appendix D: Rugby - Assessment of Need Report

The needs for minor playing pitch sports in the district were captured though consultation with the council, clubs, and NGBs.

b. This section provides an overall summary of supply, planned and proposed changes to supply, current and latent demand, covering the following leading questions as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy methodology.

- What are the main characteristics of the current supply of and demand for provision?
- Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet current demand?
- Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?
- What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?
- Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet future demand?

3.3 Club consultation

a. To understand the current landscape of clubs in the Canterbury District, the demand and issues facing each specific sport covered within the strategy, data was collected from a survey which was distributed to the sports clubs in the area. By analysing the data, it provides insight into whether the current level of provision for sport and physical activity is meeting the demands of these sports, the existing and latent demand for growth as well as potential priority project developments. An overview of the results and impact and considerations of the club survey for playing pitches is provided below. 43 individual sports clubs which primarily use playing pitch facilities responded to the invitation to complete the survey, which covers a range of between 80-100% of teams across the different playing pitch sports in the Canterbury District. Figure 3.1 below shows the team response rate for affiliated clubs of each key playing pitch sport identified in the strategy brief.

Figure 3.1 Affiliated Team response rate for each primary pitch sport

Sport**	Total Clubs	Total Teams	Response rate (% of teams responding)
Cricket	14	94	97% (91 teams)
Football	50	306	85% (260 teams)
Hockey	2	25*	100% (25 teams)
Rugby Union	2	49	100% (49 teams)

**England Hockey record affiliated club membership numbers for junior hockey, not team numbers.*
*** Additional responses from Canterbury City Lacrosse and Invicta Touch Rugby*

b. An overview of the findings and the impact and considerations of those findings from the club consultation process specific to playing pitches is provided in figure 3.2 below. Further details can be found in Appendix F – club consultation and aspirations.

Figure 3.2 Summary of the club survey findings for clubs using playing pitches

Statement	% of total club responses	Impact and considerations
The club has more teams or active members than 3 years/seasons ago	**68%**	68% of clubs report an increase in active members, suggesting an increase in demand for pitches and ancillary facilities over the last 3 years.
The club have plans to grow in the next 3 seasons	**84%**	84% of all clubs surveyed have plans to increase their number of teams or members over the next 3 years, which could further increase demand for pitches and ancillary facilities.
There is a need to change or improve the main sports facilities used by the club to sustain or grow the club	**86%**	86% of clubs feel they need to improve or change their playing pitches to sustain or grow their club, suggesting the growth of community sport in the Canterbury District may be inhibited if sporting facilities are not improved.
There is a need to change or improve the clubhouse and/or changing room facilities used by the club to sustain or grow the club	**68%**	68% of clubs feel that their supporting facilities aren't suitable to sustain or grow the club. These ancillary facilities are important for providing inclusive, safe, sports facilities for all.
The club rate their main sports facility as 'standard' quality or worse	**52%**	52% of clubs believe the quality of their playing pitch facilities are either 'standard' or worse quality, suggesting that improvements to maintenance and programming may be needed.

3.4 Changes since the last strategy

Clubs and teams

a. In terms of expressed demand, the main changes since the last assessment in 2020 is the continued growth in youth football, rugby and cricket. There has been a large increase in youth provision (including girls) within the leading cricket, football and rugby clubs located in the district. There has also been an increase in demand among adults for opportunities to play pitch sports recreationally outside the traditional sports club model, including participation in less formal small-sided games and shorter formats.

b. In terms of governing body registered sports clubs and teams, the current picture of demand in the local authority area in comparison with the position in 2020 (where comparable figures are provided) is shown in figure 3.3 below. Apart from hockey, all main playing pitch sports have seen a growth in overall numbers and diversity of teams with particularly strong growth in adult and youth football (particularly in women's and girls' teams), youth age grade rugby, and senior women and youth girls cricket.

c. There has been a total increase of 112 teams across the five sports with the majority of team growth in football (74 of the 112 new teams).

d. Figure 3.3 below includes 3 disability football teams, 8 walking football teams, 2 futsal teams, 6 small sided teams, and 2 U5 / development teams. England Hockey record affiliated club membership numbers for junior hockey, not team numbers. 2020 figures exclude Canterbury Christ Church University and University of Kent figures as these teams were not included as community teams in 2026 due to the teams only being made up of students attending each university and therefore not open to residents to join.

Figure 3.3 – Community demand for pitches and sites

	No. of Registered Teams			
		2020	2026	Change
Cricket	Men / Mixed	32	33	**+1**
	Women	2	9	**+7**
	Youth Boys / Mixed	40	44	**-4**
	Youth Girls	0	8	**+8**
	Total Cricket teams	**74**	**94**	**+20**
Football	Adult Male	48	72	**+24**
	Adult Female	7	19	**+12**
	Junior Male & Mixed	56	102	**+46**
	Junior Female	5	24	**+19**
	Mini Soccer	116	89	**-27**
	Total Football teams	**232**	**306**	**+74**
Hockey	Men	16	15	**-1**
	Women	9	10	**+1**
	Total Hockey Adult teams	**25**	**25**	**±0**
Rugby	Men / Vet	8	8	**0**
	Women	1	1	**0**
	Youth age grade Boys	10	23	**+13**
	Youth age grade Girls	0	6	**+6**
	Minis age grade Mixed	12	11	**-1**
	Total Rugby teams	**31**	**49**	**+18**
	Total increase in all teams			**+112**

Playing pitches

e. The number of playing pitch sites and playing pitches in the Canterbury District available for community use are set out in figure 3.4 below. This covers both 2026 and in 2020 data (the previous PPS) - for each pitch type (natural turf and artificial turf). It also includes each of the major playing pitch sports for which there is a current demand in the district.

f. Figure 3.4 below includes small sided football provision and junior rugby provision.

Figure 3.4 – Supply of playing pitch sites and pitches available to community club teams[3]

	No. of sites		No. of pitches	
	2020	2026	2020	2026
Cricket fine turf	14	12	14	12
Cricket NTP	3	6	3	6
Football grass	38	32	114	82
Football AGP	5	7	6	8
Hockey AGP	8	3	11	6
Rugby grass	3	3	8	8
Rugby AGP (WRC)	2	2	2	2

g. The most significant changes in playing pitch supply over the last five years has been the loss of regular community use at 6 education sites for football as well as the reduction of the number of football pitches provided at 9 sites across the District. Regular community use has been lost at 2 education sites for hockey as well as no regular community use being reported at the University of Kent or Kent College. The previous hockey pitch at Herne Bay High School has also been resurfaced to 3G.

h. Over this period, the number of grass pitches available to community football clubs has reduced (by 33, excluding the current supply of recreational pitches). In addition to the 2 stadia grass pitches upgraded to 3G, seventeen pitches across six school sites are no longer available to clubs, and several sites have reduced the number of grass football pitches provided.

i. There has also been a very substantial reduction in the available pitches for community hockey with the loss of regular community use at Kings School (Birley's Playing Fields) and Kings School Recreation Centre (Blores) as well as no existing community use being reported at either the University of Kent or Kent College. The previous hockey pitch at Herne Bay High School is being resurfaced to 3G AGP.

j. There has been a loss of two fine turf pitches for cricket at Cherry Orchard Playing Field (1) and Kenfield Cricket Club (1) which is a significant loss of capacity for community cricket. Although an additional 3 NTPs have been developed, this is not equivalent to the match capacity which has been lost by the reduction in fine turf pitches.

k. There has been no change to the supply of community rugby pitches since the previous strategy.

3.5 Current supply

Natural turf pitches

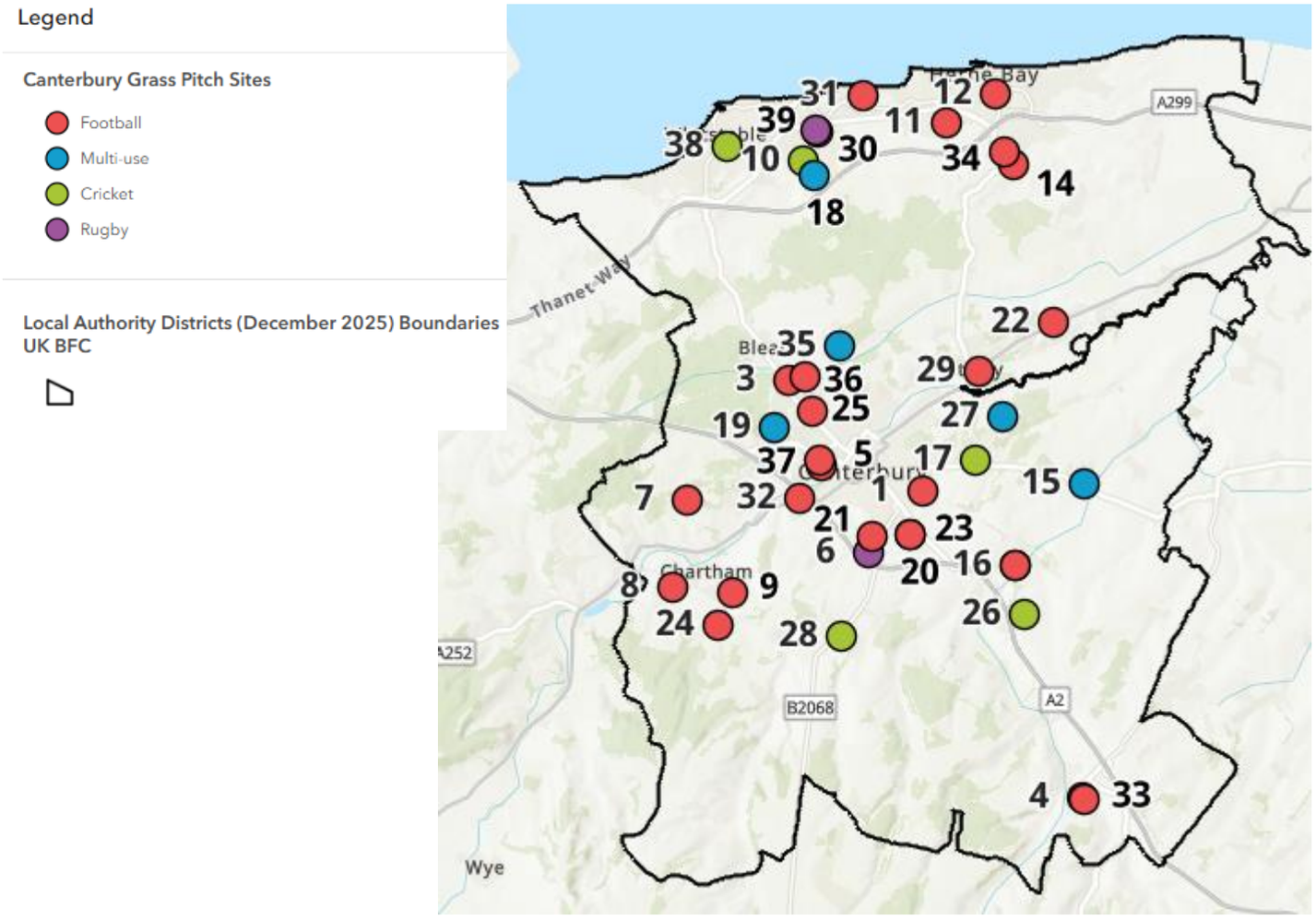
a. The sites with natural turf playing pitches in Canterbury are listed in figure 3.5 below. Figure 3.6 that follows shows the distribution of natural turf playing pitch sites throughout the district.

[3] *Includes sites and pitches on education sites (schools, colleges and the university) where these are available to community clubs / teams.*

Figure 3.5 Natural turf playing pitches in Canterbury

No	Site name	Sport(s)		No	Site name	Sport(s)
1	Barton Manor School	Football		21	Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	Football
2	Bekesbourne Recreation Ground	Football		22	Spires Academy (Orion Spires) (new site)	Football
3	Blean Primary School	Football		23	St Anselms R.C. School	Football
4	Brickfield Recreation Ground	Football		24	St Augustine's	Football
5	Canterbury Academy Campus	Football		25	St Edmunds School (Canterbury)	Football
6	Canterbury RFC	Rugby		26	St Lawrence And Highland Court Cricket Club	Cricket
7	Chartham Parish Council Village Hall	Football		27	Stodmarsh Playing Fields	Football, Rugby
8	Chartham Primary School	Football		28	Street End Cricket Club	Cricket
9	Chartham Sports Club	Football		29	Sturry FC	Football
10	Chestfield Cricket Club	Cricket		30	Swalecliffe Recreation Ground (Longrock)	Football
11	Herne Bay High School	Football		31	Tankerton Football Club Sports Ground	Football
12	Herne Bay Memorial Park	Football		32	Thanington Recreation Ground	Football
13	Herne Bay Sports Hub	Cricket		33	The Bear Trap	Football
14	Herne Ce Junior School	Football		34	The Cherry Orchard Playing Field	Football
15	Littlebourne Recreation Ground	Football, Cricket		35	Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground	Football, Cricket
16	Patrixbourne Road Recreation Ground (Bridge)	Football		36	University Of Kent (The Pavilion)	Football
17	Polo Farm Sports Club	Cricket		37	Victoria Recreation Ground	Football
18	Radfall Recreation Ground	Football, Cricket		38	Whitstable Cricket Club	Cricket
19	Rough Common Playing Field	Football, Cricket		39	Whitstable Rugby Club	Rugby
20	Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School	Football				

Figure 3.6 Distribution of natural turf playing pitch sites



Artificial turf playing pitches

b. Sites in Canterbury with artificial grass playing pitches (and the sports the sites provide for) are listed in figure 3.7. The locations of these artificial pitches showing their distribution throughout Canterbury are in figure 3.8. For cricket, NTP refers to Non-Turf Pitch which is an artificial strip located either adjacent to a fine turf table or as a standalone wicket. This type of facility is used mainly for junior Cricket and for recreation level adult cricket and practice.

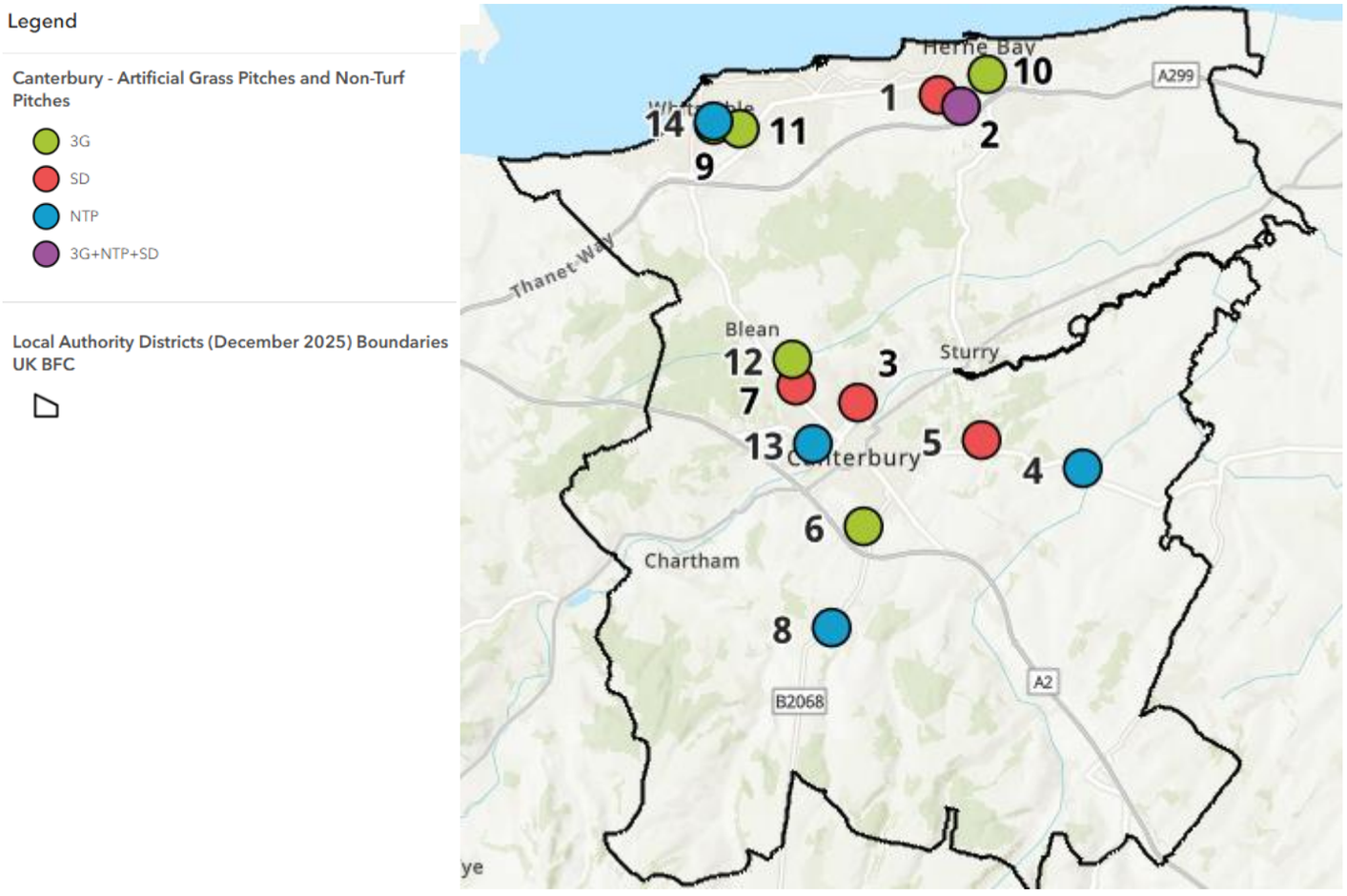
Figure 3.7 – Artificial Turf Playing Pitches in Canterbury

No	Site Name	Sport / Facility Type
1	Bay Sports Arena	Hockey (SD)
2	Herne Bay Sports Hub	Football (3G), Cricket (NTP), Hockey (SD)
3	Kings School (Birley's Playing Fields)	Hockey (SD)
4	Littlebourne Recreation Ground	Cricket (NTP)
5	Polo Farm Sports Club	Hockey (SD)
6	Simon Langton Grammar School For Boys	Football (3G)
7	St Edmunds School (Canterbury)	Hockey (SD)
8	Street End Cricket Club	Cricket (NTP)
9	The Belmont Ground	Football (3G)

No	Site Name	Sport / Facility Type
10	The Crest Stadium	Football (3G)
11	The Whitstable School	Football (3G)
12	University Of Kent (The Pavilion)	Football (3G)
13	Victoria Recreation Ground	Cricket (NTP)
14	Whitstable Cricket Club	Cricket (NTP)

SD = Sand Dressed or Sand Filled Artificial Grass Pitch, 3G = Third Generation Artificial Grass Pitch WRC = World Rugby Regulation 22 Compliant, NTP = Non Turf Pitch

Figure 3.8 - Distribution of Artificial Turf Playing Pitches sites in Canterbury



c. Figure 3.9 below provides a summary of the current demand for playing pitches in Canterbury, Figure 3.11 which follows, provides an overview of the projected future demand and facility improvements and developments required to meet this future demand. Each of the sections below are further detailed in the Assessment of Needs (Appendix A – D).

Figure 3.9 - Summary of current playing pitch provision and demand

Is there enough accessible and secured community provision to meet current demand?	
Cricket	**No** - The assessment of facility needs shows that there are insufficient fine turf pitches to cater for the current demand of clubs in the Canterbury District.

	75% of the fine turf pitches are being played at or over their maximum capacity. Whilst there are there are 3 pitches not currently being used at their maximum capacity, none of these have sufficient spare capacity to support additional teams on the site (a minimum of 10MES required for matches). All cricket provision in the area is secure with sites being owned by the City Council, Parish Councils, or community sports clubs or leased to community clubs on long term leases.
Football	**No** – Although there is currently sufficient grass pitch provision across Canterbury to meet the current demand by clubs, a number of playing field sites in Canterbury have pitches that are being played to capacity or overplayed, these are sites that are the home grounds for clubs with a large number of teams and a limited number of pitches, such as Bekesbourne Recreation Ground (Canterbury City Youth FC), and Radfall Recreation Ground (Whitstable Town FC). All the 3G pitches in the area, except for The Whitstable School due to its poor condition, are used at full capacity in the peak period and there are a number of clubs currently training on SD AGPs, which are unsuitable for football.
Hockey	**Yes** – There are currently 26 hours of availability at the pitches across Polo Farm Sports Club in the peak period, allowing Canterbury HC to comfortably manage their training and fixture demands. Although at full capacity, Herne Bay HC reported no issues with capacity at the pitches at Herne Bay Sports Hub for training or matches.
Rugby	**No** – Excluding the junior pitch currently not in use, the majority of grass rugby pitches (6 out of 7 pitches) in the Canterbury District are currently at or over capacity for the amount of demand for training and matches. Both Canterbury RFC and Whitstable RFC have referred to the capacity of their pitches being insufficient to meet the growing demand. The assessment of the pitches and their use show that both sites are overplayed. Of the two WRC 3G AGPs in the area, only Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys is regularly used by community rugby clubs. There is a CUA in place which secures 12 hours of use of the pitch for Canterbury RFC in the peak period.
Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?	
Cricket	**No** – The cricket pitches (squares) and outfields in Canterbury vary in quality. Half of all fine turf pitches (6 of 12) were assessed to be in good condition and 5 of 12 in a standard condition. There is one poor-quality fine turf pitch at Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground. The quality of the outfields in the area is varied with 4 of 12 of 'good quality', 5 of 12 'standard quality' and 3 rated as 'poor quality'. There are 6 NTPs across the Canterbury District. 2 NTP's have been recently installed and are in a good condition, of the other 4 NTPs in the area, 1 is in good condition allowing up to 60 match equivalent sessions (MES) for adults, 2 are rated as poor quality and the one at Littlebourne Recreation Ground is considered to not be ECB compliant due to the length of the boundary. The quality of non-turf practice nets which are available at 5 sites in Canterbury are in the main rated good (8 out of 11), with the remaining nets not being ECB compliant and deemed standard (1) or poor (2). There are also 8 grass practice nets of good quality at the Polo Farm Sports Club.

	Investment into pavilions is required including new or refurbished provision at a number of sites where the current provision is inadequate or falling into disrepair. 4 pavilions were rated as poor and requiring investment to bring them up to modern standards, with further issues identified with standard quality ancillary facilities.
Football	**No** – Nineteen grass pitches (23%) are not of sufficient quality, 57 are of standard quality (70%) and only 6 are of good quality (7%). The quality of the majority of AGPs in the area are good or standard and are on the FA register for matches. The only 11v11 3G AGP which is poor quality and not currently on the FA Register is The Whitstable School, however the school are currently exploring options to resurface the pitch. There are no changing facilities available for football clubs at Brickfield Recreation Ground and The Bear Trap. There are also poor-quality facilities at a number of sites that need improving including Radfall Recreation Ground, Simon Langton Grammar School for Girls, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys, and The Belmont Stadium.
Hockey	**Yes** – All sites are rated as standard or good quality, with plans in place to resurface the pitch at Polo Farm Sports Club that has been identified as requiring resurfacing. The ancillary facilities at both club sites, Herne Bay Sports Hub and Polo Farm Sports Club, were rated as good quality, with no issues raised by either club.
Rugby	**No** – Of the 8 naturally drained grass pitches in Canterbury, 7 were rated as having inadequate drainage, which significantly reduces the playing capacity of pitches and leads to the clubs having to carefully manage usage and frequently cancel training and matches.

d. Figure 3.10 later in this section provides a summary of the current shortfall of playing pitch facilities as well as highlighting the shortfall based on projected population growth and the growth of specific sports, where data has been provided by the NGBs.

3.6 Future supply and demand

a. **Proposed new supply** - On the future supply side, there are current or proposed projects (with funding allocations and/or current planning applications either in preparation or subject to detailed consideration) for new and enhanced playing pitch provision in the district which, taken together, will address some of the current need for additional playing pitch capacity and reduce overplay on grass pitches. These 'pipeline' projects are:

- **Saxon Field -** The outline planning for housing development at Saxon Field, includes the development of a cricket square. An additional planning application has been submitted for the development of a 9v9 and 5v5 grass football pitch and a new MUGA.
- **Howe Park –** 7v7 3G AGP and 11v11 grass pitch at Howe Park has been developed as part of a wider housing development and is due to be handed over to a sports trust, however this is unlikely to be for the 2026/27 season.
- **Tankerton FC –** Minimum of 7 new grass football pitches and ancillary facilities at a new site for Tankerton FC, allowing the club to relocate away from the existing Seaview Caravan site, which is considered unsecure for community use.
- **Herne Bay High School -** Conversion of the existing sand dressed AGP to a full size 3G AGP.

- **Brooklands Farm –** A planning application has been submitted for the development of an additional cricket square to support Chestfield CC and additional small sided grass football pitches alongside a housing development.
- **Hillborough –** A planning application for a significant development in Hillborough has come forward, proposing the development of 4 tennis courts, an 11v11 football pitch, 2 9v9 football pitches, a 7v7 football pitch, a 5v5 football pitch, a cricket square, and an indoor table tennis centre.
- **Simon Langton Girls Grammar School –** the school have submitted a planning application for the development of a full size 3G AGP at the site.
- **Beacon Road –** The site has been allocated for development in the Canterbury Local Plan. Appropriate mitigation for the loss of the disused tennis courts and hockey pitch should be sought either through development of new facilities or enhancement of existing facilities in the local area. As per development policy point 3(a).

b. **Population Growth -** In terms of estimating future demand for community playing pitches, assuming current levels of participation per capita and the forecast population growth (+22,781) people resident in the Canterbury District by 2042[4], application of Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) tool indicates a potential need to secure more playing pitch capacity. This additional capacity will need to be achieved through a combination of investment in new provision, enhancement of existing pitches and negotiating and securing more community access to existing and any planned new school and college playing pitches.

c. This does not include the planned projects referenced in 3.6a as they have not been completed and highlights the additional capacity needed to 2042 based on current participation rates. This should be reviewed on a regular basis as part of the strategy Stage E process for account for changes in supply and demand.

d. **Potential effect of demand trends -** When considering future playing pitch capacity needs, it is important to note that the run of Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) assumes 'static demand' i.e., the proportion of the population by age group and gender that currently play pitch sports stays the same.

e. The national governing bodies of all four of the major playing pitch sports aspire to continue to grow demand for their sports, particularly among historically under-represented groups and have development programmes and strategies in place towards achieving this aim.

f. The ECB had reported that the scale of women and girls Cricket has more than doubled over the past 4 years, and all Counties have a target to treble the number of girls teams by 2028 with extra investment ahead of and beyond the Women's T20 World Cup in England & Wales in 2026. The ECB and Kent Cricket have forecasted there is likely to be a growth of 12 additional women and girls' teams in the Canterbury District, which would require an additional 72 MES.

g. The FA continues to invest in established development programmes such as the girl's football school's partnership and, at club level, 'Wildcats' and 'Squad Girls' capitalising on the success of the England Women's team. FA Insight shows youth football growth has been running at an average of just over 3% per annum since 2018. The Local Football Facilities Plan for Canterbury suggests the demand for 11v11 3G pitch provision could be more, with a growth of 83 teams requiring at least 2 additional 11v11 3G pitches by 2030.

[4] Population change from 2026 to 2042 based on subnational population projections for England from ONS

h. It should be noted that the local growth rate for adult and junior football is much greater than the FA national model (3.09% per year), with adult men's football growing at 8.44% per year since the last strategy, women's football growing at 22.10% per year, youth boys growing at 12.74% per year, and youth girls growing at 36.85% per year. If these local growth trends were to continue over just the next 5 years, the demand for pitches would be significantly greater than highlighted above.

i. As well as growth in demand for women and girls' football, there is an increased demand for women and girls' rugby following the country hosting and winning the 2025 Women's Rugby World Cup. The RFU legacy programme Impact 25 aims to grow women's rugby to 100,000 female players by 2027. The latest report by the RFU (August '25) highlighted there had been a 35% increase in registered age grade girls since the start of Impact 25.

j. Figure 3.10 below provides a summary of the future demand based on projected population growth and the projected growth in demand for football and cricket as outlined above. Recent changes to physical education policy and practice in schools aimed at equal opportunities for girls could also impact positively on future community demand for all pitch sports. For rugby and hockey, the PPC estimates in figure 3.10 should be considered as the minimum future requirement for new playing pitch capacity.

Figure 3.10 – summary of the total capacity needed to meet current and future demand for each playing pitch sport

Sport and pitch type	Current capacity needed	Additional capacity needed by 2042	Total capacity needed to meet current and future demand
Cricket	110 MES	184 MES	294 MES
Total Fine Turf Pitches	**3 cricket pitches (22 total wickets)**	**5 cricket pitches (37 total wickets)**	**8 cricket pitches (59 total wickets)**
Football - adult	0 pitches	5 pitches	5 pitches
Football - junior	0 pitches	15 pitches	15 pitches
Football - mini	0 pitches	9 pitches	9 pitches
Total Grass pitches	**0 football pitches**	**29 football pitches**	**29 football pitches**
Football - training hours	36 hours	54.96 hours	90.96 hours
Total 3G AGPs	**2 3G AGPs**	**1.5 3G AGPs**	**3.5 3G AGPs**
Hockey	0	1.67 MES + 6.95 training hours	1.67 MES + 6.95 training hours
Total SD AGPs	**0 SD AGPs**	**0.47 SD AGPs**	**0.47 SD AGPs**
Rugby	8.5 MES	1.77 MES + 2.28 MES for training	12.55 MES
Total Grass pitches	**5 rugby pitches**	**2 rugby pitches**	**7 rugby pitches**

k. Figure 3.11 provides an overview of the projected future demand and facility improvements and developments required to meet this future demand. Each of the sections below are further detailed in the Assessment of Needs (Appendix A – D).

Figure 3.11 – summary of the total capacity needed to meet current and future demand for each playing pitch sport

Is there enough accessible and secured community provision to meet future demand?	
Cricket	**No** – The existing supply of pitches can only meet the current demand if improvements to levels of pitch maintenance are achieved to improve the standard of pitches. In order to accommodate growth of clubs, particularly in girls participation, investment into improvements in pitch quality, (noting the challenges of increased maintenance and investment costs), followed by appropriate installation of hybrid pitches and new or improved NTPs will help to increase capacity. Opportunities to improve the quality of poor and standard quality pitches which are currently used at or over capacity should be prioritises. These sites include Herne Bay Sports Hub, Littlebourne Recreation Ground, Street End CC, Tyler Hill Memorial, and Whitstable CC. The pitch at Whitstable CC is constrained by residential areas and roads therefore capacity cannot increase above the club's existing use, which is 7MES greater than capacity. The options of installing NTPs at Canterbury Cricket Club, Chestfield Cricket Club, St Lawrence and Highland Court Cricket Club as well as replacing existing poor provision at Whitstable Cricket Club and Street End Cricket Club should be explored. There is outline planning for housing development in the Canterbury District at two sites for which new cricket provision is proposed. The Saxon Field Site pitch has planning permission, but the size of the square (number of wickets) is yet to be determined. This site is linked to South Canterbury CC to provide them with a home site in Canterbury. The Brooklands Farm development is proposed to provide a second pitch for Chestfield CC as it is next to their site however this is not confirmed. If the improvement in pitch quality can be made on the majority of sites, noting the challenges of increased maintenance and investment costs, the provision of the proposed additional NTP's is considered and the two new additional cricket sites are developed as planned, there would a need for two additional pitches to cater for future demand. To cater for this demand the council should explore bringing the lapsed fine turf square at Cherry Orchard Playing Fields back into use and endeavour to secure Kenfield Cricket Club site for regular community use. Options for the development of an additional 16 wickets of good quality should be explored to meet remaining future demand by 2042.
Football	**No** – There is projected to be a future shortfall of 12 junior and 6 mini grass pitches. There are no education sites with grass pitches that have expressed an interest in increasing their community offer, however many education sites in the area with existing community use do not have CUAs to secure community use of their pitches. Securing CUAs at these education sites would secure the use of these pitches for future demand and contribute towards meeting the shortfall. The current and future shortfall of 3G AGPs in the area is equivalent to 3.5 11v11 3G AGPs. There are plans to resurface the existing SD AGP at Herne Bay High School to a 3G surface. Funding and planning have been confirmed for the project. Once developed, the current shortfall of 3G AGPs will be reduced to 2.5. The 7v7 3G AGP at Howe Park is due to be handed over from Taylor Wimpey to Howe Park Trust for community use shortly, reducing the current and future shortfall of 3G AGPs to 2. The leading projects for football are considered further in the scenarios section below.

Hockey	**Yes** – There is currently a spare 26 hours of capacity at Polo Farm Sports Club, which, subject to viability and the ability for the club to sustain more use, is sufficient to support the projected increase in demand due to population growth over the strategy period. The key priority is to ensure the quality of the existing stock of pitches is maintained and that sinking funds are in place to resurface pitches when required. The pitches at Herne Bay Sports Hub are currently at full capacity, however these are only currently available for 15.5 hours in the peak period each (out of a potential maximum of 31 hours). To support future growth of Herne Bay HC, it is recommended that the availability of the pitches is extended, subject to financial impact assessment by the club and operators.
Rugby	**No –** Improvements to the maintenance and drainage at overplayed pitches in the Canterbury District would help partially meet the existing shortfall however there would still be surplus existing demand as well as future demand for an additional 2 grass pitches. To address the identified current and future shortfall with the lack of capacity at current sites and limited opportunities presented for new grass pitches, it is recommended that the City Council and partners look to progress increasing rugby access at the University of Kent AGP. Securing a minimum of 8 hours of peak period use could be a workable solution if football use can be provided at other sites. The 3G AGP at The Whitstable school is in poor condition, not on the FA register, and requires resurfacing. The school are currently exploring options to resurface the pitch and an assessment should be undertaken of the viability of resurfacing this pitch with a WRC shockpad and surface to support Whitstable RFC's training and match demand. This would provide a suitable alternative to relocating football demand from the University of Kent pitch and would negate the overplay at Whitstable RFC.

3.7 Meeting the needs: 'How to' scenarios

a. As part of the overall strategy development process, alongside the assessment of need for current and future demand, a number of scenarios have been identified as options to meet the future facility needs highlighted in the preceding section. The Steering Group has considered these scenarios along with their potential implications on the future picture of provision for the leading playing pitch sports in the Canterbury District and how best to meet existing and future playing pitch facility demand. These scenarios have also been considered in relation to setting the priorities for future enhancement and provision detailed in the action plan for playing pitches in Section 6.

Scenario 1 - Improved quality of sites

a. Before considering the provision of new playing fields it is important to first consider the potential for increasing capacity of existing sites (particularly those grounds owned or leased by community clubs) as these have resources and structures in place (e.g., grounds maintenance, coaching) and an established sporting identity developed over many years. Improving the quality of ancillary facilities such as practice, changing and social provision can also have an impact by sustaining and retaining existing demand and on attracting under-represented groups (e.g. the provision of suitable changing provision for women and girls).

b. **Cricket –** As set out above in figure 3.9, six of the 12 sites in the district with fine turf pitches have potential for improvements to increase playing capacity. PitchPower (and ECB funding) is due to be available to local authorities and cricket clubs, providing potential for funding pitch improvements either through the ECB or the Football Foundation for sites with 'standard' quality pitches that provide for both football and cricket (e.g. at Cherry Orchard Playing Field, Herne Bay Sports Hub, Littlebourne Recreation

Ground, Rough Common Playing Field, and Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground).

c. It should be noted that the pitch at Whitstable CC is constrained by roads and residential buildings and there have been issues of ball strikes reported. This means that despite the 11 wickets available on site, the club typically restrict themselves to only using the middle wickets for senior matches. Beyond the development of hybrid wickets, there are limited opportunities to increase the capacity of the site.

d. Poor quality cricket pitches are assumed to have 0 capacity for regular cricket, therefore the poor-quality pitch at Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground is a priority for improvement to ensure the pitch is of sufficient quality to be safe for regular use.

e. Improving the quality of the NTPs at Street End Cricket Club and Whitstable Cricket Club would also increase capacity. Upgrading the practice nets at Street End CC and Whitstable CC to meet ECB requirements should also be considered.

f. Of more significant impact on retention is the quality of the changing facilities, particularly in attracting more women and girls to play club cricket which tends to centre on larger, better resourced clubs. In this respect, the pavilion facilities at Chestfield Cricket Club and Street End Cricket Club are priorities for improvement to modern standards. The two remaining poor-quality pavilions (Radfall Recreation Ground and Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground) have multisport elements, catering for both cricket and football during their respective seasons. These pavilions are also a priority for improvement to ensure they can better meet the needs of all sports on site.

g. **Football –** Seventeen of the grass football pitches in Canterbury have had PitchPower assessments undertaken by the GMA, of which 13 were rated as standard or poor quality. Through maintenance guidance and funding from the Football Foundation, these pitches may be improved to good/advanced quality over time. If all 13 pitches were improved to good quality, this would have a positive impact on capacity at Radfall Recreation Ground (+10 MES), Chartham Sports Club (+14 MES), St Augustine's (+8 MES), and Herne Bay Sports Hub (+8 MES). This increase in capacity would be equivalent to 8 junior football pitches and 5 mini pitches, which is insufficient to meet the projected future shortfall of 12 junior pitches and 6 mini pitches by 2042.

h. There are a number of pitch sites in regular use by youth football clubs without adequate on-site changing or WC facilities e.g. Brickfield Recreation Ground and the Bear Trap. Whilst not essential for youth football, many clubs prefer to have access to changing rooms and toilets should be a minimum to ensure the safeguarding of players. In addition, there are also poor-quality ancillary facilities at a number of other sites e.g. Radfall Recreation Ground, Simon Langton Grammar School for Girls, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys, and The Belmont Stadium. Improvements where possible, prioritising those sites with the greatest community use, will help to retain players and attract new players to the game. The council are also exploring opportunities to upgrade or replace the ancillary facilities at Swalecliffe Recreation Ground, which are at end of life.

i. **Hockey –** Polo Farm Sports Club noted through consultation that they have plans in place to resurface one of the three pitches at the site (last resurfaced in 2015). The hockey pitch at St Edmunds School was developed in 2013 and has not been resurfaced since. The school did not raise any issues with the pitch or immediate need to resurface, however a technical assessment of the pitch should be undertaken to provide a detailed estimate on a timeline for resurfacing.

j. **Rugby** – As set out earlier in figure 3.9, of the eight naturally drained grass rugby pitches in the Canterbury District, seven were rated as having inadequate drainage. If improvements to the drainage at these pitches were achieved, this would increase the playing capacity by 0.5 MES a week thereby reducing current overplay at Canterbury RFC and Whitstable RFC, however there would still be demand for additional capacity at both sites.

k. The pitches at Whitstable RFC have failed pipe drainage and are therefore rated as natural inadequate drainage. If the pipe drainage was repaired and the quality of drainage improved, this would further reduce the overplay at Whitstable RFC.

l. Improvements to the maintenance of pitches at both sites from 'adequate' to 'good', alongside improved drainage, would negate overplay at Canterbury RFC and significantly reduce the overplay at Whitstable RFC. Improvements to the drainage and maintenance at Whitstable RFC is not sufficient to completely negate the existing shortfall of pitch capacity at the site. Opportunities for increased provision for training and matches are explored in the scenarios below.

Scenario 2 - More community use at education sites

a. There are no education sites identified as priorities for gaining additional regular community access to meet current and future demand for playing pitches in Canterbury. There is however a reliance on the education sites which currently provide community use and many of these sites do not have community use agreements in place.

b. Church Street Playing Fields is owned by Kent County Council and is connected to the Whitstable School. The site has been unused by community clubs for over 10 years following issues with access and misuse of the site, however the site should be protected from development as it provides an opportunity to meet future additional playing pitch demand. The site is large enough to multiple pitches but would need suitable ancillary facilities to be developed as well as access to be secured. Should the site come under development pressure, suitable mitigation should be secured within the local area.

c. School and college facilities are important to community football in the Canterbury District, most notably access to 3G pitches Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and University of Kent. Community grassroots football also takes place at weekends by arrangement on 13 school playing fields in the district. No existing 'Community Use Agreements' are in place at these sites to secure this use.

d. Maintaining access to education sports facilities in the evenings and at weekends therefore continues to be an important element of the overall strategy to meet community playing pitch needs going forward, most particularly for football clubs. Securing formal Community Use Agreements (CUAs) with schools and colleges is very challenging in the case of existing facilities. However, whenever new or upgraded sports pitches are proposed on education sites, opportunities to secure formal CUAs linked to planning obligations and/or grant conditions should always be explored. The priority schools for securing community access to are highlighted in the Section 6 Action Plan.

e. Should any additional education provision be needed as part of housing growth, then the Council or County Council should ensure community use of any facilities provided and refer to this strategy to identify priorities needed for the area. Similarly, should new capital funding to support community access to school facilities become available in the future, then Active Kent and Medway, the council, county council, and the pitch sport governing bodies should consider the priorities identified in this strategy.

Scenario 3 - Change of use from one sport or pitch type to another

a. The most common scenarios involving change of pitch type are:
   - Upgrading natural turf pitches to AGPs (i.e. to 3G football and/or WRC rugby, or to sand-dressed hockey)
   - Resurfacing sand-dressed hockey AGPs as 3G football (subject to consultation and agreement with EH and SE).
   - Resurfacing 3G football as WRC 3G (i.e. suitable for both football and contact rugby).

b. The 3G AGP at The Whitstable School requires resurfacing as it is currently poor quality and not on the FA 3G Register. Alongside football use, any redevelopment could provide an opportunity to support Whitstable RFC in negating the significant overplay of the grass rugby pitches at their site by resurfacing The Whitstable School 3G AGP to a WRC surface and shockpad. Regular, secured, access to WRC 3G AGPs for midweek rugby training can significantly reduce the pressure on grass rugby pitches with sports lighting and support clubs in better managing and maintaining their pitches.

c. The only existing WRC 3G AGP within a 20-minute driving catchment of Whitstable RFC is the University of Kent 3G pitch, however this does not currently accommodate any community rugby clubs and the pitch is used at full capacity by the university and community football clubs. The Whitstable School is only a 4-minute drive from the rugby club and the current 3G pitch has 13.5 hours of spare capacity in the peak period. Resurfacing this pitch to a WRC 3G and securing regular access for Whitstable RFC would allow the club to significantly reduce overplay on their current grass pitches and provide the club with pitch capacity to accommodate future growth (if grass pitch drainage and quality improvements were achieved as outlined in 3.13 above).

d. The sand-dressed AGP at Bay Sports Arena (Herne Bay High School) is currently being resurfaced to a 3G AGP to support the demand by football clubs in the area. No additional sand-dressed hockey AGPs are proposed to be resurfaced to 3G football AGPs, but should any be proposed in the future it is recommended that the change of surface type should be subject to planning permission to formalise the consultation process with England Hockey and Sport England.

Scenario 4 - Potential loss of availability of key sites

a. No imminent threat to the availability of key community playing pitch sites in the Canterbury District has been identified in the course of the research and consultation for this PPS.

b. However, there is a significant number of pitches – notably on education sites - where continued availability and access is unsecured whether by a lack of a lease, licence or CUA. Continued access to these playing pitches for community clubs is therefore at risk and reliant on successful negotiations season by season.

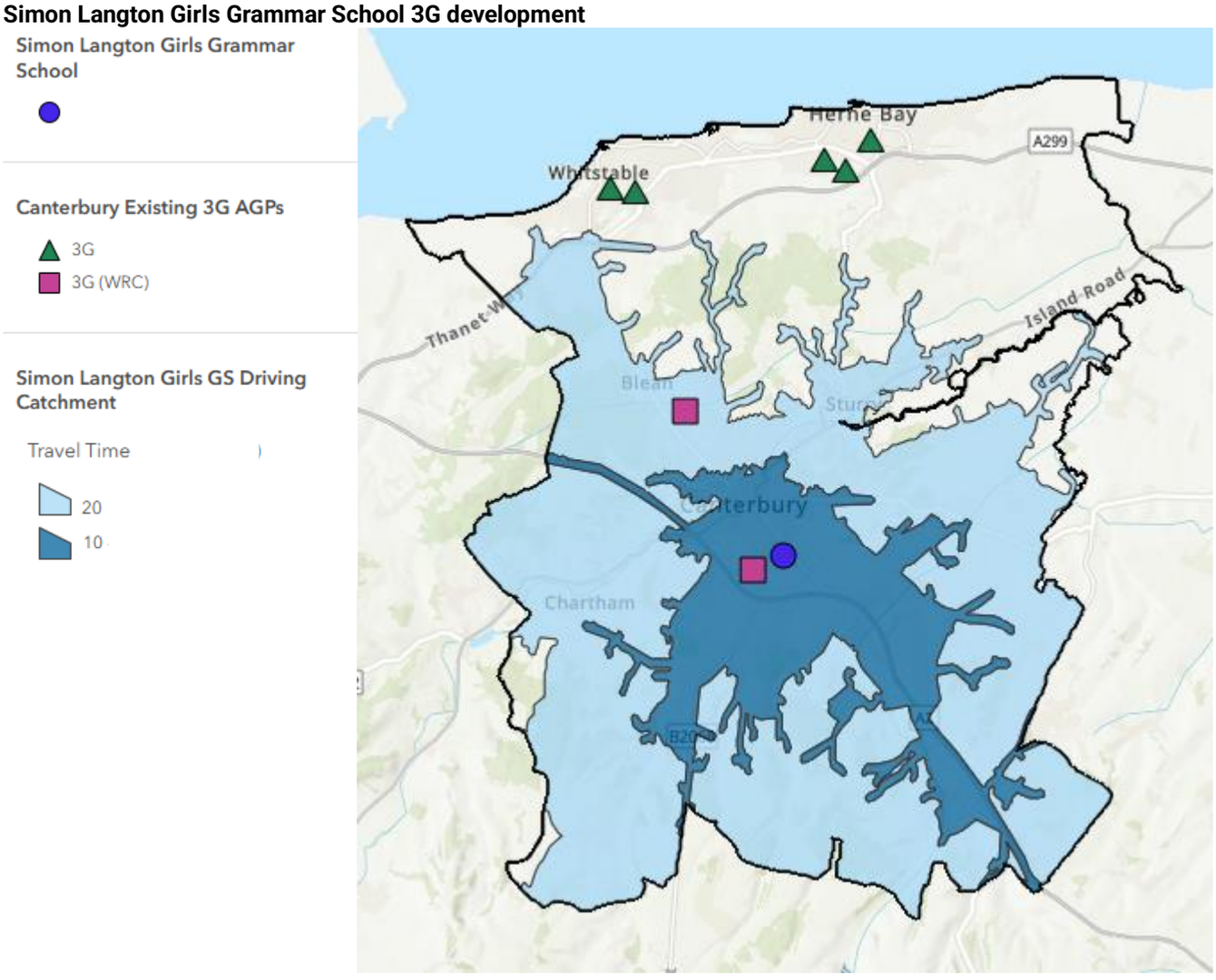
Scenario 5 - New or reinstated pitches

a. Simon Langton Girls Grammar School have submitted planning for the development of an 11v11 3G AGP at the site. Analysis has been undertaken to review the impact on the site's location based on the identified shortfall and current catchment for AGPs in Canterbury

b. Figure 3.12 below highlights the current distribution and type of 3G AGPs within Canterbury (including the pitch currently being installed at Herne Bay High School) alongside 10-minute and 20-minute driving catchments from Simon Langton Girls Grammar School. This highlights that there is only one 3G AGP within a 10-minute driving catchment (Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys) and one additional 3G AGP within

a 20-minute catchment of the proposed site (University of Kent), both of which are WRC 3G AGPs.

Figure 3.12 – Distribution and type of 3G AGPs in Canterbury with driving catchment from proposed Simon Langton Girls Grammar School 3G development



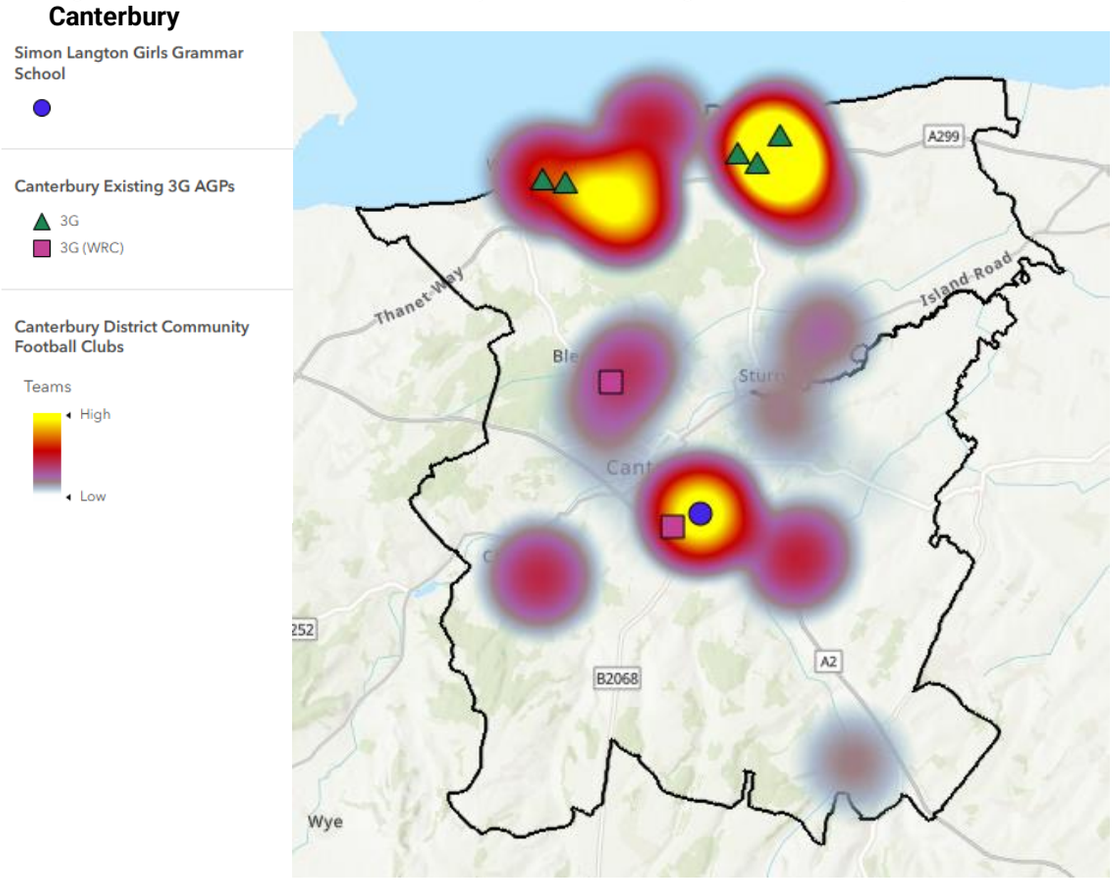
c. There is currently a shortfall of two 3G AGPs, reduced to one when factoring in the imminent delivery of the new 3G AGP at Herne Bay High School (included in figure 3.12 above). Figure 3.12 above shows that there are five existing 3G AGPs available for community use along the coastal band of Canterbury compared to only two around the city centre. Looking at the distribution of where community football clubs are primarily based within the district (figure 3.13 below), there are hotspots of community football clubs within the City Centre that could benefit from the development of a new 3G AGP at Simon Langton Girls Grammar School. The largest clubs based in the area include:

- Canterbury Eagles (40 teams)
- Chartham Sports Club (17 teams)
- Canterbury Youth (15 teams)
- Tyler Hill Youth (9 teams)

d. Canterbury Eagles are the largest club based in the Canterbury District and currently primarily based at Simon Langton Girls Grammar School. The club state that they train at 5 different sites throughout the year and often have 4-6 teams training on a 3G pitch at

once. The club report that their facilities for matches and training are not currently sufficient to meet their demand. Chartham Sports Club, Canterbury Youth, and Tyler Hill Youth all also stated that the match and training facilities available to them are not currently suitable to meet their capacity demands.

Figure 3.13 – Location of community football clubs against the current provision of 3G AGPs in Canterbury



e. A key priority for rugby is to gain regular access to the WRC 3G AGP at The University of Kent to help reduce the current overplay of grass pitches caused by excess training demand. The development of a 3G AGP at Simon Langton Girls Grammar School would provide an opportunity to relocate some football demand from the University of Kent pitch, providing access for Canterbury RFC and Whitstable RFC.

f. Overall, the current distribution of community accessible 3G AGPs, demand for rugby clubs to access more WRC 3G AGPs for training, and demand for additional 3G AGPs for training and matches in the catchment area, suggests that there is demand for the development of a full size 11v11 3G AGP within the City Centre area. A final viability review be undertaken by CCC and the Football foundation ahead of supporting the proposed development.

g. For cricket, the priority is the reinstatement of the fine turf square at Cherry Orchard Playing Fields and securing regular community use of the previous Kenfield Cricket Club site to help met current and future demand. To meet the remaining future demand, options for the development of an additional 16 wickets of good quality should be explored.

h. There is an opportunity to reinstate the lapsed pitches at Westmead's Recreation Ground provided investment into the drainage and ancillary facilities on the site was secured. The

site previously provided one adult 11v11 grass pitch, however the type of pitches reinstated should consider the high current and future demand for junior and mini pitches in the district.

i. There are a number of planning applications for housing developments which have proposed the development of new sport and leisure facilities (section 3.6a) if these planning applications are accepted then a range of additional playing pitches and sports facilities will be delivered and available for community use over the strategy period.

Scenario 6 - Significant Increase in Demand by an Age Group or Sport

a. Nationally, Sport England's latest Active Lives Survey (ALS) data report published in April 2026 suggests that participation in all sports has been increasing year on year, with Cricket recording its highest levels of participation since the data started being collected.

b. While Hockey participation is already evenly split between the male and female participants, the governing bodies of Football, Cricket and Rugby all have a clear strategic focus on delivering more opportunities for women and girls to play and compete. As identified in the detailed assessments of future need for each sport, it is demand from the growth from women and girls that is likely to be the most significant over the next planning period and place the most pressure on the available capacity in the peak hours at existing pitches. The ECB and Kent Cricket Foundation have forecasted there is likely to be a growth of 12 girls' teams in the Canterbury District, which would require an additional 72 MES.

c. This demand and growth are particularly evident in football and, if sustained, will place additional demand pressure on the available stock of youth and mini soccer pitches and 3G AGPs as well as on the existing stock of pavilions many of which do not have adequate changing and toilet facilities. The FA's national insight shows that youth football is growing at an average of 3.09% year on year, based on this growth, there would be a shortfall of 12 junior and 6 mini soccer grass pitches in addition to 1.5 3G AGPs for team training by 2042 (see figure 3.10).

d. It should be noted that the local growth rate for adult and junior football, based on the rate of growth from 2020 to 2026, is much greater than the FA national model (3.09% per year), with adult men's football growing at 8.44% per year since the last strategy, women's football growing at 22.10% per year, youth boys growing at 12.74% per year, and youth girls growing at 36.85% per year. If these local growth trends were to continue over just the next 5 years, the demand for pitches could be as much as an additional 22.5 grass pitches and 4 3G AGPs, significantly greater than highlighted above.

e. Actual team generation rates should be monitored as part of regular PPS updates to identify whether the population growth or participation growth scenarios outlined above are proving to be accurate. Future pitch capacity and demand should be revised on an ongoing basis to ensure provisions are planned accordingly.

Scenario 7- The impact of climate change

a. Climate change is affecting participation in physical activity, with reduced water and air quality, rising temperatures and extreme weather events such as flooding, drought and heatwaves all affecting playing pitches and expected to increase in the coming decades.

b. Grass sports pitches are increasingly vulnerable to extreme weather conditions and Sport England and the NGBs are conducting research and providing updated advice to clubs on ways to make pitches more resilient to our changing weather patterns.

c. Drought and extreme temperatures over the summer in 2026 had a significant impact on both summer playing pitch sports and resulted in delays to winter playing pitch sports. Cricket squares have a health and safety exemption from temporary watering bans, however drought and extreme temperature resulted in poor quality, unsafe outfields. The condition of grass pitches through September resulted in the grassroots rugby season being delayed due to unsafe conditions. These issues highlighted a need for improved irrigation systems across playing pitch sites nationally as well as the importance of artificial pitches to support training demand through extreme weather conditions.

d. Artificial pitch provision provides opportunities for increased usage whilst being resilient to most weather conditions for example an 11v11 3G AGP can sustain up to 80 hours of use a week, providing an average of around 1,400 playing opportunities, compared to a good-quality grass pitch, which can sustain just 6 hours a week (100 playing opportunities). A Cricket NTP can allow for 60 MES compared to 5 MES on a fine turf wicket.

e. However, concerns have been raised about the environmental impact of 3G AGP's related to the rubber crumb infill and the recycling of pitches. Within the EU, restrictions have been put in place that restrict the sale of rubber crumb from 2031. Whilst this does not directly impact the UK, the Sports Councils (Sport England, Sport Wales, sportscotland, and Sport NI) and leading sport bodies are working with respective governments to understand the impact of the EU ban on 3G Pitches in the UK. The Football Foundation and Sport England are currently exploring options for viable infill alternatives. Improved containment methods have been put in place in the meantime and 3G AGPs continue to be supported by Sport England as they enable more people to experience the benefits of being active.

f. As previously outlined in figure 3.10 Canterbury has a shortfall of 3.5 11v11 3G AGPs (2 current and 1.5 future) if the council tried to accommodate this provision on grass pitches, they would need 49 pitches with sports lighting to cater for matches and training needs.

g. The council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and is committed to identify steps to be carbon zero for their own services and building by 2030 and meet net zero for all activities that support the council's work by 2050. The council have a Net Zero and Climate Change Action Plan 2026 in place. It will be important for the council to review the impact of climate change on playing pitches and participation levels as part of future versions of this strategy.

Scenario 8 - Extension of available hours

a. There are currently restrictions of the hours which sports lights are able to be turned on at Herne Bay Sports Hub, reducing the peak period hours which the hockey pitches and 3G AGP are available for community use. As part of the funding application to develop the 3G AGP with the Football Foundation, a clause is in place requiring the operator of the site to apply for an extension of sports lighting hours on an annual basis.

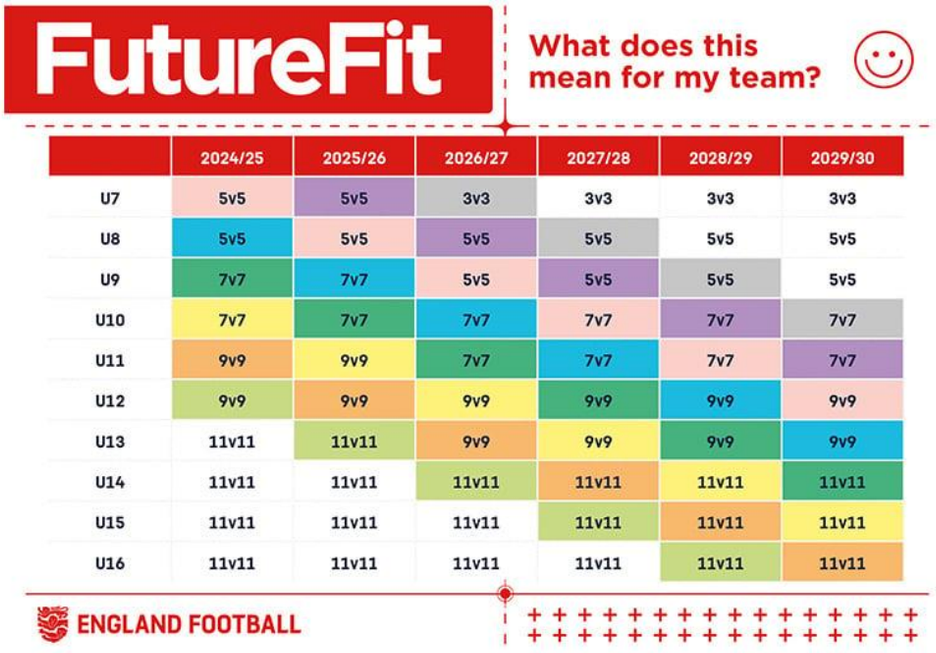
b. Both the football and hockey pitches are currently used at full capacity during the peak period. For hockey, there is currently sufficient supply of pitches to meet the projected future demand as the pitches at Polo Farm Sports Club have spare capacity to support increased demand based on population growth. However, it should be noted that this assumes that all growth in demand for hockey is located around the city centre, the catchment area for Polo Farm Sports Club. Currently there is not sufficient pitch capacity at Herne Bay Sports hub to support growth of Herne Bay HC, therefore extension of the available hours of the hockey pitches at the site should continually be reviewed to ensure the club have sufficient capacity to support future growth.

Scenario 9 - Introduction of 3v3 football

a. From the 2026/27 season, 3v3 football will be introduced for U7 teams. Leagues in Canterbury have opted against a central venue format, meaning that 3v3 pitches will be either overmarked onto existing grass pitches or on grass areas with no existing pitches.

b. A second impact of the introduction of 3v3 is that the format played by U9, U11, and U13 teams will change. The changes to format are summarised in figure 3.14 below:

Figure 3.14 – Changes to the format of youth football following the introduction of 3v3 football in the 2026/27 season



	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
U7	5v5	5v5	3v3	3v3	3v3	3v3
U8	5v5	5v5	5v5	5v5	5v5	5v5
U9	7v7	7v7	5v5	5v5	5v5	5v5
U10	7v7	7v7	7v7	7v7	7v7	7v7
U11	9v9	9v9	7v7	7v7	7v7	7v7
U12	9v9	9v9	9v9	9v9	9v9	9v9
U13	11v11	11v11	9v9	9v9	9v9	9v9
U14	11v11	11v11	11v11	11v11	11v11	11v11
U15	11v11	11v11	11v11	11v11	11v11	11v11
U16	11v11	11v11	11v11	11v11	11v11	11v11

c. The introduction of 3v3 football is anticipated to increase the number of teams affiliated within a local authority area, with more age groups playing small sided football compared to the current season. Based on the current formats for junior football, there is projected to be a shortfall of 12 junior pitches and 6 mini pitches by 2042. This shortfall is expected to increase following the changes to youth football from the 2026/27 season and should be assessed once new affiliation data which reflects the format changes is available.

3.8 Additional playing pitch sports

a. As part of this study, additional playing pitch sports were considered, including American Football, Rounders, and Lacrosse.

b. East Kent Mavericks American Football Club are based at Simon Langton Grammar School and have been using the facilities for the last 10 years. Between training and matches, the club use the WRC 3G AGP at the site for approximately 15 hours per week. The club have approximately 60 players and 15 staff, however recently stopped providing a youth set up. The club have a good relationship with South East Legion and Kent Phoenix American Football, who are both based in Maidstone, and direct prospective youth players to these clubs.

c. British American Football noted that there is also American Football activity at Canterbury Christchurch University and the University of Kent, however with most students leaving

the area in the middle of the American Football season there are few students who play for local clubs.

d. The priorities for British American Football are to increase participation nationally through youth participation, particularly an increase in youth girls participation, and the development of more flag football opportunities across the country. The NGB are aiming to double flag football membership (currently approximately 3,000 players and 80 teams) and are targeting 2028 to achieve this goal. A secondary objective for the NGB is that all new clubs will be formed of 70% players which are new to the sport rather than players leaving other clubs to setup new clubs.

e. Canterbury City Lacrosse are the only lacrosse club based in the district and have 1 team of approximately 30 senior players. The club was reestablished in 2025 and have seen an increase in players since reintroducing club lacrosse in Canterbury. The club outlined that they have plans to continue growing by promoting opportunities to non-university students, as the majority of their players are current university students which results in a high turnover of players each season. Playing matches at Stodmarsh Playing Fields and the University of Kent, and training at Birleys Playing Field and Victoria Recreation Centre, the club do not have a dedicated facility for training and matches. Although the facilities are suitable to meet the club's needs, they are heavily dependent on retaining access to these sites.

f. Within the Canterbury District, there are 2 Rounders leagues, one taking place at Kent College every Tuesday between 19:00 and 21:00. Canterbury Rounders League takes place at Beverley Meadow throughout the summer.

3.9 Playing pitch priority projects

a. Based on the findings of the assessment of current and future facility needs for the four major playing pitch sports summarised in previous sections of this strategy and detailed in sport-specific reports in Appendices A to D, the priority project recommendations for the strategic provision of playing pitch facilities are made in section 6 later in this report. This review of playing pitches, bringing together the analysis, consultation and assessment work, has highlighted a need to protect the current provision of playing pitches in the area as well as identifying a significant number of facility investment needs for Canterbury City Council, the Town and Parish Councils, and partners.

3.10 Summary

a. Football has grown significantly since the last strategy putting pressure on the facilities in the area. There is a clear need to provide more artificial grass pitches across Canterbury, this includes continuing to progress the current planned 3G AGP at Herne Bay High School and undertaking a final viability assessment of the proposed 3G AGP development at Simon Langton Girls Grammar School. There is an evident need to develop additional grass pitches to meet the projected future demand based on population growth and FA growth data. There is also a need to develop or improve a number of ancillary facilities at key sites, including Radfall Recreation Ground, The Bear Trap, Brickfield Recreation Ground, and Simon Langton Girls Grammar School.

b. For cricket the priority is to reinstate the fine turf wicket at Cherry Orchard Playing Field and secure community access to the pitch at Kenfield Cricket Club as well as the development or improvement of NTPs at strategic sites across the District. Housing developments at Saxon Fields and Brooklands Farm are proposed to deliver additional fine turf pitches, which will help meet the current and future shortfall of fine turf pitches, however improvements to the quality of existing pitches are also required to increase capacity. Within the Local Plan period, should population growth alongside the demand

growth projections for women and girls sport be realised, there will also be a need to provide the equivalent capacity of at least five new fine turf pitches. Opportunities to secure new pitches should be explored in the context of proposed new large scale housing developments as well as use of education sites for junior provision.

c. The priority for hockey in Canterbury is the resurfacing of one of the pitches at Polo Farm Sports Club and exploring the extension of sports lighting hours at Herne Bay Sports Hub. It is essential that the current provision of community accessible hockey pitches is protected to ensure there is sufficient capacity to sustain current demand and provide opportunities for the clubs to grow in the future.

d. The two community rugby clubs based in the district have high levels of demand for matches and training, which will require further improvements to the existing pitches at the club sites as well as relocation of some training to suitable WRC AGPs where available. Opportunities include accessing the University of Kent 3G AGP and the resurfacing of the 3G AGP at the Whitstable School to a WRC surface.

e. Given the on-going financial challenges for the public sector, it is acknowledged that it will not be possible to deliver or support all the sport specific investment needs identified within this strategy. On-going work with the leading NGBs and funding bodies such as Sport England and the Football Foundation is critical to plan for the priority projects identified within this strategy. As a minimum the Council should ensure the continued protection and maintenance of all existing playing pitch provision across the district.

f. Section 5 of this strategy that follows sets out a number of overarching policy recommendations aimed at facilitating and addressing the sports specific needs identified in this Playing Pitch Strategy (Section 3) and in the Sports Facilities Assessment that follows (Section 4). Section 6 provides an action plan identifying the prioritised projects for both playing pitches and sports facilities arising out of this strategy as well as the partners and stakeholders who are likely to be central to facilitating this change.



Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch and Sports Facility Strategy 2026 – 2042
Section 4 – Sports Facilities Strategy

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4. Sports Facilities Assessment

4.1 Introduction

a. This section of Canterbury City Council's Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026-2042 sets out the supply, demand, and priority actions for non-pitch sports facilities. Natural turf (grass) and Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) are covered within the Playing Pitch Strategy (Section 3 of this report).

b. This SFS considers facility supply, demand, accessibility, and availability of the following sports facilities for indoor and/or outdoor sport:
   - Swimming pools over 20m in length or 160m^2 water area
   - Sports halls (3 badminton courts or more)
   - Health & Fitness facilities (studios and gyms)
   - Athletics and running tracks
   - Cycling, BMX and Skate parks
   - Golf facilities
   - Gymnastic and Trampolining facilities
   - Indoor Bowls halls, outdoor greens and Pétanque
   - Indoor and outdoor courts for Tennis, Padel, Netball, Basketball
   - Squash courts
   - Water sports facilities (including rowing and sailing)

c. The approach and method follow current national guidance published by Sport England - Assessing Needs & Opportunities Guide (ANOG) for Indoor & Outdoor Sports Facilities, Sport England (July 2014). In accordance with ANOG guidance, this section sets out a detailed analysis of facility supply, demand and accessibility factors by sport facility type (informed by the use of available sports facility planning tools) along with a summary of consultation findings to identify club and NGB facility priorities in the study area.

d. The section concludes with recommendations for the protection and enhancement of existing facilities and for the provision of new facilities, where considered necessary, to address identified current or future needs to 2042 the end of the emerging Canterbury City Local Plan period.

4.2 Swimming

Introduction

a. Since the previous 2019 strategy, the only change to the quantity of swimming pool provision in Canterbury has been the development of a 4-lane pool at David Lloyd, which was developed in 2025. The district has seven public indoor swimming pools at 3 sites (Herons Leisure Centre, Kingsmead Leisure Centre, and Whitstable Pools and Fitness), one pool with community access provided by an educational provider (The King's School Sports Centre), and two commercially operated pools (David Lloyd and Everlast Gyms).

b. There are an additional 4 outdoor lido pools (David Lloyd, Junior King's School, St Edmund's School, and The Kent College Junior School) as well as indoor pools at Broome Park Golf Club and Joy Lane Junior School. These have not been included as part of the community supply in this analysis as outdoor pools generally do not provide year-round use and the remaining 2 indoor pools are either private use (Broome Park Golf Club) or only offer children's use (Joy Lane Junior School).

c. The pool at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys is currently closed due to issues with the plant room. The school have proposed that once restored, the pool would be suitable for community groups to use outside of school hours. As it is not currently operational, the pool has been excluded from the existing supply in the following analysis.

d. To better understand the current swimming pool needs and assess the baseline position for swimming in the Canterbury District, the council commissioned additional analysis using the Facilities Planning Model (FPM) from Sport England. This analysis helps to establish the current supply and demand and assists in informing future priorities and decisions for swimming provision. The analysis is based on the available opening hours at the ten publicly accessible pools at the time of the FPM run.

Sport England's Facility Planning Model

e. The overall aims of the standard FPM assessment reports are to provide a current assessment of need for swimming pools in the local authority area based on the existing supply of pools that provide public access in the peak demand times for the existing population.

f. The FPM study is a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access to swimming pools. The assessment is based on catchment area, so includes the swimming pools and population across the local authority area and indoor swimming pool facilities in the neighbouring authorities accessible to Canterbury District residents.

g. As indicated above, the most attractive (and accessible) facility for some Canterbury District residents may be outside the local authority area (known as exported demand) and for residents of neighbouring local authorities, their most attractive (and accessible) swimming pool may be in Canterbury District (known as imported demand). To take account of these factors, the study area places Canterbury District at its centre and includes the neighbouring local authorities and their swimming pool supply.

h. The headline strategic findings of the FPM analysis for the Canterbury District are presented below. The full FPM report is available in appendix G.

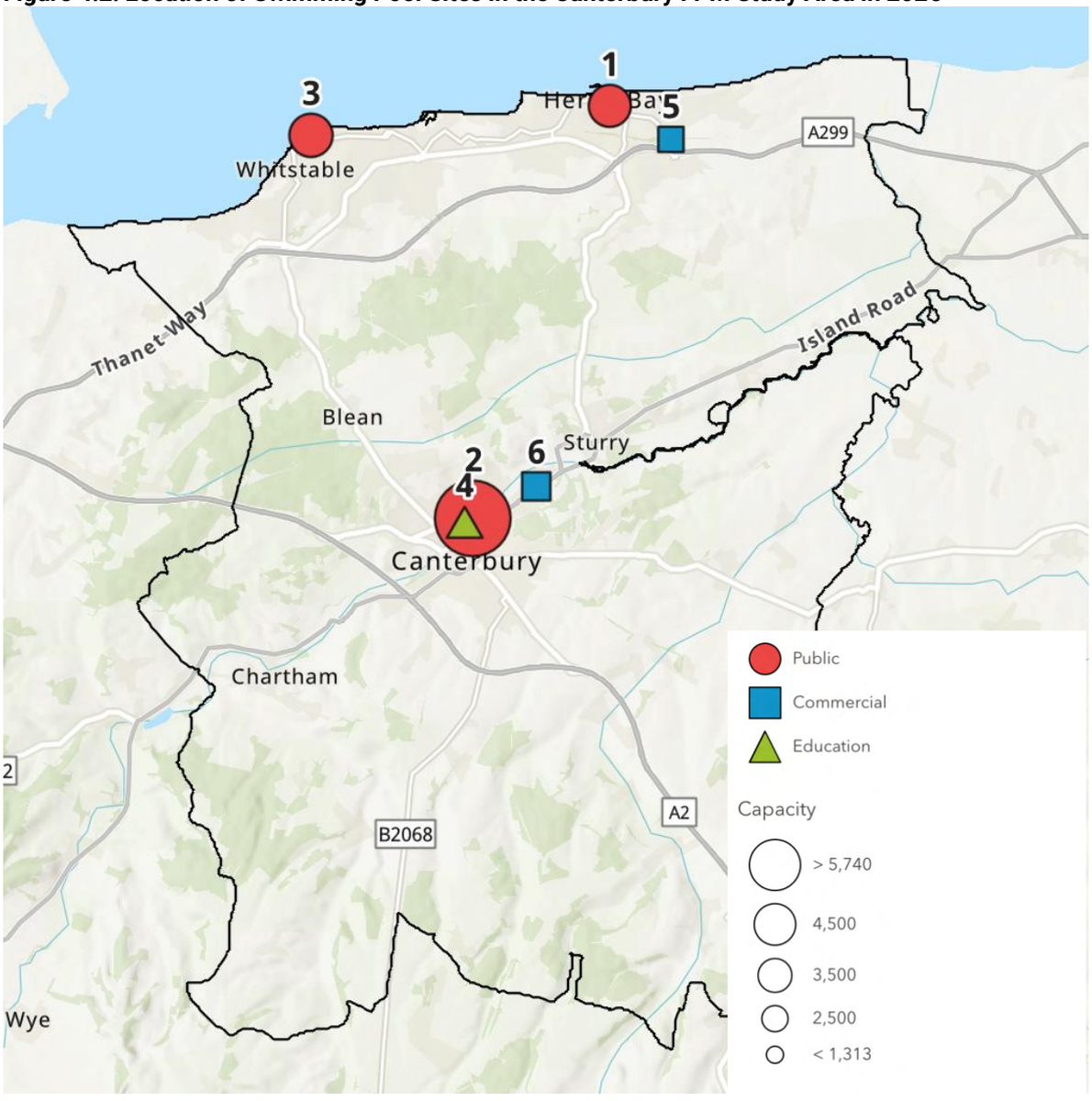
Supply of swimming pools in Canterbury

i. Supply is defined as the supply or capacity of the swimming pools available for community and club use in the weekly peak period. Supply is expressed in the number of visits that a pool can accommodate in the weekly peak period and in square metres of water. The swimming pool facilities that meet the criteria to be included in the FPM modelling are listed in figure 4.1 below and the location of these sites, and neighbouring sites, are shown in figure 4.2.

Figure 4.1: Details of Swimming Pools in the Canterbury District in 2025

ID	*Site*	*Operation*	*Year Built/ Refurbed*	*Facility Type*	*Peak Hours*	*Area (sqm)*	*Capacity (visits)*
1	Herons Leisure Centre	Public	1994 / 2022	5-lane main pool (25x11m) Teaching pool (11x8m)	47 43.8	275 88	2,797
2	Kingsmead Leisure Centre	Public	1970 / 2024	6-lane main pool (33.3x12.8m) Leisure pool (13.2x10.4m) Teaching pool (12.8x7.3m)	52.5 52.5 52.5	426 137 93	5,740
3	Whitstable Pools and Fitness	Public	1993	5-lane main pool (25x10.5m) Teaching pool (10.5x7.5m)	50.5 52.5	263 79	2,905
4	The King's School Sports Centre	Education	1990	6-lane main pool (25x12m)	40.3	300	2,015
5	David Lloyd	Commercial	2025	4-lane main pool (20x7.5m)	52.5	150	1,313
6	Everlast Gyms	Commercial	2010	Main pool (20x9m)	52.5	97.5	1,575
	Total sites: 6		Average year built: 1,997	Total pools: 10	Total peak hours: 496.6	Total area: 1,991	Total capacity: 16,345

Figure 4.2: Location of Swimming Pool Sites in the Canterbury FPM Study Area in 2025



j. The largest site with three pools, Kingsmead Leisure Centre, provides 35% of the available capacity in Canterbury during the weekly peak period. the two remaining public leisure facilities provide an additional 35% of the total capacity, therefore public leisure facilities make up the majority of swimming capacity within Canterbury at 70%. All 3 public swimming facilities enable specific swimming activities to take place in dedicated pools including:

- Casual recreational swimming
- Lane and fitness swimming
- Learning to swim
- Swimming development through clubs (City of Canterbury Swimming Club, Herne Bay Lifeguard and Swimming Club)

Demand for Swimming Pools

k. Total demand is calculated by adding the participation by each five-year age band/gender of Canterbury's population with the frequency of participation in each age band/gender and is expressed in visits in the weekly peak period and square metres of water. The FPM

parameters for the percentage and frequency of participation, for gender and age, are calculated from Sport England's annual Active Lives survey.

l. The total demand for swimming by Canterbury District residents in 2025 is 10,545 visits per week in the peak period which equates to 1,734m^2 of water allowing a 'comfort factor' of 70% of the pools' theoretical capacity to take account of the range of activities that take place which have different numbers of users – e.g. aqua aerobics as compared to lane swimming – and to allow sufficient space to undertake the activity comfortably.

m. Within Canterbury only 2% of the swimming demand is located in the 10% most deprived lower super output areas (LSOAs) nationally. Deprivation is highest west of Herons Leisure Centre and east of Canterbury City Centre in Barton Ward. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score is used in the FPM to limit whether people will travel to use commercial facilities with main swimming pools, such as David Lloyd Clubs. The assumption is that the higher the IMD score (less affluence), the less likely the population of the LSOA would choose to go to a commercial facility, such as David Lloyd or Everlast Gyms, to swim.

n. For residents without access to a car, travel to swimming pools by public transport, walking, wheeling or cycling needs to be considered. The FPM uses a distance decay function where the further a user is from a facility, the less likely they will travel. On average, a 20-minute travel time accounts for approximately 90% of visits to a swimming pool.

o. The proportion of the resident population in Canterbury who do not have access to a car is 21% which is just above the regional average of 16% and below the national average of 23%. This will influence travel patterns to swimming pools, the FPM estimates 75% of journeys to swimming pools by residents are by car. Of the remainder, 17% are on foot and 8% by public transport reflecting the location of the pools within Canterbury City Centre and Herne Bay, the main centres of population with accessible bus services.

Supply / demand balance

p. In 2025, 96% of total demand for swimming from Canterbury residents is satisfied by the existing pool supply located either in the local authority area or within a neighbouring area (figure 4.3). Only 3% of the satisfied demand is met by pools located in neighbouring local authorities i.e., 'exported demand' equating to 277 visits in the weekly peak period.

q. Unmet swimming demand is defined in the model as demand for swimming pools which cannot be met because there is either too much demand for any particular swimming pool within its catchment area resulting in a lack of available capacity, or because demand is located too far away from any swimming pool.

r. In Canterbury, unmet demand amounts to a relatively small 4% of total demand, equivalent to 76m^2 of water area. This total unmet demand is aggregated from across the whole local authority area and not concentrated in a single location. Unmet swimming demand in Canterbury is mainly due to the nearest facility being too far away as opposed to lack of capacity in the pools that are provided. Some unmet demand will always exist because it is not possible to achieve complete spatial coverage whereby all areas of an authority are within walking distance of a swimming pool providing sufficient capacity in the peak period and not everyone will want, or be able, to drive to a facility. A summary of the supply / demand balance is provided in figure 4.3 below.

Figure 4.3: Supply / demand balance for swimming in Canterbury

Supply / Demand Balance	2025
Number of visits which are **met** per week in peak period	10,084
% of total demand **satisfied**	96%
Number of visits **unmet** per week in peak period	462
Unmet demand as a % of total demand	4%
Equivalent **unmet demand** in sqm of water with comfort factor	76m^2
Facility too far away:	99%
Lack of facility capacity:	1%

s. Sport England define used capacity as a measure of usage at swimming pools that estimates how well used or how full facilities are in the peak hours; the pools and ancillary changing rooms etc. expressed as a percentage. The assumption is that usage over 70% of capacity is busy and that the venue is operating at an uncomfortable level above that percentage. Taken together, the estimated used capacity of Canterbury's swimming pool sites in the weekly peak period is 72%. However, two sites are uncomfortably full during the peak period – Herons Leisure Centre at 93% and Kingsmead Leisure Centre at 91%. All other facilities are at less than 60% capacity in the peak period, with Everlast Gyms at only 24%.

Future need

t. In the context of this strategy and the emerging Canterbury Local Plan, it is important to consider the projected increase in population in the district in terms of scale and location, and how this will impact on the future demand for swimming pools. Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator (SFC) planning tool has been used which estimates the amount of demand for key community sports facilities that may be generated by the currently forecasted 22,781 additional residents by 2042. The SFC suggests demand will be generated for an additional 238m^2 of water space, equivalent to 5 lanes. It is important to remember that the SFC looks at demand for facilities and does not take account of existing supply of facilities as it does not include a spatial element.

Strategic outcomes

u. The FPM report provides a detailed 'snapshot' of the supply and demand balance for public swimming in the district as of 2025. The report findings do not justify investment in providing more public swimming supply at the present time. The clear immediate priority is to address the issues of the age of some of the existing public pools and the underutilisations of existing facilities. The gym at Whitstable Pools and Fitness has been refurbished and new studios developed, however the pool and wet-side changing facilities have remained the same, refurbishing the pool facilities here would increase their attractiveness to users and therefore increase capacity of the site. Discussions around the longer term potential relocation of the Whitstable Pool should be further explored over the lifetime of this strategy to ensure the quality of swimming pool provision is improved, therefore increasing capacity and attractiveness of the site.

v. The pool at Kings School should also be assessed for the feasibility of refurbishment to increase attractiveness.

w. Alongside the above improvements to existing facilities to ensure they are more attractive to residents and able to meet future increases in demand, the 4-lane pool at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys is currently closed as it requires a new plant room and flooring. If the site was brought into community use, then it would meet the majority of future demand over the plan period.

Club and NGB consultation

x. Swim England, use a different calculation than the FPM, and use a benchmark of 12m² of public water space provision of per 1000 population. When consulted for this strategy, they stated the target water supply for Canterbury is 1,888m², based on the current population. The current supply of indoor public water supply is 1,711m², making a deficit of 177m², which increases to 415m² when including forecasted population growth to 2042 (equivalent to a need for an 8-lane 25m pool).

y. They stated that any future provision should look to have open community access, making the water space even more accessible to the local population, and consider the versatility of its water space and the use of movable floor/boom system to maximise operations.

z. Herne Bay Lifeguard and Swimming Club, operating out of both Herons Leisure Centre and Whitstable Pools and Fitness, train for 16 hours a week and focus on competitive swimming from ages 7+. The club supply their own Olympic diving blocks and state that the quality of facilities at the sites is generally standard, noting that the ancillary facilities require an upgrade.

Priorities and Actions - Swimming Pools

Swimming
Prioritised Actions: **Protect** • Retain the current levels of water space at sites available for public swimming. **Enhance** • Support improvements of the pool at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys to ensure the facility is sufficient quality to be brought back into community use • Explore feasibility of refurbishing the pool at Whitstable Pools and Fitness to extend the changing rooms and studio space as well as a moveable floor in the learner pool and refurbishment of the pool at Kings School • Undertake further modification of the public pool sites where feasible in partnership with the service provider to further reduce energy costs and minimise waste and emissions. **Provide** • Review updated Sport England and Swim England findings as part of the Stage E process for the strategy to determine future need.

4.3 Sports Halls

Introduction

a. Canterbury District has 22 main sports halls (3-court and above) across 16 sites as recorded in 2025. There are two main public sports hall (Bay Sports Arena and Kingsmead Leisure Centre) operated by Active Life, 11 education sites providing community use , 6 of which are managed in-house and two operated by a 3rd party and 3 other sites operated by a sports club (2) or charity (1).

b. Since the previous strategy in 2019, there has been a £8 million investment into the Kingsmead Leisure Centre in 2024, which included the refurbishment of the sports hall alongside the development of 2 new studios, LED lighting, and upgraded ancillary facilities.

c. To better understand the current sport hall needs and assess the baseline position for sports halls in the Canterbury District, the Council commissioned additional analysis using the Facilities Planning Model (FPM) from Sport England. This analysis helps to establish the current supply and demand and assists in informing future priorities and decisions for sports hall provision. The analysis is based on the available opening hours at the 22 publicly accessible sports halls at the time of the FPM run.

Sport England's Facility Planning Model

d. The overall aims of the standard FPM assessment reports are to provide a current assessment of need for sports hall in the local authority area based on the existing supply that provide public access in the peak demand times for the existing population. The council commissioned a bespoke assessment to also understand the contribution from education sports halls sites in meeting the demand for sports halls in the area.

e. The FPM study is a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access to sports halls. The assessment is based on catchment area, so includes the sports halls and population across the local authority area and sports hall facilities in the neighbouring authorities accessible to Canterbury District residents.

f. As indicated above, the most attractive (and accessible) facility for some Canterbury District residents may be outside the local authority area (known as exported demand) and for residents of neighbouring local authorities, their most attractive (and accessible) sports hall may be in Canterbury District (known as imported demand). To take account of these factors, the study area places Canterbury District at its centre and includes the neighbouring local authorities and their swimming pool supply.

g. The headline strategic findings of the FPM analysis for the Canterbury District are presented below. The full FPM report is available in appendix H.

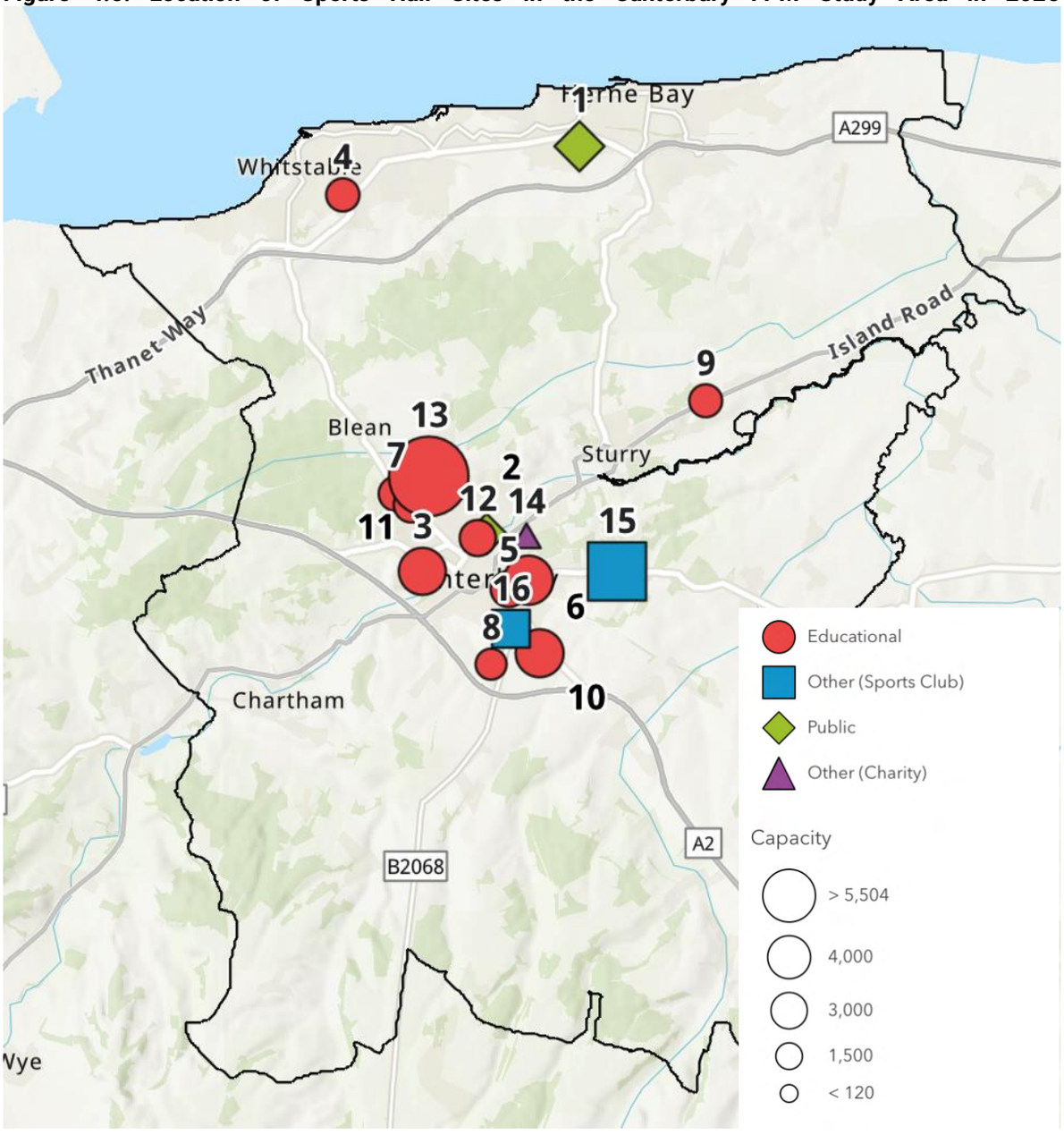
Supply of Sports Halls in Canterbury

h. Supply is defined as the supply or capacity of the sports halls available for community and club use in the weekly peak period. Supply is expressed in the number of visits that a sports hall can accommodate in the weekly peak period and in the number of badminton courts. The sports halls facilities that meet the criteria to be included in the FPM modelling are listed in figure 4.4 below and the location of these sites, and neighbouring sites, are shown in figure 4.5.

Figure 4.4: Details of Sports Halls Included in FPM modelling for Canterbury District

ID	Site	Operation	Year built /refurbished	Sports hall type/ area	Peak hours per week	Capacity (visits)
1	Bay Sports Arena	Public	2011	5 court (867m^2) 3 court (486m^2)	39 39	2,496
2	Kingsmead Leisure Centre	Public	1996/2024	4 court (752m^2)	56	1,472
3	Canterbury Academy Campus	Educational	2001	6 court (932m^2)	46	2,206
4	Whitstable Sports Centre	Educational	1983/2010	4 court (690m^2)	25	800
5	Canterbury College	Educational	2015	3 court (486m^2)	46	1,104
6	Christ Church Sport Centre	Educational	2009	8 court (1,221m^2)	37.8	2,419
7	Kent College	Educational	1989/2005	4 court (690m^2)	29	928
8	Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	Educational	2005	4 court (690m^2)	18	576
9	Spires Academy	Educational	2012	4 court (594m^2)	24	768
10	St Anselm's Catholic School	Educational	1970/2003	4 court (690m^2) Activity (306m²) Activity (306m²)	24 24 24	2,298
11	St Edmund's School	Educational	1985	4 court (690m^2) Activity (180m²)	20 20	1,015
12	The King's School Sports Centre	Educational	1990/2008	4 court (690m^2)	34.3	1,098
13	University of Kent Sports Centre	Educational	1965/2004	8 court (1,295m^2) 4 court (596m^2) 4 court (583m^2)	43 43 43	5,504
14	Northgate Ward Community Centre	Other (Charity)	1996/2009	3 court (486m^2)	5	120
15	Polo Farm Sports Club	Other (Sports Club)	2015	10 court (1,680m^2)	41.5	3,320
16	St Lawrence Ground	Other (Sports Club)	1992/2004	4 court (690m^2)	39	1,248
	Total sites: 16		**Average age of all sites: 30**	**Total halls: 22** **Total badminton courts: 100.3**	**Total peak hours: 720.6**	**Total capacity: 27, 374**

Figure 4.5: Location of Sports Hall Sites in the Canterbury FPM Study Area in 2025



i. Canterbury has an extensive supply of sports halls. The University of Kent Sports Centre is the largest site with an eight-court sports hall and two four-court halls. The largest individual sports hall is the ten-court hall at Polo Farm Sports Club. Bay Sports Arena is the largest public leisure Centre with a five-court and three-court hall.

j. In general, a four-court sports hall can provide for most indoor hall sports at the community level of participation. Six court halls can accommodate multiple sports activities at the same time and eight and ten court halls can provide a show court for events use with spectator seating.

k. Of the 11 four-court sports halls three have dimensions which are less than the Sport England and National Governing Bodies' recommended size of 34.5m x 20m. Dimensions less than this, limit the run-off area between and behind courts and restrict the levels of competition play that can be programmed for some sports. A further three sports hall have 3-courts, these sites are limited to recreational level of participation.

l. Educational sports halls provide 68% of the available capacity in Canterbury, with the 3 sports halls managed by a charity / sports club providing 17% and public leisure centres providing just 14%.

Demand for Sports Halls

m. The total demand for Sports Halls is calculated by adding the participation by each five-year age band/gender of the district's population with the frequency of participation in each age band/gender and is expressed in visits in the weekly peak period and number of badminton courts. The FPM parameters for the percentage and frequency of participation, for gender and age, are calculated from Sport England's annual Active Lives survey.

n. The total demand for sports halls by Canterbury District's resident in 2025 is 12,270 visits per week in the peak period, which equates to 41.7 badminton courts with an 80% comfort factor, beyond which the venue are too full and time to change the sports hall programme starts to impinge on activity time and changing and circulation areas become congested.

o. Within Canterbury only 2% of the sports hall demand is located in the 10% most deprived lower super output areas (LSOAs) nationally. Deprivation is highest east of Canterbury College and Christ Church Sports Centre, and north of Bay Sports Arena in Herne Bay.

p. For residents without access to a car, travel to sports hall by public transport, walking, wheeling or cycling needs to be considered. The FPM uses a distance decay function where the further a user is from a facility, the less likely they will travel. On average, a 20-minute travel time accounts for approximately 90% of visits to a sports hall.

q. The proportion of the resident population in Canterbury who do not have access to a car is 21% which is just above than the regional average of 16% and below the national average of 23%. This will influence travel patterns to sports halls, the FPM estimates 77% of journeys to sports halls by residents are by car. Of the remainder, 16% are on foot and 7% by public transport or bicycle reflecting the location of the halls within Canterbury City Centre and Herne Bay, the main centres of population with accessible bus services.

Supply / demand balance

r. In 2025, 95% of total demand for sports halls from Canterbury resident is satisfied by the existing sports hall supply located in the local authority area or within a neighbouring area (figure 4.6). Only 6% of the satisfied demand is met by sports hall in neighbouring local authorities i.e., 'exported demand' equating to 735 visits in the weekly peak period.

s. Unmet demand is defined in the model as demand for sports halls which cannot be met because there is either too much demand for any particular sports hall within its catchment area and there is a lack of capacity; or because demand is located too far away from any sports hall.

t. In Canterbury, unmet demand amounts to a relatively small 5% of total demand, equivalent to 2.2 courts. This total unmet demand is aggregated from across the whole local authority area and not concentrated in a single location. Unmet sports hall demand in Canterbury is mainly due to the nearest facility being too far away as opposed to lack capacity in the halls provided. Some unmet demand will always exist because it is not possible to achieve complete spatial coverage whereby all areas of an authority are within walking distance of a sports hall providing sufficient capacity in the peak period and not everyone will want, or be able, to drive to a facility. A summary of the supply / demand balance is provided in figure 4.6 below.

Figure 4.6: Supply / Demand balance for sports halls in Canterbury

Supply / Demand balance	2025
Number of visits which are **met** per week in peak period	11,630
% of total demand **satisfied**	95%
Number of visits **unmet** per week in the peak period	640
Unmet demand as a % of total demand	4%
Equivalent **unmet demand** in courts with comfort factor	2.2
Facility too far away:	81%
Lack of facility capacity:	19%

u. Sport England define used capacity as a measure of usage at sports halls that estimates how well used or how full facilities are in the peak hours expressed as a percentage. The assumption that usage above 80% of capacity is busy and the sports hall is operating at an uncomfortable level. Taken together, the estimated used capacity of Canterbury's sports halls in the weekly peak period is 45%. However, four sites are estimated to be uncomfortably full at peak times - Bay Sports Arena, Kingsmead Leisure Centre and Whitstable Sports Centre at 100% and Northgate Ward Community Centre at 90%. All other facilities are at less than 61% capacity in the peak period, with University of Kent Sports Centre at only 18%.

Future need

v. In the context of this strategy and the emerging Canterbury Local Plan, it is important to consider the projected increase in population in the local authority area in terms of scale and location, and how this will impact on the future demand for sports halls. Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator (SFC) planning tool has been used which estimates the amount of demand for key community sports facilities that may be generated by the currently forecasted 22,781 additional residents by 2042. The SFC suggests demand will be generated for an additional 5.76 courts. It is important to remember that the SFC looks at demand for facilities and does not take account of existing supply of facilities as it does not include a spatial element. It should also be noted that the demand for facilities is generally much greater in the evening than during the day, leading to some sites being largely empty during the day but significantly busier in the evenings.

Strategic outcomes

w. The FPM report provides a detailed 'snapshot' of the supply and demand balance for sports halls in the district as of 2025. It should also be noted that Barton Manor School was excluded from the FPM report and therefore supply as at the time it was deemed to be available for private use only but club consultation as part of this strategy confirmed some community use.

x. The FPM report findings do not justify investment in providing more sports hall supply at the present time. The clear immediate priority is to protect the current supply by ensuring the education sites available for community use are secured by means of a Community Use Agreement to ensure they can continue supporting community demand for sports hall space. There is also a need to create a better balance between supply and demand by increasing the available peak hours at Bay Sports Arena by 7 hours and at Whitstable Sports Centre by 16 hours. This would help to reduce the proportion of capacity used and meet unmet demand. In addition, based on the age and condition of the sports halls at Bay Sports Arena, stakeholders should start to plan for future refurbishment.

Sports Hall quality assessments

y. The sports halls sites visited across the district are rated as either good or standard in terms of their quality, with the only facility improvement noted at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys where the sports hall has a wooden sprung floor that is due resanding and

relining, the school have scheduled the work to take place in 2026. However, the ancillary facilities of the school are poor, with no heating or hot water and roof structural issues, meaning a rebuild is required.

z. The ancillary facilities at The Whitstable School have been highlighted as being poor quality and therefore locked the majority of the time. Refurbishment of these ancillary facilities is a key priority for the council.

Club and NGB consultation

aa. As part of the strategy consultation was conducted with sports that are typically based in sports hall this included contacting the NBG for insight on demand and facility needs and surveying sports clubs in the area. This section summarises the responses from NGBs and sports clubs where provided.

Badminton

bb. Badminton England's area profile (20/21 data) indicates there are 11 clubs in area, 10 of which are affiliated. They highlight a projected demand of 2,405 participants in the area. The supply and demand analysis provided by Badminton England indicates a supply balance of +3.5 courts, but when unmet demand is factored in, this changes to an undersupply of -2.3 courts, which increases further to -2.6 courts by 2030.

cc. Three badminton clubs responded to the survey. Apollo Badminton Club are based at Barton Manor School. They have 32 members (4 teams) and are looking to grow. They rate the facilities as excellent with no needs identified.

dd. Herne Bay Junior Badminton Club are based at Bay Sports Arena. They have 37 members (5 teams) and are looking to grow. They rate the facilities as good but state the roof leaks over the fourth court.

ee. Foreland Badminton Academy and Canterbury Kings Club are based at The Kings School Sports Centre. They have 90 members (7 teams), including disability provision through para badminton. The club are looking to grow, they rate the facilities as good but state to grow the club they need a bigger venue.

Basketball

ff. One basketball club responded to the survey, Herne Bay Basketball Club are based at Herne Bay High School and The Whitstable School. They have 85 members (9 teams) and have plan to grow but state they would need access to more facilities. The rate the facilities as good but highlight that 25% of bookings get cancelled due to unavailability of the halls due to exams and would like increased access to changing rooms, toilet facilities and drinking water.

Boxing and Martial Arts

gg. The Prince of Wales Youth Centre has a 2-court sports hall and a boxing area with a permanent ring set up and a range of punching bags to compliment sessions. The centre runs a boxing academy from 8 years upwards. One martial arts club responded to the survey Herne Bay Taekwondo offers Taekwondo and kickboxing and are based at Arkley Road studios, Herne Bay Family Hub and the Bay Sports Arena and have 50 members, including deaf and neurodiverse members. They are looking to grow and aim to increase the number of sessions available at community buildings in and around Herne Bay. They would like to have a permanent purpose built martial arts studio, where they can store equipment and be able to grow. They rate current facilities as standard.

Climbing

hh. There is one club registered to the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) in the district the University of Kent. Canterbury District has bouldering at Chimera CIC, Canterbury, which hosts informal social climbing for adults and young people, a performance squad for athletes and structure participation for young people. There is also limited roped climbing at Christ Church sports centre and a climbing wall at Simon Langton Gramamr School for Boys that is underutilised. The NGB identified that Chimera CIC is a good facility but is limited by its small size and options to expand this facility should be explored to positively impact climbing participation in the region.

Fencing

ii. One fencing club responded to the survey. Canterbury Blades Fencing Club, based at Canterbury College. They have 20 members and are looking to grow and want to run development programmes if they can find the funding. They rate the facilities as standard and have not identified any facility needs.

Inclusive Sport

jj. Inclusive Sport offers multisport provision at the University of Kent Sports Centre offering 8 weekly sessions term time to 750 members of all ages working with schools, SEND provisions, alternative education settings and care environments. They rate the facilities as good but state in order to grow there is a need for a dedicated, inclusive, pan disability facility to meet a wide range of needs where they can base their activities.

Indoor Cricket

kk. Indoor cricket nets can be difficult to hire at peak times due to demand from other sports. There are indoor practice nets available in a number of sports halls in the district including Polo Farm Sports Club, Kent College. Further details of usage by cricket clubs is outlined in Appendix A – Cricket Assessment of Needs.

Roller Hockey

ll. Bay Sports Arena is one of a few international size (40mx20m) Roller Hockey Rinks in the UK with a purpose built barrier system. The facility hosts national events for roller hockey, dance and derby with several clubs based at the facility Herne Bay United Roller Hockey and Skating Club, Herne Bay Roller hockey Club, Invicta Roller Hocky Club and Kent Roller Derby, as well as offering public roller skating sessions. The site is currently operating at full capacity and there is a need for an additional facility to support Roller Hockey.

mm. One club responded to the survey, Kent Roller Derby have 35 members (4 teams) and run a Learn3Skate programme weekly, they are looking to grow and want to expand to provide more regular training sessions they rate their current facilities as good but need access to a secondary training site that is affordable and accessible.

Table Tennis

nn. Two table tennis club responded to the survey, Canterbury Table Tennis Club, based at St Stephen's Community Centre, Prince of Wales Youth Centre and Wincheap Scout Hut. They have 80 members (6 teams) and are looking to grow. They rate the facilities as good but want to develop their own club house, they have identified a facility they want to take over and develop (The Cow Lane PIP Centre), however this needs extensive work to refurbish.

oo. Herne Bay Table Tennis Club have over 200 members and offer disability provision including a stroke club, a Mencap open session and mental health and wellbeing sessions. They have a lease on their own dedicated facility in Hampton Pier Recreation Ground, however report the club is at threat of closure due to the poor condition of the building.

They are working with the council and Active Kent and Medway to explore options for a new facility.

pp. Chestfield Warriors are based in Whitstable at Joseph Wilson Industrial Estate. The club lease the site but have no land security.

qq. Canterbury & District Table Tennis League offers 4 division, with a total of 6 clubs and 48 teams taking part in regular competitive matches.

rr. All table tennis clubs struggle to grow due to security of tenure and storage requirements of venues. A dedicated standalone or shared racquets facility would enable the sport to develop in the district.

Volleyball

ss. Invicta Volleyball have over 100 members (5 teams) and organise volleyball, beach volleyball and VolleyStart youth skill based sessions. They play fixtures at Maidstone Grammer School for girls as well as at Canterbury Academy and University of Kent Sports Centre. Canterbury Academy is their main training site. They state the sand levels of the beach courts are low and the facilities they use do not meet the training needs of the club, with a need for new posts and access to changing rooms.

Summary

tt. The FPM report outlines that the demand for sports hall provision is met in Canterbury and investment in providing more sports hall is not needed. However, there is a need to protect the current supply of education sites available and increasing the available peak hours where possible. NGBs and clubs consulted have identified some specific needs for improvements, and dedicated provision, and the council should aim to explore the feasibility of this where it is sustainable and supports growth in participation. There is also a need to plan for the future refurbishment of Bay Sports Arena given the age of the facility. Although the current demand for sports halls is met, there is high demand for sport specific facilities within the district and opportunities to support the improvement and development of sport specific facilities should be explored.

Sports Halls

Prioritised Actions:

Protect

- Protect the quality and availability of the sports halls across the district
- Seek to secure community use agreements (CUAs) on the education sites with sports halls, prioritising those with the highest amount of existing community use and additional use by other sports such as gymnastics and trampolining, including Canterbury Academy Campus, Canterbury College, Christ Church Sports Centre, Kings School Sports Centre, Spires Academy, and St Anselms Catholic School.
- The council to monitor CUAs in place

Enhance

- Work to extend the availability of the sports hall at Bay Sports Arena and Whitstable Sports Centre to create a better balance between supply and demand.
- Support the development of Table Tennis in the area and support Chestfield Warriors in maintaining and improving their dedicated facilities.

Provide

- Consider future planning for the refurbishment of Bay Sports Arena given the age of the facility.
- Support Simon Langton Girls Grammer School to redevelop their ancillary facilities to better support community use.

Sports Halls
• Explore opportunities to develop a dedicated standalone table tennis or shared racquets facility at a suitable site.

4.4 Health and fitness

a. There are 18 sites in Canterbury with 20 stations or more that offer health and fitness provision. There are 14 sites that have studio facilities for exercise classes (Sport England Active Places). Schools with gyms for pupil use only are not included, along with those sites for private use only. The existing provision provides accessible opportunities across the range of access types (pay and play/ pay as you go, and membership), and provision (cardio, weights, functional fitness, circuits, exercise to music classes, studio cycling) and two options of 24/7 access (PureGym Sturry Road and PureGym Wincheap).

Figure 4.7: Health and fitness facilities in Canterbury with 20+ stations

Facility Name	Postcode	Approx. Stations	Access Type	Ownership
Canterbury College	CT1 3AJ	37	Registered Membership Use	Education
Christ Church Sport Centre	CT1 1XS	70	Registered Membership Use	Education
David Lloyd	CT6 6GZ	100	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
Everlast Gyms	CT1 1ZG	105	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
Flex Appeal	CT5 2AJ	54	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
Herons Leisure Centre	CT6 5NX	55	Registered Membership Use / Pay and Play	Local Authority
Kingsmead Pools and Fitness	CT2 7PH	80	Registered Membership Use / Pay and Play	Local Authority
Muscle Hut	CT6 8JZ	50	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
PureGym (Sturry Road)	CT1 1DX	220	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
PureGym (Wincheap)	CT1 3TQ	170	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
Snap Fitness (Herne Bay)	CT6 6GZ	150	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
Snap Fitness (Whitstable)	CT5 3QP	150	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
Sweat Shop Fitness	CT6 5AH	50	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
The Canterbury Academy	CT2 8QA	120	Registered Membership Use / Pay and Play	Education
The Kings School Recreation Centre	CT2 7HU	35	Registered Membership Use	Education
University of Kent Sports Centre	CT2 7NL	144	Registered Membership Use	Education
Whitstable Pools and Fitness	CT5 2BJ	25	Registered Membership Use / Pay and Play	Local Authority
Whitstable Sports Centre	CT5 1PX	20	Registered Membership Use / Pay and Play	Local Authority
	Total	**1,670**		

Figure 4.8: Studio facilities in Canterbury

Facility Name	Postcode	No of Studios	Access Type	Ownership
Canterbury College	CT1 3AJ	1	Registered Membership Use	Education
Christ Church Sports Centre	CT1 1XS	1	Registered Membership Use	Education
David Lloyd (Herne Bay)	CT6 6GZ	1	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
Everlast Gyms	CT1 1ZG	3	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
Flex Appeal	CT5 2AJ	1	Registered Membership Use	Commercial
Herons Leisure Centre	CT6 5NX	2	Registered Membership Use / Pay and Play	Local Authority
Kent College	CT2 9DT	1	Sports Club/ Community Use	Education
Kingsmead Pools and Fitness	CT2 7PH	3	Registered Membership Use/ Pay and Play	Local Authority
Prince of Wales Youth Club	CT1 1YX	2	Sports Club/ Community Use	Community Organisation
The Canterbury Academy	CT2 8QA	2	Registered Membership Use/ Pay and Play	Education
The Kings School Recreation Centre	CT2 7HU	2	Registered Membership Use	Education
University of Kent Sports Centre	CT2 7NL	1	Registered Membership Use	Education
Whitstable Pools and Fitness	CT5 2BJ	1	Registered Membership Use	Local Authority
Whitstable Sports Centre	CT5 1PX	1	Registered Membership Use	Local Authority
	Total	**23**		

b. In 2024, the Kingsmead Pools & Fitness facility reopened following investment by Canterbury City Council and Active Life. The enhancement of the facility offered more opportunities for more fitness classes, modern equipment, and sauna to support the wellbeing of the residents. In the same year, David Lloyd opened a facility in Herne Bay, increasing provision for Canterbury District residents. In 2025, The Canterbury Academy refurbished their site to make their offer more attractive for residents. It is important that the health and fitness offer at all sites continue to offer competitive opening hours, affordable membership options, and attractive facilities (quality of the studios, equipment, training and instruction).

c. With 180 stations and 7 studios, across the four public leisure centres, there is a good level of health and fitness provision at council operated sites, all of which provide pay and play options as well as memberships. The equipment is modern and includes cardio equipment, resistance machines, free weights, and functional areas. All four centres also offer personal training and a group exercise classes.

d. All the health and fitness facilities listed offer some form of disability access apart from Energie Fitness and Muscle Hut, according to Sport England's Active Places database.

Location of health and fitness facilities in Canterbury

e. There is a concentration of facilities located between 3 of the more populated areas of Canterbury District (Canterbury City, Whitstable and Herne Bay). The rural areas of Canterbury District are both North and South of the city centre and have fewer health and fitness sites. These areas are less populated, which means the demand for health and fitness facilities is lower and residents within these areas are still within a 20 minute driving catchment of existing facilities in the city centre or along the coastal band to the north.

Health and fitness participation

f. In terms of health and fitness demand trends, the 2026 annual state of the industry report found that the penetration rate (i.e., the proportion of the adult population in the UK that were members of a gym in either the public or private sector) has increased from 16.0% in 2023 to 17.9% noting that engagement in health and fitness increasing across all age groups but particularly in younger adults.

g. The gym usage data (Active Lives Survey, 2025) reports a slightly higher percentage in Canterbury (14.3%) when compared with the Kent CC (11.8%) and national (13.4%) average. This shows that the demand in the area is met compared to averages.

h. The percentage for fitness class participation is slightly lower for Canterbury (13.2%) when compared with Kent CC (14.8%) and the national average (15.1%). Similar percentages when compared with the regional and national averages (Active Lives Survey, 2025).

i. The Active Lives Survey shows a steady increase in gym use in Canterbury since 2020, overall rising by 5.6%. Participation data for fitness classes in Canterbury has significantly decreased (between 23-24 and 24-25) by 6.5%. However, new data is still within 2% of the national average. This data correlates with the closure of Kingsmead Leisure Centre during refurbishments over the 2023-2024 period, highlighting the importance of the facility.

Health and Fitness Recommendations
Prioritised Actions **Protect** • Continue to protect the current quantity and availability of community health and fitness facilities through planning policy. **Enhance** • Ensure Council owned health and fitness facilities and equipment are maintained to a good quality standard whilst offering affordable pricing. **Provide** • Regularly review health and fitness facility and equipment needs in relation to changes in accessible supply, fitness participation and industry trends and population growth.

4.5 Athletics and running

a. There is one standard outdoor 400m athletics track located in the District at Canterbury Academy, which is home to Invicta East Kent Athletics Club.

b. Invicta East Kent Athletics Club are the only dedicated athletics club in the District with approximately 200 members and offer both junior and senior sections. The club welcomes new members of all ages and abilities and provides coaching geared towards competition in track and field. They compete in a variety of leagues at youth, senior and masters level, as well as county, regional and national championships. The club also cater for elite performance groups, providing financial and mentoring support to help athletes develop and raise the profile of the club at elite competitions. The club has remained the same size over the last 3 years but have aspirations to grow in the near future by increasing and improving their coaching team to allow them to accommodate new members.

c. Canterbury Harriers are a running club based at Birley's Sports Pavillion with approximately 130 senior members. The club host sessions on Tuesdays and Thursday with qualified coaches at Birley's Playing Field as well as longer road running sessions at the weekends.

d. Jelly Legs Running Club have groups based in both Canterbury and Deal, with 15 regular members of the Canterbury group. The club host frequent runs around the city on footpaths and through local countryside as well as having training sessions at Wingham, Littlebourne, and Chartham recreation grounds and a Couch to 5K programme. The club reports the same number of members over the last 3 years, however, are looking to grow in the next few years.

e. Whitstable Road Runners have approximately 125 senior members and have grown after the last 3 years by an estimated 25 members. The club have aspirations to continue this growth by leaning into their Couch to 5K programme and free coaching for new members who sign up to their new Harbour 5 mile and Neptune mile events. Members meet at Whitstable Harbour to start their sessions.

Quality of athletics provision

f. The track is assessed as in standard condition, however, is currently being resurfaced at the time of reporting. Invicta East Kent Athletics Club funded the resurfacing themselves and will take on maintenance and management responsibilities of the track following completion of the resurfacing. As the track is currently being resurfaced, it does not have a valid UK Athletics TrackMark assessment.

g. Invicta East Kent Athletics Club report that their ancillary facilities at the Canterbury Academy track are poor quality and require investment to refurbish and modernise the facilities. The club also uses the onsite gym for training.

h. Canterbury Harriers report that they have use of the ancillary facilities at Birleys Sports Pavilion and rated the facilities as good quality.

Location of athletics and running facilities in Canterbury

i. The track at Canterbury Academy is located in the city centre, accessible to the majority of the district within a 20-minute driving catchment.

j. Canterbury Harriers and Jelly Legs Running Club are located in the City Centre, with Whitstable Road Runners are located in the north of the District. Whilst Jelly Legs Running

Club are primarily based in the city centre, they also host sessions at sites outside of the city centre in Wingham and Chartham.

Athletics facilities in neighbouring authorities

k. There are three synthetic 400m facilities in neighboring areas which according to Sport England's Access Analysis report are within a 20-minute drive time of residents, these include.

- The Royal Harbour Academy Upper Site (Thanet), Northeast
- Duke of York's Royal Military School (Dover), Southeast
- Julie Rose Stadium (Ashford), Southwest

Participation in athletics and running

l. The most recent Active Lives Survey findings indicate a steady increase in adult demand for running, or athletics multi sports nationally, over the last four years. Since 2021/22, there has been an increase in regular adult participation (16+ years old) of 1.9%, reaching 15% in 2024/25. 15% of adult participation is equivalent to 7,157,200 regular adult participants. The current participation figure for athletics and running is now greater than gym-based health and fitness membership.

Parkrun

m. There are 2 adult Parkrun events in the Canterbury District, Canterbury Parkrun and Whitstable Parkrun, each taking place at 09:00 on Saturday morning. Canterbury Parkrun has taken place 571 times with over 11,000 finishers, Whitstable Parkrun is the most established event having taken place 766 times with over 23,500 finishers. There are also 2 specific junior Parkrun events at Sturry Road, and Herne Bay Memorial Park which offer a shorter 2km route for juniors aged 4 to 14 to take part in on Sunday mornings. The Sturry Road Parkrun has taken place 23 times with nearly 200 participants at the time of reporting. The Herne Bay Memorial Junior Parkrun has hosted 227 events with over 900 finishers. Across the 4 ParkRuns, there have been approximately 2,300 volunteers supporting the events.

n. Herne Bay Junior Parkrun have reported growth in number of participants in the last 3 years, growing from 10-20 participants per week 4 years ago to up to an average of 45 participants per week in 2026. The organisers of the event state they have plans to continue growing by reaching out to local primary schools and continuing to be active on their Facebook account.

Walking

o. The NHS provides evidence of countless health benefits to walking, centered around heart health, general fitness levels and burning excess calories. Beyond medical benefits the NHS recommend walking as one of the cheapest and easiest ways to become healthier. Whilst physical and mental health is key to the promotion of walking, the environmental benefits are vast in terms of reduced transport by other means and therefore cleaner air and reduced pollution.

p. There are a number of health walks offered in the Canterbury District, which are provided by Kent County Council. The Kent Coast Big Walk and Wheel, is a free 6-week countywide active travel challenge running through summer 2026 to get people walking, wheeling, and cycling, and rewards people with points and prizes for being active across Kent. Kent County Council also advertise free group walks across the county.

Athletics and running recommendations
Prioritised actions: **Protect** • Protect the current availability of community athletics facilities through planning policy. • Ensure the lighting, waymarking and other signage along key footpaths and parks used for jogging and walking for health are maintained to a sufficient standard, in addition to those used connect residential areas to sports facilities. **Enhance** • Undertake UKA TrackMark assessment of the track at Canterbury Academy once resurfacing is complete. • Support Invicta East Kent Athletics Club in refurbishing their ancillary facilities **Provide** • Explore options to develop ActiveTracks as part of future housing developments and to meet the needs of both athletics clubs and running clubs in the area. • Regularly review athletics and running facility needs with England Athletics, and leisure providers in relation to changes in accessible supply, participation trends and population growth.

4.6 Bowls, Croquet and Pétanque provision

a. There are 5 outdoor bowls clubs in the Canterbury District. There is also one indoor bowls club within Canterbury District.

Figure 4.9 Bowls Sites in Canterbury District

Site	Club	Postcode	No Rinks	Type
Barham Bowls Club	Barham Bowls Club	CT4 6NX	6	Outdoor
Memorial Park	Herne Bay Bowls Club	CT6 5QL	12	Outdoor
The Castle Green	Whitstable Bowling Club	CT5 2BW	6	Outdoor
Chislet Colliery Welfare Club	Chislet Colliery Welfare Association Bowls Club (Hersden Bowls Club)	CT3 4HX	6	Outdoor
Canterbury Bowling Club	Canterbury Bowling Club	CT1 3LJ	12	Outdoor
Oyster Indoor Bowls Club	Oyster Indoor Bowls Club	CT5 1AB	8	Indoor

b. The provision of bowls facilities across the District is secure, with all clubs either owning the freehold of their site or have leases in place. Canterbury BC own the free hold of their site and are responsible for maintenance. Barham BC, Herne Bay BC, Whitstable BC, Hersden BC, and Oyster Indoor BC all operate on leasehold sites.

Indoor Bowls

c. There is only 1 dedicated site which offers indoor bowls in Canterbury District. Oyster Indoor Bowls Club, based in Whitstable, offer a total of 8 indoor rinks with 500 playing members. They have approximately 500 playing members, with a total of 66 teams. The club have increased their membership by 200 people since 2022 and have plans to grow this number further over the next 3 years. They have male and female changing facilities, a bar and a restaurant on site, however hope to move the kitchen and restaurant downstairs to improve accessibility. The club hold a 'full repairing lease' on the building and are therefore responsible for the maintenance of the site.

d. Bay Sports Arena also hosts indoor bowls with Arena Bowls Club Monday to Friday 9am to 12pm. The club have approximately 80 members. Ashford road Community Association also host short mat indoor bowls at ARCA Hall Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

Croquet

e. There is one croquet club (Canterbury Croquet Club) in the district based at Polo Farm Sports Club, where the club have a lease in place. The site has three good quality lawns which are maintained by the club, with support from Polo Farm. The club play Golf Croquet and Association Croquet and offer taster sessions for members who want to try the sport. The club host internal competitions and are part of the Southeast league for external competitions.

Pétanque

f. There is one pétanque club (Whitstable Grattons) in the district which form 1 of 14 clubs in the Kent Pétanque Association. The club operates on the Chestfield Cricket Club site, who own the freehold, however the croquet club are responsible for all groundskeeping, cleaning and maintenance of the pétanque piste which is supported by members. The site has 3 pétanque lanes which all have disability access. The facilities on site include changing rooms, toilets and showers, a bar and a kitchen, however these are cricket club facilities with no specific facilities in place for the pétanque club.

Quality of provision in Canterbury

g. The provision of outdoor bowls greens across the district are generally of standard or good quality, with most clubs responsible for the maintenance of the greens either because they own the facilities or due to maintenance responsibilities outlined in lease agreements.

h. Barham BC have an active membership of 37 and report aspirations to resurface their green and enhance ancillary facilities. The club state that the wood on the buildings is reaching the end of its life and that there are no toilets on the site. During the site visit, it was reported that the green had missing patches of grass and areas of moss present.

i. Whitstable BC have approximately 100 members and have grown over the last 3 years by offering a broad range of activity, including coaching, friendly and league matches, competitions, and free events. The club invested in a new green in 2024 after receiving funding from Bowls England and partly self-funded the project. They also report having good ancillary facilities but noted issues with car parking as they can only accommodate 5 cars on the premises and local parking is typically busy and limited to only 4 hours.

j. Canterbury BC currently have approximately 200 members however have plans to grow over the next 3 years through annual open days. The club have 2 good quality greens and report that their ancillary facilities are good quality and are suitable to meet their current needs.

k. Pétanque provision at Chestfield CC is in excellent condition. The club reports a need for more changing room space due to the number of teams across several different sports that are based at the club.

l. Canterbury Croquet Club report that their lawns are maintained to an excellent standard aside from the drainage issue on the lawns. They report a need for sports lighting to increase playing opportunities in the darker months and improvements to the ancillary facilities. The club stated that the pavilion does not have electricity which is an issue in the winter and spring months with no lighting and no heating.

Location of facilities in Canterbury

a. There is a good spread of bowls clubs across the district with 3 sites in the north of Canterbury (2 in Whitstable and 1 in Herne Bay). 1 site is situated centrally, 1 in the northeast and 1 based in the south of the district.

b. Canterbury Croquet Club is well situated centrally within the district. Pétanque within Canterbury is based at Whitstable, in the North of the district, but has good travel connections to the area.

Participation in Bowls

c. The most recent Active Lives Survey findings indicate stable adult demand for bowls nationally over the last 4 years. Each year since 2021, 0.6% of adults (16+) in England participated in bowls at least twice in the last 28 days, in 2024/25 this equates to a total of 264,100 people. Croquet participation has fallen in the last few years in 2024/25 14,800 people were recorded as participating in croquet at least twice in the last 28 days, compared to 17,600 in 2022/23 and 16,200 in 2021/22. However, this has increased slightly over the last year as 13,200 were recorded to participate in 2023/24.

Bowls Recommendations

Prioritised Actions

Protect

- The Council to continue to protect the current community facilities for bowls through planning policy

Enhance

- Support clubs to link with schools and youth groups such as scouts and recruit new members through promotion of open days
- Support Barham Bowls Club to refurbish green and ancillary facilities
- Support Canterbury Croquet club with refurbishing ancillary facilities

Provide

- Regularly review bowls facility needs in the area in relation to changes in accessible supply, participation trends and population growth
- Explore feasibility of installing sports lighting at Canterbury Croquet Club

4.7 Cycling, BMX and Skate Park Provision

a. There are two BMX Tracks and three skate parks in the district as outlined in figure 4.10 below.

Figure 4.10 Cycling, BMX and Skate Park sites in Canterbury District.

Site	Postcode	Type of Provision
Broomfield	CT6 7AD	• BMX Track
Hersden Recreation Ground	CT3 4HX	• BMX Track
Sturry Road Community Park	CT1 1AD	• Skate park
Swalecliffe Skatepark	CT5 2QH	• Skate park
Thannington (Wincheap) Skate Park	CT1 3XB	• Skate park
The Canterbury Academy (The Canterbury Skate Project)	CT2 8QA	• School/private community use

b. There are two National Cycling Network (NCN) cycling routes going through the district. Route 1, which runs from Dover to the Highlands of Scotland and Route 18 from Canterbury to Royal Tunbridge Wells. Explore Kent have a cycling map that shows other routes within the area.

Quality of Cycling, BMX and Skate Park Facilities in Canterbury District.

c. The three skateparks seem to be well-used as reported by residents on local group websites. Canterbury Skate Project reports Sturry Road and Thannington both feature a quarter pipe and flat bank either side of a funbox. Users report that the sites are not well maintained and need enhancement. The facilities available at Sturry Road are no longer recommended by Skateboard GB.

d. Swalecliffe Skatepark is the most modern of the three sites, with a bowl and a plaza style street section. The Skatepark Project reports this site to be a 'great local skatepark in an amazing location'. With the projected growth of residents to 2042, it is likely that this facility will need expanding in the future to support future growth.

e. Broomfield BMX Club reports that Hersden BMX track is not useable in its current condition and therefore the next closest track is in Gravesend.

f. The track at Broomfield BMX is rated as standard quality however can be misused by people on motorbikes due to tit's secluded location. The club highlight that there will be a need to resurface the track in the future due to levels of misuse.

Location of Cycling, BMX and Skate Park Facilities in Canterbury District.

g. The provision of skate park facilities is evenly spread across the most densely populated areas in Canterbury.

h. The locations of the two BMX parks are in the North (Broomfield) and East (Hersden) of Canterbury. Both tracks are somewhat accessible via public transport but require walking to the facility from the bus stop. There is a lack of BMX pump track facilities within the Canterbury City Centre area, with users having to travel East to Hersden Recreation Ground or North East to Broomfield to access BMX specific tracks. As the area of highest population within the district, options to develop BMX specific facilities within the catchment of the city centre should be explored.

Cycling Provision in Neighbouring Local Authorities.

i. The closest Pump Track to the Canterbury district is in Swingfield (fifteen-minute drive from Canterbury City, forty-five-minute drive from Herne Bay).

Road Cycling

j. There are two road cycling clubs in the district, Canterbury Bicycle Club (CBC) and Whitstable Oyster Belles (a women's only club). Both clubs have a website where anyone can become a member and join their group rides. Whitstable Oyster Belles welcome women who want to build confidence and they will adapt their riding speed to remain as a group. Although, they do point out that the group is not for beginners.

Participation in Cycling

k. The most recent Active Lives Survey findings indicate a slight decline in adult demand for cycling for leisure and sport nationally over the last 4 years. There was a significant increase likely due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019-20 where 16% of adults (16+) in England participated in cycling at least twice in the last 28 days, this has since dropped to 12.7% in 2024/25 i.e., 5,802,600 people which is higher than the year 2023/24 (12.3%).

l. Canterbury's new Local Plan and Transport Strategy are set to play a significant role in responding to climate change through maximising active travel. The council aims to safeguard their cycle routes and also create an off-road cycle route from Herne Bay to Canterbury to provide an alternative to the A291. New developments are expected to show best practice in design for cyclists and make sure that the layout provides appropriate access to cycle storage.

BMX, Cycling, and Skatepark Recommendations

Prioritised Actions

Protect

- The Council should continue to protect the existing BMX and skate park facilities through planning policy.
- Ensure that existing cycle paths, cycle routes, lighting, waymarking and other signage are maintained to a good standard.

Enhance

- The Council to support the maintenance and refurbishment of the skate parks in the area, with a focus on Sturry Road, Broomfield, and Thannington.
- Work with schools to link to national cycling networks and promote opportunities for active travel.
- Explore feasibility of installing sports lighting at Broomfield BMX Club
- Regularly review the quality of surface at Broomfield BMX to plan for future resurfacing.

Provide

- Regularly review cycling facility needs with British Cycling and local clubs in relation to changes in accessible supply, participation trends and population growth.
- Explore the feasibility of developing a BMX pump track within a suitable catchment of Canterbury City Centre to meet the current shortfall of facilities in the area

4.8 Golf

a. There are 3 standard length (18-hole) golf courses in the Canterbury District as detailed in figure 4.11 below as well as one 9 hole course.

Figure 4.11 Golf courses in the Canterbury District

Site	Postcode	Course	Other facilities
Whitstable & Seasalter Golf Club*	CT5 1EB	1x 9 hole course	
Chestfield Golf Club*	CT5 3LU	1x 18 hole course	7 bay covered driving range (220 yards), 2 indoor simulator rooms, short game area, putting green (members and private lessons only)
Broome Park Golf Club*	CT4 6QX	1x 18 hole course	8 bay covered driving range, short game area, putting green (members, hotel guests, private lessons)
Canterbury Golf Club*	CT1 1TW	1x 18 hole course	13 bay driving covered driving range (public access), two putting greens, short game area including bunker.

**England Golf affiliated club*

b. All 4 golf courses are affiliated to England Golf with 3 being members clubs (Whitstable & Seasalter, Chestfield, and Canterbury) and one commercial club (Broome Park).

c. Whitstable & Seasalter Golf Club is a coastal links 9-hole course, which is played twice around to make up a full 18-hole course. If playing a full 18, the course is comparatively shorter, up to 5,300 yards long from the back tees and a par 66. In 2020, the club opened a new state-of-the-art clubhouse which is available to hire for private events. Visitors green fees are £35 for both weekday and weekend rounds and annual membership costs £985, below the national average of £1,071.

d. The 18-hole downland course at Chesfield Golf Club is located on the outskirts of Whitstable. The second longest course in Canterbury, the par 70 course plays 6,209 yards off the back tees and is highly regarded. The clubhouse building was developed in the 15th century and restored to a high quality. The clubhouse is available to book for private events. Members have access to a range of practice facilities including a covered driving range (limited to 220 yards), indoor simulators, short game area, and practice green – these facilities are also used for private lessons. Visitors green fees range from £65 during the week and £75 at the weekend and annual membership costs £1,650.

e. Part of the Broome Park Hotel, the 18-hole, par 72, parkland course is the longest in canterbury, playing 6,579 yards off the back tees. The clubhouse is part of the 17th-century historic mansion hotel. Members, hotel guests, and visiting players have access to an 8-bay driving range, short game green, and putting green. Green fees range from £32.50 to £75 and annual membership costs £1,045, in line with the national average of £1,071.

f. Canterbury Golf Club have an 18-hole, par 72, parkland course which plays 5,852 yards off the back tees. The clubhouse was recently refurbished with an improved main hospitality suite, additional function room, and new outdoor patio. The clubhouse is available to book for private events. The 13-bay driving range is fitted with TopTracer ball-tracking technology and is available for community use. The club also offer private lessons on the range and also utilise the short game area and putting greens. Canterbury Golf Club is the most expensive course in the district with green fees ranging from £65 to £75 and annual membership costing £1,760.

Quality of golf provision

g. The 'Golfshake' website provides online customer reviews; figure 4.12 shows quality ratings for formal golf courses in Canterbury. The overall review scores are averaged from individual scores for factors including quality of course, facilities and services, course condition, pace of play, food and drink, practice facilities and value for money. The review ratings show that the golf venues in the district have a high percentage of players (who submitted reviews) that would play them again or recommend the venue to others.

Figure 4.12: Online ratings of Canterbury District golf courses and comparators[5]

Club	Overall Rating out of 5	% Would Play Again or Recommend	Sample No
Whitstable & Seasalter Golf Club	3.3	100%	8
Chestfield Golf Club	4.1	95%	119
Broome Park Golf Club	3.8	97%	147
Canterbury Golf Club	4.3	100%	129

Location of Golf facilities

h. The provision of golf facilities is distributed across the district with clubs located within a reasonable driving catchment of the main population areas of Canterbury City and the Coastal band area (covering Whitstable and Herne Bay) as well as provision in the south (Broome Park Golf Club). There are however only limited provision of community accessible practice facilities (Canterbury Golf Club) and no provision for family activities such as adventure golf or a pitch and putt course.

Golf facilities in neighbouring local authorities

i. Sport England's access analysis report shows there are several golf facilities that are accessible to some Canterbury District residents within a 20-minute journey time.
   - Westgate and Birchington Golf Club (Thanet) – 18-hole golf course, putting green
   - St Augustines Golf Club (Thanet) – 1x 18-hole golf course, driving range, and putting green and a 20-bay driving range
   - Stonelees Golf Centre (Thanet) – 5-hole par 3 golf course, 9-hole short golf course (8x par 3 and 1x par 4), 9-hole golf course, 18 bay covered driving range, indoor simulator, short game area, putting green
   - Roundwood Hall Golf Club (Folkestone) – 9-hole short golf course (7x par 3, 2x par 4)
   - Cave Hotel and Golf Resort (Swale) – 18-hole golf course, 9-hole par 3 course, 15 bay covered driving course

Golf participation

j. In terms of demand, the most recent Active Lives Survey findings, as of November 2024, indicate a slight increase in adult demand with participation at 2.3% (1,085,300) of adults (16+) in England participating in golf at least twice in the last 28 days, following a recorded 2.2% in the previous year.

k. England Golf average membership figures in per club is 545, which is 34% above the national average of 407. England Golf have also identified a 5% increase in club membership within Canterbury between 2015 and 2025.

l. The Regular Golfer Demand Index for Canterbury, developed by England Golf, which compares the number of regular golfers per course in the area against the national average highlights that there is demand for additional golf facilities in Canterbury. Based on the existing mix of facilities and higher than national average membership costs

[5] Source: www.Golfshake.com (August 2026)

(£1,360 district average compared to £1,071 national average), it is recommended that opportunities for the development of entry-level facilities are explored.

m. The demand for golf facilities provided by England Golf highlights that the Golf Clubs in Canterbury should be protected from development as if one of the golf club sites was sold for development, this would put additional strain on other clubs in the area, which are already at higher than national average membership levels and could lead to a reduction in participation.

Golf Recommendations
Prioritised Actions **Protect** • The Council to continue to protect through planning policies the availability of all golf facilities - both traditional courses and entry-level, any proposals for development on golf course sites would require an objective and comprehensive golf needs assessment to be prepared. **Enhance** • The Council to work with golf clubs to support them in diversifying their memberships and offer **Provide** • Regularly review facility needs for golf in the area in relation to changes in accessible supply, participation trends and population growth. • Explore opportunities for entry level golf provision in the district.

4.9 Gymnastics and Trampolining

a. There are 5 gymnastics/trampolining clubs/ providers in Canterbury District, across 5 different venues. There is 1 cheerleading club. No clubs have dedicated venues and instead use schools or leisure centres to deliver their sessions. Canterbury Gymnastics Club previously operated out of a dedicated facility in Wincheap Industrial Estate, however have recently disbanded. The site is not currently used by any gymnastics clubs

Figure 4.13: Facilities in Canterbury District used by Gymnastics clubs.

Site Name	Club	Postcode	Facility Type
Bay Sports Arena	Greenhill Gymnastics Club	CT6 7NS	Non-dedicated Facility
The Canterbury Academy	East Kent Gymnastics	CT2 8QA	Non-dedicated Facility
Kingsmead Leisure Centre	City of Canterbury Rhythmic Gymnastics Club	CT2 7PH	Non-dedicated Facility
St Anselm's Catholic School	Aire Trampoline Club	CT1 3EN	Non-dedicated Facility
Orion Spires Academy	DC Diamonds Gymnastics Club	CT2 0HD	Non-dedicated Facility
Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School	Saxon Stars Cheerleading Squad	CT1 3EW	Non-dedicated Facility

b. East Kent Gymnastics are a new club that was founded by local parents within the district after Canterbury Gymnastics Club disbanded. East Kent Gymnastics operates out of Lifestyle Fitness at The Canterbury Academy. The club states that they are currently looking for a more permanent facility. The club offers a wide and inclusive range of provision including parent/toddler classes, SEN classes, adult classes, beginner classes and boys classes. Assuming that all members from Canterbury Gymnastics Club transferred to East Kent Gymnastics, the total of affiliated members was 330 and they had 43 teams. Canterbury Gymnastics Club stated that 35% of their members travel from neighbouring districts.

c. Greenhill Gymnastics Club are based in Herne Bay and operate from Bay Sports Arena. They offer four classes: recreational, floor and vault squad, development squad and artistic squad.

d. City of Canterbury Rhythmic Gymnastics Club operates from Kingsmead Leisure Centre. They offer classes for beginners through to advanced and also offer classes for younger children.

e. Aire Trampoline Club are a non-profit community organisation that offer provision across three East Kent locations: Canterbury, Dover and Sandwich. The majority of their sessions are in Canterbury, where they operate from St Anselm's Catholic School. They hold classes for a range of abilities and ages (5 years+) including beginners through to competitive squads. They also offer 1:1 coaching and smaller group sessions.

Quality of Gymnastics and Trampolining Facilities

f. As part of the data collection for the strategy, some of the gymnastics facilities were visited and given a quality rating. The facilities can be rated either 'poor', 'standard' or 'good'. The quality ratings can be seen in Figure 4.14.

Figure 4.14: Quality of Gymnastic Facilities

Gymnastic Facilities	Quality Rating
Bay Sports Arena	Good
The Canterbury Academy	Good
Kingsmead Leisure Centre	Good
St Anselm's Catholic School	*Facilities not seen*
Orion Spires Academy	*Facilities not seen*
Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School	Good

Location of Gymnastics and Trampolining Facilities in Canterbury District.

g. The provision of gymnastics facilities is well spread across the district, with 1 site located in the north, 4 located centrally, and 1 located in the northeastern area.

Gymnastics and Trampolining Facilities in Neighbouring Authorities.

h. There are several gymnastics or trampolining clubs in the neighboring areas, the nearest clubs within a 15-mile radius of Canterbury City Centre are:
- Dover Gymnastics Club (CT17 0HL) Dover
- Faversham Gymnastics Club (ME13 8HD) Faversham
- Sunny Starz (CT7 0NB) Birchington
- Thanet Gymnastics Club (CT9 5QX) Thanet

Gymnastics Participation

i. The most recent Active Lives Survey findings indicated a stagnant adult participation rate for gymnastics and trampolining over the last 3 years (2021-2025) with the last 4 years reporting an adult (16+) participation rate of 0.4%, 0.5%, 0.4% and 0.4% respectively. With 0.4% of the national 16+ population regularly participating in gymnastics, this is approximately equivalent to 211,100 participants nationally in 2024/25. However, it should be noted that adult data is of limited value in estimating overall demand for the sport of gymnastics as most participation is by children under 16, who are excluded from this data source.

j. The Active Lives Children and young people data shows 28.9% of young people (2,128,700) participated in Gymnastics, trampolining or cheerleading in the last 7 days during the academic year of 24-25, this is slightly higher than previous years of 27.6% in 23-24 and 28.8% in 22-23.

k. British Gymnastics state the main issue for gymnastic development is having access to sufficient dedicated space for clubs to grow and extend their programmes. The NGB states that the sport has seen consecutive growth since 2022 with many clubs having high waiting lists, particularly in constrained or shared use environments.

Gymnastics and Trampolining Recommendations
Prioritised Actions **Protect** • Continue to protect the current quantity and availability of community facilities for gymnastics and trampolining through planning policy and this strategy **Enhance** • Explore opportunities for dedicated gymnastics facilities to enhance club offer in the district **Provide**

Gymnastics and Trampolining Recommendations
• Regularly review gymnastics and trampolining facility needs with British Gymnastics, and the clubs based in the study area in relation to changes in accessible supply, participation trends and population growth.

4.10 Netball

a. Canterbury District has a total of 27 courts across 8 different sites. There are 18 outdoor courts, of which 12 are located at education sites, and 9 indoor courts, of which 7 are located at education sites and the others based at public access sites.

Figure 4.15 Netball sites in Canterbury District

Site	Postcode	No Courts	Indoor	Outdoor	Lighting
University of Kent, Canterbury	CT27UG	2	2	0	0
St Edmund's School Sports Hall	CT2 8HU	6	2	4	0
Kent College	CT29DT	4	2	2	0
Birley's Playing Fields	CT2 7JS	4	0	4	0
Ames Levett Sports Centre	CT1 3NZ	1	1	0	0
Bay Sports Arena	CT6 7NS	3	1	2	2
Simon Langton Girls School	CT1 3EW	3	0	3	0
King's School Canterbury	CT2 7HU	4	1	3	0
Total		**27**	**9**	**18**	**2**

b. Bay Netball Club are based at Bay Sports Arena and use the indoor and outdoor courts. They have 100 members and offer commitment free sessions. The club reports that improvements to the playing surface at the site would benefit players and that the posts require new padding for safety both indoors and outdoors.

c. Canterbury and District Netball League have approximately 165 members and a total of 16 team and are looking to grow member numbers. There are 4 courts at the Birley's Playing Field site which the league use, but the club and England Netball rate these facilities 'very poor'. The ancillary facilities at this site are rated standard by the league. The league stated that netball is experiencing a surge in popularity in the district, however due to poor quality and unsafe facilities, the league is under threat due to a lack of affordable alternative sites.

d. Pilgrims Netball Club is based at Kent College and also use Birley's Playing Fields courts for league matches. The club has 85 members, all of whom are under 18, and have up 4 teams. The club aspires to enter two teams into the County League but need to expand by one more training session to support an additional team, however there is a lack of facility availability to support this. 46% of fixtures have been cancelled at Birley's Playing Fields due to the safety of courts in wet weather. The club hopes to increase participation and expand its offer to be gender inclusive.

e. Play Netball League is based as Canterbury Academy. The league is open to adult teams and takes place every Tuesday. The league allow players to register as a team or as an individual, providing opportunities for new players to be placed into a team and meet new people – in 2025, 98% of players joined as individuals.

Quality of Netball Courts in Canterbury District.

f. England Netball stated that the Canterbury and District Netball League is hosted at a central venue (Birley's Pavilion and Playing Fields). The league has only been able to play 20% of their fixtures over the winter due to the condition of the netball courts. They stated that there are other facilities available in the area; however, they are either in poor condition or too expensive to hire.

g. England Netball reported that the number of courts is sufficient to meet demand in the

area, but the quality of the facilities is not sufficient and therefore has led to cancelled fixtures and a lower engagement rate. They recommended that court refurbishment and development of sports lighting at Birley Playing Fields would allow for extra training hours and mid-week fixtures.

h. The planned new sportslit MUGA at Hersden Recreation Ground will have netball line markings and nets available for use.

Location of Netball Facilities in Canterbury District.

i. There is a concentration of facilities located in the central area of Canterbury, and no facilities are located in the south of the district however, the central sites are within a suitable driving catchment of residents in the south of the district. There is one site located in the north of the district.

Netball Participation

j. The most recent Active Lives Survey shows that there has been a decrease in adult demand for Netball nationally over the last year. In 2024/25, 0.6% of adults, i.e., 309,100 adults in England participated in netball at least twice in the last 28 days whereas 2023/24 recorded 0.7% of adults (16+) i.e., 345,700 people. The 2023/24 recorded the highest total adult population regularly taking part in netball since the Active Lives database started recording data (2015-16).

k. England Netball stated that membership rates in Canterbury are on an upward trend and that there is demand for more clubs and teams in the area. In the district, there is one England Netball league and several commercial leagues operating.

Netball Recommendations
Prioritised Actions **Protect** • The Council to continue to review the quality of facilities in the area and protect provision through planning **Enhance** • Support Education sites to ensure the courts, fencing and nets at all venues are maintained to a good quality standard and club activity is secured. • Work with clubs and England Netball to explore suitable sites to enhance courts to meet England Netball standards. • Support with upgrading the courts and installing sports lighting at Birley's Playing Fields. **Provide** • Ensure any new or refurbished sports hall provision or outdoor court provision meets Sport England and England Netball requirements • Regularly review netball facility needs with England Netball, netball clubs in relation to changes in accessible supply, participation trends and population growth.

4.11 Squash

a. There are currently 13 squash courts in the Canterbury district over 4 different sites. 3 of these sites (10 courts) are publicly accessible through memberships and 1 site (3 courts) is private use only.

Figure 4.16 Squash court sites in Canterbury

Site	Postcode	Number of courts	Access type
The Kings School Recreation Centre	CT2 7HU	4	Membership use / Club use
Kent College	CT2 9DT	2	Club and community use
Canterbury Squash Rackets Club	CT2 7LR	4	Membership use / Club use
Broome Park Golf Club	CT4 6QX	3	Private use

b. There are no courts that offer pay and play services for squash. Each facility requires membership to book and use the courts. All courts are reported to be accessible for disabilities and for people who use a wheelchair.

c. There are 2 squash clubs in the district: Canterbury Squash Rackets Club and King's Club. Both clubs have competitive teams and host several different sessions including development lessons, fitness sessions, group lessons, or individual coaching.

Location of Squash facilities in Canterbury

d. The location of provision over the 3 sites with membership use are central within the district, all within a 2-mile radius. Broome Park Golf Club is located South of Canterbury City.

Pay and play Squash facilities in neighboring local authorities

e. Pay and play is a good option for those new to squash; however, there are no facilities within the district for this type of access. Therefore, it is likely that these residents will travel to neighboring districts for this access.

f. Sport England Active Places data shows squash facilities with pay and play provision in neighboring districts (Thanet, Folkestone and Hythe, Dover, Swale and Ashford). There is a total of 5 facilities with pay and play; 3 are within a 30-minute drive from the centre of Canterbury City.
   - Sandwich Leisure Centre (CT13 0FA) – 1 court
   - Rodmersham Squash Club (ME9 0PR) - 4 courts
   - Dover District Leisure Centre (CT16 3FH) - 2 courts

Squash facilities in neighboring local authorities

g. It is likely that residents located in the South of the district would use squash provision in Dover where there are a total of 6 courts spread over 4 facilities (1 of which is pay and play). Residents in Herne Bay and Whitstable are likely to use provision within Canterbury, however if they are not members of a Canterbury facility, they would have to travel, on average, 40 minutes to their nearest pay and play facility.

Squash participation

h. The most recent Active Lives Survey findings indicate the adult demand for squash nationally is stagnant at around 0.6% of adults (16+) in England playing at least twice in the last 28 days. The last 4 years of data, 2021-25 have reported 0.6%, 0.5%, 0.6% and 0.6%, of adults per year regularly play squash, equivalent to approximately 293,900 people nationally in 2024/25.

i. England Squash provide a number of engagement programmes aimed at encouraging more people to become involved with the sport and help to create thriving communities, these include Squash 101 programmes - Squash Stars, Junior 101, Adult 101, Squash 57 (Racketball), Squash Girls Can, Mixed Ability Squash and Squash from the Mosque. For these programmes to be successful facilities need to be well maintained to provide a positive experience along with a partnership approach between the various clubs and leisure management teams where applicable.

j. England Squash set a benchmark standard of 1 court per 10,000 residents in a local authority area. Based on a current population of 162,100 in Canterbury, England Squash suggest there is a shortfall of 3 squash courts.

Squash Recommendations
Prioritised Actions **Protect** • Continue to protect the current quantity and the availability of community squash facilities through this strategy. **Enhance** • Ensure the current supply of squash courts are maintained to a good quality standard. **Provide** • Review the need for pay and play access for current provision within the district • Regularly review squash facility needs with England Squash and leisure provider in relation to changes in accessible supply, participation trends and population growth.

4.12 Tennis

a. There are 12 sites that offer community accessible tennis courts in the area, with a total of 52 tennis courts, as detailed in figures 4.17 - 4.19. There are 17 permanent outdoor courts with sports lighting in the study area.

Park tennis in Canterbury District

b. There are 6 park sites in the Canterbury District which provide a total of 21 tennis courts, 2 of which have permanent sports lighting, and all courts are dedicated tennis courts with none being overmarked for additional sports such as netball or basketball.

c. The LTA are keen to develop the offer within the park facilities, as a significant proportion of tennis participation in the UK takes place in a park environment and is the most likely place for new participants to start their tennis journey. LTA recommend gate access systems and online booking to support the sustainability of park sites. A lack of park tennis courts within the city centre was highlighted by the LTA, however they acknowledge that there is little suitable land for the development of park courts within the city centre and that increasing access to courts in this area would likely have to be achieved through improving community use at education sites.

Figure 4.17 Park tennis sites in the Canterbury District

Site	No. Courts	Lighting	Multi-use	LTA Registered
Victoria Memorial Park	2	2		No
Charlton Park	1			No
West Beach	5			No
Herne Bay Memorial Park	8			No
Brickfield Rec (Barham LTC)	4 (2 are small sized)			No
Homing Park	1			No
Total	**21**	**2**		

Indoor Tennis Courts

d. There are 3 sites with permanent indoor tennis courts in the Canterbury District which are available for regular community use, providing a total of 9 courts. Covered courts are essential to ensuring tennis can be played year-round. The Canterbury district is well catered for with the current level of indoor courts.

Figure 4.18 Indoor tennis sites in the Canterbury District

Site	No. Indoor Courts	LTA Registered
Polo Farm Sports Club	3	Yes
University of Kent	4	Yes
Appeti Tennis Centre	2	Yes
Total	**9**	

Tennis clubs in the Canterbury District

j. There is a total of 5 LTA registered tennis club sites located within the study area, listed in figure 4.29. Club environments play a vital role in tennis participation, particularly in encouraging more regular play. They place a strong emphasis on organised activity, including coaching programmes, social sessions and competitions. Barham LTC are based at Brickfield Recreation Ground, however the site is registered as a park site and therefore not included in figure 4.19 below.

Figure 4.19 Club Tennis sites

Site*	No. Courts	Lighting	Indoor	LTA Registered
Polo Farm Sports Club (Canterbury Lawn Tennis Club)	11	6	3	Yes
Bridge Tennis Club	3	3	0	Yes
Whitstable Lawn Tennis Club	4	0	0	Yes
Herne Bay Lawn Tennis Club	6	6	0	Yes
Appeti Tennis Centre	3	0	2	Yes
Total	**27**	**15**	**5**	

Education Tennis sites

k. One education site in the Canterbury District offers tennis court provision for community use, the University of Kent.

l. The LTA is committed to working with schools to widen community access to the sport both during and out of school hours. Opportunities to review the possibility of opening up courts on education sites to further community use or coaching programmes should be explored where appropriate. This is a particular priority for the LTA within the city centre, where development of new park courts to meet future demand is less likely due to land constraints.

m. Junior Kings have expressed an interest in increasing the community use of their tennis courts. St Edmunds School (Canterbury) offer some community use of the facilities by Barracudas Activity Camps, however there is no reported community use for tennis clubs or recreational tennis bookings. Barton Court Grammar School have 6 courts, overmarked with 4 netball courts and a basketball court. The courts are not currently available for any community use however there are aspirations within the school for these to be made available for hire.

Quality of Tennis courts in the Canterbury District

n. During the development of this strategy, Canterbury City Council and University of Kent Students undertook non-technical visual site visits to the following tennis facilities in the study area. Each facility visited was given a quality rating of Poor, Standard or Good. The ratings can be seen below in figure 4.20. Not all club tennis courts were seen as they either did not respond to consultation requests or offer limited community use.

Figure 4.20: Quality of Tennis courts audited.

Tennis Courts	Facility Type	Quality Rating
Victoria Memorial Park	Park	Not seen
Charlton Park	Park	Not seen
West Beach	Park	5x Good
Herne Bay Memorial Park	Park	8x Good
Brickfield Rec	Park	Not seen
Homing Park	Park	1x Poor
Polo Farm Sports Club (Canterbury Lawn Tennis Club)	Club	11x Good
Bridge Tennis Club	Club	3x Good
Whitstable Lawn Tennis Club	Club	4x Poor
Herne Bay Lawn Tennis Club	Club	6x Good
Appeti Tennis Centre	Club	3x Standard
University of Kent	Education	4x Good

o. The non-technical site assessments, as outlined in figure 4.30, highlighted that the majority of tennis courts sites in the Canterbury District are in a good condition, with just 3 courts (Appeti Tennis Centre) rated as standard and 5 courts on 2 sites rated as poor (Homing Park and Whitstable Lawn Tennis Club).

p. The courts at Whitstable Lawn Tennis Club need resurfacing to bring them back to 'Good' quality and allow the club to continue using the facilities. The club have a sinking fund in place and are prepared to resurface the courts in the near future. Significant upgrades to the ancillary facilities are also required as the club report water ingress in their pavilions and the storage rooms leak. The club lease the courts and ancillary facilities from the council, however the lease is due to expire in mid 2026. At the time of reporting, Canterbury City Council and Whitstable LTC are negotiating a new 15 year lease for the site.

q. In 2024, the tennis courts at West Beach were resurfaced following investment from Canterbury City Council and the LTA. Alongside investment into the courts, the council and operator have worked with the LTA to deliver a range of activities at the courts including weekly free tennis sessions for all ages and playing abilities. The council and LTA report that following investment into the courts and additional activities, use of the courts has increased significantly.

r. LTA Venue Registration is a scheme for all tennis venue types, and these include clubs, parks, Community Indoor Tennis Centres and education organisations. To be eligible for LTA registration, venues are required to meet a range of governance, legal and safeguarding standards and in return venues receive a range of tailored and affordable support packages that include public liability insurance, venue management system, free legal advice as well as a range of online resources to support all aspects of tennis management and delivery. There are 7 registered venues in the Canterbury District.

Location of Tennis facilities

s. The geographic spread of tennis facilities across the Canterbury District, covers the major population hubs along the north coast and within the city centre, with club sites or bookable park courts within travelling distance of all areas. The LTA states that there is a lack of park courts in the city centre however accept that the development of new courts will be tricky due to a lack of suitable land, therefore gaining regular community access to education sites in the city centre is seen as a high priority. For a park court it is likely people will travel within a 10-minute walk, for a club site, a 10-minute drive time and for covered courts, a 20-minute drive time.

Tennis participation

t. The most recent Active Lives Survey findings indicate that there has been a steady increase in adult tennis nationally over the last 4 years with 2024/25 recording 2.3% (1,047,400 people) of adults participating in the last 28 days, which is the highest recorded level since the Active Lives Survey began in 2015/16. Recent LTA insight from July 2025 highlighted in the past year 5.8m adults played tennis, with 2.6m playing monthly and 987,409 playing weekly, and almost 4m children played tennis, with 1.6m playing monthly and 619,000 playing weekly.

u. The LTA's vision is 'Tennis Opened Up' and the LTA want tennis and the benefits it provides to be open to as many people as possible. They encourage providers of tennis to open their facilities to community use and implement an online booking system, and a chargeable model to ensure sustainability for the future investment into sites and will work with providers to review booking processes and price points.

Tennis Recommendations
Prioritised Actions **Protect** • The council to continue to protect the current quantity and availability of community facilities for tennis through planning policy, including the protection of grass tennis courts. • Ensure sites are maintained to a good quality standard • Renew Whitstable LTC lease agreement at St Annes Tennis Courts **Enhance** • Work with the LTA to provide support for tennis sites in the area to refurbish courts as required during the lifetime of the strategy • Support Whitstable LTC to refurbish their ancillary facilities and resurface courts **Provide** • Support the LTA and education sites in opening up regular community access to tennis courts at Junior Kings School, St Edmunds School, and Barton Court Grammar School to meet future demand in the city centre. • Regularly review tennis facility needs with the LTA in relation to changes in accessible supply, participation trends and population growth.

4.13 Padel and Pickleball

Padel

a. The LTA recently launched an updated LTA Padel Strategy to outline plans for 2024 – 2029. The vision and mission align to the tennis strategy, and the focus is on growing the infrastructure, increasing and diversifying the coaching workforce and building on the performance pathway as well as increasing visibility and driving participation. There are currently over 1,500 courts in Great Britain of which 60% are indoor (LTA Padel insight, December 2025) and a recent survey reported the following findings:
   - An estimated 580,000 people have played padel in British venues in the past year with around half this number playing regularly / monthly.
   - At present, most players are adults, with juniors accounting for less than 1 in 10 of the total.
   - Most venues reported strong growth, with high interest in taster sessions, and players enjoying the fun / sociability offered by the sport.
   - 9 million people have some interest in playing padel.
   - Currently demand is outstripping supply, with many venues keen to add courts, or cover existing facilities, though costs, and the complexity of local planning rules, can be prohibitive.

b. The LTA padel demand for the Canterbury District states a latent demand for the sport. The LTA data shows that there is a minimum demand for 12 courts in the area, however the LTA state this is minimum demand and not a cap on the number of facilities, and that it is important the geographic spread of existing facilities should also be considered when identifying shortfalls. The only existing community accessible padel courts in Canterbury are located at Smash Padel, Whitstable (3 courts) and Brakepoint Padel (3 courts).

c. Planning permission has been granted for the development of 2 padel courts at Polo Farm Sports Club, however development has not started yet. Square One Padel are also advertising the development of a 6 court padel centre just outside of Canterbury City Centre.

Location of Padel courts in the Canterbury District

d. Padel is one of the fastest growing sports in Great Britain which has led to significant interest from private investors and operators. The location of any potential padel court developments should be carefully considered to ensure they do not negatively impact local residents or the capacity of other sports facilities within proximity of the proposed development.

e. If the courts are developed at Polo Farm Sports Club and Square One Padel (both in the city centre), with the existing supply at Brakepoint Padel (city centre) and Smash Padel (coastal) there would be sufficient facilities to meet the current minimum demand.

f. Based on the estimated population growth of 22,781 residents over the strategy period, there will be a minimum demand for an additional 3 courts within the Canterbury District. With only 3 courts located in the coastal area of Canterbury, any future development should consider opportunities in the coastal area in the north of the District.

g. All existing and planned padel courts in Canterbury are operated privately or by commercial companies. The priority for future padel court developments is to ensure they are community venues with an accessible price point to ensure all residents are able to access padel facilities.

Pickleball

h. Pickleball is a fun sport that combines elements of badminton, tennis, and table tennis. The sport can be played both indoors or outdoors on a badminton-sized court and a slightly modified tennis net.

i. Canterbury Area Pickleball (CAP) have approximately 30 members and operate out of a range of sites across Canterbury including Spires Academy, Barton Manor, Simon Langton Girls Grammar School, and Whitstable School. They also have sessions at Sandwich Technology School in Dover. As they are reliant on school facilities, they find it difficult to book one site consistently due to closures for exams and other school priorities.

j. Although the LTA are not the governing body for pickleball, they support their registered venues to offer this type of activity to bring new interest and diversity to venues. Pickleball complements tennis and is a great way to engage new and underrepresented communities LTA support consists of online resources and workforce CPD.

k. Opportunities to provide Canterbury Area Pickleball with secure access to pickleball courts should be explored to ensure they are not reliant on education sites. A partnership between CAP and an LTA registered Tennis Club could be beneficial for both clubs, providing secure access to courts for CAP and providing a more diverse opportunity for tennis club members.

Padel and Pickleball Recommendations
Prioritised Actions **Protect** • The council to protect the quantity and availability of padel facilities through planning policy once provided **Enhance** • Work with the LTA to support padel operators working with them to align with the LTA Padel Strategy. • Work with facility providers to consider developing pickleball activities. • Work with tennis clubs to provide pickleball provision and support Canterbury Area Pickleball in securing regular use of the courts **Provide** • Investigate suitable sites for the development of council owned / managed padel provision in the north of the district • Regularly review padel facility needs with the LTA in relation to changes in accessible supply, participation trends and population growth. • Investigate opportunities to relocate Canterbury area Pickleball and form a partnership with an LTA registered club.

4.14 Watersports

a. There is a range of watersports provision in the Canterbury District as outlined in figure 4.21 below. The range of watersports activity available includes, sailing, paddleboarding, powerboating, and kayaking.

Figure 4.21 Watersports sites in the Canterbury District

Site	Postcode	Type of Provision
Canoe Wild	CT2 0DE	Canoe, kayak, paddleboard
Westbere Sailing Opportunities	CT2 0HA	Sailing (disability)
Herne Bay Sailing Club	CT6 6BA	Sailing, powerboating, paddleboard, kayak, open water swimming
Seasalter Sailing Club	CT5 4BW	Sailing
Whitstable Yacht Club	CT5 1BX	Sailing
Tankerton Bay Sailing Club	CT5 2BG	Sailing
Hampton Pier Yacht Club	CT6 8EP	Sailing, kayak, canoe, paddleboard, open water swimming
Oyster Coast Watersports	CT5 1AB	Powerboating

b. Five of the six sailing clubs are based along the north coastline of the district, with only Westbere Sailing Opportunities located away from the coastline, at Westbere Lake. Although the five sailing clubs are located within close proximity, the RYA state they provide a range of different opportunities and all clubs are currently thriving.

c. Hampton Pier Yacht Club, based between Whitstable and Herne Bay are not an RYA training centre, however have a strong relationship with Whitstable Yacht Club where they direct new members who are looking for introductory training. The RYA report that this relationship works well, with many of these new members then returning to Hampton Pier YC after receiving training. The club provide sailing activities most weekends from March until late October as well as providing opportunities for kayaking, canoeing, paddleboarding, and open water swimming.

d. Herne Bay Sailing Club, based on the coast in Herne Bay, are a registered RYA training centre with busy racing and social calendars as well as separate opportunities for cadets and new sailors. The club report having approximately 150 members and also provide deaf sailing days throughout the year to provide an inclusive offer. The club have grown recently and have plans to grow further by providing more training opportunities for their youth section. The club are in need of a new or improved slipway to support the activities provided by the club and report that their ancillary facilities are in poor condition.

e. Seasalter Sailing Club, in the Northwest of the district, focus on club racing and leisure sailing using dinghies and catamarans. The club have recently upgraded ancillary facilities, with a new balcony opening in 2026 and previously receiving funding from Sport England to upgrade their ancillary facilities and family area.

f. The RYA report that Whitstable Yacht Club are an active club within their local community and frequently engage with RYA initiatives. The club also engage with Kent Schools Sailing Association, who provide opportunities for school age children to take part in races and training. The club have a full-time paid member of staff who manages training, allowing them to provide extensive training opportunities alongside a range of RYA courses for juniors, adults, and advanced sailors.

g. Tankerton Bay Sailing Club are an RYA training centre and have seen significant growth in memberships over the last 5 years. Similar to Whitstable YC, Tankerton also support Kent Schools Sailing Association Activities and engage well with RYA initiatives.

h. Westbere Sailing Opportunities, the only sailing club not located on the seafront, are a disability sailing club that provide sailing opportunities for adults and children with all forms and levels of disability at Westmere Lake. The club report having approximately 340 members, of which 40 are youth members. They have a lease agreement with 4 years remaining at their facilities at Westbere Lake and have submitted a planning application for the development of a new clubhouse at the site as their existing facilities are poor quality.

i. Oyster Coast Watersports are an RYA training centre for powerboating, located in Whitstable. The club also offer RYA first aid courses as well as a range of online theory courses.

j. Canoe Wild offer a range of watersports activities in Fordwich and Grove Ferry. The club report that they have grown in the last 3 years and have plans to continue this growth in the near future. They have aspirations to make improvements to the Fordwich jetty.

Location of Watersports Facilities in Canterbury District

k. The provision of water sport facilities is Iconcentrated along the northern coastline, with five sailing clubs as well as Oyster Coast Watersports located between Seasalter and Herne Bay. There are also opportunities around the city centre, with Canoe Wild and Westbere Sailing Opportunities located within a 15 minute drive of the city centre.

Participation in Watersports

l. In terms of demand, the most recent Active Lives Survey findings indicate a slight increase in adult demand in the last year with participation in 2024/25 at 1.3% (598,500) of adults (16+) in England participating in watersports at least twice in the last 28 days, Participation in previous years was recorded at 2.2% (582,000) in 2023/24 and 2.3% (632,500) in 2022/23.

m. The RYA highlighted that Canterbury is a key location for recreational boating in the south east. With a growing trend of people travelling out of London to take part in recreational boating, the projected population growth in Canterbury, and significant summer tourism, the demand for watersports activities in Canterbury is likely to increase over the strategy period.

Whitstable Harbour Redevelopment

n. Canterbury City Council have proposed the redevelopment of Whitstable Harbour, enhancing its leisure and commercial opportunities whilst retaining the harbour as a key fishing and maritime industrial centre. Whitstable Yacht Club, a key provider of introductory RYA training and community sailing opportunities, are located within the area of the harbour which is proposed for redevelopment. Opportunities to improve the quality of facilities at the club should be explored to ensure the club can meet increased demand for facilities in the area which is likely to be generated through the redevelopment.

Watersports Recommendations
Prioritised Actions **Protect** • The council to protect the quantity and availability of watersports facilities through planning policy

Enhance

- Work with the RYA to support sailing and other watersports clubs in providing entry-level training opportunities and ensuring facilities are suitable for beginners and families.
- Explore opportunities to upgrade the ancillary facilities at sailing clubs along the coast due to the age of buildings.
- Work with clubs to upgrade the slipway at Herne Bay Sailing Club and the jetty at Canoe Wild Fordwich.
- Work with Whitstable Yacht Club to identify facilities enhancements as part of the Whitstable Harbour Redevelopment.

Provide

- Support Westbere Sailing Opportunities in developing new ancillary facilities, ensuring they are fully accessible to support their disability provision.

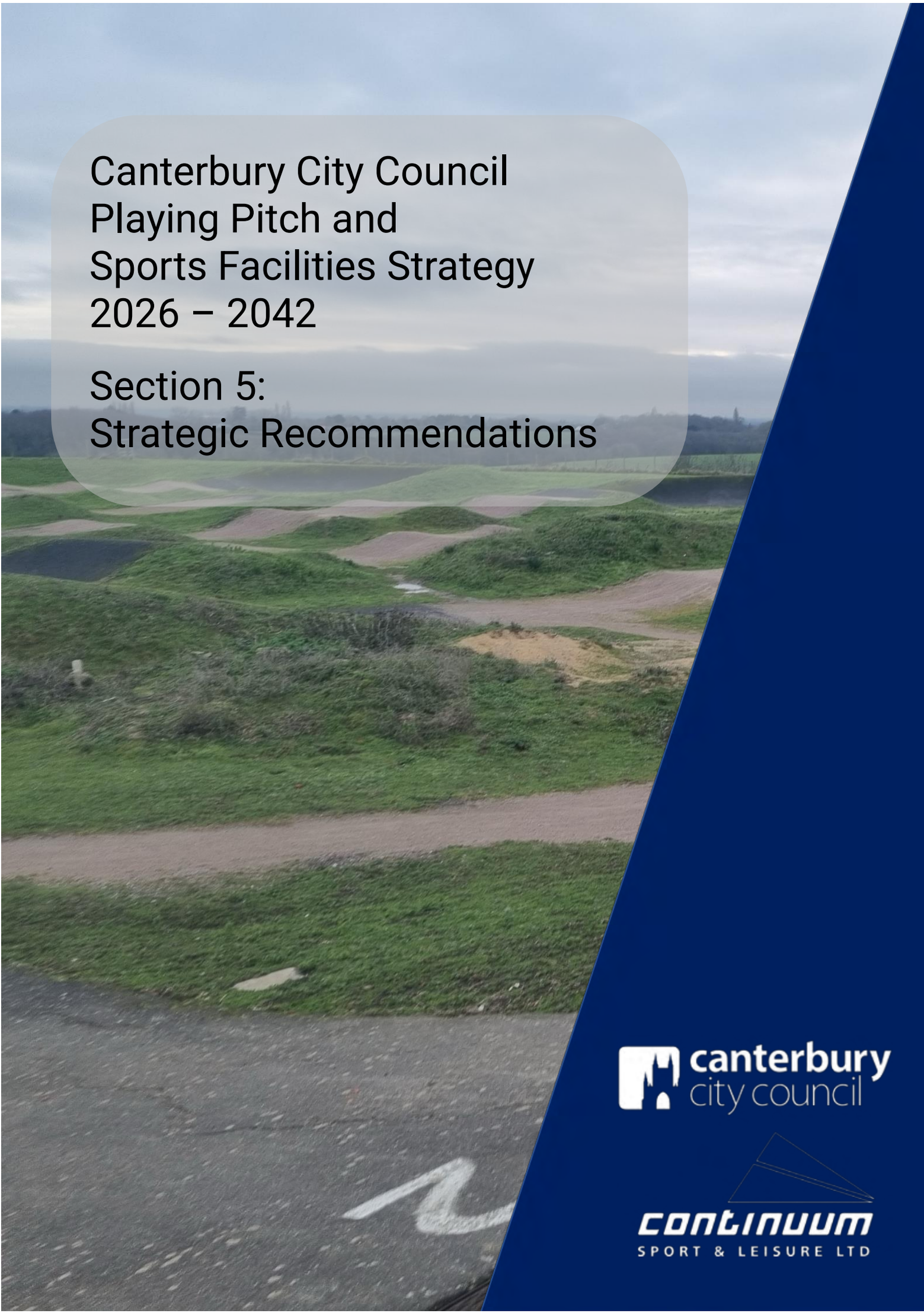
4.15 Sports Facilities Assessment Summary

a. The analysis, consultation and assessment work in this section has brought together a number of potential facility investment needs for the Council and its partners to meet both current needs for sport as well as future demand and growth. The needs within this section will help the Council in making some important and key decisions over the coming years to protect, enhance and provide sports facilities across the district.

b. The council will need to consider the future pool and sports hall provision to meet additional demand from population growth. The priority is to secure provision of sports halls on education sites through CUAs as the majority of community sports hall provision is currently unsecure. Specific and strategic sites to prioritise securing community use through CUAs are highlighted in section 4.2 and figure 6.3 as part of the overall strategy action plan. This alongside future considerations to the refurbishing of Bay Sports Arena and improved ancillary facilities at Simon Langton Girls Grammar School will ensure future demand for sports halls is met. For swimming pools, the pool at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys can be brought back into use to meet future demand by supporting the school to upgrade the plant room.

c. There are further opportunities to improve the provision of sports facilities in the district to support community clubs in meeting their current demand as well as meeting the future demand generated by the projected population growth. Opportunities such as development of dedicated gymnastics facilities to allow a club to move into a dedicated facility, upgrading ancillary facilities at bowls clubs, and improving the quality of netball courts to better support the local league will all support community clubs in continuing to provide opportunities for accessible sports and physical activity.

d. Section 5 of this strategy sets out a number of overarching policy recommendations aimed at facilitating and addressing the sports specific needs identified in this Strategy and Section 6 of this report sets out the priority projects arising out of this strategy for both playing pitches and sports facilities as well as the partners and stakeholders who are likely to be central to facilitating this change.



Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042

Section 5: Strategic Recommendations

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5. Strategic Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

a. This section of the Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy sets out a number of overarching strategic recommendations, endorsed by the Strategy Steering Group, aimed at ensuring the on-going provision of high-quality, accessible playing pitches and sport facilities that can meet the needs and demands of the district's current and future populations. The recommendations relate to the facility needs highlighted in both Section 3, the Playing Pitch Strategy and Section 4, the Sports Facilities Strategy.

5.2 Planning Policy

a. The need to protect and enhance the existing scale of facility provision for key facility types, pools, sports halls, artificial and natural turf playing pitches, gymnastics centres and health and fitness facilities, remains an important and material consideration as it was in the previous strategy in 2020.

b. Given the evidence presented, the principles established with respect to the protection of existing community sport and leisure recreation facility provision in the current Canterbury City Council Local Plan (adopted in 2017 for the period 2011 – 2031) need to be maintained. However, it is acknowledged that in light of this new strategy and evidence base, these will need to be amended for the emerging Local Plan 2026 – 2043 to reflect current national policy and good practice as discussed in this section.

c. These current planning policies are set out in full in Appendix F, together with policies set out in the emerging Canterbury City Council Local Plan. Public consultation on the draft Local Plan (Regulation 19) has taken place over mid-2026.

d. The adopted Canterbury City Local Plan includes Policy OS2 Playing Fields, which protects playing fields from development proposals which would result in the loss, in whole or part, of playing fields. Policy OS9 Protection of Existing Open Spaces also contributes to the protection of playing pitches and open spaces.

e. A separate development management policy 'Outdoor Space Provision' (Policy OS11) sets out minimum per capita standards for playing pitch space per 1,000 head of population.

f. The emerging Canterbury City Local Plan includes draft policy DS28 Publicly Accessible Open Space and Sports includes a local standard for outdoor sports provision in relation to proposals for new residential and mixed use developments. The emerging Canterbury Local Plan also has updated strategic policies with regard to both Town Centres and Community Facilities (DS9) and Active and Sustainable Travel (DS17).

g. As stated above, the existing Canterbury Local Plan Policy (OS11) includes per capita quantitative standards for the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities. The replacement draft policy (DS28) also includes these local standards. The 2026 NPPF references the use of local standards for guiding the development of playing pitches alongside the use of robust Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategies to inform decision making. Sport England advocate for all local authorities to develop and maintain up to date Playing Pitch Strategies to ensure the use of any local standards is supported by a robust, evidence-based strategic review of the local priorities.

h. Policy HC1 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning for healthy communities should be informed by an understanding of any existing deficits in the availability of community facilities and additional requirements expected over the plan

period arising from proposed development and wider changes in the local provision. It states plans should take into account both quantitative and qualitative aspects of provision, identified local health needs and opportunities to reduce inequalities through the availability of facilities.

i. Accordingly, this updated Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy for Canterbury is based on a detailed local assessment of the supply and demand for playing pitches and sports facilities and on the full adoption of this strategy, the Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy will be evidence to use in applying policies for all planning applications especially those which affect outdoor sports facilities and playing pitches, and the recommendations within this strategy are intended to guide future planning decisions and provides an updated approach that enhances and supports Local Plan Policy OS11 and the emerging Canterbury Local Plan Policies DS28, DS9, and DS17.

j. The Council should maintain a prioritised site-specific schedule of sports facility needs and opportunities approach within the Canterbury District categorised under the following headings.

PROTECT sports facilities from loss as a result of redevelopment.
ENHANCE existing facilities through improving their quality, accessibility and management.
PROVIDE new facilities that are fit for purpose to meet demands for participation now and in the future.

k. In this Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026-2042 it is therefore recommended that Canterbury City Council ensure that the local standards set in the emerging Canterbury Local Plan Policy DS28 are informed by the findings and recommendations of this Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy to reflect the ANOG national guidance.

l. The strategic recommendations of the Canterbury Strategy Steering Group for playing pitches and sports facilities are set out in the following paragraphs. The recommendations are based on the assessment of needs process (following national guidance) completed as part of this Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy, reported in this document and its appendices.

5.3 Protect

a. Canterbury City Council has undertaken a Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy and assessed existing and future needs for all provision across the district. The firm conclusion is that there is an identified need to retain all the existing overall quantity of sports facilities within the district whilst recognising that the distribution of facilities may change (for example, through closure of sites of poor quality or of limited value for community sport replaced by new provision). This headline finding and recommendation is also applicable when examined at the LPA level and in accordance with Policy HC1 of the NPPF and the emerging Canterbury Local Plan.

b. It is therefore recommended that, as proposed, the new Local Plan should continue to maintain a policy framework to resist granting planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss, or would prejudice the use, of a sports facility unless either the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location *OR* the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use in line with NPPF policy HC7.

c. Should a current or newly created sports facility exist in the Canterbury District that is not

mentioned in this Strategy and appendices, its omission is not an endorsement by the Council, Sport England or the relevant national governing body of that facility or site for disposal.

d. It is also recommended that the Council continue to work with strategic sports partners (Sport England, the National Governing Bodies of sport and, in particular the county council and education providers) to seek agreements to secure access for community sport at those sites in the district where there is existing access that is currently unsecured (i.e. by means of Community Use Agreements).

e. Where sports facility sites are in the Council's ownership, the policy of securing community access through asset transfer to community clubs and/or sports associations should continue to be applied, provided that:
   - The facilities are assessed as 'good' quality by the relevant governing bodies of sport prior to transfer, and
   - The transferee is able to demonstrate it has the capacity and resources to maintain the facilities to good quality (and this forms part of any service level agreement). It is recommended that the terms of future transfer agreements include incentives for the clubs to deliver sports development outcomes (e.g. grow numbers of teams, volunteering, and sporting opportunities for under-represented groups).

f. It is recommended the Council continue to seek to influence the design and specification of any new education sports facilities and extensions to existing facilities to ensure their suitability for both education and community use (i.e., provided to Sport England and/or the relevant sport's national governing body design dimensions and standards as opposed to education dimensions and standards).

g. It is further recommended that the Council negotiates secure affordable community access as a condition of planning consent (via formal Community Use Agreements) for applications from education providers of sports facilities relating to:
   - Extending hours of permitted use
   - Extensions to existing sports facilities
   - Provision of new or enhanced sports facilities

5.4 Enhance and Provide

a. It is recommended that the Local Planning Authority continue to seek the advice of appropriate sport national governing bodies whenever pre-planning proposals or planning applications involving new sports facilities are brought forward or new S106 Agreements for sports facilities are drafted. This is to ensure that the design, layout and management plans maximise the community value of the new facilities and that any maintenance plans meet any relevant Performance Quality Standards.

b. For appropriate types of development, provision of or contributions towards the delivery of relevant sport and recreation infrastructure projects (including priority projects) should be secured through the appropriate mechanism (CIL/S106). It may also be appropriate in certain circumstances to seek contributions to the maintenance of new facilities or provisions.

c. The priority projects are those set out in the Action Plan current at the time the planning application is submitted. The initial Action Plan is in Section 6 of this document. The priority projects include sites in private ownership and on school sites outside the council's control. Accordingly, the lead party responsible for progressing the actions is identified in the Action Plan along with supporting agencies.

d. For larger scale development proposals, on-site provision of new sport and recreation facilities may be sought. On-site provisions are more likely to be promoted, rather than financial contributions, where a site would be able to accommodate an appropriate facility and / or where there are no or limited existing sports provisions in the vicinity based on identified needs. Early engagement with the Council is encouraged to ensure on-site provision, where required, is appropriately incorporated into larger scale developments. This process will be guided by the needs identified in the Strategy. On-site provision will typically be secured via a legal agreement, and contributions may be sought (under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or through the Community Infrastructure Levy mechanism) towards its delivery and maintenance.

e. The latest version of Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator (SFC) and/or Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) planning tools could be used, as appropriate, to scope the appropriate scale and approximate costs of new provision and to provide the starting point for project specific negotiations of S106 and/or CIL developer contributions.

f. It is recommended that in the case of all planning applications with implications for sports facilities (both indoor and outdoor), the latest version of Sport England's Model Planning Conditions should be used as appropriate. Current model conditions cover the following:
   I. Protection/New Provision of Sport & Recreation Facilities;
   II. Compensatory Provision, Continuity of Use and Phasing of Development;
   III. Built Design and Layout;
   IV. Playing Field Provision;
   V. Operational Matters.

g. It is recommended that the Council's Strategy Steering Group, comprising of membership from Sport England and the NGBs, should review and update the Action Plan and priority projects annually during the strategy period. In line with Sport England guidance a full review of the strategy will be required after 5 years. If no annual monitoring takes place a full review is required after 3 years.



Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042

Section 6: Action Plan

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6. Action Plan

6.1 Introduction

a. This section of the strategy provides an outline action plan that details the leading priority projects and facility needs for sport and recreation as set out in the previous sections.

b. Figure 6.3 highlights the education sites which have been identified as strategically important to secure Community Use Agreements at. The rationale for securing use of these sites is highlighted through Section 3 and Section 4 as well as Appendix A – D.

c. Figure 6.4 identifies those sites that are not identified in figures 6.1 and 6.2 (for enhancement or new provision) but require protection for community sport through the planning system. The omission of any playing pitch site from this strategy is not an endorsement by the council, Sport England or the relevant national governing body of that sport of its disposal.

d. Figure 6.5 highlights the lapsed or disused sites that have been identified for protection or development to meet the current and future demand for community sport.

e. The action plan is a guide to how facilities might be developed, pending funding confirmation and planning permission where necessary, where and whom they might be developed by to meet identified demand, exploit opportunities that may arise and provide sustainable management and operational models often through engaging with either voluntary or commercial partners. A number of project proposals within the strategy are subject to design and cost analysis and for some projects feasibility testing and options appraisals. There is an expectation that all new sports buildings meet Canterbury City Council's policy on Carbon Net zero and that for any extension to existing facilities, applicants will seek to create environmentally sustainable extensions.

f. Each potential project must be evaluated considering the current situation, as the strategy and action plan sets out the position at the time of writing; so, factors on both the demand and supply side may have changed as well as the cost and viability of the project at the point when an individual project is being considered within the lifespan of this strategy. The action plan should be reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis by the Strategy Steering Group to ensure these factors are taken into consideration.

g. The immediate priority for the council, as with many local authorities at the time of this strategy, is to protect and continue to maintain the current level of facilities to ensure no loss of provision. The current pressures on public sector budgets alongside increasing operational costs and capital costs (for maintenance and new facilities) means the council must plan prudently for future needs.

h. The updates to the Action Plan should in turn inform periodic updates of the council's priorities for investment and future decision on funding either through capital grant and / or financing and budgetary planning.

Figure 6.1 Priorities and actions for Playing Pitches				
Site	**Highest 30% IMD**	**Timescale**	**Facility type**	**Priority actions**
Brickfield Recreation Ground	Yes	Short	Football	Improve playing pitch quality by carrying out PitchPower assessments and implement recommendations where possible.
				Assess options for provision of ancillary facilities for community users of the site.
Canterbury Cricket Club (Polo Farm Sports Club)	No	Medium	Cricket	Explore the feasibility of installing an NTP on site.
Canterbury Rugby Club (Merton Park local plan allocation)	No	Medium	Rugby	Support improved drainage and maintenance of the grass pitches.
		Short	Rugby	Reinstate the second junior pitch at Canterbury RFC to accommodate additional junior training and matches.
Chartham Sports Club	No	Short	Football	Implement PitchPower assessment recommendations to improve pitch quality.
Cherry Orchard Playing Field	No	Medium	Cricket	Reinstate the lapsed fine turf cricket pitch for community use.
		Long	Football, Cricket	Upgrade ancillary facilities to enable women and girls football and cricket.
Chestfield Cricket Club	Yes	Short	Cricket	Improve and modernise the ancillary facilities, including replacing or repairing the roof.
			Cricket	Explore the feasibility of installing an NTP on site.
			Cricket	Support Chestfeld CC with ongoing plans to provide them with a second pitch through The Brooklands Farm Developments.
Herne Bay High School	No	Short	Football	Support the development plans to resurface the existing sand based AGP to a 3G AGP.
Howe Park	Yes	Short	Football	Secure handover of the 3G AGP and grass pitches to Howe Park Community Trust
Kenfield Cricket Club	No	Short	Cricket	Reinstate and secure the fine turf pitch for community cricket.
Patrixbourne Road Recreation Ground	No	Short	Football	Improve playing pitch quality by carrying out PitchPower assessments and implement recommendations where possible.
Polo Farm Sports Club	No	Short	Hockey	Resurface the SD AGP which is currently reaching end of life
Radfall Recreation Ground	Yes	Short	Football, Cricket	Implement PitchPower assessment recommendations to improve pitch quality on some of their pitches.
		Medium	Football, Cricket	Replace the ancillary facilities as they are currently not fit for purpose.
		Short	Football, Cricket	Complete the process of renewing the license.
				Improve the ancillary facilities to address the rotting floor which needs replacing.

Rough Common Playing Field	Yes	Short	Cricket	Improve the condition of the outfield area to at least standard quality to enable cricket to continue to be played on the site.
Simon Langton Girls Grammar School	Yes	Short	Football	Final viability review of the development of a new 11v11 3G AGP to meet current shortfall
		Medium	Football, additional sports	Refurbish the school ancillary facilities to support ongoing use of the football pitches and prepare for increased usage should a 3G AGP be developed.
St Augustine's	No	Short	Football	Implement PitchPower assessment recommendations to improve pitch quality.
St Edmunds School	Yes	Short	Hockey	Assess the surface and shock pad of the sand dressed AGP to plan for future resurfacing.
St Lawrence and Highland Court Cricket Club	Yes	Medium	Cricket	Explore the feasibility of installing an NTP on site.
Street End Cricket Club	No	Short	Cricket	Upgrade and modernise the ancillary facilities on site.
Sturry FC	No	Short	Football	Improve playing pitch quality by carrying out PitchPower assessments and implement recommendations where possible.
Stodmarsh Playing Fields	No	Short	Football, Rugby	Improve playing pitch quality by carrying out PitchPower assessments and implement recommendations where possible.
Swalecliffe Recreation Ground	No	Long	Football	Consider options to upgrade or replace the ancillary facilities on site as they are at end of life.
Thannington Recreation Ground	Yes	Short	Football	Complete works to bring back two playing pitches back into supply.
The Belmont Stadium	Yes	Medium	Football	Upgrade the changing facilities to ensure they are suitable for women and girls' teams or disability teams.
The Bear Trap	No	Short	Football	Improve playing pitch quality by carrying out PitchPower assessments and implement recommendations where possible.
				Assess options for the development of ancillary facilities to support the club.
The Saxon Fields	Yes	Medium	Cricket	Support the development of a new cricket square and determine the number of wickets being installed at this site.
The Whitstable School	Yes	Short	Football, Rugby	Undertake and assess the viability of resurfacing the 3G AGP with a WRC shock pad to support training and match demand for football and rugby.
Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground	Yes	Short	Cricket	Improve the condition of the pitch to at least standard quality to enable cricket to continue to be played on the site.

University of Kent	Yes	Short	Rugby	Look to secure a minimum of 8 hours of rugby usage on the 3G AGP if the current football provision can be placed on an alternative site.
		Short	Football, Rugby	Secure community use of the site through a CUA.
Whitstable Cricket Club	Yes	Long	Cricket	Renew the lease with Whitstable CC.
				Upgrade the changing and shower facilities to cater for all their teams.
Whitstable Rugby Club	Yes	Medium	Rugby, Padel	Explore the feasibility of extending the ancillary facilties as part of a joint venture with Smash Padel.
		Short	Rugby	Support Whitstable RFC to improve the drainage and quality of their playing pitches to accommodate additional match demand.
Sites to be identified	N/A	Medium	Football	Develop an additional 3G AGP to meet the future shortfall of an additional 1 full size 3G AGP.
Sites to be identified	N/A	Medium	All playing pitch sports	Develop additional playing pitches as required to meet current and future demand over the course of the strategy period.
Hockey pitches	N/A	N/A	Hockey	Protect SD AGPs from conversion to 3G AGP unless otherwise stated within this PPS
District-wide	N/A	N/A	All playing pitch sports	Work with clubs, community organisations, and facility providers to deliver initiatives to increase disability and econimcally inactive participation.

Figure 6.2 Priorities and actions for Sports Facilities				
Site	**Highest 30% IMD**	**Timescale**	**Facility type**	**Priority actions**
Barham Bowls Club	No	Medium	Bowls	Support the club to resurface the green and refurbish ancillary facilities
Bay Sports Arena	No	Medium	Sports Halls	Explore feasibility of extending availability of the sports hall in the peak period
		Medium	Sports Halls	Consider future planning for the refurbishment of the sports hall given the age of the facility
Birley's Playing Field	No	Medium	Netball	Upgrade the quality of the netball courts and explore the feasibility of developing sports lighting to support Canterbury & District Netball League.
Broomfield BMX Club	No	Short	Cycling	Support the club to improve the ancillary facilities on site as well explore the feasibility of installing sports lighting around the track.
		Medium	Cycling	Improve the quality of the existing BMX track.
		Long	Cycling	Regularly review the quality of surface at Broomfield BMX to plan for future resurfacing.
Canoe Wild Fordwich	No	Medium	Water sports	Upgrade the jetty at the Fordwich site
Canterbury Croquet Club	No	Medium	Croquet	Support the club to refurbish ancillary facilities and installing sports lighting.
Canterbury Academy	No	Short	Athletics	Undertake UKA TrackMark assessment of the track once resurfacing is complete.
		Long	Athletics	Support Invicta East Kent Athletics Club in refurbishing their ancillary facilities
Herne Bay Sailing Club	No	Medium	Water sports	Upgrade the Slipway
Kings School	No	Medium	Swimming	Refurbish swimming pool to increase capacity and usage in the peak period
Polo Farm Sports Club	No	Short	Padel	Support the development of two padel courts which have been granted planning permission.
Simon Langton Girls Grammar School	Yes	Medium	Sports Halls	Support the school in redeveloping their ancillary facilities
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	No	Medium	Swimming	Refurbish the plant room to bring the swimming pool back into community use.
Sturry Road Community Park	Yes	Short	Cycling	Support improved maintenance and upgrading of the skatepark
Thannington (Wincheap) Skate Park	Yes	Short	Cycling	Support improved maintenance and upgrading of the skatepark
Westbere Sailing	No	Long	Water sports	Support Westbere Sailing Opportunities in developing new ancillary facilities, ensuring they are fully accessible to support their disability provision.
Whitstable Pools and Fitness	No	Medium	Swimming	Refurbish swimming pool area to increase capacity
Whitstable Sports Centre	Yes	Medium	Sports Halls	Explore feasibility of extending availability of the sports hall in the peak period.
				Upgrade ancillary facilities.
Whitstable Tennis Club	No	Short	Tennis	Renew the lease agreement for the St Annes Tennis Courts.
		Long	Tennis	Support Whitstable LTC to refurbish their ancillary facilities and resurface courts

Whitstable Yacht Club	No	Short	Water sports	Work with Whitstable Yacht Club to identify facilities enhancements as part of the Whitstable Harbour Redevelopment
Education sites	Barton Court Grammar School – Yes Junior Kings School – No St Edmunds School - Yes	Short	Tennis	Support the LTA and education sites in opening up regular community access to tennis courts at Junior Kings School, St Edmunds School, and Barton Court Grammar School to meet future demand in the city centre.
	N/A	Short	Sports Halls	Secure community use of sports halls through CUAs
Sites to be identified	N/A	Medium	Padel	Consider developing council operated, community padel sites in the coastal areas located in the north of the district.
Sites to be identified	N/A	Long	Tennis	Work with Pickleball UK and the LTA to identify tennis court sites for the development of pickleball courts and provide Canterbury Area Pickleball with regular, secure use.
Sites to be identified	N/A	Medium	Table Tennis	Explore suitable options to develop dedicated table tennis facilities to relocate and support the growth of clubs.
Sites to be identified	N/A	Long	Golf	Explore opportunities for entry level golf provision across the Canterbury District.
District-wide	N/A	N/A	All sports	Work with clubs, community organisations, and facility providers to deliver initiatives to increase disability and econimcally inactive participation.

Figure. 6.3 Education sites to explore securing CUA at	
Site	**Sport (s)**
Barton Court Grammar School	Tennis
Barton Manor Junior School	Football
Birley's Playing Fields	Netball
Canterbury Academy Campus	Football, Sports Hall
Canterbury College	Sports Hall
Christ Church Sports Centre	Sports Hall
Herne Bay High School	Football
Herne CE Junior School	Sports Hall
Junior Kings School	Tennis
Kings School Sports Centre	Swimming, Sports Hall
Simon Langton Girls Grammar School	Football
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	Football, Swimming
Spires Academy	Sports Hall
Stodmarsh Playing Fields	Football
St Anselms Catholic School	Sports Hall
St Edmunds School	Tennis

Figure. 6.3 Education sites to explore securing CUA at	
Site	**Sport (s)**
University of Kent Sports Pavilion	Rugby, Football

Figure. 6.4 Other playing pitch sites for protection	
Site	**Sport (s)**
Barton Manor School	Football
Bekesbourne Recreation Ground	Football
Blean Primary School	Football
Canterbury Academy Campus	Football
Chartham Parish Council Village Hall	Football
Chartham Primary School	Football
Herne Bay Memorial Park	Football
Herne Bay Sports Hub	Cricket, Football, Hockey
Herne CE Junior School	Football
Kent College (Canterbury)	Cricket
Littlebourne Recreation Ground	Cricket, Football
Moat Lane Playing Fields	Cricket
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	Cricket, Football
Spires Academy (new site)	Football
St Anselms RC School	Football
St Edmunds Cricket Pitch	Cricket
Swalecliffe Recreation Ground	Football
Seaview Caravan Park (Tankerton FC)	Football
Victoria Recreation Ground	Cricket, Football

Figure. 6.5 Lapsed sites for protection or reinstatement	
Site	**Action**
Cherry Orchard Playing Fields	Reinstate lapsed cricket pitch
Church Street Playing Fields	Protect disused pitches as an opportunity to meet future demand
Westmead's Recreation Ground	Reinstate football pitches to meet local current and future demand
Kenfield CC	Protect site and secure use to meet current demand



Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042

Section 7: Summary

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7. Summary

a. Canterbury City Council through their Corporate Plan outlines a commitment to improving public health and working to make the community more liveable. This strategy highlights the vital contribution playing pitches and sports facilities make to the local economy and quality of life for all residents, communities, and visitors, and will help the council in making some important decisions over the coming years to protect, enhance and provide sports facilities across the district.

b. Throughout the development of this strategy the council and key partners involved in the strategy steering group have outlined their commitment to protecting and improving facilities for sport and physical activity in the district in order to increase physical activity levels and the health and wellbeing of the local population.

c. Over the course of this study, clubs were consulted through online surveys to gather their views on the facilities available within Canterbury and their future needs. 63% of clubs reported that they have grown in the previous 3 years, which is supported by the growth of 112 teams for playing pitch sports alone, and 90% of all clubs stated that they have plans to grow in the future. This highlights the increasing demand for community accessible sports facilities. 82% of clubs stated that there is a need to change their main sports facilities to sustain and grow the club which points to a need for the development of new and improvement of existing facilities. Projects to support the improvement of facilities and opportunities to develop new facilities have been identified throughout this study.

d. The Playing Pitch Strategy highlighted that despite the increase in artificial 3G provision in the area for football, there is still a shortfall of 2 3G AGPs and a significant amount of community football training taking place on SD AGPs, which are not the preferred surface for football. The loss in grass pitch provision for both football and cricket, combined with the significant growth of teams for these two sports in the district, of 94 teams in total, has put an increased pressure on facilities and highlights a clear need for investment in more playing pitches.

e. A number of playing pitch priorities were identified for the council to consider. For cricket there is a need to provide at least eight new pitches as well as upgrade NTPs and improve the quality of ancillary facilities to meet current and future demand. For football there is a need to provide a minimum of 2.5 more artificial grass pitches in addition to the ongoing delivery of the new 3G AGP at Herne Bay High School, as well as improve pitch quality and secure community use on key education sites.

f. The key priority for hockey is to protect the existing supply of community hockey pitches to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet future demand. Exploring the feasibility of extending the sports lighting hours at Herne Bay Sports Hub will provide further capacity to support growth of Herne Bay HC.

e. The Sports Facilities Strategy identified the evident need to secure the existing sports hall supply at education sites and consider the future refurbishment of the sports hall at Bay Sports Arena due to the age of the facility and upgrade of the ancillary facilities at Simon Langton Girls Grammar School. For swimming, the pool at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys can be brought back into use to meet future demand by supporting the school to upgrade the plant room.

g. As well as the potential investment into playing pitches and sport facilities identified, the overarching need for the council is to protect and retain the overall quantity, maintain the

quality and secure availability for the wider community to the existing supply of sports facilities. Given that many playing pitches and sports facilities in Canterbury are located on education sites, which require community use agreements to protect future usage and extend community access, the council's own sites and community clubs sites take on added importance and their continued protection is of utmost importance.

h. Alongside direct provision, and as the local planning authority, the council also plays an important enabling role in developing better quality facilities by engaging and empowering community organisations through the asset transfer process to potentially independently manage and operate facilities funded through partnerships with Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport as well as other funding organisations.

i. Given the on-going financial challenges for the public sector, it will not be possible to deliver or support all of the investment needs identified within this strategy, but it provides a clear outline of the priorities for sports facilities in Canterbury that may attract investment from key partners and other future sources.

j. As local authorities continue to manage difficult budget decisions and the challenges of providing both statutory and critical non-statutory services, the important role physical activity has in positively impacting the health of the nation is even more evident. Addressing the priorities highlighted within this strategy will be a central part of the council's on-going investment into the future health and wellbeing of Canterbury residents. This will be in the form of both protecting the current sports facilities and playing pitches as well as investing in improved and new facilities where the opportunities arise. This important strategy provides the evidence base and priority actions needed to achieve this and following its formal adoption by the council, should be updated on at least an annual basis.



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Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch Strategy 2026 Appendix A Assessment of Needs Report Cricket

Appendix A: Cricket - Assessment of Needs (Stages B and C)

Introduction

The findings of the assessment of needs for cricket facilities in the Canterbury District are summarised in this appendix to the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). Affiliated cricket clubs in Canterbury playing their home fixtures in the area have contributed to this assessment either by submitting an online club survey and/or through in person consultation during site visits. The number of clubs that responded to consultation represents 97% of all teams playing cricket in the district.

The last playing pitch assessment carried out in 2020 recorded 14 fine turf squares available for community use across 14 sites that were used by community clubs. In 2026, there has been a decrease of 2 fine turf pitches, following the loss of fine turf squares at Cherry Orchard Playing Field and Kenfield Cricket Ground. There has however been new NTPs developed at Herne Bay Sports Hub (only suitable for junior cricket), Cherry Orchard Playing Fields, and Victoria Recreation Ground.

The number of clubs in the area has decreased by 1 since the last strategy, however the number of teams has grown by 20 teams in total. The most significant areas of growth are in senior women and youth girls' teams with an additional 7 women's teams and 8 girls' teams. The last strategy only recorded 2 female teams in the area, so this is a significant and very positive increase in women's and girls' teams, highlighting the increasing demand for female cricket opportunities in the area.

The decrease in fine turf pitches available for community use and significant growth in demand for pitches in the area, particularly in women and girls cricket, has resulted in no spare capacity in the peak period for future growth and many sites being played over their capacity. Considering the growth plans of clubs in the area and future demand based on both the consultation findings and projected population growth, there is a significant need for improved quality cricket pitches in Canterbury and the need for potential development of additional pitches to meet both current and future demand.

1. Cricket supply (Step 1)

The findings of the assessment of supply of cricket facilities in Canterbury are summarised in this section and detailed by site, both for fine turf pitches and for non-turf artificial grass pitches (NTPs). The supply side information is generated through standard facility audits based on the visual assessment, grading, and playing capacity guidance (as set out by Sport England and the ECB in the national guidance for the development of playing pitch needs assessments) supported by consultation with the Council, Kent Cricket, and user clubs.

1.1 Cricket pitches in Canterbury District

A total of 12 fine turf pitches in the Canterbury district are identified as available for community cricket in 2026, on 10 playing pitch sites. There are two standalone NTP sites with no fine turf square (Victoria Recreation Ground and Cherry Orchard Playing Field).

There are 5 additional fine turf pitches on sites which are not available for regular community use, predominately due to the amount of colleges/ school use. These are all education sites; Kent College – Whitstable Road Site (1), Moat Lane Playing Fields (1), Simon Langton Grammer School for Boys (1) and St Edmunds Cricket Pitch (2).

The table below (figure 1.1) outlines the supply, condition, ancillary facilities, and demand for each site available for community use in the district. The RAG rating highlights the supply/demand balance of each pitch, with **RED** indicating pitches used at more than capacity, **AMBER** indicating pitches which are used at capacity, and **GREEN** indicating pitches with surplus capacity.

Figure 1.1: Cricket sites in the Canterbury District

Site Name	Postcode	Access Security and Ownership	Pitches / wickets	NTP	NT Nets	Pavilion / Changing Rooms	Pitch & Outfield Rating	Pavilion Rating	Fine Turf Capacity (MES pa)	Fine Turf Use (MES pa)	Peak Use (% of cap)	RAG
CHERRY ORCHARD PLAYING FIELD	CT6 7HD	Secured – Canterbury City Council	n/a	1 - Good	n/a	Standard changing facilities available for matches.	O-Standard	Standard	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
CHESTFIELD CRICKET CLUB	CT5 3LX	Secured – Club freehold	1 (14)	n/a	3 - Good	Clubhouse with small kitchen, bar and community space. External facility for home changing room with showers. Away changing has 2 showers with toilets. Main building roof has asbestos and needs replacing.	P-Good O-Good	Poor	70	88	126%	
HERNE BAY SPORTS HUB	CT6 5DN	Secured – Club leasehold - 96 years remaining	1 (7)	1- Good (Junior use only)	n/a	None directly by pitch however can use multiuse facilities in Herne Bay Sports Hub.	P-Standard O-Standard	Good	21	21	100%	
LITTLEBOURNE RECREATION GROUND	CT3 1ST	Secured – Littlebourne Parish Council	1 (6)	1- Not ECB compliant 25m boundary	n/a	2x basic changing facilities. Girls use the umpires room to change if needed. 3 sets of showers for each changing room.	P-Standard O-Standard	Standard	18	28	156%	
POLO FARM SPORTS CLUB	CT3 4AF	Secured – Club freehold	2 (18,17)	n/a	10 - Good (2 NT and 8 grass)	Clubhouse with bar and kitchen. 8 changing rooms of different sizes, easily accessible.	P-Good O-Standard	Standard	175	167	95%	
RADFALL RECREATION GROUND	CT5 3LR	Secured – Canterbury City Council	1 (8)	n/a	n/a	Building is wooden construction, external single toilet. Floor is rotting and building needs replacement.	P-Good O-Good	Poor	40	48	120%	

Site Name	Postcode	Access Security and Ownership	Pitches / wickets	NTP	NT Nets	Pavilion / Changing Rooms	Pitch & Outfield Rating	Pavilion Rating	Fine Turf Capacity (MES pa)	Fine Turf Use (MES pa)	Peak Use (% of cap)	RAG
ROUGH COMMON PLAYING FIELD	CT2 9BS	Secured – Harbledown and Rough Common Parish Council	1 (10)	n/a	n/a	Changing rooms large and in standard condition.	P-Standard O-Poor	Standard	30	26	87%	
ST LAWRENCE AND HIGHLAND COURT CRICKET CLUB	CT4 5BE	Secured – Club leasehold – 25 years remaining	2 (15, 18)	n/a	3 - Good	Facilities are in good condition but small. Increased space and toilet provision needed	P-Good O-Good	Standard	165	218	132%	
STREET END CRICKET CLUB	CT4 5NP	Secured – Club leasehold – 15 years remaining	1 (8)	1 - Poor	2 - Good	2 team changing rooms with toilets and small kitchen in need of updating.	P-Standard O-Standard	Poor	24	30	125%	
TYLER HILL MEMORIAL HALL AND RECREATION GROUND	CT2 9NJ	Secured – Trust ownership.	1 (5)	n/a	n/a	Use facilities in the village hall however no shower facilities.	P-Poor O-Poor	Poor	0	20	N/A	
VICTORIA RECREATION GROUND	CT2 8PY	Secured – Canterbury City Council	n/a	1 - Good	n/a	Not used for NTP	O-Standard	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
WHITSTABLE CRICKET CLUB	CT5 1QJ	Secured – Club leasehold – 10 years remaining	1 (11)	1 - Poor (10 yrs old)	1 - Standard	2 small changing rooms with 3 shared showers. 1 portacabin changing room for umpires but no toilet. No provision for women's teams. Changing facilities in need updating.	P-Standard O-Poor	Standard	33	40	121%	

1.2 Junior Pitches

In general, the clubs with junior sections set aside one strip on the main square for junior matches requiring shorter dimensions and/or use of the non-turf pitches where these are available on their grounds. At most sites, Kwik Cricket for younger children is usually played on temporary pitches set up on a mown strip in the outfield (or several strips around the outfield in the event of Kwik Cricket tournaments and festivals). Most sites with NTP wickets have different markings for each age group to allow for regulation bowling lengths.

Across the Canterbury District, 17 grass wickets on 4 sites are specifically set aside for junior cricket either due to shorter boundaries or to protect wickets from overplay.

1.3 Lapsed Sites

There are three lapsed cricket sites in Canterbury, Bishopsbourne Recreation Ground, Kenfield Cricket Ground, and Cherry Orchard Playing Fields. Bishopsbourne Recreation Ground is no longer used as a cricket pitch, and the last reported community use on this site was from 2021. The pitch at Kenfield Cricket Ground has occasional cricket use (2x a year) and is considered as an unsecure site due to it being privately owned. Kenfield CC previously held fixtures at this site however they are no longer an active club. Cherry Orchard Playing Field has an NTP on site which was installed in 2026 and is to be used for club activity. The fine turf square on this site is not currently in use but has been identified as a site to be brought back into use in future if needed.

1.4 Non-Turf Pitches (NTPs)

In the younger age groups (U10 to U13), some hardball match play takes place on non-turf pitches (NTPs). NTPs are also used for training and adult play including most short format friendly games between non-traditional single team clubs without a secured home ground.

Excluding the NTP at Victoria Recreation Ground, which is for informal use only, there are 5 NTPs across Canterbury. 2 is in good condition allowing up to 60 match equivalent sessions (MES) for adults, 2 are rated as poor quality and the one at Littlebourne Recreation Ground is considered to not be ECB compliant due to the length of the boundary, however some junior training and matches still takes place on the site.

1.5 Non-Turf Practice Nets

The quality of non-turf practice nets which are available at 5 sites in Canterbury are predominantly of good quality (8 out of 11 nets). The nets at Whitstable and Street End Cricket Club are not ECB compliant and as such have been downgraded in quality level, with Whitstable deemed to be standard and Street End poor. It's important to note that Polo Farm Sports Club also has 8 grass lanes which are of good quality. Clubs without non-turf net systems rely on mobile net cages for practice on NTP wickets or on one of the fine turf strips.

Figure 1.2 – Non-turf permanent net systems: locations and quality

Location	Ownership	No. of Lanes	Quality
Chestfield Cricket Club	Club Freehold	3	Good
Polo Farm Sport Club	Club Freehold	2	Good
St Lawrence & Highland Court Cricket Club	Club Leasehold	3	Good
Street End Cricket Club	Club Leasehold	2	Poor
Whitstable Cricket Club	Club Leasehold	1	Standard
	Total	**11**	

1.6 Indoor Cricket Competitions and Indoor Practice Nets

Polo Farm Sports Club has a large indoor sports hall that can house up to 10 indoor cricket nets and is used by South Canterbury CC and Whitstable CC. Kent College also offer indoor cricket nets and are used by Whitstable CC. There are also indoor cricket facilities at the Ames-Levett Indoor School (The Spitfire Ground), which has 5 cricket lanes, however this has limited availability, as this is the winter training base for Kent County Cricket professional staff. The site is occasionally used by Herne Bay CC and St Margarets Cosmopolitan CC, based in Dover.

The majority of clubs report training on their main sites in practice nets or on the square with portable provision, rather than at indoor halls.

Indoor sports hall space is in high demand across the area as the main constraint on cricket hires is the competing demand from sports hall team sports and badminton. These are all year-round activities whereas demand for indoor cricket nets is generally limited to peak evening or weekend slots from January to March and therefore is often disruptive to the core programme for indoor facilities. Maintaining facilities for indoor cricket is also demanding for facility operators due to ball striking and often heavier impact on the facilities.

1.7 Facilities for Non-Traditional Forms of Cricket

Kent Cricket is working alongside the ECB towards the aim of inspiring a new generation to say that ‘Cricket is a game for me’, with one of their aspirations by 2028 being to become the most inclusive team sport.

Non-traditional facilities range from non-turf pitches (NTPs) for organised cup and league 20-over matches and 'Last Man Stands' (games of approximately 120 minutes for teams of 8 players played in public parks) down to hard-court Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) for informal games of 'Cage Cricket' using a softball or a tapeball (a tennis ball wrapped in tape). There are no ‘Last Man Stands’ leagues in Canterbury, with the nearest activity in Maidstone.

Two new NTPs have been installed in Canterbury. One at Cherry Orchard Playing Fields, on a previous fine turf square that is no longer used but has been identified to be brought back into use if needed. The other new NTP at Victoria Recreation Ground, replaces an old NTP which had deteriorated to a poor condition beyond use. The new NTP has been identified for informal use only and has been well used by the community since installation.

1.8 Ownership and Security of Access

Cricket pitches in Canterbury fall into one of four categories of site ownership where community access is considered to be ‘secured’:

- **Club / community organisation owned -** The most secure type of provision is cricket grounds where the home club or a community sports association or trust owns the freehold or has a long lease. Chestfield Cricket Club, Polo Farm Sports Club, Herne Bay Sports Hub and St Lawerence and Highland Court Cricket Club are either club owned or have a long lease (over 25 years), ensuring their facilities are secure for the long-term future of the club.
- **Council or Parish Council owned and managed –** Grounds owned by the Council are considered to be secured for community use and are hired out to clubs and teams either on a match-by-match pre-booked letting basis or under terms of a seasonal agreement. In total 4 sites are owned and managed by the Council or a Parish Council however, 1 of these sites is for informal cricket use only (Victoria Recreation Ground).
- **Council, Town Council or Parish Council owned site leased to clubs –** Grounds owned by the Council leased to clubs, Whitstable CC have 10 years remaining on their site, and CCC

are currently going through the process of renewing the licence on Radfall Recreation Ground which has been delayed to staffing issues. These grounds are considered secure as they are in Council ownership however, with the length of lease being under 25 years it can limit the opportunity for the club to apply for or secure funding.

- **Other ownership –** Grounds in another form of ownership such as those owned by charities, trusts, private ownership or located on education sites. Street End CC, lease their site from a private organisation which has 15 years remaining, Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground is owned by a trust which the cricket club (Tyler Hill CC) hire on a seasonal basis.

1.9 At Risk Sites

There are no sites in Canterbury deemed to be at risk from development. Despite the pitch at Kenfield CC being considered lapsed, the uncertainty around this site should be monitored as it is unclear at the time of this strategy what the future plans are.

Whilst no sites are considered unsecure provision there are a few sites (detailed above) where clubs do not have security in the form of a long lease. These should be monitored to ensure Cricket provision remains protected on these sites.

1.10 Opportunity Sites for Cricket

There is outline planning for housing development in the Canterbury District at two sites for which new cricket provision is proposed. The Saxon Field Site pitch has planning permission, but the size of the square (number of wickets) is yet to be determined. This site is linked to South Canterbury CC to provide them with a home site in Canterbury. The Brooklands Farm development is proposed to provide a second pitch for Chestfield CC as it is next to their site however this is not confirmed.

1.11 Pitch Quality

The table below shows the quality of grass pitches within the area based on their operation and management. Club managed sites include all those either club owned or with leases of any duration.

Figure 1.3 – Pitch square and outfield quality and operation

Rating	Club Managed		Council and Parish Council Managed		Other Management		Total	
	Pitch	Outfield	Pitch	Outfield	Pitch	Outfield	Pitch	Outfield
Good	5	3	1	1	0	0	6	4
Standard / Basic	3	4	2	1	0	0	5	5
Poor	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	3
						TOTAL	12	12

The cricket pitches (squares) and outfields in Canterbury vary in quality. Half of all fine turf pitches (6 of 12) were assessed to be in good condition and 5 of 12 in a standard condition. There is one poor-quality fine turf pitch at Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground. The quality of the outfields in the area is varied with 4 of 'good quality', 5 of 'standard quality' and 3 rated as 'poor quality'.

Where clubs are responsible for maintaining a square and have access to a trained professional or experienced volunteer grounds person, the pitch quality tends to be a higher quality than at Council (and Parish Council) owned sites without a partnership agreement with the hiring club that includes a maintenance clause. Similarly, the open access / shared use nature of recreation

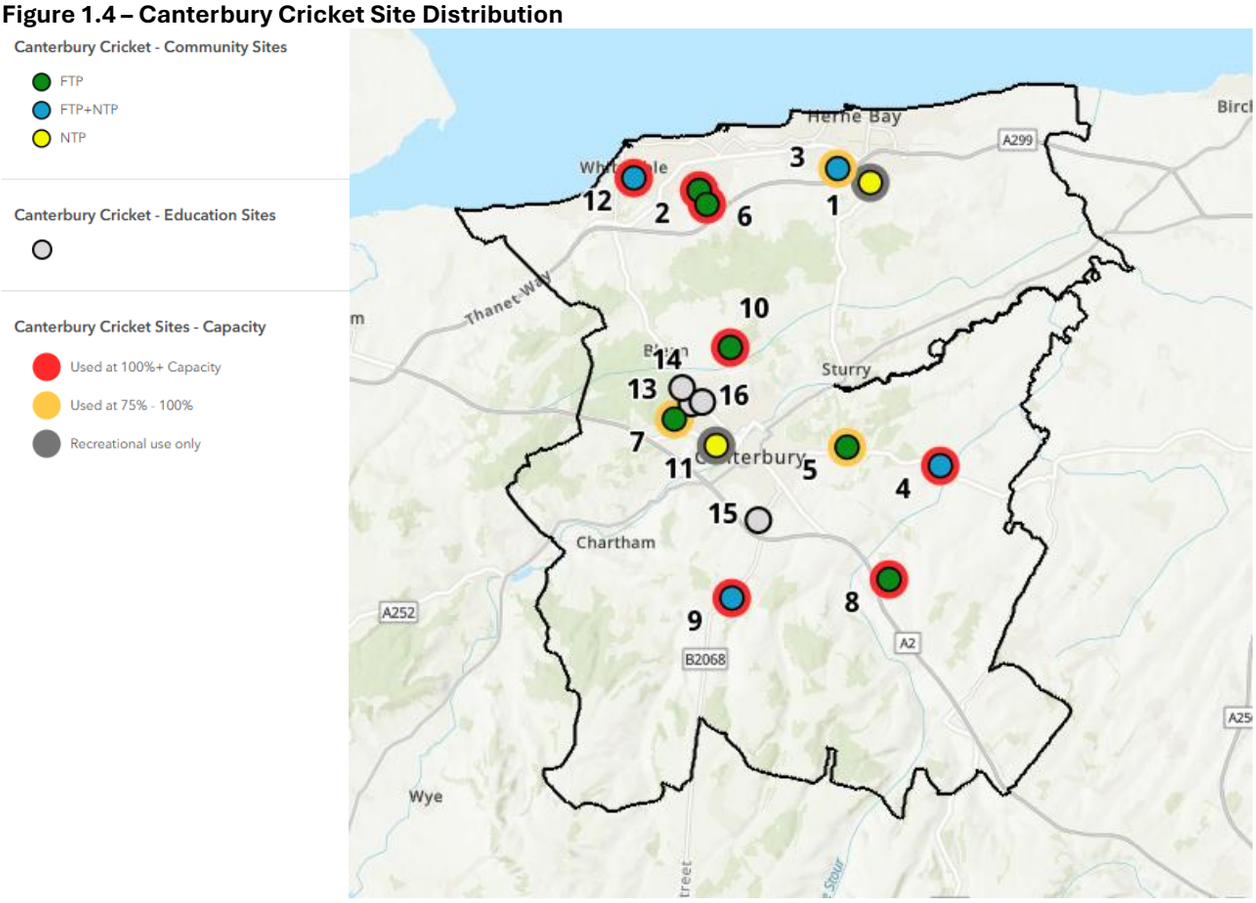
ground sites renders cricket pitches on these sites more vulnerable to incidences of damage and acts of vandalism than at sites where access is controlled. Issues with maintaining high-quality pitches on open access council sites is a common issue in all local authorities.

For those pitches that are deemed to be of poor quality there is a need to improve the condition of the pitch to at least standard quality to enable cricket to continue to be played on the site. For those pitches maintained to a standard quality there can be potential to increase the playing capacity of the existing supply by improving the quality of the pitches used by cricket clubs and teams based in the Canterbury, however this will require a potential increase in maintenance budget for the Council, Parish Council, or club which may already be under pressure.

1.12 Distribution of Cricket Sites

Figure 1.4 shows the distribution of fine turf and non turf pitch cricket sites across Canterbury which are available for community use. The distribution of cricket facilities is well spread across the local authority area.

Figure 1.4 – Canterbury Cricket Site Distribution



Key	Site	Postcode
1	CHERRY ORCHARD PLAYING FIELD	CT6 7HD
2	CHESTFIELD CRICKET CLUB	CT5 3LX
3	HERNE BAY SPORTS HUB	CT6 5DN
4	LITTLEBOURNE RECREATION GROUND	CT3 1ST
5	POLO FARM SPORTS CLUB	CT3 4AF
6	RADFALL RECREATION GROUND	CT5 3LR
7	ROUGH COMMON PLAYING FIELD	CT2 9BS
8	ST LAWRENCE AND HIGHLAND COURT CRICKET CLUB	CT4 5BE

9	STREET END CRICKET CLUB	CT4 5NP
10	TYLER HILL MEMORIAL HALL AND RECREATION GROUND	CT2 9NJ
11	VICTORIA RECREATION GROUND	CT2 8PY
12	WHITSTABLE CRICKET CLUB	CT5 1QJ
Education sites without regular community use		
13	KENT COLLEGE - WHITSTABLE ROAD SITE	CT2 9DT
14	KENT COLLEGE - MOAT LANE PLAYING FIELDS	CT2 9DR
15	SIMON LANGTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS	CT4 7AS
16	ST EDMUND'S CRICKET PITCH	CT2 8HT

1.13 Cricket Supply of Relevance in Neighbouring Local Authorities

There are five sites outside of Canterbury but within Sport England's 20-minute maximum drive time catchment for some residents of the area and Kent Cricket Foundation have confirmed that clubs playing at these facilities attract some Canterbury residents.

- Bell Meadow Recreation Ground (Northeast, Thanet)
- Elham Valley Cricket Club (South, Folkestone & Hythe)
- Hernhill Playing Field (West, Swale)
- Nonnington Cricket Club (East, Dover)
- Wingham Recreation Ground (East, Dover)

2. Cricket Demand (step 2)

To support the review of the supply of cricket pitches in the area, findings relating to cricket pitch demand in Canterbury are summarised below.

2.1 Cricket Clubs and Teams

In the 2026 cricket season, a total of 14 clubs were identified through consultation and ECB affiliation data, with Kent Cricket, and the Council, as being active in Canterbury. This includes two exported clubs, Exiles at Bishopsbourne, a wandering club previously based in Canterbury now playing in Dover and South Canterbury CC playing in Swale. These clubs, their teams, and where they play are shown in figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1- Open Age Cricket Expressed Demand in Canterbury

Cricket clubs	Adult teams	Youth teams	Home ground(s)	Other grounds used
Canterbury CC	3M, 2F	11B	Polo Farm Sports Club	Littlebourne Recreation Ground, Whitstable CC
Chestfield CC	6M, 2F	8B, 2G	Chesterfield CC	Radfall Recreation Ground, Whitstable CC, St Lawrence & Highlands Court CC
Exiles at Bishopsbourne (exported)	1M		Ash Recreation Ground (Dover)	
Harbledown CC	2M		Rough Common Playing Field	
Herne Bay CC	2M		Herne Bay Sports Hub	
Herne CC	1M		Herne Bay Sports Hub	
Littlebourne CC	2M	3B	Littlebourne Recreation Ground.	
Reculver CC	1M		Herne Bay Sports Club	
South Canterbury CC (exported)	1M		Norton Sports Club (Swale)	Occasional use of Street End CC
St Lawrence & Highland Court CC	4M, 3F	11B, 5G	St Lawrence & Highlands Court CC	
Street End CC	3M	4B	Street End CC	
Tyler Hill CC	2M		Tyler Hill Recreation Ground	
Whitstable CC	4M, 2F	6B, 1G	Whitstable CC	Radfall Recreation Ground
Whitstable Labour Club CC	1M	1B	Radfall Recreation Ground	

M=Male, F=Female, B=Boys, Mx=Mixed, G=Girls

In addition to the clubs listed above using grass pitches. There is one additional club in the area (Sturry CC) that only has an indoor team.

7 clubs provide opportunities for juniors to play competitive cricket in the area - Canterbury CC, Chestfield CC, Littlebourne CC, St Lawrence and Highland Court CC, Street End CC, Whitstable CC, and Whitstable Labour CC, of these 3 provide girls specific teams (Chestfield CC, St Lawrence and Highland CC and Whitstable CC). Herne Bay CC provide junior training sessions despite not having any current junior teams and aim to deliver 'Dynamos' sessions next season. 5 clubs (Canterbury CC, Chestfield CC, Littlebourne CC, St Lawrence and Highland Court CC, and Street End CC) provide junior 'All Stars' and/or 'Dynamos' sessions supported by Kent Cricket, or a similar club based junior programme.

The number of clubs in the area has decreased by 1 since the last strategy, but the number of teams has grown in all areas. The most significant areas of growth are in senior women and youth

girls' teams with an additional 7 women's teams and 8 girls' teams. The last strategy only recorded 2 female teams in the area, so this is a significant and positive increase in women's and girls' teams highlighting the increasing demand for female cricket opportunities in the area.

Figure 2.2- Changes in the number of teams in Canterbury since the last strategy

Teams	2020	2026	Difference
Men / Mixed	32	33	**+1**
Women	2	9	**+7**
Youth Boys / Mixed	40	44	**+4**
Youth Girls	0	8	**+8**
Total Cricket teams	**74**	**94**	**+20**

2.2 Trends in Demand for Team Cricket

The ECB's new strategy 'Inspiring Generations 2025-2028' has a key objective to 'connect communities through play' and reported a significant growth in participation with the number of junior fixtures between 2020-2024 increasing overall by 40%. Another key objective is to 'transform women and girls' cricket', and it reports fixtures growing by 20-25% year on year.

Kent Cricket have recorded a growth of women and girls cricket of 264 teams in the last four years across the County. This represents a 96% growth in women's cricket and a 94% growth in junior girls cricket.

This is reflected in the local authority area with the increase in teams and several clubs reporting growth in their women's and girls' sections. There are also midweek formats, mixed teams, indoor teams and friendly only teams providing more flexible formats of the game, catering for people's busy lifestyles.

2.3 Casual Cricket Demand

Demand for less formal forms of play - using free to use net systems and non-turf facilities in public parks, as well as the use of hard-surface areas such as MUGAs, streets, footpaths and hard standing areas on housing estates - is a growing feature of cricket demand nationally, particularly among teenagers and young adults in the Black, Black/British, Asian and Asian/British communities.

The population of Canterbury[1], is predominately White British (89.2%), with 10.8% of the population from Black, Asian, Other white or Mixed/Multiple ethnic backgrounds, so the provision of facilities for free to access and casual play across Canterbury could help to increase cricket, and all activity, among all participant groups helping to reduce barriers associated with accessing opportunities to being active and playing sport.

The council has recently installed a new NTP Victoria Recreation Ground specifically for informal use.

There are no publicly accessible practice net facilities in the City of Canterbury.

2.4 Displaced/Imported Demand

From the research and consultation carried out, there are two exported clubs, Exiles at Bishopsbourne, a wandering club previously based in the Canterbury District now playing in Dover and South Canterbury CC playing in Swale. There is no known imported demand for matches in Canterbury.

[1] 2021 census

There is imported demand for indoor training facilities by clubs based in Dover. Nonington CC report use of the indoor nets at Polo Farm Sports Club and St Maragret's Cosmopolitan CC use the nets at Ames Levitt Indoor School for winter training.

2.5 Unmet / Latent Demand

Chestfield CC report unmet demand which they cannot meet due to a lack of pitch space. The club however does have links to the adjoining development at Brooklands Farm and initial proposals suggest an additional pitch could be created for the club, however this is not confirmed. Herne Bay CC state that there is demand for cricket locally however they are limited by the quality and capacity of their existing facilities. In addition to this. 11 (79%) clubs in Canterbury outlined their aspirations to grow in the next 3 years. Figure 2.3 outlines the growth aspirations of these clubs, and it is apparent that there is perceived latent demand in the area for youth, girls, and women's cricket.

This information is drawn from the club consultation survey carried out for this strategy (running from January to July 2026). Conversion of this perceived latent demand into new teams will depend on these clubs engaging sufficient volunteer team managers and coaches as well as securing suitable pitches to play and train on in the peak period.

Figure 2.3: Canterbury Cricket Clubs - Self-Reported Team Growth Plans

Club	Growth Aspirations
Canterbury CC	Aim to reach out to schools, universities and past players to extend the coverage of the club.
Chestfield CC	To increase the number of teams and members playing at their existing sites, particularly female teams.
Herne Bay CC	Plans to grow the number of active members and participants but limited due to quality and availability of pitches.
Littlebourne Junior CC	Actively looking to connect with local schools to increase participation.
St Lawrence and Highland Court CC	Would like to build an additional cricket ground to accommodate additional teams and improve changing facilities to accommodate women and girls.
Street End CC	The club have plans to grow their junior section by 50% through additional teams including girls.
South Canterbury CC	Want to grow the club by adding more activities, like starting a second team for the Saturday league and joining the Sunday village cricket league. If they gain access to their own ground, they would like to introduce junior and women and girls teams.
Tyler Hill CC	Ambitions to grow reported but no specific detail provided.
Whitstable Labour CC	Ambitions to grow reported but no specific detail provided.
Whitstable CC	The club intend to expand the hardball provision of cricket for women and girls. Would also like to develop an additional men's team.

3. The Situation at Individual Cricket Sites (Step 4)

The fine turf cricket pitches in Canterbury were assessed during the 2026 season. All the sites were assessed using the current methodology established by Sport England and the ECB in the published Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance and Appendices - i.e., a non-technical visual site assessment.

The findings of the site-specific audit assessments were reviewed with representatives of Kent Cricket and ratings for each agreed as a basis for comparison of the amount of play each site can accommodate (the site carrying capacity) against the amount of play that takes place. Carrying capacity is a measure of the number of match equivalent sessions per season for community use each pitch can take without adversely affecting its quality and use. It was agreed with the ECB representative to adopt the following pitch carrying capacities according to each quality rating to be consistent with the approach adopted in similar assessments in other areas:

Figure 3.1: Cricket Pitch Carrying Capacity

Pitch Quality Rating	Carrying Capacity - Match equivalent sessions per prepared fine turf wicket (strip) per season
Good / Advanced	5
Standard / Basic	3
Poor	0

The site-specific audit assessments (Figure 1.1) detail the situation at each cricket site with regard to:

1. *Pitch supply* (including the quality ratings) and conclusions reached as to the amount of play a site can accommodate (i.e., it's carrying capacity for community use).
2. *The amount of play that takes place at each site* (i.e., the expressed demand) adjusted to reflect any casual or education use in addition to club use for matches and training.
3. *The comparison* (shown as a RAG rating) as to whether, for each pitch type it contains, a site is:
    - **RED** - Being overplayed (current use exceeds the carrying capacity)
    - **AMBER** - Being played to the level the site can sustain, or
    - **GREEN** - Potentially able to accommodate some additional play (current use falls significantly below the carrying capacity)

7 sites (listed below) are highlighted from the audit as a **RED** rated site where the available fine turf cricket pitches are considered to be played at or over their estimated carrying capacity based on the size of the square (i.e., number of wickets/strips) and the assessed quality of the square.

- Chestfield CC
- Littlebourne Recreation Ground
- Radfall Recreation Ground
- St Lawerence and Highland Court CC
- Street End CC
- Tyler Hill Memorial Hall & Recreation Ground
- Whitstable CC

One site (listed below) from the audit is rated as **AMBER** indicating the available fine turf cricket pitch is being played to the maximum of its playing capacity:

- Herne Bay Sports Hub

This shows that 75% (9/12) of fine turf pitches in the area are being played at or over their maximum capacity, which restricts the growth of clubs and impacts the quality of playing pitch surfaces. The current picture of provision for cricket is explored further in Section 4.

4. The Current and Future Picture of Provision for Cricket (Step 5)

4.1 Current

Overall, the assessment of facility needs shows that 9 out of 12 (75%) fine turf pitches in the area are being played over their maximum capacity and with an additional pitch at capacity**.**

Only two sites have capacity, Polo Farm Sports Club has a capacity of 8 MES across its two squares and Rough Common Playing Field has a capacity of 4 MES. The minimum MES required to cater for an additional team is 10 MES as it is expected that cricket teams will play 10 matches on a pitch per season. This means that these 3 pitches do not have enough spare capacity to meet the pitch requirements of additional teams.

Overall, there is insufficient spare capacity in the peak period to support the growth aspirations of clubs or any projected future demand based on population growth.

There is the potential to increase the playing capacity of some of existing cricket pitches by improving the quality of the pitches. The pitch at Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground is of poor quality and as such is deemed to have no capacity if this site could be improved to standard quality, it would still be being played over capacity by 5 MES, so improvement would need to be increased to a good quality or an NTP installed to cater for clubs needs on this site.

If other pitches in the area currently over capacity, or at capacity and rated as standard could be improved to good, it would reduce the over play at the following sites and provide capacity for growth.

- Herne Bay Sports Hub
- Littlebourne Recreation Ground
- Street End Cricket Club
- Whitstable Cricket Club

Whilst these potential improvements would address some current capacity issues, it should be acknowledged however this would require an increase in maintenance budget by the Council or local cricket clubs depending on ownership. These options are explored further as part of the scenarios in the main strategy and recommendations included in the action plan.

Practice nets

The non-turf practice net systems in the area vary in quality, but the majority are rated good (8 out of 11), with the remaining nets not being ECB compliant and deemed standard (1) or poor (2). There are also 8 grass practice nets of good quality at the Polo Sports Club.

The only sites with indoor nets which are used by community cricket clubs for winter training are Kent College, Ames Levitt Indoor School, and Polo Farm Sports Club.

Ancillary facilities

4 pavilions were rated as poor and requiring various levels of investment to bring them up modern standards (Chestfield Cricket Club, Radfall Recreation Ground, Street End Cricket Club, and Tyler Hill memorial Hall and Recreation Ground).

There are also a number of pavilions rated as ‘standard’ which require improvements to parts of the facilities. This may include general refurbishment, increased storage, or redevelopment of

specific facilities. The ancillary facility issues identified through site visits and club consultation are outlined in figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1: Ancillary Facility Issues

Site	Club	Ancillary Facility Issues Raised
Chestfield Cricket Club	Chestfield CC	Main building roof has asbestos and needs replacing.
Herne Bay Sports Hub	Herne Bay CC	No Cricket facilities next to square, facilities available in main building although some distance away.
Radfall Recreation Ground	Whitstable Labour CC	Old building of wooden construction with rotting floor which needs replacing.
St Lawrenece and Highland Court Cricket Club	St Lawrence and Highland Court CC	Good quality facilities but in need of extending to cater for number of teams.
Street End Cricket Club	Street End CC	Poor quality facilities in need of updating.
Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground	Tyler Hill CC	The club have access to village hall facilities but do not have any showering facilities.
Whitstable Cricket Club	Whitstable CC	Changing facilities in need of extension to cater for number of teams and provide dedicated shower facilities for each team.

4.2 Future

To estimate the potential impact of population growth over the strategy period to 2042 on the need for cricket pitch capacity in the peak period, Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) tool has been used to determine the demand likely to be generated in the future based on population growth. To meet cricket demand from 22,781 additional residents (as currently forecast[2]) and assuming current levels of cricket demand by age group for matches and training in the peak period, the PPC indicates that the equivalent capacity of 112 MES is needed, equivalent to 3 pitches with a combined total of at least 23 wickets of a good quality (figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2: Demand from population growth to 2042

	Match Equivalent Sessions (MES)	Estimated demand for new grass pitches (match & training demand)
Cricket (open age & junior)	111.93	2.4
Total	**112 (rounded)**	**3 pitches (23 total wickets)**

Eleven of the clubs surveyed during the consultation process stated that they are striving to grow their club over the next three seasons, with four clubs looking to specifically grow female provision. The ECB has reported that the scale of women and girls Cricket has more than doubled over the past 4 years, and all Counties have a target to treble the number of girls teams by 2028 with extra investment as part of the Women's T20 World Cup in England & Wales in 2026. The ECB and Kent Cricket Foundation have forecasted there is likely to be a growth of an additional 12 girls' teams in the Canterbury District, which would require an additional 72 MES as outlined in figure 4.3. This equates to an overall need for 5 fine turf pitches, however some of this provision, particularly the growth in youth cricket, could be accommodated on an NTP to reduce the need for grass pitch provision to 4 fine turf pitches.

[2] Population change from 2026 to 2042 based on Canterbury Local Plan.

Figure 4.3: Demand from population growth and increase in demand (ECB insight) to 2042

	Match Equivalent Sessions (MES)	Estimated demand for new grass pitches (match & training demand)
Cricket (open age & junior)	184.93	4.6
Total	**185 (rounded)**	**5 pitches (37 total wickets)**

With the majority of pitches in Canterbury being used at or over their maximum capacity, the aspirations of clubs to grow, and the projected future demand from estimated population growth and increase in demand, there is a clear need for future investment to increase the provision of community cricket facilities in the area.

5. Key Findings and Issues for Cricket (Step 6)

Figure 5.1 - Cricket Key Findings and Issues

The main characteristics of the <u>current</u> supply of and demand for provision
12 fine turf pitches are identified as available for community cricket across the Canterbury District in 2026, on 10 playing pitch sites. There are two standalone NTP sites with no fine turf square as well as 4 non-turf pitches alongside fine turf squares that are available for community use. There are 5 additional fine turf pitches on sites which are not available for regular community use, predominately due to the amount of colleges/ school use. These are all education sites with no community use agreement in place, Kent College – Whitstable Road Site (1) and Moat Lane Playing Fields (1), Simon Langton Grammer School for Boys (1) and St Edmunds Cricket Pitch (2). The last playing pitch assessment carried out in 2020 recorded 14 fine turf squares available for community use across 14 sites that were used by community clubs. In 2026, there has been a decrease of 2 fine turf pitches, following the loss of fine turf squares at Cherry Orchard Playing Field and Kenfield Cricket Ground. There has however been new NTPs developed at Herne Bay Sports Hub (only suitable for junior cricket) and Cherry Orchard Playing Fields. 14 clubs were identified as being active in Canterbury, including two exported clubs with a total of 94 teams (33 men's/mixed, 9 women's, 44 boys/mixed teams and 8 girls' teams). 7 clubs provide opportunities for juniors to play competitive cricket, 3 of which provide girls specific teams. There has been an increase in the number of teams in Canterbury, resulting in an additional 20 teams playing in the area since the previous strategy in 2020. The most significant areas of growth are in women and girls provision with an increase of 7 senior women's teams and 8 youth girls' teams.
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet <u>current</u> demand?
<u>No</u> - The assessment of facility needs shows that there are insufficient fine turf pitches to cater for the current demand of clubs Canterbury. 75% of the fine turf pitches are being played at or over their maximum capacity. Although there are there are 3 pitches not currently being used at their maximum capacity, none of these have sufficient spare capacity to support additional teams on the site (a minimum of 10MES required for matches). There are two exported clubs playing outside of the area, Exiles at Bishopsbourne, a wandering club previously based in Canterbury now playing in Dover and South Canterbury CC playing in Swale. All the cricket provision in area is secured with sites being owned by the Council or Parish Councils, freehold or on long leases to Sports clubs, or under trust ownership. Although secure, there are some sites with club leases with less than 25 years remaining. This may limit the opportunities for clubs to apply for and secure funding. Street End CC (15 years) and Whitstable CC (10 years) have leases less than 25 years and should consider renewing during the lifetime of this strategy.

Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?
No – The cricket pitches (squares) and outfields in Canterbury vary in quality. Half of all fine turf pitches (6 of 12) were assessed to be in good condition and 5 of 12 in a standard condition. There is one poor-quality fine turf pitch at Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground. The quality of the outfields in the area is varied with 4 of 12 of 'good quality', 5 of 12 'standard quality' and 3 rated as 'poor quality'. The delivery of grass pitch improvements recommended by the Grounds Maintenance Association through PitchPower pitch assessments would help to improve the playing capacity at the sites assessed. The pitch at Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground is deemed to have no capacity due to its 'poor quality', if this site could be improved to standard quality it would still be being played over capacity by 5 MES, so improvements would need to increase the site to a good quality or an NTP installed to cater for the club's needs at the site. If other pitches in the area currently played at or over capacity, and rated as standard could be improved to good quality, it would reduce the over play at the following sites and provide capacity for growth. • Herne Bay Sports Hub • Littlebourne Recreation Ground • Street End Cricket Club • Whitstable Cricket Club There are 6 NTPs across the Canterbury District. 2 NTP's have been recently installed and are in a good condition, of the other 4 NTPs in the area, 1 is in good condition allowing up to 60 match equivalent sessions (MES) for adults, 2 are rated as poor quality and the one at Littlebourne Recreation Ground is considered to not be ECB compliant due to the length of the boundary. The quality of non-turf practice nets which are available at 5 sites in Canterbury are in the main rated good (8 out of 11), with the remaining nets not being ECB compliant and deemed standard (1) or poor (2). There are also 8 grass practice nets of good quality at the Polo Sports Club. Investment into pavilions is required including new or refurbished provision at a number of sites where the current provision is inadequate or failing into disrepair. 4 pavilions were rated as poor and requiring investment to bring them up to modern standards, with further issues identified with standard quality ancillary facilities. The priority sites for investment will be identified and discussed in the main report and resulting action plan.
What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?
To meet cricket demand from 22,781 additional residents (as forecasted) to 2042 and assuming current levels of cricket demand by age group for matches and training in the peak period, the PPC indicates that the equivalent capacity of 112 MES is needed, equivalent to 3 pitches with a combined total of at least 23 wickets of a good quality. In addition, consultation highlighted that 11 clubs have aspirations to grow their clubs over the next three years. Should this growth be achieved, future demand for pitches is likely to increase further.

The ECB has reported that the scale of women and girls' Cricket has more than doubled over the past 4 years, and all Counties have a target to treble the number of girls teams by 2028 with extra investment as part of the Women's T20 World Cup in England & Wales in 2026. The ECB and Kent Cricket Foundation have forecasted there is likely to be a growth of an additional 12 girls' teams in the Canterbury District, which would require an additional 72 MES.

The total demand from population growth and increase in demand for women and girls cricket totals 185 MES, equivalent to 5 additional pitches (37 wickets) however some of this provision particularly the growth in youth cricket could be accommodated on an NTP to reduce the need for grass pitch provision to 4 fine turf pitches.

Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet future demand?

No - There is insufficient, accessible and secured community use provision in Canterbury to meet future demand.

The existing supply of pitches can only meet the current demand if improvements to levels of pitch maintenance are achieved to improve the standard of pitches. Whilst this may be possible in some cases, it may not be possible on all sites.

In order to accommodate growth of clubs, particularly in girls, investment into new or improved quality NTPs at the following sites will help to increase capacity and protect the fine turf wickets. The options of installing NTPs at Canterbury Cricket Club, Chestfield Cricket Club, St Lawrence and Highland Court Cricket Club as well as replacing existing poor provision at Whitstable Cricket Club and Street End Cricket Club should be explored.

There is outline planning for housing development in the Canterbury District at two sites for which new cricket provision is proposed. The Saxon Field Site pitch has planning permission, but the size of the square (number of wickets) is yet to be determined. This site is linked to South Canterbury CC to provide them with a home site in Canterbury. The Brooklands Farm development is proposed to provide a second pitch for Chestfield CC as it is next to their site however this is not confirmed. There is also the potential to reinstate the fine turf pitch at Cherry Orchard Playing Fields as well as exploring the opportunity to secure the Kenfield Cricket pitch for more regular community use.

If the improvement in pitch quality can be made on the majority of sites, noting the challenges of increased maintenance and investment costs, the provision of the proposed additional NTP's is considered and the two new additional cricket sites are developed as planned, there would be a need for two additional pitches to cater for future demand. To cater for this demand the council should explore bringing the lapsed fine turf square at Cherry Orchard Playing Fields back into use and endeavour to secure Kenfield Cricket Club site for regular community use. Options for the development of an additional pitch with. Options for the development of a minimum of 16 good quality wickets should be explored to meet the remaining future demand by 2042.

A number of these options and leading projects for cricket are considered further in the main strategy with the action plan outlining the priority projects to meet the needs identified across Canterbury.



Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch Strategy 2026 Appendix B Assessment of Need Report Football

Appendix B: Football - Assessment of Needs (stages B and C)

1. Introduction

The findings of the assessment of football facilities in Canterbury are summarised in this appendix to the Playing Pitch Strategy. FA affiliated football clubs registered to Kent FA and playing home fixtures in the area have contributed to this assessment by submitting an online club survey and/or through in person consultation during site visits. The number of clubs/organisations that responded to consultation as part of this process represents 85% of all teams playing football in the area.

Since the last assessment was carried out in 2020 there have been changes in both the supply of football pitches in Canterbury and in football demand. On the supply side there has been a reduction in grass pitches available for community use from 114 in 2020 to 82 in 2026 (with an additional 9 recreational pitches).

There has been a loss of regular community use at St Stephens Junior School (1), Junior Kings School (4), Moat Lane Playing Fields (5), Swalecliffe Community Primary School (2), Canterbury Academy Campus (3 of the 5 pitches on site), and St Edmunds School (2). There has also been a reduction in the number of pitches marked at Herne Bay Memorial Park (2), Sturry FC (1), Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground (1), Herne Bay High School (1), St Augustine's (1), Hampton School (2), Herne Bay High School (3), Sturry Primary (1), Whitstable School (2).

The number of pitches marked at some sites that provide regular community use has increased since the previous strategy including The Bear Trap (1), Bekesbourne Recreation Ground (2), Herne CE Junior School (2), Radfall Recreation Ground (1), Simon Langton Girls Grammar School (2), St Edmunds School (1), Stodmarsh Playing Fields (2), Seaview Caravan Park (2), Thanington Recreation Ground (1), The Cherry Orchard Recreation Ground (1), University of Kent (1), and Chartham Sports Club (2). Regular community use has been secured at one pitch at St Anselms RC School (1).

The stadia grass pitches previously in place at Whitstable Town FC (1) and Herne Bay FC (1) have both been replaced with new 3G AGPs since the previous strategy.

Football demand has continued to grow in all areas except mini soccer. In the 2025/26 season, Canterbury had a total of 306 affiliated football teams which represents an increase of 74 teams (32%) since the previous audit in 2020 when 232 affiliated teams were registered in the area.

The reduction in grass pitches has been partly offset by the increase in 3G provision but the growth of teams in the area has created increasing pressure on the supply of pitches.

2. Football Supply (step 2)

The findings of the assessment of supply of football facilities in Canterbury are summarised in this section and detailed by site for both grass and artificial grass pitches (AGPs). The supply information is generated through standard facility audits based on the visual assessment, grading and playing capacity guidance (as set out by Sport England and the FA in the national guidance for the development of playing pitch needs assessments), supported by consultation with the Council, Kent FA, and user clubs.

At a number of key football sites, detailed pitch quality assessments were undertaken using the Football Foundation's 'PitchPower' methodology. At these sites playing capacity are informed by the results of the PitchPower assessments and Performance Quality Standards (PQS) ratings provided by the Grounds Management Association (GMA). These sites are indicated with PP next to their rating (see Figures 2.7 and 2.8).

2.1 Distribution of Football Supply

Figures 2.2 and 2.3 on the following pages show the distribution of key football sites across Canterbury.

2.2 Grass Football Pitches in Canterbury

In total there are 82 grass pitches across 32 sites in Canterbury, 24 pitches (10 sites) are on school playing fields, and either are not currently available for community use or have no known history of community use. These include:

- Canterbury Academy Campus – 1 pitch (Junior 9v9)
- Hampton Primary School - 2 pitches (2x Junior 9v9)
- Junior King's School – 4 pitches (4x Mini 7v7)
- Kings School (Birley's Playing Fields) – 3 pitches (3x Adult 11v11)
- Moat Lane Playing Fields – 5 pitches (2x Junior 11v11, 1x Junior 9v9, 2x Mini 7v7)
- St Anselm's R.C School – 2 pitches (Junior 9v9, Mini 5v5)
- St Edmunds School – 2 pitches (2x Mini 7v7)
- St John Church of England Primary School – 1 pitch (Junior 9v9)
- Swalecliffe Community Primary – 2 pitches (2x Mini 7v7)
- Thornden Wood Primary School – 2 pitches (2x Junior 9v9)

There are also a number of open spaces in the area that have goals in place, either socketed or portable for recreational provision, some of these may have previous accommodated formal football provision such as Hersden Recreation Ground.

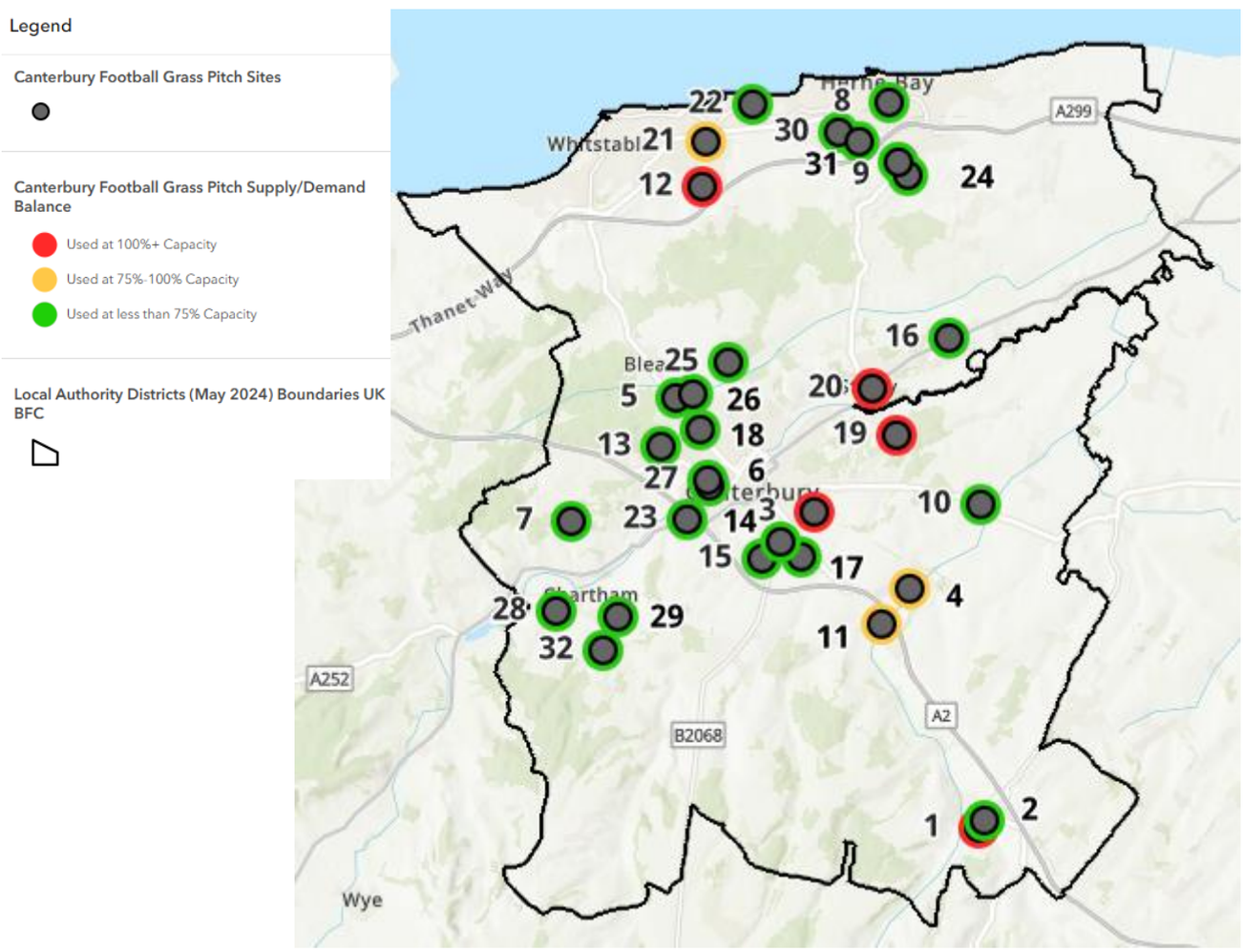
Accounting for those pitches without regular community use the total number of grass pitches available for community football in Canterbury (and used in the assessment for this playing pitch strategy) is 82 pitches on 32 sites (figure 2.2) and the number of AGPs is 8 across 7 sites (figure 2.3). A summary of the community availability of football pitches in Canterbury is presented in figure 2.1 below. Further details of these facilities can be found in figures 2.5 – 2.9 and 2.11 – 2.12 below. The following maps also show the percentage of used capacity based on the quality of the pitch, use of pitches based on club consultation, and the carrying capacity – a good pitch can sustain 3 games per week on average.

Figure 2.1 – Availability of football pitches in Canterbury

	All grass football pitches/sites	Grass pitches /sites not available for community use	**Grass pitches /sites available for community use**
Number of pitches	81	24	**57**
Number of sites	42	10	**32**
	All 3G AGPs / sites	3G AGPs / sites not available for community use	**3G AGPs / sites available for community use**
Number of pitches	8	0	**8**
Number of sites	7	0	**7**

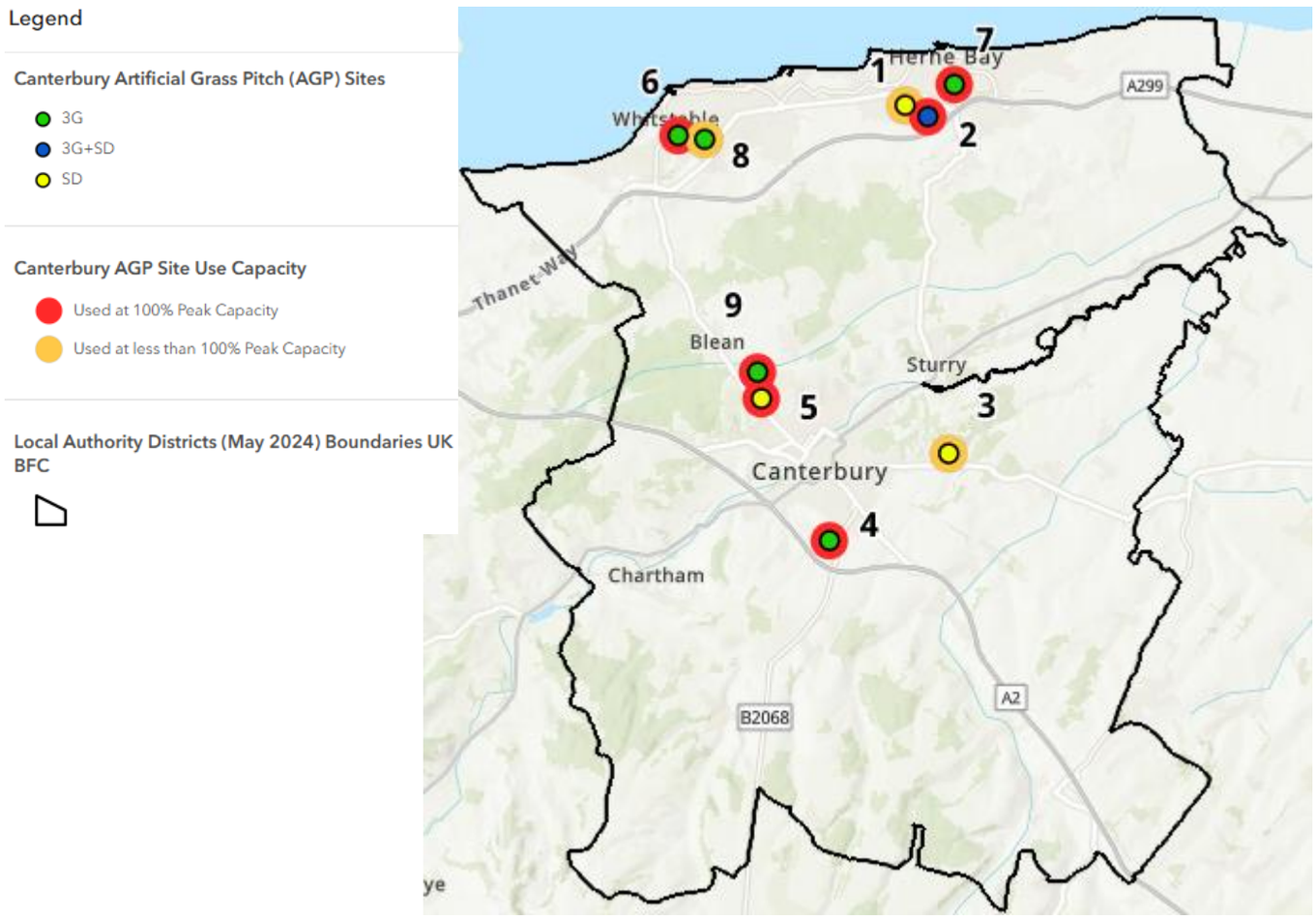
Figure 2.2 below shows the distribution and theoretical supply demand balance for each site. Whilst there are a high proportion of sites that are listed as having spare capacity in the map below, Section 4 investigates whether this spare capacity is available in the peak period and suitable to meet demand of community football clubs. Figure 4.2 outlines that the majority of spare capacity at these sites is not secured or suitable to meet the demands of community football clubs in the peak period, and Section 5 highlights that the remaining spare capacity is essential to meet the projected future demand for football facilities.

Figure 2.2 - Distribution of grass football pitch sites with community use in Canterbury



Key: Grass Pitch Sites					
No	**Site Name**	**Postcode**	**No**	**Site Name**	**Postcode**
1	BRICKFIELD RECREATION GROUND	CT4 6LG	17	ST ANSELMS R.C. SCHOOL	CT1 3EN
2	THE BEAR TRAP	CT4 6LG	18	ST EDMUNDS SCHOOL (CANTERBURY)	CT2 8HU
3	BARTON MANOR SCHOOL	CT1 1SU	19	STODMARSH PLAYING FIELDS	CT3 4AR
4	BEKESBOURNE RECREATION GROUND	CT4 5BP	20	STURRY FC	CT2 0BH
5	BLEAN PRIMARY SCHOOL	CT2 9ED	21	SWALECLIFFE RECREATION GROUND (LONGROCK)	CT5 32NH
6	CANTERBURY ACADEMY CAMPUS	CT2 8QA	22	SEAVIEW CARAVAN PARK	CT6 8BB
7	CHARTHAM PARISH COUNCIL VILLAGE HALL	CT4 7JA	23	THANINGTON RECREATION GROUND	CT1 3XE
8	HERNE BAY MEMORIAL PARK	CT6 5QL	24	THE CHERRY ORCHARD PLAYING FIELD	CT6 7HD
9	HERNE CE JUNIOR SCHOOL	CT6 7AL	25	TYLER HILL MEMORIAL HALL AND RECREATION GROUND	CT2 9NJ
10	LITTLEBOURNE RECREATION GROUND	CT3 1TR	26	UNIVERSITY OF KENT (THE PAVILION)	CT2 7SR
11	PATRIXBOURNE ROAD RECREATION GROUND (BRIDGE)	CT4 5BN	27	VICTORIA RECREATION GROUND	CT2 8PY
12	RADFALL RECREATION GROUND	CT5 3LR	28	CHARTHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL	CT4 7QN
13	ROUGH COMMON PLAYING FIELD	CT2 9BF	29	CHARTHAM SPORTS CLUB	CT4 7TA
14	SIMON LANGTON GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL	CT1 3EW	30	HERNE BAY HIGH SCHOOL	CT6 7NS
15	SIMON LANGTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS	CT4 7AS	31	HERNE BAY SPORTS HUB	CT6 5DN
16	SPIRES ACADEMY (ORION SPIRES) (new site)	CT2 0HD	32	ST AUGUSTINE'S	CT4 7TS

Figure 2.3- Distribution of AGP pitch sites (3G & Sand Dressed) with community use in Canterbury and in neighbouring areas.



Key: Artificial Pitch Sites			
No	**Site Name**	**Postcode**	**Type**
1	BAY SPORTS ARENA	CT6 7NS	SD
2	HERNE BAY SPORTS HUB	CT6 5DN	3G+SD
3	POLO FARM SPORTS CLUB	CT3 4AF	SD
4	SIMON LANGTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS	CT4 7AS	3G
5	ST EDMUNDS SCHOOL (CANTERBURY)	CT2 8HU	SD
6	THE BELMONT GROUND	CT5 1QJ	3G
7	THE CREST STADIUM	CT6 5SG	3G
8	THE WHITSTABLE SCHOOL	CT5 1PX	3G
9	UNIVERSITY OF KENT (THE PAVILION)	CT2 7SR	3G

SD = Sand Dressed Artificial Grass Pitch, 3G = Third Generation Artificial Grass Pitch

Figure 2.4 shows the number of grass pitches currently available compared with the number of FA affiliated teams by age group in October 2025. Comparison of current team numbers with the available supply of grass pitches shows there are comparatively fewer Junior 11v11 pitches compared to the number of teams playing that format of football in Canterbury, with over 6 teams per pitch. Whilst some of these games may be played on 3G due to the number of 3G pitches in the area, it still suggests there is demand in the area for more 11v11 pitches.

There are three pitches within Canterbury which are overmarked for smaller sided games. One of these is at Bekesbourne Recreation Ground and the other two are at Radfall Recreation

Ground. This can be an effective way to manage demand in areas of concentrated youth football but can lead to poor pitch quality due to overplay, as is evident at both of these sites.

Figure 2.4: Pitch Size / Team Comparison

Pitch Type	Available Pitch Supply		Affiliated teams	No of teams per pitch
Adult 11v11 (Open Age, Veterans, U19, U18, U17)	28	34%	91	3.25
Junior 11v11 (U13 - U16)	12	15%	77	6.42
Junior 9v9 (U11 – U12)	19	23%	49	2.58
Mini Soccer 7v7 (U9 - U10)	13	16%	41	3.15
Mini Soccer 5v5 (U6 – U8)	10	12%	36*	3.6
Total	**82**			

**Excludes 2x U5 / development teams*

2.3 Local Authority Owned Sites with Grass Football Pitches for Hire:
Canterbury City Council own 12 grass pitch sites, 6 of which are available to book through the Council (see figure 2.5 below), 3 are leased to sports clubs Chartham Sports FC (Chartham Sports Club), Sturry FC and Tyler Hill Youth FC (Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground) and one is leased to Herne and Broomfield Parish Couuncil (Cherry Orchard Playing Field) (figure 2.6). Six sites are owned by Town or Parish Councils within Canterbury (see figure 2.7).

2.4 Football Pitches on Education Sites:
Several clubs in Canterbury currently play on pitches at education sites, as listed in figure 2.8. The clubs using pitches on education sites have little security of access as continued use from one season to the next depends on the consent of the site's management (head teacher, board of governors, management company and/or governing trust). If education sites do not have community use agreements in place security of access for football clubs at these sites is considered by Sport England at risk. It should also be noted that the capacity of pitches on education sites is typically influenced by school use including PE activity, extra-curricular use and playtimes.

Further pitches (or space to accommodate pitches) exist in the area on playing fields at other school sites, as listed in section 2.2, however they are not available for community use, predominately due to the level of school team use and need to maintain the quality of pitches. At other education sites the lack of access to ancillary facilities limits access. Arranging future access to these pitches at weekends at reasonable cost while safeguarding the security of the schools' buildings would be difficult to achieve at a number of these sites.

During consultation, none of the education sites, which do not currently have community use expressed an interest in providing community use in the future.

2.5 Grass Football Pitches with Other Ownership Agreements:
There are two sites which is privately owned – Seaview Caravan Park which is currently used by Tankerton FC, and Herne Bay Sports Hub which is owned by a developer but leased to Herne Bay Youth FC on a long term lease (figure 2.9).

2.6 Changes to Grass Football Pitch provision

In the previous strategy, 114 pitches were identified as being available for community use and used at some level by community clubs. In 2026, there are 82 grass pitches identified as being available for community use, with an additional 9 pitches only suitable for recreational football.

There has been a loss of regular community use at St Stephens Junior School (1), Junior Kings School (4), Moat Lane Playing Fields (5), Swalecliffe Community Primary School (2), Canterbury Academy Campus (3 of the 5 pitches on site), and St Edmunds School (2). There has also been a reduction in the number of pitches marked at Herne Bay Memorial Park (2), Sturry FC (1), Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground (1), Herne Bay High School (1), St Augustine's (1), Hampton School (2), Herne Bay High School (3), Sturry Primary (1), Whitstable School (2).

The number of pitches marked at some sites that provide regular community use has increased since the previous strategy including The Bear Trap (1), Bekesbourne Recreation Ground (2), Herne CE Junior School (2), Radfall Recreation Ground (1), Simon Langton Girls Grammar School (2), St Edmunds School (1), Stodmarsh Playing Fields (2), Seaview Caravan Park (2), Thanington Recreation Ground (1), The Cherry Orchard Recreation Ground (1), University of Kent (1), and Chartham Sports Club (2). Regular community use has been secured at one pitch at St Anselms RC School (1).

The stadia grass pitches previously in place at Whitstable Town FC (1) and Herne Bay FC (1) have both been replaced with new 3G AGPs since the previous strategy.

2.7 Facilities for Informal Football

Within the parks and public open spaces in Canterbury there are areas that provide space that is suitable for casual recreational games of football and kick-abouts. Some have goals in place, either socketed or portable for recreational provision and may have previous accommodated formal football provision. Many open spaces also offer a fenced but open access multi use games area (MUGA) and/or a smaller ball court (for football/basketball/skate) and some have sports lighting. Examples of recreational football provision identified include:

- Beverley Meadow – grass open space with portable 5 aside goals for recreational use.
- Hersden Recreation Ground – site is currently only used for informal football however there is planning permission in place to bring the two 11v11 pitches back into use. The site also has 2 MUGAs which will be converted into a PlayZone.
- Kingsmead Playing Field – grass open space with two socketed 5 aside goals for recreational use only.
- St Stephens Recreation Ground – grass open space with two socketed 5 aside goals for recreational use. It also has a small MUGA with one basketball hoop.
- The Street Recreation Ground – grass open space with two socketed 11 aside goals for recreational use only due to condition of the grass pitch.
- Whitstable heights – grass open space with two socketed 5 aside goals for recreational use only. Also has a MUGA with no line markings and two plastic portable 5 aside goals.

2.8 The Situation at Individual Sites

The tables below (Figures 2.5-2.9) outline the supply, condition, ancillary facilities, and demand for each site available for community use in Canterbury. The RAG rating highlights the supply/demand balance of each pitch, with **RED** indicating pitches used at more than capacity, **AMBER** indicating pitches which are used at capacity, and **GREEN** indicating pitches with surplus capacity. This supply/demand balance does not take into consideration the availability and suitability of pitches in the peak period, which is discussed further in Section 4 and results in many sites being used at full capacity.

Figure 2.5: Canterbury City Council Owned Sites with Grass Football Pitches for Hire:

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary Facilities	Pitches by size	Rating	Capacity	Weekly MES / Use	Supply / Demand Balance	RAG
HERNE BAY MEMORIAL PARK	CT6 5QL	Canterbury City Council - Secure	2 changing room in good condition	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	
RADFALL RECREATION GROUND	CT5 3LR	Canterbury City Council - Secure	One single wooden toilet building and a wooden changing facility that is on a timber frame.	Mini 7v7	PP - Poor	2	3.5	-1.5	
				Mini 5v5	PP - Standard	4	2	2	
				Junior 11v11	PP – Poor (Standard)	2	3.5	-1.5	
				Junior 11v11	PP - Standard	2	4	-2	
				Junior 11v11	Standard	2	2	0	
SWALECLIFFE RECREATION GROUND (LONGROCK)	CT5 2NH	Canterbury City Council - Secure	Village hall and changing rooms	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	2	0	
THANINGTON RECREATION GROUND	CT1 3XE	Canterbury City Council –Secure	1 Communal shower block with 10 showers. 1 female toilet. 4 changing rooms. Officials changing rooms have been recently refurbished with shower.	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	
				Adult 11v11	Expected to come back into community supply				
				Adult 11v11	Expected to come back into community supply				
THE CHERRY ORCHARD PLAYING FIELD	CT6 7HD	Canterbury City Council – Secure	Changing facilities are breeze block and pebble dash. No female toilet. 6 changing rooms, storage area. External public toilets too for male, female and disabled.	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	1	1	
				Adult 11v11	Standard	2	1	1	
				Adult 11v11	Poor	1	1	0	
VICTORIA RECREATION GROUND	CT2 8PY	Canterbury City Council – Unknown	5 team changing rooms and 1 officials changing room. Communal shower room.	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	1	1	
				Adult 11v11	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	
				Adult 11v11	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	

Figure 2.6 Canterbury City Council Owned Grass Pitches with Lease / Licence Agreements:

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary Facilities	Pitches by size	Rating	Capacity	Weekly MES / Use	Supply / Demand Balance	RAG
CHARTHAM SPORTS CLUB	CT4 7TA	CCC site leased to club – 10 years remaining	Pavilion with 4 changing rooms, 2 referee rooms, kitchen and a meeting room. Club state it is in excellent condition.	Junior 11v11	PP – Poor	1	1	0	
				Junior 9v9	PP – Poor	1	1	0	
				Mini 7v7	PP – Poor	2	1.5	0.5	
				Mini 7v7	PP – Poor	2	1	1	
PATRIXBOURNE ROAD RECREATION GROUND (BRIDGE)	CT4 5BN	CCC - Secure	Unknown	Adult 11v11	Poor	1	1	0	
STURRY FC	CT2 0BH	CCC site leased to club - 10 years remaining.	2 changing rooms, 1 referee changing room, showers, toilets and communal area.	Adult 11v11	Poor	1	1.5	-0.5	
ST AUGUSTINE'S	CT4 7TS	CCC site – leased to Chartham PC	Unknown	Adult 11v11	PP - Poor	1	1	0	
				Junior 11v11	PP - Poor	1	0.5	0.5	
				Junior 9v9	PP - Poor	1	0.5	0.5	
TYLER HILL MEMORIAL HALL AND RECREATION GROUND	CT2 9NJ	CCC site leased to club – 30 years remaining	1 changing room with toilet. This is part of the village hall.	Junior 9v9	Standard	2	1.5	0.5	
				Mini 7v7	Standard	4	3	1	
				Mini 5v5	Standard	4	0.5	3.5	

Figure 2.7 Town or Parish Council owned grass pitches:

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary Facilities	Pitches by size	Rating	Capacity	Weekly MES / Use	Supply / Demand Balance	RAG
BRICKFIELD RECREATION GROUND	CT4 6LG	Barham Parish Council - Leased to Barham FC until 2049 - Secure	None	Junior 9v9	Poor	1	1.5	-0.5	
BEKESBOURNE RECREATION GROUND	CT4 5BP	Bekesbourne with Patrixbourne Parish Council	No access to ancillary facilities on site visit. Club rate good quality.	Junior 11v11	Standard	2	3	-1	
				Junior 9v9	Standard	2	3	-1	
				Mini 7v7	Standard	4	1	3	
CHARTHAM PARISH COUNCIL	CT4 7JA	Parish Council – Chartham - Secure	No access provided at site visit. Separate male and female changing rooms attached to the village hall.	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	1.5	0.5	
LITTLEBOURNE RECREATION GROUND	CT3 1TR	Littlebourne Parish Council - Secure	No access provided at site visit	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	1	1	
ROUGH COMMON PLAYNG FIELD	CT2 9BF	Parish Council – hired to club	No access for football team, only cricket able to use.	Junior 11v11	Standard	2	1	1	
THE BEAR TRAP	CT4 6LG	Barham Parish Council - Leased to Barham FC until 2049 – Secure	None	Mini 7v7	Poor	2	0.5	1.5	
				Mini 7v7	Poor	2	0.5	1.5	
				Mini 5v5	Standard	4	0.5	3.5	
				Mini 5v5	Poor	2	0.5	1.5	

Figure 2.8 Football Pitches on Education Sites:

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary Facilities	Pitches by size	Rating	Capacity	Weekly MES / Use	Supply / Demand Balance	RAG
BARTON MANOR SCHOOL	CT1 1SU	Education site - Unaware of CUA	None available on the site.	Junior 11v11	Standard	2	2	0	
				Junior 9v9	Standard	2	3	-1	
BLEAN PRIMARY SCHOOL	CT2 9ED	Education site - Unaware of CUA	Separate boys' and girls' toilets. Separate store cupboard for community users which is used to store goalposts.	Mini 5v5	Standard	4	0.5	3.5	
				Mini 7v7	Standard	4	2	2	
CANTERBURY ACADEMY CAMPUS	CT2 8QA	Education site - Unaware of CUA	No access to changing facilities or toilets by clubs	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	2	0	
				Adult 11v11	Standard	2	1.5	0.5	
CHARTHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL	CT4 7QN	Education - unaware of CUA	Unknown	Junior 11v11	PP - Good	3	0.5	2.5	
				Junior 9v9	PP - Good	4	0	4	
HERNE BAY HIGH SCHOOL	CT6 7NS	Education site – unaware of CUA	Unknown	Junior 11v11	PP - Good	3	0	3	
				Junior 9v9	PP - Good	4	0.5	3.5	
HERNE CE JUNIOR SCHOOL	CT6 7AL	Education site - Unaware of CUA	Club built wooden facilities with changing rooms toilets and kitchen. Also an officials room	Junior 9v9	Standard	2	2	0	
				Mini 7v7	Standard	4	2.5	1.5	
				Mini 7v7	Standard	4	1.5	2.5	
				Mini 5v5	Standard	4	2	2	
				Mini 5v5	Standard	4	2	2	
SIMON LANGTON GIRLS'	CT1 3EW	Education site - Unaware of CUA	Toilets are in the main building, no changing rooms available. Small outside	Mini 7v7	Good	6	3	3	
				Adult 11v11	Good	3	2	1	

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary Facilities	Pitches by size	Rating	Capacity	Weekly MES / Use	Supply / Demand Balance	RAG
GRAMMAR SCHOOL			building also available with a kitchen but not always used.	Junior 9v9	Standard	2	1.5	0.5	
SIMON LANGTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS	CT4 7AS	Education site - Unaware of CUA	4 changing rooms. 1 small changing room used for girls but this next to the Spectator toilet next to girls changing so safeguarding issue. Major roof structural issues. Lots of damp issues and internal plastering is failing.	Junior 9v9	Standard	2	0	2	
				Adult 11v11	Standard	2	1.5	0.5	
				Adult 11v11	Standard	2	1.5	0.5	
SPIRES ACADEMY (ORION SPIRES) (new site)	CT2 0HD	Education site - Unaware of CUA	4 changing rooms with showers but these are not used by the club just for school use.	Junior 11v11	Standard	2	2	0	
				Junior 9v9	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	
				Junior 9v9	Poor	1	0.5	0.5	
ST ANSELMS R.C. SCHOOL	CT1 3EN	Education site - Unaware of CUA	Two changing room blocks with 2 changing rooms in each. 6 communal showers	Junior 11v11	Standard	2	1.5	0.5	
ST EDMUNDS SCHOOL (CANTERBURY)	BN9 9JL	Education site - Unaware of CUA	Only toilets available due to staffing. Disabled access.	Junior 9v9	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	
				Junior 11v11	Standard	2	1	1	
				Junior 9v9	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	
STODMARSH PLAYING FIELDS	CT3 4AR	Education (Christ Church University) - Unaware of CUA	No access to the changing facilities	Adult 11v11	Poor	1	1.5	-0.5	
				Adult 11v11	Poor	1	1	0	
				Adult 11v11	Poor	1	1	0	
UNIVERSITY OF KENT (THE PAVILION)	CT2 7SR	Education - Unaware of CUA	2 pavilions. Old pavilion has 8 mixed gender changing rooms with 2x communal shower rooms in each wing. The new pavilion has 3 disabled toilets and an	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	
				Junior 9v9	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	
				Mini 7v7	Standard	4	0.5	3.5	

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary Facilities	Pitches by size	Rating	Capacity	Weekly MES / Use	Supply / Demand Balance	RAG
			accessible shower. 10x changing rooms with integrated showers. 4x officials changing rooms.	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	

Figure 2.9 Football Pitches with Other Ownership

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary Facilities	Pitches by size	Rating	Capacity	Weekly MES / Use	Supply / Demand Balance	RAG
SEAVIEW CARAVAN PARK	CT6 8BB	Privately owned – club hire weekly	Home and away changing facilities. Club rate them as being in poor condition.	Adult 11v11	Standard	2	2	0	
				Junior 11v11	Standard	2	2	0	
				Junior 9v9	Standard	2	0.5	1.5	
				Junior 9v9	Standard	2	0	2	
				Mini 7v7	Standard	4	1.5	2.5	
				Mini 5v5	Standard	4	1	3	
HERNE BAY SPORTS HUB	CT6 5DN	Developer owned and leased to sports club (secure) – 94 years remaining	Pavillion with 4 changing rooms and a bar.	Mini 7v7	PP – Standard	4	3.5	0.5	
				Mini 5v5	PP – Standard	4	2.5	1.5	

2.9 Quality

The table below summaries the standard of the pitches assessed. The ratings attributed to each pitch are detailed in figures 2.5 - 2.9. These were informed by a combination of visual assessment on site visits and PitchPower assessments as well as feedback from consultation with user clubs and the Council. All audit data has been agreed with Kent FA.

Figure 2.10 – Canterbury grass football pitch quality

	Total	Percentage
Good / Advanced (PP)	6	7%
Standard / Basic (PP)	57	70%
Poor	19	23%
Total	**82**	

23% of pitches in the area that have been assessed are of poor quality, with the majority (70%) of the available grass football pitches accessible for community use in Canterbury rated as 'standard' (i.e., providing a playing capacity for up to two match equivalent sessions a week on average for adults). The remaining 7% of pitches are rated as good.

17 pitches (on 6 sites) in Canterbury have been assessed using the Football Foundation's PitchPower assessment and reporting tool. The findings for these sites identify the maintenance needs required, together with budget costs to improve pitch quality. These sites are identified in figures 2.5, figure 2.6 and 2.8 with 'PP' next to their pitch rating.

2.10 Informal and Unauthorised Use of Formal Pitches by Teams

Informal recreational use and unauthorised use of the maintained pitches on playing pitch sites is a challenge for the Council, Town and Parish Councils. Clubs tend to use these sites especially for early and late season training when there is sufficient daylight on weekday evenings. There is also informal use of pitches especially where socketed goals are in place. The impact on pitch quality is difficult to measure however this can often lead to reduced pitch quality for those that do book and pay for the pitch. The use of portable goals in place of socketed goals or additional goals posts or, on appropriate sites with capacity, considering the viability of developing a MUGA specifically for recreational use can help to reduce this.

2.11 Closed Sites

Thanington Recreation Ground was previously closed for community use as it was allocated for development in the draft local plan, however the site has since been removed from the local plan. The pitches on site are due to be returned to the stock of community football pitches for the 2026/27 season.

Whilst not closed, the grass pitches and 3G AGP at Howe Park is not currently available for community use whilst it is still owned by the housing developer on site. Ownership is due to be transferred to Howe Park Trust for the 2026/27 season.

2.12 Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) in Canterbury

In total, there are 7 full sized 3G AGPs and 1 small sided pitch suitable for football play at some level, which are available for community use. There are also 3 SD AGPs that are currently used to support football demand. (identified in figures 2.11 and 2.12 below).

Of the 7 full sized 3G pitches in the area, 6 of these are used at maximum peak capacity for training and matches. The 3G AGP at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and one of the 3Gs at University of Kent, are world rugby compliant 3Gs, but have less community availability due to university and rugby use.

There is some spare capacity on the 3G at The Whitstable School however this is mainly available during the weekends where they operate reduced hours for community access.

The quality of the 3G pitches in the area is positive with 5 of the pitches being in good condition. One of the 3G pitches at the University of Kent was rated as standard and the pitch at the Whitstable School was rated as poor and not been resurfaced since 2009 (however the school are currently exploring options to resurface the pitch). The pitches at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and Herne Bay Sports Hub were both funded by the Football Foundation.

15 of the clubs/organisations who responded to the consultation (representing 197 teams, 63%), stated that their existing training facilities did not meet their demand. The following themes emerged from the club's comments due to lack of availability:

- Dependence on school and university pitches for training
- Multiple teams using 3G AGPs at the same time due to lack of availability
- Ancillary facilities are not suitable
- Club using multiple venues
- Travel times to access training facilities

Sport England's Area Access Tool did not identify any full size 3G AGPs with sports lighting that are available for community use within a 20-minute driving catchment of Canterbury.

2.13 AGPs at Risk
There are no AGPs in community use known to be at risk of development.

2.14 Artificial Grass Pitch Ownership
There are two 3G AGPs currently owned by Canterbury City Council, both of which are leased to clubs, (The Belmont Ground to Whitstable Town FC and The Crest Stadium to Herne Bay FC). The 3G pitch at Howe Park is due to be transferred from Taylor Wimpey to Howe Park Trust for community use. The 3G pitch at Herne Bay Sports Club is owned by a developer but leased to the club on a long term lease. The remaining 5 3G AGPs available for community use are owned and managed by education providers.

The sand based AGPs (figure 2.12) in Canterbury that are currently used for football include Herne Bay Sports Hub, Polo Farm Sports Club, and St Edmunds School. Further details of their ownership and management can be found in Appendix C – Assessment for Need – Hockey.

2.15 Commercial Football Centres
There are no commercial football centres in Canterbury and no known commercial five-a-side leagues operating on 3G facilities.

2.16 Proposed New AGPs
Outline planning and funding has been granted for the resurfacing of the existing hockey AGP at Herne Bay High School to a 3G AGP surface. The project has been part funded by the Football Foundation and a programme of use has been drafted. It is anticipated that Herne Bay Harriers FC will be one of the primary users of the site.

Simon Langton Grammar School for Girls have submitted a planning application to Canterbury City Council for the development of an 11v11 3G AGP on site. At the time of reporting, it is not yet

clear if the proposed pitch will be developed. A scenario exploring the impact of this pitch being developed is presented in the full strategy.

Figure 2.11: 3G AGPs - Situation at Individual Sites

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary facilities	AGP Size & Type	Date built (refurbished)	Rating	On FA 3G Reg.	Peak hrs available[1]	Use in peak hours	Supply / Demand Balance	RAG
CANTERBURY ACADEMY CAMPUS	CT2 8QA	Education – Unaware of CUA	1x men's block with 2x changing rooms and 1x women's block with 2x changing rooms. Showers in each block.	5v5 (unsure n exact measurements)	2001 (2021)		No	34	14	20	
HERNE BAY SPORTS HUB	CT6 5DN	Developer owned and leased to sports club with 94 years remaining - Secure	New large multi-use clubhouse for the 4 clubs on site	11v11 3G (105mx70m)	2019	Good	Yes	34	34	0	
HOWE PARK	CT1 1TQ	Taylor Wimpey - soon to be handed over to Howe Park Trust. Currently unsecure	None	65mx45m	2021	Good	No	-	-	-	
SIMON LANGTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS	CT4 7AS	Education - Secured use for rugby with 12 hours per week	4 changing rooms. 1 small changing room used for girls but this next to the Spectator toilet next to girls changing so safeguarding issue. Major roof structural issues. Lots of damp issues and internal plastering is failing.	11v11 3G 115mx75m	2014		Yes	34	34	0	
THE BELMONT GROUND	CT5 1QJ	Club lease	Poor quality changing rooms and clubhouse facilities. Limited accessible access. 2x CR with communal showers. 1x officials CR.	11v11 3G (115mx55m)	2006 (2021)	Good	Yes	34	34	0	
THE CREST STADIUM	CT6 5SG	Club lease - 13 years remaining. Secure	2x changing rooms and clubhouse facilities which the club rate as poor quality. Parking is limited and remains an issue for the club.	11v11 3G (110mx80m)	2022	Good	Yes	34	34	0	

[1] Peak hours = M-Th 5-9pm, Fri 5-7pm, S&S 9-5pm = 34hrs

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary facilities	AGP Size & Type	Date built (refurbished)	Rating	On FA 3G Reg.	Peak hrs available[1]	Use in peak hours	Supply / Demand Balance	RAG
THE WHITSTABLE SCHOOL	CT5 1PX	Education site - Unaware of CUA	Only one accessible toilet is made available to hirers	11v11 3G (110mx63m)	2009	Poor	No	29.5	16	13.5	
UNIVERSITY OF KENT (THE PAVILION)	CT2 7SR	Education site - Unaware of CUA	2 pavilions. Old pavilion has 8 mixed gender changing rooms with 2x communal shower rooms in each wing. The new pavilion has 3 disabled toilets and an accessible shower. 10x changing rooms with integrated showers. 4x officials changing rooms.	11v11 3G (106mx72m)	2009 (2022)	Good	Yes	34	34	0	
				11v11 3G (125mx80m)	2015 (2017)	Standard	Yes	34	34	0	

Figure 2.12: Hockey sand based AGPs used for football training - Situation at Individual Sites

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary facilities	AGP Size and Type	Date built (last refurb)	Pitch Rating	Peak hours available[2]	Use in peak hours[3]	Supply/ Demand Balance	RAG
BAY SPORTS ARENA	CT6 7NS	Education site - Unaware of CUA	6 indoor changing rooms with showers. 4 external changing rooms with showers.	SD 97x61m	2001	Poor	29	11.5 (100% football usage)	18.5	
POLO FARM SPORTS CLUB	CT3 4AF	Sports Club	Two buildings at Polo Farm Sports Club with ancillary facilities. Building 1 (Hockey) has 5 changing rooms (3 male, 2 female) with shower and toilet facilities. Building 2 (Cricket) has separate facilities including changing rooms for both male and female. It only has 1 disabled shower for 7 changing rooms.	SD 91m x55m	1992 (2015)	Good	31	25 88% hockey (22 hours) 12% football (3 hours)	6	

[2] Peak hours = M-Th 6-9:30pm, Fri 6-9pm, S&S 10-5pm = 31hrs
[3] T = Training, M = Match use

Site	Postcode	Security of access	Ancillary facilities	AGP Size and Type	Date built (last refurb)	Pitch Rating	Peak hours available[2]	Use in peak hours[3]	Supply/ Demand Balance	RAG
ST EDMUNDS SCHOOL (CANTERBURY)	CT2 8HU	Education site - Unaware of CUA	2 portable toilets used by hirers. Canterbury Eagles own their own storage container on site. School own the goals.	SD 97m x 61m	2013	Good	17	17 (100% football)	0	

2.17 Ancillary Facilities

The ancillary facilities across Canterbury are generally of standard quality. Figures 2.5-2.9 detail the situation at each site. Some sites in Canterbury either do not have ancillary facilities or have limited ancillary facilities (lack of changing space), whilst not essential for all youth football, many clubs prefer to have access to changing rooms, and access to toilets should be a minimum to ensure the safeguarding of players and especially female players. Access to at least standard quality ancillary facilities can support growth of football teams, particular for women and girls' teams. Sites where ancillary facility issues have been identified through consultation or site visits are detailed in figure 2.13 below.

Figure 2.13 – Canterbury Ancillary Facility issues

Site	Ancillary Facility Issues
Brickfield Recreation Ground	No ancillary facilities on site
The Bear Trap	No ancillary facilities on site
Radfall Recreation Ground	Wooden changing room block and toilet facilities which are not fit for purpose. Issues with water ingress and flooding.
Simon Langton Grammar School for Girls	No changing rooms available, only toilets. Small external building with a kitchen but not regularly used
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	Showers do not work and there is no heating or hot water on site. 1 small changing room is used for girls changing but is adjacent to the spectator toilets which causes safeguarding concerns. Structural issues with the roof. Damp and internal plastering is failing.
The Belmont Stadium	Changing facilities are outdated and not suitable to meet the needs of women and girls' teams or disability participation.

3. Football Demand (step 3)

The findings relating to football pitch demand in Canterbury are summarised in this section of the report.

3.1 Clubs and Teams

In the 2025/26 season, Canterbury had a total of 50 affiliated clubs (including separately constituted youth sections of adult clubs) with a total of 306 teams. There are three adult disability teams and one U16 disability team in Canterbury (Tankerton x2, Canterbury Eagles x1, and Tyler Hill x1). The total number of affiliated teams has increased by 74 teams – 32% - since the last strategy in 2020 when 232 affiliated teams were registered in the area. The previous strategy did not state the total number of community clubs based in Canterbury. Figure 3.1 summarises the change in affiliated clubs and teams.

Figure 3.1- Changes in the number of clubs and teams in the Canterbury District since 2020

No. of Affiliated Clubs			
	2020	**2025**	**Change**
No of clubs	-	50	**-**
No. of Affiliated Teams			
	2020	**2025**	**Change**
Adult Male (16+)	48	72*	**+24**
Adult Female	7	19**	**+12**
Junior Male & Mixed	56	102	**+46**
Junior Female	5	24	**+19**
Mini Soccer	116	89***	**-25**
Total Football teams	**232**	**306**	**+74**

*Includes 3 disability teams (2x6v6, 1x 7v7), 8x walking football teams and 2 futsal teams
** includes 6 small sided teams
*** includes 2x U5 / development teams

In comparing affiliated provision against the previous strategy 30% of teams in Canterbury are adult teams (up from 24% in 2020), 41% are junior teams (up from 26% in 2020), 29% are mini-soccer teams (down from 50%). The above table shows that the number of women's teams in the area has more than doubled and there has been a particularly large growth in the Junior age group, whilst mini soccer growth has stalled against the trend in other areas.

Five of the clubs in Canterbury have youth sections with more than 15 age group teams. Of which, four clubs have 20 or more teams. Whitstable Town FC have the largest youth section with 36 teams, Herne Bay Youth have 31 teams, Canterbury Eagles have 28 teams, and Herne Bay Harriers have 23 teams.

3.2 Active Lives Survey

The most recently published findings of the national Active Lives Adult Survey[4] showed that self-reported regular participation (i.e., taken part at least twice in the last 28 days) in football within England by adults (aged 16+) has continued to grow to 4.7% in November 2024 - 25.

If football participation in Canterbury were at the national average in November 2025 (i.e., 4.7%), this would indicate around 6,431 adults (aged 16+) living in Canterbury play football out of a 16+ adult population of approximately 136,813[5]. This playing population considers both regular club participation and regular informal recreational play in parks and hired facilities, and Canterbury City residents who participate outside of the area.

[4] Active Lives Adult Survey November 2024-25, Sport England
[5] 2022 ONS Subnational Population Projections for 2026 and Census 2021 age brackets percentages

The 'adult' affiliated football club playing membership in Canterbury is approximately 1,820 players (91x 16+ 11v11 teams with an estimated squad size of 20). Assuming adult football participation in Canterbury is in line with the current national average of 4.7%, this suggests that 72% of total regular adult football participation is either through informal activity outside of a club environment (i.e., through informal games with family, friends and/or work colleagues in parks or in small sided leagues or is exported to other clubs outside of the area.

This shows the potential latent demand for adult participation in football should sufficient opportunities be provided as well as the importance of retaining the provision of grass open spaces and informal football facilities to cater for this recreational demand. It should also be noted that the Active Lives Survey is specific to adult participation and does not consider youth male or female participation.

3.3 Expressed Demand

Expressed demand in Canterbury for all levels and types of football is summarised in this section. Sources of demand information include FA databases, club and league websites, club survey returns, and information gathered from site visits and meetings. The home ground and training ground of each club is listed where identified and league information is based on 2025/26 season. Venues outside of Canterbury are noted in Italics.

Open Age Adult Football – There are three men's and one women's team based in Canterbury who play within the National League Pyramid. Herne Bay FC Men's and Whitstable Town FC First play at Step 4 in the Isthmian Football League whilst Herne Bay FC Women play in tier 6 in the London and Southeast Regional Women's Football League. The other men's club, Faversham Strike Force, within the National League Pyramid play at step 5 and ground share the site at Whitstable Town FC. These clubs are required to comply with the FA's minimum ground grading guidelines to maintain their league status. This includes promotion from their current division / league which requires the club's home ground to meet the any additional requirement of the corresponding ground grading at each 'Step' or 'Tier'.

Figure 3.1: Senior Adult Football League Clubs

Senior Football Clubs	League(s) – 25/26 season	Home Ground	Training Ground
Step 4			
Herne Bay FC First	Isthmian South East Division	The Crest Stadium	The Crest Stadium
Whitstable Town FC First	Isthmian South East Division	Whitstable Town FC	Whitstable Town FC
Step 5			
Faversham Strike Force Men's First Team	Southern Counties East Football League	Whitstable Town FC	
Tier 6			
Herne Bay FC Women First Team	London and Southeast Regional Women's FL	The Crest Stadium	The Crest Stadium

There are an additional 23 other affiliated adult men's clubs with a total of 54 teams based in Canterbury, these are detailed in figure 3.2 below showing the league they play in, home ground and training ground where known.

Figure 3.2: Men's Adult League Clubs Based in Canterbury

Other Adult Men's League Clubs	League(s)	Home Ground(s)	Training Ground(s)
Bekesbourne FC	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	Bekesbourne Recreation Ground	Bekesbourne Recreation Ground
Bourne FC	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	Bekesbourne Recreation Ground	
Canterbury Christ Church University College • 3 teams	BUCS Men's Football	Stodmarsh Playing Fields	
Canterbury City FC	Kent County Football League	Thannington Recreation Ground	*Folkestone Invicta FC*
Canterbury Eagles • 4 teams	Kent County Football League The Len Martin Thanet and District Football League Kent Masters Conference Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys University of Kent Sports Centre Victoria Recreation Ground	University of Kent Sports Centre Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys Victoria Recreation Ground
Canterbury Red Star	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	Victoria Recreation Ground	University of Kent
Chartham Sports Club • 3 teams	Ashford and District Sunday League The Len Martin Thanet and District Football League Kent Masters Conference	Memorial Playing Field	Memorial Playing Field
FC Concept	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	St Anselm's R.C. School	
Herne Bay FC • 4 teams	National League U19 Alliance Southern Counties East Football League The Len Martin Thanet and District Football League Kent Masters Conference	The Crest Stadium	Herne Bay High School
Herne Bay Youth Charity Team	Unknown	Herne Bay Sports Hub	
Heron United	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	Sturry FC	
Littlebourne FC • 2 teams	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League Kent County Football League	Littlebourne Recreation Ground	
Maidens Head	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	Victoria Recreation Ground	

Other Adult Men's League Clubs	League(s)	Home Ground(s)	Training Ground(s)
Memorial Park Rangers	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	Herne Bay Memorial Park	Herne Bay Football Club The Cherry Orchard Playing Field
Monument FC	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	Patrixbourne Road Recreation Ground	
NHS Kent	Kent FA Recreational Cup	Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	
Red Lion Bridge	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	Patrixbourne Road Recreation Ground	
Rising Sun FC	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	The Cherry Orchard Playing Field	
Tankerton FC • 2 teams	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League	Seaview Caravan Park	The Whitstable School
The Plough Whitstable FC • 3 teams	Herne Bay and Whitstable Sunday League The Len Martin Thanet and District Football League	Swalecliffe Recreation Ground	
The University of Kent Staff	Kent FA Recreational Cup	University of Kent (The Pavillion)	University of Kent (The Pavillion)
University Of Kent • 3 teams	BUCS Men's Football Canterbury and District Football League.	University of Kent (The Pavillion)	University of Kent (The Pavillion)
University Of Kent Monument	Canterbury and District Football League	University of Kent Sport Centre	
Whitstable Town FC • 5 teams	Youth Development League National League U19 Alliance Southern Counties East Football League The Len Martin Thanet and District Football League	Whitstable Town FC	

Youth football - There are 16 youth football clubs in Canterbury with a total of 195 youth boys/ mixed teams.

Figure 3.3: Youth and Mini Soccer Clubs with youth boys/mixed teams

Youth and Mini Soccer Teams	League(s)	Home Ground(s)	Training Ground(s)
Anthony Deer Football Academy • 4 teams (U9, U11, U14, U17)	Unknown	Herne Bay Sports Hub	
Barham FC • 7 teams (2xU8, U9, U10, 2xU11, U12)	Faversham & District Youth Football League	The Bear Trap	The Bear Trap

Youth and Mini Soccer Teams	League(s)	Home Ground(s)	Training Ground(s)
Canterbury Eagles • 19 teams (U6, U7, 2xU8, 2xU9, 2xU10, 3xU11, 2xU12, U13, U14, 2xU15, U16, U18)	Faversham & District Youth Football League East Kent Youth League	Barton Manor School St Anselm's R.C School Stodmarsh Playing Field Blean Primary School Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys St Edmund's School	University of Kent Sports Centre Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys Victoria Recreation Ground
Canterbury Youth FC • 15 teams (U6, 2xU8, 2xU9, 2xU10, 3xU12 2xU13, 3xU15)	East Kent Youth League Faversham & District Youth Football League	Bekesbourne Recreation Ground University of Kent Sport Centre	University of Kent Sports Ground
Chartham Sports Club • 14 teams (U7, U8, 2xU9, U10, 2xU11, U12, U13, 2xU14, U15, U16, U17)	East Kent Youth League Faversham & District Youth Football League	St Augustine's Recreation Ground Chartham Primary School	Chartham Sports Club Chartham Primary School
Dawes Hernhill Herons • 3 teams (2xU15, U18)	Faversham & District Youth Football League Ashford And District Youth League	Rough Common Playing Field St Anselm's R.C School	
Football Futures Kent Ltd • 7 teams (U9, U10, U12, U14, U15, U16, U17)	Junior Premier League	Whitstable Town FC The Whitstable School	
Herne Bay FC • 9 teams (U11, U12, U13, 2xU14, U15, U16, 2xU18)	Kent Youth League Faversham & District Youth Football League	The Crest Stadium Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys Herne Bay High School	Herne Bay High School
Herne Bay Harriers • 23 teams (U6, 3xU7, 4xU8, 4xU9, 2xU10, 2xU11, 2xU12, 3xU13, U15, U16)	Faversham & District Youth Football League East Kent Youth League	The Cherry Orchard Playing Field Herne Church of England Junior School	Herne Bay High School
Herne Bay Youth • 27 teams (2xU5, U7, 3xU8, 3xU9, 3xU10, 3xU11, 3xU12 3xU13, 3xU14, 2xU15, U18)	Faversham & District Youth Football League Kent Youth League East Kent Youth League	Herne Bay Sports Hub	
Rising Stars FC • 11 teams (U7, U8, 2xU9, U12, 2xU13, U14, U15, U16, U18)	Faversham & District Youth Football League East Kent Youth League	Whitstable Sports Centre The Archbishop's School Canterbury Academy Campus Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	Abbey School St Edmunds School Whitstable School
Sturry FC	Faversham & District Youth Football League	Sturry FC	Sturry FC
Sturry Kings • 9 teams (U7, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U16)	Faversham & District Youth Football League East Kent Youth League	Spires Academy (new site)	St Edmunds School
Tankerton FC • 10 teams (2xU8, U9, 2xU10, U12, U13, U14 U15, U16)	Faversham & District Youth Football League East Kent Youth League	Seaview Caravan Park	The Whitstable School

Youth and Mini Soccer Teams	League(s)	Home Ground(s)	Training Ground(s)
Tyler Hill Youth • 9 teams (U7, 2xU9, 3xU10, U11, 2xU12)	Faversham & District Youth Football League	Tyler Hill Playing Field	Herne Bay High School Herne Bay Sports Hub Simon Langton Boys School
Whitstable Town FC Youth • 27 teams (2XU7, 2XU8, 3XU9, 3XU10, 3XU11, 2XU12, 3Xu13, 2xU14, 2xU15, 2xU16, 3xU18)	Kent Youth League Faversham & District Youth Football League East Kent Youth League	Radfall Recreation Ground Swalecliffe Community Primary Whitstable Town FC	

Women and girls' football - There are a total of 10 other women and girls' clubs affiliated to the FA with a total of 49 teams.

Figure 3.4: Clubs with Women and Girls' Teams

Women and Girls' Teams	Leagues	Home Ground	Training Grounds
Canterbury Christ Church University College • 2 teams	BUCS Women's Football BUCS Women's Futsal	Stodmarsh Playing Fields Christ Church Sport Centre	
Canterbury Eagles • 16 teams (2Xu9, U10, 2XU11, U12, 2XU13, U14, U15, 2XU18, 4x adult)	Kent Girls/Ladies Football League Kent Women's Walking Football Southeast Counties Women's League Kent Futsal League	Barton Manor School Stodmarsh Playing Field Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	University of Kent Sports Centre Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys Victoria Recreation Ground
Herne Bay FC • 3 teams (U8, U18, 1x adult)	Kent Girls/Ladies Football League Southeast Counties Women's League	The Crest Stadium Spires Academy (new site)	Herne Bay High School Herne Bay FC
Herne Bay Youth • 5 teams (U8, U11, U12, U13, U15)	Kent Girls/Ladies Football League	Herne Bay Sports Hub	
Rising Stars FC • 1 team (U15)	Kent Girls/Ladies Football League	Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	Herne Bay FC
Sturry FC • 1 team (U15)	Kent Girls/Ladies Football League	Sturry FC	
Tankerton FC • 2 teams (U15, 1x adult)	Kent Girls/Ladies Football League	Seaview Caravan Park	The Whitstable School
The Plough Whitstable FC • 2 teams (2x adult)	Southeast Counties Women's League Kent Futsal League	Swalecliffe Recreation Ground	
University Of Kent Women • 4 teams (4x adult)	BUCS Women's Football	University of Kent (The Pavillion)	University of Kent (The Pavillion)
Whitstable Town FC • 13 teams (2XU10, U11, 3XU12, 3XU13, U14, 2XU16, 1x adult)	Kent Women's Walking Football Kent Girls/Ladies Football League Junior Premier League	Whitstable Town FC Radfall Recreation ground The Archbishops School	

Disability Football – There are 4 affiliated disability specific teams in Canterbury. Tankerton FC have 2 teams and Canterbury Eagles and Tyler Hill both have one.

Disability Teams	Main venue
Canterbury Eagles • 1 team (adult)	Barton Manor School
Tankerton FC • 2 teams (U16, adult)	Seaview Caravan Park
Tyler Hil SEN 1 team (adult)	University of Kent Sport Centre

3.4 Casual Demand

Casual football play among groups of children and adults, using free to use open access grass and MUGA in public parks continues to be a major feature of football demand. Indeed, the Active Lives Survey data suggests that 72% of all regular adult football played in the area is unaffiliated football within small-sided leagues, friendly games or park kick-abouts.

As identified in the supply section of the report, Canterbury provides facilities for informal football demand by maintaining open areas of grass in parks and open spaces or open access MUGAs. Where these informal play facilities are provided in parks alongside formal pitches designated for match play, they help to reduce wear of the formal pitches.

3.5 Unmet / Latent Demand

Three clubs have reported unmet demand. Sturry Kings stated that the facilities available to them haven't allowed them to keep up with growing demand caused by housing developments in the local area. Whitstable Town FC state that their growth is specifically limited by the capacity of their facilities and are having to turn players away. Rising Stars FC state that they have players who want to join, however the club are restricted due to a lack of home ground.

19 other clubs highlighted ambitions for growth to meet perceived latent demand, e.g., teams that could be created if additional pitch provision and volunteers were available. This information is drawn from the club consultation surveys carried out from January 2026 to July 2026 and therefore only includes those clubs/ organisations that completed the survey. Conversion of this perceived latent demand into new teams will depend on these clubs engaging sufficient volunteer team managers and coaches as well as securing suitable pitches to play and train on in the peak period. Figure 3.6 outlines the growth aspirations of clubs/ organisations, and it is apparent that there is latent demand in the area for all formats of football from youth to adult football including women and girls' provision. This demand is explored further in Section 5 which outlines the effect of these potential demand trends.

Figure 3.6: Canterbury Football Clubs - Self-Reported Team Growth Plans

Club	Growth Aspirations
Barham Bears FC	Want to develop teams above U12 to have a full complement of junior teams and develop their first men's team. Aspirations to improve the parking and develop a clubhouse.
Bekesbourne FC	The club want to encourage more people to get involved and help grow the club.
Canterbury Bombers	Looking to develop a youth section and second men's team
Canterbury City FC	Secure a home ground to allow the club to redevelop.
Canterbury Eagles	Secure access to additional facilities for both matches and training to increase the number of teams across all age groups and expand community programmes.
Canterbury Eagles FC	The club plan to develop additional teams for all age groups and gain more access to 3G AGPs to accommodate growth.
Canterbury Eagles Sunday	Aiming to develop a reserve team.
Canterbury Mariners	*Club have plans to grow but did not provide details*
Canterbury Red Star	Grow into Saturday County Football and develop a reserves team.

Club	Growth Aspirations
Canterbury Youth FC	Secure a home ground that meets the needs of the club and allows them to grow.
Chartham Sports FC	Expand to 2 teams per age group and add girls' teams
Herne Bay FC	*Club have plans to grow but did not provide details*
Herne Bay FC Women	Expand youth teams to offer a pathway all the way through to women's football.
Herne Bay Harriers FC	Set up a girl's section for the 2027/28 season and expect their team numbers to increase from 23 to 30 within 3 years.
Memorial Park Rangers	The club plan to develop an additional senior men's team.
Rising Stars FC	Aspirations to secure a home ground and expand the club. Also looking to grow their girl's section and wildcats sessions.
Sturry FC	Developing a new men's team and adding an additional youth team from the 2026/27 season.
Sturry Kings	Seeking secure access to new grass pitch sites to help expand the club
Tankerton FC	Open the club's new site with grass pitches and a community sports hub.
Tyler Hill Youth	Intend to develop 1-2 more teams
Whitstable Juniors	Consistent weekly training sessions for girls' teams and workshops with Faversham Town FC
Whitstable Town FC	The club are interested in developing additional facilities if land becomes available within suitable catchment of their home ground. This will allow the club to expand participation and deliver inclusive football opportunities.

3.6 Displaced and Imported Demand

The research and consultation show that in relation to match play (competitive football) and training, there is little displaced demand of football - i.e., teams of clubs based in Canterbury travelling outside the area. Whitstable Reckers use Faversham Recreation Ground, Swale, for matches due to a lack of bookable pitches in Whitstable. Sturry Kings FC report use of Baypoint Sports Centre, Dover, to host training and matches. Rising Stars FC, utilise the 3G pitch at Abbey School, Swale. This suggests that there is a need for additional training facilities in the north west of the local authority area.

There was no reported imported demand from clubs based outside of the local authority area utilising facilities within Canterbury.

Seven clubs/ organisations in the area report teams training on sand dressed artificial pitches (Herne Bay Harriers, Tyler Hill Youth FC, Canterbury Youth FC, Canterbury Eagles, Sturry Kings, Rising Stars, and Chartham Sports). It is also likely some training takes place on grass pitches particularly on the lighter evenings and at weekends.

4. The Situation at Individual Football Sites (step 4)

4.1 Grass Pitch Sites

The grass football pitches were assessed in December and January of the 2025/26 season, with most of the sites assessed using the methodology established by Sport England and the FA in the published Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance (2013) a non-technical visual site assessment. Six of the grass pitch football sites had a more in-depth assessment using the Football Foundation's PitchPower methodology and reporting. Kent FA have reviewed the findings of these site-specific assessments and agreed the quality ratings as a basis for comparison of the amount of play each site can accommodate (carrying capacity) against the amount of play that takes place. Carrying capacity is a measure of the number of match equivalent sessions per week for community use each pitch can take without adversely affecting its quality.

The following pitch carrying capacities have been used and are consistent with the PPS Guidance methodology, informed (where applicable) by the Performance Quality Standard ratings (from Poor to Advanced) in the PitchPower Assessment Reports.

Figure 4.1: Grass Football Pitch Carrying Capacity

PPS Guide ratings/ Pitch Power PQS ratings	Adult Football (11v11)	Junior Football (9v9, 11v11)	Mini Soccer (5v5, 7v7)
	Number of match equivalent sessions a week		
Good / Good or Advanced	3	4	6
Standard / Basic	2	2	4
Poor / Poor	1	1	2

The full pitch audit (figures 2.5-2.9) details the situation at each individual football site with regard to:

1. *Pitch supply* (including the quality ratings) and conclusions reached as to the amount of play a site can accommodate (i.e., its carrying capacity for community use).
2. *The amount of play that takes place at each site* (i.e., the expressed demand where known) adjusted to reflect any casual or education use in addition to club use for matches and training.
3. *The comparison* (shown as a RAG rating) as to whether, for each pitch type it contains, a site is:
   - **RED** - Being overplayed (current use exceeds the carrying capacity)
   - **AMBER** - Being played to the level the site can sustain (current use matches the carrying capacity), or
   - **GREEN** - Potentially able to accommodate some additional play (current use falls below the carrying capacity)

There are 6 sites highlighted from the site audit spreadsheet as **RED** rated sites where the majority of the available natural turf football pitches are overplayed.

- Brickfield Recreation Ground
- Barton Manor School
- Bekesbourne Recreation Ground
- Radfall Recreation Ground
- Stodmarsh Playing Field
- Sturry FC

Two sites from the full site audit are **AMBER** rated where the majority of the natural turf pitches are played at (or very close to) their playing capacity:

- Patrixbourne Road Recreation Ground
- Swalecliffe Recreation Ground

The remaining sites in Canterbury have grass pitches with some spare capacity, however in order to determine if this capacity is available in the peak period (weekends for match play) a review of each site is undertaken below to determine if that capacity can accommodate extra play in the peak period.

In some cases, sites may have capacity but be unusable in peak times due to set kick off times for teams (usually in adult football), others maybe managed to below capacity to account for recreational / friendly matches, and others will not have secured community use e.g., education sites, in these cases or where pitches are rated as poor quality this capacity is discounted as not available in peak times. In other cases, additional matches can be accommodated due to leagues allowing flexible kick off times enabling a number of games to take place throughout the day (usually youth football).

Figure 4.2 below lists the sites where there is spare capacity in the peak period, but this capacity is discounted and provides the rationale for this.

Figure 4.2 – Pitches where spare capacity is discounted

Pitch sites with spare capacity	Pitch Type	Total pitch capacity surplus	Capacity discounted	Comments/ Rationale
The Bear Trap	Mini 7v7	1.5	1.5	Poor quality pitch
	Mini 7v7	1.5	1.5	Poor quality pitch
	Mini 5v5	1.5	1.5	Poor quality pitch
Blean Primary School	Mini 7v7	2	2	Unsecure provision
	Mini 5v5	3.5	3.5	Unsecure provision
Canterbury Academy Campus	Adult 11v11	0.5	0.5	Unsecure provision
Chartham Parish Council Village Hall	Adult 11v11	0.5	0.5	No additional capacity for matches in the peak period
Herne CE Junior School	Mini 7v7	2.5	2.5	Unsecure provision
	Mini 7v7	2.5	2.5	Unsecure provision
	Mini 5v5	2	2	Unsecure provision
	Mini 5v5	2	2	Unsecure provision
Simon Langton Girl's Grammar School	Mini 7v7	3	3	Unsecure provision
	Adult 11v11	1	1	Unsecure provision
	Junior 9v9	0.5	0.5	Unsecure provision
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	Junior 9v9	2	2	Unsecure provision
	Adult 11v11	0.5	0.5	Unsecure provision
	Adult 11v11	0.5	0.5	Unsecure provision
Spires Academy (Orion Spires) (new site)	Junior 9v9	1.5	1.5	Unsecure provision
	Junior 9v9	0.5	0.5	Unsecure provision and poor-quality pitch
St Anselms R.C. School	Junior 11v11	0.5	0.5	Unsecure provision
St Edmunds School	Junior 9v9	1.5	1.5	Unsecure provision
	Junior 11v11	1	1	Unsecure provision
	Junior 9v9	1.5	1.5	Unsecure provision
Tankerton Football Club Sports Ground	Junior 9v9	1.5	1.5	Unsecure provision
	Junior 9v9	2	2	Unsecure provision
	Mini 7v7	2.5	2.5	Unsecure provision
	Mini 5v5	3	3	Unsecure provision
The University of Kent	Adult 11v11	1.5	1.5	Unsecure provision and likely additional use of pitches by university teams outside of peak period impacting pitch capacity
	Junior 9v9	1.5	1.5	Unsecure provision and likely additional use of pitches by university teams outside of peak period impacting pitch capacity

Pitch sites with spare capacity	Pitch Type	Total pitch capacity surplus	Capacity discounted	Comments/ Rationale
	Mini 7v7	3.5	3.5	Unsecure provision and likely additional use of pitches by university teams outside of peak period impacting pitch capacity
	Adult 11v11	1.5	1.5	Unsecure provision and likely additional use of pitches by university teams outside of peak period impacting pitch capacity
Chartham Sports Club	Mini 7v7	0.5	0.5	Poor quality pitch
	Mini 7v7	1	1	Poor quality pitch
St Augustine's	Junior 11v11	0.5	0.5	Poor quality pitch
	Junior 9v9	0.5	0.5	Poor quality pitch

Figure 4.3 shows the total capacity of each grass pitch type and balance against use, highlighting the final capacity in the peak period after discounting capacity unavailable in the peak period as outlined in figure 4.2.

Figure 4.3: Grass Pitches Supply / Demand Balance –community football sites

Pitch Type	Capacity (MES / Week)	Weekly Use (MES)	Supply / Demand Balance	Capacity discounted	Capacity in peak period	Spare pitch equivalent*
Adult 11v11 (Open Age, Veterans, U19, U18, U17)	50	32	18	6	**12**	**6**
Junior 11v11 (U13-U16)	24	19	5	2	**3**	**1**
Junior 9v9 (U11-U12	38	19.5	18.5	13	**5.5**	**2**
Mini Soccer 7v7 (U9-U10)	44	23.5	20.5	20.5	**0**	**0**
Mini Soccer 5v5 (U7-U8)	38	12.5	25.5	12	**13.5**	**3**
Total	**194**	**106.5**	**87.5**	**53.5**	**34**	**12**

*Based on standard pitch ratings rounded down to whole number.

Whilst there appears to be a surplus of match equivalent sessions (MES) per week for football pitches in Canterbury, when these MES are converted into pitch equivalents (based on a standard quality pitch), it shows that the actual peak period supply of pitches is only slightly greater than demand. Section 5 below highlights that this spare capacity id needed to meet future demand.

4.3 The FA National Football Facilities Strategy

In 2018, in partnership with the Football Foundation and Sport England, the Football Association developed a ten-year investment plan in facilities for grass roots football - *The National Football Facilities Strategy 2018-2028*. The facilities strategy aims to ensure that by 2028:

- Every FA-affiliated club has access to a 3G artificial pitch for training and, potentially, matches.
- Accelerated improvements are made to the key grass pitch sites across England to reduce fixture cancellations.

To support delivery of the FA's new national strategy titled '*A Thriving Grassroots Game'*, Kent FA have launched their strategy Play-Protect-Promote and in partnership with the Football

Foundation has set these ambitions for Kent football in relation to the overarching priority to building more and improving existing facilities:

- Improve the quality of 471 grass pitches.
- Support the development of 10 new 3G pitches.
- Create inclusive and accessible football facilities ensuring equal access for females.
- Secure £15m of investment into Kent football facilities.

4.4 Canterbury Local Football Facilities Plan

The Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP) for Canterbury was updated in November 2024 and identifies the key projects to increase 11v11 3G pitch provision and improve ancillary facilities in the area. The plan identifies a need for one additional 11v11 3G pitch and highlighted Herne Bay High School as a suitable location for the development of this pitch. The plan also identifies a need to resurface the 3G AGP at Whitstable School. Radfall Recreation Ground was identified as the only ancillary facilities project.

The FA has seen unprecedented growth over the last five years, particularly in the youth and women and girls' game. Overall participation is estimated to grow year on year, equating to an additional 83 teams in the local authority by 2030, of which 32 will come from women and girls. This represents the equivalent of two additional full sized 11v11 3G AGPs.

The Playing Pitch Strategy methodology is more detailed than that used to inform the LFFP investment priorities and as such Sport England would highlight that the PPS should be referred to as the evidence base to inform the development planning process.

4.5 FA Training Scenario for 3G AGP Assessments of Need

The FA has designed a model scenario to help understand what demand there may be for full size equivalent floodlit 3G AGPs if increased amounts of play were to take place on them. The scenario question tested is: *How many full size floodlit 3G AGPs may be required to meet demand within Canterbury if all teams playing competitive football had access to a full size floodlit 3G AGP to train on once a week?*

Within Canterbury 6/7 of the 11v11 floodlit 3G AGPs on the FA Register (The Whitstable School is not on the FA Register) which have community use for football during peak periods. These pitches are suitable to sustain matchplay and training, whereas all 3G pitches are suitable to support training demand. As a guide the FA suggest that one 11v11 floodlit 3G AGP accommodates the training demand from 38 teams. The information from the assessment indicates that there are 306 teams playing competitive affiliated football in Canterbury and as such the 1:38 ratio suggests that 8 (rounded from 8.05) 11v11 equivalent floodlit 3G AGPs would be required to meet 100% of team football training on 3G within the area. As such the FA training model suggests there is a need for a minimum of 1 further accessible 11v11 3G pitch in the area to support current training and match play demands.

The majority of 11v11 3G pitches in the area are used to capacity during peak hours, with only Whitstable School being used at less than full capacity. It should also be noted that there is currently 31.5 hours of football being played on SD AGPs in the peak period, nearly equivalent to a full 3G AGP (34 hours).

The club training scenario calculation also takes no account of the accessibility of the available AGPs to clubs nor cost / affordability issues. As highlighted in section 3.6 and above, there is a significant proportion of clubs that are currently training on SD AGPs, which are not the preferred

surface for regular football use, and clubs that are struggling to secure training facilities. This suggests that there is demand for an additional 3G AGP on top of the current shortfall highlighted by the FA training model.

Based on the FA training model and the level of football use of SD AGPs in Canterbury, the current shortfall of FA registered 11v11 3G AGPs is two. This is reviewed further and potential projects to meet this shortfall identified in Section 5 below.

5. The Current and Future Picture of Provision for Football (step 5)

5.1 Grass Pitches

A number of playing field sites in Canterbury have pitches that are being played to capacity or overplayed. These are generally sites that are the home grounds for clubs with a large number of teams and a limited number of pitches, such as Bekesbourne Recreation Ground (Canterbury City Youth FC), and Radfall Recreation Ground (Whitstable Town FC).

There is limited capacity for 11v11, 9v9, and 5v5 football in Canterbury in the peak period once poor pitches and those with unsecured access are discounted, and no capacity for 7v7 football. Any spare capacity will be needed in the future with the increasing demand for football pitches and clubs future growth ambitions, as identified in figure 5.3 below.

5.2 AGPs

The trends in football point to the continuing growth in youth, mini soccer and in particular women and girls' football. Growth has also been seen in the recreational game including walking football, small sided and women's recreation participation. This growth has seen more and more demand for artificial grass pitches. The provision of more full size 3G football AGPs on the FA Register especially where large youth clubs are struggling for pitch space will help to accommodate both training and match day provision reducing the need for training on grass or sand dressed pitches as well as prevent the overuse of grass pitches for matches enabling the clubs to grow and meet this demand.

5.3 Future Demand

To estimate the potential impact of population growth over the strategy period to 2042 on the need for football pitch capacity in the peak period, Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) tool has been used to determine the number of teams likely to be generated in the future based on population growth.

To meet football demand from 22,781 additional residents (as currently forecast[6]) and assuming current levels of football demand by age group for matches and training in the peak period, the PPC indicates that the equivalent capacity (rounded) of 5 adult football pitches, 9 junior football pitches and 6 mini soccer pitches will be needed in the area (totalling 20 natural turf pitches) as well as 37.5 hours of estimated demand for training per week, equivalent to a full sized 3G AGP. This is summarised below in figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Demand from population growth

Football	No of Pitches to meet demand
Adult	4.62 (5)
Junior	8.64 (9)
Mini	5.49 (6)
Total Grass pitches	**20 (rounded)**
Training	37.5 hours
Total AGP	**0.99 (1)**

Potential effect of demand trends (how pitch sports are played) – Among adults, national trends show a growth in women's football in addition to men's football participation levels sustaining after a period of decline. In Canterbury the number of men's and women's team's affiliations have increased by 36 teams (+24 and +12 respectively, as previously shown in figure

[6] Population change from the 2026 to 2042 based on Canterbury City Council Local Plan

3.1). The growth in youth football has increased the most in the Junior Male and Mixed category with an additional 46 teams since the last strategy and youth female teams have grown by an additional 19 teams. Against the trend seen in many local authorities, the number of mini soccer teams has decreased by 25 teams. As a number of large youth clubs are already training at facilities which are unsuitable for football, it is likely that the lack of training space has constrained the growth of these clubs, which is confirmed by a number of clubs stating that they have latent demand (section 3.5) which they cannot currently meet.

Clubs/ organisations, through their survey returns have indicated further growth aspirations for adult and youth teams. A total of 22 clubs in Canterbury outlined growth aspirations, as summarised in Section 3, figure 3.6, and whilst clubs are reliant on volunteers to deliver this growth, given the consultation findings it appears evident that with sufficient facilities each club could grow by 1-2 teams a year, resulting in a possible additional 22-44 teams a year. There is also continued increase in demand for girls' football following the success of the England Women's team and the FA's investment in development programmes such as the girl's football school's partnership and Wildcats and Squad Girls at club level. The LFFP for Canterbury estimates a growth of an additional 83 teams in the area by 2030 of which 32 will come from women and girls.

The FA's insight nationally shows that youth football is growing at an average of 3.09% year on year. In view of these demand pressures, a further run of the Playing Pitch Calculator has been made to show the possible impact on pitch needs with an adjusted demand rate of 63% for youth football (3.09% iterative increase per year over 16 years).

Figure 5.2: Demand from population growth and increase in youth football demand (FA insight)

Football	No. of Pitches to meet demand
Adult	4.62 (5)
Junior	14.01 (15)
Mini	8.85 (9)
Total Grass pitches	**29 (rounded)**
Training	54.96 hours
Total AGP	**1.5**

To meet football demand from 22,781 additional residents and adjusting demand for a growth of 63% in youth football for matches and training in the peak period until 2042, the PPC indicates that the equivalent capacity (rounded) of 5 adult football pitches, 15 junior football pitches and 9 mini soccer pitches will be needed in the area (totalling 29 grass pitches) as well as 55 hours of training on a 3G pitch equivalent to the need for one and a half additional AGPs. The LFFP for Canterbury suggests the demand for 11v11 3G pitch provision could be more, with a growth of 83 teams requiring up to 2 additional 11v11 3G pitches by 2030.

It should be noted that the local growth rate for adult and junior football is much greater than the FA national model (3.09% per year), with adult men's football growing at 8.44% per year since the last strategy, women's football growing at 22.10% per year, youth boys growing at 12.74% per year, and youth girls growing at 36.85% per year. If these local growth trends were to continue over just the next 5 years, the demand for pitches would be significantly greater than highlighted above. Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator estimates that if local growth trends were observed over the next 5 years to 2031, there would be demand for 8 additional adult 11v11 pitches, 21 additional junior pitches, and 2 3G AGPs (67.99 training hours), therefore the projected demand highlighted in figure 5.2 should be considered the minimum estimated demand.

Figure 5.3 outlines the effects of the future demand highlighted in figure 5.2 on pitch capacity based on population growth and adjusted demand. This shows that the current supply of community available grass football pitches in the Canterbury District is not sufficient for the projected level of demand up to 2042.

Figure 5.3 Changes in capacity after accounting for future growth and demand.

Pitch Type	Pitch equivalent capacity in peak period	Demand (pitch equivalent)	
		Future demand	Total
Adult 11v11 (Open Age, Veterans, U19, U18, U17)	6	5	**1**
Junior 11v11 (U13-U16)	1	15	**-12**
Junior 9v9 (U11-U12	2		
Mini Soccer 7v7 (U9-U10)	0	9	**-6**
Mini Soccer 5v5 (U7-U8)	3		
Total	**12**	**29**	**-17**

Figure 5.3 outlines the effects of the future demand highlighted above on pitch capacity based on population growth and adjusted demand. This shows that the current supply of community available grass football pitches in Canterbury is not sufficient for the projected level of demand up to 2042. The key findings and issues for football is further explored in the following section.

6. Key findings and issues for football (step 6)

Figure 6.1: Football Key Findings and Issues

The main characteristics of the <u>current</u> supply of and demand for provision
Since the last assessment was carried out in 2020 there have been changes in both the supply of football pitches in Canterbury and in football demand. On the supply side there has been a reduction in grass pitches available for community use from 114 in 2020 to 82 in 2026 (with an additional 9 recreational pitches). There has been a loss of regular community use at St Stephens Junior School (1), Junior Kings School (4), Moat Lane Playing Fields (5), Swalecliffe Community Primary School (2), Canterbury Academy Campus (3 of the 5 pitches on site), and St Edmunds School (2). There has also been a reduction in the number of pitches marked at Herne Bay Memorial Park (2), Sturry FC (1), Tyler Hill Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground (1), Herne Bay High School (1), St Augustine's (1), Hampton School (2), Herne Bay High School (3), Sturry Primary (1), Whitstable School (2). The number of pitches marked at some sites that provide regular community use has increased since the previous strategy including The Bear Trap (1), Bekesbourne Recreation Ground (2), Herne CE Junior School (2), Radfall Recreation Ground (1), Simon Langton Girls Grammar School (2), St Edmunds School (1), Stodmarsh Playing Fields (2), Seaview Caravan Park (2), Thanington Recreation Ground (1), The Cherry Orchard Recreation Ground (1), University of Kent (1), and Chartham Sports Club (2). Regular community use has been secured at one pitch at St Anselms RC School (1). The stadia grass pitches previously in place at Whitstable Town FC (1) and Herne Bay FC (1) have both been replaced with new 3G AGPs since the previous strategy. Overall, 82 grass pitches (with an additional 9 recreational pitches) are identified as available for community football across Canterbury, on 32 operational playing pitch sites as well as 5x 11v11 3G pitches on the FA Register, 1x 11v11 3G AGP that is not currently on the FA Register, and 2x small sided 3G AGPs in the area. Football demand has continued to grow in all areas except mini soccer. In the 2025/26 season, Canterbury had a total of 306 affiliated football teams which represents an increase of 74 teams (32%) since the previous audit in 2020 when 232 affiliated teams were registered in the area. The reduction in grass pitches has been partly offset by the increase in 3G provision but the growth of teams in the area has created increasing pressure on the supply of pitches.
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet <u>current</u> demand?
<u>No</u> – Although there is currently sufficient grass pitch provision across Canterbury to meet the current demand by clubs, a number of playing field sites in Canterbury have pitches that are being played to capacity or overplayed, these are generally sites that are the home grounds for clubs with a large number of teams and a limited number of pitches, such as Bekesbourne Recreation Ground (Canterbury City Youth FC), and Radfall Recreation Ground (Whitstable Town FC). Any spare capacity on grass pitches is required to support the projected future growth, as outlined below. All the 3G pitches in the area, except for The Whitstable School due to its poor condition, are used at full capacity in the peak period and there are a number of clubs currently training on SD AGPs, which are unsuitable for football, which constrains the growth aspirations of these clubs. The

current shortfall based on the FA 1:38 training ratio is one pitch, but due to the number of clubs reporting training on SD AGPs and struggling to access suitable training facilities an additional pitch is needed to meet the needs of their teams for training. In total two FA Registered 11v11 3G AGPs are needed to meet current demand.

Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?

No – Nineteen grass pitches (23%) are not of sufficient quality, 57 are of standard quality (70%) and only 6 are of good quality (7%).

17 pitches have had pitch improvements recommended by the Grounds Maintenance Association through the Football Foundation's PitchPower pitch assessment reports and will benefit from the maintenance recommendations made and potential funding to support pitch improvements.

The quality of the majority of AGPs in the area are good or standard and are on the FA register for matches. The only 11v11 3G AGP which is poor quality and not currently on the FA Register is The Whitstable School, however the school are currently exploring options to resurface the pitch.

The ancillary facilities across the area are generally of standard quality. Some sites in Canterbury either do not have ancillary facilities or have limited ancillary facilities (lack of changing space), whilst not essential for all youth football, many clubs prefer to have access to changing rooms, and toilets should be a minimum to ensure the safeguarding of players especially for women and girls' football. Access to at least standard quality ancillary facilities can support growth of football teams, particular for women and girls' teams.

There are no changing facilities available for football clubs at Brickfield Recreation Ground and The Bear Trap. There are also poor-quality facilities at a number of sites that need improving including Radfall Recreation Ground, Simon Langton Grammar School for Girls, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys, and The Belmont Stadium.

What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?

Future demand for football facilities will put increasing pressure on the existing supply. To meet football demand from 22,781 additional residents (as currently forecast[7]) and assuming current levels of football demand by age group for matches and training in the peak period, the PPC indicates that the equivalent capacity (rounded) of 20 natural turf pitches as well as 37.5 hours of estimated demand for training per week, equivalent to one full sized 3G AGP.

The growth plans of the football clubs based in Canterbury will also place further pressure on pitch supply. 22 clubs responded to the survey indicating they have aspirations to increase the number of teams they run over the coming seasons, provided they have sufficient volunteers and pitches for matches and training can be secured.

This combined with the FA insight data showing a growth in youth teams of 3.09% per year means it is likely provision will increase above the usual rate. When adjusting for this increase in demand in youth football, the PPC indicates that the equivalent capacity (rounded) 29 grass pitches as well as 55 hours of training on a 3G pitch equivalent to the need for one and a half additional AGPs.

[7] Population change from the 2026 to 2042 based on Canterbury City Council Local Plan

The LFFP for Canterbury suggests the demand for 11v11 3G pitch provision could be more, with a growth of 83 teams requiring up to 2 additional 11v11 3G pitches by 2030. It should also be noted that the local growth rate for adult and junior football is much greater than the FA national model (3.09% per year), with adult men's football growing at 8.44% per year since the last strategy, women's football growing at 22.10% per year, youth boys growing at 12.74% per year, and youth girls growing at 36.85% per year. Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator estimates that if local growth trends were observed over just the next 5 years to 2031, there would be demand for 8 additional adult 11v11 pitches, 21 additional junior pitches, and 2 3G AGPs (67.99 training hours).

Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet future demand?

No – There is a requirement to develop additional 3G AGP and grass pitch provision in the area to meet future demand.

There is projected to be a future shortfall of 12 junior and 6 mini grass pitches. There are no education sites with grass pitches that have expressed an interest in increasing their community offer, however many education sites in the area with existing community use do not have CUAs to secure community use of their pitches. Securing CUAs at these education sites would secure the use of these pitches for future demand and contribute towards the shortfall highlighted above (Blean Primary School, Canterbury Academy Campus, Herne CE Junior School, Simon Langton Girls Grammar School, Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys, Spires Academy (new site), St Anselms RC School, St Edmunds School, and The University of Kent).

There is also one junior 11v11 grass pitch at Howe Park which is not currently available for community use, however, is due to be handed over to Howe Park Trust for community use shortly. Tankerton Football Club are due to move into a new site with 7 junior and mini pitches for the 2026/27 season. If the pitches at their existing site are retained and secured for community use, then this would greatly increase the stock of mini and junior pitches in the area.

Over the period of the strategy to 2042, to address forecast population growth, unmet and latent demand identified by clubs and to continue to deliver on the FA's strategy to transfer more affiliated competitive football to 3G surfaces, further secured provision of 3G AGP pitches is needed.

There is a need to resurface the existing 11v11 3G AGP at The Whitstable school to ensure it is registered on the FA 3G Pitch Register and able to sustain matchplay. The school are currently exploring options to resurface the pitch and should be supported to ensure the pitch is resurfaced to Football foundation specification and reinstated on the FA register.

The current and future shortfall of 3G AGPs in the area is equivalent to 3.5 11v11 3G AGPs.

There are plans to resurface the existing SD AGP at Herne Bay High School to a 3G surface. Funding and planning have been confirmed for the project. Once developed, the current shortfall of 3G AGPs will be reduced to 2.5.

The 7v7 3G AGP at Howe Park is due to be handed over from Taylor Wimpey to Howe Park Trust for community use shortly, reducing the current and future shortfall of 3G AGPs to 2.

Future population growth and demand suggest investment in two additional full-sized FA registered 3G AGP is needed to cater for the future training and match demand of community clubs in the area.

The leading projects for football are considered further in the main strategy with the action plan outlining the priority projects to meet the needs identified across Canterbury.



Canterbury City Council
Playing Pitch Strategy 2026
Appendix C
Assessment of Needs Report
Hockey

Appendix C: Hockey - Assessment of Needs (stages B and C)

1. Introduction

The findings of the assessment of needs for hockey facilities in Canterbury are summarised in this appendix of the main Playing Pitch Strategy.

There are currently two community hockey club based in the area, Herne Bay HC and Canterbury HC, as well as University teams and school activity. The University of Kent also affiliate to England Hockey, however as they are only accessible to students of the university, they are not considered a community club in this report.

Both Herne Bay HC and Canterbury HC responded to the club consultation survey, which accounts for 100% of all hockey teams playing in the area. Herne Bay HC are based at Herne Bay Sports Hub and have two sand-dressed (SD) AGPs on site which they use for training and matches. Canterbury HC are based at Polo Farm Sports Club, with three SD AGPs on site.

Since the last assessment of hockey facility needs in 2020, there has not been any development of new facilities for hockey, however regular community use has been lost at Kings School (Birley's Playing Fields) and Kings School Recreation Centre (Blores). From the consultation and research for this strategy there was also no recorded community use of the pitches at Kent College (Canterbury) or the University of Kent, which both previously supported community use in the last strategy. The pitch at Herne Bay High School has also been lost from supply as it is due to be resurfaced to 3G AGP.

Two of the pitches at Polo Farm Sports Complex have been resurfaced since the previous assessment.

Canterbury HC have a total of 16 adult teams and a junior section of 454 members, whilst Herne Bay HC have 9 adult teams and 118 junior members. There has not been any increase in the number of teams and, based on England Hockey affiliation data, there has been a decline of 97 junior members.

This retention of the number of adult teams alongside the decline in the number of junior members since the last strategy is reflected in both Herne Bay HC and Canterbury HC being able to support current demand for fixtures and training at their sites. The priority for hockey clubs in Canterbury is to ensure there is sufficient capacity for any potential future growth, ensuring facilities are well maintained and protected to support clubs in achieving their growth aspirations. This report covers this demand in more detail and explores future need in Canterbury.

2. Hockey Supply (step 2)

2.1 Hockey Pitches in Canterbury

There are currently six full sized sand dressed (SD) artificial grass pitches (AGP) with sports lighting, on 3 sites, currently available for community hockey.

- Herne Bay Sports Hub (91mx55m)
- Herne Bay Sports Hub (91mx55m)
- Polo Farm Sports Club (91mx55m)
- Polo Farm Sports Club (91mx55m)
- Polo Farm Sports Club (91m x 55m)
- St Edmunds School (97mx61m)

There are an additional 4 x SD AGPs within the local authority area that are not used by any community clubs. Kings School (Birley's Playing Fields) have a full size (97mx62m) SD AGP which is overmarked for small-sided football and tennis however the school do not provide any community access. The pitch also does not have sports lighting so cannot be used in the evenings. The small sided (44mx23m) SD AGP at Junior King's School was resurfaced in 2025 however is not available for community use. There was no reported community use of the two full size SD AGPs at Kent College (Canterbury) or the University of Kent.

The previous sand dressed hockey pitch at Herne Bay high School is scheduled to be resurfaced to a 3G AGP surface and has been removed from supply.

2.2 Distribution of Hockey AGP Sites

Figure 2.1 shows the distribution of full-sized hockey AGP sites available for community use in Canterbury. There is one site, Herne Bay Sports Hub, located in the North of the local authority area and 3 sites, Kent College (Canterbury), Polo Farm Sports Club, and St Edmunds, located within the City Centre. There are no hockey sites located in the south of the local authority area.

2.3 Hockey AGP's in Neighbouring Boroughs

There are no full size hockey pitches located in neighbouring local authority areas that are within a 20-minute driving catchment of the Canterbury District.

2.4 The Situation at Individual Sites

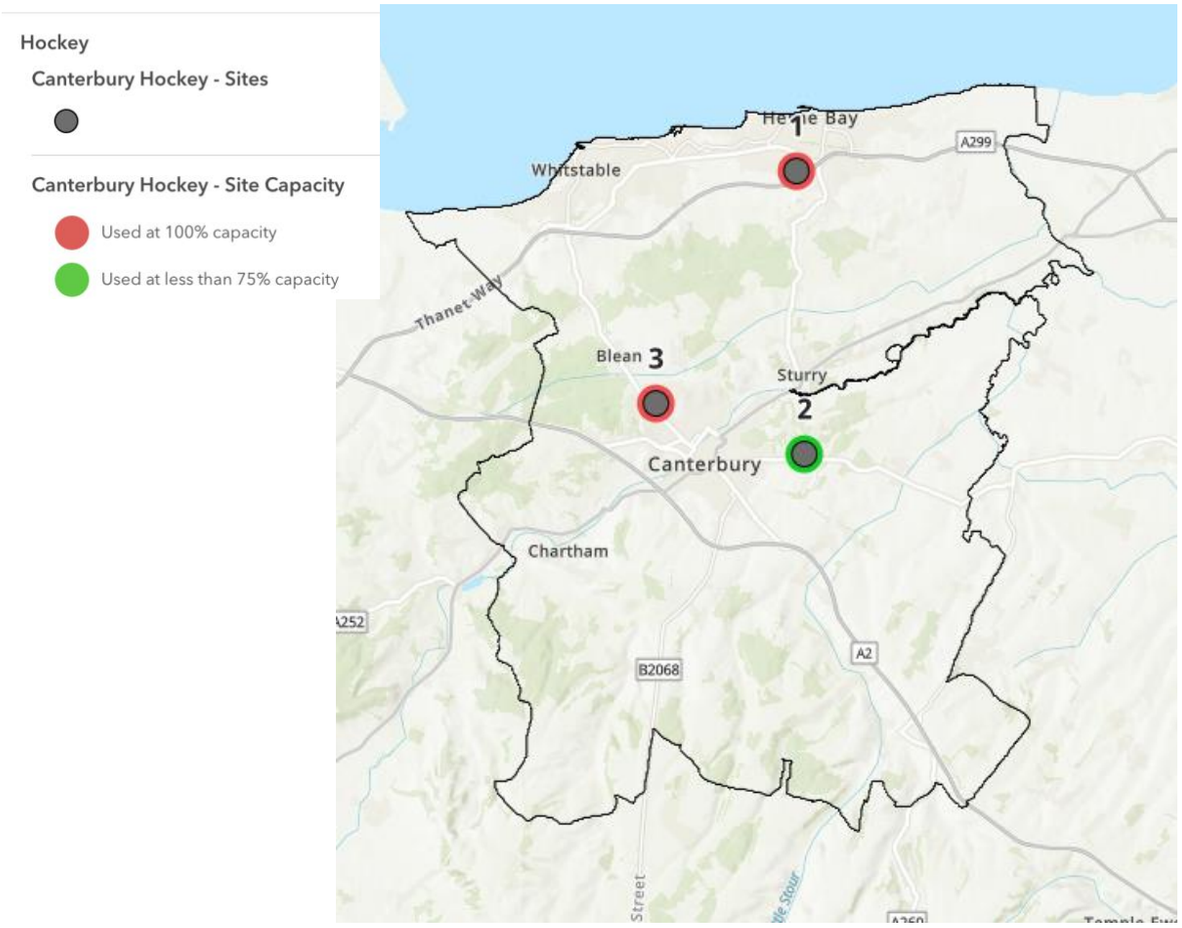
Figure 2.2 details the situation at each site for those facilities available for community use. The pitches were quality-assessed during the 2025/26 season via site visits and informed by consultation surveys with the user clubs and insight from England Hockey. Figure 2.3 highlights the pitches not available for community use or not currently used by any community clubs.

The availability of the pitches for community hockey use is usually dependant on bookings by other sports (e.g., football, touch rugby, lacrosse, tennis). For each site, this is noted in the column headed estimated use in peak hours.

The Red (RAG) rating refers to whether, in the peak period in a typical week in the main hockey season, there is considered to be:

- Unused capacity for hockey matches - **Green**
- The available peak slots for hockey matches are used close to capacity - **Amber**, or
- The available peak slots for hockey matches are at capacity – **Red**

Figure 2.1- Distribution of Full-sized Hockey AGPs in the Canterbury District



Key	Site Name	Postcode
1	Herne Bay Sports Hub	CT6 5DN
2	Polo Farm Sports Club	CT3 4AF
3	St Edmund's School	CT2 8HU

Figure 2.2: Situation at Individual Sites available for community use

Sites	Postcode	Management & Ownership of site	Security of access	AGP Size & Type	Lighting & Lux level (where Known)	Date built (last refurbished)	Ancillary facilities	Rating	Peak hours available = 31[1]	Estimate use in peak hours	Supply Demand Balance	RAG (match capacity)
HERNE BAY SPORTS HUB	CT6 5DN	Club – Herne Bay Hockey Club own the freehold of the site	Secure	SD 91m x 55m	Yes (unknown)	2019	New multi-use clubhouse with 5 changing rooms, each with showers, disabled changing, bar, and kitchen	Good	15.5	15.5 100% Hockey	0	
				SD 91m x 55m	Yes (unknown)	2018		Good	15.5	15.5 100% Hockey	0	
POLO FARM SPORTS CLUB	CT3 4AF	Club – Canterbury Hockey Club own the freehold of the site	Secure	Water Based 91m x 55m	Yes (unknown)	2006 (2025)	5 changing rooms specifically for hockey. Main clubhouse has a bar, kitchen, and	Good	31	20.5 100% Hockey	10.5	

[1] Peak hours = M-Th 6-9:30pm, Fri 6-9pm, S&S 10-5pm = 31hrs

				SD 91m x55m	Yes (unknown)	1992 (2015)	lounge areas for all clubs	Standard	31	25 88% hockey (22 hours hockey, 3 hours football)	6	
				Water based 91m x 55m	Yes (LED)	2000 (2020)		Standard	31	21.5 100% Hockey	9.5	
ST EDMUNDS SCHOOL (CANTERBURY)	CT2 8HU	Education	Unsecure – CUA unknown	SD 97m x 61m	Yes (LED)	2013	No access to school building for hiring club. 2 portable toilets for pitch hirers.	Good	17	17 0% hockey (17 hours football)	0	

Figure 2.3: Individual sites which are not available for community use or not currently used by community clubs

Site	Postcode	AGP Size & Type	Community Availability
UNIVERSITY OF KENT	CT2 7SR	SD 100m x 62m	Available for hire by community groups however not currently used by any community clubs. Currently only used by University of Kent Hockey Club who have not been considered a community club despite affiliating 1 team to England Hockey.
KENT COLLEGE (CANTERBURY)	CT2 9DT	SF 97m x 60m	Available to hire by community clubs via the school website, however no clubs based in or around canterbury report use of the site. There is limited availability of the pitch due to boarding students at the school.
KINGS SCHOOL (BIRLEY'S PLAYING FIELD)	CT2 8DE	SD 97m x 62m	No access provided for community clubs. The pitch does not have sports lighting so cannot be used in the evenings for mid-week training.

2.5 Ownership, Operation, Quality and Access

There is a mix of ownership and security of pitches in the Canterbury. One of the hockey pitches that are available for community use are on education sites, owned and managed by the schools, whereas the remaining 5 pitches are owned by community hockey clubs.

The majority of pitches are rated as good quality, with both pitches at Herne Bay Sports Hub, one of the pitches at Polo Farm Sports Club, and the pitch at St Edmunds School being in good condition. One of the pitches at Polo Farm Sports Club was last resurfaced in 2015 and will require resurfacing soon to ensure continued use over the strategy period. Although rated as good quality during non-technical site assessments, the pitch at St Edmunds School was developed in 2013 and has not been resurfaced since. A technical assessment of the surface and shockpad is required to provide a more detailed estimate on resurfacing.

The two main sites used by community hockey clubs, Herne Bay Sports Hub and Polo Farm Sports Club are used at or close to full capacity. There are no hours in the peak period spare at Herne Bay Sports Hub and 26 hours a week across the 3 pitches at Polo Farm Sports Club. St Edmunds School is used at 100% capacity in the peak period, however this pitch is only used by community football clubs; there is no reported community hockey usage of the site.

2.6 Indoor Hockey

Polo Farm Sports Club offers a full size indoor hockey pitch on site, which is used by Canterbury HC. The club take part in the Indoor Hockey UK London Grand Slam tournament in for U10-U16 age groups, and county, regional, and national indoor tournaments for U16s/U18s.

Herne Bay HC also offer men's and women's indoor hockey teams and utilise the pitch at Polo Farm Sports Club.

2.7 Ancillary Facilities

The changing facilities at the main hockey club sites (Polo Farm Sports Club and Herne Bay Sports Hub) were assessed as good quality. Both clubs rated their ancillary facilities as excellent, with neither club raising any issues or development priorities for their ancillary facilities.

2.8 At Risk Sites

There is no known risk of development or change of surface to the current full sized sand dressed hockey pitches in the area.

2.9 Proposed New Supply

There are no advanced plans to develop new provision in the area.

3. Hockey Demand (steps 3 and 4)

3.1 Clubs and Teams

There are currently two community hockey club based in the area, as well as University teams and school activity.

The clubs based in Canterbury are:

- **Canterbury HC** who offer both adult and junior hockey provision for male and female players. They have 16 adult teams (10 male and 6 female) and a junior section of 454 members, as well as offering back to hockey sessions, social hockey sessions, and indoor hockey. They estimate that 90% of their members come from within Canterbury, with a few members travelling from neighbouring authorities. The club reported that they have grown in memberships over the last 3 seasons, introducing their 10th men's team in the last couple of seasons which aims to introduce players progressing from junior sections.
- **Herne Bay HC** provide 5 men's teams and 4 women's teams as well as 118 junior players. The club also provide opportunities for Back to Hockey sessions, Walking Hockey, Flyerz and indoor hockey. They estimate that 94% of their members live within the local authority area, with a few members travelling from Sevenoaks, Eastbourne, London, and Thanet. The club stated they have grown in recent years since moving into the new facility at Herne Bay Sports Hub and are looking to continue growing over the coming years.

The University of Kent affiliate to England Hockey however as they are only accessible to students of the university, have not been considered a community club in this report. The university only affiliate one of their nine teams and report 36 female players.

3.2 Club Players - Demand Trend

Whilst both clubs have reported a growth in membership, player affiliation data in figure 3.1 provided by England Hockey for the previous seasons shows a decrease in both junior membership and adult membership. Overall, the number of individual players registered has decreased from 1,111 in 2024/25 to 968 in the 2025/26 season (143 players).

It should be noted that England Hockey have made changes to their membership model to charge individual fees. This has resulted in a general trend of less members being affiliated by clubs particularly of adult recreational and social players as highlighted but does not necessarily mean a drop in team demand. In the previous strategy Canterbury HC had 15 adult teams and they now have 16, Herne Bay HC previously had 10 adult teams and now have 9 teams. This results in a net change of 0 teams since the previous strategy.

Growing participation is a key aim for England Hockey's recent strategy (Creating A Future for Our Game Together 2024 – 2028) with the aim of doubling the number of 7-13 year olds in club activity and welcoming a more diverse group of young players into the sport.

Figure 3.1 Club affiliation data

	2024/25				2025/26			
Club	**Junior**		**Adult (18+)**		**Junior**		**Adult (18+)**	
	Male	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
Canterbury HC	267	265	169	134	235	219	164	92
Herne Bay HC	77	66	92	41	62	56	87	53
Totals	**675**		**436**		**572**		**396**	

3.3 Unmet / Latent demand

No latent demand or unmet demand was reported by either club. Herne Bay HC expressed an ambition to grow the club further as outlined further in 3.6 below but did not state that there is any existing demand which they cannot currently meet.

3.4 Imported and Displaced Demand

There is no reported displaced demand of clubs using facilities outside of the local authority area or imported demand of clubs based outside of the local area using facilities in Canterbury.

3.5 Active Lives Survey

Adults: The most recently published findings of the national Active Lives Adult Survey[2] (November 2024-2025) showed that self-reported regular participation (i.e., taken part at least twice in the last 28 days) in hockey in England by adults (aged 16+) had increased from 0.3% in November 2024 to 0.4% in November 2025.

If hockey participation in the area were at the national average (i.e., 0.4%), this would indicate around 548 adults (aged 16+) living in the area play hockey out of the 16+ adult population of approximately 136,813[3]. This playing population considers both regular club participation and regular informal recreational play in parks and hired facilities, and Canterbury residents who participate outside of the local authority area.

The '16+ adult' hockey club playing membership is 534 (England Hockey membership data). If we then assume adult hockey participation in Canterbury is in line with the national average of 0.4%, this suggests that only 2.5% of all regular adult hockey played by residents in Canterbury is either 'displaced' to venues outside of the area (e.g., at other clubs) or takes place in informal, social game formats such as Back 2 Hockey and pay & play schemes, which are provided in the area.

3.6 Club Aspirations – Hockey Development Priorities and Facility Needs

Herne Bay HC have expressed aspirations to grow in the coming seasons. The club are looking to grow their junior section, as this then filters into the senior section. They also have ambitions to continue growing their range of summer hockey to help introduce new members to the club. The main priority for the club is keeping on top of maintaining the new facilities at Herne Bay Sports Hub, ensuring a sinking fund is in place to resurface the pitches when required, and improve the coaching available at the club.

Canterbury HC do not have any plans to grow over the next 3 seasons and did not raise any development priorities. One of the pitches at Polo Farm Sports Club has not been resurfaced since 2015 and is due for resurfacing soon. A sinking fund is in place to support the resurfacing when required.

[2] Active Lives Adult Survey November 2024-25, Sport England

[3] 2022 ONS Subnational Population Projections for 2026 and Census 2021 age brackets percentages

4. The Current and Future Picture of Provision for Hockey (step 5)

4.1 Current

Since the last assessment of hockey facility needs in 2020, there has not been any development of new facilities for hockey, however regular community use has been lost at Kings School (Birley's Playing Fields) and Kings School Recreation Centre (Blores). From the consultation and research for this strategy there was also no recorded community use of the pitches at Kent College (Canterbury) or the University of Kent, which both previously supported community use in the last strategy. The pitch at Herne Bay High School is due to be resurfaced to a 3G AGP surface and has been removed from supply.

Two of the pitches at Polo Farm Sports Complex have been resurfaced since the previous assessment.

4.2 Future

To estimate the potential impact of population growth over the strategy period to 2042 on the need for hockey pitch capacity in the peak period, Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) tool has been used to determine the demand of new teams and junior training squads likely to be generated in the future based on population growth (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Future Demand

Age	Match Equivalent Sessions (MES)	Training Demand Hours on AGP	Estimated demand for new AGP
Adult	1.67	5.02	0.47
Junior and Mixed	0	1.93	
Total	**1.67**	**6.95**	**0.47**

To meet hockey demand from 22,781 additional residents (as currently forecast[4]) and assuming current levels of hockey demand by age group for matches and training in the peak period, the PPC indicates that the equivalent capacity of 0.47 additional sand dressed artificial grass pitches suitable for hockey will be needed in the area based on the need for 1.67 additional match equivalent sessions and a total of 6.95 training hours per week.

Based on the evidence and research in this strategy, with the pitches in Canterbury not at full capacity, the existing stock of community accessible hockey pitches should be sufficient to cater for this projected demand.

4.3 Conclusion

To better meet current and likely future needs for the sport of hockey in Canterbury, the strategy should seek to:

- Protect the current supply of sand based artificial pitches in the area used by clubs.
- Support the resurfacing of the pitch at Polo Farm Sports Club.
- Undertake a review of the availability of pitches at Herne Bay Sports Hub to support growth of Herne Bay HC

[4] Population change from the 2026 to 2042 based on Canterbury City Council Local Plan

5. Key Findings and Issues for Hockey (step 6)

Figure 5.1: Key Findings and Issues

The main characteristics of the <u>current</u> supply of and demand for provision
There are currently seven full sized sand based artificial grass pitches with sports lighting in Canterbury currently available for community hockey. Since the last assessment of hockey facility needs in 2020, there has not been any development of new facilities for hockey, however regular community use has been lost at Kings School (Birley's Playing Fields) and Kings School Recreation Centre (Blores). From the research and consultation for this strategy it was recorded that there was also no community use of the pitches at Kent College (Canterbury) or the University of Kent, which both previously supported community use in the last strategy. The pitch at Herne Bay High School is due to be resurfaced to a 3G AGP surface and has been removed from supply. Two of the pitches at Polo Farm Sports Complex have been resurfaced since the previous assessment. There are currently two community hockey club based in the area, as well as University teams and school activity. Canterbury HC have 16 adult teams (10 male, 6 female) and a junior section of 454 members. Herne Bay HC have 5 men's teams and 4 women's teams with a junior section of 118 players. Both clubs offer social and introductory hockey sessions such as Back to Hockey, Walking Hockey, and Flyerz. Both clubs also offer indoor hockey. The University of Kent also affiliate to England Hockey however as they are only accessible to students of the university, they have not been considered a community club in this report. The university affiliate one of their nine teams and a total of 36 female players. England Hockey affiliation data show a significant decrease in both adult and junior membership, resulting in a reduction of 143 players between the 2024/25 and 2025/26 seasons.
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet <u>current</u> demand?
<u>Yes</u> – There are currently 26 hours of availability at the pitches across Polo Farm Sports Club in the peak period, allowing Canterbury HC to comfortably manage their training and fixture demands. Although at full capacity, Herene Bay HC reported no issues with capacity at the pitches at Herne Bay Sports Hub for training or matches. There is a significant amount of football use of the SD AGP at St Edmunds School, which is used at full capacity. The ancillary facilities at both Polo Farm Sports Club and Herene Bay Sports Hub are sufficient to support the number of teams and junior members provided by Canterbury HC and Herne Bay HC, with no concerns about capacity raised by either club.
Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?
<u>Yes</u> –All sites are rated as standard or good quality, with plans in place to resurface the pitch at Polo Farm Sports Club that has been identified as requiring resurfacing. The pitch at St Edmund's School was developed in 2013 and hasn't been resurfaced since. The pitch was rated as standard quality, with no issues raised about immediate needs to resurface the pitch, however a technical assessment of the surface and shockpad is required to provide a more detailed estimate on resurfacing. This pitch is not currently used for any community hockey and all 17 hours of peak period availability are occupied by football club training.

The ancillary facilities at both club sites, Herne Bay Sports Hub and Polo Farm Sports Club, were rated as good quality, with no issues raised by either club. The priority for both clubs is to continue to maintain the facilities to a high standard.

What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?

Herne Bay HC have expressed aspirations to grow in the coming seasons. The club are looking to grow their junior section, as this then filters into the senior section. They also have ambitions to continue growing their range of summer hockey to help introduce new members to the club. The main priority for the club in the immediate future is to continue maintaining their new facilities at Herne Bay Sports hub.

To meet hockey demand from 22,781 additional residents (as currently forecast[5]) and assuming current levels of hockey demand by age group for matches and training in the peak period, the PPC indicates that the equivalent capacity of 0.47 additional sand dressed artificial grass pitches suitable for hockey will be needed in the area based on the need for 1.67 additional match equivalent sessions and a total of 6.95 training hours per week.

Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet future demand?

Yes – There is currently a spare 26 hours of capacity at Polo Farm Sports Club, which, subject to viability and the ability for the club to sustain more use, is sufficient to support the projected increase in demand due to population growth over the strategy period. The key priority is to ensure the quality of the existing stock of pitches is maintained and that sinking funds are in place to resurface pitches when required.

The pitches at Herne Bay Sports Hub are currently at full capacity, however these are only currently available for 15.5 hours in the peak period each (out of a potential maximum of 31 hours). To support future growth of Herne Bay HC, it is recommended that the availability of the pitches is extended, subject to financial impact assessment by the club and operators.

The leading projects for hockey are considered further in the main strategy with the action plan outlining the priority projects to meet the needs identified across Canterbury.

[5] Population change from the 2026 to 2042 based on Canterbury City Council Local Plan



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Appendix D
Assessment of Need Report
Rugby

continuum
SPORT & LEISURE LTD

Appendix D: Rugby - Assessment of Needs (stages B and C)

1. Introduction

The findings of the assessment for needs for rugby facilities in the Canterbury District are summarised in this Appendix to the Playing Pitch Strategy. Site visits to the home grounds used by clubs in the area have been undertaken and club officials/site managers have been consulted regarding training provision and match use. Both of the leading rugby clubs based in the Canterbury District (Canterbury RFC and Whitstable RFC) provided responses to the online club survey.

The last assessment of Rugby Union in 2020 recorded a total of 27 rugby grass pitches available for community use, however this included 16 pitches across 6 different sites: Barton Court Grammar School, Canterbury Academy Trust Campus, Herne Bay High School, Kings School, Moat Lane Playing Fields, University of Kent, and Spires Academy. All these sites were not actively being used by community clubs as they were used solely for education use. The previous strategy also included mini pitches within the total supply of pitches (3 at Canterbury RFC), whereas this report considers mini pitches and training grids as training facilities and separately from the supply of match pitches. This approach is more in keeping with the more up to date and agreed strategic planning approach with both Sport England and the Rugby Football Union. The supply of grass pitches available to community clubs in the previous strategy should therefore be considered to be 8 pitches.

In the 2025/26 season, 8 grass rugby pitches have been identified as being available for community use. There has been a re-purposing of one pitch at Stodmarsh Playing Field, which has now been marked for football. However, the balance is maintained with mini pitches at Canterbury RFC having been provided as a junior pitch and now been included in supply.

Moat Lane Playing Fields was reported as being available but unused in the previous strategy however, through consultation with the RFU it was identified that there is some usage within the summer months for informal training however due to this not being regular community use, it has also been excluded from the current supply for rugby.

There are two WRC 3G pitches in Canterbury available for community use, located at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and the University of Kent (The Pavillion). Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys is currently being used by community rugby clubs, however the pitch at University of Kent is currently only used by community football clubs.

The number of community clubs in the area has remained the same and both clubs reported they have grown over the last 3 years, resulting in the number teams increasing significantly since the previous strategy. The number of teams has grown from 31 to 49, with the greatest increase being in age-grade teams. Canterbury RFC are the only club in the area to provide women and girls teams however, Whitstable RFC have ambitions to develop a women and girls section in the future.

The growth of age-grade teams has significantly increased the pressure on the stock of grass rugby pitches across the local authority area. This combined with a lack of access to midweek sportslit training facilities has resulted in the two main club sites being used over their capacity. The impact of this growth in demand and the projected future demand is assessed in this appendix to the main Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy.

2. Rugby Pitch Supply (step 2)

The findings of the assessment of supply of rugby facilities in the Canterbury District are summarised in this section and detailed by site for both grass and artificial turf pitches. The supply information is generated through standard facility audits based on the visual assessment, grading and playing capacity guidance (as set out by Sport England and the RFU in the national guidance for the development of playing pitch needs assessments), supported by consultation with the City Council, the RFU, and user clubs.

There are two community rugby clubs based in the Canterbury District on playing field sites with rugby pitches.

- Canterbury RFC
- Whitstable RFC

It is also important to note that there are two additional University clubs which play in community leagues however they are not open for all community members to join so have therefore been excluded from the community clubs' supply. These two clubs are:

- Canterbury Christ Church University RFC
- University of Kent RFC

2.1 Distribution of Rugby Sites

Figure 2.1 shows the distribution of rugby pitches in the Local Authority area. The map indicates the level of use at each of the sites which is taken from the booking data and club surveys. The map shows the percentage of used capacity for each site based on the quality of the pitch and the expected carrying capacity. It is notable that the majority of the pitches in Canterbury are operating at or over their maximum capacity. This is further reviewed within this report taking into account the growth of the two clubs and increased demand for rugby pitches since the previous strategy.

2.2 Rugby Pitches in Canterbury

In the 2025/26 season, 8 grass rugby pitches have been identified as being available for community use. There has been a re-purposing of one pitch at Stodmarsh Playing Field, which has now been marked for football. However, the balance is maintained with mini pitches at Canterbury RFC having been provided as a junior pitch and now been included in supply.

There are two WRC 3G pitches in Canterbury, one is located just south of Canterbury City Centre at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and the other is located north of the City Centre at the University of Kent. The pitch at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys was built in 2014 and has not been resurfaced since, it remains certified for rugby use, with the next test due on 17/04/2027. The school have a CUA in place for the pitch which secures 12 hours for community rugby use during the peak period. The remaining peak period hours are used for community football and American football.

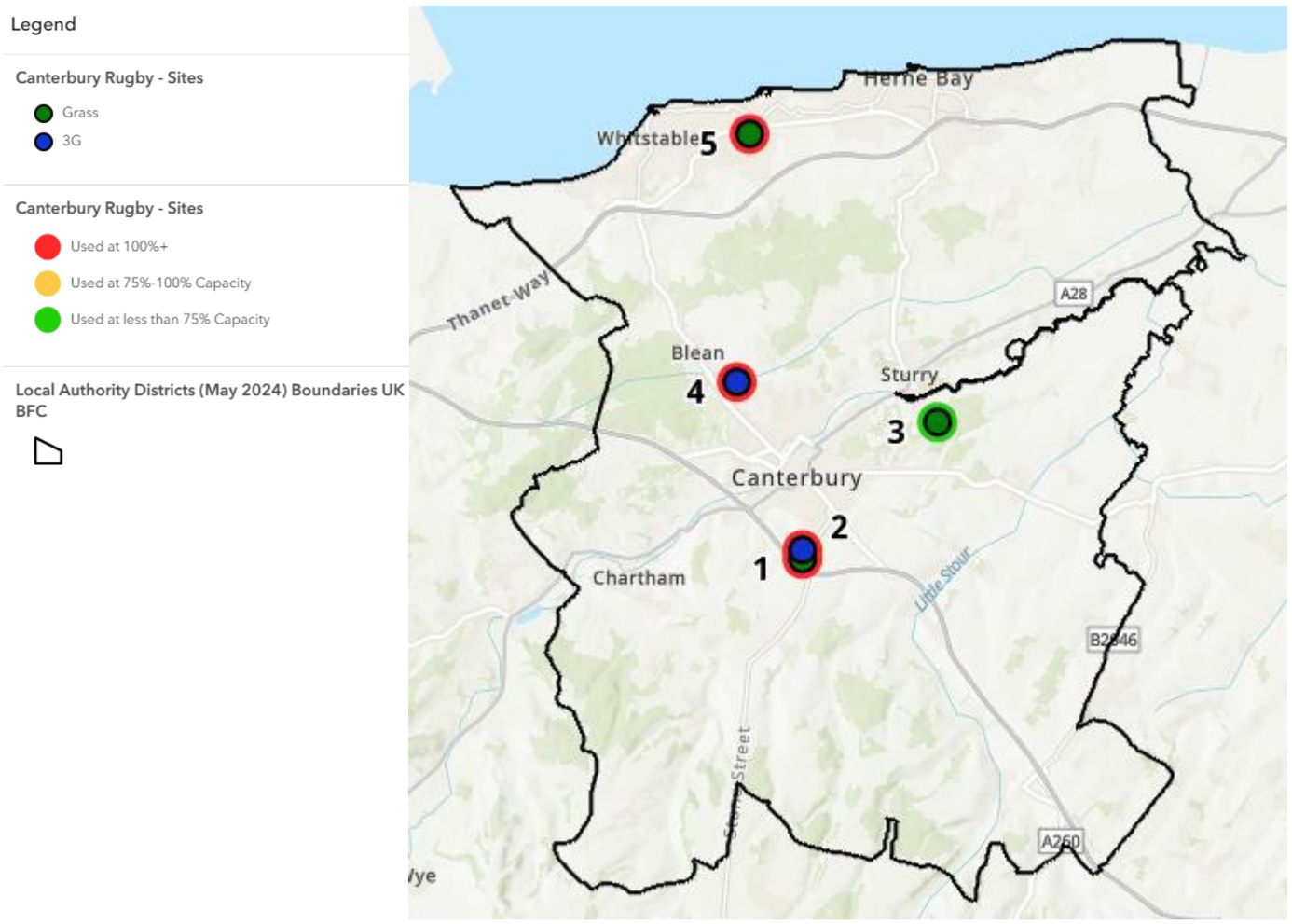
The WRC 3G pitch at the University of Kent was developed in 2015 and last resurfaced in 2017. The pitch is currently used at full capacity during the peak period and is primarily used by university students as well as community football usage. There is currently no community rugby on this pitch.

There are 4 natural turf pitches with sports lighting in Canterbury, located at the Canterbury RFC (2 pitches) and Whitstable RFC (2 pitches).

One of the 8 pitches included in the supply of community rugby pitches was undergoing significant repairs at the time of reporting and was unplayable, located at Canterbury RFC. This pitch will be brought back into community use following repairs for the 2026/27 season.

Details on individual sites can be found in figure 2.2 and 2.3 below.

Figure 2.1 – Canterbury Rugby facilities



Key	Site	Postcode
1	Canterbury RFC	CT4 7DZ
2	Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	CT4 7AS
3	Stodmarsh Playing Fields	CT3 4AR
4	University of Kent (The Pavillion)	CT2 7SR
5	Whitstable Rugby Club	CT5 3QS

2.3 The Situation at Individual Sites

The table below (figure 2.2 and 2.3) outlines the supply, condition, ancillary facilities, and demand for each site available for community use in Canterbury. The RAG rating highlights the supply/demand balance of each pitch, with RED indicating pitches used at more than capacity, AMBER indicating pitches which are used at capacity, and GREEN indicating pitches with surplus capacity.

Figure 2.2: Rugby Grass Pitches in Canterbury

Sites	Postcode	Ownership	Security of access	Ancillary Facilities	Pitch	Drainage	Maintenance	Pitch capacity	Estimated use	Supply Demand Balance	RAG
CANTERBURY RFC	CT4 7DZ	Club has leasehold	Secured – 50 years remaining on lease	8 changing rooms – each one has shared shower facility. No designated changing room for women and girls.	Senior Rugby (Main, SL)	D0 - Natural Inadequate	M1 - Adequate	1.5	2	-0.5	
					Senior Rugby	D0 - Natural Inadequate	M1 - Adequate	1.5	3.5	-2	
					Senior Rugby	D0 - Natural Inadequate	M1 - Adequate	1.5	4	-2.5	
					Junior Rugby (SL)	D0 - Natural Inadequate	M1 - Adequate	1.5	2.25	-0.75	
					Junior Rugby *(Not in use pending pitch repair work)*	D0 - Natural Inadequate	M0 - Poor	0	0	0	
STODMARSH PLAYING FIELDS	CT3 4AR	Education (Canterbury Christchurch University)	CUA unknown	*No access provided*	Senior Rugby	D1 - Natural Adequate	M1 - Adequate	2	0	2	
WHITSTABLE RUGBY CLUB	CT5 3QS	Club has leasehold	Secured – 69 years remaining on lease	4 changing rooms, 1 physio and medical room	Senior Rugby (Main, SL)	D2 - Pipe (referenced as Natural Inadequate)	M1 - Adequate	1.5	5	-3.5	
					Senior (SL training pitch)	D2 - Pipe (referenced as Natural Inadequate)	M1 - Adequate	1.5	2.75	-1.25	
					Training area	D2 - Pipe (referenced as Natural Inadequate)	M1 - Adequate	N/A	N/A	N/A	
					2x small grids	D2 - Pipe (referenced as Natural Inadequate)	M1 - Adequate	N/A	N/A	N/A	

SL = Sports Lighting

Figure 2.3: Rugby 3G AGP sites in Canterbury

Site	Postcode	Ownership	Security of access	Ancillary facilities	AGP Size & Type	Date built (last refurbished)	Rating	Peak hours available[1]	Estimate use in peak hours	RAG
SIMON LANGTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS	CT4 7AS	Education	Secured use for Rugby 12 hours per week	4 changing rooms of which 1 is used for girls changing	115m x 75m SL 3G WRC	2014	Standard	34	34 (12 hours affiliated rugby use)	
UNIVERSITY OF KENT (THE PAVILION)	CT2 7SR	Education	Unsecure	2 separate pavilions, one with 8 mixed gender changing rooms and the other with 10 mixed gender changing rooms and 4 official's changing rooms	125m x 80m SL 3G WRC	2015 (2017)	Standard	34	34 (0 hours affiliated rugby use)	

[1] Peak hours = M-Th 5-9pm, Fri 5-7pm, S&S 9-5pm = 34hrs

2.4 Ownership and Security of Access

All but one of the grass pitch rugby sites in the Canterbury District are leased by the city council to local clubs. Both club sites have long-term leases of 50+ years and are therefore considered secured for rugby provision. The remaining grass pitch site at Stodmarsh Playing Fields is owned by Canterbury Christchurch University with no known community use agreement in place, therefore whilst it is available for use, it is considered unsecure.

The two WRC 3G pitch sites are education sites. There is a CUA in place at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys which secures 12 hours of community rugby usage per week for Canterbury RFC. There is no CUA in place at the University of Kent 3G AGP and is therefore considered unsecure for community use and as detailed earlier has no current capacity with the football demand and use of that AGP site.

2.5 Pitch Quality – Maintenance and Drainage

The maintenance of grass rugby pitches in Canterbury is the responsibility of the site owners/lease holders of each site. As shown in figure 2.4 the maintenance of pitches across Canterbury is adequate at all pitches apart from one junior pitch at Canterbury RFC which is considered to be poor. The quality of drainage across the majority of grass pitches is inadequate, with 7 pitches having inadequate natural drainage and only 1 having adequate natural drainage.

Figure 2.4– Pitch Maintenance and Drainage Ratings from Site Visits and Club Consultation

Number of pitches		Maintenance			
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)	Total
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	1*	6	-	**7**
	Natural Adequate (D1)	-	1	-	**1**
	Pipe Drained (D2)	-	-	-	**-**
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	-	-	-	**-**
	Total	**1**	**7**	**-**	**8**

** The junior pitch undergoing repairs at Canterbury RFC at the time of reporting has been rated as having poor maintenance and natural inadequate drainage due to the current condition. Once repairs have been complete, it is likely that the pitch will return to adequate maintenance and natural inadequate drainage, matching the other 4 pitches on the site.*

All 5 pitches at Canterbury RFC have inadequate drainage, resulting in a significantly lower capacity for training and matches. Despite the club investing significantly to improve the drainage of their pitches in recent years, the drainage remains an ongoing issue at the site. The club are currently fundraising and exploring grant options to install a borehole to support maintenance of pitches during the summer and improve the drainage of the pitches.

The 2 pitches at Whitstable Rugby Club have pipe drainage (D2) installed, however due to significant ongoing drainage issues, they have been referenced as natural inadequate in this report to reflect the true capacity of the pitches. These issues are being investigated by the RFU to support the club.

2.6 Park Pitches

There are no park pitches for rugby within Canterbury.

2.7 At Risk Sites

There are no rugby sites in Canterbury at risk of development.

2.8 Proposed New Supply

There are no proposals for new supply of community rugby facilities.

2.9 Ancillary Facilities

Canterbury RFC noted through consultation that they aspire to develop a new clubhouse to help extend and improve their current toilets and changing facilities. The club rate their current ancillary facilities as standard quality and has suggested that upgraded ancillary facilities alongside the required pitch works would allow them to continue growing and better accommodate that growth in demand.

Whitstable Rugby Football Club are currently exploring the possibility of extending their balcony and area at the back of the clubhouse as part of a joint venture with Smash Padel. The club state that this, alongside increasing the capacity of their pitch facilities, will allow them to improve the functionality of the clubhouse and support their own growth plans.

2.10 Rugby Supply in Neighbouring Boroughs

96% of the population's nearest site within Sport England's recommended 20-minute driving catchment is within the Canterbury authority boundary, for the remaining 4% the closest site within this catchment area is outside of the City. The sites with senior grass pitches for rugby, with community access, which are closer to some Canterbury residents than any facilities within the local authority boundary are:

- Ash Recreation Ground, Dover, located to the East.
- Aylesham Welfare Leisure Centre, Dover, located to the East

3. Rugby Pitch Demand (step 3)

3.1 Clubs and Teams

The rugby clubs and teams based in Canterbury are listed in figure 3.1 below including the home ground and training ground information. The two leading clubs play on grass pitches in the area, with both offering a full youth set up with teams from U7 through to U18. Whitstable, however, does not currently offer any women and girls provision.

Figure 3.1: Table of senior rugby club information

Rugby Clubs	2025/26 League(s)	Age Grade Teams (squads)	Home Ground	Training Ground
Canterbury RFC 1st XV Canterbury RFC Women Canterbury RFC 2nd XV (Pilgrims) Canterbury RFC 3rd XV (Canons) Canterbury RFC 4th XV (Deacons) Canterbury RFC 5th (Zingari)	National League 2 East Women's NC 1 South East (SOUTH) Counties 1 Kent Counties 3 Kent Kent Rural B Kent Rural C	5x mixed mini teams, U7B, U7G, U8B, U8G, U9B, U9G, U10B, U10G, U11B, U11G, U12B, U13B, U14B, U15B, U16B, U16G, 2XU18B	Canterbury RFC	Canterbury RFC Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys
Whitstable RFC 1ST XV Whitstable RFC 2nd XV Whitstable RFC Veterans	Counties 3 Kent Kent Rural B	6x mixed mini teams, U7B U8B, U9B, U10B & U11B, U12B, U13B, U14B, U15B, U16B, U18B	Whitstable RFC	Whitstable RFC Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys

3.2 Active Lives Survey

The most recently published findings of the national Active Lives Adult Survey[2] showed that self-reported regular participation (i.e., taken part at least twice in the last 28 days) in rugby in England by adults (aged 16+) stayed consistent over the last 2 years between November 2022-23 to November 2024-25 at 0.5%. If rugby participation in Canterbury were at the national average (i.e., 0.5%), this would indicate around 685 adults (aged 16+) living in the area play rugby out of a 16+ adult population of approximately 136,813[3]. This playing population considers both regular club participation and regular informal recreational play in parks and hired facilities, and Canterbury residents who participate outside of the city.

With 12 senior rugby teams, including U18s, based in Canterbury, the adult rugby club playing memberships in the area is roughly 504 players (assuming an average squad size of 42 players per team), which shows that adult rugby participation in Canterbury is lower than the national average rate of 0.5%.

3.3 Unmet / Latent Demand

Both clubs reported unmet demand within Canterbury. Canterbury RFC reported ambitions to grow in the next 3 years, however stated that this is dependent on additional facilities being available to them. Whitstable RFC also stated they have plans to grow in the next 3 years, but the current condition of their playing pitches is not suitable to meet the demand. Both clubs are of the opinion that based on

[2] Active Lives Adult Survey Nov 2023/24, Sport England.
[3] 2022 ONS Subnational Population Projections for 2026 and Census 2021 age brackets percentages

rising demand an additional WRC 3G facility would help them develop more teams, particularly for women and girls and disability members.

This information is drawn from the club consultation surveys carried out from January 2026 to June 2026 and includes the views from both rugby clubs/ organisations in Canterbury. Conversion of this perceived unmet demand into new teams will depend on these clubs engaging sufficient volunteer team managers and coaches as well as developing additional playing pitches to play and train on in the peak period.

3.4 Imported and Displaced Demand

There was no imported or displaced demand for rugby facilities reported through site visits and club consultation.

4. The Situation at Individual Sites for Rugby (step 4)

The pitches were assessed during January of the 2025/26 season, with the sites assessed using the methodology established by Sport England and the RFU in the published Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance (2013) - i.e., a non-technical visual site assessment. These assessments were reviewed in discussion with the RFU and ratings for each agreed as a basis for comparison of the amount of play each site could accommodate (the carrying capacity) against the amount of play that takes place.

Carrying capacity is a measure of the number of match equivalent sessions per season for community use each pitch can take without adversely affecting its quality and use. The following pitch carrying capacities according to each quality rating was used to be consistent with the approach adopted in similar assessments across the country (figure 4.1):

Figure 4.1: Rugby Pitch Carrying Capacity

Match Equivalent Sessions a week		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
	Natural Adequate (D1)	1.5	2	3
	Pipe Drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5

1. *Pitch supply* (including the quality ratings) and conclusions reached as to the amount of play a site can accommodate (i.e., the carrying capacity for community use):
2. *The amount of play that takes place at each site* (i.e., the expressed demand) adjusted to reflect any casual or education use in addition to club use for matches and training:
3. *The comparison* (shown as a RAG rating) as to whether, for each pitch type it contains, a site is:
   - RED - Being overplayed (current use exceeds the carrying capacity)
   - AMBER - Being played to the level the site can sustain (current use matches the carrying capacity), or
   - GREEN - Potentially able to accommodate some additional play (current use falls below the carrying capacity)

There are 2 sites, highlighted from the site audit spreadsheet as RED rated sites where the majority of pitches are overplayed.

- Canterbury RFC
- Whitstable RFC

There is 1 site, highlighted from the site audit spreadsheet as GREEN rated sites where the balance of the grass pitch use (none at present) indicates spare capacity.

- Stodmarsh Playing Fields

This highlights that 2 of the 3 sites in Canterbury are being played at or over their maximum capacity, which restricts the growth of clubs and impacts the quality of playing pitch surfaces. The site with capacity is only a single rugby pitch on the site. The current and future picture of provision for rugby is explored further in Section 5.

5. The Current and Future Picture of Provision for Rugby (step 5)

5.1 Current

Excluding the junior pitch which is not in use at Canterbury RFC due to pitch repair works, the majority of grass rugby pitches (6 out of 7 pitches) in the Canterbury area are currently played at or over capacity for the amount of demand for training and matches. There is one pitch with spare capacity at Stodmarsh Playing Fields.

There are two 3G pitches in the area which are World Rugby Compliant (Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and University of Kent). The CUA in place at Simon Langton Grammar School for boys secures 12 hours of use for Canterbury RFC per week. There was no reported use of the 3G pitch at the University of Kent by community rugby clubs. The pitch is primarily used by the university and community football clubs.

5.2 Future

Planned/expected growth – Both clubs reported ambitions to grow in the next 3 years and outlined their plans in the club consultation survey, as detailed in figure 5.1 below.

Figure 5.1 Growth aspirations of clubs

Club	Growth aspirations
Canterbury RFC	The club are looking to grow player numbers by introducing additional rugby variations such as walking rugby and growing their youth section. To achieve these growth aspirations, the club state they need improved pitch and ancillary facilities.
Whitstable RFC	The club have aspirations to grow their women and girls' section as well as disability rugby. To achieve any growth, the club state that their playing facilities require significant improvement as they are currently at full capacity.

Potential effect of population change – To estimate the potential impact of population growth over the strategy period and the local plan period to 2042 on the need for rugby pitch capacity in the peak period, Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) has been used to determine the demand likely to be generated in the future due to population growth (figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Future Demand.

Plan Period	Match Equivalent Sessions (MES)	Training Demand MES on grass pitches with Sports lighting	Estimated demand for new grass pitches (match & training demand)
2042	1.77	2.28	1.77

To meet rugby demand from 22,781 additional residents, as currently forecast to the end of the strategy period in 2042[4], and assuming current levels of rugby demand by age group for matches and training in peak period, the PPC indicates that the equivalent capacity of two additional full size natural turf pitches (rounded from 1.77) are needed to accommodate the additional demand. Pitches will require sufficient sports lighting to accommodate training demand for new teams.

The RFU highlighted that there is also likely to be an increased demand for women and girls' rugby following the country hosting and winning the 2025 Women's Rugby World Cup. The Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 represented a generational moment for global rugby that set new standards, welcomed new fans and families to the sport and inspired a new generation of players. The RFU hopes the success of the event will provide an exciting catalyst to nationwide and global rugby growth.

[4] ONS subnational population projections 2022

This potential increase in women and girls' participation, along with growth aspirations, means the future demand highlighted in figure 5.2 should be considered as the minimum amount of additional provision needed when planning future requirements.

6. Key Findings and Issues for Rugby (step 6)

Figure 6.1: Rugby Key Findings and Issues

The main characteristics of the current supply of and demand for provision
In the 2025/26 season, 8 grass rugby pitches have been identified as being available for community use. There has been a re-purposing of one pitch at Stodmarsh Playing Field, which has now been marked for football. However, the balance is maintained with mini pitches at Canterbury RFC having been provided as a junior pitch and now been included in supply. There are two WRC 3G pitches in Canterbury available for community use, located at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys and the University of Kent (The Pavillion). Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys is currently being used by community rugby clubs, however the pitch at University of Kent currently is used by community football clubs only. The number of community clubs in the area has remained the same and both clubs reported they have grown over the last 3 years, resulting in the number teams increasing significantly since the previous strategy. The number of teams has grown from 31 to 49, with the greatest increase being in age-grade teams. Canterbury RFC are the only club in the area to provide women and girls teams however, Whitstable RFC have ambitions to develop a women and girls section in the future. The growth of age-grade teams has significantly increased the pressure on the stock of grass rugby pitches across the local authority area. This combined with a lack of access to midweek sportslit training facilities has resulted in the two main club sites being used over their capacity.
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet current demand?
No – Excluding the junior pitch currently not in use, the majority of grass rugby pitches (6 out of 7 pitches) in Canterbury are currently at or over capacity for the amount of demand for training and matches. There is one pitch with spare capacity at Stodmarsh Playing Fields. Of the two WRC 3G AGPs in the area, only Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys is regularly used by community rugby clubs. There is a CUA in place which secures 12 hours of use of the pitch for Canterbury RFC in the peak period. The WRC 3G pitch at University of Kent is available for community use however it is primarily used by students and community football teams, with no use by community rugby clubs reported. All but one of the grass pitch rugby sites in Canterbury are leased by the city council to local clubs, and both club sites have long-term leases of 50+ years in place and therefore considered secure for rugby provision. The remaining grass pitch site (Stodmarsh Playing Fields) is located on an education site owned by Canterbury Christchurch University. There is no CUA in place to secure community use of the pitch, therefore the site is considered unsecure for rugby. Both WRC 3G pitch sites are located on education sites. Simon Langton is considered secure with a CUA in place to secure 12 hours for community rugby, however the University of Kent pitch is considered to be unsecure as there is no CUA in place. Both Canterbury RFC and Whitstable RFC have referred to the capacity of their pitches being insufficient to meet the growing demand. The assessment of the pitches and their use show that both sites are overplayed. The need to improve the quality of drainage at both sites is essential to enable the clubs to continue meeting the immediate needs of the growth in teams and players since the last strategy.

The clubs are also looking to improve their ancillary facilities to meet identified unmet demand and allow the clubs to grow alongside the needs of the pitches. The improvement of the pitches is considered as a higher priority at present than the refurbishment and improvements to the ancillary facilities

Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?

No – Of the 8 naturally drained grass pitches in Canterbury, 7 were rated as having inadequate drainage, which significantly reduces the playing capacity of pitches and leads to the clubs having to carefully manage usage and frequently cancel training and matches.

Canterbury RFC have reported significant issues with the drainage of their pitches having invested significantly into the improving the drainage of the site. The club are continuing to explore fundraising and grant opportunities to resolve drainage issues.

The pitches at Whitstable RFC have pipe drainage installed, however the club report considerable drainage issues. These pitches have therefore been considered as having natural inadequate drainage to ensure the capacity of the pitches has been accurately reflected.

If the drainage of the four pitches at Canterbury RFC and two pitches at Whitstable RFC were improved from 'natural inadequate' to 'natural adequate', it would increase the capacity of each pitch by 0.5 MES per week and would reduce the overplay at the two sites. Improving the maintenance from adequate to good on these sites, alongside the drainage improvements would increase the capacity of each pitch by a further 1 MES per week and negate overplay at Canterbury RFC and significantly reduce overplay at Whitstable RFC. Repairing and improving the pipe drainage at Whitstable RFC would further reduce the overplay, however would not entirely meet the current demand for pitches.

Both clubs are responsible for the overall maintenance of their sites and reported they have invested in improving the overall maintenance of their pitches. However, there are opportunities to improve the maintenance of pitches at all sites in Canterbury from adequate to good, subject to available resources and funding and facility owners.

What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?

To meet rugby demand from 22,781 additional residents, as currently forecast to the end of the strategy period in 2042[5], and assuming current levels of rugby demand by age group for matches and training in peak period, the PPC indicates that the equivalent capacity of two additional full size natural turf pitches (rounded from 1.77) are needed to accommodate the additional demand.

Both clubs in the area reported ambitions to grow in the next 3 years and it is anticipated that women and girls' participation for rugby will increase following the country hosting and winning the 2025 Women's Rugby World Cup. The Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 represented a generational moment for global rugby that set new standards, welcomed new fans and families to the sport and inspired a new generation of players. The RFU hopes the success of the event will provide an exciting catalyst to nationwide and global rugby growth.

This highlights that the need of equivalent to two additional pitches for future demand by 2042 should be considered as the minimum requirement for Canterbury.

[5] ONS subnational population projections 2022

Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet future demand?
No – There is currently insufficient provision to meet future demand. Improvements to the maintenance and drainage at overplayed pitches in Canterbury would help partially meet the existing shortfall however there would still be surplus existing demand as well as future demand for an additional 2 grass pitches. If Canterbury RFC pitches were to improve the drainage of their pitches through grant support and reinstate the additional junior pitch which is currently out of use, overplay at the site would be reduced to 1.75 MES. If the quality of pitches were also improved from standard to good, this would accommodate current and future demand with spare capacity for the club to continue growing. If drainage of the pitches at Whitstable RFC were also improved to natural adequate, this would reduce the overplay at the site to 3.75MES. If the pipe drainage was repaired and the quality of the pitches were improved from standard to good, this would only reduce the overplay to 1.75MES with no capacity to meet future demand. Considering that both sites have previously had investment into improving the drainage and maintenance without significant results, it is possible that neither site will be able to be improved beyond standard quality and natural adequate drainage, which would result in a total shortfall of 7.5MES to meet current and future demand. With the University of Kent WRC 3G pitch being located approximately 15 minutes from both rugby clubs in Canterbury, securing access to the pitch will support both clubs training needs and create capacity for their future growth plans. To address the identified current and future shortfall with the lack of capacity at current sites and limited opportunities presented for new grass pitches, it is recommended that the City Council and partners look to progress increasing rugby access at the University of Kent AGP. Securing a minimum of 8 hours of peak period use could be a workable solution if football use can be provided at other sites. The University pitch is currently at full capacity with football use therefore considerations should be made to relocate some football training and matches to alternative 3G provision in the area. Based on the assessment for this strategy the 3G pitches at Howe Park (7v7) and The Whitstable School have spare capacity in the peak period and the ongoing development of a 3G AGP at Herne Bay High School may free up space at other 3G AGPs in the area as clubs relocate to the new facility. Whilst reviewing and possibly influencing the University of Kent 3G pitch programme would potentially allow clubs to meet the current and future demand for community rugby facilities, there is currently no CUA in place, so the site is considered unsecure. As part of any future negotiation the council should look to work with the University to try to secure this additional community use of this site for rugby as well as the and the other community sports through a more formal agreement. The 3G AGP at The Whitstable school is in poor condition, not on the FA register, and requires resurfacing. The school are currently exploring options to resurface the pitch and an assessment should be undertaken of the viability of resurfacing this pitch with a WRC shockpad and surface to support Whitstable RFC's training and match demand. This would provide a suitable alternative to relocating football demand from the University of Kent pitch and would negate the overplay at Whitstable RFC. The leading properties and actions for Canterbury are considered further below.

Leading priorities:

- Secure a minimum of 8 hours of community rugby use of the WRC 3G pitch at the University of Kent.
- Explore options to improve the drainage and quality of grass pitches at Canterbury RFC and Whitstable RFC
- Support Whitstable RFC in repairing the pipe drainage at their site.
- Reinstate the second junior pitch at Canterbury RFC to accommodate some of the junior training and matches.
- Investigate the feasibility of resurfacing The Whitstable School 3G AGP to a WRC shockpad and surface.



Canterbury City Council
Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042
Appendix E –
Club Consultation and Aspirations

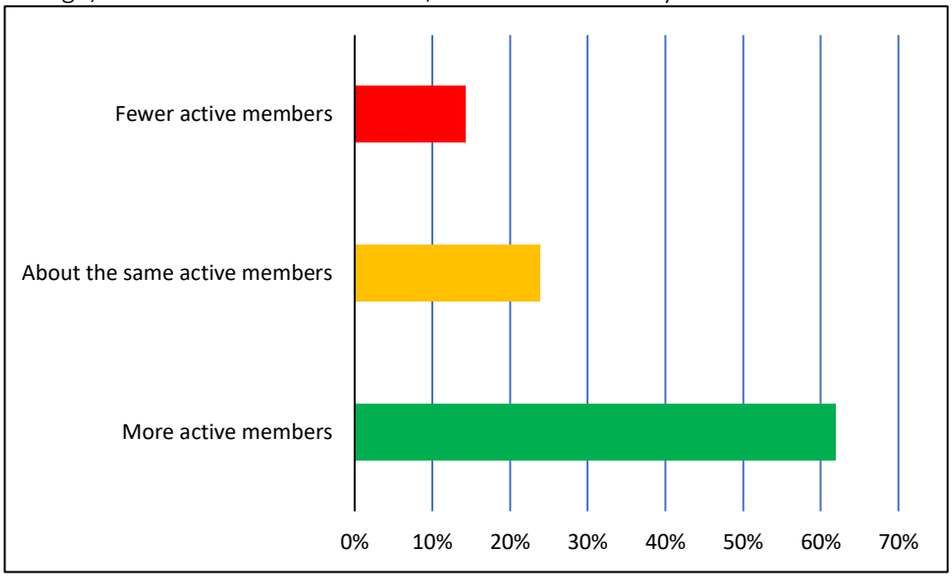
Appendix F- Club consultation and aspirations

To understand the current landscape of clubs in Canterbury, data was collected from a survey distributed to the sports clubs in the area. 85 individual sports clubs responded to the invitation to complete the survey. A summary of the club survey results is provided in the strategy introduction, with this appendix providing the results of key questions asked and details of club's aspirations for improved facilities. It should be noted that not all clubs in the District responded to the survey and some were consulted with by other means such as by phone or via a meeting. It should also be noted that not all clubs answered every question.

Club Survey Responses

Figure F.1 Growth trend last 3 years

Does your Club/Organisation have more or fewer teams/active members than three seasons/years ago, or has the number of teams/active members stayed about the same?

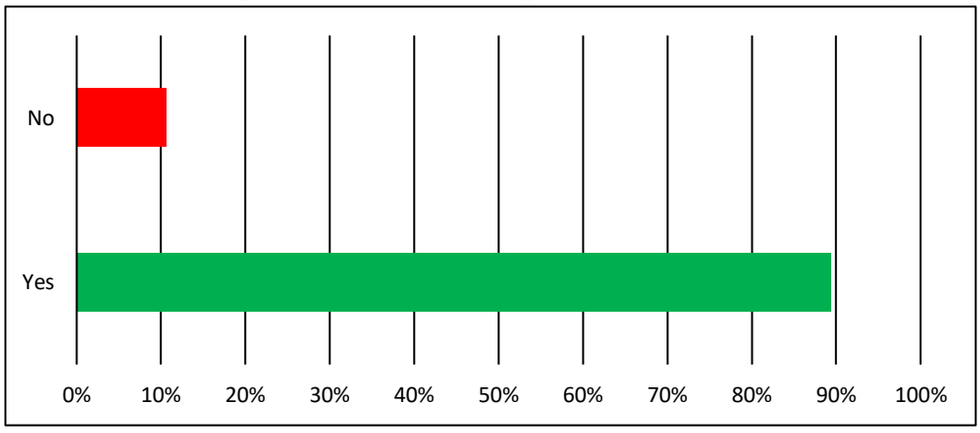


**1 club did not provide an answer*

Fewer teams/active members	14%
About the same active member	24%
More teams/active members	62%

Figure F.2 Future growth

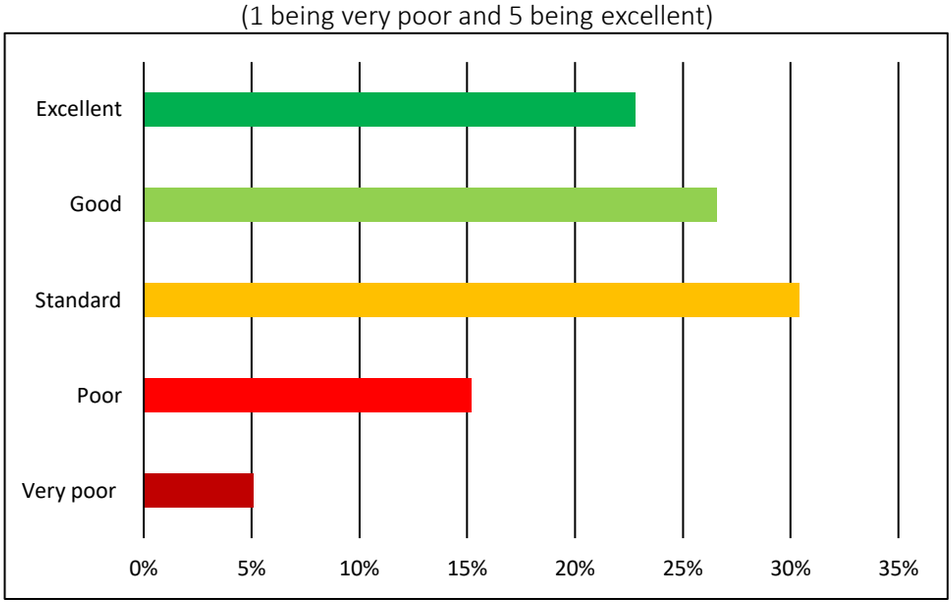
Does your Club/Organisation have plans to grow in the next three seasons/years?



No plans to grow in the next three seasons / years	11%
Plans to grow in the next three seasons / years	89%

*Figure F.3 Club response – Sports facilities ratings**

How do you rate the quality of your Club's/Organisation's main facilities?
(1 being very poor and 5 being excellent)

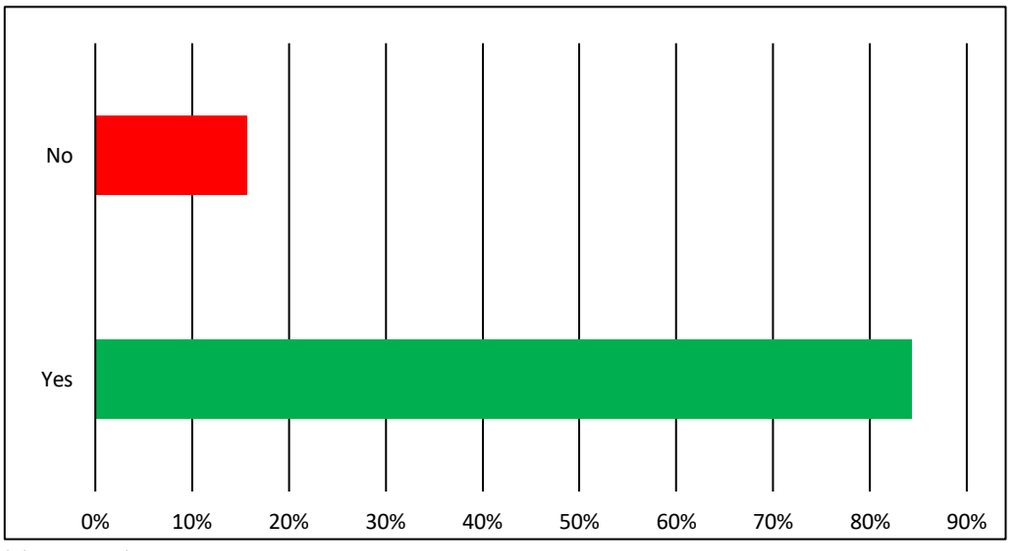


*6 clubs did not provide an answer

Excellent	23%
Good	27%
Standard	30%
Poor	15%
Very Poor	5%

*Figure F.4 Main site – Sports facility improvements**

Is there a need to improve or change your main sports facilities to sustain or grow your Club/Organisation (ie improved maintenance, engineered drainage, develop additional pitches etc)?

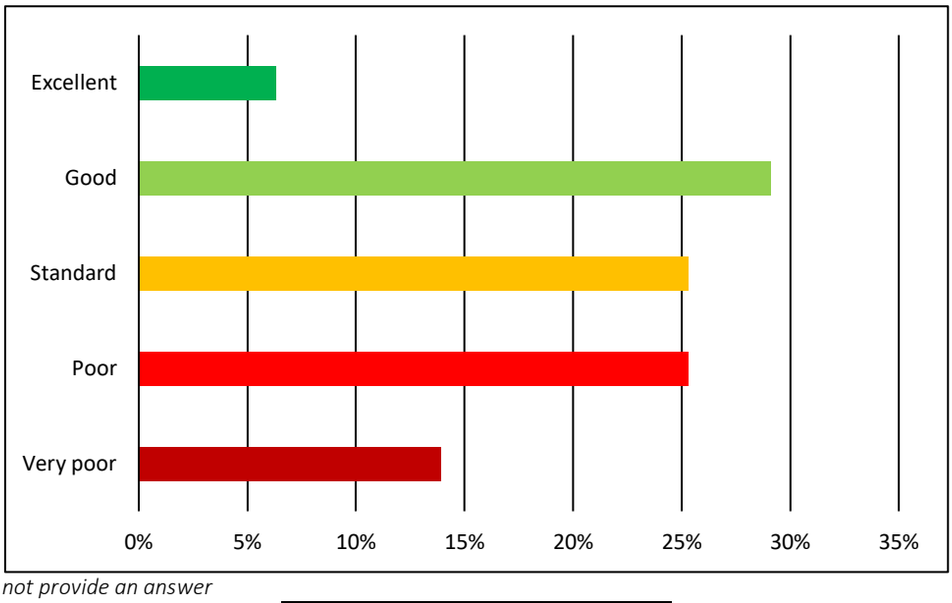


*2 clubs did not provide an answer

There is not a need to improve or change playing facilities	16%
There is a need to improve or change playing facilities	84%

*Figure F.5 Main site – Ancillary facilities rating**

How do you rate the quality of the clubhouse/changing rooms at your Club's/Organisation's main site? (1 being very poor and 5 being excelent).

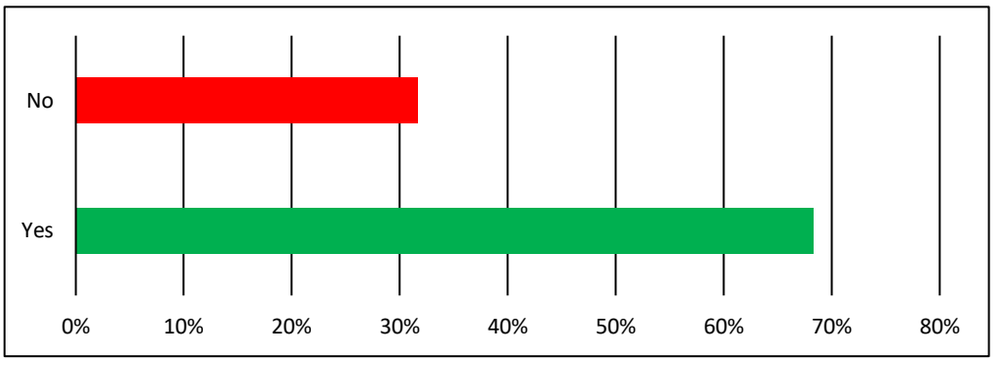


*6 clubs did not provide an answer

Excellent	6%
Good	29%
Standard	25%
Poor	25%
Very Poor	14%

*Figure F.6 Main site – Ancillary facilities improvement**

Is there a need to improve the ancillary facilities at your main site?



*6 clubs did not provide an answer

There is not a need to improve or change ancillary facilities	32%
There is a need to improve or change ancillary facilities	68%

Club aspirations and demands for facility improvements

The clubs surveyed cited a range of aspirations and facility needs to assist in growing and developing their respective clubs. A number of these have been considered during the formation of the strategy action plan in discussion with the steering group, however not all of these needs were deemed to be priorities at the time of the strategy being developed and therefore have not been included in the action plan. The table below illustrates the aspirations provided by the responding clubs, in their own words, as part of the survey process for reference and information.

Figure F.7 Playing Pitch Sports club aspirations and demands for facility improvements

Club / Sport	Aspirations/Demands
Barham Bears FC	Hoping for planning permission to be granted for permeable parking grid to make their club more accessible. Looking to section off brickfield recreation ground to prevent dogs and walkers damaging the pitch. Submitting a new grant to enable Brickfield recreation ground to be a usable pitch. Replace their leaking container with improved facilities including a clubhouse with toilets. Club are looking to upgrade their pitches and have aspirations to develop a 3G pitch on the site. Would like to install floodlights on site. Fencing and equipment needs upgrading as parents are currently covering most of the costs.
Bekesbourne FC and Canterbury youth	The club feel that in order to grow, access to a 3G pitch for their teams is required. The overall building needs improvements and there is a need for extra changing facilities on site.
Canterbury Bombers	Need better quality pitches and better maintenance of these pitches due to significant overplay. Need better quality changing facilities also.
Canterbury City Football CIC	Club need to relocate and looking to secure pitch where they can develop facilities around the pitch to help them grow. Need to improve the pitch of their current site at Thannington due to molehills. Need to develop clubhouse facilities at Thannignton or gain access to facilities at Thannington Neighbourhood Resource Centre.
Canterbury Cricket Club	Better quality nets to help grow the club and provide the players with a quality training environment. Better quality clubhouse facilities.
Canterbury Eagles FC	Would like to increase use of Barton Manor and explore using Barton Court. Do not have enough 3G pitch space to sustain the amount of training for all teams which leads to players leaving with better facilities. Would like to establish a home base for matches and training, which could be met by developing 3G pitch at Simon Langton Grammar School for Girls. Need access to a site where ancillary facilities are available as the ones they use currently do not offer this.
Canterbury Eagles Sunday	Need access to more affordable pitch hire.
Canterbury Hockey Club	Need to constantly review and maintain their facilities.
Canterbury Red Star	Need to improve their pitch care and maintenance, particularly during periods of poor weather. Increase and improve their current equipment and changing facilities as building is old so can get cold. Need new locks for building.
Canterbury Rugby Club	Install a borehole to provide water to sustain the grass reseeding in summer and to improve quality of pitch during winter. Changing rooms and toilets need improvements and updating. Need a new clubhouse with a meeting room and larger bar area. Access to more playing fields and a WRC 3G pitch.
Canterbury Youth FC	Need access to a dedicated home facility where they can play their matches.
Chartham Sports FC	Need access to more pitches which are of better quality. Need better access to changing facilities on school sites.
Chestfield Cricket Club	Require additional space to allow for a second pitch to help them meet current and future demand. Exploring acquiring a new facility in future housing development of Brooklands Farm adjoining the club. Install hybrid training wickets.
Harbledown Cricket Club	Install a non-turf pitch to alleviate pressure on their cricket square. Improve the maintenance of the outfield area.
Head in the game	Need access to facilities at cheaper rates and more suitable times to allow more people to take part.

Club / Sport	Aspirations/Demands
Herne Bay Cricket Club	Need support with maintaining their pitches, particularly with the growth of teams and increase in matches being played. Upgrade their equipment such as sight screens, rollers and other maintenance equipment. Need a suitable clubhouse and changing facilities to accommodate their current members and attract more people to the club.
Herne Bay FC	Need to make improvements to their changing facilities and outside toilets, particularly around making it more accessible. Improve their car park which causes ongoing issues.
Herne Bay FC Women	To support their growth, they need access to their own home facility. Improvements are needed to the changing room facilities.
Herne Bay Harriers FC	Awaiting the development at Oxenden Park which will give them access to more grass pitches. Continue with plans to be a partner club in the development of a 3G pitch at Herne Bay High School. Improve the maintenance of the grass pitches at Herne Bay school.
Herne Bay Sports Hub	Require additional facilities to help the club grow their women and girls section as well as disability football. Upgrade their ancillary facilities to facilitate more sustained commercial usage of the site in the future.
Little Kickers	Access to more affordable 3G pitches in Canterbury.
Littlebourne Junior Cricket	Need to improve changing facilities and include umpires' room and other changing facilities for opposite sex playing in same fixture.
Memorial Park Rangers	Need support with maintenance of the pitches which has deep holes and regularly needs maintenance to fill.
Rising Stars FC	Would like to have a dedicated home ground with a clubhouse and ancillary facilities to meet the demands of their club and allow them to grow into offering disability teams. Need greater access to quality and affordable 3G pitches for training and matches.
Rising Sun FC	Improve the quality of the pitches. Increase the number of changing rooms with showers.
SMB FC	Improve the quality and accessibility of the showers and toilet facilities.
South Canterbury Cricket Club	Need a permanent cricket ground so all their members can play and train more frequently. Need covers on their current facility as they have had some fixtures cancelled due to weather this season.
St Lawerence and Highland Court Cricket Club	Secure funds to develop a third cricket ground and grow their number of teams. Need to improve their changing, shower and toilet facilities to keep up with the growing demand for women and girls cricket. Would like to improve their water pressure so they can adequately irrigate their cricket squares in summer months.
Street End Cricket Club	Need to improve their ancillary facilities as it is outdated and small which limits the number of people wanting to join. Pitch also needs to be levelled.
Sturry FC	Need help with pitch drainage as they struggle during the winter to fulfill fixtures, which affects how much they can grow as a club as struggle to get games played Need help with general maintenance of our facilities and certain modernisation.
Sturry Kings FC	Need more match space to accommodate the growth in Canterbury Hope to secure use of Hersden Recreation Ground. Need more all-weather space to avoid these long winter gaps and play regardless of the rain. Need space maintained by the city or parish councils in partnership with their volunteers to build a real "home" ground. Need access to ancillary facilities which can cater for everyone. Would like a permanent dedicated facility where they can meet all these needs.
Tankerton FC	Need support from the council to help with developing and opening their new pitches and community sports hub
Tyler Hill Cricket Club	Need to improve the ancillary facilities on site as currently no showers, sight screens or pitch maintenance equipment.
Tyler Hill Youth FC	Need support with maintaining the pitches as they are often waterlogged due to lack of investment over the years.
Whitstable Cricket Club	Need a bigger ground with more facilities to train and play matches. Outfield area needs completely relaying Cricket square is becoming damaged and unplayable so requires significant work to improve this. Investment into a larger, second ground could help them develop as a club. Need additional changing and shower facilities to accommodate all ages and teams.

Club / Sport	Aspirations/Demands
Whitstable Juniors FC	AGP pitch at Whitstable Junior School is very worn and in need of an update. Needs sports lighting as matches can't be played in evenings during winter months. Would like pitch markings to be appropriate for 7v7 football as they are currently multisport. Access to changing facilities would be helpful for the club.
Whitstable Reckers FC	Would be nice to redevelop the Westmeads Recreation Ground pitch which is currently not used. Modernise the changing facilities at Faversham Recreation Ground
Whitstable Rugby Club	Have a long-term plan to fundraise a 3G pitch on their site which they need support with. Looking to extend the balcony and build out the area underneath the new balcony to support the increased membership, to offer additional services to support revenue growth. Need support with the ongoing maintenance of their grass pitches, particularly help with the current drainage of the pitches.
Whitstable Town Football Club	Ongoing discussions with The Whitstable School to explore additional shared-use opportunities. If suitable land becomes available near our home ground, the club is willing and able to invest in developing additional facilities. Need to redevelop their clubhouse and changing facilities as they are outdated and not fit for purpose as they do not support women and girls, officials or inclusive participation.

Figure F.8 Sports Facilities club aspirations and demands for facility improvements

Club/Sport	Aspirations/Demands
Barham Bowls Club	The clubhouse and green both need refurbishing. Would like to attract additional members into the committee however the poor facilities makes this challenging.
Bay Netball Club	Improvements to the playing surfaces at Bay Sports Arena would allow for greater skill and speed of movement. Sunken posts would help improve the safety for players. Current posts require new padding and nets.
Broomfield BMX Club	Club would like to develop floodlights on the track. Need to improve security and install fencing on the site to prevent damage caused by motorbikes. The track surface needs improving. There is a need to develop toilets, a changing area and a small communal space for spectators to encourage longer sessions. The track will require a resurfacing in the next few years.
Canterbury & District Indoor Bowling Association	Need to move kitchen and restaurant downstairs to make it easy access for less mobile members and visitors.
Canterbury City Lacrosse Club	Need a dedicated facility where they can train and play matches and, access to ancillary facilities which they can use such as a clubhouse and storage. This site would ideally be an artificial pitch which they can share with other sports clubs.
Canterbury Croquet Club	Floodlights would help them as they have limited space to use once it gets dark in the winter months. Need support with drainage of the site to allow for play in winter months. Would like to add more lanes at the site to allow more members to play at once as currently limited. Need electricity in the clubhouse.
Canterbury and District Netball League	Want to expand the league but currently don't have access to safe and affordable facilities which is putting them at risk of collapsing. Need to resurface some of the courts across the area, particularly the ones which flood and becomes slippery in winter months.
Canterbury Gymnastics Club	Need funding to improve the venue and facilities as well as upgrade their current equipment. Roof needs to be refurbished as they currently have to cancel sessions due to leaks, or it being too hot or cold.
Canterbury Harriers	Access to sports lit track for winter training sessions.
Canterbury Mariners	Looking to mark out football pitch on the 3G pitch permanently.
Canterbury Table Tennis Club	Need support to take over a Kent County Council building in Cow Lane to allow them to host more sessions and grow as a club. This building will require significant refurbishments to make it safe for the club to use.
Canterbury Tennis Club	Develop two new padel courts on site. Resurface their tennis courts. Improve and increase the size of their current toilets and changing facilities.
Foreland Badminton Academy and Canterbury Kings Club	Need a bigger area like a Sports Village to support the growth of the club.
Herne Bay Amateur Rowing Club	Ongoing discussions with the council to expand their clubhouse. Need to improve the changing facilities for females. Improve the kitchen facilities in the club.
Herne Bay Basketball Club	Need greater access to courts as currently impacting how many sessions they can deliver. Introduce a small stall to sell refreshments and snacks. Improve equipment in the sports hall of Herne Bay High School.
Herne Bay Junior Badminton Club	Need to refurbish their roof as currently leaks onto one of their courts.
Herne Bay Lifeguard and Swimming Club	Need to replace the equipment such as new lanes and flags at the site however they are not responsible for this. Update changing facilities as they are becoming outdated.

Club/Sport	Aspirations/Demands
Herne Bay Memorial Park Junior Parkrun	Improve the maintenance of the tarmac paths they use for the run as some areas have cracks and potholes which can be dangerous for participants. Introduce permanent route signage to support the runners and marshals. Introduce permanent advertisement of the parkrun.
Herne Bay Roller Hockey & Skating Club	Looking to put an agreement in place to run the outside MUGA/skating rink. Need greater access to suitable venues for their activities.
Herne Bay Table Tennis Club	Ongoing development plans to find a new dedicated facility to enable them to expand affordable opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities, particularly as current facility is under threat of closing.
Herne Bay Taekwondo	Would like a permanent purpose-built martial arts studio where they can deliver sessions and store equipment. Need bigger changing facilities and more storage at Arkley Road Studios
Inclusive Sport	To sustain and grow, there is a need for access to a dedicated, inclusive, pan-disability playing facility that is fully prepared to meet a wide range of needs. Gain access to cheaper facilities which are of good quality. Access to a swimming pool that is designed or adapted to meet a wide range of physical, sensory, and learning needs such as appropriate changing facilities, hoists, and supportive staff environments.
Invicta East Kent Athletics Club	Need to update their track facilities. Want to establish a high-quality pole-vaulting program with appropriate equipment and coaching. The clubhouse has become outdated and requires a full update.
Invicta Touch Club	Access to 3G facilities for them to train in winter months.
Invicta Volleyball	Require new posts and sports hall at Canterbury Academy gets very cold. Need better maintained sand courts as it is currently dangerous to play on. Access to appropriate changing and toilet facilities.
Kent Roller Derby	Need access to a secondary training site which is affordable and accessible as they feel this will help them become a beacon of community, women-led sport for Kent. .
Pilgrims Netball Club	Need sports lighting on their outdoor courts to allow them to play late into evenings. Access to adequate toilets and changing facilities. Club would like an area they can call their own with all appropriate facilities alongside it. There is a need for gender-inclusive sports facilities that cater to all young people
The Appeti Tennis Centre	More courts required during peak times.
Westbere Sailing Opportunities	Submitted a planning application for a new clubhouse and are awaiting the planning department's decision
Whitstable Bowling Club	Would like a bigger car parking facility for their members and visitors as currently only space for 5 cars.
Whitstable Lawn Tennis Club	Plans to resurface the tennis courts with Tiger Turf Pro surface which will encourage more usage. Introduce sports lighting which will enable later court usage in the winter months. Kitchen needs improving as becoming outdated. Need to develop designated changing rooms and toilets on site.
Whitstable Road Runners	Would like to have their own dedicated venue to meet and train as this will help them provide more sessions and cater for more age groups and be more inclusive for disabled people.



Canterbury City Council Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy 2026 – 2042 Appendix F – Planning Policies

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Appendix G – National, Regional and Local Planning Policy: Sport and Recreation Facilities

1. National Planning Policy

The government's latest revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in August 2026 and the relevant policies relating to promoting healthy communities are set out in section 16 and include the following plan-making policy HC1 and national decision-making policies HC3 community facilities and public service infrastructure serving new development and HC7 development affecting existing recreational land and facilities.

HC1 - Planning for healthy communities

1. To promote the creation of healthy and inclusive places, and the provision, retention and enhancement of appropriate community facilities and public service infrastructure, development plans should, at the most appropriate level:
a. Be informed by an understanding of any existing deficits in the availability of community facilities and public service infrastructure, and additional requirements expected over the plan period, arising from proposed development and wider changes in the local population and public service provision. In doing so, they should take into account both quantitative and qualitative aspects of provision, identified local health needs and opportunities to reduce inequalities through the availability of facilities;
b. Set out the facilities and contributions expected from development, including as part of allocations for major development involving the provision of housing;
c. Allocate land specifically for community facilities and public service infrastructure where it is appropriate to do so, and assess whether any land is suitable for designation as Local Green Space in accordance with policy HC2;
d. Set local standards for the provision of different types of recreational land and facilities, including for play, sport, informal recreation and allotments. In doing so plans should draw upon relevant national standards and best practice, tailoring these as necessary to local circumstances and evidence. Policies for play and informal recreation should aim to secure a connected network of high quality, inclusive and accessible opportunities as part of the wider network of green space provision, secured through both on-site provision in conjunction with land allocated for development and through other contributions and investment; and e. Identify wider opportunities to promote good health, prevent ill-health, reduce health inequalities and support social interaction through their spatial strategy and land allocations, including through policies for strengthening town centres, locating development where it will support walking, wheeling and cycling and promoting mixed-use developments.
2. In planning for community facilities and public service infrastructure, authorities should engage proactively with local communities and relevant service providers, taking into account relevant strategies to improve health, address inequalities and foster social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community. Authorities should attach considerable importance to providing for sufficient education facilities (including early years, school and post-16 provision), all types of health care provision and other essential community facilities and public service infrastructure over the plan period, in a way that aligns with the needs of the local population and any wider requirements for improvements in public service infrastructure identified by the government or public agencies (recognising that some public service infrastructure serves a larger than local population).

HC3: Community facilities and public service infrastructure serving new development

1. Proposals for housing, employment or other development which would give rise to significant numbers of additional people living in, working in or visiting an area should:
a. Be informed by an understanding of the need for any associated improvements to community facilities and public service infrastructure, whether on or off-site; and
b. Provide for new or improved community facilities and public service infrastructure which are necessary for the development to be acceptable in planning terms, whether

by direct provision or a contribution to off-site improvements (which may be through Community Infrastructure Levy payments, where applicable).
2. Where the development plan does not set locally-specific standards for recreational land and facilities, all development proposals should use relevant national standards and best practice to identify improvements in the quantity and quality of provision which should be provided or contributed towards, as appropriate to the nature of the development and taking into account existing levels of provision in the area.
3. Planning conditions and obligations should be used to secure the timely delivery of community facilities and public service infrastructure required to serve new development, so that these facilities are available for use when the development (or an agreed proportion of the development) is first occupied or comes into use.

HC7: Development affecting existing recreational land and facilities
1. Development proposals should not result in the loss of existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, other formal and informal play space and allotments, unless:
a. An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
b. The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, in a location which offers comparable or improved accessibility for the community it serves; or
c. The development is for public service infrastructure, and the resulting loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and/or quality; or d. The development is for alternative open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

2. County Planning Policy

At the county level, Kent County Council has no planning responsibilities of direct relevance to sports facilities aside from provision for physical education and sport in its schools and responsibilities for travel infrastructure across the County. The Council works closely with Kent County Council on an officer level through the Locality Board set up for the district on these areas.

There is a duty to cooperate between East Kent authorities and Kent County Council on planning policy and strategy. The East Kent authorities (including Canterbury) co-operated on the preparation of a Sub-Regional Strategy – The South East Plan to recognise the complementary roles of the different districts. This was followed by the preparation of a Sustainable Community Strategy for East Kent. A Regeneration Board for East Kent has also been established, whose role is in part to encourage cooperation on planning and related issues.

3. Local Planning Policy

The Canterbury District Local Plan 2011-2031 shapes and guides development for the area. The existing adopted statutory development plan for the Canterbury City Council Local Planning Authority (LPA) Area was adopted in July 2017. It sets out the spatial strategy and vision for the district that *"through focused, well-planned and environmentally sustainable growth, by 2030 the Canterbury District will be defined by a dynamic strong economy and distinctive cultural and visitor experience from which our communities will prosper. As a council we will provide leadership for our community and shape our district through working in partnership to deliver our vision. We are ambitious and will do the best for our people and will be prepared to take the difficult decisions which may be needed when choices have to be made. We will support the growth needed to deliver our ambition of having a strong dynamic economy and a skilled well-paid workforce supported by the quality of life and housing of the appropriate scale and quality."*

The Canterbury District Local Plan 2011-2031 includes key planning policies relating to infrastructure including community facilities and services. The key policies of relevance to this strategy are:

Policy OS2 Playing Fields

Proposals for development, which would result in the loss, in whole or in part, of playing fields will only be permitted if:

a. The site has first been considered for other sport, recreation or community uses; and
b. It has been demonstrated that the playing field is surplus to requirements having regard to the City Council's Open Space Strategy; or
c. There is an overriding need for the proposed development which outweighs the loss of the playing fields and the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or,
d. The development is for a small part of the site; where it has been demonstrated that it will result in enhanced sport and recreational facilities .

Policy OS8 Sports and Recreation in the Countryside

Proposals for sports and recreation facilities in the countryside will be permitted where:

a. They are well related to an existing settlement;
b. There is no detrimental impact on landscape interests, protected species, sites or features of nature conservation interest or on sites of archaeological or historical importance;
c. There is no adverse impact upon residential amenity;
d. Access and parking provisions are acceptable, the use does not significantly increase traffic to the detriment of the rural area or highway safety and the site is accessible by a range of transport modes;
e. Buildings and other related development are well designed, appropriate in scale and function to the use of the land and sensitively located to retain the openness of the area;
f. The rural character of the area is safeguarded.

Policy OS9 Protection of Existing Open Space

Proposals which would result in the loss of protected existing open space as shown on the Proposals Map (all Insets), will be permitted if:

a. There would be no material harm to the contribution the protected open space makes to the visual or recreational amenity of the area; and
b. The open space has been assessed by the City Council as making no positive contribution to its overall strategy on open space.
c. Where there would be material harm, this would be balanced against demonstrable need for the development;
d. There is no alternative site available to accommodate the proposed development, and any harm that might result from the development could be offset by the provision of other open space of comparable quality, size, character and usability in a suitable location.

Policy OS11 Outdoor Space Provision

New housing development shall make provision for appropriate outdoor space, including semi-natural areas, strategic urban parks and green corridors, amenity greenspace, children's play areas, open space for sport, allotments or community gardens proportionate to the likely number of people who will live there.

Where the development does not allow for the provision of such open space on site, developers will be expected to make financial contribution towards the provision of new, or improvement of open space or recreational facilities elsewhere in the locality, through entering into a legal agreement or another suitable mechanism.

4.2 The Emerging Local Plan

The city council is preparing a new Local Plan for the district, which will replace the adopted Local Plan (2017) and will set out the strategy for accommodating new housing, supporting jobs, delivering community infrastructure and protecting the environment through to 2043. The emerging Canterbury District Local Plan 2026-2043 is at Regulation 19 stage consultation with the Draft Local Plan submission due by December 2026.

The proposed policies in the emerging Canterbury District Local Plan that relate to provision of community facilities for sport and recreation are:

Draft Policy DS9 – Town centres and community facilities (Extract):
Proposals for new indoor sports, recreation, fitness, swimming or skating facilities, or for the improvement or enhancement of existing facilities, will be supported on suitable sites across the district, where it accords with other policies in this plan. Proposals for development which would result in the loss, in whole or in part, of existing indoor sports, recreation, fitness, swimming or skating facilities will only be supported where the site has first been considered for other indoor sports provision and:

a. It has been demonstrated that the facility is surplus to requirements having regard to the Indoor Built Facilities Strategy; or
b. There is an overriding need for the proposed development which outweighs the loss and the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location to serve the local community; or
c. The development is for a small part of the site; where it has been demonstrated that it will result in enhanced sport and recreational facilities.

Draft Policy DS17 – Active and Sustainable Travel (Extract):

1. Proposals for development must demonstrate how they will maximise high-quality walking, wheeling and cycling connectivity both within the site and to local facilities, open spaces and public transport networks including bus and rail. Proposals within settlement boundaries should be designed to ensure that walking, wheeling and cycling routes from the development are more convenient than vehicular routes. Routes and access should be designed to be safe and inclusive and meet the needs of all pedestrians and cyclists, including disabled people and the mobility impaired and, where appropriate, contribute to ecological and pollinator connectivity.

Draft Policy DS28 – Publicly accessible open space and sports (Extract)

1. Proposals for new residential and mixed-use development schemes will be required to deliver the following quantum of each category of publicly accessible open space provision in accordance with the specified quantity standards below:

Typology	Definition	Local standard per 1,000 people
Outdoor sports pitches	Areas marked for pitch sports. This is in addition to any sports pitches provided as part of any on site school provision.	0.87ha The types of sports facilities provided should be informed by the Playing Pitch Strategy and Sport England's Play Pitch Calculator

2. Where the quantity standards are not met in full by open space provision within the site, the council will secure appropriate financial contributions towards qualitative investments to existing off-site open spaces, and on-going maintenance, to ensure the impact of the development is fully mitigated. The council has prepared an Open Spaces Calculator to help applicants quantify such contributions.

3. Where a development of over 3.5ha is proposed in an area of the district with

identified deficiencies in the typologies for parks and gardens, play areas, allotments or outdoors sports, or where the specific characteristics of a development site present a strategic opportunity for provision of one of these typologies, the council will require the applicant to maximise the impact of the open space contribution to the local area and the district by applying flexibility between typologies, while maintaining the overall level of open space provision for the site.

4. The type of outdoor sports pitches must be determined based on the council's Open Space Strategy and Playing Pitch Strategy, or any subsequent updates to these strategies, or identified local need.

4.3 Neighbourhood Plans

The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development through the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood Planning can be undertaken by two types of bodies parish/town councils or neighbourhood forums. To date only Bridge Parish Council are preparing a neighbourhood plan.

4.4 Sport England Guidance - Standards

Sport England has published guidance for local authorities on how to undertake and apply needs assessments for community sports facilities in accordance with the NPPF (i.e. *Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities, July 2014*).

Sport England's national guidance for assessing needs and opportunities (ANOG) advocates gathering detailed local supply and demand data and assessment of area, sport and site-specific needs using purpose-designed sports facility planning tools in order to determine which existing specific sites and facilities should be protected and the priority areas/sites for enhanced, new or expanded facilities. Sport England recommends all local authorities develop and maintain up to date Playing Pitch Strategies to ensure the use of local standards is supported by a robust, evidence-based strategic review of the local priorities.

As detailed within Section 5 of the main Playing Pitch and Sport Facilities Strategy, the existing Canterbury Local Plan Policy (OS11) includes per capita quantitative standards for the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities. The replacement draft policy (DS28) also includes these local standards. The 2026 NPPF references the use of local standards for guiding the development of playing pitches alongside the use of robust Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategies to inform decision making.

Policy HC1 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning for healthy communities should be informed by an understanding of any existing deficits in the availability of community facilities and additional requirements expected over the plan period arising from proposed development and wider changes in the local provision. It states plans should take into account both quantitative and qualitative aspects of provision, identified local health needs and opportunities to reduce inequalities through the availability of facilities.

Accordingly, this updated Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy for Canterbury District is based on a detailed local assessment of the supply and demand for playing pitches and sports facilities and on the full adoption of this strategy, the Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy will be evidence to use in applying policies for all planning applications especially those which affect outdoor sports facilities and playing pitches, and the recommendations within this strategy are intended to guide future planning decisions and provides an updated approach that enhances and supports Local Plan Policy OS11 and the emerging Canterbury Local Plan Policies DS28, DS9, and DS17.

Facilities Planning Model Assessment of Swimming Pool Provision for Canterbury City Council

Bespoke Report

9 March 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

0.1 Canterbury City Council (also referred to as Canterbury or the City) is reviewing its current provision of swimming pools.

0.2 This report has been prepared based on an assessment using the Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM) spatial modelling tool. The FPM study is a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access to swimming pools.

0.3 The FPM modelling run is to provide a baseline assessment of provision in 2025.

0.4 The main report sets out the full set of findings under each of the seven assessment headings.

0.5 The next section of the report provides the headline strategic overview, the key findings and interventions arising from the FPM study on supply, demand and accessibility.

Headline Strategic Overview

0.6 The headline strategic finding is that Canterbury has an extensive public swimming offer with three public leisure centres. The centres are fit for purpose and provide for all swimming activities. The centres are located in the areas of highest demand.

0.7 The available supply of swimming pools can meet Canterbury's demand for swimming in 2025. Satisfied demand is very high with almost all met within Canterbury. Unmet demand is very low.

0.8 The estimated level of utilisation at most of the swimming pools is comfortable. However, Herons Leisure Centre and Kingsmead Leisure Centre are estimated to be uncomfortably full at peak times (more than 70% utilised).

Key Findings

0.9 The key findings that underpin the headline strategic overview are as follows:

1. In 2025 the total water space in Canterbury is 1,991 sqm of water and the available water space in the weekly peak period is 1,868 sqm of water. Therefore, 6% of the water space is unavailable.
2. The public leisure centres provide 70% of the available capacity, the commercial pools provide 18% and the educational site provides 12%.
3. Canterbury's demand is the equivalent of 65% of its available supply in 2025.
4. In 2025, 96% of Canterbury's demand is met. The number of visits met in the weekly peak period is 10,084. Canterbury's proportion of met demand is higher than the regional average of 95% and the national average of 93%.

5. Of Canterbury's satisfied demand, 97% is met within Canterbury. The swimming pools are very accessible to Canterbury's residents.
6. Unmet demand is very low, equating to 4% of Canterbury's demand and 76 sqm of water. Nearly all the unmet demand is too far from a facility. Unmet demand due to lack of capacity is 1 sqm of water.
7. The overall used capacity of Canterbury's swimming pools in the weekly peak period is 72%. However, two sites are uncomfortably full at peak times – Herons Leisure Centre at 93% and Kingsmead Leisure Centre at 91%.

Interventions and Next Steps

0.10 The focus for the intervention is to create a better balance between supply and demand by increasing availability at peak times at Herons Leisure Centre and increasing the attractiveness of Whitstable Pools and Fitness and The King's School Sports Centre.

0.11 Kingsmead Leisure Centre meets the most visits in Canterbury. All three pools are available for the maximum 52.5 hours in the weekly peak period; therefore, there is no scope to increase availability and capacity to reduce the proportion of used capacity to a comfortable level. The intervention is to programme the main pool to provide for the most popular activities at peak times.

0.12 The King's School Sports Centre is located close to Kingsmead Leisure Centre and is estimated to be underutilised. It has a 25m x 12m pool, which opened in 1990 and has not been refurbished. Therefore, the swimming pool is less attractive to residents than the recently refurbished and larger Kingsmead Leisure Centre. The school actively promotes itself as a centre for educational after school club use before wider sports clubs and community recreational use. This pool could meet some unmet demand if it was modernised in the future and more appealing to residents.

0.13 Availability of the main pool at Herons Leisure Centre can be increased by up to 5.0 hours in the weekly peak period, and the availability of the teaching pool by up to 8.7 hours, if there is sufficient demand for learn to swim. Increasing availability and capacity is recommended to reduce the proportion of used capacity.

0.14 Whitstable Pools and Fitness is estimated to be 57% utilised at peak times. Demand is lower in Whitstable than in the other two main settlements, but there is a small amount of unmet demand in the wider area. The centre opened in 1993 and is the only public leisure centre that has not been refurbished. If the centre were to be modernised then this would increase the attractiveness of the swimming pools to residents and further improve the offer. Canterbury City Council should undertake a dilapidations survey to inform the works required and costs for refurbishment.

0.15 These interventions and suggested next steps are based on the FPM findings and should be considered as a key part of the all-round evidence base currently being developed to inform the Canterbury Built Facilities Strategy.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Canterbury City Council (also referred to as Canterbury or the City) is reviewing its current provision of swimming pools.

1.2 This report has been prepared based on an assessment using the Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM) spatial modelling tool. The FPM study is a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access to swimming pools.

1.3 The key drivers for the work are to understand the impact of the following:

- How well the supply of swimming pools is meeting the 2025 demand
- Identify the scale, location, and quantity of any unmet demand

1.4 The outputs from the FPM assessment will:

- Inform Canterbury City Council's strategic planning review of swimming pools provision and update the Council's Built Facilities Strategy
- Inform an evidence base that contributes to the development of planning policy for the provision of indoor sports facilities

The Study Area

1.5 The assessments include the swimming pools and population in Canterbury and the neighbouring local authority areas, which comprise the study area (see Map **1.1**).

1.6 A customer's choice of swimming pool does not respect local authority boundaries. There may be management and possibly pricing incentives for customers to use sports facilities in their local authority area. Other factors that influence choice of swimming pool include:

- How close the venue is to where residents live or work
- Other facilities at the same site, such as a gym or studio
- Programming of the pool with swimming activities that appeal to residents and are available at times that fit with the lifestyle of residents
- Age and condition of the facility and inherently its attractiveness

1.7 Increasingly, the quality of swimming pools and their offer are of more importance to residents in their choice of venues. New facilities will have a significant draw because of the enhanced quality of the venues.

1.8 In determining the position across Canterbury, it is important to take full account of the swimming pools and population in neighbouring local authority areas. The most attractive facility for some Canterbury residents may be outside the City (known as exported demand). For residents of neighbouring local authorities, their most attractive swimming pool may be inside Canterbury (known as imported demand).

1.9 To take account of these factors, a study area is established that places Canterbury at its centre and includes the neighbouring local authority areas.

Map 1.1: Study Area for Canterbury Swimming Pools Assessment



Report Structure, Content and Sequence

1.10 The findings for the Canterbury assessment are set out in a series of tables.

1.11 The headings for each table are:

- Supply
- Demand
- Accessibility
- Satisfied Demand
- Unmet Demand
- Used Capacity
- Local Share

1.12 The terms listed above are defined beneath the tables.

1.13 To support the findings, this report also includes maps that show swimming pool locations, demand, deprivation, driving and walking coverage, public transport access, exported satisfied demand, unmet demand, imported used capacity and local share.

1.14 Where valid, the findings for neighbouring local authorities are set out. A commentary is provided on these comparable findings. For example, some local authorities like to know how their findings on proportion of met demand compare with those of neighbouring local authorities.

1.15 The key findings in each of the sections are numbered and highlighted in bold typeface.

1.16 The facilities excluded from the study, with explanations, are listed in Appendix 1. Details of the swimming pools in the neighbouring local authority areas for the assessment are set out in Appendix 2. The FPM and its parameters are described in Appendix 3.

2 SWIMMING POOL SUPPLY

Table 2.1: Supply of Swimming Pools in Canterbury in 2025

Supply	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Number of pools Number of pool sites	10 6
Total water space in sqm Available sqm of water in weekly peak period	1,991 1,868
Unavailable supply in the weekly peak period	6%
Supply in visits per week in peak period	16,344
Average age of all of sites Average age of public leisure centres	28 40

Definition of supply – This is the supply or capacity of the swimming pools available for community and swimming club use in the weekly peak period. Supply is expressed in the number of visits that a pool can accommodate in the weekly peak period and in square metres of water.

Weekly peak period – This is when most visits take place and when users have most flexibility to visit. The peak period for swimming pools is one hour on weekday mornings, one hour on weekday lunchtimes, five and a half hours on weekday evenings, and seven and a half hours on weekend days. This gives a total of 52.5 hours per week. The modelling and recommendations are based on the ability of the public to access facilities during this weekly peak period.

2.1 In 2025 there are ten swimming pools across six sites in Canterbury.

2.2 **Key finding 1** is that, in 2025, the total water space in Canterbury is 1,991 sqm of water and the available water space in the weekly peak period is 1,868 sqm of water. Therefore, 6% of the water space is unavailable.

2.3 The facilities excluded from the study are listed in Appendix **1**.

Table 2.2: Details of Swimming Pools in Canterbury included in the Run

Site	Provider	Facility Type	Dimensions (m)	Area (sqm)	Year Built	Year Refurb	Peak Hours	Total Hours	Capacity (visits in weekly peak period)
Herons Leisure Centre	Public	5-lane Teaching	25 x 11 11 x 8	275 88	1994	2022	47 43.8	79.9 79.8	2,797
Kingsmead Leisure Centre	Public	6-lane Leisure Teaching	33.3 x 12.8 13.2 x 10.4 12.8 x 7.3	426 137 93	1970	2024	52.5 52.5 52.5	102 102 102	5,740
Whitstable Pools and Fitness	Public	5-lane Teaching	25 x 10.5 10.5 x 7.5	263 79	1993		50.5 52.5	82.5 92	2,905
The King's School Sports Centre	Educational	6-lane	25 x 12	300	1990		40.3	77.7	2,015
David Lloyd	Commercial	4-lane	20 x 7.5	150	2025		52.5	106.25	1,313
Everlast Gyms	Commercial	Main	20 x 9	180	2010		52.5	97.5	1,575

Providers

2.4 Canterbury has an extensive public swimming offer. The three public leisure centres are available to all residents and they provide all the following swimming activities:

- Learn to swim (in separate pools at all three sites)
- Casual recreational swimming
- Lane and fitness swimming activities
- Swimming development through clubs
- Fun and family based activities (Kingsmead Leisure Centre)

2.5 There is one educational site that is available for community use, which is managed in-house. Access to educational sites depends on the policy of each individual school or college towards community use:

- Some educational owners will proactively encourage community use and allow regular hire by swimming clubs and may also operate a learn-to-swim school
- Other schools/colleges will have a responsive, more limited, approach to community use, and only hire the pool on an irregular basis

2.6 There are two commercial sites that are membership-based. They provide recreational swimming and both operate a learn to swim school.

Scale

2.7 The three public leisure centres all have a main pool and a teaching pool. Kingsmead Leisure Centre also has a leisure pool.

2.8 Kingsmead Leisure Centre is the largest swimming pool site in Canterbury and the only site with three pools. The site has a 33.3m x 12.8m six-lane pool, a 12.8m x 7.3m teaching pool and 13.2m x 10.4m leisure pool.

2.9 Both Herons Leisure Centre and Whitstable Pools and Fitness have a 25m five-lane pool and a teaching pool. The teaching pool at Herons Leisure Centre is slightly larger at 11m x 8m, while the Whitstable Pools and Fitness teaching pool has dimensions of 10.5m x 7.5m.

2.10 The King's School Sports Centre is a single pool site but with an extensive 25m x 12m six-lane pool. This scale of pool will appeal to clubs for swimming development.

2.11 Of the commercial pools, Everlast Gyms is slightly larger with a 20m x 9m pool. David Lloyd is the smallest pool in Canterbury with a 20m x 7.5m pool.

Availability

2.12 At the public leisure centres, all three pools at Kingsmead Leisure Centre and the teaching pool at Whitstable Pool and Fitness are available for the maximum 52.5 hours in the weekly peak period.

2.13 Whitstable Pool and Fitness main pool is available for 50.5 hours in the weekly peak period. At Herons Leisure Centre the main pool is available for 47.0 hours and the teaching pool for 43.8 hours in the weekly peak period. Therefore, there is scope to increase availability at peak times by up to 2.0 hours per week for the main pool at Whitstable Pool and Fitness and at Herons Leisure Centre by 5.0 hours for the main pool and 8.7 hours for the teaching pool.

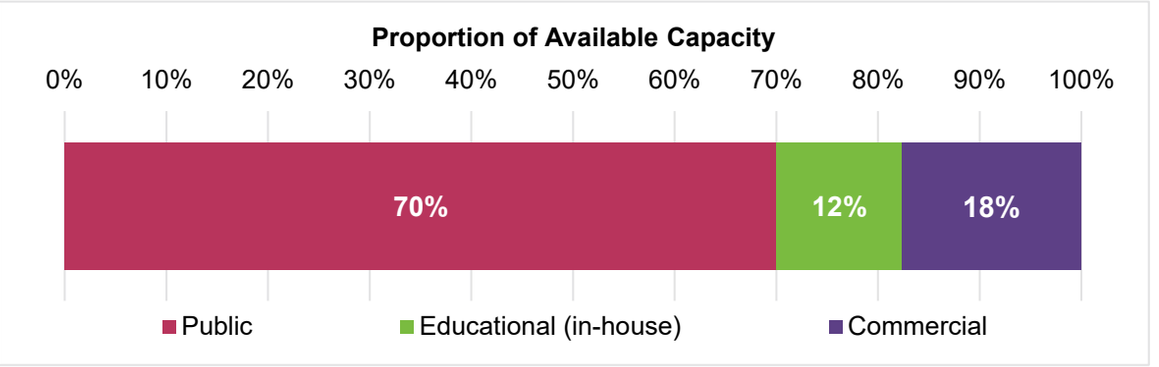
2.14 Educational pools are unlikely to be available for the maximum hours because the weekly peak period includes hours that fall during school time and when after-school clubs are running.

2.15 There is a high commitment to community use at The King's School Sports Centre, which is available for 40.3 hours in the weekly peak period. The school actively promotes itself as a centre for educational after-school club use and wider sports clubs and community recreational use.

2.16 Both commercial pools are available to their membership for the maximum 52.5 hours in the weekly peak period.

Capacity

Chart 2.1 Proportion of Available Water Space by Provider



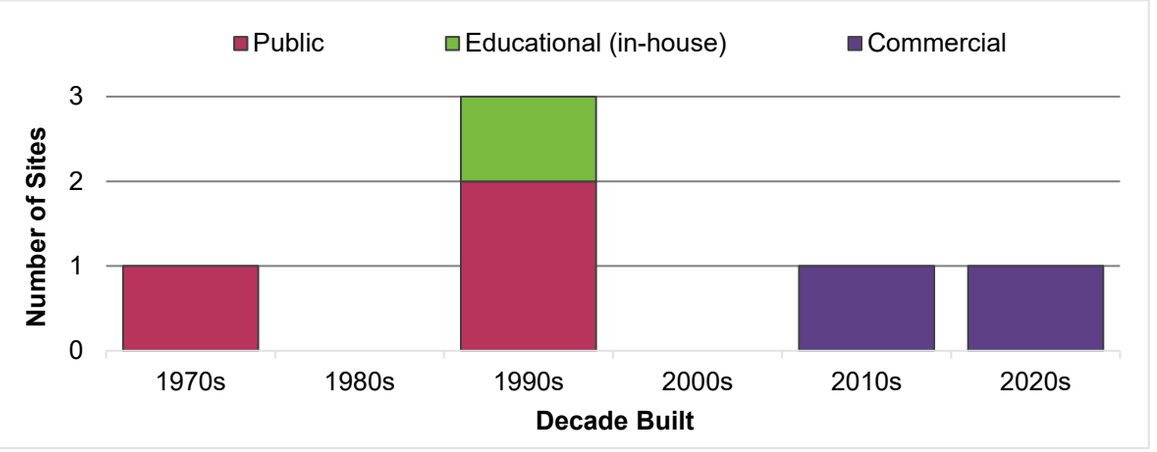
2.17 **Key finding 2** is that the public leisure centres provide 70% of the available capacity in Canterbury. The commercial pools provide 18% and the educational site provides 12%.

2.18 The proportion of Canterbury's available capacity that the public leisure centres each provide are:

- Kingsmead Leisure Centre – 35%
- Whitstable Pools and Fitness – 18%
- Herons Leisure Centre – 17%

Age

Chart 2.2: Decade Built of Swimming Pools in Canterbury by Provider



2.19 All three public leisure centres opened before 2000 but there is a good track record of modernisation:

- Kingsmead Leisure Centre – oldest pool site, opened in 1970 and recently refurbished in 2024
- Herons Leisure Centre – opened in 1994 and refurbished in 2022
- Whitstable Sports and Fitness – opened in 1993 and has not been modernised

2.20 The King's School Sports Centre was built in 1990 and has not been modernised.

2.21 David Lloyd is the most recent swimming pool to open in 2024.

2.22 In 2025 the average age of all the swimming pool sites is 28 years and for the public leisure centres it is 40 years.

Swimming Pool Locations

2.23 Three of the swimming pool sites are located in Canterbury city, including Kingsmead Leisure Centre and The King's School Sports Centre, which are located close together (see Map 2.1). Two sites are located in Herne Bay and one in Whitstable. There are no swimming pool sites in the southern half of the Council area.

2.24 Faversham Swimming Pools in Swale is the closest site in a neighbouring local authority area to Canterbury.

Map 2.1: Location of Swimming Pools in 2025

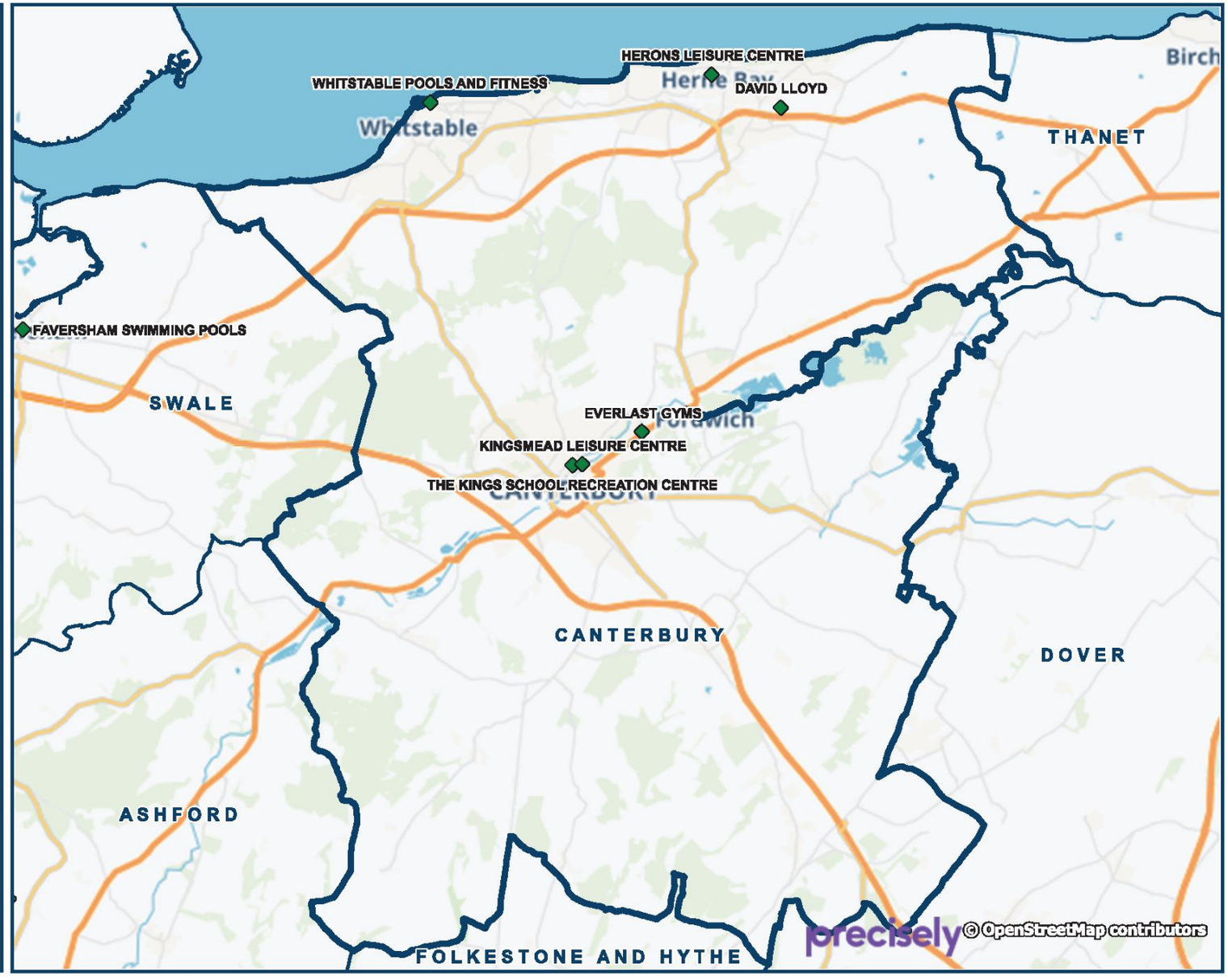
All facility locations used in the model across all runs.

Facilities Included in Runs

- Existing Swimming Pools Location

Boundaries

- Canterbury
- Neighbouring Local Authorities



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3 DEMAND FOR SWIMMING POOLS

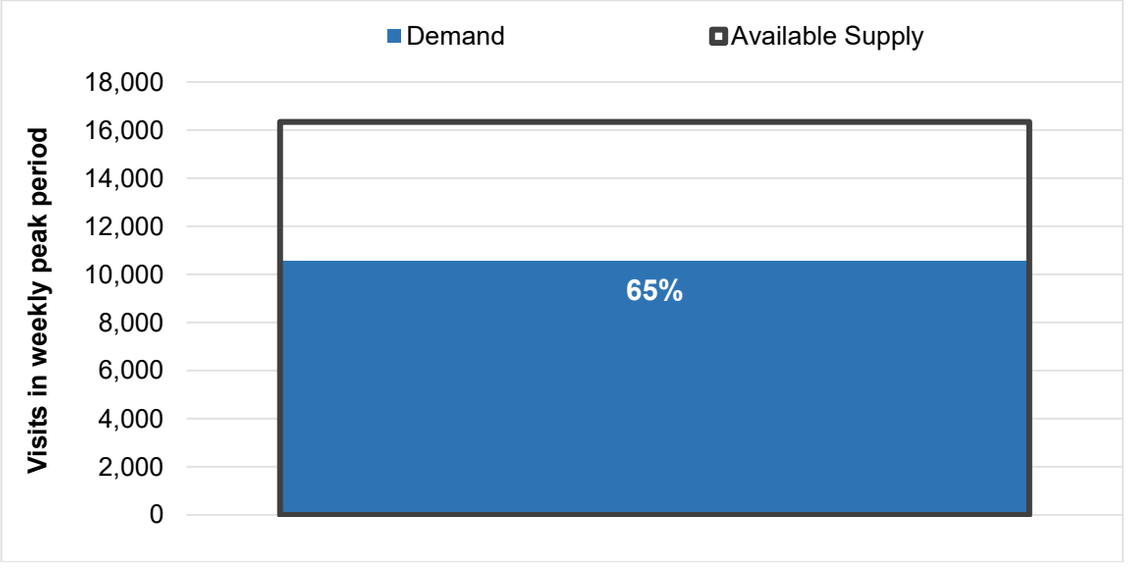
Table 3.1: Demand for Swimming Pools in Canterbury in 2025

Demand	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Resident population	165,237
Visits demanded in weekly peak period	10,545
Demand in sqm of water with comfort factor included	1,734
% of demand in the 10% most-deprived LSOAs nationally	2%

Definition of total demand – This represents the total demand for swimming by gender and for six age bands from 0 to 80+ and is calculated as the percentage of each age band/gender that participates. This is added to the frequency of participation in each age band/gender to arrive at a total demand figure, which is expressed in visits in the weekly peak period and square metres of water. The FPM parameters for the percentage of participation and frequency of participation, for gender and for different age bands, are calculated from Sport England's Active Lives survey up to November 2023 and are set out in Appendix 3.

3.1 Demand is calculated from on the resident population. Canterbury's population in 2025 is 165,237. This population generates demand for 10,545 visits to swimming pools in the weekly peak period, which equates to 1,734 sqm of water. This is less than the available supply.

Chart 3.1: Demand as a Proportion of Available Supply in Canterbury in 2025



3.2 **Key finding 3** is that Canterbury's demand is the equivalent of 65% of its available supply in 2025.

Demand in the Study Area

Table 3.2: Demand for Swimming Pools by Area in 2025

Demand in sqm of Water Considering a 'Comfort' Factor	Run 1
Area	2025
Canterbury	1,734
Ashford	1,550
Dover	1,292
Folkestone and Hythe	1,198
Swale	1,747
Thanet	1,533

3.3 Canterbury has the second highest demand in the study area. Demand is slightly higher in Swale at 1,747 sqm of water. Swale has a slightly smaller population than Canterbury.

3.4 Demand is lowest in Folkestone and Hythe at 1,198 sqm of water. Folkestone and Hythe has the smallest population in the study area.

Geographical Distribution of Demand

3.5 The public leisure centres are located in the areas of highest demand across 12 square kilometres, which are as follows (see Map 3.1):

- Canterbury city – 292 sqm of water (Kingsmead Leisure Centre and The King's School Sports Centre are located in the area)
- Herne Bay – 243 sqm of water (Herons Leisure Centre and David Lloyd are located in this area)
- Whitstable – 193 sqm of water (Whitstable Pools and Fitness is located in this area)

3.6 Demand is much lower in the area south of Canterbury city towards the border with Folkestone and Hythe. Demand is mostly between 2 sqm of water and 8 sqm of water per square kilometre (purple and dark blue squares).

3.7 There is no demand in parts of the west of the Council area on the border with Swale and Ashford.

Deprivation

3.8 In 2025, 2% of Canterbury's demand is in the 10% most-deprived lower super output areas (LSOAs) nationally.

3.9 Deprivation is highest west of Herons Leisure Centre and east of Canterbury city centre in St Martin's (dark brown areas in Map 3.2).

3.10 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score is used in the FPM to limit whether people will use commercial facilities such as David Lloyd and Everlast Gyms (see Appendix 3 for definition of IMD). A weighting factor is incorporated to reflect the cost element often associated with commercial facilities. The assumption is that the higher the IMD score (less affluence), the less likely the population of the LSOA would choose to go to a commercial facility.

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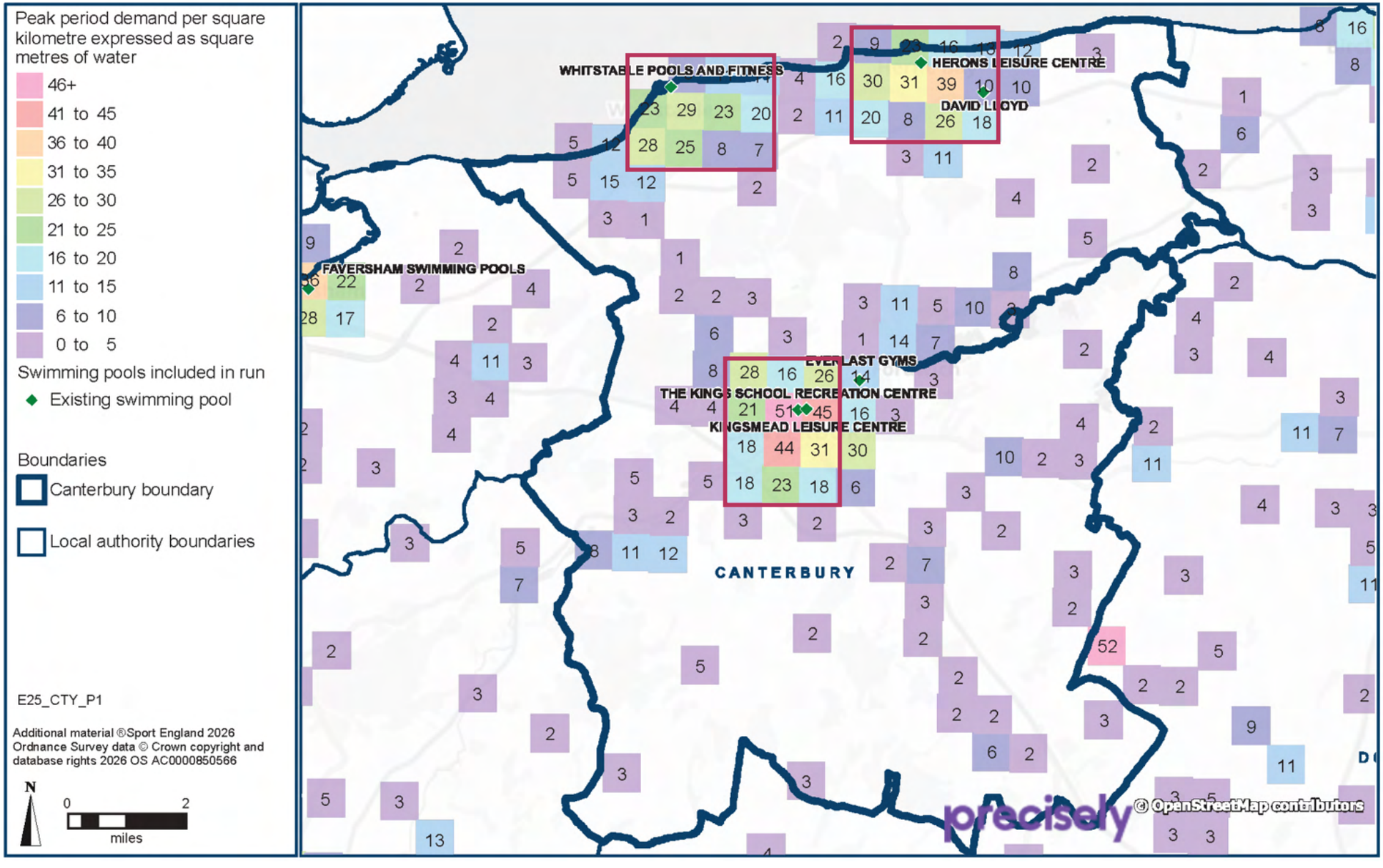
Map 3.1: Demand for Swimming Pools in 2025 (Run 1)



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Map 3.2: Deprivation in 2019 (Run 1)

Deprivation shown thematically (colours) at lower super output area level by decile.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019)

10% most deprived

10% least deprived

Facilities Included in Runs

Existing Swimming Pools Location

Boundaries

Canterbury

Neighbouring Local Authorities

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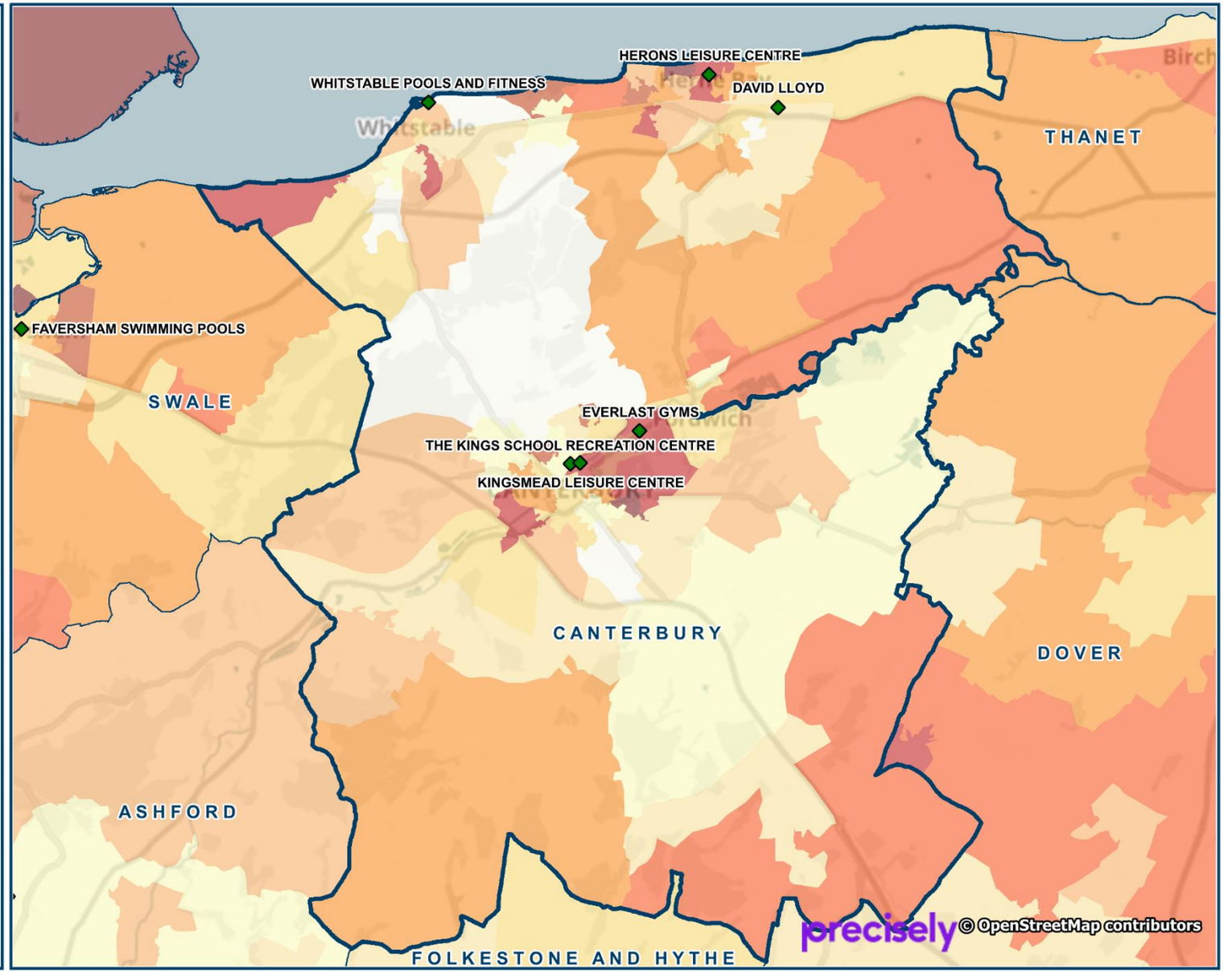


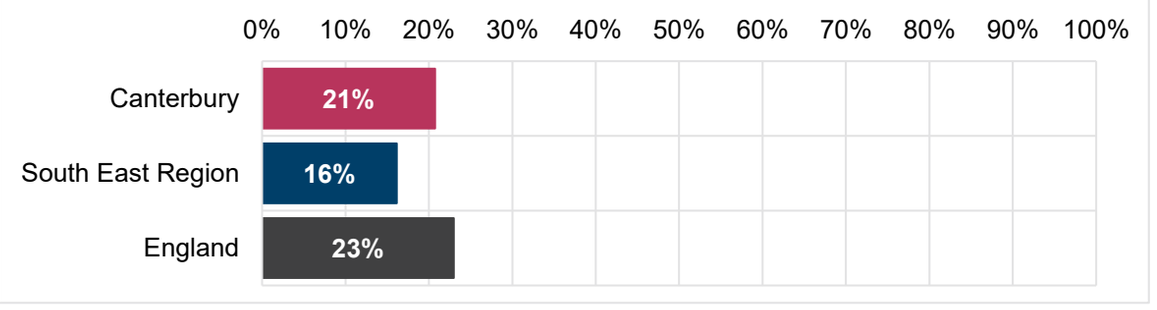
4 ACCESSIBILITY

Table 4.1: Travel Mode of Canterbury Demand to Swimming Pools in 2025

Accessibility	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
% of total residents within a 20-minute walk of a swimming pool	35%
% of 10% most deprived population within a 20-minute walk of a pool	52%
% of demand satisfied when travelled:	
on foot	17%
by public transport or bicycle	8%
by car	75%

Definition of accessibility – The FPM uses a distance decay function where the further a user is from a facility, the less likely they will travel. A description of the distance decay function is set out in Appendix 3. On average, a 20-minute travel time accounts for approximately 90% of visits to a swimming pool.

Chart 4.1: Proportion of Residents Without Access to a Car



4.1 In Canterbury, 21% of residents do not have access to a car. This is higher than the regional average of 16% and lower than the national average of 23%. For these residents, a network of accessible swimming pools is important in order to encourage swimming participation.

Walking Access

4.2 Of Canterbury's residents, 35% are within a 20-minute walk of a swimming pool. Of the 10% most deprived residents, 52% are within a 20-minute walk of a swimming pool.

4.3 Access is best northeast of Canterbury city centre, where residents can walk to three sites within 20 minutes (dark orange area in Map **4.1**). In most of Canterbury city and a small area in east Herne Bay, residents can walk to two swimming pool sites within 20 minutes (light orange areas).

4.4 However, not all residents in these areas will walk to a swimming pool and some will travel further. It is estimated that the proportion of journeys made on foot to swimming pools by Canterbury residents is 17% in 2025.

Public Transport Access

4.5 All the swimming pool sites are within a five-minute walk of an existing bus stop (pink areas in Map 4.2).

4.6 All three public leisure centres and The King's School Sports Centre are within a 15-minute walk of a railway station (purple areas).

4.7 It should be noted that while most Canterbury residents can access an existing public transport stop, it may not mean they can get to a swimming pool within 20 minutes from home via a combination of walking and public transport. Also, in rural areas the service may be irregular.

4.8 It is estimated that the proportion of journeys made by public transport or bicycle to swimming pools by Canterbury residents is 8% in 2025.

Driving Access

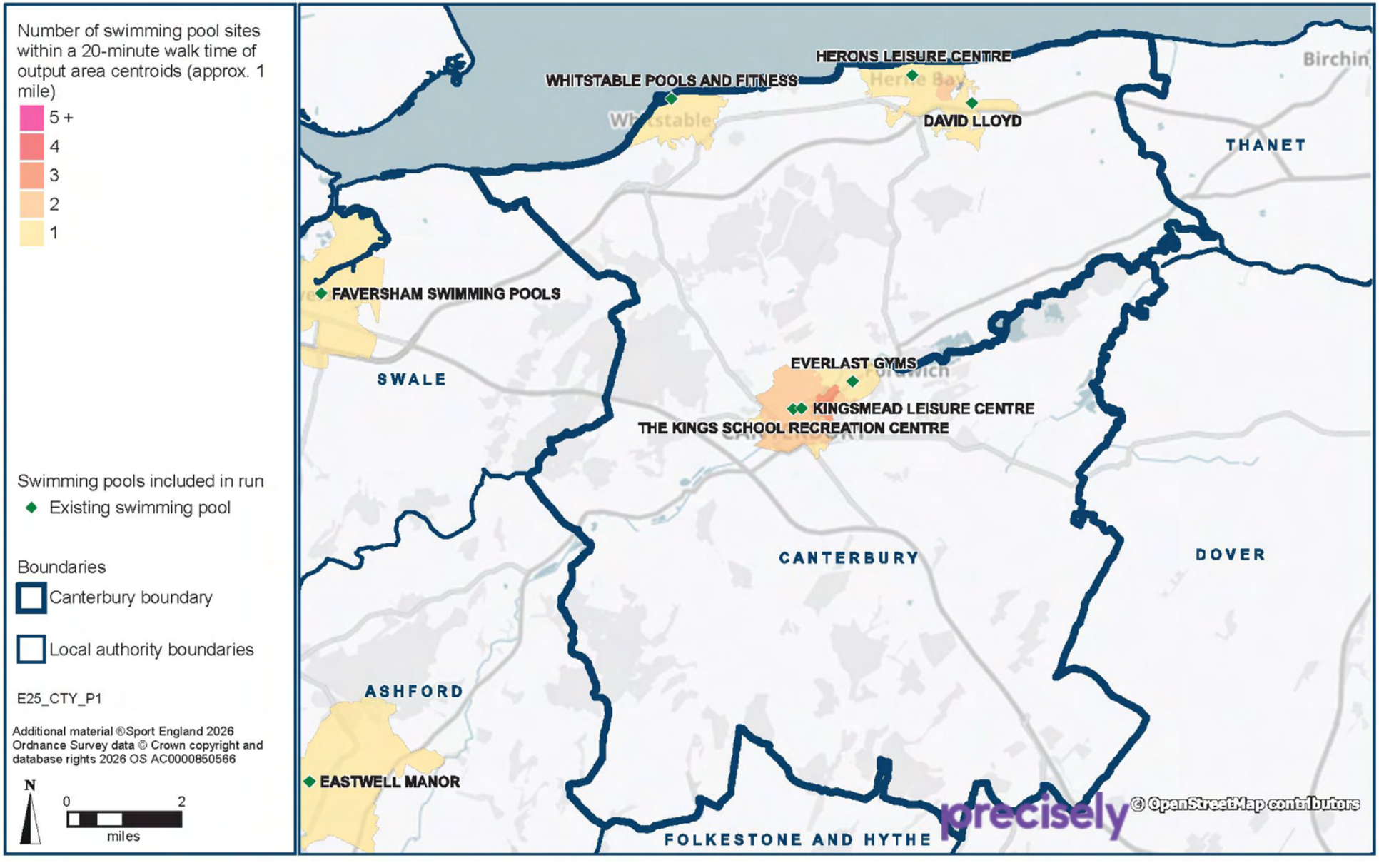
4.9 In 2025, residents in most of the southern half of Canterbury can reach between one and four swimming pool sites within a 20-minute drive from where they live (light green areas in Map 3.1). Access is higher in the northern half of the Council area and parts of the south, where residents can drive to between five and nine sites within 20 minutes of where they live (dark green areas).

4.10 Access is best southeast of Herne Bay and along the eastern border with Thanet, where residents can drive to between ten and 14 sites within 20 minutes (light blue areas).

4.11 It is estimated that 75% of all journeys to swimming pools by Canterbury residents are made by car in 2025.

SPORT ENGLAND

Map 4.1: Walking Access to Swimming Pools in 2025 (Run 1)



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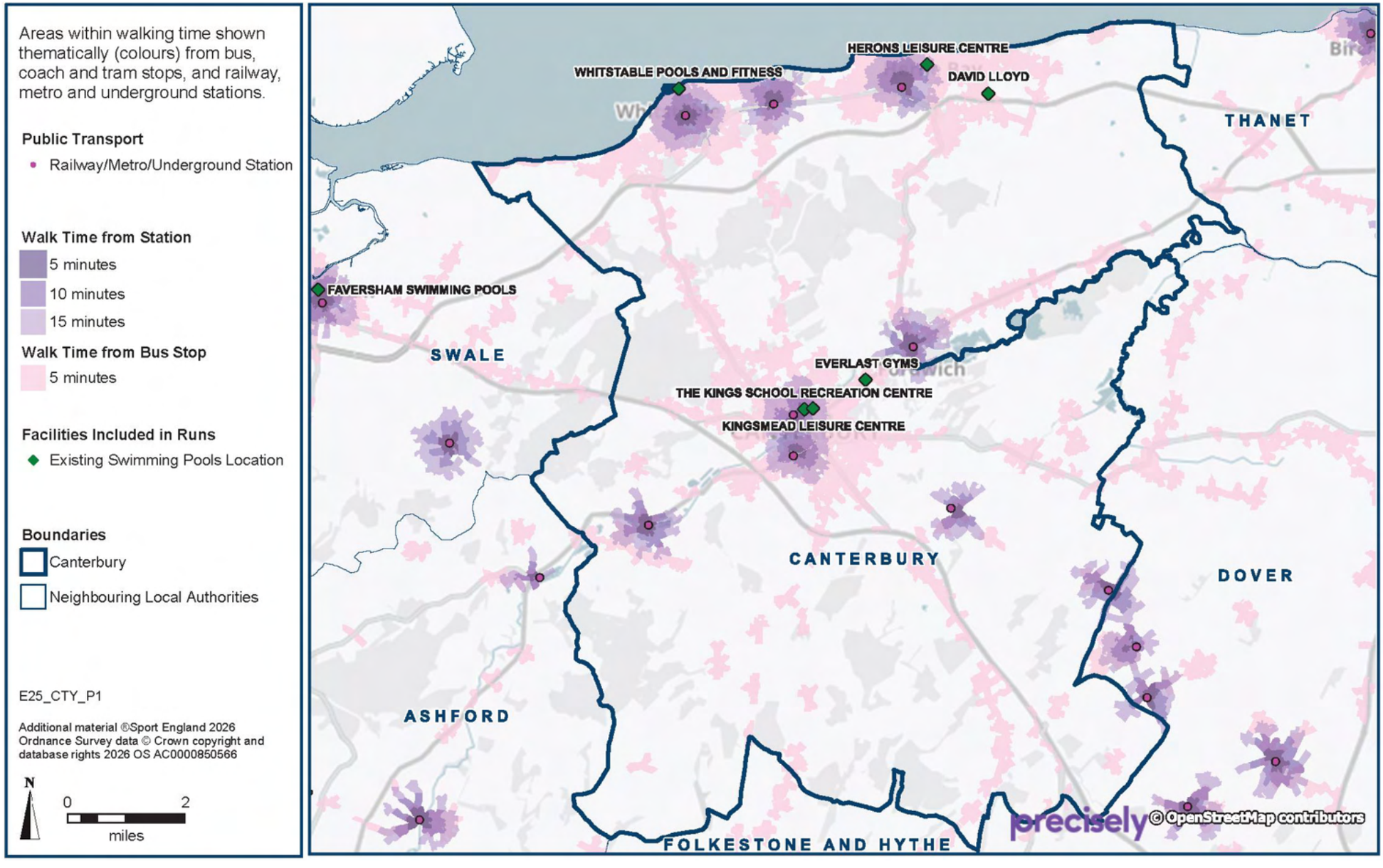
Map 4.2: Walking Access to Public Transport in 2025 (Run 1)



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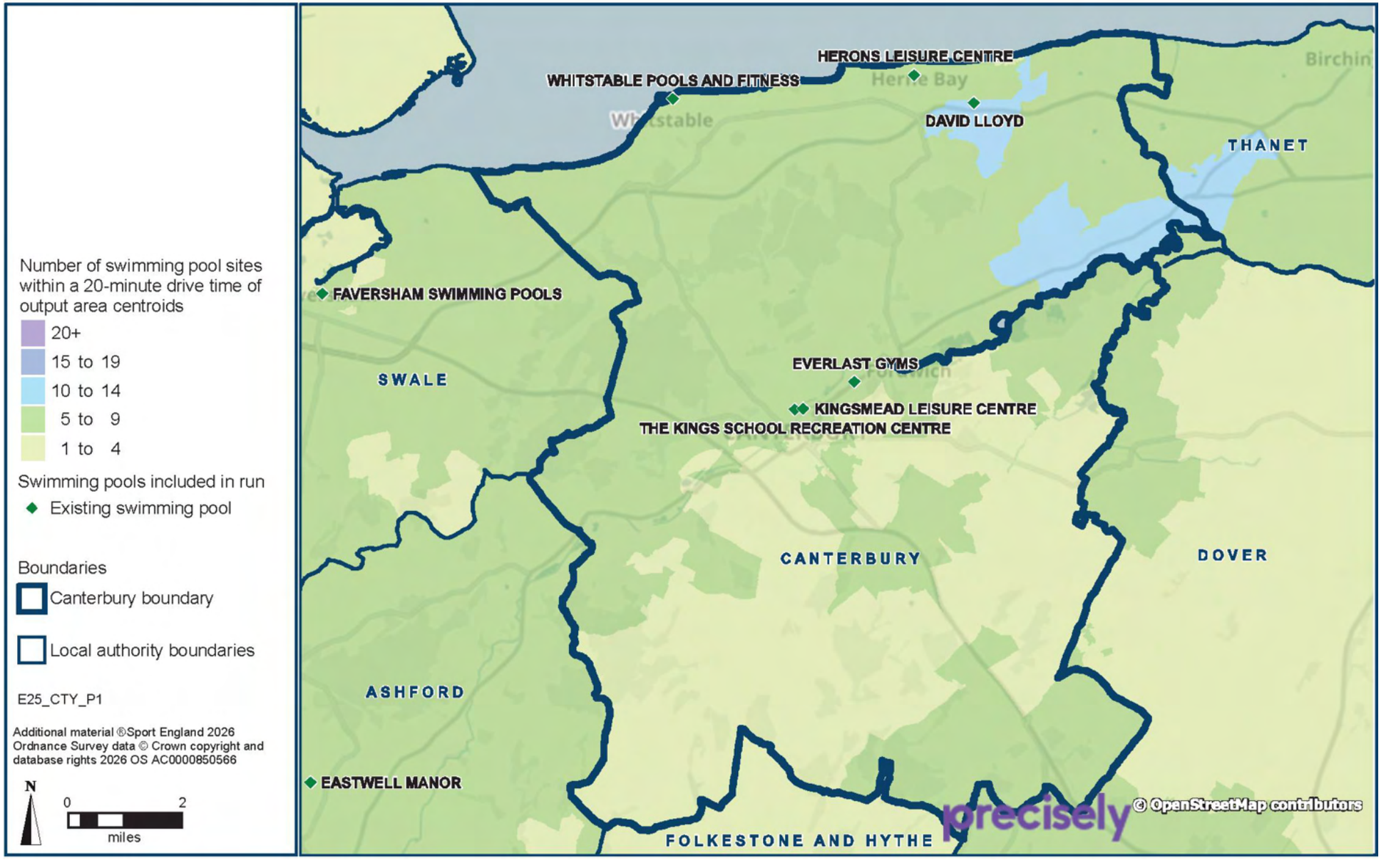
Map 4.3: Driving Access to Swimming Pools in 2025 (Run 1)



5 SATISFIED DEMAND FOR SWIMMING POOLS

Table 5.1: Satisfied Demand for Swimming Pools in Canterbury in 2025

Satisfied Demand	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Number of visits which are met per week in peak period % of total demand satisfied	10,084 96%
Number of visits retained per week in peak period Demand retained as a % of satisfied demand	9,807 97%
Number of visits exported per week in peak period Demand exported as a % of satisfied demand	277 3%

Definition of satisfied demand – This represents the proportion of total demand that is met by the capacity at the swimming pools from Canterbury residents who live within the travel time of a pool. This includes pools located both within and outside Canterbury.

5.1 **Key finding 4** is that 96% of Canterbury's demand is met in 2025. The number of visits met in the weekly peak period is 10,084. Canterbury's proportion of met demand is higher than the regional average of 95% and the national average of 93%.

Table 5.2: Proportion of Demand Met by Area in 2025

Proportion of Demand Met	Run 1
Area	2025
Canterbury	**96%**
Ashford	95%
Dover	75%
Folkestone and Hythe	70%
Swale	94%
Thanet	93%
South East Region	**95%**
England	**93%**

5.2 Canterbury's proportion of satisfied demand is the highest in the study area. The lowest proportion is in Folkestone and Hythe at 70%.

5.3 Details of the swimming pools in the neighbouring local authority areas are listed in Appendix 2.

Retained Demand

Definition of retained demand – A subset of the satisfied demand findings shows how much of Canterbury residents' demand for swimming pools is met at pools located within the City. This assessment is based on the travel time from Canterbury's swimming pools and residents in the City participating at these pools.

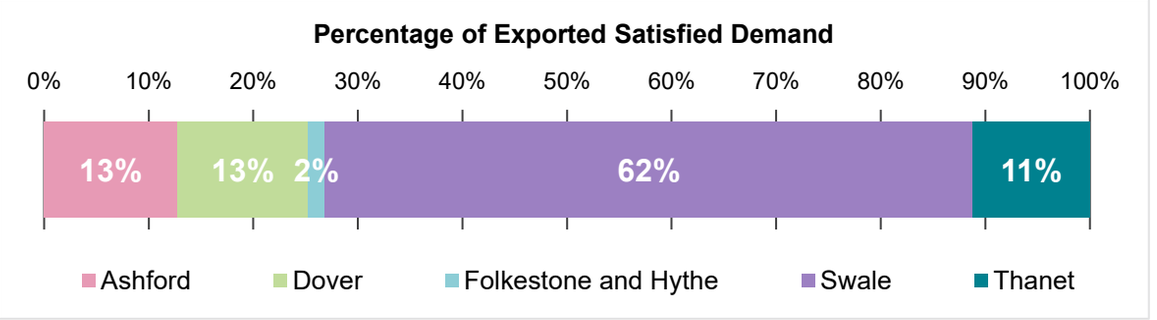
5.4 **Key finding 5** is that 97% of Canterbury's satisfied demand is met within Canterbury. The swimming pools are very accessible to Canterbury's residents.

Exported Demand

Definition of exported demand – The residue of satisfied demand, after retained demand, is exported demand. This is based on Canterbury residents who live within the travel time of a swimming pool located outside Canterbury and use that pool.

5.5 Of Canterbury's satisfied demand, 3% is exported and met at swimming pools in neighbouring local authority areas. This equates to 277 visits in the weekly peak period.

Chart 5.1: Percentage of Exported Satisfied Demand by Destination in 2025



5.6 In 2025, the majority of Canterbury's exported demand goes to Swale, accounting for 62% of exported demand and 172 visits in the weekly peak (see Map **5.1**). Demand is quite high west of Whitstable and can access Faversham Swimming Pools in Swale. The centre opened in the same year as Whitstable Pools and Fitness.

5.7 The second largest amounts of exported demand go to Ashford and Dover at 13% each. This equates to 35 visits in the weekly peak period to both Ashford and Dover.

SPORT ENGLAND

Map 5.1: Export of Canterbury Satisfied Demand for Swimming Pools in 2025 (Run 1)

The figure within each chevron is the number of visits in the weekly peak period from that local authority met at the other local authority.

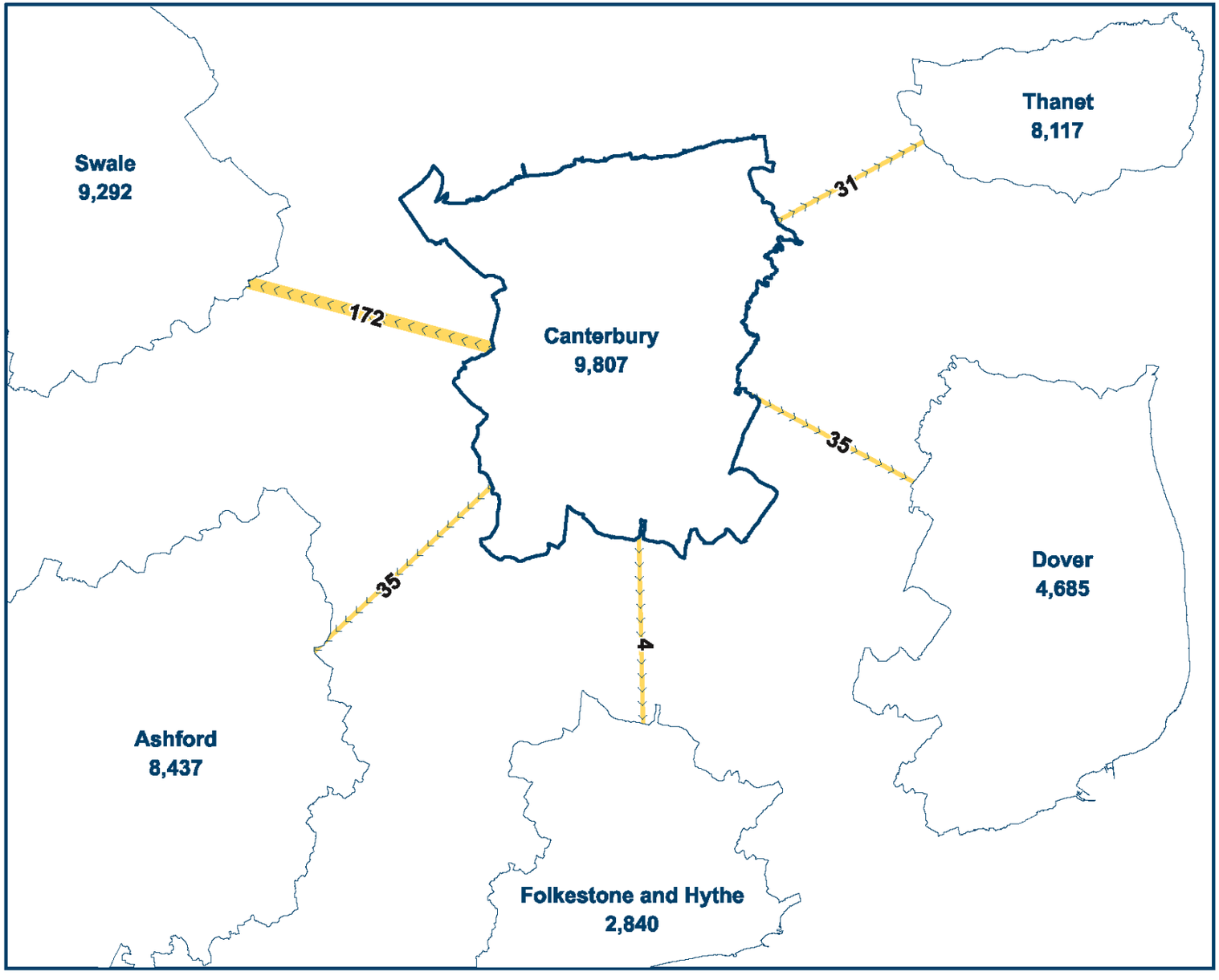
› › › › › Direction of flow

Export

The figure within each boundary is the number of visits retained within the local authority area in the weekly peak period.

Canterbury

Neighbouring Local Authorities



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6 UNMET DEMAND FOR SWIMMING POOLS

Table 6.1: Unmet Demand for Swimming Pools in Canterbury in 2025

Unmet Demand	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Number of visits unmet per week in peak period	462
Unmet demand as a % of total demand	4%
Equivalent in sqm of water with comfort factor	76
% of 10% most deprived demand unmet	5%
% of unmet demand due to:	
Facility too far away:	99%
% without access to a car	84%
% with access to a car	15%
Lack of facility capacity:	1%
% without access to a car	0%
% with access to a car	1%

Definition of unmet demand – This has two parts: demand for swimming pools that cannot be met because either:

1. There is too much demand for any particular swimming pool within its travel time area and there is a lack of capacity.
2. The demand is located too far from any swimming pool that it can use (taking into account deprivation) or reach (taking into account car access) and is then classified as unmet demand.

6.1 **Key finding 6** is that unmet demand is very low, equating to 4% of Canterbury's demand and 76 sqm of water in 2025. Nearly all the unmet demand is too far from a facility. Unmet demand due to lack of capacity is 1 sqm of water.

6.2 Unmet demand too far from a swimming pool will always exist because it is not possible to achieve complete spatial coverage whereby all areas of a local authority are within walking distance of a swimming pool that is not commercial and not everyone will want, or is able, to drive the full distance.

6.3 The key point here is the scale of the unmet demand. Also, if it is clustered in one location, further provision should be considered to improve accessibility.

Location of Unmet Demand

2025

6.4 In 2025 the greatest density of unmet demand is 2 sqm of water per square kilometre (medium blue squares in Map 6.1).

6.5 Unmet demand is highest in Canterbury city at 16 sqm of water across 16 square kilometres.

6.6 There are two clusters of unmet demand of 5 sqm of water across eight square kilometres southwest of Whitstable and west of Herne Bay.

6.7 There is a cluster of unmet demand of 3 sqm of water in the area of Shalmsford Street and Chartham.

6.8 Unmet demand in the remainder of Canterbury is either 1 sqm of water or less per square kilometre (dark blue and purple squares).

Meeting Unmet Demand

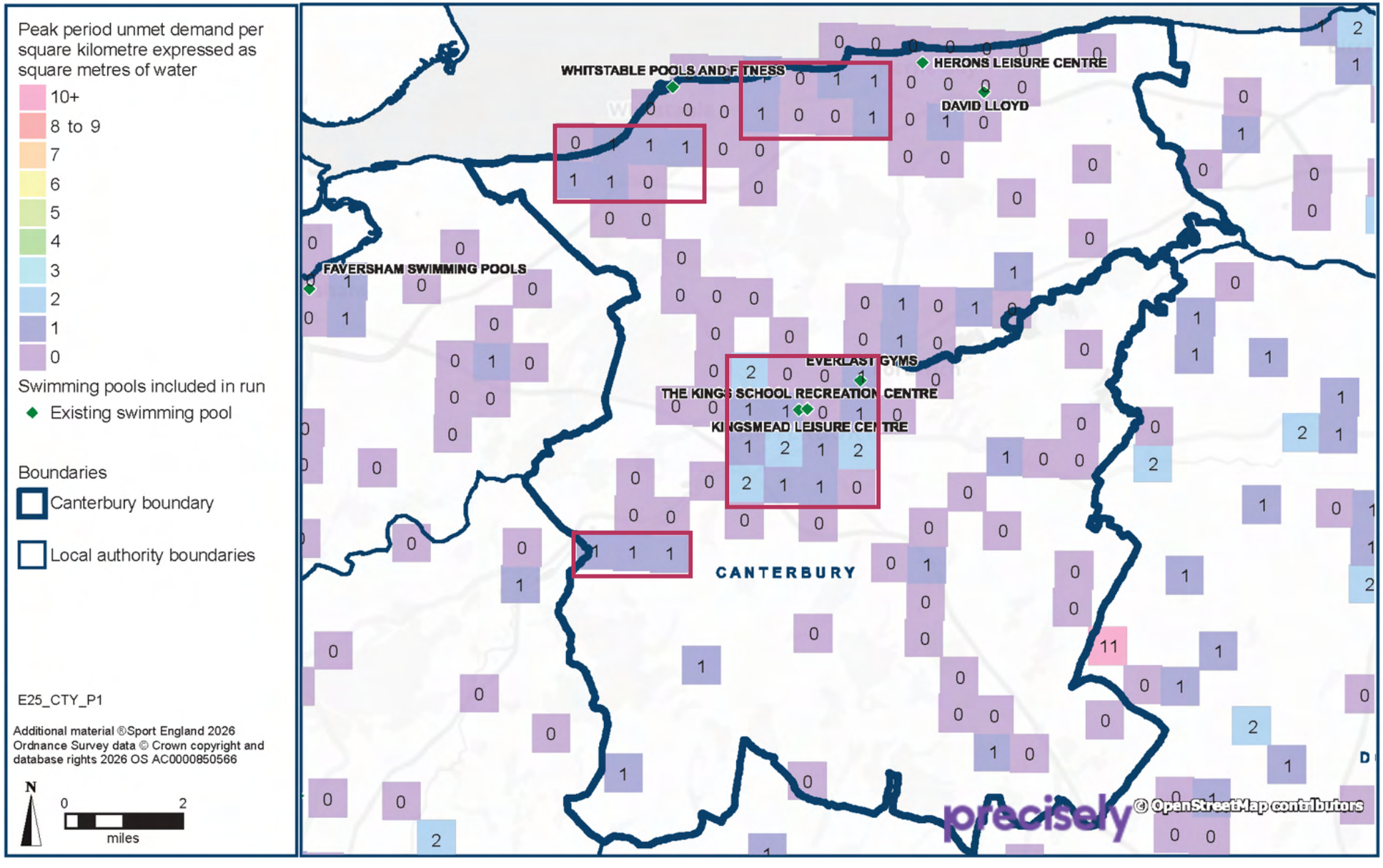
> **Definition of reachable unmet demand** – Analysis of the spread of unmet demand shows the level of unmet demand that would be met by a potential new facility in any given location. This 'reachable unmet demand' is calculated for each one-kilometre grid square and figures are shown in the map.

6.9 In 2025, the location in Canterbury where the most unmet demand can be met is east of Barham at the junction of the A2 and A260 at 129 sqm of water (pink square in Map 6.2). This will include unmet demand from Dover and Folkestone and Hythe. Folkestone and Hythe has the highest unmet demand in the study area.

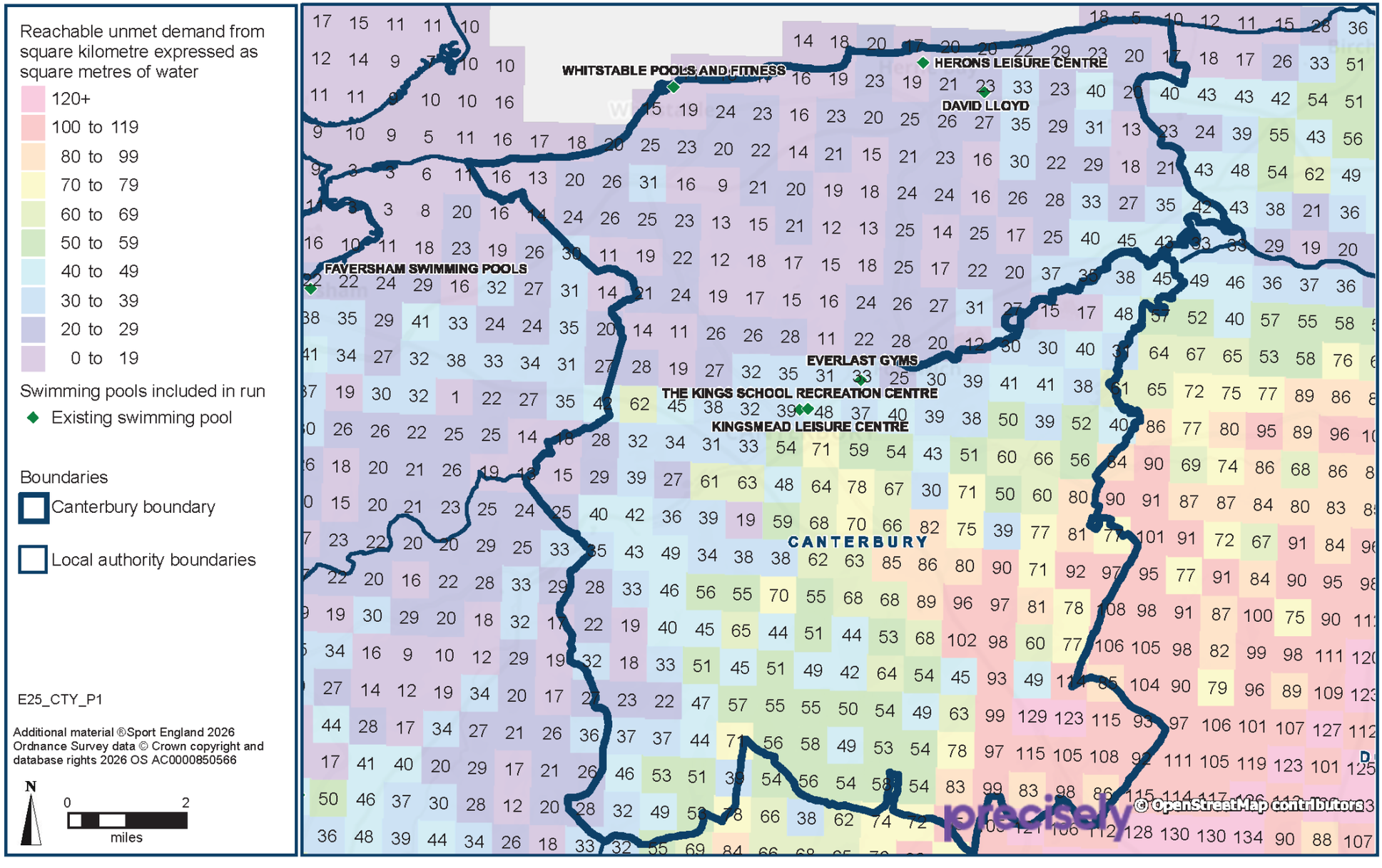
6.10 The amount of reachable unmet demand is just above the size of a Sport England Leisure Local swimming pool of 15m x 8m (120 sqm of water). This finding does not cover future changes in demand.

SPORT ENGLAND

Map 6.1: Unmet Demand for Swimming Pools in 2025 (Run 1)



Map 6.2: Reachable Unmet Demand for Swimming Pools in 2025 (Run 1)



7 USED CAPACITY OF FACILITIES

Table 7.1: Used Capacity of Swimming Pools in Canterbury in 2025

Used Capacity	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Number of visits used of capacity in weekly peak period	11,694
% of overall capacity of pools used	72%

Definition of used capacity – This is a measure of usage at swimming pools and estimates how well used or how full facilities are. The FPM is designed to include a 'comfort factor', beyond which the venues are too full. The pool itself becomes too crowded to swim comfortably, and the changing and circulation areas also become too congested. In the model, Sport England assumes that usage above 70% of capacity is busy and that the swimming pool is operating at an uncomfortable level.

7.1 The number of visits met at Canterbury's swimming pools in the weekly peak period in 2025 is 11,694.

7.2 **Key finding 7** is that the overall used capacity of Canterbury's swimming pools in the weekly peak period is 72%. However, two sites are uncomfortably full at peak times – Herons Leisure Centre at 93% and Kingsmead Leisure Centre at 91%.

Table 7.2: Weekly Peak Period Used Capacity of Canterbury Swimming Pools in 2025

Used Capacity	2025 (Run 1)		Provider	Peak Hours	Year Built	Year Refurb
Individual Sites	Proportion	Visits				
Herons Leisure Centre	93%	2,601	Public	47.0/43.8	1994	2022
Kingsmead Leisure Centre	91%	5,244	Public	52.5	1970	2024
Whitstable Pools and Fitness	57%	1,651	Public	50.5/52.5	1993	
The King's School Sports Centre	55%	1,105	Educational	40.3	1990	
David Lloyd	55%	719	Commercial	52.5	2025	
Everlast Gyms	24%	373	Commercial	52.5	2010	

Site Utilisation

7.3 The public leisure centres meet the most visits in Canterbury because of their 'draw effect' and large capacities.

7.4 Kingsmead Leisure Centre meets the most visits because it is located in the area of highest demand and has the largest capacity. Its recent refurbishment makes it attractive to residents. There is no scope to increase availability and capacity in the weekly period at the site to reduce the proportion of used capacity to a comfortable level.

7.5 Herons Leisure Centre meets the second most visits, but it is half the amount of Kingsmead Leisure Centre. Herons Leisure Centre is located in the area of second highest demand and is attractive residents due to its refurbishment in 2022. There is scope to increase availability and capacity of both pools.

7.6 Whitstable Pools and Fitness is estimated to be 57% utilised at peak times and meets the third most visits. Demand is lower in Whitstable than in the other two main settlements. Whitstable Pools and Fitness is less attractive than the other public leisure centres because it has not been modernised.

7.7 The King's School Sports Centre is estimated to be 55% utilised and meets the fourth most visits. It is located close to Kingsmead Leisure Centre, which is more attractive because it has been refurbished.

7.8 The estimated used capacity should be reviewed with the facility operator. There are several reasons for the variation in estimated used capacity by site. Often it is difficult to identify which of these reasons apply because several could be interacting simultaneously, but variation is generally caused by any of the following factors.

Type of site operator (public/educational/commercial)

- Public leisure centres have a 'draw effect' because they:
  - Are accessible for public and swimming club use
  - Have extensive opening hours and are proactively managed to encourage and support swimming participation and physical activity
  - Unlike commercial swimming pools, do not require payment of a monthly membership fee
  - Provide all activities
- Access to swimming pools for community use at educational sites will be determined by the policy of each educational provider and affects the hours available for community use.
- Commercial swimming pools provide recreational swimming through membership and operate a learn to swim school. The centres are not available for public pay and swim or for club development. Therefore, they offer a more limited programme of use than public leisure centres and are less utilised.

Age of the pool and its 'attractiveness'

- To assess their comparative attractiveness to customers, all swimming pools in the model are weighted to reflect their age and whether they have been modernised.
- The effect of refurbishment at a site decreases as the site gets older, and it becomes less attractive than a site built in the same year as the refurbishment.

Location of demand and competition from other sites

- Where swimming pools are located close together, the demand for these sites is shared between the venues, and this contributes to the level of used capacity at each.
- Conversely, where a swimming pool is remotely located, it benefits from having no competition for the local demand.

Capacity

- When reviewing the estimated used capacity, it is important to consider the capacity of the site and not just the proportion in isolation. Centres with the same or similar proportions of used capacity can accommodate very different levels of demand.
- The hours when a site is available for community use affects its capacity at peak times.

Imported demand

- If residents in neighbouring local authority areas participate at a site in Canterbury, their usage becomes part of the used capacity of Canterbury's swimming pools.

Imported Demand

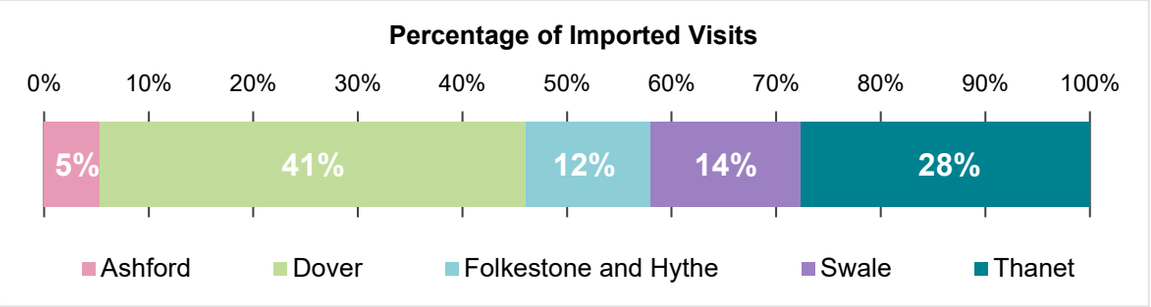
Table 7.3: Imported Demand for Swimming Pools in Canterbury in 2025

Imported Demand	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Number of visits imported per week in peak period As a % of used capacity	1,887 16%
Difference between visits imported and exported	1,610

7.9 In 2025, 1,887 visits from other local authorities are imported and met at Canterbury's swimming pools in the weekly peak period. This equates to 16% of the used capacity of Canterbury's swimming pools.

7.10 Canterbury is a net importer of visits, importing 1,610 more visits in the weekly peak period than it exports.

Chart 7.1: Percentage of Imported Visits by Origin in 2025



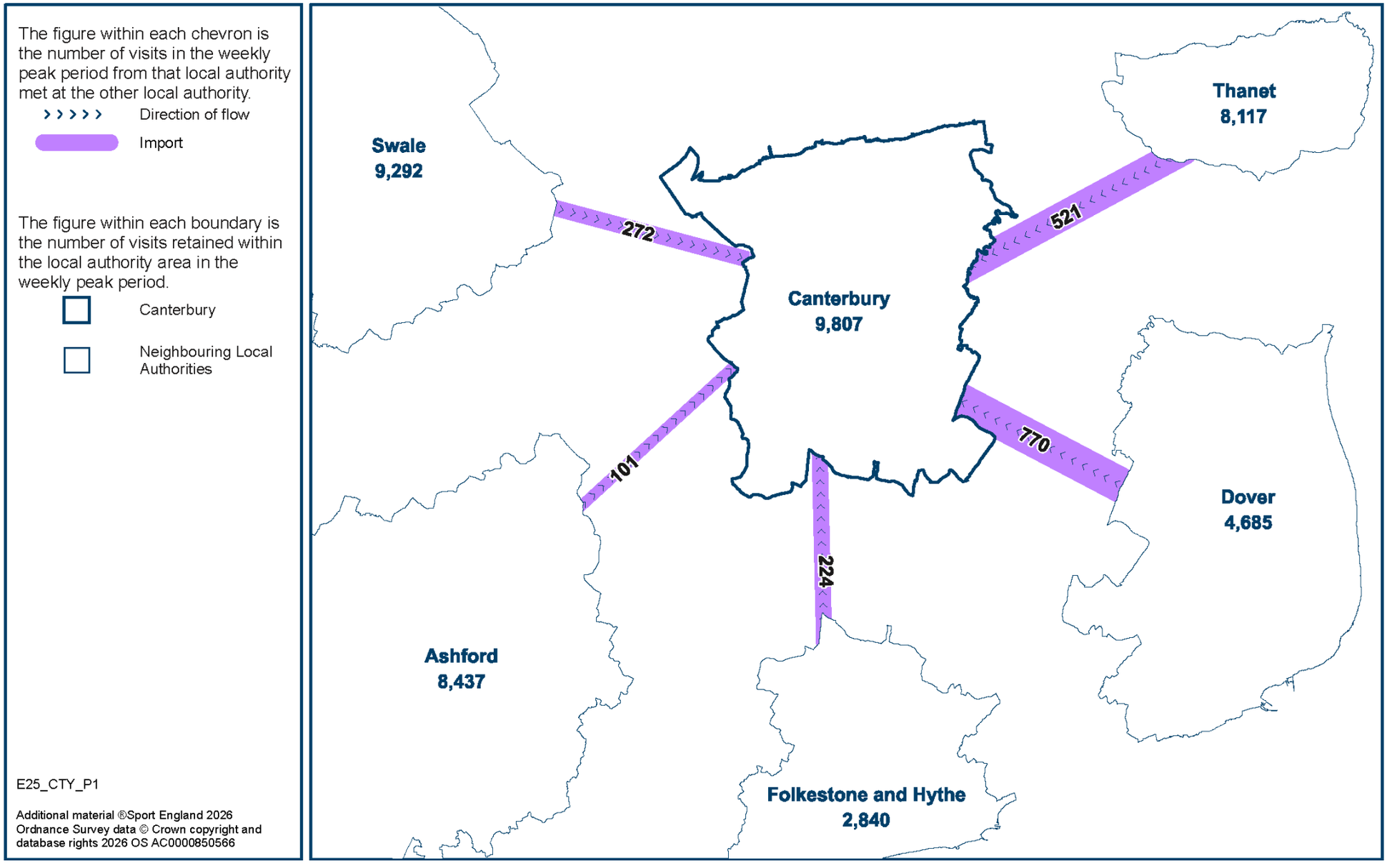
7.11 The largest amount of imported demand comes from Dover, accounting for 41% of Canterbury's imported demand and 770 visits in the weekly peak period (see Map **7.1**).

7.12 There are no swimming pools in the west of Dover bordering Canterbury. Dover's demand is quite low in this area but the A257 provides access to the two swimming pool sites in Canterbury city. Dover District Council is opening a new public leisure centre in Deal in 2027.

7.13 The second largest amount of imported demand is from Thanet, at 28% of Canterbury's imported demand and accounting for 521 visits in the weekly peak period. Similarly to Dover, there are no swimming pools in Thanet close to the border with Canterbury. Demand is also low in this area but it can access the two swimming pool sites in Herne Bay.

SPORT ENGLAND

Map 7.1: Imported Demand for Swimming Pools to Canterbury in 2025 (Run 1)



8 LOCAL SHARE OF FACILITIES

Table 8.1: Local Share of Swimming Pools in Canterbury in 2025

Local Share	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Local share of swimming pools relative to demand in local area: <1 = poorer, >1 = better	1.10

Definition of local share – This helps show which areas have a better or worse share of facility provision. It considers the size, availability and quality of facilities, and travel modes. Local share is useful for looking at 'equity' of provision. Local share is the available capacity that people want to visit in an area (considering deprivation), divided by the demand for that capacity in the area. Local share decreases as facilities age.

8.1 Local share shows how access and share of swimming pools differs across the local authority area, as follows:

- A value of 1 means that there is sufficient suitable supply reachable by the demand
- A value of less than 1 indicates a shortage of suitable supply that can be reached by the demand
- A value greater than 1 indicates a surplus of suitable supply that can be reached by the demand

8.2 Overall, local share identifies the areas of the local authority where the share of swimming pools is better and worse. The intervention is to try and increase access for residents in the areas with the poorest access to swimming pools.

8.3 In 2025 local share in Canterbury is 1.10 meaning that there is sufficient suitable provision that demand can access, based on the age, used capacity and operation of the swimming pools.

Geographical Distribution of Local Share

8.4 Local share is good across most of Canterbury in 2025 (see Map **8.1**).

8.5 Local share is best in Fordwich at 1.8 and 1.9 (purple squares). Demand and deprivation are lower in this area and residents can access Everlast Gyms, which is the second newest swimming pool in Canterbury and is underutilised.

8.6 Local share is poorest in Adisham, Woolage Village, Derringstone and Seasalter at 0.8 (light green squares). Demand is very low in these areas but is the furthest from a swimming pool.

Comparative Measure of Provision

8.7 A comparative measure of swimming pool provision is total water space per 1,000 population.

Table 8.2: Water Space in sqm per 1,000 Population by Area in 2025

Sqm of water per 1,000 population	Run 1
Area	2025
Canterbury	**12**
Ashford	12
Dover	7
Folkestone and Hythe	4
Swale	10
Thanet	9
South East Region	**12**
England	**11**

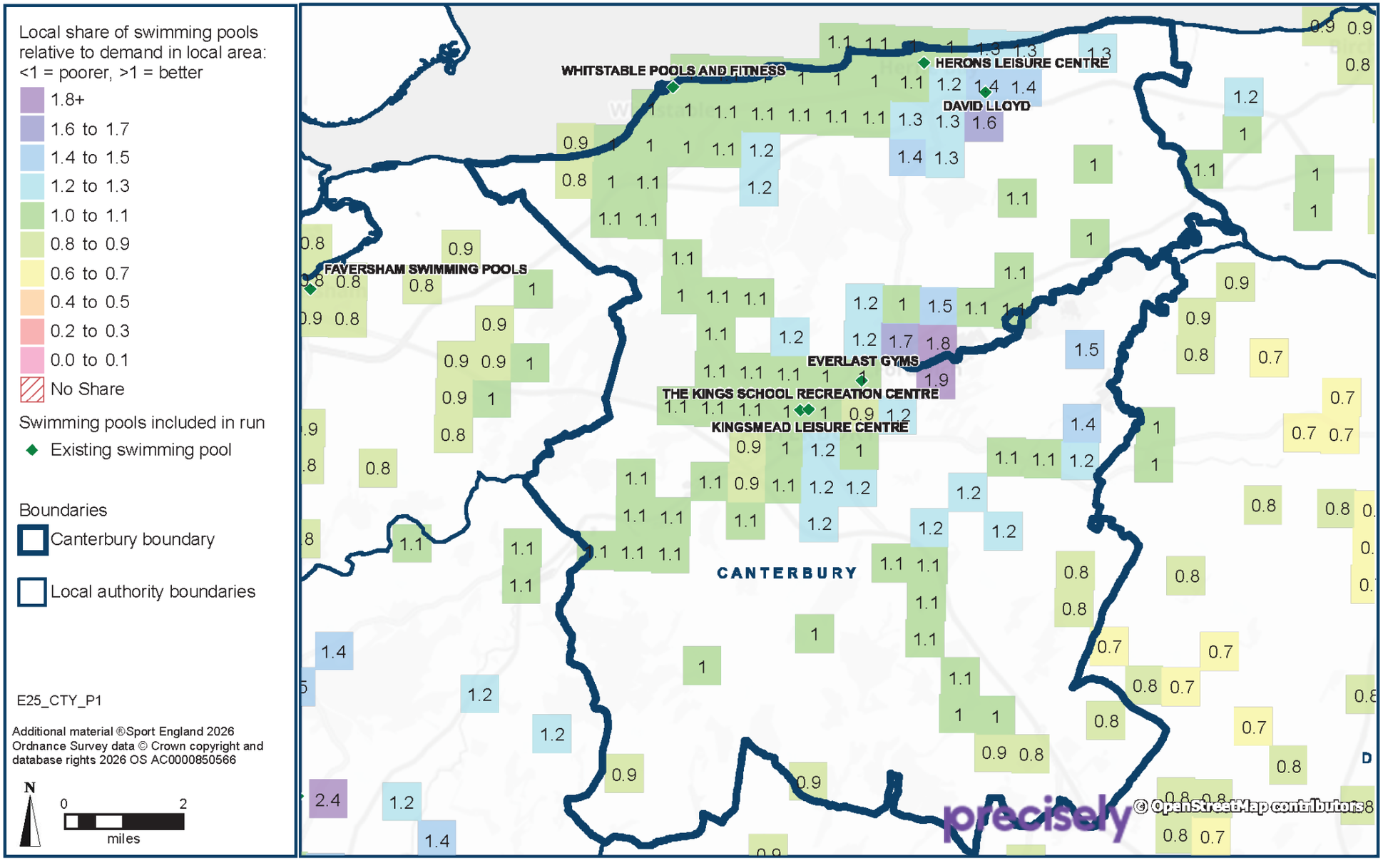
8.8 Canterbury has 12 sqm of water per 1,000 population in 2025. Canterbury's provision is the same as the regional average and higher than the national average of 11 sqm of water per 1,000 population.

8.9 Canterbury and Ashford have the best provision in the study area. It is three times higher than the lowest provision of 4 sqm of water per 1,000 population in Folkestone and Hythe.

8.10 **The findings on water space per 1,000 population are reported because some local authorities like to compare their quantitative provision with others; however, it does not set a standard of provision, and should not be used as such.**

8.11 The supply and demand assessment for swimming pools in the Canterbury is based on the findings from the previous six headings analysed in this report.

Map 8.1 Local Share of Swimming Pools in 2025 (Run 1)



APPENDIX 1: FACILITIES EXCLUDED

The audit excludes facilities that are deemed to be either for private use, too small, closed or there is a lack of information, particularly relating to hours of use. The following facilities were deemed to fall under one or more of these categories and therefore excluded from the modelling:

Site	Facility Type	Reason for Exclusion
Broome Park Golf Club	Main	Private use
David Lloyd	Lido	Outdoor pool
Joy Lane Junior School	Teaching	Not a balanced programme (children's use only)
Junior King's School	Lido	Outdoor pool
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	Main	Closed
St Edmund's School	Lido	Outdoor pool
The Kent College Junior School	Lido	Outdoor pool

APPENDIX 2: FACILITIES IN NEIGHBOURING LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS INCLUDED IN THE ASSESSMENT

Site	Provider	Facility Type	Dimensions (m)	Area (sqm)	Year Built	Year Refurb
Ashford						
Ashford International Hotel	Commercial	4-lane	20 x 8	160	2007	
Bannatyne Health Club (Ashford)	Commercial	4-lane	20 x 10	200	2001	
Eastwell Manor	Commercial	4-lane	20 x 8	160	2000	2017
Stour Centre	Public	6-lane	25 x 12.5	313	1975	2007
		Leisure	10 x 5	50		
		Teaching	12 x 10	120		
Tenterden Leisure Centre	Public	7-lane	25 x 15	375	1991	2022
The Ashford School (Prep School)	Educational (in-house)	4-lane	20 x 8	160	2004	
The Ashford School (Senior School)	Educational (in-house)	4-lane	20 x 10	200	1982	1994
Dover						
Balance Spa And Health Club	Commercial	4-lane	22 x 9	198	1984	
		Leisure	9 x 9	81		
Dover District Leisure Centre	Public	8-lane	25 x 17	425	2019	
		Teaching	15 x 8.5	128		
Folkestone and Hythe						
Bannatyne Health Club (Folkestone)	Commercial	4-lane	20 x 8	160	2004	
Hythe Swimming Pool	Public	5-lane	25 x 11	275	1974	2016
		Teaching	9 x 4	36		
Swale						
Faversham Swimming Pools	Other (pay & play)	6-lane	25 x 13	325	1993	
		Teaching	9 x 8.5	77		
Sheppey Leisure Complex	Public	6-lane	25 x 13	325	1980	2005
		4-lane	20 x 8.5	170		
Swallows Leisure Centre	Public	11-lane	25 x 25	625	1989	2005
		Teaching	13 x 6	78		
Thanet						
Bannatyne Health Club (Broadstairs)	Commercial	4-lane	20 x 8	160	2002	
Hartsdown Leisure Centre	Public	5-lane	25 x 12	300	1974	2023
		Teaching	10 x 5	50		
Ramsgate Leisure Centre	Public	6-lane	25 x 12.5	313	2013	
		Teaching	12.5 x 8	100		
St Lawrence College	Educational (in-house)	4-lane	20 x 10	200	1886	2001
Upton Swimming Pool	Other (pay & play)	4-lane	25 x 8	200	1994	

APPENDIX 3: MODEL DESCRIPTION, INCLUSION CRITERIA AND MODEL PARAMETERS

Included within this Appendix are the following:

- Model Description
- Facility Inclusion Criteria
- Model Parameters

Model Description

1 Background

1.1 The Facilities Planning Model (FPM) is a computer-based supply/demand model, which has been developed by Edinburgh University in conjunction with sportscotland and Sport England since the 1980s.

1.2 The model is a tool for helping to assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities in an area. It is currently applicable for use in assessing the provision of the following facilities that Sport England holds substantial demand data for:

- sports halls
- swimming pools
- indoor bowls centres
- artificial grass pitches (AGPs)

2 Use of FPM

2.1 The FPM is one of Sport England's principal tools and has been developed as a means for:

- Assessing the requirements for different types of community sports facilities on a local, regional and national scale.
- Helping local authorities to determine an adequate level of sports facility provision to meet their local needs.
- Helping to identify strategic gaps in the provision of sports facilities.
- Comparing alternative options for planned provision, taking account of changes in demand and supply. This includes testing the impact of opening, relocating and closing facilities, and the likely impact of population changes on the need for sports facilities.

2.2 The FPM has been used in the assessment of Lottery funding bids for community facilities and as a principal planning tool to assist local authorities in planning for the provision of community sports facilities.

3 How the Model Works

3.1 In its simplest form, the model seeks to assess whether the capacity of existing facilities for a particular sport is capable of meeting local demand for that sport, considering how far people are prepared to travel to such a facility.

3.2 In order to do this, the model compares the capacity of facilities (supply) within an area against the demand for that facility from the local population, similar to other social gravity models.

3.3 To do this, the FPM converts both demand (in terms of people) and supply (facilities) into a single comparable unit. This unit is 'visits in the weekly peak period'. Once converted, demand and supply can be compared.

3.4 The FPM uses a set of parameters to define how facilities are used and by whom. These parameters are primarily derived from a combination of data, including actual user surveys from a range of sites across the country in areas of good supply, together with participation survey data. These surveys provide core information on the profile of users such as their age and gender, how often they visit, the distance travelled, duration of stay, as well as information on the facilities themselves such as programming, peak times of use and capacity of facilities.

3.5 This survey information is combined with other data sources to provide a set of model parameters for each facility type. The original core user data for halls and pools comes from the National Halls and Pools survey undertaken in 1996. This data previously formed the basis for the National Benchmarking Service. For AGPs, the core data used comes from the user survey of AGPs carried out in 2005/06 jointly with sportscotland.

3.6 User survey data from the National Benchmarking Service and other appropriate sources are used to update the model's parameters on a regular basis. The parameters are set out at the end of the document, and the main data sources analysed are:

- Active Lives:
    - For the adult survey, this data is collected by an online survey or paper questionnaire on behalf of Sport England. Each annual sample includes approximately 175,000 people and covers the full age/gender range. Detailed questions are asked about over 200 separate sport categories in terms of participation and frequency.
    - For the children and young people survey, this data is collected through schools, with up to three mixed ability classes in up to three randomly chosen year groups completing an online survey.
- National Benchmarking Service (now ceased):
    - This was a centre-based survey whose primary purpose was to enable centres to benchmark themselves against other centres. Sample interviews were conducted on site. The number of people surveyed varied by year depending on how many centres took part. Approximately 10,000 swimmers and 3,500 sports hall users were surveyed per year. This data was used for journey

times, establishing proportions of particular activities in different hall types, the duration of activities and the time of activity (peak period).

- Moving Communities Customer Experience Survey:
  - Annual online survey distributed by participating local authorities and operators via email. Email invites are sent to any member or customer on their database who has attended their leisure centre in the last 3 months. The results inform the travel mode that residents use to access facilities.
- Scottish Health:
  - Annual survey of approximately 6,600 people (just under 5,000 adults). This data is primarily used to assess participation, frequency and activity duration.

3.7 Other data is used where available. For example, the following data sources are among those that have been used to cross-check results:

- Children's Participation in Culture and Sport, Scottish Government, 2008
- Young People's Participation in Sport, Sports Council for Wales, 2009
- Health and Social Care Information Centre, Lifestyle Statistics, 2012
- Young People and Sport, Sport England, 2002
- Data from Angus Council, 2013/14
- National Pools and Halls Survey, 1996
  - This survey was used to obtain capacities per sports hall for differing sport types for programming data.

4 Calculating Demand

4.1 Demand is calculated by applying the user information from the parameters, as referred to above, to the population[1]. This produces the number of visits for that facility that will be demanded by the population.

4.2 Depending on the age and gender composition of the population, this will affect the number of visits an area will generate. In order to reflect the different population profiles of the country, the FPM calculates demand based on the smallest census groupings. These are output areas (OAs)[2].

4.3 The use of OAs in the calculation of demand ensures that the FPM is able to reflect and portray differences in demand in areas at the most sensitive level based on available census

[1] For example, it is estimated that 7.72% of 16-24 year old males will demand to use an AGP 1.67 times a week. This calculation is done separately for the 12 age/gender groupings.

[2] Census OAs are the smallest grouping of census population data and provide the population information on which the FPM's demand parameters are applied. A demand figure can then be calculated for each OA based on the population profile. There are over 178,600 OAs in England. An OA has a target value of 125 households per OA.

information. Each OA used is given a demand value in visits in the weekly peak period by the FPM.

5 Calculating Supply Capacity

5.1 A facility's capacity varies depending on the following factors:

- Its size (area of pool or hall, number of pitches or rinks)
- How many hours the facility is available for use by the community in the weekly peak period
- How many visits can be accommodated by the facility at any one time (pools = 1 user/6 sqm, main halls/barns = 8 users/court, activity halls/studios = 15 users/court, AGPs = 28 users/pitch, indoor bowls = 6 users/rink)

5.2 The FPM calculates the maximum number of visits that a facility can accommodate, which gives it a theoretical capacity in visits in the weekly peak period.

5.3 Based on travel time information (see Travel Time section) taken from the user surveys, the FPM then calculates how much demand would be met by the facility, having regard to its capacity and how much demand can travel to the facility. The FPM includes an important feature of spatial interaction. This feature takes account of the location and capacity of all the facilities, having regard to their access and the size of demand, and assesses whether the facilities are in the right place to meet the demand.

5.4 It is important to note that the FPM does not simply add up the total demand within an area and compare that to the total supply within the same area. This approach would not take account of the spatial aspect of supply against demand in a particular area. For example, if an area has a total demand for five facilities and there are currently six facilities within the area, it would be too simplistic to conclude that there is an over-supply of one facility as this approach would not take account of whether the five facilities are in the correct location for local people to use them within that area. It may be that all the facilities are in one part of the local authority area, leaving other areas under-provided. An assessment of this kind would not reflect the true picture of provision. The FPM is able to assess supply and demand within an area based on the needs of the population within that area.

5.5 In making calculations as to supply and demand, visits made to sports facilities are not artificially restricted or calculated by reference to administrative boundaries, such as local authority areas. Users are generally expected to use their closest facility. The FPM reflects this through analysing the location of demand against the location of facilities, allowing for cross-boundary movement of visits. For example, if a facility is on the boundary of a local authority, users will generally be expected to come from the population living close to the facility, but who may be in a neighbouring authority.

6 Calculating the Capacity of Sports Halls – Badminton Court Equivalents

6.1 The capacity of sports halls is calculated in the same way as described above, with each sports hall site having a capacity in visits in the weekly peak period. In order for this capacity to be meaningful, these visits are converted into the equivalent of main hall badminton

courts. This 'court' figure is often mistakenly read as being the same as the number of 'marked courts' at the sports halls in the Active Places data, but it is not the same. There will usually be a difference between this figure and the number of 'marked courts' in Active Places.

6.2 The reason for this is that the badminton court equivalents are of all the main and activity halls' capacities; this is calculated based on hall size (area) and whether it is a main hall or an activity hall. This gives a more accurate reflection of the overall capacity of the halls than simply using the 'marked courts' figure, for two reasons:

- In calculating the capacity of halls, the model uses a different at-one-time parameter for main halls and for activity halls. Activity halls have a greater at-one-time capacity than main halls. Marked courts can sometimes not properly reflect the size of the actual main hall. For example, a hall may be marked out with four courts, when it has space for three courts. As the model uses the 'courts' as a unit of size, it is important that the hall's capacity is included as a 'three-court unit' rather than a 'four-court unit'.
- It is often difficult to visualise how much hall space there is when expressed as visits in the weekly peak period. To make things more meaningful, this capacity is converted back into badminton court equivalents and is noted in the output tables as hall space in courts.

7 Facility Attractiveness – for Halls and Pools Only

7.1 Not all facilities are the same, and users will find certain facilities more attractive to use than others. The model attempts to reflect this by introducing an attractiveness weighting factor, which affects the way visits are distributed between facilities. Attractiveness, however, is very subjective. Currently weightings are only used for sports hall and swimming pool modelling.

7.2 Attractiveness weightings are based on the following:

- Age and refurbishment weighting (pools and halls): The older a facility is, the less attractive it will be to users. It is recognised that this is a general assumption and that there may be examples where older facilities are more attractive than newly built ones due to excellent local management, programming and sports development. Additionally, the date of any significant refurbishment is also included within the weighting factor; however, here attractiveness is set lower than a new build of the same year. It is assumed that a refurbishment that is older than 20 years will have a minimal impact on the facility's attractiveness. The information on year built/refurbished is taken from Active Places. A graduated curve is used to allocate the attractiveness weighting by year. This curve levels off at 70 years old with a 20% weighting. The refurbishment weighting is slightly lower than the new built year equivalent.
- Management and ownership weighting (halls only): Due to the large number of halls being provided by the education sector, an assumption is made that these halls will generally not provide as balanced a programme as halls run by local authorities, trusts, etc, with school halls more likely to be used by teams and groups through block booking. A less balanced programme is assumed to be less attractive to a general

pay-and-play user than a standard local authority leisure centre sports hall with a wider range of activities on offer.

7.3 To reflect this, two weighting curves are used:

- High weighted curve – includes non-education management (third party) and a more balanced programme, therefore more attractive
- Lower weighted curve – includes educational halls managed in-house, therefore less attractive

7.4 Commercial facilities (halls and pools): While there are relatively few sports halls provided by the commercial sector, an additional weighting factor is incorporated within the model to reflect the cost element often associated with commercial facilities. For each population OA, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score is used to limit whether people will use commercial facilities. The assumption is that the higher the IMD score (less affluence), the less likely the population of the OA would choose to go to a commercial facility.

7.5 The English Indices of Deprivation 2019, produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, measure relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 lower super output areas in England. IMD is an overall relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their relative weights.

8 Used Capacity

8.1 Used capacity refers to how much of a facility's theoretical capacity is being used. At first this can appear to be unrealistically low, with local authority figures being in the 50-60% region. Without any further explanation, it would appear that facilities are half empty. The key point is not to see a facility's theoretical maximum capacity (100%) as being an optimum position. In practice this would mean that a facility would need to be completely full every hour it was open during the peak period. This would be both unrealistic from an operational perspective and undesirable from a user's perspective, as the facility would be completely full.

8.2 For example, a 25m four-lane pool has a theoretical capacity of 2,260 visits per week during a 52.5-hour peak period. Usage of a pool will vary throughout the evening, with some sessions being busier than others through programming, such as an aqua aerobics session between 19:00 and 20:00 and lane swimming between 20:00 and 21:00 (see table below). Other sessions will be quieter, such as between 21:00 and 22:00. This pattern of use would mean a total of 143 swims taking place. However, the pool's maximum theoretical capacity is 264 visits throughout the evening. In this instance the pool's used capacity for the evening would be 54%.

Visits per hour	16:00-17:00	17:00-18:00	18:00-19:00	19:00-20:00	20:00-21:00	21:00-22:00	Total visits for the evening
Theoretical maximum capacity	44	44	44	44	44	44	264
Actual usage	8	30	35	50	15	5	143
% of capacity used	18%	68%	80%	114%	34%	11%	54%

9 Comfort Factor – Halls and Pools

9.1 If the facilities were full to their theoretical capacity, there would simply not be the space to undertake the activity comfortably. In addition, there is a need to take account of a range of activities taking place which have different numbers of users; for example, aqua aerobics will have significantly more participants than lane swimming sessions. Additionally, there may be times and sessions that, while being within the peak period, are less busy and so will have fewer users.

9.2 To account for these factors the notion of a 'comfort factor' is applied within the model. For swimming pools, 70%, and for sports halls, 80%, of their theoretical capacity is considered as indicating where a facility starts to become uncomfortably busy. This should be seen only as a guide to help flag when facilities are becoming busier, rather than as a 'hard threshold'.

9.3 The comfort factor is also used to increase the capacity needed to comfortably meet unmet demand. If this comfort factor is not applied, then any facilities provided will be operating at their maximum theoretical capacity, which is not desirable as previously noted.

9.4 The comfort factor is not applied to AGPs due to the fact they are predominantly used by teams that have a set number of players, therefore, the notion of having a 'less busy' pitch is not applicable.

10 Travel Times

10.1 The model includes three different modes of travel:

- driving
- walking and wheeling
- public transport and cycling

10.2 Car access is also considered. In areas where there is less access to a car, the model reduces the number of visits made by car and increases those made on foot for shorter journeys and public transport for longer journeys.

10.3 Overall, surveys have shown that most visits to swimming pools, sports halls and AGPs are made by driving, with a significant minority of visits to facilities being made on foot.

Facility	Driving	Walking	Public Transport	Cycling
Swimming Pool	74%	18%	4%	4%
Sports Hall	76%	19%	2%	3%
AGP Combined AGP Football AGP Hockey	79% 74% 97%	18% 22% 2%	3% 4% 1%	unknown

10.4 The model includes a distance decay function where the further a user is from a facility, the less likely they will travel. Set out below is the survey data with the percentage of visits made

within each of the travel times. This shows that almost 90% of all visits, both by car and on foot, are made within 20 minutes. Hence, 20 minutes is often used as a rule of thumb for the coverage for sports halls and swimming pools.

Minutes	Swimming Pools		Sport Halls	
	Drive	Walk	Drive	Walk
0-10	56%	53%	54%	55%
11-20	35%	34%	36%	32%
21-30	7%	10%	7%	10%
31-45	2%	2%	2%	3%

10.5 For AGPs, there is a similar pattern to halls and pools, with hockey users observed as travelling slightly further (89% travel up to 30 minutes). Therefore, a 20-minute travel time can also be used for combined and football, and 30 minutes for hockey.

Minutes	AGP Combined		AGP Football		AGP Hockey	
	Drive	Walk	Drive	Walk	Drive	Walk
0-10	28%	38%	30%	32%	21%	60%
10-20	57%	48%	61%	50%	42%	40%
20-40	14%	12%	9%	15%	31%	0%

NOTE: These are approximate figures and should only be used as a guide

10.6 Ordnance Survey's Multi-Modal Network Roads average speed data is used to calculate the off-peak drive times between facilities and the population, observing any one-way and turn restrictions that apply. These travel times have been validated against national survey work, and therefore are based on the actual travel patterns of users.

10.7 The network is also used to calculate walk times along paths and roads, excluding motorways and trunk roads. A standard walking speed of 3 mph is used for all journeys.

10.8 Due to the complexity of public transport timetables, public transport travel times in the model are assumed to be twice as long as driving times.

10.9 A cycling speed of 12 mph is used for roads and shared use cycleways, which is approximately half the average speed of driving in urban areas. A speed of 7.5 mph is used for tracks and off-road travel.

Facility Inclusion Criteria

Swimming Pools

The following inclusion criteria were used for this analysis:

- Include all operational indoor pools available for community use i.e., pay-and-play, membership, sports club/community association.
- Exclude all pools not available for community use, i.e., private use.
- Exclude all outdoor pools, i.e., lidos.
- Exclude all pools where the main pool is less than 20 metres in length, or the area is less than 160 square metres. If the principal pool is a leisure pool with an area less than 200 square metres, then all pools on the site should be excluded.
- For leisure pools, only the area of the water that is swimmable should be included. Water play or splash areas should be excluded from the useable space.
- Include all 'planned', 'under construction', and 'temporarily closed' facilities only where all data is available for inclusion.
- Where opening times are missing, availability is included based on similar facility types.
- Where the year built is missing, assume date 1975[3].

Facilities over the border in Wales and Scotland are included, as supplied by sportscotland and Sport Wales.

[3] Choosing a date in the mid-1970s ensures that the facility is included, while not overestimating its impact within the run.

Model Parameters

Swimming Pools Parameters

At-one-time Capacity		0.16667 per square metre = 1 person per 6 square meters
Coverage Maps		Car: 20 minutes Walking: 1.6 km Public transport: 20 minutes at about half the speed of a car NOTE: Travel times are indicative, within the context of a distance decay function of the model.
Duration		60 minutes
Percentage Participation		

Age	0-15	16-24	25-39	40-59	60-79	80+
Male	15.6%	7.6%	10.9%	9.9%	6.7%	2.3%
Female	17.5%	9.2%	12.7%	11.7%	9.2%	3.0%

Frequency per Week

Age	0-15	16-24	25-39	40-59	60-79	80+
Male	1.07	0.91	0.77	0.92	1.21	1.54
Female	1.09	0.94	0.75	0.92	1.16	1.27

Peak Period		Weekday: 9:00 to 10:00, 12:00 to 13:00, 15:30 to 21:00 Weekend: 08:00 to 15:30 Total: 52.5 hours
Proportion in Peak Period		63%

Facilities Planning Model Assessment of Sports Hall Provision for Canterbury City Council

Bespoke Report

9 March 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

0.1 Canterbury City Council (also referred to as Canterbury or the City) is reviewing its current provision of sports halls.

0.2 This report has been prepared based on an assessment using the Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM) spatial modelling tool. The FPM study is a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access to sports halls.

0.3 The FPM modelling run is to provide:

- A baseline assessment of provision in 2025
- An assessment of the contribution from educational sports halls sites in meeting the demand for sports halls

0.4 The main report sets out the full set of findings under each of the seven assessment headings.

0.5 The next section of the report provides the headline strategic overview, and the key findings and interventions arising from the FPM study on supply, demand and accessibility.

Headline Strategic Overview

0.6 The headline strategic overview is that most of Canterbury's demand for sports halls can be met by the available supply in 2025. Unmet demand is low.

0.7 The educational sector is the major provider of sports halls in Canterbury. There is a high commitment to community use at five sites and this needs to be protected.

0.8 Three sports hall sites are estimated to be fully utilised at peak times and one site is uncomfortably full (more than 80% utilised). There is scope to increase availability and capacity at some of these sites.

Key Findings

0.9 The key findings that underpin the headline strategic overview are as follows:

1. The nine educational sports hall sites managed in-house provide 57% of the available capacity and the two managed by a third party provide 11%. The public leisure centres provide 15% and the three other sports halls provide the remaining 17%.
2. Canterbury's demand for sports halls of 41.7 courts is less than the available supply of 74.4 courts.
3. In 2025, 95% of Canterbury's demand is met. The number of visits met is 11,630 in the weekly peak period.

4. Of Canterbury's satisfied demand, 94% is met within Canterbury. The number of visits retained is 10,895 in the weekly peak period.
5. Unmet demand is very low, equating to 5% of Canterbury's demand and 2.2 courts. Of the unmet demand, 81% is too far from a facility. Unmet demand due to lack of capacity is 0.4 courts.
6. The location where most unmet demand can be met is in Herne Bay at 0.6 courts. This is an insufficient amount to consider providing a new sports hall to meet unmet demand; however, this is where modern capacity should be increased.
7. Bay Sports Arena, Kingsmead Leisure Centre and Whitstable Sports Centre are estimated to be 100% utilised in the weekly peak period. Northgate Ward Community Centre is estimated to be uncomfortably full at 90% of capacity used at peak times.

Interventions and Next Steps

0.10 Overall, Canterbury has a sufficient and accessible supply of sports halls to meet demand. The focus for the interventions are:

- Creating a better balance between supply and demand by increasing availability and capacity at peak times at two centres
- Ensuring the educational supply is protected for community use

Creating a Better Balance between Supply and Demand

0.11 Bay Sports Arena is a public leisure centre and Whitstable Sports Centre is an educational dual-use site with The Whitstable School. Availability and capacity at both sites needs to be increased to reduce the proportion of capacity used and meet unmet demand.

0.12 Herne Bay is the area of second highest demand in the Council area and Whitstable is the third highest, with little difference in the level of demand between the two towns. Both towns have one sports hall site. Bay Sports Arena is the third most recent sports hall to open in 2011. Whitstable Sports Centre opened in 1983 and was refurbished in 2010.

0.13 Bay Sports Arena has a five-court hall and a three-court hall. The centre meets the most visits in the weekly peak period. Availability can be increased by up to 7.0 hours in the weekly peak period for both halls to accommodate more demand. Based on the age and condition of the sports halls, there may be the need for refurbishment in the future.

0.14 It is unusual for educational sports halls to be available for more than 41.0 hours in the weekly peak period because they are not available for community use during weekday daytimes.

0.15 Whitstable Sports Centre has a four-court hall suitable for club development. Availability could be increased up to 16.0 hours to accommodate more demand.

0.16 It is suggested that Canterbury City Council investigates increasing the hours available for community use at both sites.

0.17 Kingsmead Leisure Centre is located in the area of highest demand in Canterbury. It has an extensive four-court hall. The centre is the most recent sports hall to be refurbished in 2024. The centre meets the second most visits. The centre is available for the maximum 46.0 hours in the weekly peak period. Therefore, there is no scope to increase availability and capacity.

Protecting the Educational Supply for Community Use

0.18 The educational sector is the major provider for community use and the supply needs to be protected. Any decrease in availability and capacity will change the positive balance of supply and demand, reducing met demand and increasing unmet demand.

0.19 There is a high commitment to community use at five of the educational sites, with availability of between 34.0 hours and 46.0 hours in the weekly peak period. Availability is highest at Canterbury College and Canterbury Academy Campus.

0.20 If a Community Use Agreement (CUA) is not already in place to protect this accessibility, then one should be negotiated. Sport England can advise on the process for setting up a CUA. Once in place it should be monitored by Canterbury City Council to ensure that community use is delivered.

0.21 Sport England's website provides a free resource, Use our School, to support educational sites opening up or increasing access to their facilities to community use.

Next Steps

0.22 These interventions and suggested next steps are based on the FPM findings and should be considered as a key part of the all-round evidence base and integration into the Built Facilities Strategy the Council has commissioned.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Canterbury City Council (also referred to as Canterbury or the City) is reviewing its current provision of sports halls.

1.2 This report has been prepared based on an assessment using the Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM) spatial modelling tool. The FPM study is a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access to sports halls.

1.3 The strategic drivers for Canterbury City Council are to:

- Understand how the existing supply of sports halls is meeting demand in 2025
- Understand the contribution from educational sports halls sites in meeting the demand for sports halls

1.4 The outputs from the FPM assessment will:

- Inform Canterbury City Council's strategic planning review of sports halls provision and future strategy
- Inform an evidence base that contributes to development of planning policy for the provision of indoor sports facilities

1.5 The sequence of work is based on assessments known as runs, and these are set out in the Executive Summary.

The Study Area

1.6 The assessments include the sports halls and population in Canterbury and the neighbouring local authority areas, which comprise study area (see Map **1.1**).

1.7 A customer's choice of sports hall does not respect local authority boundaries. There may be management and possibly pricing incentives for customers to use sports facilities in their local authority area. Other factors that influence choice of sports hall include:

- How close the venue is to where residents live or work
- Other facilities at the same site, such as a gym or studio
- Programming of the hall with activities that appeal to residents and are available at times that fit with the lifestyle of residents
- Age and condition of the facility and inherently its attractiveness

1.8 Increasingly, the quality of sports halls and their offer are of more importance to residents in their choice of venues. New facilities will have a significant draw because of the enhanced quality of the venues.

1.9 In determining the position across Canterbury, it is important to take full account of the sports halls and population in neighbouring local authority areas. The most attractive facility for some Canterbury residents may be outside the City (known as exported demand). For

residents of neighbouring local authorities, their most attractive sports hall may be inside Canterbury (known as imported demand).

1.10 To take account of these factors, a study area is established that places Canterbury at its centre and includes the neighbouring local authority areas.

Map 1.1: Study Area for Canterbury Sports Halls Assessment



Report Structure, Content and Sequence

1.11 The findings for the Canterbury assessment are set out in a series of tables.

1.12 The headings for each table are:

- Supply
- Demand
- Accessibility
- Satisfied Demand
- Unmet Demand
- Used Capacity
- Local Share

1.13 The terms listed above are defined beneath the tables.

1.14 To support the findings, this report also includes maps that show sports hall locations, demand, deprivation, driving and walking coverage, public transport access, exported satisfied demand, unmet demand, imported used capacity and local share.

1.15 Where valid, the findings for neighbouring local authorities are set out. A commentary is provided on these comparable findings. For example, some local authorities like to know how their findings on proportion of met demand compare with those of neighbouring local authorities.

1.16 The key findings in each of the sections are numbered and highlighted in bold typeface.

1.17 The facilities excluded from the study, with explanations, are listed in Appendix 1. Details of the sports halls in the neighbouring local authority areas included in the assessment are set out in Appendix 2. The FPM and its parameters are described in Appendix 3.

2 SPORTS HALL SUPPLY

Table 2.1: Supply of Sports Halls in Canterbury in 2025

Supply	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Number of sports halls	22
Number of sports hall sites	16
Supply in badminton court equivalents	100.3
Supply in courts scaled with hours available in peak period	74.4
Unavailable supply in the weekly peak period	26%
Supply in visits per week in peak period	27,374
Average age of all sites	30
Average age of public leisure centres	22

Definition of supply – This is the supply or capacity of the sports halls available for community and club use in the weekly peak period. Supply is expressed in the number of visits that a sports hall can accommodate in the weekly peak period and in the number of badminton courts.

Weekly peak period – This is when most visits take place and when users have most flexibility to visit. The peak period for sports halls is one hour on weekday mornings, five hours on weekday evenings and eight hours on weekend days. This gives a total of 46 hours per week. The modelling and recommendations are based on the ability of the public to access facilities during this weekly peak period.

2.1 In 2025 there are 22 sports halls across 16 sites in Canterbury.

2.2 The facilities excluded from the study are listed in Appendix 1.

Table 2.2: Details of Sports Halls in Canterbury included in 2025

Site	Provider	Facility Type	Dimensions (m)	Area (sqm)	Peak Hours	Total Hours	Capacity (visits)	Year Built	Year Refurb
Bay Sports Arena	Public	5-court 3-court	40.6 x 21.35 27 x 18	867 486	39 39	48.5 48.5	2,496	2011	
Kingsmead Leisure Centre	Public	4-court	32 x 23.5	752	46	102	1,472	1996	2024
Canterbury Academy Campus	Educational (3rd party)	6-court	34.5 x 27	932	46	93	2,208	2001	
Whitstable Sports Centre	Educational (3rd party)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	25	41.5	800	1983	2010
Canterbury College	Educational (in-house)	3-court	27 x 18	486	46	93	1,104	2015	
Christ Church Sport Centre	Educational (in-house)	8-court	37 x 33	1,221	37.8	86.8	2,419	2009	
Kent College	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	29	33	928	1989	2005
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	18	18	576	2005	
Spires Academy	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	24	26	768	2012	
St Anselm's Catholic School	Educational (in-house)	4-court Activity Activity	34.5 x 20 18 x 17 18 x 17	690 306 306	24 24 24	29 29 29	2,298	1970	2003
St Edmund's School	Educational (in-house)	4-court Activity	34.5 x 20 18 x 10	690 180	20 20	28 28	1,015	1985	
The King's School Sports Centre	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	34.3	66	1,098	1990	2008
University of Kent Sports Centre	Educational (in-house)	8-court 4-court 4-court	37 x 35 33.1 x 18 32.4 x 18	1,295 596 583	43 43 43	90 90.5 90.5	5,504	1965	2004
Northgate Ward Community Centre	Other (pay & play)	3-court	27 x 18	486	5	36.5	120	1996	2009
Polo Farm Sports Club	Other (sport club)	10-court	48 x 35	1,680	41.5	87.5	3,320	2015	
St Lawrence Ground	Other (sport club)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	39	58	1,248	1992	2004

Providers

2.3 There are two public leisure centres. Public leisure centres are available for use to all residents, and provide recreational pay-and-play, and organised team and individual sports activities.

2.4 The educational sector is the major provider, with 11 of the 16 sports hall sites. Nine are managed in-house and, therefore, are responsible for promoting community use. Promotion may be passive, whereby the school responds to booking requests, or dynamic, with the school working alongside sports clubs to encourage community use.

2.5 Two educational sites are operated by external providers:

- Canterbury Academy Campus – Lifestyle Fitness on behalf of The Canterbury Academy Trust
- Whitstable Sports – Active Life, a not-for-profit charitable trust, on behalf of Canterbury City Council

2.6 Protecting the educational supply of sports halls for community use is very important. If not already in place, a Community Use Agreement (CUA) should be established to protect this current supply.

2.7 Given that nearly all the sports hall stock is provided by the educational sector, this may restrict residents who require access during weekday daytimes; for example, stay-at-home parents, home workers, and the unemployed or retired. This places greater reliance on the more limited public leisure centre stock for these residents

2.8 There are three other providers:

- Northgate Ward Community Centre is a registered charity. It is operated by local volunteers and provides for residents in the Northgate ward. The building is owned by Canterbury City Council.
- Polo Farm Sports Club is operated by a private company and provides activities for its members.
- St Lawrence Ground is owned and operated by Kent County Cricket Club. It provides activities for its members.

Scale

2.9 Canterbury has an extensive supply of sports halls.

2.10 University of Kent Sports Centre is the largest site with an eight-court hall and two four-court halls. Eight-court halls have the potential to provide a more extensive programme when operated as two four-court halls. An eight-court hall can provide a show court for events use with spectator seating.

2.11 The largest individual sports hall in Canterbury is the ten-court hall at Polo Farm Sports Club. A ten-court hall can also provide a show court for events use with spectator seating. Six-court halls can accommodate multiple sports activities at the same time.

2.12 There is an eight-court hall at Christ Church Sport Centre and a six-court hall at Canterbury Academy Campus.

2.13 Bay Sports Arena is the largest public leisure centre with a five-court hall and a three-court hall.

2.14 There are 11 four-courts halls, of which:

- Seven have dimensions of 34.5m x 20m. This is the size that Sport England and the National Governing Bodies for hall sports recommend for a four-court hall. These dimensions can cater for all hall sports at the community level of participation and also meet the requirements for hall sports club development.
- One has dimensions of 32m x 23.5m and one 32.4m x 18m, while two have dimensions of 33m x 18m. These sports halls, while meeting the requirements for most indoor hall sports at the community level of participation, has less space between and behind individual courts. This may prohibit use of these sports halls if they do not meet the requirements for competition play.

2.15 There are three three-court halls with dimensions of 27m x 18m. A three-court hall can provide for most hall sports at the recreational level of participation.

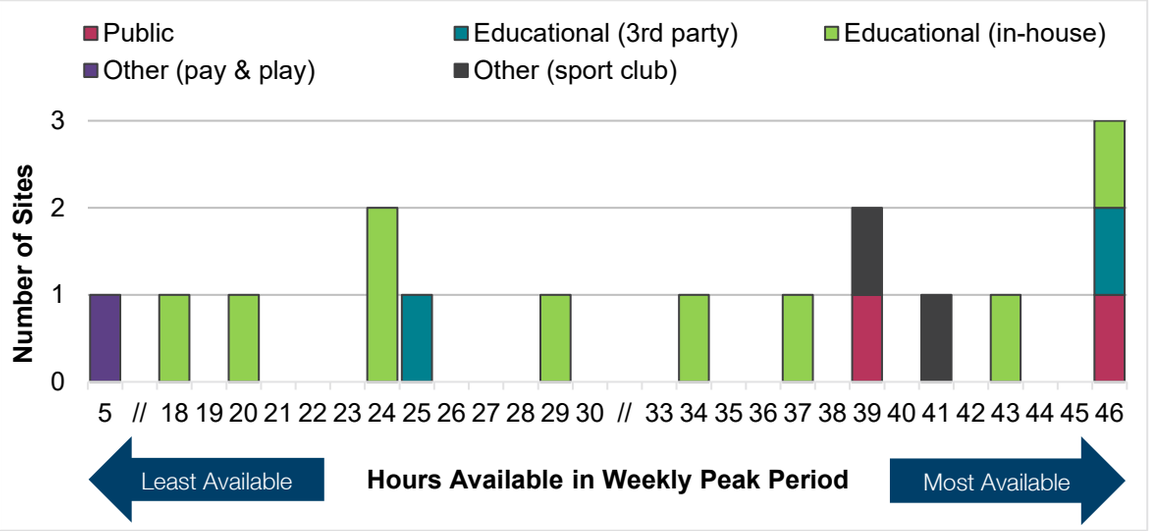
2.16 St Edmund's School has a main hall and an 18m x 10m activity hall. St Anselm's Catholic School has a main hall and two activity halls, each with dimensions of 18m x 17m. An activity hall is a flexible space for multiple sports that is smaller than the equivalent of three badminton courts and may or may not have line markings.

2.17 Where a sports hall site has a main hall and an activity hall, the activities for the two halls are programmed together. The main hall can accommodate big/high space activities such as basketball and badminton, which have low participant numbers at-one-time. The activity hall can accommodate smaller space activities such as martial arts, which have higher participant numbers.

2.18 The at-one-time capacity of a main hall with marked courts is eight people per badminton court (the equivalent area of a badminton court is 144 sqm). For an activity hall, this increases to 15 people per court. Therefore, an activity hall has almost double the capacity of a main hall with the same dimensions.

Availability

Chart 2.1: Availability of Canterbury Sports Halls by Provider



2.19 Three sites, of which two are educational sports halls, are available for the maximum 46.0 hours in the weekly peak period. There is no scope to increase availability and capacity at peak times at the following sites:

- Kingsmead Leisure Centre
- Canterbury Academy Campus
- Canterbury College

2.20 There are four sites, including one educational site, with high availability in the weekly peak period as follows:

- University of Kent Sports Centre (all three halls) – 43.0 hours
- Polo Farm Sports Club – 41.5 hours
- Bay Sports Arena (both halls) – 39.0 hours
- St Lawrence Ground – 39.0 hours

2.21 It is unusual for educational sports halls managed in-house to be available for more than 41.0 hours in the weekly peak period because they are not available for community use during weekday daytimes.

2.22 The other educational sites are available for between 18.0 hours and 37.8 hours in the weekly peak period.

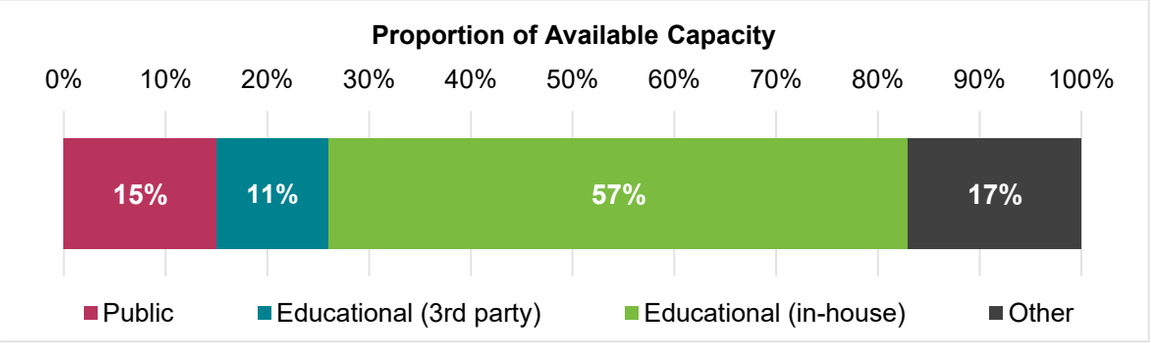
2.23 Sport England has produced a resource to support schools in opening their facilities and for community use in non-school hours. The resource covers how to get started, who can help, operating models, legal and governance, finance, marketing, operating safely and safeguarding and can be found here: https://www.sportengland.org/funding-and-campaigns/use-our-school.

2.24 The resource can be used to support discussions with schools to open their sites for community use either for the first time or to extend the hours available to the local community.

2.25 Northgate Ward Community Centre has the lowest availability at 5.0 hours in the weekly peak period.

Capacity

Chart 2:2 Proportion of Available Capacity by Provider in 2025



2.26 **Key finding 1** is that the nine educational sports halls managed in-house provide 57% of the available capacity and the two managed by a third party provide 11%. The public leisure centres provide 14% and the three other sports halls provide the remaining 17%.

2.27 The sites with the largest capacities in the weekly peak period in Canterbury are:

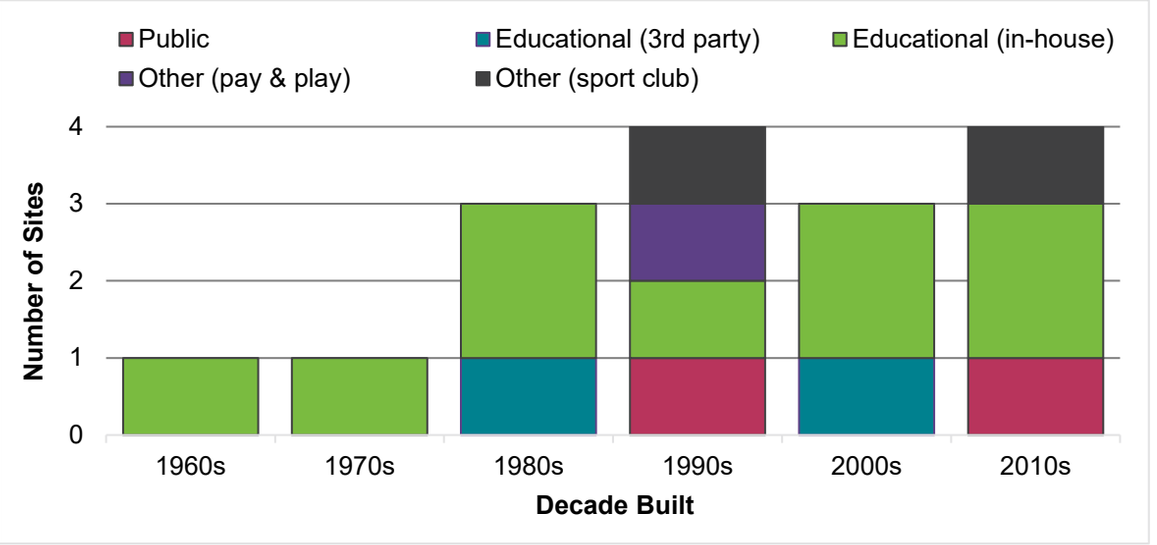
- University of Kent Sports Centre – 5,504 visits
- Polo Farm Sports Club – 3,320 visits
- Bay Sports Arena – 2,496 visits
- Christ Church Sports Centre – 2,419 visits

2.28 The sites with the smallest capacities in the weekly peak period in Canterbury are:

- Northgate Ward Community Centre – 120 visits
- Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys – 576 visits
- Spires Academy – 768 visits
- Whitstable Sports Centre – 800 visits

Age

Chart 2.3: Decade Built of Sports Halls in Canterbury by Provider



2.29 The average age of all the sports hall sites is 30 years in 2025 and for the public leisure centres it is 22 years.

2.30 The oldest sports hall is University of Kent Sports Centre, which opened in 1965 and was modernised in 2004. The most recent sports halls to open are Canterbury College and Polo Farm Sports Club, both of which opened in 2015.

2.31 There is a very good track record of modernisation. Nine sports hall sites opened before 2000 and eight of these have been modernised. The unmodernised site is St Edmund's School, which opened in 1985. Three sites opened between 2001 and 2009 and none have been refurbished.

2.32 Modernisation is defined as one or more of the following:

- Upgrade of the sports hall floor to a sprung timber floor
- Upgrade of the lighting in the sports hall
- Modernisation of the changing accommodation

Sports Hall Locations

2.33 Fourteen of the sports hall sites are located in the central area of Canterbury. There is one site in Herne Bay and one site in Whitstable (see Map **2.1**). There are no sports halls in the southern half of the Council area.

2.34 There are no sports halls in the neighbouring local authorities that are close to the border with Canterbury.

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Map 2.1: Location of Sports Halls in 2025 (Run 1)

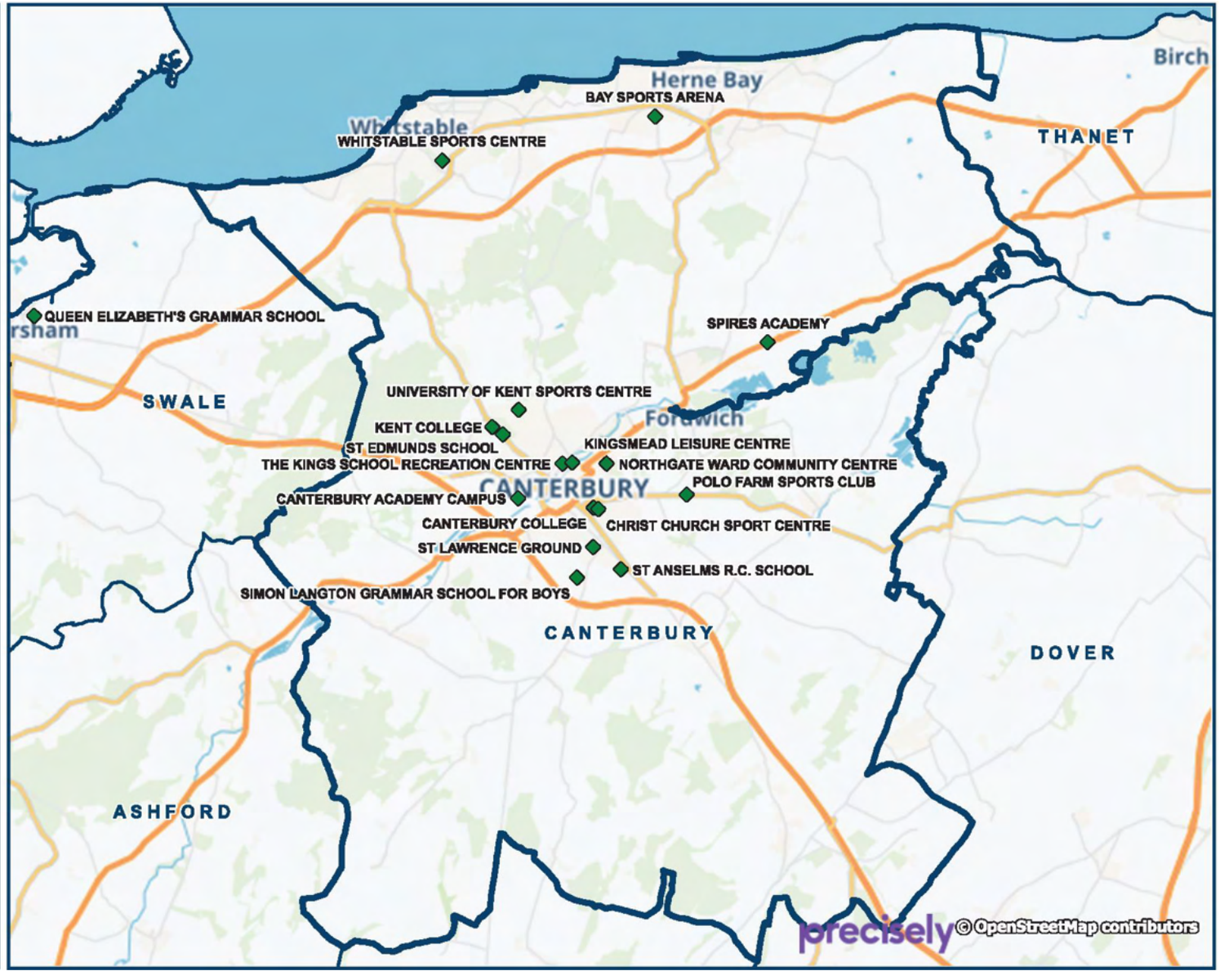
All facility locations used in the model across all runs.

Facilities Included in Runs

- Existing Sports Halls Location

Boundaries

- Canterbury
- Neighbouring Local Authorities



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3 DEMAND FOR SPORTS HALLS

Table 3.1: Demand for Sports Halls in 2025

Demand	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Population	165,237
Visits demanded in weekly peak period	12,270
Demand in courts with comfort factor included	41.7
% of demand in the 10% most deprived LSOAs nationally	2%

Definition of total demand – This represents the total demand for sports halls by gender and for six age bands from 0 to 79 and is calculated as the percentage of each age band/gender that participates. This is added to the frequency of participation in each age band/gender to arrive at a total demand figure, which is expressed in visits in the weekly peak period and number of badminton courts. The FPM parameters for the percentage of participation and frequency of participation, for gender and for different age bands, are calculated from Sport England's Active Lives survey up to November 2023 and are set out in Appendix 3.

3.1 Demand is calculated from the resident population. Canterbury's population in 2025 is 165,237. This population generates demand for 12,270 visits to sports halls in the weekly peak period, which equates to 41.7 courts.

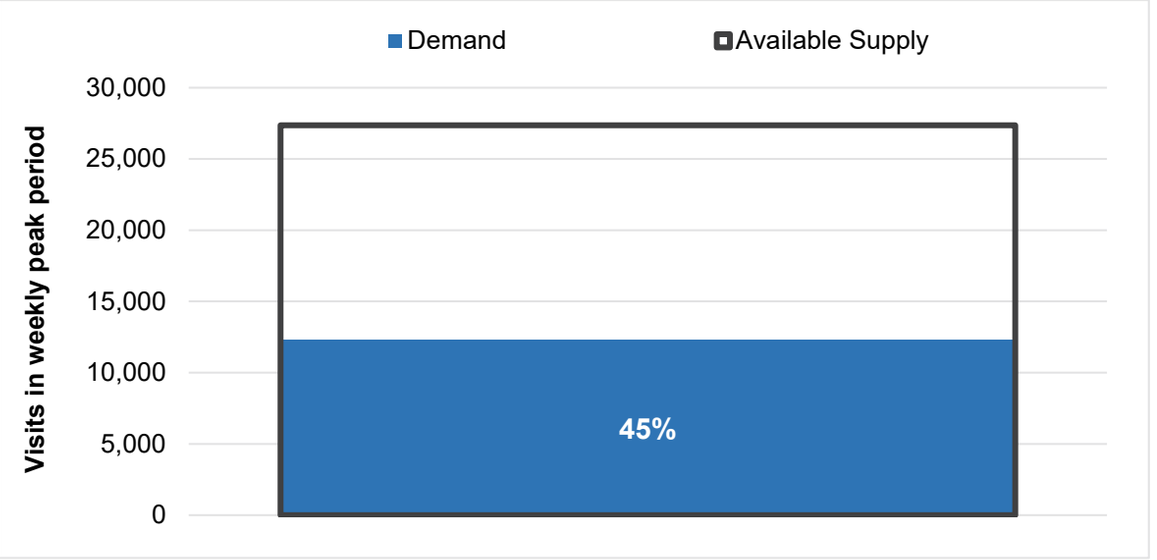
3.2 **Key finding 2** is that Canterbury's demand for sports halls of 41.7 courts is less than the available supply of 74.4 courts.

3.3 Of Canterbury's population (source: ONS Census 2021):

- Residents aged 65 and over represent 22% of the total population compared to the national average of 20%
- Disabled residents account for 11% compared to the national average of 17%
- Residents economically inactive are 28% compared to the national average of 19%

3.4 The scale of the economically inactive population suggests a need to promote more access for these residents. The educational supply during weekday day times during term time is unavailable. This places greater reliance on the more limited public leisure centre stock for these residents.

Chart 3.1: Demand as a Proportion of Available Supply in Canterbury in 2025



3.5 Canterbury's demand is the equivalent of 45% of its available supply in 2025.

Demand in the Study Area

Table 3.2: Demand for Sports Halls by Area in 2025

Demand in Court Equivalents Considering a 'Comfort' Factor	Run 1
Area	2025
Canterbury	**41.7**
Ashford	34.9
Dover	28.7
Folkestone and Hythe	26.7
Swale	39.5
Thanet	34.2

3.6 Canterbury has the highest demand in the study area. Demand is slightly lower in Swale at 39.5 courts. Swale has a slightly smaller population than Canterbury.

3.7 Demand is lowest in Folkestone and Hythe at 26.7 courts. Folkestone and Hythe has the smallest population in the study area.

Geographical Distribution of Demand

3.8 In 2025 the highest densities of demand per square kilometre are in Canterbury city centre at 1.5 and 1.6 courts (orange squares in Map 3.1).

3.9 The areas of highest demand across 12 square kilometres are:

- Canterbury city – 11.1 courts (Kingsmead Leisure Centre and nine other sports hall sites are located in this area)
- Herne Bay – 6.2 courts (Bay Sports Arena is located in this area)
- Whitstable – 5.0 courts (Whitstable Sports Centre is located in this area)

3.10 There areas of lowest demand are in the northeast of the Council area, on the border with Thanet, and in the south, towards the border with Ashford, Folkestone and Hythe, and Dover. Demand in these areas is between is 0.1 and 0.2 courts per square kilometre (purple squares).

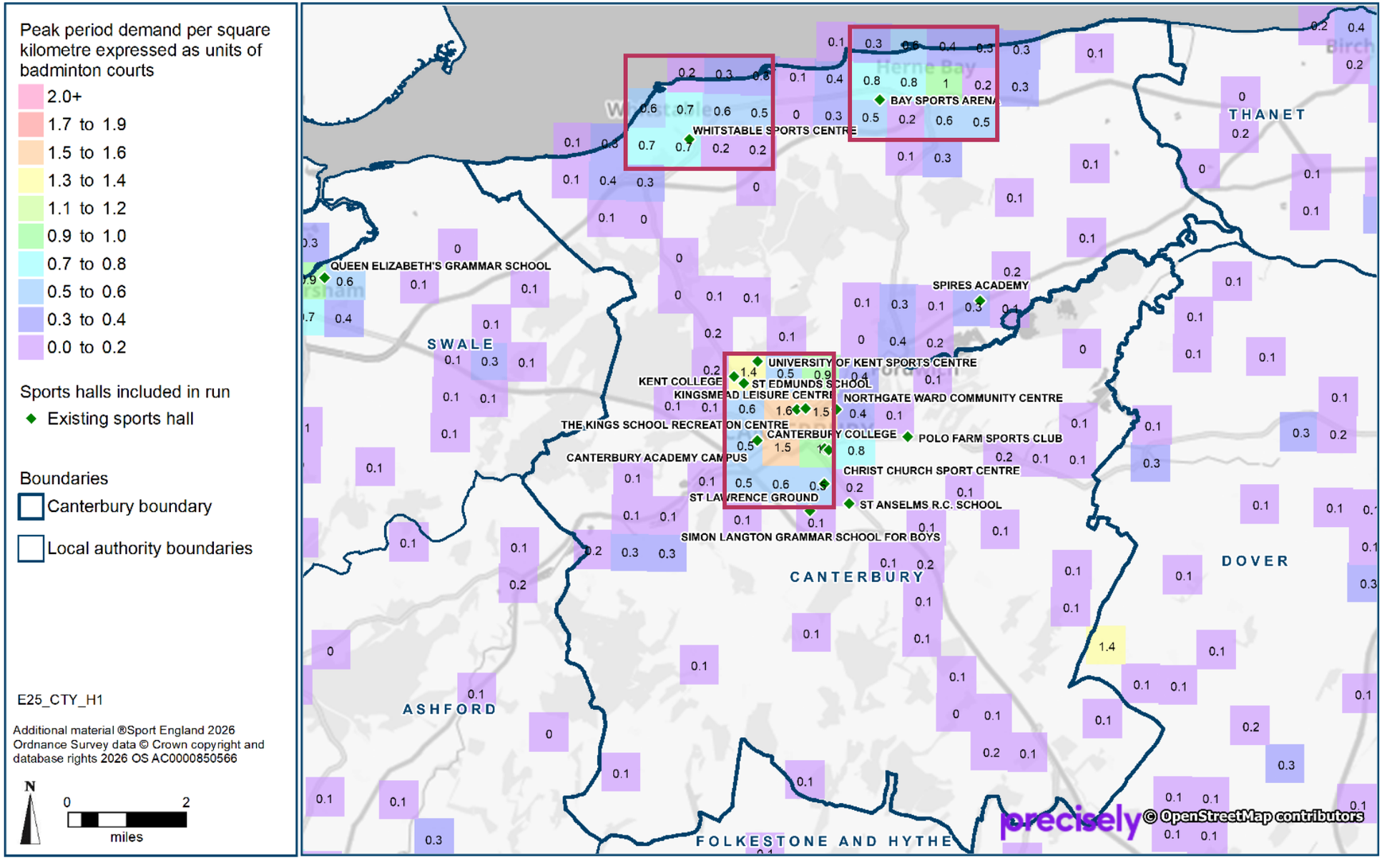
Deprivation

3.11 In 2025, 2% of Canterbury's demand is in the 10% most-deprived lower super output areas (LSOAs) nationally.

3.12 Deprivation is highest east of Canterbury College and Christ Church Sports Centre, and north of Bay Sports Areana in Herne Bay (dark brown areas in Map 3.2).

3.13 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score is used in the FPM to limit whether people will use commercial facilities (see Appendix 3 for definition of IMD). A weighting factor is incorporated to reflect the cost element often associated with commercial facilities. The assumption is that the higher the IMD score (less affluence), the less likely the population of the LSOA would choose to go to a commercial facility. It is acknowledged that there are no commercial sports halls in Canterbury.

Map 3.1: Demand for Sports Halls in 2025 (Run 1)



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Map 3.2: Deprivation in 2019 (Run 1)

Deprivation shown thematically (colours) at lower super output area level by decile.

Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019)

10% most deprived

10% least deprived

Facilities Included in Runs

Existing Sports Halls Location

Boundaries

Canterbury

Neighbouring Local Authorities

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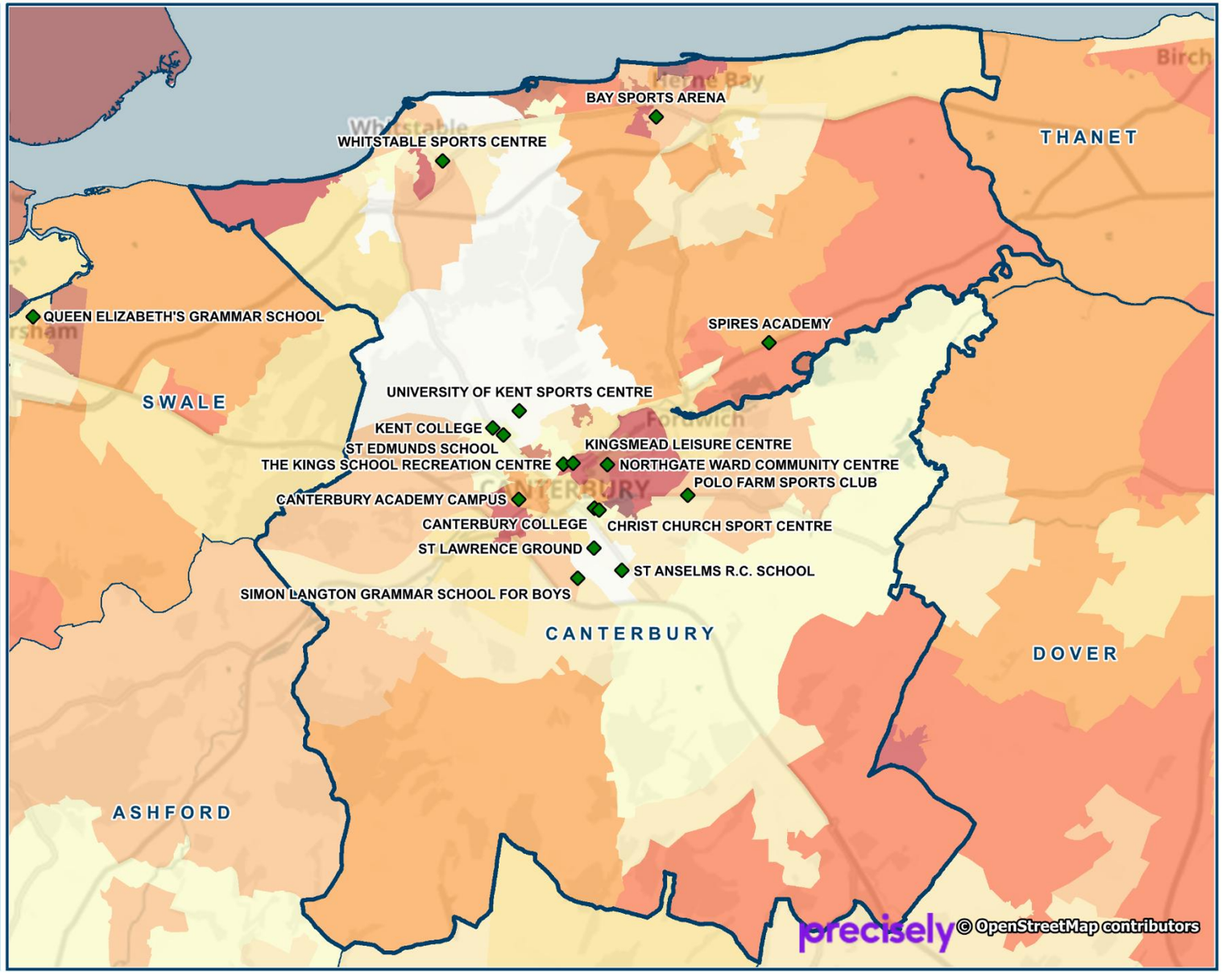


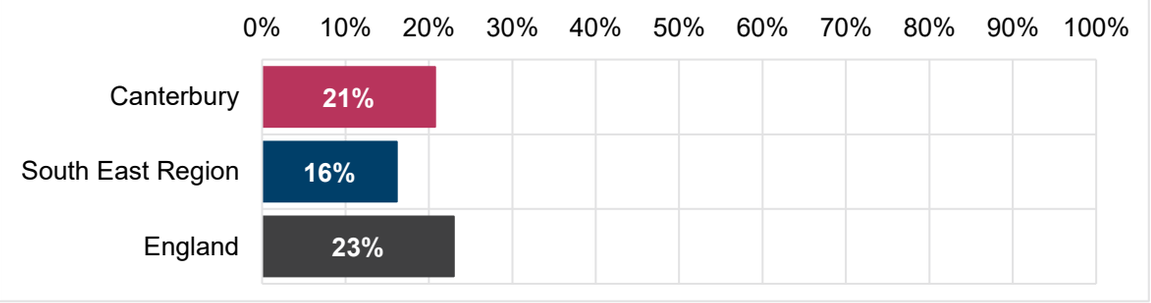
4 ACCESSIBILITY

Table 4.1: Travel Mode of Canterbury Demand to Sports Halls in 2025

Accessibility	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
% of total residents within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall	48%
% of 10% most-deprived residents within a 20-minute walk of a hall	60%
% of demand satisfied when travelled: on foot by public transport or bicycle by car	 16% 7% 77%

Definition of accessibility – The FPM uses a distance decay function where the further a user is from a facility, the less likely they will travel. A description of the distance decay function is set out in Appendix 3. On average, a 20-minute travel time accounts for approximately 90% of visits to a sports hall.

Chart 4.1: Proportion of Residents Without Access to a Car



4.1 In Canterbury, 21% of residents do not have access to a car. This is higher than the regional average of 16% but lower than the national average of 23%.

Walking Access

4.2 Of Canterbury's residents, 48% are within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall.

4.3 Access is highest in Canterbury city centre and to the southeast and northwest where residents can walk to five or more sports hall sites within 20 minutes (pink areas in Map 4.1).

4.4 However, not all residents in these areas will walk to a sports hall and some will travel further. It is estimated that 16% of journeys to sports halls by Canterbury residents are made on foot in 2025.

Public Transport Access

4.5 All the sports hall sites are within a five-minute walk of an existing bus stop (pink areas in Map **4.2**).

4.6 Kingsmead Leisure Centre, The King's School Sports Centre, Canterbury Academy Campus and the sports halls in Herne Bay and Whitstable are within a 15-minute walk of a railway station (purple areas).

4.7 It should be noted that, while most Canterbury residents can access an existing public transport stop, it may not mean they can get to a sports hall within 20 minutes from home via a combination of walking and public transport. Also, in rural areas the service may be irregular.

4.8 It is estimated that 7% of journeys to sports halls by Canterbury residents are made by public transport or bicycle in 2025.

Driving Access

4.9 Residents in Canterbury are within a 20-minute drive of more than ten sports hall sites from where they live. Access is poorest in the southwest of the Council area and along the coast, at between 11 and 15 sites within a 20-minute drive (dark green areas in Map **4.3**). Access is best in Upstreet, along the A28 to Thanet, at more than 25 sites within a 20-minute drive (purple area).

4.10 It is estimated that 77% of journeys to sports halls by Canterbury residents are made by car in 2025.

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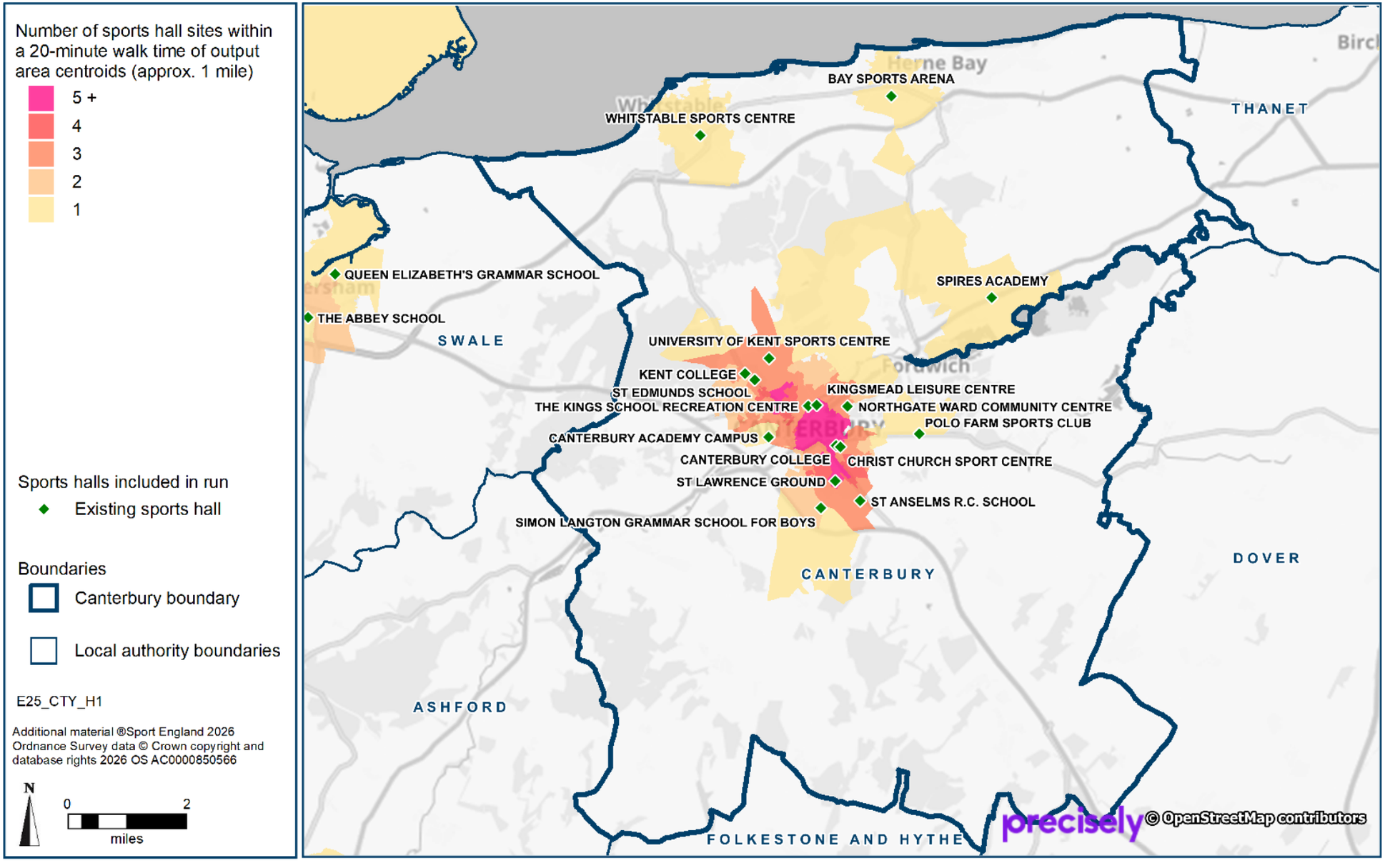
Map 4.1: Walking Access to Sports Halls in 2025 (Run 1)



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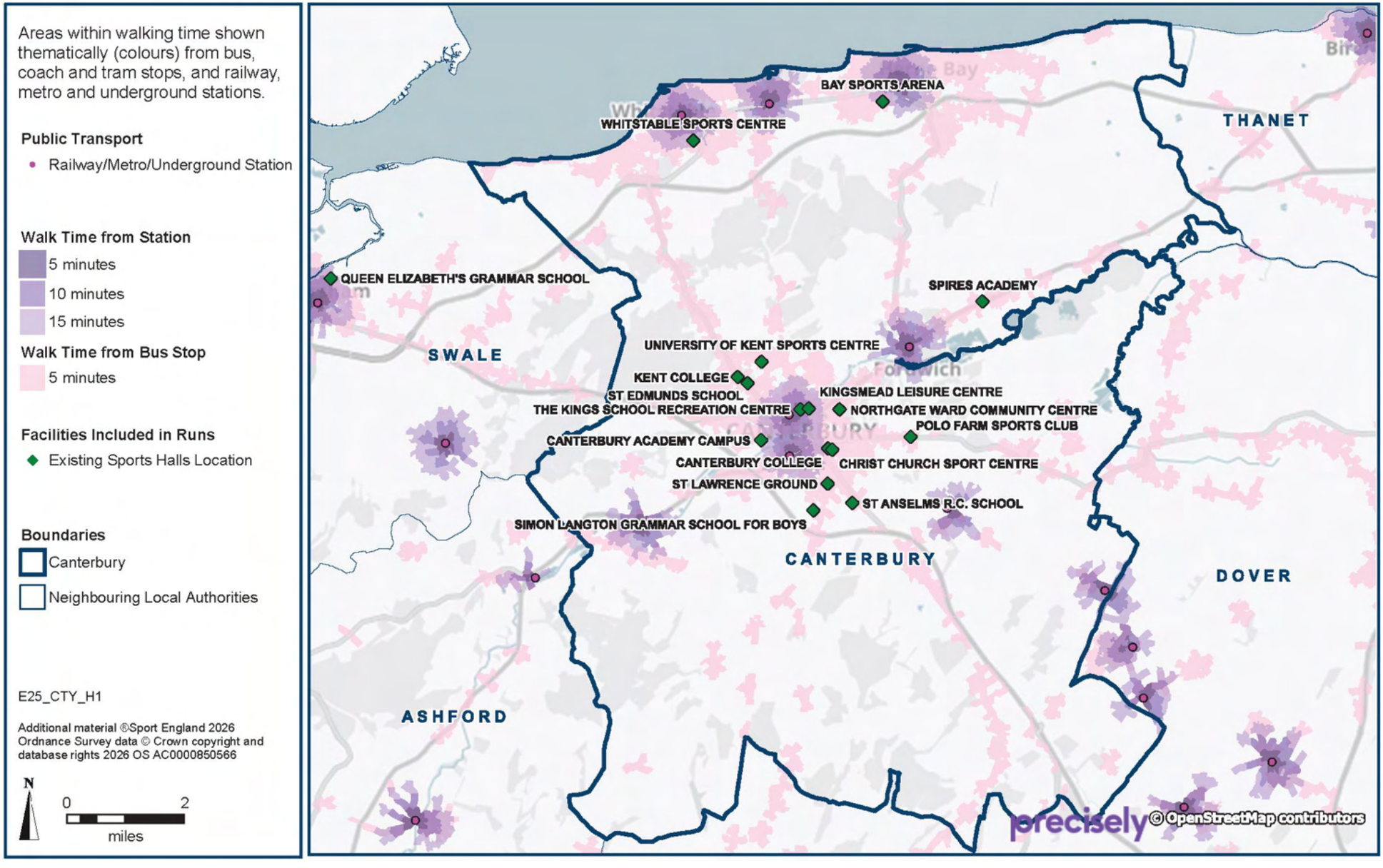
Map 4.2: Walking Access to Public Transport in 2025 (Run 1)



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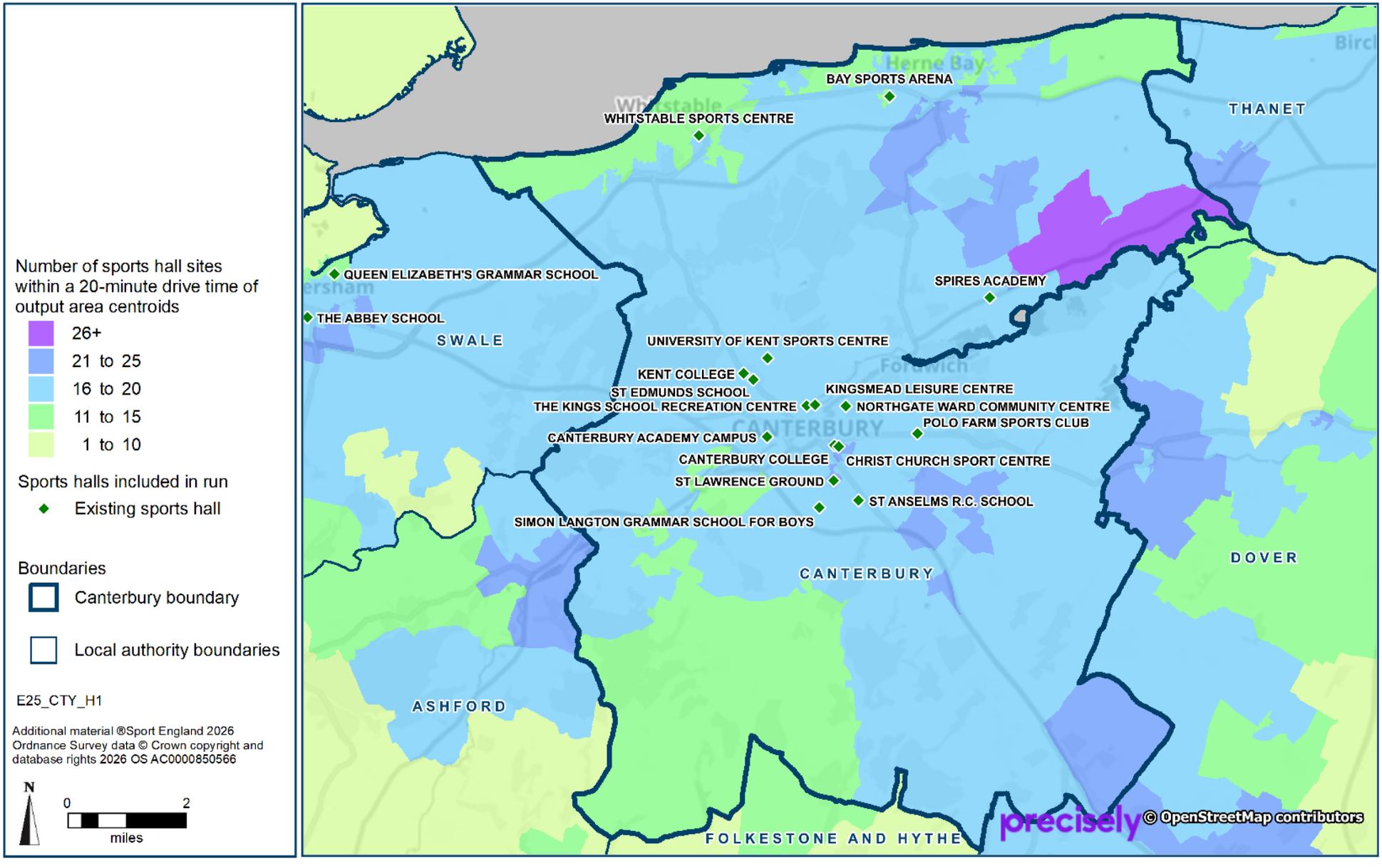
Map 4.3: Driving Access to Sports Halls in 2025 (Run 1)



5 SATISFIED DEMAND FOR SPORTS HALLS

Table 5.1: Satisfied Demand for Sports Halls in Canterbury in 2025

Satisfied Demand	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Number of visits which are met per week in peak period % of total demand satisfied	11,630 95%
Number of visits retained per week in peak period Demand retained as a % of satisfied demand	10,895 94%
Number of visits exported per week in peak period Demand exported as a % of satisfied demand	735 6%

Definition of satisfied demand – This represents the proportion of total demand that is met by the capacity at the sports halls from Canterbury residents who live within the travel time of a sports hall. This includes sports halls located both within and outside Canterbury.

5.1 **Key finding 3** is that 95% of Canterbury's demand is met in 2025. The number of visits met in the weekly peak period is 11,630.

Table 5.2: Proportion of Demand Met by Area in 2025

Proportion of Demand Met	Run 1
Area	2025
Canterbury	**95%**
Ashford	95%
Dover	95%
Folkestone and Hythe	92%
Swale	95%
Thanet	95%
South East Region	**97%**
England	**95%**

5.2 Canterbury's proportion of satisfied demand is lower than the regional average of 97% and is equivalent to the national average.

5.3 Folkestone and Hythe has the lowest proportion of satisfied demand in the study area at 92%. The proportion in the rest of the neighbouring local authorities is 95%.

5.4 Details of the sports halls in the neighbouring local authority areas are listed in Appendix **2**.

Retained Demand

Definition of retained demand – A subset of the satisfied demand findings shows how much of Canterbury residents' demand for sports halls is met at sports halls located within the City. This assessment is based on the travel time from Canterbury's sports halls and residents in the City participating at these halls.

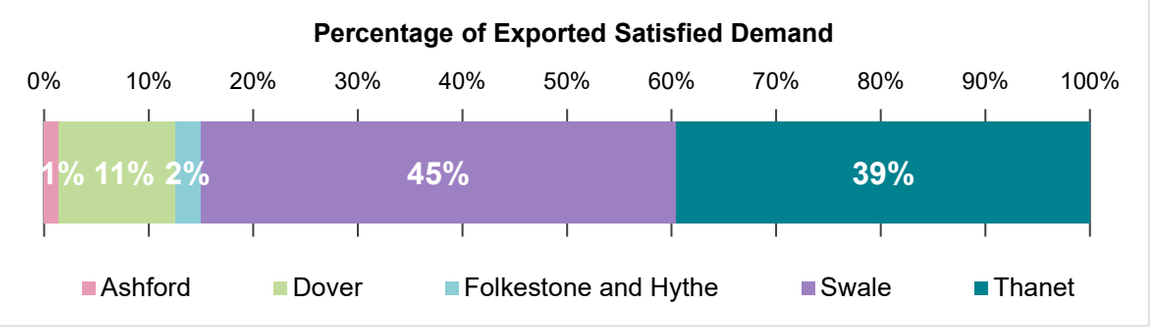
5.5 **Key finding 4** is that 94% of Canterbury's satisfied demand is met within Canterbury. The number of visits retained is 10,895 in the weekly peak period.

Exported Demand

Definition of exported demand – The residue of satisfied demand, after retained demand, is exported demand. This is based on Canterbury residents who live within the travel time of a sports hall located outside Canterbury and use that hall.

5.6 Of Canterbury's satisfied demand, 6% is exported and met at sports halls in neighbouring local authority areas. This equates to 735 visits in the weekly peak period.

Chart 5.1: Percentage of Exported Satisfied Demand by Destination in 2025



5.7 The largest amount of Canterbury's exported demand goes to Swale, accounting for 45% of exported demand and 334 visits in the weekly peak period (see Map **5.1**). There are two sports hall sites in Faversham, which are closest to Canterbury.

5.8 The second largest amount of exported demand goes to Thanet, accounting for 39% of exported demand and 290 visits in the weekly peak period.

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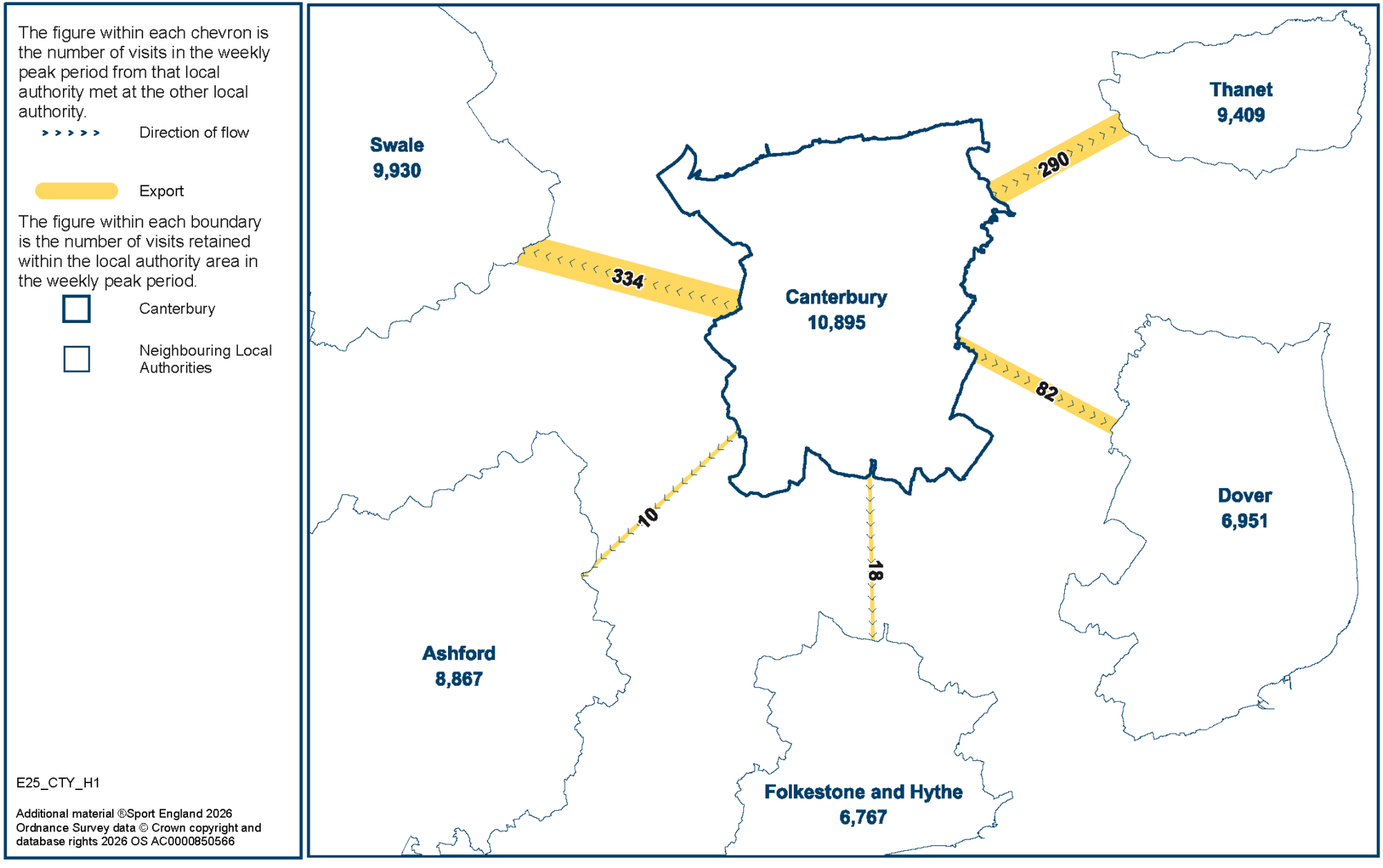
Map 5.1: Export of Canterbury Satisfied Demand for Sports Halls in 2025 (Run 1)



6 UNMET DEMAND FOR SPORTS HALLS

Table 6.1: Unmet Demand for Sports Halls in Canterbury in 2025

Unmet Demand	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Number of visits unmet per week in peak period	640
Unmet demand as a % of total demand	5%
Equivalent in courts with comfort factor	2.2
% of 10% most deprived demand unmet	10.4%
% of unmet demand due to:	
Facility too far away:	81%
Without access to a car	77%
With access to a car	4%
Lack of facility capacity:	19%
Without access to a car	16%
With access to a car	2%

Definition of unmet demand – This has two parts; demand for sports halls that cannot be met because either:

1. There is too much demand for any particular sports hall within its travel time area and there is a lack of capacity.
2. The demand is located too far from any sports hall that it can use (taking into account deprivation) or reach (taking into account car access) and is then classified as unmet demand.

6.1 **Key finding 5** is that unmet demand is low, equating to 5% of Canterbury's demand and 2.2 courts. Of the unmet demand, 81% is too far from a facility. Unmet demand due to lack of capacity is 0.4 courts.

6.2 Unmet demand too far from a sports hall will always exist because it is not possible to achieve complete spatial coverage whereby all areas of a local authority are within walking distance of a sports hall that is not commercial and not everyone will want, or is able, to drive the full distance.

6.3 The key point here is the scale of the unmet demand. Also, if it is clustered in one location, further provision should be considered to improve accessibility.

Location of Unmet Demand

6.4 In 2025 the greatest density of unmet demand is 0.2 courts per square kilometre in Herne Bay (medium blue square in Map 6.1).

6.5 Unmet demand is highest in:

- Herne Bay – 0.7 courts across six square kilometres
- Whitstable – 0.2 courts across two square kilometres
- Canterbury City Centre – 0.1 courts in one square kilometre

6.6 Unmet demand in the remainder of Canterbury is less than 0.1 courts per square kilometre (purple squares).

Meeting Unmet Demand

Definition of reachable unmet demand – Analysis of the spread of unmet demand shows the level of unmet demand that would be met by a potential new facility in any given location. This 'reachable unmet demand' is calculated for each one-kilometre grid square and figures are shown in the map.

6.7 **Key finding 6** is that the location where the most unmet demand can be met in Canterbury is in Herne Bay at 0.6 courts (light green squares in Map 6.2). This is an insufficient amount to consider providing a new sports hall to meet unmet demand; however, this is where modern capacity should be increased.

6.8 Bay Sports Arena is close to this area and has scope to increase availability and capacity in the weekly peak period.

For context, the minimum number of reachable courts required to justify a new sports hall would be three.

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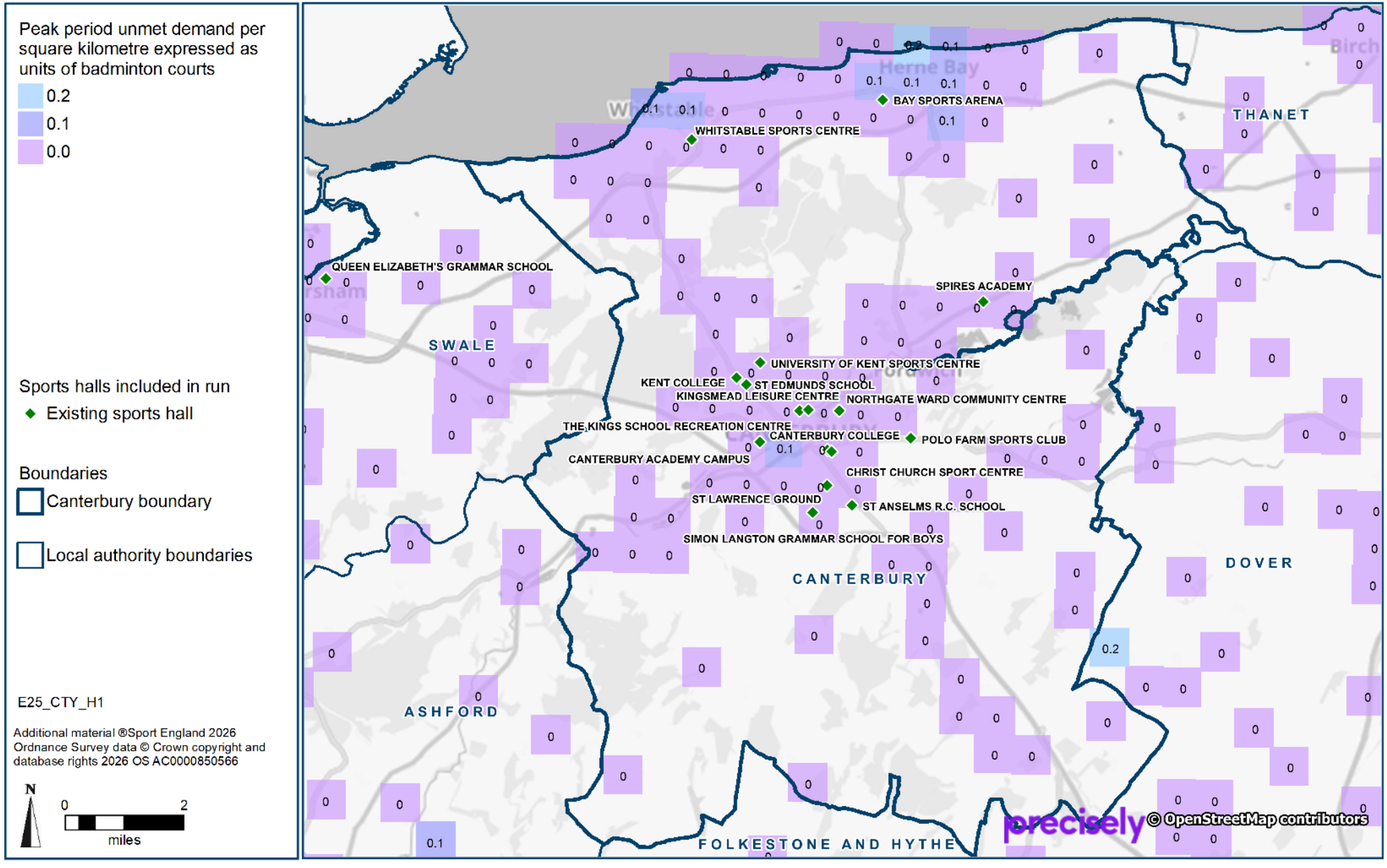
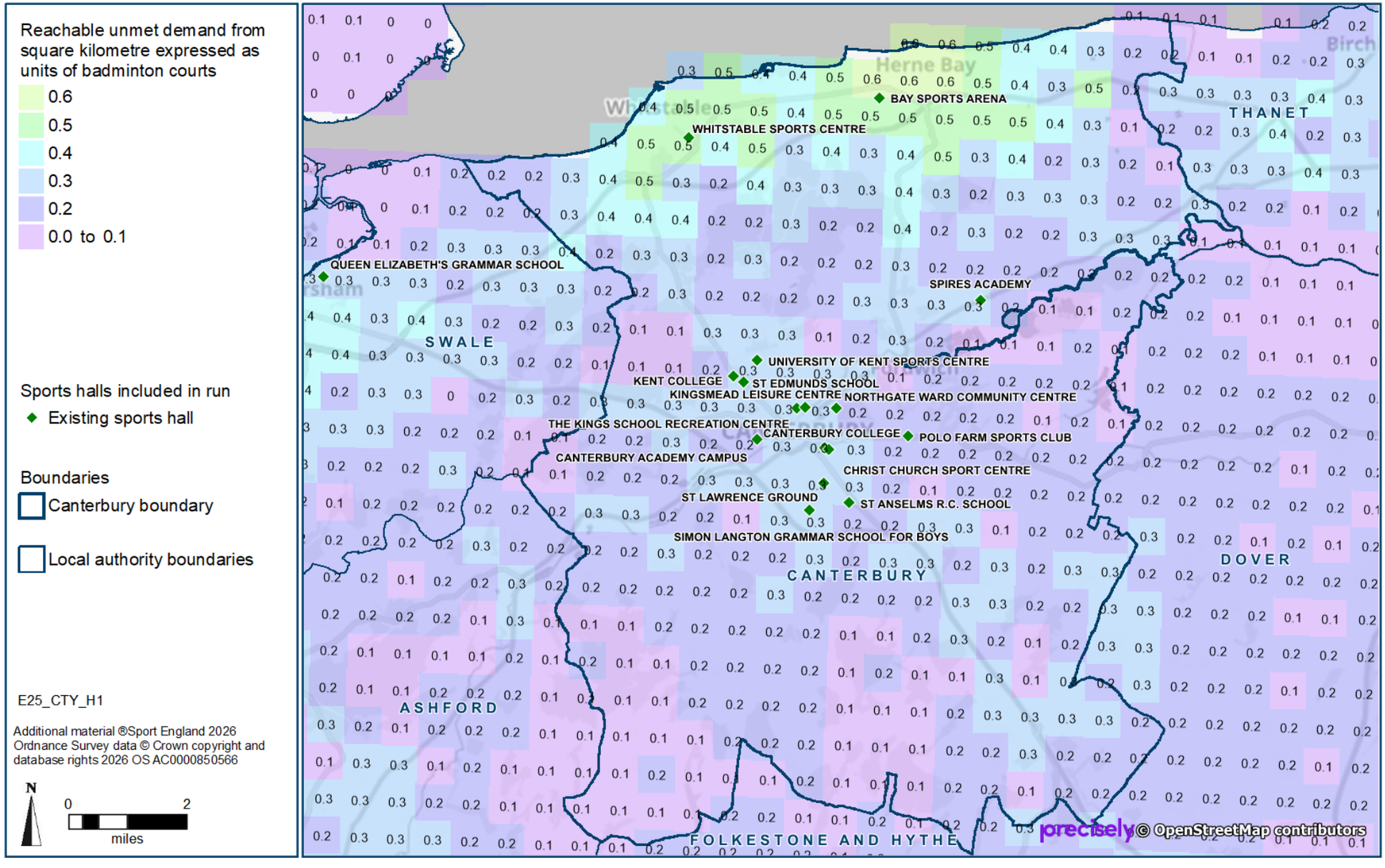
Map 6.1: Unmet Demand for Sports Halls in 2025 (Run 1)



Map 6.2: Reachable Unmet Demand for Sports Halls in 2025 (Run 1)



7 USED CAPACITY OF FACILITIES

Table 7.1: Used Capacity of Sports Halls in 2025

Used Capacity	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Number of visits used of capacity in weekly peak period	12,204
% of overall capacity of halls used	45%

Definition of used capacity – This is a measure of usage at sports halls and estimates how well used or how full facilities are. The FPM is designed to include a 'comfort factor', beyond which the venues are too full. When the venues are too full, the time taken to change the sports hall programme and equipment starts to impinge on the activity time itself and the changing and circulation areas become congested. In the model, Sport England assumes that usage above 80% of capacity is busy and that the sports hall is operating at an uncomfortable level.

7.1 The number of visits met at Canterbury's sports halls in the weekly peak period in 2025 is 12,204.

7.2 The overall used capacity of Canterbury's sports halls in the weekly peak period is 45%. The low proportion of used capacity is due to the available supply being much greater than the demand in 2025.

7.3 **Key finding 7** is that Bay Sports Arena, Kingsmead Leisure Centre and Whitstable Sports Centre are estimated to be 100% utilised in the weekly peak period. Northgate Ward Community Centre is estimated to be uncomfortably full at 90% of capacity used at peak times.

Table 7.2: Weekly Peak Period Used Capacity of Sports Halls in 2025

Used Capacity	2025 (Run 1)		Provider	Peak Hours	Year Built	Year Refurb
Individual Sites	Proportion	Visits				
Bay Sports Arena	**100%**	2,496	Public	39	2011	
Kingsmead Leisure Centre	**100%**	1,472	Public	46	1996	2024
Canterbury Academy Campus	61%	1,342	Educational (3rd party)	46	2001	
Whitstable Sports Centre	**100%**	800	Educational (3rd party)	25	1983	2010
Canterbury College	43%	470	Educational (in-house)	46	2015	
Christ Church Sport Centre	39%	933	Educational (in-house)	37.8	2009	
Kent College	35%	326	Educational (in-house)	29	1989	2005
Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys	34%	197	Educational (in-house)	18	2005	
Spires Academy	53%	408	Educational (in-house)	24	2012	
St Anselm's Catholic School	21%	480	Educational (in-house)	24	1970	2003
St Edmund's School	35%	357	Educational (in-house)	20	1985	
The King's School Sports Centre	40%	441	Educational (in-house)	34.3	1990	2008
University of Kent Sports Centre	18%	994	Educational (in-house)	43	1965	2004
Northgate Ward Community Centre	**90%**	108	Other (pay & play)	5	1996	2009
Polo Farm Sports Club	29%	973	Other (sport club)	41.5	2015	
St Lawrence Ground	33%	407	Other (sport club)	39	1992	2004

Site Utilisation Factors

7.4 The estimated used capacity should be reviewed with the facility operator. There are several reasons for the variation in estimated used capacity by site. Often it is difficult to identify which of these reasons apply because several could be interacting simultaneously, but variation is generally caused by any of the following factors.

Type of site operator (public/educational/other)

- Public leisure centres have a 'draw effect' for the following reasons:
    - They have the greatest accessibility for both sports club and public use because they are available for daytime use, which is not possible at educational venues during term time
    - Public operators actively promote hall sports and physical activity participation, with a programme of use that reflects the activities customers wish to participate in and when they wish to participate
- Access to educational sports halls for community use will be determined by the policy of each educational provider and affects the hours available for community use:
    - Some schools and colleges actively promote community use, while others let their sports halls to sports clubs or community groups on a termly basis, or for shorter periods
    - At some venues there is little differentiation between educational and wider community use, with community access based on a membership system (classed as commercial)

Age of the hall and its 'attractiveness'

- To assess their comparative attractiveness to customers, all sports halls in the model are weighted to reflect their age, whether they have been modernised, and how actively managed they are (educational sites managed in-house have a lower weighting).
- The effect of refurbishment at a site decreases as the site gets older, and it becomes less attractive than a site built in the same year as the refurbishment.
- The quality and range of the offer are considered by customers. These features are of increasing importance to customers and affect participation levels. Desirable features include a modern sports hall with a sprung timber floor, good-quality lighting, modern changing rooms, and other facilities on site such as a studio and/or a gym. Residents may travel further to use a sports hall with this all-round offer rather than participate at the sports hall closest to where they live.

Location of demand and competition from other sites

- Where sports halls are located close together, the demand for these sites is shared between the venues, and this contributes to the level of used capacity at each.
- Conversely, where a sports hall is remotely located, it benefits from having no competition for the local demand.

Capacity

- When reviewing the estimated used capacity, it is important to consider the capacity of the site and not just the proportion in isolation. Centres with the same or similar proportions of used capacity can accommodate very different levels of demand.
- The hours when a site is available for community use affects its capacity at peak times.

Imported demand

- If residents in neighbouring local authority areas participate at a site in Canterbury, their usage becomes part of the used capacity of Canterbury's sports halls.

Highly Utilised Sites

7.5 The sites with highest proportion of capacity used are:

- Bay Sports Arena
  - Meets the most visits
  - Very attractive as opened in 2011
  - Only sports hall site in Herne Bay
  - Located in area of second highest demand
  - Availability can be increased by up to 7.0 hours in the weekly peak period at both halls to increase capacity and meet unmet demand
- Kingsmead Leisure Centre
  - Meets the second most visits
  - Very attractive as most recent sports hall to be refurbished in 2024
  - Only public leisure centre in Canterbury city
  - Located in the area of highest demand
  - No scope to increase availability and capacity in the weekly peak period
- Whitstable Sports Centre
  - Only sports hall site in Whitstable
  - Located in area of third highest demand
  - Attractive as actively managed by an external operator
  - Fourth smallest capacity
  - Availability can be increased by up to 16.0 hours in the weekly peak period to increase capacity and reduce the proportion of capacity used to a comfortable level
- Northgate Ward Community Centre
  - Meets the fewest visits
  - Has the smallest capacity

- Attractive as actively managed
- Located in the area of highest demand
- Availability can be increased by up to 41.0 hours in the weekly peak period to increase capacity and reduce the proportion of capacity used to a comfortable level

Imported Demand

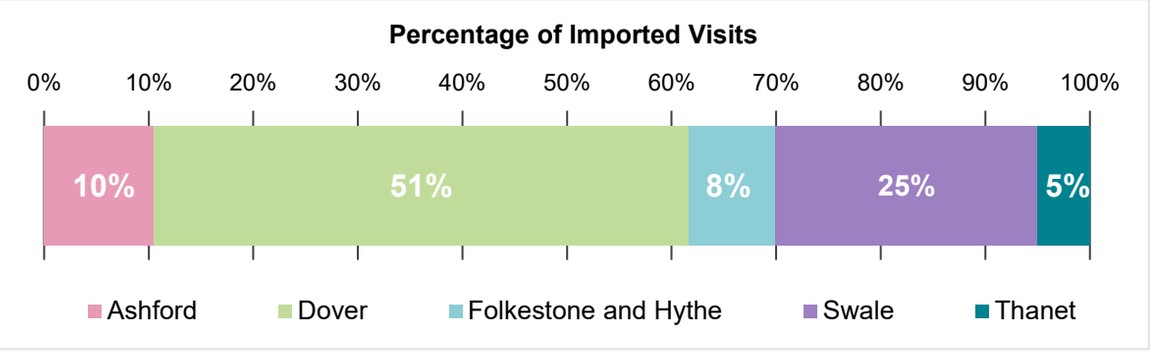
Table 7.3: Imported Demand for Sports Halls in Canterbury in 2025

Imported Demand	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Number of visits imported in weekly peak period	1,309
Visits imported as a % of used capacity	11%
Difference between visits imported and exported	574

7.6 In 2025, 1,309 visits from other local authorities are imported and met at Canterbury's sprots halls in the weekly peak period. This equates to 11% of the used capacity of Canterbury's sports halls.

7.7 Canterbury is a net importer of visits, importing 574 more visits in the weekly peak period than it exports.

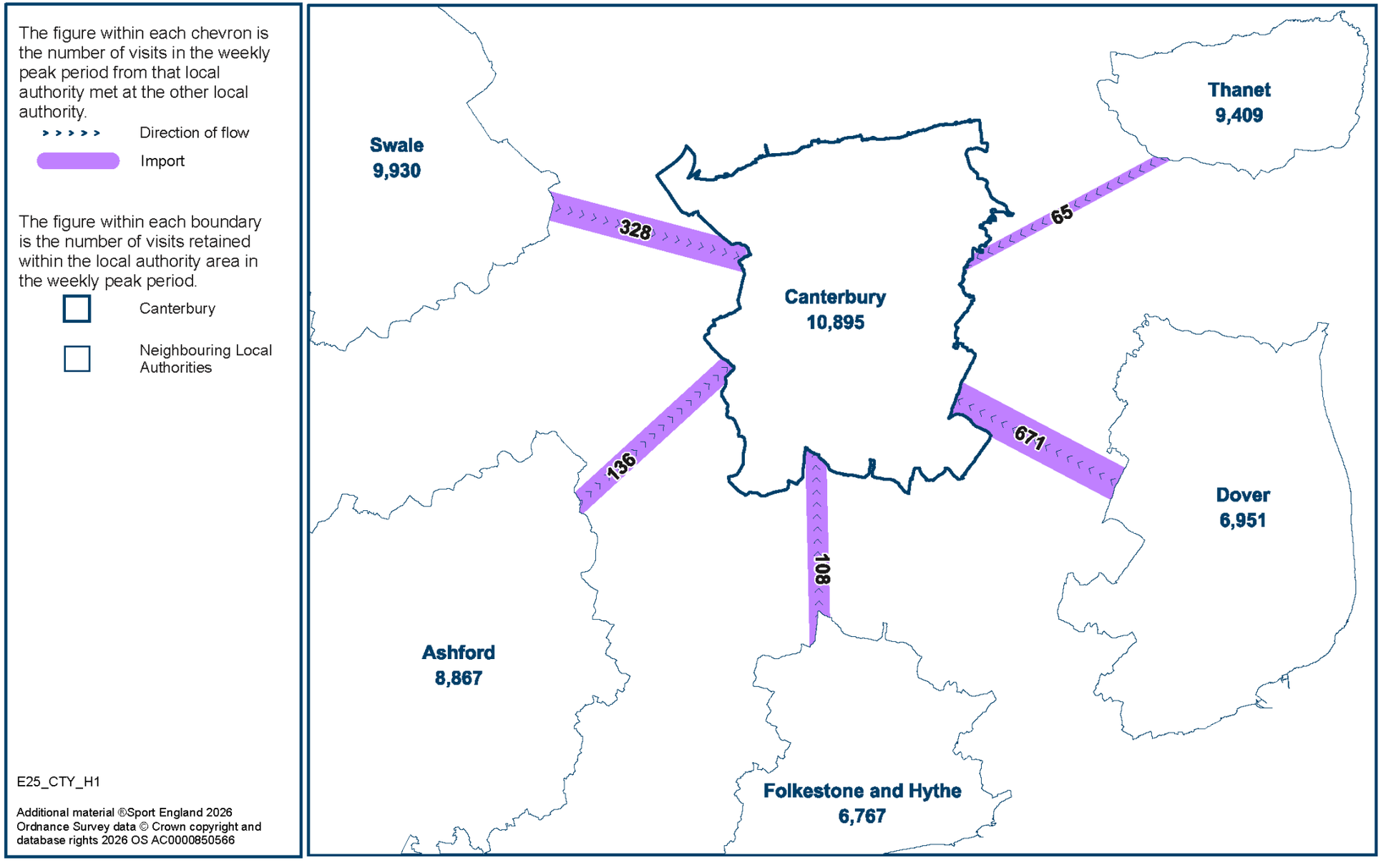
Chart 7.1: Proportion of Imported Visits by Origin in 2025



7.8 The majority of imported demand is from Dover, accounting for 51% of Canterbury's imported demand and 671 visits in the weekly peak period (see Map **7.1**). Demand is high Aylesham, which is on the border of Canterbury, and there are no sports halls nearby in Dover.

7.9 Imported demand from Swale is 25% of imported demand and accounts for 328 visits in the weekly peak period. The A2 provides access for some Swale residents to the extensive supply of sports halls in Canterbury city.

Map 7.1: Imported Demand for Sports Halls to Canterbury in 2025 (Run 1)



8 LOCAL SHARE OF FACILITIES

Table 8.1: Local Share of Sports Halls in Canterbury in 2025

Local Share	Run 1
Canterbury	2025
Local share of sports halls relative to demand in local area: <1 = poorer, >1 = better	0.98

Definition of local share – This helps show which areas have a better or worse share of facility provision. It considers the size, availability and quality of facilities, and travel modes. Local share is useful for looking at 'equity' of provision. Local share is the available capacity that people want to visit in an area (considering deprivation), divided by the demand for that capacity in the area. Local share decreases as facilities age.

8.1 Local share shows how access and share of sports halls differs across the local authority area, as follows:

- A value of 1 means that there is sufficient suitable supply reachable by the demand
- A value of less than 1 indicates a shortage of suitable supply that can be reached by the demand
- A value greater than 1 indicates a surplus of suitable supply that can be reached by the demand

8.2 Overall, local share identifies the areas of the local authority where the share of sports halls is better and worse. The intervention is to try and increase access for residents in the areas with the poorest access to sports halls.

8.3 In 2025 local share in Canterbury is 0.98 meaning that there is insufficient suitable provision that demand can access, based on the age, used capacity and operation of the sports halls. However, local share varies across Canterbury (see Map **8.1**).

Geographical Distribution of Local Share

8.4 Local share is best in the area around Littlebourne at 1.4 and 1.5 (medium blue squares). Demand and deprivation is very low in this area and residents can access Polo Farm Sports Club, which has the second largest capacity, is the joint newest sports hall and has low utilisation.

8.5 Local share is poorest in an extensive area of Herne Bay and Whitstable at 0.6 and 0.7 (yellow squares). Demand in these towns is the second and third highest and both Bay Sports Arena and Whitstable Sports Centre are fully utilised at peak times.

Comparative Measure of Provision

Table 8.2: Badminton Court Equivalents per 10,000 Population by Area in 2025

Courts per 10,000 Population	Run 1
Area	2025
Canterbury	**6.1**
Ashford	3.5
Dover	3.6
Folkestone and Hythe	2.5
Swale	3.4
Thanet	3.9
South East Region	**4.3**
England	**3.9**

8.6 A comparative measure of sports hall provision is the total number of badminton court equivalents per 10,000 population.

8.7 Canterbury has the best provision in the study area, at 6.1 courts per 10,000 population. This is higher than the regional average of 4.3 courts the national average of 3.9 courts.

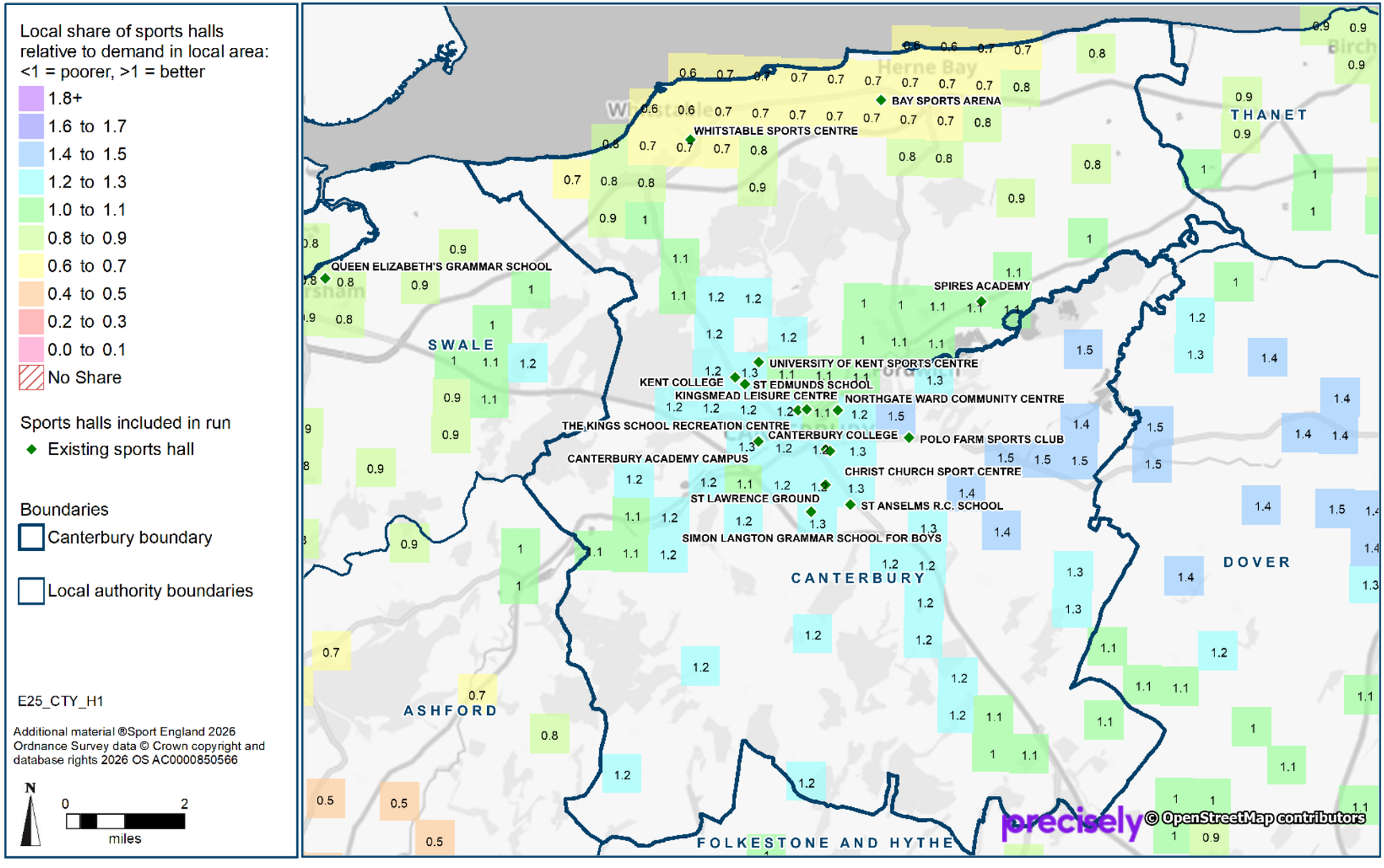
8.8 Folkestone and Hythe has the poorest provision at 2.5 courts per 10,000 population.

8.9 **The findings on badminton courts per 10,000 population are set out because some local authorities like to compare their quantitative provision with that elsewhere; however, this does not set a standard of provision, and should not be used as such.**

8.10 The supply and demand assessment for sports halls in Canterbury is based on the findings from the previous six headings analysed in this report.

SPORT ENGLAND

Map 8.1: Local Share of Sports Halls in 2025 (Run 1)



APPENDIX 1: FACILITIES EXCLUDED

The audit excludes facilities that are deemed to be either for private use, too small, closed or there is a lack of information, particularly relating to hours of use. The following facilities were deemed to fall under one or more of these categories and therefore excluded from the modelling:

Site	Facility Type	Reason for Exclusion
Barton Court Grammar School	Main	Private use
Barton Manor School	Main	Private use
Bishopsbourne Recreation Ground	Activity	Principal hall too small
Blean Village Hall	Activity	Principal hall too small
Blenheim Stables	Activity	Closed
Chartham Parish Council Village Hall	Activity	Principal hall too small
Chaucer Technology School	Main Activity	Closed Closed
Hampton School	Activity	Principal hall too small
Herne Bay Judo Club	Activity	Closed
Herne Community Centre	Activity	Principal hall too small
Herne Bay Table Tennis Club	Activity	Principal hall too small
Junior King's School	Main	Private use
Pier Sports Centre	Main	Closed
Prince of Wales Youth Club	Activity	Principal hall too small
Rough Common Village Hall	Activity	Principal hall too small
Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School	Main Activity	Closed Private use
Spires Academy	Main	Closed
St Peters Church Hall	Activity	Principal hall too small
The Archbishop’s School	Activity x 2	Private use
The Orchard School	Activity	Private use
Tyler Hill Memorial Hall	Activity	Principal hall too small
Water Meadows Primary School	Activity	Private use

APPENDIX 2: FACILITIES IN NEIGHBOURING LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS INCLUDED IN THE ASSESSMENT

Site	Provider	Facility Type	Dimensions (m)	Area (sqm)	Year Built	Year Refurb
Ashford						
Highworth Grammar School	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	2019	
Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre	Educational (in-house)	6-court	33 x 27	891	2000	
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
Stour Centre	Public	8-court	40 x 34.5	1380	1975	2000
Tenterden Leisure Centre	Public	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	1991	2014
The John Wallis C Of E Academy	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	2005	
The North School	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	1979	2008
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
The Norton Knatchbull School	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	2007	
		Activity	17 x 9	153		
Towers School & Sixth Form Centre	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	1974	
		3-court	27 x 18	486		
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
Dover						
Astor College For The Arts	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	1974	2004
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
Baypoint Fitness and Sports	Commercial	4-court	33 x 18	594	1965	2003
Deal Leisure Centre	Public	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	2002	
Dover Christ Church Academy	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	2003	2016
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
Dover College	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	1978	
Dover District Leisure Centre	Public	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	2019	
Goodwin Academy	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	1948	2002
Sandwich Leisure Centre	Public	4-court	33 x 18	594	2004	
Sir Roger Manwoods School	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 19	627	1999	
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
Folkestone and Hythe						
Brockhill Park Performing Arts College	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	1987	2000
Folkestone Academy	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	1955	
		4-court	33 x 18	594		
Hawkinge Community Centre	Other (pay & play)	3-court	27 x 20	540	2003	
		Activity	20 x 13	260		
The Marsh Academy Leisure Centre	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	2001	
Three Hills Sports Park	Public	6-court	34.5 x 27	932	2013	

Swale						
Borden Grammar School	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	2023	
		Activity	24 x 10	240		
Ekc Sheppey Secondary	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	2013	
Fulston Manor School	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	1977	
		3-court	27 x 18	486		
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
Leigh Academy Minster	Educational (in-house)	6-court	34.5 x 27	932	2013	
Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School	Educational (in-house)	4-court	37 x 18	666	2023	
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
Sheppey Leisure Complex	Public	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	1980	2002
Swallows Leisure Centre	Public	6-court	34.5 x 27	932	1989	2005
The Abbey School	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	2006	2010
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
Warden Bay Community Centre	Public	3-court	27 x 18	486	2003	
Thanet						
Dane Court Grammar School	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	2010	
Hartsdown Academy	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	2002	2008
Hartsdown Leisure Centre	Public	4-court	33 x 18	594	1984	2010
King Ethelbert School	Educational (in-house)	6-court	34.5 x 27	932	2007	
Ramsgate Leisure Centre	Public	6-court	34.5 x 27	932	2000	
St Georges C Of E School	Educational (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	2010	
		Activity	17 x 9	153		
St Lawrence College	Educational (in-house)	5-court	40.6 x 21.35	867	2010	
The Royal Harbour Academy (Lower Site)	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	2007	
		Activity	18 x 10	180		
The Royal Harbour Academy (Upper Site)	Educational (in-house)	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	1985	2004
		4-court	34.5 x 20	690		
Ursuline College	Educational (in-house)	6-court	34 x 27	918	2007	

APPENDIX 3: MODEL DESCRIPTION, INCLUSION CRITERIA AND MODEL PARAMETERS

Included within this Appendix are the following:

- Model Description
- Facility Inclusion Criteria
- Model Parameters

Model Description

1 Background

1.1 The Facilities Planning Model (FPM) is a computer-based supply/demand model, which has been developed by Edinburgh University in conjunction with sportscotland and Sport England since the 1980s.

1.2 The model is a tool for helping to assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities in an area. It is currently applicable for use in assessing the provision of the following facilities that Sport England holds substantial demand data for:

- sports halls
- swimming pools
- indoor bowls centres
- artificial grass pitches (AGPs)

2 Use of FPM

2.1 The FPM is one of Sport England's principal tools and has been developed as a means for:

- Assessing the requirements for different types of community sports facilities on a local, regional and national scale.
- Helping local authorities to determine an adequate level of sports facility provision to meet their local needs.
- Helping to identify strategic gaps in the provision of sports facilities.
- Comparing alternative options for planned provision, taking account of changes in demand and supply. This includes testing the impact of opening, relocating and closing facilities, and the likely impact of population changes on the need for sports facilities.

2.2 The FPM has been used in the assessment of Lottery funding bids for community facilities and as a principal planning tool to assist local authorities in planning for the provision of community sports facilities.

3 How the Model Works

3.1 In its simplest form, the model seeks to assess whether the capacity of existing facilities for a particular sport is capable of meeting local demand for that sport, considering how far people are prepared to travel to such a facility.

3.2 In order to do this, the model compares the capacity of facilities (supply) within an area against the demand for that facility from the local population, similar to other social gravity models.

3.3 To do this, the FPM converts both demand (in terms of people) and supply (facilities) into a single comparable unit. This unit is 'visits in the weekly peak period'. Once converted, demand and supply can be compared.

3.4 The FPM uses a set of parameters to define how facilities are used and by whom. These parameters are primarily derived from a combination of data, including actual user surveys from a range of sites across the country in areas of good supply, together with participation survey data. These surveys provide core information on the profile of users such as their age and gender, how often they visit, the distance travelled, duration of stay, as well as information on the facilities themselves such as programming, peak times of use and capacity of facilities.

3.5 This survey information is combined with other data sources to provide a set of model parameters for each facility type. The original core user data for halls and pools comes from the National Halls and Pools survey undertaken in 1996. This data previously formed the basis for the National Benchmarking Service. For AGPs, the core data used comes from the user survey of AGPs carried out in 2005/06 jointly with sportscotland.

3.6 User survey data from the National Benchmarking Service and other appropriate sources are used to update the model's parameters on a regular basis. The parameters are set out at the end of the document, and the main data sources analysed are:

- Active Lives:
    - For the adult survey, this data is collected by an online survey or paper questionnaire on behalf of Sport England. Each annual sample includes approximately 175,000 people and covers the full age/gender range. Detailed questions are asked about over 200 separate sport categories in terms of participation and frequency.
    - For the children and young people survey, this data is collected through schools, with up to three mixed ability classes in up to three randomly chosen year groups completing an online survey.
- National Benchmarking Service (now ceased):
    - This was a centre-based survey whose primary purpose was to enable centres to benchmark themselves against other centres. Sample interviews were conducted on site. The number of people surveyed varied by year depending on how many centres took part. Approximately 10,000 swimmers and 3,500 sports hall users were surveyed per year. This data was used for journey

times, establishing proportions of particular activities in different hall types, the duration of activities and the time of activity (peak period).

- Moving Communities Customer Experience Survey:
  - Annual online survey distributed by participating local authorities and operators via email. Email invites are sent to any member or customer on their database who has attended their leisure centre in the last 3 months. The results inform the travel mode that residents use to access facilities.
- Scottish Health:
  - Annual survey of approximately 6,600 people (just under 5,000 adults). This data is primarily used to assess participation, frequency and activity duration.

3.7 Other data is used where available. For example, the following data sources are among those that have been used to cross-check results:

- Children's Participation in Culture and Sport, Scottish Government, 2008
- Young People's Participation in Sport, Sports Council for Wales, 2009
- Health and Social Care Information Centre, Lifestyle Statistics, 2012
- Young People and Sport, Sport England, 2002
- Data from Angus Council, 2013/14
- National Pools and Halls Survey, 1996
  - This survey was used to obtain capacities per sports hall for differing sport types for programming data.

4 Calculating Demand

4.1 Demand is calculated by applying the user information from the parameters, as referred to above, to the population[1]. This produces the number of visits for that facility that will be demanded by the population.

4.2 Depending on the age and gender composition of the population, this will affect the number of visits an area will generate. In order to reflect the different population profiles of the country, the FPM calculates demand based on the smallest census groupings. These are output areas (OAs)[2].

4.3 The use of OAs in the calculation of demand ensures that the FPM is able to reflect and portray differences in demand in areas at the most sensitive level based on available census

[1] For example, it is estimated that 7.72% of 16-24 year old males will demand to use an AGP 1.67 times a week. This calculation is done separately for the 12 age/gender groupings.
[2] Census OAs are the smallest grouping of census population data and provide the population information on which the FPM's demand parameters are applied. A demand figure can then be calculated for each OA based on the population profile. There are over 178,600 OAs in England. An OA has a target value of 125 households per OA.

information. Each OA used is given a demand value in visits in the weekly peak period by the FPM.

5 Calculating Supply Capacity

5.1 A facility's capacity varies depending on the following factors:

- Its size (area of pool or hall, number of pitches or rinks)
- How many hours the facility is available for use by the community in the weekly peak period
- How many visits can be accommodated by the facility at any one time (pools = 1 user/6 sqm, main halls/barns = 8 users/court, activity halls/studios = 15 users/court, AGPs = 28 users/pitch, indoor bowls = 6 users/rink)

5.2 The FPM calculates the maximum number of visits that a facility can accommodate, which gives it a theoretical capacity in visits in the weekly peak period.

5.3 Based on travel time information (see Travel Time section) taken from the user surveys, the FPM then calculates how much demand would be met by the facility, having regard to its capacity and how much demand can travel to the facility. The FPM includes an important feature of spatial interaction. This feature takes account of the location and capacity of all the facilities, having regard to their access and the size of demand, and assesses whether the facilities are in the right place to meet the demand.

5.4 It is important to note that the FPM does not simply add up the total demand within an area and compare that to the total supply within the same area. This approach would not take account of the spatial aspect of supply against demand in a particular area. For example, if an area has a total demand for five facilities and there are currently six facilities within the area, it would be too simplistic to conclude that there is an over-supply of one facility as this approach would not take account of whether the five facilities are in the correct location for local people to use them within that area. It may be that all the facilities are in one part of the local authority area, leaving other areas under-provided. An assessment of this kind would not reflect the true picture of provision. The FPM is able to assess supply and demand within an area based on the needs of the population within that area.

5.5 In making calculations as to supply and demand, visits made to sports facilities are not artificially restricted or calculated by reference to administrative boundaries, such as local authority areas. Users are generally expected to use their closest facility. The FPM reflects this through analysing the location of demand against the location of facilities, allowing for cross-boundary movement of visits. For example, if a facility is on the boundary of a local authority, users will generally be expected to come from the population living close to the facility, but who may be in a neighbouring authority.

6 Calculating the Capacity of Sports Halls – Badminton Court Equivalents

6.1 The capacity of sports halls is calculated in the same way as described above, with each sports hall site having a capacity in visits in the weekly peak period. In order for this capacity to be meaningful, these visits are converted into the equivalent of main hall badminton

courts. This 'court' figure is often mistakenly read as being the same as the number of 'marked courts' at the sports halls in the Active Places data, but it is not the same. There will usually be a difference between this figure and the number of 'marked courts' in Active Places.

6.2 The reason for this is that the badminton court equivalents are of all the main and activity halls' capacities; this is calculated based on hall size (area) and whether it is a main hall or an activity hall. This gives a more accurate reflection of the overall capacity of the halls than simply using the 'marked courts' figure, for two reasons:

- In calculating the capacity of halls, the model uses a different at-one-time parameter for main halls and for activity halls. Activity halls have a greater at-one-time capacity than main halls. Marked courts can sometimes not properly reflect the size of the actual main hall. For example, a hall may be marked out with four courts, when it has space for three courts. As the model uses the 'courts' as a unit of size, it is important that the hall's capacity is included as a 'three-court unit' rather than a 'four-court unit'.
- It is often difficult to visualise how much hall space there is when expressed as visits in the weekly peak period. To make things more meaningful, this capacity is converted back into badminton court equivalents and is noted in the output tables as hall space in courts.

7 Facility Attractiveness – for Halls and Pools Only

7.1 Not all facilities are the same, and users will find certain facilities more attractive to use than others. The model attempts to reflect this by introducing an attractiveness weighting factor, which affects the way visits are distributed between facilities. Attractiveness, however, is very subjective. Currently weightings are only used for sports hall and swimming pool modelling.

7.2 Attractiveness weightings are based on the following:

- Age and refurbishment weighting (pools and halls): The older a facility is, the less attractive it will be to users. It is recognised that this is a general assumption and that there may be examples where older facilities are more attractive than newly built ones due to excellent local management, programming and sports development. Additionally, the date of any significant refurbishment is also included within the weighting factor; however, here attractiveness is set lower than a new build of the same year. It is assumed that a refurbishment that is older than 20 years will have a minimal impact on the facility's attractiveness. The information on year built/refurbished is taken from Active Places. A graduated curve is used to allocate the attractiveness weighting by year. This curve levels off at 70 years old with a 20% weighting. The refurbishment weighting is slightly lower than the new built year equivalent.
- Management and ownership weighting (halls only): Due to the large number of halls being provided by the education sector, an assumption is made that these halls will generally not provide as balanced a programme as halls run by local authorities, trusts, etc, with school halls more likely to be used by teams and groups through block booking. A less balanced programme is assumed to be less attractive to a general

pay-and-play user than a standard local authority leisure centre sports hall with a wider range of activities on offer.

7.3 To reflect this, two weighting curves are used:

- High weighted curve – includes non-education management (third party) and a more balanced programme, therefore more attractive
- Lower weighted curve – includes educational halls managed in-house, therefore less attractive

7.4 Commercial facilities (halls and pools): While there are relatively few sports halls provided by the commercial sector, an additional weighting factor is incorporated within the model to reflect the cost element often associated with commercial facilities. For each population OA, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score is used to limit whether people will use commercial facilities. The assumption is that the higher the IMD score (less affluence), the less likely the population of the OA would choose to go to a commercial facility.

7.5 The English Indices of Deprivation 2019, produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, measure relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 lower super output areas in England. IMD is an overall relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their relative weights.

8 Used Capacity

8.1 Used capacity refers to how much of a facility's theoretical capacity is being used. At first this can appear to be unrealistically low, with local authority figures being in the 50-60% region. Without any further explanation, it would appear that facilities are half empty. The key point is not to see a facility's theoretical maximum capacity (100%) as being an optimum position. In practice this would mean that a facility would need to be completely full every hour it was open during the peak period. This would be both unrealistic from an operational perspective and undesirable from a user's perspective, as the facility would be completely full.

8.2 For example, a 25m four-lane pool has a theoretical capacity of 2,260 visits per week during a 52.5-hour peak period. Usage of a pool will vary throughout the evening, with some sessions being busier than others through programming, such as an aqua aerobics session between 19:00 and 20:00 and lane swimming between 20:00 and 21:00 (see table below). Other sessions will be quieter, such as between 21:00 and 22:00. This pattern of use would mean a total of 143 swims taking place. However, the pool's maximum theoretical capacity is 264 visits throughout the evening. In this instance the pool's used capacity for the evening would be 54%.

Visits per hour	16:00-17:00	17:00-18:00	18:00-19:00	19:00-20:00	20:00-21:00	21:00-22:00	Total visits for the evening
Theoretical maximum capacity	44	44	44	44	44	44	264
Actual usage	8	30	35	50	15	5	143
% of capacity used	18%	68%	80%	114%	34%	11%	54%

9 Comfort Factor – Halls and Pools

9.1 If the facilities were full to their theoretical capacity, there would simply not be the space to undertake the activity comfortably. In addition, there is a need to take account of a range of activities taking place which have different numbers of users; for example, aqua aerobics will have significantly more participants than lane swimming sessions. Additionally, there may be times and sessions that, while being within the peak period, are less busy and so will have fewer users.

9.2 To account for these factors the notion of a 'comfort factor' is applied within the model. For swimming pools, 70%, and for sports halls, 80%, of their theoretical capacity is considered as indicating where a facility starts to become uncomfortably busy. This should be seen only as a guide to help flag when facilities are becoming busier, rather than as a 'hard threshold'.

9.3 The comfort factor is also used to increase the capacity needed to comfortably meet unmet demand. If this comfort factor is not applied, then any facilities provided will be operating at their maximum theoretical capacity, which is not desirable as previously noted.

9.4 The comfort factor is not applied to AGPs due to the fact they are predominantly used by teams that have a set number of players, therefore, the notion of having a 'less busy' pitch is not applicable.

10 Travel Times

10.1 The model includes three different modes of travel:

- driving
- walking and wheeling
- public transport and cycling

10.2 Car access is also considered. In areas where there is less access to a car, the model reduces the number of visits made by car and increases those made on foot for shorter journeys and public transport for longer journeys.

10.3 Overall, surveys have shown that most visits to swimming pools, sports halls and AGPs are made by driving, with a significant minority of visits to facilities being made on foot.

Facility	Driving	Walking	Public Transport	Cycling
Swimming Pool	74%	18%	4%	4%
Sports Hall	76%	19%	2%	3%
AGP Combined AGP Football AGP Hockey	79% 74% 97%	18% 22% 2%	3% 4% 1%	unknown

10.4 The model includes a distance decay function where the further a user is from a facility, the less likely they will travel. Set out below is the survey data with the percentage of visits made

within each of the travel times. This shows that almost 90% of all visits, both by car and on foot, are made within 20 minutes. Hence, 20 minutes is often used as a rule of thumb for the coverage for sports halls and swimming pools.

Minutes	Swimming Pools		Sport Halls	
	Drive	Walk	Drive	Walk
0-10	56%	53%	54%	55%
11-20	35%	34%	36%	32%
21-30	7%	10%	7%	10%
31-45	2%	2%	2%	3%

10.5 For AGPs, there is a similar pattern to halls and pools, with hockey users observed as travelling slightly further (89% travel up to 30 minutes). Therefore, a 20-minute travel time can also be used for combined and football, and 30 minutes for hockey.

Minutes	AGP Combined		AGP Football		AGP Hockey	
	Drive	Walk	Drive	Walk	Drive	Walk
0-10	28%	38%	30%	32%	21%	60%
10-20	57%	48%	61%	50%	42%	40%
20-40	14%	12%	9%	15%	31%	0%

NOTE: These are approximate figures and should only be used as a guide

10.6 Ordnance Survey's Multi-Modal Network with average speed data is used to calculate the off-peak drive times between facilities and the population, observing any one-way and turn restrictions that apply. These travel times have been validated against national survey work, and therefore are based on the actual travel patterns of users.

10.7 The network is also used to calculate walk times along paths and roads, excluding motorways and trunk roads. A standard walking speed of 3 mph is used for all journeys.

10.8 Due to the complexity of public transport timetables, public transport travel times in the model are assumed to be twice as long as driving times.

10.9 A cycling speed of 12 mph is used for roads and shared use cycleways, which is approximately half the average speed of driving in urban areas. A speed of 7.5 mph is used for tracks and off-road travel.

Facility Inclusion Criteria

Sports Halls

The following inclusion criteria were used for this analysis.

- Include all operational sports halls available for community use, ie, pay-and-play, membership, sports club/community association.
- Exclude all halls not available for community use, ie, private use.
- Exclude all halls where the main hall is less than 3 courts in size.
- Include all 'planned', 'under construction', and 'temporarily closed' facilities only where all data is available for inclusion.
- Where opening times are missing, availability is included based on similar facility types.
- Where the year built is missing, assume date 1975[3].

Facilities over the border in Wales and Scotland included, as supplied by sportscotland and Sport Wales.

[3] Choosing a date in the mid-1970s ensures that the facility is included, while not overestimating its impact within the run.

Model Parameters

Sports Halls Parameters

<table>
<tr><td>At-one-time Capacity</td><td>32 users per 4-court hall
15 users per 144 square meters of activity hall</td></tr>
<tr><td>Coverage Maps</td><td>Car: 20 minutes
Walking: 1.6 km
Public transport: 20 minutes at about half the speed of a car

NOTE: Travel times are indicative, within the context of a distance decay function of the model</td></tr>
<tr><td>Duration</td><td>60 minutes</td></tr>
<tr><td>Percentage Participation

Frequency per Week</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th>Age</th><th>0-15</th><th>16-24</th><th>25-34</th><th>35-44</th><th>45-59</th><th>60-79</th></tr>
<tr><td>Male</td><td>21.7%</td><td>16.3%</td><td>12.9%</td><td>10.8%</td><td>9.2%</td><td>6.4%</td></tr>
<tr><td>Female</td><td>24.7%</td><td>16.8%</td><td>15.1%</td><td>13.6%</td><td>13.5%</td><td>10.7%</td></tr>
</table>
<table>
<tr><th>Age</th><th>0-15</th><th>16-24</th><th>25-34</th><th>35-44</th><th>45-59</th><th>60-79</th></tr>
<tr><td>Male</td><td>0.60</td><td>0.96</td><td>0.88</td><td>0.80</td><td>0.94</td><td>1.02</td></tr>
<tr><td>Female</td><td>0.65</td><td>1.20</td><td>1.14</td><td>1.01</td><td>1.11</td><td>0.96</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Peak Period

Proportion in Peak Period</td><td>Weekday: 9:00 to 10:00, 17:00 to 22:00
Weekend: 08:00 to 16:00
Total: 46 hours

62%</td></tr>
</table>


SPORT
ENGLAND

Cabinet

7 December 2026

Subject: Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy (adoption)

Director and Head of Service:

Marie Royle, Director of People

Tracy Chambers, Head of Housing and Community

Officer:

Gary Peskett, Housing Strategy Manager

Cabinet Member:
Pip Hazelton, Cabinet Member for Housing

Key or Non Key decision: Key

Decision Issues:

These matters are within the authority of the Cabinet

Is any of the information exempt from publication:

This report is open to the public.

CCC ward(s): All

Summary and purpose of the report:

The draft Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy are a refresh of the documents adopted by the council on 7 December 2020. The Tenancy Strategy is a statutory requirement and the Tenancy Policy is required by the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.

Much of the core content has been carried over from the 2020 documents because the basic legal framework is unchanged. Alterations or additions reflect current national housing policy, regulation and council policy.

Consultation was undertaken on the principles of the draft Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy. The consultations ran in tandem for 12 weeks from 15 June to 7 September 2026.

On 8 October 2026 Overview Committee discussed the Draft Tenancy Strategy, the draft Tenancy Policy and the results of the consultation.

The text of both documents has been amended to reflect issues raised by the consultation and by Overview Committee, especially in relation to survivors of domestic abuse, tenancy sustainment, sustainable communities, tenant engagement and consultation. No significant changes have been made to the statutory elements of the text.

To Resolve:

That the Draft Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy be adopted.

Next stage in process:

Upload onto the council's website.

Raise staff awareness and address any training needs that may occur.

1. Introduction

The council has a statutory duty to produce a Tenancy Strategy to guide Registered Providers (RPs) in the development of tenancy policies for their housing stock in the district.

The draft Tenancy Policy is the council’s response as an RP to the Tenancy Strategy.

The public consultations for the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy ran in tandem for 12 weeks from 15 June to 7 September.

Overview Committee provided feedback on 8 October 2026 and the text of both documents has been amended to reflect the main issues that emerged. No significant changes were needed to the statutory elements of the text.

2. Detail

Tenancy Strategy

The Tenancy Strategy (Appendix 3) is written from the council’s strategic perspective as the Local Housing Authority, rather than as a social housing landlord, and is primarily aimed at RPs and organisations that offer housing advice and support, such as Canterbury Housing Advice Centre and Citizens' Advice Bureau.

RPs are social housing landlords and include the City Council and housing associations, not-for-profit and for-profit organisations.

The Localism Act 2011, requires the Tenancy Strategy to address specific matters which RPs should consider when formulating tenancy policies for their residential properties:

a) The types of tenancies granted

b) The circumstances in which a particular type of tenancy is granted

c) Where tenancies are granted for a specified term, the lengths of the terms granted

d) The circumstances in which a further tenancy is granted where an existing tenancy is ending.

Much of the core text relating to tenancies and landlord and tenant law is largely unchanged from December 2020 because there have been few legislative changes affecting social housing tenancies. Although, it does raise the prospect of changes in October 2027 to social housing Assured Shorthold Tenancies issued by RPs (not the council) set out in the Renters' Rights Act.

The Tenancy Strategy expects RPs to publish clear and accessible policies to inform their tenants and staff of their approach to tenancy management, based on the regulatory standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing. The council hopes that RPs will take note of the draft Tenancy Strategy when formulating their Tenancy Policies but has no powers to force them to do so.

Tenancy Policy

The draft Tenancy Policy (Appendix 4) is the council's response as an RP to the Tenancy Strategy. The Localism Act expects the council to have a Tenancy Policy, but it is not a statutory requirement. It is, however, a regulatory requirement under the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards.

The draft Tenancy Policy explains the council's approach to the types of tenancy it grants, the principles that guide how tenancies are managed, and how the council addresses the regulatory requirements of the Consumer Standards. It is aimed at council officers, councillors, tenants and groups that offer advice and support.

This policy sets out principles, not operational procedures, which are contained in a series of supporting policies, procedures and the Tenant Handbook.

The core text relating to landlord and tenant law is largely unchanged from December 2020 because there have been no legislative changes affecting council tenancies. Council tenancies are not expected to be affected by the Renters' Rights Act.

Some sections of both draft documents have been edited to improve the flow of the text and amended to reflect matters raised by the consultation and by Overview Committee, especially in relation to survivors of domestic abuse, tenancy sustainment, sustainable communities, tenant engagement and a refreshed approach to consultation. Appendix 5 summarises the amendments.

3. Relevant Council policy, strategies or budgetary documents

Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028

Housing strategy 2026 to 2030

Housing Asset Management Strategy 2025 to 2029

Housing allocations policy

Anti-social behaviour policy

Neighbourhood noise policy statement

Compensation and redress policy

Consumer Standard Improvement Plan June 2026

HRA rent setting policy 2020

Draft income collection and arrears management policy

Tenant Engagement Strategy 2026 to 2030,

Tenant Engagement Framework (2025 to 2028)

Tenant panels' role in governance

Tenancy strategy 2020

Tenancy policy 2020

Your tenancy agreement | Canterbury City Council

Canterbury City Council tenant handbook

4. Consultation planned or undertaken

(a) General consultations

The consultations for the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy ran in tandem for 12 weeks

from 15 June to 7 September 2026.

Approximately 600 invitations were sent to organisations, stakeholder groups, RPs, neighbouring local authorities, representatives of the property management and construction industries, statutory consultees, the voluntary sector and local representative groups and was available on the council's website.

Disappointingly, only three responses were received. The report on the results of the consultation for the Tenancy Strategy is Appendix 6 and for the Tenancy Policy is Appendix 7.

(b) Tenant engagement feedback

The Residents Engagement Panel was consulted on 16 June 2026 and its feedback is in Appendix 7.

Overview Committee discussed this matter on 8 October following the public consultation. Their feedback is contained in the Committee minutes

The feedback and consultation responses do not propose amendments to the statutory requirements relating to:

a) The types of tenancies granted

b) The circumstances in which a particular type of tenancy is granted

c) Where tenancies are granted for a specified term, the lengths of the terms granted

d) The circumstances in which a further tenancy is granted; where an existing tenancy is ending.

However, both draft documents have been amended and enhanced to reflect points raised in the consultation and by Overview Committee in relation to survivors of domestic abuse, tenancy sustainment, sustainable communities, tenant engagement and a revitalised approach to consultation. Appendix 5 summarises the amendments.

5. Options available with reasons for suitability

1. Adopt the Draft Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy (recommended). The documents update the 2020 framework to reflect current housing policy and statutory and regulatory requirements, incorporating consultation and Overview Committee feedback on matters including domestic abuse, tenancy sustainment and tenant engagement.

2. Require amendments to the Draft Tenancy Strategy and/or Tenancy Policy before adoption if Cabinet identifies specific matters that need further attention.

3. Do not adopt the Draft Tenancy Strategy and/or Tenancy Policy, leaving the council reliant on the 2020 documents. This is the least suitable option because it would omit the proposed policy updates and consultation improvements, while the council’s statutory and regulatory obligations would remain.

6. Reasons for supporting option recommended, with risk assessment

Option 1 is recommended because the council is required to have a Tenancy Strategy by the Localism Act and a Tenancy Policy is a regulatory requirement. The draft documents reflect current legislation, guidance and regulation relating to social housing tenancies,

the rights and responsibilities of social landlords and their tenants.

7. Implications

(a) Financial

None identified.

(b) Legal

The Tenancy Strategy is a requirement of the Localism Act and the Tenancy Policy is required by the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards. The draft Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy explain the legal rights and responsibilities of social landlords and their tenants, which are contained in relevant legislation.

(c) Equalities

The draft Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy reflect landlord and tenant law, the council's tenancy agreement and the Housing Allocations Scheme 2023. They are based on objective criteria that apply to all social housing tenants and seek to ensure equality of treatment and eliminate discrimination and harassment.

The text has been amended to provide greater focus on the survivors of domestic abuse, tenancy sustainment, sustainable communities, tenant engagement and a revitalised approach to consultation.

(d) Environmental including carbon emissions and biodiversity

It is expected that the draft Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy will have a neutral impact on carbon emissions and biodiversity.

Contact Officer: Gary Peskett, Housing Strategy Manager

Background documents and appendices

Appendix 1 - Climate Change Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 3 - Draft Tenancy Strategy

Appendix 4 - Draft Tenancy Policy

Appendix 5 - Summary of amendments to the text

Appendix 6 - Consultation report Tenancy Strategy

Appendix 7 - Consultation report Tenancy Policy and Residents Engagement Panel

Additional document(s) containing information exempt from publication:

No

Appendix 1 Climate Change Impact Assessment (Checklist)

Please provide an assessment of the impact of the proposal under each of the headings below. If none, please say so.

1. **Climate Change impacts**

Topic	**Impact of proposal** Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact** If you have any relevant data, please include that in the explanation and reference the source.	**Mitigation**
Impact on the council's target of being carbon neutral by 2030 This applies to emissions of carbon dioxide as a direct result of our **own** activities and services. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals	Neutral	No impact is anticipated	n/a
Impact on carbon emissions in the Canterbury district This applies to the carbon dioxide emissions in the district as a result of your proposal. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals.	Neutral	No impact is anticipated	n/a
Emission of other climate changing gases including methane, CFCs, nitrous oxide	Neutral	No impact is anticipated	n/a

2. Adaptation to climate change - Impact on our resilience to the effects of climate change

The greatest risks posed by climate change to the UK are:

- Flooding and coastal changes including erosion from extreme events
- Risks to health caused by high temperatures
- Water shortages and drought

- Risk to natural environments & services - landscape, wildlife, pollinators, timber etc
- Risk to food production & trade
- Emergence of new pests and diseases affecting people, plants & animals

What impact do your proposals have on our ability to resist or tackle these problems in the future?

Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact**	**Mitigation**
Neutral	No impact is anticipated	n/a

3. Further assessment work

Is a further more detailed assessment required at a later stage of this proposal? If yes, please give a brief description

No.

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

Date of initial assessment	21 September 2026
Division	Housing and Community
Proposal to be assessed	Draft Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy
New or existing policy or function?	Existing
External (i.e. public-facing) or internal?	External
Statutory or non-statutory?	Statutory
Your name	Gary Peskett
Your job title	Housing Strategy Manager
Your contact telephone number	01227910574
Decision maker (e.g.Community Committee, Management Team etc.)	Cabinet
Estimated proposal deadline	7 December 2026

Please outline your proposal, including: ● Aims and objectives ● Key actions ● Expected outcomes ● Who will be affected and how ● How many people will be affected	The council has a statutory duty to produce a Tenancy Strategy to guide Registered Providers (RPs) in the development of tenancy policies for their housing stock in the district. The draft Tenancy Policy is the council's response as an RP to the Tenancy Strategy. The Tenancy Strategy is written from the council's strategic perspective as the Local Housing Authority, not as a social housing landlord, and is primarily aimed at RPs and organisations that offer housing advice and support, such as Canterbury Housing Advice Centre and Citizens' Advice Bureau. The Localism Act 2011, requires the Tenancy Strategy to address specific matters which RPs should consider when formulating tenancy policies for their own properties: a) The types of tenancies granted b) The circumstances in which a particular type of tenancy is granted c) Where tenancies are granted for a specified term, the lengths of the terms granted d) The circumstances in which a further tenancy is granted; where an existing tenancy is ending. The draft Tenancy Policy is the council's response as an RP to the Tenancy Strategy and

	explains the Council's approach to the types of tenancy it grants, the principles that guide how tenancies are managed, and how the Council meets its regulatory duties under the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards. It is aimed at council officers, councillors, tenants and groups that offer advice and support.
What relevant data or information is currently available about the customers who may use this service or could be affected? Please give details; for example "x% of customers are female" or "x% of customers are aged over 60"	The council holds extensive information on its 5,000 tenants.

Is the decision relevant to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, which are listed below? Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's PSED Technical Guidance		
Aim	Yes/No	Explanation
Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes	The Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy reflect landlord and tenant law and the tenancy agreement, which prohibit certain behaviours, such as anti-social behaviour.
Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes	All council tenants share the same rights and responsibilities under statute. Access to the council's rented homes is controlled by objective criteria contained in the Housing Allocations Scheme 2023, which is a related policy document.
Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No	

Assess the relevance of the proposal to people with different protected characteristics, and assess the impact of the proposal on people with different protected characteristics. Your explanation should make it clear who the assessment applies to within each protected characteristic. For example, a proposal may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.			
Protected characteristic	Relevance to proposal High/ Medium/ Low/None	Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	Explanation

Age	None	Neutral	The Tenancy Strategy applies to all Registered Providers and the Tenancy Policy applies to all council housing tenants.
Disability	None	Neutral	As above
Gender reassignment	None	Neutral	As above
Marriage and civil partnership	None	Neutral	As above
Pregnancy and maternity	None	Neutral	As above
Race	None	Neutral	As above
Religion or belief	None	Neutral	As above
Sex	None	Neutral	As above
Sexual orientation	None	Neutral	As above
Other groups: for example – low income/ people living in rural areas/ single parents/ carers and the cared for/ past offenders/ long-term unemployed/ housebound/ history of domestic abuse/ people who don't speak English as a first language/ People without computer access etc.	None	Neutral	As above

Are you going to make any changes to your proposal as a result of these findings, in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts identified? If yes, what are they? If no, why not?	No
Is there any potential negative impact which cannot be minimised or removed? If so, can it be justified? (for example, on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for another protected characteristic)	No

What additional information would increase your understanding about the potential impact of this proposal?	None

If a consultation exercise is required as part of your proposal, please complete the consultation planning form on iCan.

Please update the section below if:

- You have amended your proposal
- You have new information
- You have undertaken consultation

Date of revised assessment	Click here to enter a date.
Have you made any changes to your initial assessment? If so, please give brief details	No.
Did you undertake consultation? – if yes, give date and the consultation results:	Yes. The consultations for the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy ran in tandem for 12 weeks from 15 June to 7 September 2026. The Residents Engagement Panel was consulted on 16 June 2026. Overview Committee was invited to provide feedback on 8 October following the public consultation. The minutes are available at $$ADocPackPublic.version0001.pdf The results of the consultation are attached to this report as Appendices 6 and 7.
Do you have new information which reveals any difference in views across the protected characteristics?	No.
Can any new conclusions be drawn as to how the proposal will affect people with different protected characteristics?	No.
Are you going to make any changes to your proposal as a result of these findings, in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts identified? If yes, what are they? If no, why not?	Yes.
Is there any potential negative impact which cannot be minimised or removed? If so, can it be justified? (for example, on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for another protected characteristic)	Both draft documents have been amended to reflect points raised in the consultation and by Overview Committee in relation to survivors of domestic abuse, tenancy sustainment, sustainable communities, tenant engagement and a revitalised

	approach to consultation. Appendix 5 summarise the amendments.

Should you need to revisit your assessment more than once, please ensure that you provide details of any changes or new information and the date these amendments were made

Appendix 3

Draft Tenancy Strategy

June 2026: revised November 2026

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1. Introduction

The council has a statutory duty to produce a Tenancy Strategy to guide registered providers of social housing (RPs) in the development of tenancy policies for their housing stock in the district.

Canterbury City Council's Tenancy Strategy was revised in Spring 2026 and has since been refined to take on board the results of the consultation and governance process. It supersedes the Tenancy Strategy of 7 December 2020, which needed updating because the council has stopped offering Flexible Tenancies in the light of case law and legal advice and the policy environment in which social housing operates has changed since 2020.

The Tenancy Strategy is written from the council's strategic perspective as the Local Housing Authority, rather than as a social housing landlord.

The situation facing RPs is challenging. Expectations of social landlords have increased, with updated regulatory standards, and greater emphasis on the outcomes of regulatory inspections. There is more focus on improving the quality of housing management and maintenance, on healthy homes, fire safety and compliance, based on sound information about the housing stock and tenants, and by listening to tenants.

High property prices and rents in Canterbury District mean that many local households cannot afford to rent or buy a home on the open market. Affordable housing is in short supply: accommodation provided by the council and RPs makes up about 11% of all homes in the district, so many people who need an affordable home cannot get one.

There is considerable political and financial support nationally and locally to build more affordable housing. The council is making strenuous efforts to increase the number of homes it owns, to rationalise its existing residential portfolio by disposing of properties that cannot be brought up to modern standards at reasonable cost and to facilitate the provision of more affordable housing by RPs.

The Government would like to extend the Renters Rights Act to the social housing sector, but first the Regulator of Social Housing must amend the Tenancy Standard to clarify the expectations of RPs under the new system. This change will require statutory consultation, and the change is expected to come into force in October 2027. The Tenancy Strategy reflects the current legal position and will be amended in due course as necessary.

2. Statutory and regulatory requirements

This strategy meets the council's obligations under the Localism Act 2011, which requires local authorities to develop a Tenancy Strategy that sets out the matters which registered providers of social housing (RPs) should have regard to when formulating their tenancy policies for their own stock, especially:

a) The types of tenancies granted

b) The circumstances in which a particular type of tenancy is granted

c) Where tenancies are granted for a specified term, the lengths of the terms granted

d) The circumstances in which a further tenancy is granted; where an existing tenancy is ending.

Tenancy policies are a regulatory requirement under the Tenancy Standard and the council expects RPs to publish clear and accessible tenancy policies outlining their approach to tenancy management. These policies should be available online and provided on request to any resident. The council will publish its own Tenancy Policy in its role as a social housing landlord.

3. The intended audience of the Tenancy Strategy

All RPs with homes in the district, including the City Council and housing associations, not-for-profit and for-profit organisations.

The Tenancy Strategy is reviewed, modified or replaced from time to time and is published on the council's website. A copy is available at the council's principal office for inspection at all reasonable hours, without charge, by members of the public, who will be provided with a copy on request.

This Tenancy Strategy is supplemented by a Tenancy Policy for the council's own homes that explains how it will put the principles of this strategy into practice. The Tenancy Policy is supported by a framework of operational policies and processes and the Tenant's Handbook.

4. Links to other strategies

The Tenancy Strategy has a particular function, and does not cover the whole range of strategic housing issues, which are addressed in other strategies with which the Tenancy Strategy is aligned:

Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028 | Canterbury City Council
Adopted Local Plan | Canterbury City Council
New Local Plan | Canterbury City Council
Housing homelessness and rough sleeping policy 2018-23
Housing strategy 2026 to 2030
HRA Business Plan 2019
Housing allocations policy 2023
Tenancy strategy 2020
Tenancy policy 2020
Housing plans | Canterbury City Council (for the framework of operational housing policies that underpin the Tenancy Policy)
Canterbury City Council tenant handbook

5. Background and context

Social housing lettings data is reported to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for every letting and published on a national basis. Statistics are not available at district level.

5.1 Tenancy types and length

There are three categories of social housing tenancy type: fixed term, lifetime and licence agreements. They differ in length and level of security; some are more appropriate for particular types of tenants.

Tenancy types	Definition
Fixed term	Fixed term tenancies are tenancies of a set length, provided by both councils (Secure Flexible) and RPs (Assured Shorthold). For General Needs, the minimum length is five years (though may be shorter in exceptional circumstances) and the maximum length is 20 years.
Lifetime	These are tenancies given for the lifetime of the tenant and are provided by both councils (Secure) and RPs (Assured).

Licence agreement	These are provided by both councils and RPs and are not a formal tenancy. They have no set length or end date and are mainly used for Supported Housing.
Periodic	These are rolling tenancies with no fixed end date. They may have an initial fixed term and then become rolling.

5.2 National data on tenure of new social lettings in 2024/25

In 2024/25, the national data shows that the majority (78%) of new social housing tenancies were lifetime which were split into:

- Assured lifetime tenancies (53% of all new lets) which were mainly let by RPs.
- Secure lifetime tenancies (25% of all new lets) which were mainly let by councils.
- 10% of new social tenancies had a fixed end date.
- 1% were periodic tenancies that roll with no fixed end date.
- A further 10% were licence agreements which have no fixed end date, almost all of which are used for Supported Housing to allow flexibility if tenants' support needs change.

Local authorities were more likely to provide their tenants with a lifetime tenancy than RPs. Almost all (89%) new council lets were lifetime tenancies, and just 6% were fixed term. This compares to 74% of new RP lets being lifetime and 11% being fixed term.

6. Fixed term tenancies

Fixed term tenancies were introduced with the aim of making best use of social housing and responding to changing housing needs.

They enable landlords at the end of a specified period to review tenants' conduct of their tenancy, their personal circumstances and to identify the most suitable housing options for them. This may include moving to another affordable rented property or a different form of tenure better suited to their needs.

6.1 Introductory or Starter Tenancies

The council recommends that all new tenants should be granted an Introductory or Starter Tenancy, sometimes referred to as probationary or provisional tenancies, for an initial fixed term period of 12 months, which can be extended by up to another six months.

Before the start of the Introductory Tenancy, prospective tenants should be told:

- That they do not have the same rights as Secure, Secure Flexible or Assured tenants; for example, they cannot:
    - Apply for the Right to Buy their home or
    - Carry out a mutual exchange with other tenants.
- Whether they will be granted a Secure, Assured or Flexible Tenancy at the end of the Introductory period.
- The reasons why the landlord may refuse to grant a tenancy at the end of the Introductory Tenancy, such as:
    - The property is no longer suitable for the tenant, and an alternative affordable home is being offered that is in a location and of a type and size that will be more appropriate for the tenant in the foreseeable future.

  - The tenant's financial circumstances have improved to a level where other forms of tenure could be affordable, such as shared ownership or open market purchase.
  - The conduct of the tenant is such that they would not be accepted onto the council's Housing Needs Register, including rent arrears or other housing debts and their history of addressing these issues.
  - The tenants have breached the terms of their tenancy or have been involved in criminal activity or anti-social behaviour.
  - The tenancy was obtained fraudulently.
- The process for reviewing tenancies and the factors that will be considered.
- The process for appealing against a decision not to grant a further tenancy.

The council expects Registered Providers to provide appropriate tenancy support to help vulnerable people sustain their tenancies but also expects providers to take robust measures to deal with tenants who commit anti-social behaviour to protect individuals and communities.

6.2 Fixed Term or Assured Shorthold Tenancies

RPs may offer Fixed Term or Assured Shorthold Tenancies of up to 10 years duration. The council expects:

- Fixed Term Tenancies should be for a minimum of five years, with consideration given for longer terms in appropriate circumstances.
- Longer Fixed Term Tenancies should be considered for families with young children, older households and for vulnerable tenants who would benefit from increased stability.
- Shorter tenancies of two years should be used only in exceptional circumstances, for example where accommodation is intended to be short term, or there have been significant previous tenancy breaches, or there are concerns about affordability. This should be clearly explained in their tenancy policies It is essential that all prospective tenants understand the type of tenancy they are being offered before they are obliged to accept.
- All prospective tenants should be given clear information before the start of a tenancy, about the tenancy type, the reasons why that tenancy is being offered, the rights and responsibilities specific to the tenancy and the process for reviewing Fixed Term Tenancies.
- In most cases it is expected that a further Fixed Term Tenancy will be granted for the same property at the end of the fixed term.

6.3 Implications of the Renters' Rights Act for Fixed Term and Assured Shorthold Tenancies

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 creates a simpler, more secure Assured Tenancy structure and strengthens tenants' rights. Implementing the Renters' Rights Act: Social Housing - GOV.UK From 1 May 2026, the changes will apply to:

- Private rented sector tenancies that are not within the definition of social housing Assured Tenancies.
- Assured Tenancies of social housing where the landlord is not an RP.

Until October 2027, for social housing Assured Tenancies, RPs must continue to follow the rules that were in place prior to 1 May 2026.

From October 2027, the Renters' Rights Act will apply to social housing Assured Tenancies provided by RPs.

The Act introduces a new tenancy system, including:

- Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs) will become Assured periodic (rolling) tenancies.
- All new Assured Tenancies will be periodic from the start.
- Section 21 (no fault) evictions will be abolished.
- Updated grounds for possession will apply.
- RPs will be required to provide tenants with certain information in writing at the outset of tenancies. The government will lay secondary legislation setting out what this must include.

All existing social housing Assured Tenancies provided by RPs will move to Assured periodic from October 2027.

From October 2027, new section 13A of the Housing Act 1988 will apply to rent increases for social housing Assured Tenancies held with RPs. This will allow landlords to use the section 13A process to increase rent at any point in the first 52 weeks of a tenancy, and then no more than once every 52 weeks after that, provided they give at least one month's notice. Unlike private landlords, RPs will continue to be able to use rent review clauses to increase rent, as they do now, and where a rent review clause is used there will be no requirement to serve a section 13A notice.

Annual limits on rent increases will continue to be set under the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard, not through the Renters' Rights Act.

The Regulator will then consult on and publish any updates to the regulatory standards before October 2027.

While the Renters' Rights Act will apply to landlords using the Assured Tenancy framework, the regulatory standards, set by the Regulator of Social Housing, apply to all social housing landlords registered with the Regulator, including Canterbury City Council.

Although the current Government guidance refers to Assured Shorthold Tenancies, it is not anticipated that this change will apply to Demoted Tenancies and Introductory Tenancies.

The Tenancy Strategy reflects the current legal position and will be amended when the revised Tenancy Standard is published.

6.4 Secure Flexible Tenancies

Fixed term Secure Flexible Tenancies are a type of council tenancy introduced by the Localism Act 2011.

The council no longer grants Flexible Tenancies following legal advice in 2021 because of emerging case law.

No other RPs in the district can issue a Flexible Tenancy.

There were some circumstances when a Flexible Tenancy was not deemed suitable, and a lifetime Secure Tenancy more appropriate, for example:

- Housing designated for older people, or
- General needs housing where the occupant is 60+ years of age.
- Housing designated for vulnerable people such as those with learning or physical disabilities, or enduring mental health issues. The exception to this will be where the accommodation is intended as move-on to more permanent housing or where specific adaptations may not be required long term.

The number of council tenants with Flexible Tenancies is gradually reducing as the fixed terms come to an end.

There is a presumption that most tenants on Flexible Tenancies will be granted a Secure Tenancy for their lifetime when their fixed term comes to an end.

6.5 Reviewing Fixed Term Tenancies

All RPs should explain in their tenancy policies the process for reviewing Fixed Term Tenancies, detailing the frequency of review and what factors will be considered.

The council recommends that Fixed Term Tenancies are reviewed between six and twelve months before the end of the term.

If the circumstances of the household are broadly similar to those at the time of the original letting, there should be a presumption that either a new lifetime tenancy or Fixed Term Tenancy will be granted.

The review should be based on objective criteria to establish how the tenant has conducted their tenancy, how they have managed their property, whether the property is still suitable to their needs, and whether the tenant has the financial means to move to alternative accommodation.

Examples of significant changes to a tenant's circumstances include:

- The property is no longer suitable for the tenant, and an alternative affordable home is being offered that is in a location and of a type and size that will be more appropriate for the tenant in the foreseeable future.
- The tenant's financial circumstances have improved to a level where other forms of tenure could be affordable, such as shared ownership or open market purchase.
- The conduct of the tenant is such that they would not be accepted onto the council's Housing Needs Register, including rent arrears or other housing debts and their history of addressing these issues.
- The tenants have breached the terms of their tenancy or have been involved in criminal activity or anti-social behaviour.
- The tenancy was obtained fraudulently.

RPs should ensure that they have sufficient resources and trained staff to operate the review process efficiently and effectively.

6.6 Ending Fixed Term Tenancies

If a Fixed Term Tenancy ends and no new tenancy will be granted at that property and there has been no breach of tenancy conditions, reasonable efforts should be made to offer suitable alternative accommodation, and consideration given to extending the tenancy until alternative suitable accommodation can be made available.

RPs should give at least 6 months' notice to a tenant where there is an intention not to renew a tenancy.

The reason for ending the tenancy should be clearly set out and information provided to the tenant on how to appeal. The appeal process should be clearly publicised and transparent.

The council expects Registered Providers to provide appropriate tenancy support to help vulnerable people sustain their tenancies but also expects providers to take robust measures to deal with tenants who commit anti-social behaviour to protect individuals and communities.

When ending a tenancy, it is essential that landlords take effective steps to avoid homelessness by working with the council at the earliest opportunity, so that tenants understand their housing options and organisations act together to avoid or relieve homelessness before the tenancy comes to an end. The tenant may obtain free, independent advice by contacting housingadvice@canterbury.gov.uk

The council also expects that procedures for bringing tenancies to an end will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

7. Lifetime tenancies

7.1 Assured and Secure Tenancies

The council expects most social housing tenants to be offered an Assured or Secure Tenancy, which grants them a home for life after the successful completion of an Introductory or Starter Tenancy.

8. Survivors of Domestic Abuse

The council expects RPs to co-operate with other agencies tackling domestic abuse and enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice.

The Secure Tenancies (Victims of Domestic Abuse) Act 2018 requires all Local Authorities and RPs, when rehousing an existing Secure Tenant who needs to move or has recently moved from their social home to escape domestic abuse, to grant a Secure Tenancy for their new home.

The council wants to ensure that survivors of domestic abuse will not fear losing security of tenure and to provide families with a stable new home. The impact of this on the turnover of social housing stock should be minimal and should be offset by the subsequent eviction of the perpetrator from the former home, thereby releasing another affordable property.

The council recommends that RPs adopt an approach based on the DAHA - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation framework, or similar, to ensure that organisations' operations deliver safe and effective interventions in domestic abuse, including:

- Partnerships and Collaboration
- Staff Development and Support
- Policies and Procedures
- Survivor Led Support
- Safety Led Case Management
- Removing internal systems that discriminate or negatively impact survivors and challenging external systems
- Perpetrator Accountability
- Publicity and Awareness

9. Tenancy Management

The council expects RPs to provide effective Tenancy Management services, including:

- Effectively managing all conditions of the tenancy agreement.
- Ensuring that social housing tenants behave appropriately and in accordance with their responsibilities.
- Ensuring that the statutory rights of tenants are respected and managed effectively.
- Managing tenancy changes, mutual exchanges and the Right to Buy process.
- Dealing effectively with the impacts on local communities of anti-social behaviour, nuisance, alcohol or drug misuse.
- Tackling tenancy fraud.
- Supporting tenants to sustain their tenancy or licence.
- Providing appropriate advice and assistance if a new tenancy or licence is not granted.
- Assisting in reducing the risk of homelessness.

- Supporting the development of sustainable neighbourhoods.

10. Tenancy Sustainment

The Tenancy Standard requires Registered providers to support tenants to maintain their tenancy or licence. Where a registered provider ends a tenancy or licence, they must offer affected tenants advice and assistance.

It is important that Registered Providers ensure that tenants who are vulnerable or who need additional support to sustain their tenancy have access to services to enable them to remain in their home, their community and their support networks, reducing the risk of homelessness through loss of tenancy.

Tenancy sustainment requires holistic, partnership-focused support and safeguarding through early intervention, such as:

- Early help if a tenant is struggling; stepping in fast if they risk losing their home, owe rent, or face other hard times.
- Personal support; working with the tenant to create a plan that fits their needs, offering advice and practical help so they can take control of their tenancy.
- Access to specialist services; helping tenants to connect with services for mental health, drug or alcohol problems, benefits, debt and social care.
- Help to run their home; helping to report problems and work with the right service if the condition of their home is putting their tenancy at risk.
- Crisis support; helping to find the right support quickly if a tenant is facing a crisis that affects their housing.

11. Tenant Involvement

All RPs are encouraged to have policies in place to meet regulatory requirements to promote meaningful, inclusive tenant involvement. All policies and procedures must be based on a sound knowledge of tenants and their views.

RPs should recognise this is an opportunity to continuously improve the quality of services, improve the quality of neighbourhoods and ensure they meet the needs and aspirations of their tenants.

12. Making best use of social housing

Tenants may need to move home, and the council supports household mobility. This can be for many reasons, including poor health, to reduce overcrowding and to address under occupation.

The council would like to see RPs develop proactive tenancy policies and services that provide practical support to help people living in social housing to “rightsize”, to explore opportunities with alternative housing providers, for home ownership or other tenures, helping to free up homes to make best use of their housing stock.

13. Mutual Exchanges

Mutual exchanges are a valuable way to help tenants to improve their housing situation and for landlords to make more effective use of their housing stock.

RPs are expected to offer a mutual exchange service that:

- Allows tenants who may be eligible for mutual exchange, whether by a statutory right or by a policy of the RP, to easily access details of available matches without payment of a fee.
- Publicises the availability of mutual exchange services.

- Provides support for accessing mutual exchange services to tenants who might otherwise be unable to use them.
- Ensures that tenants who are mutually exchanging are aware of the implications for their tenancy, including:
    - Changes to their Secure or Assured status.
    - Differences in rent levels between Social Rent and Affordable Rent.
    - Any gain or loss of the Right to Buy.

The introduction of Affordable Rents and Flexible Tenancies has implications for tenants who wish to exercise their right to mutual exchange. It created a new mechanism for mutual exchanges to protect certain lifetime tenants.

If Assured Lifetime and Secure Lifetime tenants who were granted their tenancy before the 1 April 2012 exchange with a Flexible Tenant, then a new Tenancy is issued to each party, and the tenant is granted another Secure or Assured tenancy. The Flexible Tenant is granted a new tenancy, but there is no particular provision regarding its status. It will be a matter for the RP to decide what type of tenancy to offer.

The council encourages RPs to grant security equal to that which is being given up, even if they are not obliged to do so, to ensure that mutual exchanges remain an effective tool.

14. Succession

Under the Housing Act 1985, a range of family members were able to succeed to a tenancy on the death of a Secure Tenant, including spouses, partners, civil partners, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces and adopted children.

The Localism Act 2011 amended the succession framework, whereby there can only be one succession, and when one joint tenant dies, this counts as the one succession. Under the Localism Act, Secure Tenancies that started after 1 April 2012 are limited to the succession of the spouse or civil partners as an automatic right.

RPs can make express provision in the tenancy agreement to expand the group of family members that can succeed. However, given the level of housing need in the district, the council only supports this in exceptional circumstances. Successions to tenancies should therefore be applied in accordance with legislation and government guidance applicable at the time of the succession application.

Following the death of a tenant, if there is someone living in the home as their principal residence, who is not entitled to succeed, the RP should:

- Provide housing advice and assistance to the person on their options.
- Consider the interests of vulnerable people and make sure that their policies offer appropriate protection.
- Where appropriate, offer alternative accommodation that meets the household's needs.

If a person succeeds to a tenancy but needs to move, reference should be made to the council's Housing allocations policy for more details on help available.

15. Social Housing Fraud

Affordable housing is a limited resource, and therefore great importance should be placed on tackling social housing fraud. RPs are expected to have policies, processes and procedures in place to actively prevent and uncover fraud, and work with the council and its partners to address this issue and share good practice.

16. Rents

RPs must comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard and Guidance. It contains the outcomes RPs are required to deliver in setting and increasing rents for their social housing in line with Government policy in the Policy statement on rents for social housing.

17. Service Charges

Service charges are not part of the same legislative and regulatory framework as rent but are subject to statute and extensive case law.

The council expects that RPs will:

- Endeavour to keep service charges to a minimum and that increases are within the guideline limit of CPI plus 1% per annum.
- Have a reasonable and transparent method of calculating service charges that reflect the service provided to tenants.
- Ensure that all service charges are eligible for Housing Benefit to ensure they are affordable for lower income households.
- Ensure that services and works are of a reasonable standard.
- Supply tenants with clear information on how service charges are set.
- Identify service charges separately from the rent charge.
- Where new or extended services are introduced, and an additional charge may need to be made, the RP will consult with tenants.
- If actual expenditure is less than the current charge, the service charge will be reduced accordingly.

18. Use of the private rented sector

If RPs use homes in the private rented sector to provide accommodation, the council prefers:

- Rents no higher than Local Housing Allowance rates.
- If this is not possible, an affordability check to ensure that a tenancy is sustainable.
- Tenancies granted for a minimum term of two years, preferably longer.
- Provision of good quality housing management and maintenance services.
- The property to be in a good state of repair and fit for purpose.
- A process to ensure that the tenant understands their housing options when the tenancy comes to an end.
- That the use of the private rented sector does not adversely affect homelessness.

19. Sustainable communities

The council wants to work in partnership with RPs to build sustainable communities by focusing on activities that build individuals' social and cultural capital and give them pride in where they live.

To this end, the council's Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028 is inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Social housing landlords should play a key role in enabling, influencing and transforming the space in which residents live. Sustainability can come from:

- The planning and design of neighbourhoods and housing developments to encourage economic vitality, civic engagement, better public health and environmental sustainability.
- Supporting markets and commercial opportunities for local SMEs, providing space where local producers can sell their produce, improving sustainability, economic health and reducing the carbon footprint.
- Working in partnership with the planning process to shape places so that they result in the liveable, sustainable communities.
- Contributing to creating diverse, lively and sociable public environments that help build social capital and place capital.
- Understanding how assets can provide both a financial return and provide a focus for connection, promoting economic revitalisation that provides high-quality employment and opportunity for employees, allowing local talent to flourish.
- Providing good quality homes with long term security of tenure at rents that local people can afford where they can raise their families free from the blight of anti-social behaviour.

20. Review

This Tenancy Strategy was adopted on 7 December 2026. It will be reviewed as changes in legislation, regulation or guidance may dictate. It is likely that this will be necessary when the Renters Rights Act affects social housing tenancies.

Minor changes which do not significantly affect service provision will be made to the document using the delegated authority of the Head of Housing & Community.

Significant changes will be taken through the council's committee process.

21. Equality and diversity

The council is committed to ensure that this strategy does not impact disproportionately on different equality groups. This strategy has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA). All RPs are expected to undertake and publish an EIA of their own tenancy policies.

Appendix 4

Draft Tenancy Policy

June 2026: revised November 2026

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1. Introduction

Canterbury City Council (the council) is a local authority registered provider of social housing. This Tenancy Policy is the council's response to the Tenancy Strategy 2026 and explains the types of tenancy it grants, the principles that guide tenancy management, and how the Council meets its responsibilities under the Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) consumer standards.

This policy replaces the Tenancy Policy adopted on 7 December 2020. Many aspects of this new Tenancy Policy are unchanged from the 2020 edition, but it has been updated to reflect:

- Updated regulatory requirements, particularly the strengthened Tenancy Standard and consumer regulation framework, which came into in force from April 2024, with more emphasis on transparency, fairness, data-led assurance and demonstrable outcomes for tenants.
- The council's decision to cease granting Secure Flexible Tenancies, which now exist only as legacy arrangements for a small and diminishing number of households.

This policy is part of a suite of aligned housing strategies and policies that collectively set out how the Council manages its social homes and can be viewed on the Housing plans | Canterbury City Council webpage.

Operational processes are explained in separate procedural documents, service standards and the Tenant Handbook, which form the detailed operational framework supporting the principles in this document.

This Tenancy Policy is intended to be accessible, transparent and clear for tenants, staff, councillors and regulators. It explains what tenants and prospective tenants can expect from the council as a landlord and the principles that guide tenancy related decisions.

2. Purpose

This Tenancy Policy sets out the principles that guide the Council's approach to:

- The types of tenancy it offers.
- Granting, managing, altering and ending tenancies.
- The rights and security associated with each type of tenancy.
- Making decisions affecting a tenancy that take account of the need to provide secure homes, support vulnerable households, create and support sustainable communities.
- Acting fairly, transparently and consistently in all tenancy-related decisions.
- Ensuring that in exercising its duties as a landlord, all decisions by the council comply with current legislation, regulatory standards, Government guidance and the council's Tenancy Strategy 2026.
- Ensuring tenants receive the level of security appropriate to their circumstances.
- Making the best use of the council's limited housing stock by supporting effective occupation, household mobility, and providing information about housing options to meet identified needs.
- Helping tenants to understand their rights, responsibilities and the council's expectations, supported by clear information in Your tenancy agreement | Canterbury City Council and the Tenant handbook | Canterbury City Council
- Discretionary decisions, such as granting tenancies, assignment, and right-sizing moves, are taken with consideration to fairness, vulnerability, proportionality and the efficient use of the limited supply of council homes.

- Ensuring that tenancy related decisions in age restricted accommodation have particular regard to its purpose, and the needs and expectations of existing residents.
- The expectation that each property is occupied only by the approved household.
- Ensuring that no person may live at a council property on a permanent or long-term basis unless they were a member of the approved household at the start of the tenancy or the council has given written permission.
- Ensuring that any request for additional household members considers whether the proposed occupation will overcrowd the property and whether it is compatible with the nature and purpose of the accommodation, including any age restriction.
- Identifying and tackling tenancy fraud, unlawful occupation and misuse of properties.
- Enforcing tenancy conditions in ways that are always lawful, proportionate and aligned with the council's strategies for community safety and neighbourhood management.

3. Scope

This policy focuses on the residential properties owned and managed by Canterbury City Council in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and their occupants.

It also includes information relating to the type of tenancies granted by the council's social lettings agency, Canterbury Lettings. This is not a statutory requirement but is included to provide a comprehensive guide.

It does not apply to:

- The allocation of social housing, which is covered by the Housing allocations policy 2023.
- Homelessness duties and the use of private rented sector accommodation.
- Leasehold or shared ownership accommodation.
- HRA garages.
- Operational tenancy management processes, which are governed by separate internal procedures and the Tenant handbook | Canterbury City Council

4. Background

The situation facing RPs is challenging. Expectations of social landlords have increased, with updated regulatory standards, greater prominence for role of the Regulator of Social Housing and the results of their inspections. There is more emphasis on improving the quality of housing management and maintenance, on healthy homes, fire safety and compliance, based on sound information about the housing stock and tenants, and by listening to the tenants' voice.

High property prices and rents in Canterbury District mean that many local households cannot afford to rent or buy a home on the open market. Affordable housing is in short supply: accommodation provided by the council and RPs makes up about 11% of all homes in the district, so many people who need an affordable home cannot get one.

There is considerable political and financial support nationally and locally to build more affordable housing. The council is making strenuous efforts to increase the number of homes it owns and to rationalise its existing residential portfolio by disposing of properties that cannot be brought up to modern standards at reasonable cost.

The council stopped granting Secure Flexible Tenancies in 2021 in the light of case law and legal advice.

The Government would like to extend the Renters Rights Act to the social housing sector and the change is expected to come into force in October 2027. It is not expected to have

any implications for the council as a landlord, so the Tenancy Policy reflects the current legal position and will be amended if necessary.

Since the adoption of the Tenancy Policy 2020, the council:

- No longer grants Flexible Tenancies because of evolving case law and legal advice.
- Reaffirmed its commitment to Secure lifetime tenancies for eligible households following the successful completion of an Introductory period.
- Increased its focus on preventing and addressing tenancy fraud.
- Embedded enhanced consumer regulatory requirements, including proactive assurance, transparency of policies, and evidence-based reporting.

5. Legislation and Guidance

Canterbury City Council's Tenancy Policy is developed in accordance with the statutory and regulatory framework governing social housing in England, including but not limited to:

- Housing Act 1985
- Housing Act 1988
- Housing Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Localism Act 2011
- Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013
- Care Act 2014 and Children Act 2004
- Housing and Planning Act 2016
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Social Housing regulation Act 2023
- Consumer Standards 2024
- Secure Tenancies (Victims of Domestic Abuse) Act 2018
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2018

6. Relevant strategies, policies and key documents

The Tenancy Policy sits within a framework of strategies, policies, statutory documents and operational information that are available at Housing plans | Canterbury City Council. They guide how the council manages its homes and fulfils its duties as a social landlord and include:

- Draft Tenancy Strategy 2026
- Housing homelessness and rough sleeping policy 2018 – 2023
- Housing strategy 2026 to 2030
- Housing allocations policy 2023
- HRA Business Plan 2019
- HRA rent setting policy 2020
- Draft income collection and arrears management policy
- Tenant Engagement Strategy 2026 to 2030,

- Tenant Engagement Framework (2025 to 2028)
- Tenant panels' role in governance

Key documents provide tenants with clear information about their rights, responsibilities and how the landlord service operates are:

- **Your tenancy agreement | Canterbury City Council**

The legally binding contract between the council and the tenant, setting out respective rights and responsibilities. Except for minor changes, variations to the tenancy agreement will be made through sections 102 and 103 of The Housing Act 1985.

- **Tenant handbook | Canterbury City Council**

Provides practical guidance on day-to-day tenancy matters, service standards and operational processes. The handbook supports the Tenancy Agreement but does not form part of the tenancy contract or this policy.

Supporting procedures

A range of supporting procedures provide the operational detail to deliver the principles in this Tenancy Policy. These procedures are operational in nature and do not form part of this policy or its decision-making criteria but may be viewed at Housing plans | Canterbury City Council

These procedures include, but are not limited to:

- Tenancy management procedures
- Succession and assignment guidance
- Mutual exchange assessment processes
- Tenancy fraud framework
- Tenancy audit and visit arrangements
- Vulnerability and reasonable adjustments framework
- Neighbourhood and estate management standards

These procedures are reviewed periodically to support the application of this policy and to reflect changes in legislation, regulation and Government guidance.

7. The types of tenancy the council grants

The council grants appropriate types of tenancies and occupation agreements, depending on the household's circumstances, eligibility, property type, and statutory requirements. The council ensures applicants understand the nature of the tenancy offered.

7.1 Introductory tenancies

All new council tenants are granted an Introductory Tenancy for a period of 12 months.

An Introductory Tenancy:

- Acts as a trial period to demonstrate that the tenant can sustain the tenancy successfully.
- Grants fewer rights than a Secure Tenancy.
- May be extended by up to six months where there are concerns about tenancy conduct.
- May be ended early if the terms of the tenancy agreement are breached.

Following successful completion of the Introductory period, the tenancy normally converts automatically to a Secure Tenancy. The council no longer grants a Flexible Tenancy following an Introductory Tenancy.

7.2 Secure tenancies

Secure Tenancies are granted to eligible tenants who have successfully completed their Introductory period. The council grants Secure (lifetime) Tenancies in most cases, providing long-term stability for households.

Secure Tenancies:

- Do not have a fixed end date.
- Provide enhanced statutory rights, such as Right to Buy, succession, and assignment in limited circumstances.
- May only be ended by the tenant or through lawful possession proceedings, if justified.
- Are the default tenancy type for most permanent council accommodation.

Certain property types, such as older persons designated housing or adapted properties may have additional eligibility criteria and there may be circumstances when Secure Tenancies may not be granted for that property type, for example, if a member of a household does not have a statutory right of succession and does not need an existing adaptation or the property is too large or too small.

7.3 Secure Flexible tenancies

The council issued tenancies with a five-year term between April 2016 and November 2021 and stopped because of legal advice based on developing case law.

Some Flexible Tenancies granted during that period remain, but the number is gradually reducing as the fixed terms come to an end.

Flexible Tenancies are still lawful and for the remainder of their existing terms the council will continue to manage them fairly and transparently.

Most tenants on Flexible Tenancies will be granted a Secure Tenancy for their lifetime when their fixed term comes to an end.

7.4 Demoted tenancies

A Demoted Tenancy may be granted following a court order where serious anti-social behaviour or tenancy breaches have occurred.

Demoted Tenancies:

- Last for 12 months (unless extended by the court)
- Provide reduced security like an Introductory Tenancy
- Allow the council to take prompt action if further breaches occur
- Convert to a Secure Tenancy after the demotion period if no further action is taken

The council will apply for demotion only where it is reasonable, proportionate and supported by evidence.

7.5 Non-Secure Tenancies

Non-Secure Tenancies are used for temporary accommodation provided under the council's homelessness duties. They:

- Offer short-term accommodation in HRA accommodation
- Do not qualify for the same statutory rights as Secure Tenants
- Last only while the homelessness duty is being assessed or discharged

- Households are granted an appropriate type of tenancy if they are permanently rehoused in council accommodation

7.6 Licences to occupy

The council may use licence agreements in temporary accommodation where the Housing Act 1996 places an interim duty to accommodate, such as s.188 of the Housing Act 1996.

Use of licences is appropriate where:

- The household is awaiting a decision about a homelessness application.
- Accommodation is provided on a nightly or emergency basis.
- The household does not meet the criteria for a tenancy.

The council ensures that licence holders understand their rights and responsibilities and that licences are used lawfully and proportionately.

8. The circumstances in which a further tenancy will be granted when an existing tenancy ends

This section relates to:

- Introductory Tenancies
- Demoted Tenancies
- Flexible Tenancies
- Non-Secure Tenancies

8.1 Introductory tenancies

At the end of the 12-month introductory period, the tenancy will normally convert automatically to a Secure Tenancy unless:

- The council has issued a Notice of Proceedings for Possession.
- The Introductory period has been extended due to breaches of the tenancy agreement.
- The tenant has not complied with the terms of their tenancy agreement, such as serious rent arrears or anti-social behaviour.

The council will provide clear reasons and rights of review where action is taken to extend or end an Introductory Tenancy.

8.2 Secure tenancies

Secure Tenancies do not end unless:

- The tenant voluntarily surrenders the property.
- A court grants possession to the council.
- The tenancy ceases to be the tenant’s only or principal home.
- Statutory succession or assignment leads to the creation of a new tenancy.

Secure tenants are not subject to fixed term review, so it is not necessary to grant another tenancy.

8.3 Flexible Tenancies

The council no longer grants Flexible Tenancies. This section applies only to tenants who were granted a Flexible Tenancy before the council discontinued their use in November 2021. Flexible Tenancies are still lawful and the council will continue to manage them fairly and transparently.

8.3.1 Nature and length of Flexible Tenancies

The council granted Flexible Tenancies with a five-year term between April 2016 and November 2021.

For existing Flexible Tenants:

- The fixed term remains valid until its expiry.
- Tenants retain all rights and responsibilities that apply to Flexible Tenancies under the Housing Act 1985, as amended.
- During the fixed term, tenants have security of tenure unless they breach tenancy conditions.

8.3.2 Reviews prior to the end of the fixed term

Between 9 and 12 months before a Flexible Tenancy is due to end, sometimes sooner if appropriate, the council reviews the household's circumstances. The purpose of the review is to determine whether a new tenancy should be granted and, if so, the most appropriate tenancy type and property.

The outcome of the review may be:

- A new Secure (Lifetime) Tenancy for the same property.
- A new Secure Tenancy for a different property if the household's needs have changed.
- A decision not to grant another tenancy, with appropriate statutory notice and appeal rights.

There is a presumption in favour of granting a Secure Tenancy unless specific reasons apply.

8.3.3 Circumstances when a further tenancy may be offered for a different property

A new tenancy may be offered for a different home if:

- The current property is underoccupied by one or more bedrooms.
- The property contains significant adaptations no longer required by the household.
- The household's size or mobility needs have changed.
- The property is needed to make better use of the stock of council homes.
- Any alternative property must be suitable, reasonable, and consistent with the Housing allocations policy 2023.

8.3.4 Circumstances when a further Secure (lifetime) Tenancy will be refused

The Council may decide not to grant a new tenancy at the end of a Flexible fixed term if:

- There are rent arrears or other housing related debts owed to the council.
- The tenant has breached the tenancy agreement.
- The tenant does not occupy or intend to occupy the property as their only or principal home.
- There is evidence of tenancy fraud.

If the council intends to refuse a new tenancy:

- At least six months' written notice will be provided.
- Reasons will be set out clearly.
- The tenant will be informed of their right to appeal.

8.3.5 Notice and support if another tenancy is not granted

If a new tenancy is not granted, the council will:

- Serve the required statutory notice.
- Provide clear advice on alternative housing options.
- Offer referral to Housing Solutions for support into private rented or other accommodation.
- Avoid homelessness wherever possible in line with statutory duties.
- Pursue eviction proceedings only if the tenant refuses to move after the notice period expires.

8.3.6 Appeal process for Flexible Tenants

Flexible Tenants who disagree with a refusal to grant a new tenancy may use the following process to appeal:

Stage 1 Review

- Submit a written appeal within 15 working days.
- Reviewed by a manager uninvolved in the original decision.
- Written outcome normally within 10 working days.

Stage 2 Review

- Submit a written request within 15 working days of Stage 1.
- Reviewed by senior officers.
- Written outcome within 10 working days (or advised of alternative timescale).
- Review decisions will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

8.3.7 Tenancy rights during review and notice period

Until the fixed term ends, Flexible Tenants retain:

- All rights set out in statute and their current tenancy agreement.
- The right to request repairs.
- The right to be treated fairly and consistently.
- Protection from eviction without a court order.

8.4 Non-Secure Tenancies

A Non-Secure Tenancy ends when:

- The council has discharged its homelessness duty.
- The household is no longer eligible for temporary accommodation.
- The household is permanently rehoused.
- A notice to quit or equivalent lawful notice has been served.

The granting of a further tenancy in these cases will be governed by:

- The outcome of the homelessness decision; and
- The Housing allocations policy 2023.

A Non-Secure Tenancy does not normally convert to a Secure Tenancy unless a tenancy is granted for a permanent home in the HRA.

If a Non-Secure Tenancy is replaced by a Licence to Occupy, this will be indicated in a published officer decision with an effective date.

9. Tenancy management

9.1 Survivors of domestic abuse

The council co-operates with other agencies tackling domestic abuse to enable tenants to access appropriate support and advice.

The Secure Tenancies (Victims of Domestic Abuse) Act 2018 requires the council, when rehousing an existing Secure Tenant who needs to move or has recently moved from their social home to escape domestic abuse, to grant a Secure Tenancy for their new home.

The council wants to ensure that survivors of domestic abuse will not fear losing security of tenure and to provide families with a stable new home. The impact of this on the turnover of social housing stock should be minimal and should be offset by the subsequent eviction of the perpetrator from the former home, thereby releasing another affordable property.

The council is working towards DAHA - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation to ensure that its operations deliver safe and effective interventions in domestic abuse and the framework includes:

- Partnerships and Collaboration
- Staff Development and Support
- Policies and Procedures
- Survivor Led Support
- Safety Led Case Management
- Removing internal systems that may discriminate or negatively impact survivors and challenging external systems
- Perpetrator Accountability
- Publicity and Awareness

As part of its ongoing work towards Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation the council has formally launched a Resident Domestic Abuse Policy which strengthens existing work within the council to assist victims/survivors of domestic abuse, with a view to reducing or eliminating risk and preventing further harm. It includes providing information about specialist domestic abuse support services and awareness training for all staff.

9.2 Tenancy Sustainment

The council aims to support all tenants to maintain successful and secure tenancies. Sustainment activities are delivered operationally through tenancy management procedures and may include early intervention, referral to support services, and collaborative work with partner agencies.

Early warning signs often include rent arrears or other debts, noise complaints or anti-social behaviour. When considering appropriate actions, the council needs to understand the underlying causes and takes account of relevant circumstances including:

- Financial hardship
- Disability
- Health conditions
- Communication needs
- Caring responsibilities

- Safeguarding concerns
- Complex vulnerabilities
- Risks to tenancy sustainment

The draft Income Collection and Arrears Management Policy acknowledges that preventing arrears is more effective than recovering debt after it has arisen. It undertakes that the council will:

- Monitor accounts regularly.
- Make early contact where payments are missed.
- Maximise income.
- Provide information about outstanding balances
- Encourage tenants to engage with support services.
- Seek to identify issues before debts escalate.
- Advice and support on landlord and tenant issues, benefits, money advice.
    - Help with money and debt | Canterbury City Council,
    - Get help to pay your council house rent | Canterbury City Council,
    - Help with housing costs | Canterbury City Council,
    - Benefits and support | Canterbury City Council
- Robust approach to anti-social behaviour and tenancy fraud.
    - Anti-social behaviour policy
    - Neighbourhood noise policy statement
    - Report tenancy fraud | Canterbury City Council
- Report benefit fraud | Canterbury City Council

Where appropriate, and when consent is provided, the council may work with support agencies and partner organisations to assist tenants in maintaining their tenancy.

The council will make reasonable adjustments where required and will take account of identified support needs when making decisions

9.3 Sole tenancies and joint tenancies

Both sole and joint tenancies are permitted under the Housing Act 1985. Decisions relating to granting or changing the legal status of a tenancy must:

- Reflect statutory succession rights.
- All sole and joint tenants must meet the eligibility and qualification criteria of the Housing allocations policy 2023.
- Ensure fairness and transparency.
- Consider risk management and safeguarding best practice.
- Avoid creating fraudulent or non-qualifying occupation; and
- Consider the suitability of the household for the property.

9.3.1 Requests to change a sole tenancy to a joint tenancy

The Council will consider requests for joint tenancies in line with statutory eligibility, the risk of tenancy fraud, and evidence of long-term, settled residence. A joint tenancy will not be granted where:

- The household member seeking to join the tenancy does not meet statutory or policy eligibility criteria.
- Either or both applicants for a joint tenancy do not meet the eligibility and qualification criteria of the Housing allocations policy 2023.
- Granting the tenancy would undermine the council's duty to prevent fraud.
- The property would be under-occupied or otherwise unsuitable.

It is made clear that the additional tenant is normally protected by a right of succession.

Requests for a joint tenancy must be made in writing to the council. The council always informs the applicant of its decision in writing.

9.3.2 Requests to change a joint tenancy to a sole tenancy

When either or both joint tenants give notice to the council that they wish to end the tenancy, the tenancy ends for both joint tenants.

However, if one joint tenant gives notice and vacates the property, leaving the remaining joint tenant in occupation, it may be possible for the remaining former joint tenant to become a sole tenant. In certain circumstances it may be possible to assign the tenancy.

In all other cases (where assignment cannot apply), the council will consider granting a new sole tenancy to the remaining tenant. In deciding whether to grant a new sole tenancy, the council considers all relevant circumstances that may include (but are not limited to) whether:

- The property is the right size and type for the former joint tenant who wishes to become the sole tenant (according to the Housing Allocation Scheme).
- Any adaptations made to the property are required by them.
- The tenant who wishes to remain would be eligible for housing under the council's Housing allocations policy 2023.
- There are any rent arrears.
- Any other housing debt is owed to the council.
- There are any breaches of the terms of the tenancy agreement.
- There is a valid Notice in place for any breach of the tenancy agreement, or a County Court Order has been obtained because of such a breach.
- There is evidence that the person who wishes to remain does not intend to use the property as their main or principal home.
- The proposed sole tenant is subject to immigration control.

Where a joint tenancy ends following notice served by one joint tenant, the Council's Housing Management Service will take the lead in establishing the facts of occupation and determining the tenancy position. Referral to the homelessness service will be made if the council's landlord decision results in the possibility of the occupier becoming homeless.

The council always changes a joint tenancy into a sole tenancy if instructed to do so by the County Court after a divorce or legal separation. Therefore, it is strongly advised that joint tenants consider their tenancy when getting legal advice on these matters.

If a new tenancy is granted, the type of tenancy is determined by the criteria set out this policy.

The council always informs applicants of its decision in writing.

9.4 Succession

Succession is the statutory or contractual right for another person to take over a council tenancy following the death of a tenant.

9.4.1 The right to succeed

A council tenancy can only be succeeded to once. If a joint tenant dies, the tenancy passes automatically to the surviving joint tenant. This counts as the single statutory succession.

If the deceased tenant themselves became the tenant because of succession, no further person has a right to succeed to the tenancy.

9.4.2 Who can succeed to a tenancy

The right to succeed to a council tenancy is governed by the Housing Act 1985, as amended, and by the terms of the tenancy agreement.

While legislation limits statutory succession rights for certain Secure Tenancies, the current tenancy agreement provides succession rights which extend beyond the statutory minimum for some tenants.

Where the tenancy agreement applies, the tenancy may pass on the death of the tenant to:

- The tenant's husband, wife or civil partner, or a person living with the tenant as if they were their husband, wife or civil partner, provided the property was their only or principal home at the time of the tenant's death; or
- Where there is no such partner, another qualifying family member who occupied the property as their only or principal home for at least 12 months prior to the tenant's death, as defined in the tenancy agreement

If the successor occupies a property that is larger than reasonably required for their household, the council will, after an appropriate bereavement period, work with the successor to move to accommodation that is more suitable for their housing need.

9.4.3 Changes to succession rights

Succession rights are determined by legislation and the terms of the tenancy agreement in force at the time of the tenant's death.

Any future changes to succession rights arising from amendments to the tenancy agreement will be made lawfully and in accordance with the statutory framework that applies to the type of tenancy concerned.

In the case of Secure Tenancies, any variation of tenancy terms will be subject to consultation and notice requirements under sections 102 and 103 of the Housing Act 1985.

Nothing in this policy removes or limits any succession rights granted by the tenancy agreement.

9.4.4 If there is no right to succession

Where no legal or contractual right to succession exists, the council may, at its discretion, grant a new tenancy.

A new tenancy may be granted for the same property where:

- The occupier has lived with the tenant for at least 12 months prior to the tenant's death and
- The property is the right size for their household and

- The occupier would have qualified as a successor had a previous succession not already occurred.

If the property is not the right size for the household, the council may consider granting a new tenancy of alternative accommodation of a suitable size.

In deciding whether to grant a new tenancy, the council will have regard to:

- Whether any duty is owed under homelessness legislation and
- The qualifying criteria of the council's Housing Allocation Scheme

If no housing duty is owed, the decision will be made by the appropriate officer according to the council's scheme of delegations.

The factors considered may include, but are not limited to:

- The person's age.
- Length of occupation.
- Household size.
- Medical needs.
- Suitability of the property, including adaptations.
- Income.
- Social and welfare needs.

All relevant circumstances are considered, and the applicant is informed of the decision in writing.

9.5 Assignment

In certain circumstances, Secure Tenants have the right to assign their tenancy to someone else. As assignments use up the right of succession and a tenancy can only be succeeded to once, someone who was granted their tenancy as a succession cannot carry out an assignment.

Secure Tenants have the right to assign their tenancy if:

- A succession to the tenancy has not previously taken place **and**
- The proposed assignee would be eligible for housing under the council's Housing allocations policy

and either

- a) The proposed assignee would be eligible to succeed to the tenancy on the death of the tenant **or**
- b) An order is made by the Court

If an assignment takes place, this uses the right of succession and there is no further right of succession to the tenancy. The council will not approve assignments intended to circumvent statutory succession rules.

9.6 Making best use of the council's homes

Underlying themes of this policy are support for household mobility and making the best use of the council's limited housing stock by:

- An effective Housing Allocations Scheme.
- Carefully managing successions and assignments.

- Encouraging and facilitating mutual exchanges Swap your council house with someone | Canterbury City Council.
- Enabling transfers through the Housing Needs Register. Information on eligibility and the process is available in the council's Housing Allocations Scheme.
- The Assisted Moves Scheme, which is carried out through our sustainment offering.
- Addressing tenancy fraud to ensure council housing is available only to those that qualify and in greatest housing need Report tenancy fraud | Canterbury City Council.
- A continuous programme of tenancy audits to understand the needs of tenants, including overcrowding or under occupying, as well as any tenant or landlord responsibilities outstanding.

9.7 Mutual exchanges

Mutual exchanges are recognised as an important means by which tenants may improve their housing circumstances and by which the council promotes the effective and sustainable use of its housing stock.

Secure Tenants and Flexible Tenants with preserved statutory rights have the right to mutually exchange their tenancy with another qualifying tenant of a local authority or RP, subject to the council's consent and the relevant legal and regulatory provisions.

The council offers and publicises access to a mutual exchange service, enabling eligible tenants to identify potential exchange matches without payment of a fee, in line with the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenancy Standard Swap your council house with someone | Canterbury City Council

Link to a free mutual exchange service https://www.homeswapper.me/

The council takes reasonable steps to ensure that tenants who may otherwise be unable to access the mutual exchange service are provided with appropriate assistance.

Tenants seeking to mutually exchange are provided with clear information about the potential implications of an exchange, including the impact on tenure, rent and service charges.

Applications for mutual exchange are determined in accordance with Schedule 3 of the Housing Act 1985, associated legislation, and regulatory requirements. Consent is not withheld unreasonably.

The council may refuse consent where one or more statutory grounds for refusal apply, including (but not limited to):

- There are any rent arrears.
- Any other housing debt is owed to the council.
- The existence of possession proceedings, legal notices or court orders relating to breach of tenancy.
- Breaches of tenancy conditions.
- The accommodation is not suitable for the incoming household, including under occupation or overcrowding.
- The property has been adapted for a person with disabilities and the exchange would result in the loss of suitable provision.
- The property is not occupied as the tenant's only or principal home; or
- Any other ground set out in schedule 3 of the housing act 1985.

If consent is refused, the council will provide clear written reasons for the decision.

9.7.1 Mutual exchange and transfer eligibility: outstanding rechargeable repairs

Applicants seeking to transfer or move to another property will not normally be eligible to do so if there are outstanding rechargeable repairs, or recharge debts.

Any rechargeable works identified at the tenant's current property must either:

- Be completed by the tenant to the required standard prior to the move; or
- Be recharged to the tenant and settled in full before a move can proceed.

The council reserves the right to withhold approval for a transfer or move until all outstanding recharge issues have been resolved.

Details are explained in the Housing recharge policy.

9.7.2 Conditional offers

A property may be offered to an existing tenant on a **conditional basis** pending the outcome of an inspection of the tenant's current home.

If rechargeable repairs or tenancy breaches are identified during the inspection, the offer may be withdrawn or delayed until the issues have been rectified, or appropriate arrangements have been agreed.

9.7.3 Conditional offers: inspection of the tenant's current home

A property inspection will be carried out **at least two weeks** prior to the proposed moving date for all transferring tenants.

The purpose of the inspection is to:

- Assess the condition of the current property.
- Identify any tenant damage or rechargeable repairs.
- Advise the tenant of any works required before they vacate.
- Determine whether any recharges will be applied.

Where significant rechargeable repairs are identified, the move may be delayed or the property offer withdrawn until the matter has been satisfactorily resolved.

9.8 Tenant improvements

Tenants may carry out improvements or alterations to their home with the council's prior written consent, unless the works are expressly permitted without consent under the tenancy agreement. Requests for permission must be put in writing to the council.

The council recognises that a tenant's home is their principal place of residence and that tenants may wish to make improvements or alterations to better meet their household's needs.

Consent is not withheld unreasonably, but the council must be satisfied that any works are safe, lawful, and do not adversely affect the condition, value, or future management of its housing stock. Therefore, tenants must obtain permission first which will usually require a specification of works. If permission is granted, access must be given for post inspections ensure works are completed to a satisfactory standard.

When tenants terminate their tenancy, they may be eligible for compensation for improvements they have made to their home. Details are explained in the Compensation and redress policy.

9.9 Tenancy fraud

It is fundamental to the effective management of the council's homes that they are allocated to and occupied only by households who are eligible. The council has a zero-tolerance approach to tenancy fraud.

Tenancy fraud undermines the integrity of the housing system, deprives eligible households of a home, and may constitute a criminal offence under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013. If tenancy fraud is identified, the council will take appropriate civil and/or criminal action, which may include possession proceedings and prosecution.

The prevention of tenancy fraud is addressed across the full housing lifecycle, with clear accountability at each stage.

The council's Allocations Team is responsible for establishing and verifying an applicant's eligibility and qualification for social housing prior to any offer being made, whether the resulting tenancy is granted by the council or through nomination to an RP. This provides assurance that allocations decisions are lawful, fair and consistent with the Housing allocations policy

The council's tenancy management function is responsible for maintaining the integrity of occupation throughout the life of the tenancy and for identifying, investigating and responding to suspected tenancy fraud after a tenancy has been granted.

Tenancy fraud includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing false or misleading information, or failing to disclose material information, when applying for housing or responding to an allocation offer.
- Unlawful subletting or parting with possession of the property.
- Retaining a property following the death of a tenant where there is no right to succeed.
- Carrying out an unauthorised mutual exchange.
- Selling or transferring keys for financial gain.
- Providing false information in connection with statutory housing rights, including right to buy and succession.

The council maintains appropriate governance arrangements to ensure effective information sharing between allocation, nomination and tenancy management functions, and with RP where applicable, to prevent, detect and address tenancy fraud.

The council also promotes reporting of suspected tenancy fraud on its website at https://www.canterbury.gov.uk/housing/report-tenancy-fraud and publicises enforcement action where appropriate, as part of its wider deterrence strategy.

To support these principles, the council may carry out tenancy audits and proportionate verification activity to confirm that homes are occupied by the approved household as their only or principal home. This may include announced checks and, if appropriate, unannounced visits to make contact and seek verification.

Tenants are expected to provide accurate and complete information about household composition and occupation and must not withhold material information where it affects their tenancy rights, eligibility or the lawful occupation of the home. The council carries out all verification and audit activity in a way that is lawful, proportionate, and respectful, balancing effective fraud prevention with tenants' right to live in their home without unreasonable interference.

9.10 Household changes

The council takes a proportionate, risk-based approach to requests that affect who is permitted to live in a council home, including requests for additional long-term household members.

Requests for changes to household composition are considered on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the tenancy agreement, safeguarding considerations, the prevention of unlawful occupation and the effective use of housing stock.

The council expects each property to be occupied only by the approved household. No person may live at a council property on a permanent or long-term basis unless they were included in the approved household at the start of the tenancy or the council has given written permission.

In considering any request for additional household members, the council assesses whether the proposed occupation is compatible with the nature and purpose of the accommodation, including where the property is age restricted, for example, Independent Living Schemes, sometimes still referred to as sheltered housing.

9.11 Abandonment

The council expects all tenants to occupy their home as their only or principal residence, in accordance with the tenancy agreement.

If it appears that a tenant has permanently vacated the property without formally bringing the tenancy to an end, the council may treat the tenancy as having been abandoned.

In cases where abandonment is clear and unambiguous, the council may recover possession of the property without serving a Notice to Quit, where it is lawful to do so.

If this occurs, the handling of any goods left at the property and any further action is carried out in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions and the council's procedures.

Decisions relating to suspected or confirmed abandonment are made fairly, proportionately and with due regard to the prevention of unlawful eviction, the protection of tenant rights, and the effective use of the council's housing stock.

10. Rents and service charges

The council's approach to rents and service charges is explained in detail in the HRA rent setting policy.

11. Tenant engagement and consultation

The council is committed to involving tenants in shaping policies and services, which is explained in Tenant Engagement Strategy 2026 to 2030.

The council believes that tenants' voices matter and should shape its decisions and services.

A new Tenant Engagement Framework (2025 to 2028) has been introduced, based on what tenants said they want:

- To be listened to from the start,
- To see how your input leads to action,
- To influence real change, and
- To hold the council to account when things go wrong.

The framework also helps to meet the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard set by the Regulator of Social Housing.

As part of the new strategy, Tenant panels' role in governance explains how tenants can get involved and what impact they have. This shows how tenant panels are involved at every stage, from helping to shape policies and services, to reviewing and challenging performance, including:

- Contributing ideas when new policies or service changes are proposed.
- Provide feedback to help shape draft policies before they are reviewed by council officers or Cabinet.
- Assess the success of any service changes.
- Scrutinise performance.

- Review real-time data on complaints, repairs and satisfaction.
- Help identify what is working and areas for improvement.

This inclusive approach helps the council to fix issues and improve services.

More generally, the response to recent major consultation exercises on housing-related strategies and policies has been disappointing. Hitherto, it has focused on partner organisations, statutory consultees and community groups with limited success.

Contacting households by post is expensive and produces limited results. Therefore, the council is developing a more flexible, responsive approach to encourage participation by tenants and service users, including greater use of:

- The tenant e-newsletter with jargon-free articles and hyperlinks to relevant consultations.
- Improved identification of communities of interest.
- Short, targeted e-surveys.
- Tenant focus groups.
- "Armchair advisers".

12. Use of the private rented sector

The council has a duty to provide accommodation for certain people who are homeless or about to become homeless through no fault of their own. Under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 the council can house homeless households in the private rented sector. This is not the council's default position but is a useful additional resource to prevent and tackle homelessness.

The council runs a successful social lettings and management agency, Canterbury Lettings https://canterburylettings.co.uk/ which provides professional services to local landlords, enabling tenants to rent well managed and well-maintained homes. Services include:

- Basic reference and affordability check.
- Accompanied viewings.
- Inventory.
- Tenancy training and instruction.
- Tenant support.
- Tenancy agreements.
- Deposit or deposit guarantee.
- Payment of housing benefit direct to landlord where applicable.
- An arranged gas safety check/
- Energy performance certificate if required.
- Utilities set up.
- Rent collection.
- Arranged maintenance.
- Day to day tenancy management.
- Assistance to end tenancy.

12.1 The type of tenancy Canterbury Lettings grants

The Social Lettings Agency grants Assured Periodic Tenancies only, with no fixed term and no end date, operating on a rolling basis (usually monthly).

Tenancy agreements are based on the government produced guidance for use in the private rented sector, adapted to reflect the provisions of the Renters' Rights Act 2025.

12.2 Monitoring of tenancies and continuation of occupation

Tenancies are monitored throughout their duration. Any issues arising from either the tenant or landlord perspective are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

As Assured Periodic Tenancies do not come to an end unless ended by the tenant or lawfully terminated by the landlord, there is no renewal process. The tenancy continues automatically, providing tenants with long-term stability and continuity, while minimising administrative burdens for landlords and the Agency.

The Social Lettings Agency supports and sustains tenancies wherever possible, to enable tenants to establish stable homes and to provide consistency for landlords.

12.3 Circumstances when a tenancy may be ended or not supported

The Social Lettings Agency may not support the continuation of a tenancy, and a landlord may seek possession using the appropriate legal grounds, where one or more of the following apply:

- There are significant or persistent rent arrears.
- There are serious breaches of the terms of the tenancy agreement.
- The property is statutorily overcrowded.
- There is evidence of domestic abuse or serious safeguarding concerns affecting occupancy.
- The landlord intends to sell the property or requires possession for another lawful reason under the Housing Act 1988 (as amended).

Any decision to seek possession rests with the private landlord and must be made in accordance with the lawful possession grounds and procedures in force at the time.

12.4 Appeals and complaints

If a tenant wishes to complain about Canterbury Lettings or disagrees with how their tenancy has been managed, they may use the council's Complaints procedure | Canterbury City Council

Property agents are required by law to join a government authorised consumer redress scheme. Canterbury Lettings is a member of the 'Property Redress Scheme' https://www.theprs.co.uk/

Tenants are considered consumers for the purposes of this scheme. If they remain dissatisfied after exhausting Canterbury Lettings' internal complaints process, they may escalate their complaint to the Property Redress Scheme in line with its published criteria and procedures, available at https://www.theprs.co.uk/Consumer

13. Sustainable communities

The Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028 is inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the council works in partnership to build sustainable communities by focusing on activities that build individuals' social and cultural capital and give them pride in where they live.

As a social housing landlord, the council's approach comes from enabling, influencing, managing and transforming the space in which our residents live. We believe that sustainability can be supported by:

- The planning and design of neighbourhoods and housing developments that encourage economic vitality, civic engagement, better public health and environmental sustainability.
- Supporting markets and commercial opportunities for local SMEs, providing space where local producers can sell their produce, improving sustainability, economic health and reducing our carbon footprint.
- Working in partnership with the planning process to shape our places so that they result in liveable, sustainable communities.
- Contributing to creating diverse, lively and sociable public environments that help build social capital and place capital.
- Understanding how our assets can provide both a financial return and provide a focus for connection, promoting economic revitalisation with a focus on the quality of work and opportunity for employees, allowing local talent to flourish.
- Providing good quality homes with long term security of tenure at rents that local people can afford where they can raise their families free from the blight of anti-social behaviour.

The key priorities of the Corporate Plan 2024 to 2028 are:

- A greener district, with a clear focus on the climate change and biodiversity emergencies by reducing the carbone footprint of council homes and making them more energy efficient.
- A fairer district, with a key role in supporting services and people most in need.
- A better district, with more council housing, more apprenticeships, and more support for local organisations that run frontline services for our residents.
- A stronger district rhat emphasises inclusivity, tenant engagement and giving the best value services to all our residents.

Housing related actions include:

- Taking an early intervention approach to our housing services.
- Reducing our use of temporary accommodation outside our district.
- Increasing the number of council homes.
- Putting local people first for housing.
- Tenure blind design of new homes.
- Dispersing new affordable homes throughout a development to create a cohesive community.
- Long term security of tenure.
- Effective tenant engagement and consultation.
- Planned maintenance programmes that prioritise energy efficiency.
- Advice and support on landlord and tenant issues, benefits, money advice.
    - Help with money and debt | Canterbury City Council,
    - Get help to pay your council house rent | Canterbury City Council,
    - Help with housing costs | Canterbury City Council,

    - Benefits and support | Canterbury City Council
- Robust approach to anti-social behaviour and tenancy fraud.
    - Anti-social behaviour policy
    - Neighbourhood noise policy statement
    - Report tenancy fraud | Canterbury City Council
    - Report benefit fraud | Canterbury City Council
- Creating a pleasant environment by good design, maintaining homes and community facilities to a good standard.

14. Policy review

The Tenancy Policy will be reviewed regularly as changes in legislation, regulation or guidance may dictate.

Minor changes which do not make a significant difference to service provision will be made to the document by delegated authority to the Head of Housing & Community.

Significant changes will be taken through the council's governance process.

15. Equality and diversity

The Council is committed to ensuring that this policy is applied fairly, consistently and without discrimination. In delivering this policy, the Council will:

- Comply with the equality act 2010, including the public sector equality duty
- Consider the diverse needs of tenants, including those relating to disability, age, gender, race, religion or belief, sexuality and family status
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled tenants in accordance with its reasonable adjustments framework and vulnerability policy
- Ensure that tenancy related decisions are sensitive to issues of vulnerability, safeguarding, cultural needs and household composition
- Engage with a diverse range of tenants when reviewing policies, ensuring tenant voice influences decision-making
- Assess the impact of this policy through an equality impact assessment, to be reviewed with each substantive policy revision

Appendix 5

Summary of amendments to the text of the Draft Tenancy Strategy 2026		
Section	**Amendment**	**Reason**
1. Introduction	Text edited and streamlined.	Improve clarity and flow.
2. Statutory and regulatory requirements	Text edited and streamlined.	Clarity.
2.2 The council's expectations	Section deleted.	Remove duplication, as council's expectations are stated throughout the text.
4. Links to other strategies	Expanded list to include links to the council's operational housing policies and tenants' handbook.	Clarity.
5. Statement of principles	Section deleted.	Remove duplication, as council's principles are stated throughout the text.
5.Background and context	Section added.	Clarity.
5.1Tenancy types and length	Section added.	Clarity.
5.2 National data on tenure of new social lettings	Section added.	In response to question at Overview Committee.
6 to 10 Types of tenancy. Now 6.1 to 7.1	Re-ordered to reflect new section 5.1 and text edited.	Clarity in response to question at Overview Committee and improve flow.
8. Survivors of domestic abuse. Now section 11.	Text expanded to include an expected approach based on principles, including perpetrator accountability.	In response to question at Overview Committee.
10. Tenancy sustainment	Text expanded to explain tenancy sustainment in more detail.	In response to consultation.
13. to 14 Mutual exchanges and succession	Order of paragraphs changed.	Clarity.
19. Sustainable communities	Section added.	In response to consultation.
22. Tenancy policies	Section deleted.	Remove repetition of text contained in section 2.
Summary of amendments to the text of the Draft Tenancy Policy 2026		
Section	**Amendment**	**Reason**
6. Related strategies policies and key documents	Link inserted to webpage containing the framework of housing policies.	Clarity and to demonstrate policy alignment.
9.1 Survivors of domestic abuse	New section inserted set out principles of effective intervention, the council's efforts to gain Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation, the launch of the council's Domestic Abuse policy and training for staff.	In response to question at Overview Committee and to reflect work to provide better, more responsive service.
9.2 Tenancy sustainment	Text inserted from the draft Income Collection and Arrears Management Policy to explain the approach to tenancy sustainment.	In response to consultation.
9.3 Sole and joint tenancies	Text inserted that applicants must meet the eligibility criteria of the Housing allocations policy 2023.	Clarity.

Appendix 5

9.12 The Assisted Moves Scheme	Incorporated into section 9.9 Making best use of the council's homes.	Remove duplication.
9.14 Mutual exchange and transfer eligibility: outstanding rechargeable repairs	New section with link to Housing recharge policy.	Clarity, policy alignment and more effective housing management.
9.15 Conditional offers	New section with link to Housing recharge policy.	Clarity, policy alignment and more effective housing management.
9.16 Conditional offers: inspection of the tenant's current home	New section	Clarity, policy alignment and more effective housing management.
9.17 Tenant engagement	Additional text referencing Tenant Engagement Strategy 2026 to 2030, Tenant Engagement Framework (2025 to 2028) and Tenant panels' role in governance	Clarity, policy alignment and more effective housing management.
9.17 Consultation	Additional text to encourage tenant involvement and improve the effectiveness of consultation.	In response to discussion at Overview Committee.
13. Sustainable communities	Section added.	In response to consultation and better alignment with the Corporate Plan.



canterbury city council

Draft Tenancy Strategy

Consultation responses

1. Introduction

We invited residents, social housing tenants, housing providers and local organisations to share their views on our draft Tenancy Strategy 2026.

The council has a statutory duty to produce a Tenancy Strategy to guide Registered Providers of social housing when they develop their own tenancy policies for affordable homes in the Canterbury district.

The strategy was written from the council's perspective as the Local Housing Authority. It set out our expectations of all social housing providers operating in the district.

It covered how tenancies should be granted and managed, how vulnerable tenants should be supported, and how providers should help make best use of the limited number of affordable homes available locally.

The survey asked for views on:

- how clearly the strategy explained the council's role and why a Tenancy Strategy is required
- how well the strategy set out the council's expectations of Registered Providers
- whether the strategy gave sufficient weight to key issues, including tenancy types, tenant mobility, preventing homelessness, and supporting vulnerable people
- anything respondents thought was missing from the draft

The consultation ran from Monday 15 June to Monday 7 September 2026.

2. Executive summary

The consultation received three responses.

With a number this small, the results show individual views only and should not be read as representing the wider district.

Two respondents found the strategy easy or very easy to read.

One found it neither easy nor difficult.

One strongly supported the strategy, one supported it and one neither supported nor opposed it.

All three found it clear why the council must have a Tenancy Strategy.

All three agreed or strongly agreed that it explained the council's expectations of Registered Providers.

On 12 of the 15 issues listed, all three respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the strategy gave sufficient importance and clarity.

One respondent disagreed on tenant mobility and on mixed and sustainable communities.

One respondent neither agreed nor disagreed on appeals and complaints.

A respondent asked for more detail to be provided on mixed and sustainable communities and on appeals and complaints.

One also asked for clearer use of the term "rightsizing".

A respondent raised rent in advance, the bedroom tax and service charges.

3. Consultation methodology

Consultation took place between Monday 15 June and Monday 7 September 2026.

The following methods were used to seek views:

- an online questionnaire, which received three responses
- a paper version of the questionnaire, for which no responses were received
- A meeting of the Resident Engagement Panel, where members had the opportunity to speak to a council officer
- written representations, for which no responses were received

The consultation was promoted in the following ways:

- an article on the council’s newsroom site
- posts on the council’s social media channels
- Canterbury City Council corporate newsletters
- an agenda item at the Resident Engagement Panel
- direct emails to a wide range of stakeholders encouraging them to respond to the consultation
- notifications sent to individuals who had requested to be informed about council consultations

4. Findings

4.1 Respondent profile – overall

4.1.1 Respondents were asked: Which of the following best describes you?

Each respondent came from a different group.

Response	Number	Percentage
Council tenant	-	-
Housing association tenant	1	33.3%
Applicant for social housing	-	-
Resident of the district	-	-
A local business	-	-
Member of a community of volunteer group	-	-
An MP	-	-
A social housing provider or partner organisation	1	33.3%
A neighbouring local authority	-	-
A councillor	-	-
A representative of a partner organisation (for example a charity, school, health service)	-	-
Other (please specify):	1	33.3%

4.1.2 Respondents were asked: What age are you?

Response	Number	Percentage
Under 18	-	-
18 to 25	-	-
26 to 34	-	-
35 to 44	-	-
45 to 54	1	33.3%
55 to 64	1	33.3%
65 to 74	-	-
75 to 84	-	-
85 and above	-	-
Prefer not to say	-	-
No reply	1	33.3%

4.1.3 Respondents were asked: What gender are you?

Response	Number	Percentage
Male	-	-
Female	2	66.7%
Prefer to self-describe (for example, non-binary, gender fluid etc)	-	-
Prefer not to say	-	-
No reply	1	33.3%

4.1.4 Respondents were asked: Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	-	-
No	2	66.7%
Prefer not to say	-	-
No reply	1	33.3%

4.1.5 Respondents were asked: What is your ethnic background?

Response	Number	Percentage
White (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British)	1	33.3%
Irish	-	-
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	-	-
Any other White background (please specify):	-	-
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	1	33.3%
Asian / Asian British	-	-
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	-	-
Other ethnic group (please specify):	-	-
Prefer not to say	-	-
No reply	1	33.3%

4.2 Respondents were asked: Overall, how easy was the draft Tenancy Strategy to read and understand?

Two respondents found the strategy easy or very easy to read.

Response	Number	Percentage
Very easy	1	33.3%
Easy	1	33.3%
Neither easy nor difficult	1	33.3%
Difficult	-	-
Very difficult	-	-

Respondents then had the opportunity to explain their answers.

The one respondent who commented said it was *"not easy but not difficult".*

4.3 Respondents were asked three questions on the council's role and expectations

All three respondents gave a positive answer to each question.

None left a comment on these questions.

Question	Very clear / Strongly agree	Clear / Agree	Neither	Negative
Is it clear why the council must have a Tenancy Strategy?	2	1	0	0
To what extent do you agree that the strategy clearly explains the difference between the council's tenancy strategy and the tenancy policies that individual landlords must produce?	1	2	0	0
To what extent do you agree that the strategy clearly explains the council's expectations of Registered Providers operating in the district?	1	2	0	0

4.4 Respondents were asked about importance and clarity of key issues

No respondent strongly disagreed with any item.

Three items received responses other than "agree" or "strongly agree":

- **tenant mobility:** One respondent disagreed and commented that “rightsizing” means downsizing and asked why that term was not used.

  They added that if rightsizing was meant, the strategy should also cover households needing bigger homes.

- **mixed and sustainable communities:** One respondent disagreed, commenting that there is not much said about this or how it is achieved.

- **appeals and complaints:** One respondent neither agreed nor disagreed, commenting “Not much about this”.

Issue	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree
Types of tenancies granted	1	2	0	0
When and why a particular type of tenancy is granted	0	3	0	0
Length of fixed term tenancies	0	3	0	0
When and why a further tenancy is granted, or an existing one ends	0	3	0	0
Complying with the Regulator of Social Housing	1	2	0	0
Cooperating with the council to address local housing needs	1	2	0	0
Ensuring tenancy policies do not adversely affect homelessness	1	2	0	0
Balancing the interests of applicants, tenants and landlords	0	3	0	0
Encouraging tenant mobility to make best use of affordable homes	1	1	0	1
Creating and maintaining mixed and sustainable communities	1	1	0	1
Helping vulnerable people sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions	0	3	0	0
Tenants abiding by tenancy terms, backed by sanctions when necessary	1	2	0	0
Combatting tenancy fraud	1	2	0	0
Simple and accessible appeals and complaints processes	1	1	1	0
Advice and assistance to find alternative accommodation if another tenancy is granted	1	2	0	0
Discretionary succession rights, taking account of vulnerable household members	2	1	0	0

4.5 Respondents were asked: Is there anything you expected to see in the draft Tenancy Strategy that is not included?

One respondent answered this question.

They asked for more emphasis on helping tenants who cannot afford the bedroom tax, or to pay off rent arrears, to move quickly.

They also noted the draft did not mention the policy of many Registered Providers requiring new tenants to pay rent in advance.

They said this causes difficulties, especially where it is more than one week.

4.6 Respondents were asked: Overall, to what extent do you support the Tenancy Policy as proposed?

One respondent commented that "creating and maintaining mixed and sustainable communities" needs expanding on.

They said that when demand is high and homes are scarce, housing only those highest on the housing register could have the opposite effect.

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly support	1	33.3%
Support	1	33.3%
Neither support nor oppose	1	33.3%
Oppose	-	-
Strongly oppose	-	-

4.7 Respondents were asked: Do you have any other comments about the draft strategy?

One respondent noted that not all current service charges made by Registered Providers are covered by housing benefit or Universal Credit housing costs.

5. Resident Engagement Panel

The Head of Housing and Community, Tracy Chambers, presented an overview of the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy refresh at the Resident Engagement Panel on 16 June 2026.

Tracy noted that the Tenancy Strategy sets out how tenancies are managed and is a statutory requirement for registered providers.

The policy is being refreshed to reflect changes in social housing regulation, tenant feedback, the move away from flexible tenancies and forthcoming Renters' Reform changes.

Key principles of the refreshed policy were outlined as:

- meeting housing need
- providing stability and secure tenancies
- making best use of housing stock
- supporting tenants' rights
- complying with rent standards
- ensuring succession policies are applied fairly

Attendees raised the following:

- **Notice period on death of a tenant:** Attendees asked how long a property can remain occupied following a tenant's death before it must be vacated.

  The standard notice period is 28 days, though the council aims to work flexibly with the family where possible.

- **Tenancy sustainment support:** In response to a question about sustainment support, Tracy confirmed a dedicated sustainment team is in place (1.5 FTE), and that a wider review of capacity is underway.

  The importance of supporting tenants to claim benefits and access appropriate help was acknowledged.

- **Universal Credit transition delays:** Attendees asked what steps are being taken to address delays in rent payment when tenants transfer to Universal Credit.

  Tracy confirmed it aims to make early contact with affected tenants as soon as a transfer is identified, given that Universal Credit payments are not routed directly to the council and offer less flexibility than legacy housing benefit.

- **Positive feedback:** One attendee shared positive feedback about support received from the sustainment team.

- **Succession rights:** A question was raised regarding succession rights, referencing a specific case where a request had been declined following the death of a family member.

  Tracy clarified that under the policy, a tenancy can only be succeeded once (for example from one spouse to another); further succession to a subsequent generation is not permitted.

  This position was explained as necessary to ensure fair and appropriate use of housing stock over time, rather than a property remaining within one family indefinitely.

  Mutual exchanges and transfers of social tenancies from other local authorities also count towards this one-succession limit.

6. Written representations

No written representations were received as part of this consultation.

7. Conclusions

Three responses were received during the consultation period.

All three respondents found it clear why the council must have a strategy and what it expects of Registered Providers.

On 12 of the 15 issues, all agreed or strongly agreed that it gave enough weight.

One respondent raised that "creating and maintaining mixed and sustainable communities" topic needs more detail.

One respondent commented that the term "rightsizing" wording could be clearer and that the council may wish to use either the plainer term "downsizing" or add wording on households who need larger homes.

One respondent highlighted that "appeals and complaints" issue could expand more.

With three responses, these results show individual views only.

They give us useful pointers but do not show the views of the district as a whole.



canterbury city council

Draft Tenancy Policy

Consultation responses

1. Introduction

We invited residents, council tenants and local organisations to share their views on our draft Tenancy Policy.

The Tenancy Policy sets out how the council manages its own homes.

It covers tenancy types, rights and responsibilities, succession and household changes, and how decisions are made fairly and consistently.

We wanted to hear from current and prospective council tenants, and anyone with an interest in how social housing is managed in the Canterbury district.

The survey asked for views on:

- how easy the draft policy is to understand
- how clearly tenancy types are explained
- whether the council's approach to introductory and secure tenancies is fair
- how well the policy balances supporting tenants with making best use of limited housing
- whether the policy shows a clear commitment to supporting tenants to sustain their tenancies
- anything missing from the draft

The consultation ran from Monday 15 June to Monday 7 September 2026.

2. Executive summary

- Of the six respondents, four were another interested resident or organisation and two were current council tenants.
- Most respondents found the draft Tenancy Policy reasonably accessible, with four describing it as neither easy nor difficult to understand.
- A further two respondents found the policy easy or very easy to understand and no respondents reported finding it difficult or very difficult.
- All six respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the council's approach of normally offering an introductory tenancy before a secure tenancy.
- Three respondents strongly supported or supported the policy overall and three were neither supportive nor opposed.
- No respondents opposed the policy.

3. Consultation methodology

Consultation took place between Monday 15 June and Monday 7 September 2026.

The following methods were used to seek views:

- an online questionnaire, which received six responses
- a paper version of the questionnaire, for which no responses were received
- A meeting of the Resident Engagement Panel, where members had the opportunity to speak to a council officer
- written representations, for which no responses were received

The consultation was promoted in the following ways:

- an article on the council’s newsroom site
- posts on the council’s social media channels
- Canterbury City Council corporate newsletters
- an agenda item at the Resident Engagement Panel
- direct emails to a wide range of stakeholders encouraging them to respond to the consultation
- notifications sent to individuals who had requested to be informed about council consultations

4. Findings

The survey asked for views on the clarity of the draft policy, the council's approach to tenancy types and decision-making and overall support for he policy.

4.1 Respondent profile – overall

4.1.1 Respondents were asked: Which of the following best describes you?

Four of six respondents identified as another interested resident or organisation and two were council tenants.

Response	Number	Percentage
A current council tenant	2	33.3%
Applying for council housing	-	-
Living with or supporting a council tenant	-	-
Another interested resident or organisation	4	66.7%
Other (please specify):	-	-

4.1.2 Respondents were asked: What age are you?

Response	Number	Percentage
Under 18	-	-
18 to 25	-	-
26 to 34	-	-
35 to 44	1	16.7%
45 to 54	-	-
55 to 64	-	-
65 to 74	1	16.7%
75 to 84	1	16.7%
85 and above	-	-
Prefer not to say	1	16.7%
No reply	2	33.3%

4.1.3 Respondents were asked: What gender are you?

Response	Number	Percentage
Male	-	-
Female	2	33.3%

Prefer to self-describe (for example, non-binary, gender fluid etc)	-	-
Prefer not to say	2	33.3%
No reply	2	33.3%

4.1.4 Respondents were asked: Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	1	16.7%
No	1	16.7%
Prefer not to say	2	33.3%
No reply	2	33.3%

4.1.5 Respondents were asked: What is your ethnic background?

Response	Number	Percentage
White (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British)	1	16.7%
Irish	-	-
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	-	-
Any other White background (please specify):	1	16.7%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	-	-
Asian / Asian British	-	-
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	-	-
Other ethnic group (please specify):	-	-
Prefer not to say	2	33.3%
No reply	2	33.3%

4.2 Respondents were asked: Overall, how easy was the draft Tenancy Policy to understand?

Four of six respondents said the policy was neither easy nor difficult to understand.

One respondent said it was very easy and one said it was easy.

No respondent said it was difficult or very difficult.

Response	Number	Percentage
Very easy	1	16.7%
Easy	1	16.7%
Neither easy nor difficult	4	66.7%
Difficult	-	-
Very difficult	-	-

Respondents then had the opportunity to explain their answers.

One respondent commented: *“It was easy enough to understand.”*

4.3 Respondents were asked: How clear is the explanation of tenancy types (for example introductory, secure, non-secure or licences)?

Four respondents found the explanation of tenancy types very clear and one found it clear.

No respondent found it unclear or very unclear.

Response	Number	Percentage
Very clear	4	66.7%
Clear	1	16.7%
Neither clear nor unclear	1	16.7%
Unclear	-	-
Very unclear	-	-

Respondents then had the opportunity to explain their answers; however, no additional comments were provided.

4.4 Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree with the council’s approach of normally offering an introductory tenancy first, followed by a secure (lifetime) tenancy where the tenancy has been conducted satisfactorily?

All six respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the council's approach of normally offering an introductory tenancy before a secure tenancy.

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	4	66.7%
Agree	2	33.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Strongly disagree	-	-
Not sure	-	-

Respondents then had the opportunity to explain their answers; however, no additional comments were provided.

4.5 Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree that the policy is fair about how tenancy decisions are made (for example succession, household changes, or ending a tenancy)?

Four respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the policy is fair about how tenancy decisions are made.

One respondent neither agreed nor disagreed and one was not sure.

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	33.3%
Agree	2	33.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	16.7%
Disagree	-	-
Strongly disagree	-	-
Not sure	1	16.7%

Respondents then had the opportunity to explain their answers; however, no additional comments were provided.

4.6 Respondents were asked: How clear is the policy about tenants' right and responsibilities?

Five respondents found the policy very clear or clear about tenants' rights and responsibilities.

One respondent was neutral.

Response	Number	Percentage
Very clear	1	16.7%
Clear	4	66.7%
Neither clear nor unclear	1	16.7%
Unclear	-	-
Very unclear	-	-

Respondents then had the opportunity to explain their answers; however, no additional comments were provided.

4.7 Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree that the policy strikes the right balance between supporting tenants, and making best use of limited council housing?

Four respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the policy strikes the right balance.

Two respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	1	16.7%
Agree	3	50.0%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	33.3%
Disagree	-	-
Strongly disagree	-	-
Not sure	-	-

Respondents then had the opportunity to explain their answers; however, no additional comments were provided.

4.8 Respondents were asked: If you live in, or may move into, age restricted accommodation: to what extent do you agree that the policy properly explains how decisions will reflect the purpose of these schemes?

Three respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the policy properly explains how decisions will reflect the purpose of age restricted schemes.

Three respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	1	16.7%
Agree	2	33.3%

Neither agree nor disagree	3	50.0%
Disagree	-	-
Strongly disagree	-	-
Not sure	-	-

Respondents then had the opportunity to explain their answers; however, no additional comments were provided.

4.9 Respondents were asked: To what extent do you agree that the policy shows a clear commitment to supporting tenants to sustain their tenancies and taking vulnerability into account?

Five respondents agreed that the policy shows a clear commitment to supporting tenants to sustain their tenancies.

One respondent neither agreed nor disagreed.

Response	**Number**	**Percentage**
Strongly agree	-	-
Agree	5	83.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	16.7%
Disagree	-	-
Strongly disagree	-	-
Not sure	-	-

Respondents then had the opportunity to explain their answers; however, no additional comments were provided.

4.10 Respondents were asked: Is there anything you expected to see in the draft Tenancy policy that is not included?

One respondent said a glossary of terms would be useful.

One respondent said there should be more emphasis on enabling tenants affected by the bedroom tax to move quickly to a right-sized property when they cannot afford to pay the bedroom tax and/or rent arrears.

One respondent asked where Annex A was.

4.11 Respondents were asked: Overall, to what extent do you support the Tenancy Policy as proposed?

Three respondents strongly supported or supported the Tenancy Policy.

Three respondents neither supported nor opposed it.

No respondent opposed the policy.

Response	Number	Percentage
Strongly support	1	16.7%
Support	2	33.3%
Neither support nor oppose	3	50.0%
Oppose	-	-
Strongly oppose	-	-

Respondents then had the opportunity to explain their answers; however, no additional comments were provided.

4.12 Respondents were asked: Do you have any other comments about the draft policy?

One respondent referred again to Annex A.

4.13 Respondents were asked: Does anything in the policy feel unclear, or difficult to apply in real life?

Two respondents commented on the use of the term ‘discretionary succession’, stating that it is misleading because it does not exist in law.

They suggested that ‘direct let’ would be a more appropriate term and would better align with the allocations policy.

5. Resident Engagement Panel

The Head of Housing and Community, Tracy Chambers presented an overview of the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy refresh at the Resident Engagement Panel on 16 June 2026.

Tracy noted that the Tenancy Strategy sets out how tenancies are managed and is a statutory requirement for registered providers.

The policy is being refreshed to reflect changes in social housing regulation, tenant feedback, the move away from flexible tenancies and forthcoming Renters' Reform changes.

Key principles of the refreshed policy were outlined as:

- meeting housing need
- providing stability and secure tenancies
- making best use of housing stock
- supporting tenants' rights
- complying with rent standards
- ensuring succession policies are applied fairly

Attendees raised the following:

- **Notice period on death of a tenant:** Attendees asked how long a property can remain occupied following a tenant's death before it must be vacated.

  The standard notice period is 28 days, though the council aims to work flexibly with the family where possible.

- **Tenancy sustainment support:** In response to a question about sustainment support, Tracy confirmed a dedicated sustainment team is in place (1.5 FTE), and that a wider review of capacity is underway.

  The importance of supporting tenants to claim benefits and access appropriate help was acknowledged.

- **Universal Credit transition delays:** Attendees asked what steps are being taken to address delays in rent payment when tenants transfer to Universal Credit.

  Tracy confirmed it aims to make early contact with affected tenants as soon as a transfer is identified, given that Universal Credit payments are not routed directly to the council and offer less flexibility than legacy housing benefit.
- **Positive feedback:** One attendee shared positive feedback about support

received from the sustainment team.

- **Succession rights:** A question was raised regarding succession rights, referencing a specific case where a request had been declined following the death of a family member.

  Tracy clarified that under the policy, a tenancy can only be succeeded once (for example from one spouse to another); further succession to a subsequent generation is not permitted.

  This position was explained as necessary to ensure fair and appropriate use of housing stock over time, rather than a property remaining within one family indefinitely.

  Mutual exchanges and transfers of social tenancies from other local authorities also count towards this one-succession limit.

6. Written representations

No written representations were received as part of this consultation.

6. Conclusions

Six responses were received during the consultation period.

Respondents generally found the draft Tenancy Policy clear, particularly the explanation of tenancy types and the council's approach to introductory and secure tenancies, which all six respondents agreed with.

Three respondents supported the policy overall, and three were neither supportive nor opposed. No respondent opposed the policy.

Two respondents raised the same specific point: that the term ‘Discretionary Succession’ does not exist in law and that ‘Direct Let’ would be a more appropriate term.

Individual respondents also raised a glossary of terms, support for tenants affected by the bedroom tax, and a query about a missing annex.

Given the low number of responses, these findings should be treated as indicative rather than representative of wider tenant or resident opinion.

Cabinet

7th December 2026

Subject: Review of Fixed Penalty Notice Levels for Environmental Crimes

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Director and Head of Service:

Marie Royle – Director, People

Lora McCourt – Head of Locality Services

Officer:

Lacy Dixon – Senior Enforcement and Community Safety Manager

Cabinet Member:

Cllr Connie Nolan, Cabinet Member for Community safety, Engagement and Inclusion

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Key or Non-Key decision:
Key

Decision Issues:

These matters are within the authority of the Cabinet.

Is any of the information exempt from publication:

This report is open to the public.

CCC ward(s): All

Summary and purpose of the report:

Canterbury City Council is reviewing the Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) levels used for environmental offences following changes to the national enforcement framework. Statutory guidance on litter enforcement was issued in February 2026, and the Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2026 increased the range of penalties available to local authorities from 1 September 2026. The review provides an opportunity to ensure that Canterbury's FPN levels remain proportionate, effective, and aligned with the revised framework.

Cabinet is asked to consider the proposed FPN levels for littering and graffiti, fly-tipping and breaches of the household waste duty of care, together with the benchmarking, payment and enforcement implications.

To Resolve:

1. Adoption of the proposed FPN levels and early-payment amounts in section 2.1. (Option 2)

2. That the impact of the revised levels be reviewed by Cabinet after 12 months, including issue volumes, payment rates, representations, cancellations, prosecutions, income and any evidence of disproportionate impact.

Next stage in process:

If approved officers will implement the revised environmental FPN levels, associated early-payment arrangements and fly-tipping severity criteria. Details will be published via the website, and officers will cascade the decision through the Community Safety Partnership to raise awareness with partners. Targeted communications would also be delivered to reinforce the requirements relation the duty of care and promote the use of authorised waste carriers, alongside the consequences of environmental offending. Finally, briefings and refresher training in relation to the issuing of FPNs will be undertaken with internal teams and contractors.

1. Introduction

Fixed Penalty Notices provide an alternative to prosecution for specified environmental offences. Payment within the permitted period discharges liability to prosecution for that offence. An FPN is not a finding of guilt, and there is no obligation on the Council to offer one where prosecution is considered more appropriate.

From 1 September 2026, the Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2026 increased the maximum fixed penalty for littering from £500 to £750 and for fly-tipping from £1,000 to £5,000. The maximum penalties for graffiti and flyposting remain £500, and for breaches of the household waste duty of care £600.

The review considers whether Canterbury's current FPN levels remain effective, proportionate and financially sustainable. The revised national framework provides the opportunity to review local amounts; it does not, by itself, demonstrate that higher penalties are necessary locally. The proposed levels therefore need to be considered alongside local payment and enforcement outcomes, the benchmarking and the safeguards set out in this report.

2. Detail

2.1 Current and proposed FPN levels and enforcement arrangements

The table below sets out the Council's current FPN levels alongside the proposed changes:

Offence	Current FPN	Current Early Payment Levels	Proposed FPN	Proposed Early Payment Levels
Littering	£200	£100	£300	£200
Graffiti and Fly Posting	£200	£100	£300	£200
Fly Tipping	£1000	No Reduction	Level 1 Offence - £500 Level 2 Offence - £1000	No Reduction
Household waste duty of care	£500	£300	£600	£400

National Enforcement Solutions currently provides littering and PSPO enforcement under a

contract that contains two potential one-year extensions to May 2028. The Council receives 35% of income from paid FPNs, and the contractor receives 65%. Officers are salaried and are not paid commission based on the number of notices issued.

The contract is monitored monthly, including the number, reason, and location of notices issued. Body-worn video is subject to spot checks to support quality assurance. A person receiving an FPN may make representations and provide mitigating information. Depending on the circumstances, this may result in cancellation, an extension of time, or other payment arrangements. These safeguards remain important if the level of penalties increases.

Enforcement of fly-tipping and household waste duty-of-care offences is undertaken by the Enviro Crime Team within Locality Services. The two-tier fly-tipping penalties would be applied using the criteria in Appendix 5.

Level 1 (£500) would ordinarily apply to small-scale deposits of non-hazardous waste with limited environmental or community impact, straightforward clearance and normally no relevant recent offending history. Indicative operational guides are up to approximately 1 cubic metre of waste and direct clearance and disposal costs below £250.

Level 2 (£1,000) will automatically apply where the person has previously received a Level 1 FPN for fly-tipping. It would also ordinarily apply where one or more other factors make the offence materially more serious, including larger deposits, clearance and disposal costs of £250 or more, higher-risk waste, sensitive locations or pollution risks, obstruction or safety hazards, commercial activity, persistent offending or appreciable environmental or community harm.

Except for the automatic escalation following a previous Level 1 FPN, these are indicative criteria rather than automatic thresholds, with each case assessed on its individual circumstances.

Prosecution would be considered for serious cases, including hazardous waste, substantial pollution, very large-scale or organised dumping, repeated offending, serious safety risks or deliberate dumping into a watercourse.

2.2 Benchmarking

Authority	Littering	Fly-tipping	Household duty of care
Thanet	£100	£1,000 / £400	£600 / £400
Gravesham	£500	£1,000	£600
Maidstone	£250 / £200 lower tier; £500 higher tier	£600 / £520 lower tier; £1,000 higher tier	£400 or £500, depending on offence
Medway	£150 / £90	£750 / £500	£300
Canterbury - proposed	£300 / £200	£500 or £1,000	£600 / £400

Other local authorities are also reviewing their environmental FPN levels following the introduction of the new guidance and changes to the statutory penalty limits. The benchmarking above therefore provides a snapshot of published amounts, which may change as those reviews progress. Canterbury's proposed levels remain a local decision, informed by proportionality, enforcement arrangements and the impact on those receiving notices.

3. Relevant Council policy, strategies or budgetary documents

The review of environmental Fixed Penalty Notice levels supports the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of making the district greener, better and stronger. Proportionate penalties for littering, graffiti, fly-tipping and breaches of the household waste duty of care support cleaner, more welcoming neighbourhoods and public spaces for residents, businesses and visitors.

4. Consultation planned or undertaken

No public consultation is required to amend the locally determined FPN amounts. Overview Committee's was consulted on 26th November 2026. The following feedback was provided by the committee:

- The Committee supported a zero-tolerance approach to fly-tipping.
- The Committee suggested separating the FPN levels for littering and graffiti and considering a higher level for graffiti.
- The Committee recognised the need for further work to educate residents about their household waste duty of care.

In response to the Overview Committee's feedback, littering and graffiti/fly-posting are presented as separate offence categories to make the proposed FPN levels clear. A higher FPN level for graffiti was considered alongside the guidance on penalty levels and benchmarking information; however, no further increase is proposed. The Council recognises the detrimental impact of graffiti and retains the option to prosecute rather than issue an FPN where this is considered a more appropriate response.

5. Options available with reasons for suitability

Option 1 - Retain current FPN levels and monitor offences for 12 months

This option would make no immediate change to the current FPN amounts or early-payment arrangements. Offence levels would be monitored for 12 months, alongside payment rates and enforcement outcomes, to assess trends and inform a further review of whether changes to the amounts are appropriate. Existing enforcement, education and prevention activity would continue during this period.

Option 2 - Approve the proposed FPN levels (recommended)

Recommend the proposed amounts in section 2.1, retaining early-payment reductions for selected offences and introducing £500 and £1,000 fly-tipping levels. Review offence levels, payment and enforcement outcomes, financial effects and any disproportionate impacts 12 months after implementation.

Proportionate penalties, backed by consistent enforcement and education, can deter offending and support the Community Safety Plan's objectives of reducing environmental crime and anti-

social behaviour and strengthening public confidence. The review would assess their effectiveness.

The revised statutory framework for FPN levels has been issued to tackle the growing problem, the environmental impact of, and the increasing cost to councils of environmental crime.

This option takes this into account whilst having a local focus.

Option 3 - Adopt the statutory maximum for all relevant offences

This would maximise the financial impact on those committing environmental crime but may increase non-payment, representations, and prosecution activity. It is not recommended without stronger local evidence that maximum amounts are necessary and proportionate for each offence category.

6. Reasons for supporting option recommended, with risk assessment

Option 2 balances stronger deterrence with proportionate penalties, rather than applying statutory maximums across all offences. Published fly-tipping criteria and individual consideration of representations would support consistent, fair enforcement, with effectiveness assessed through the 12-month review.

Risk	Mitigation
Higher non-payment and prosecution workload	Monitor payment and prosecution rates; retain appropriate payment arrangements; assess resource impacts at the 12-month review.
Inconsistent selection of £500 or £1,000 for fly-tipping	Approve and publish objective severity criteria; require supervisory review and auditable decision records.
Disproportionate impact on people on low incomes or with additional needs	Consider representations and vulnerability; provide accessible information, extensions or payment arrangements where appropriate; monitor outcomes.
Perverse incentives arising from income sharing	Maintain salaried officers, monthly monitoring, body-worn video quality checks, and independent review of representations.
Benchmarking becomes outdated or is not directly comparable	Verify comparator figures before the Cabinet report and focus the decision on Canterbury evidence and statutory limits.
Higher income assumed but not realised	Base budgets on prudent payment-rate assumptions and report gross receipts, contractual payments, recovery costs and net income separately.

7. Implications

(a) Financial

The proposal may increase gross FPN receipts, but the net effect will depend on issue volumes, payment rates, cancellations, the 65/35 contractor income split, prosecution costs and administration. No additional income should be assumed until these factors have been modeled and monitored.

(b) Legal

FPN amounts must remain within the statutory ranges in force at the implementation date. The final Cabinet report should obtain legal confirmation of the relevant amounts, discount requirements, payment periods, and the proposed two-tier fly-tipping criteria. An FPN is an alternative to prosecution and must be issued and reviewed in accordance with the Council's enforcement policy.

(c) Equalities

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed (Appendix 2). The proposed FPN levels are intended to support cleaner neighbourhoods and public spaces for residents, businesses and visitors. Higher penalties may place greater financial pressure on people on low incomes, while communication barriers and individual support needs may affect understanding of notices and access to representations. Mitigation includes accessible information, individualised and proportionate enforcement decisions, appropriate payment arrangements, support and safeguarding referrals, and monitoring of enforcement outcomes.

(d) Environmental including carbon emissions and biodiversity

A Climate Change Impact Assessment has been completed (Appendix 1). The proposed FPN levels may strengthen deterrence against littering, fly-tipping and unlawful waste disposal, supporting cleaner public spaces and protecting local habitats and wildlife. Any emissions associated with enforcement travel will be mitigated through targeted deployment, efficient scheduling and the use of electric vehicles where available.

Other implications

(e) Staffing resource

The proposals will be delivered through existing staffing resources. Higher non-payment or challenge rates could, however, increase administrative, legal and management workload and should be included in the 12-month review.

(f) Human rights issues

Regulations are applied consistently and staff operate within the framework of dignity, fairness, respect, and equality. Care will be taken to ensure that certain individuals are not unduly marginalised or disproportionately affected by the provisions.

(g) Crime and disorder

The Council must consider how its decisions contribute to reducing crime and disorder. The proposed FPN levels support a proportionate response to environmental offending and associated anti-social behaviour, alongside education and prevention. Serious or repeat cases may be more appropriately prosecuted.

(h) Safeguarding children

The Council has a duty to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm when carrying out its functions. Where officers identify a risk of harm, appropriate safeguarding referrals will be made.

Contact Officer: Lacy Dixon – lacy.dixon@canterbury.gov.uk

Background documents and appendices

Appendix 1 – Climate Change Impact Assessment
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix 3- Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2026
Appendix 4 - Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse, updated March 2026
Appendix 5 – Proposed fly tipping enforcement criteria

Appendix 1 - Climate Change Impact Assessment

Please provide an assessment of the impact of the proposal under each of the headings below. If none, please say so.

1. **Climate Change impacts**

Topic	Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	Explanation of impact If you have any relevant data, please include that in the explanation and reference the source.	Mitigation
Impact on the council's target of being carbon neutral by 2030 This applies to emissions of carbon dioxide as a direct result of our **own** activities and services. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals	Neutral	Enforcement activity may require vehicle journeys across the district, creating a small increase in carbon dioxide emissions. The residual impact is therefore assessed as neutral.	Targeted deployment, efficient scheduling, and the planned replacement of Council enforcement vehicles with electric models will minimise these emissions.
Impact on carbon emissions in the Canterbury district This applies to the carbon dioxide emissions in the district as a result of your proposal. Please consider the whole life impact of your proposals.	None		
Emission of other climate changing gases including methane, CFCs, nitrous oxide	None		

2. Adaptation to climate change - Impact on our resilience to the effects of climate change

The greatest risks posed by climate change to the UK are:

- Flooding and coastal changes including erosion from extreme events
- Risks to health caused by high temperatures
- Water shortages and drought
- Risk to natural environments & services - landscape, wildlife, pollinators, timber etc
- Risk to food production & trade
- Emergence of new pests and diseases affecting people, plants & animals

What impact do your proposals have on our ability to resist or tackle these problems in the future?

Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	**Explanation of impact**	**Mitigation**
Positive	Reduction in fly tipped waste in the natural environments will have a positive impact on landscapes and wildfire	

3. Further assessment work

Is a further more detailed assessment required at a later stage of this proposal? Not at this stage

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

Date of initial assessment	30th July 2026
Division	People
Proposal to be assessed	Review of FPN Levels

New or existing policy or function?	Existing
External (i.e. public facing) or internal?	External
Statutory or non-statutory?	Statutory
Your name	Lacy Dixon
Your job title	Senior Enforcement and Community Safety Manager
Your contact	Lacy.dixon@canterbury.gov.uk
Decision maker	Cabinet
Estimated proposal deadline	Proposed implementation December 2026

Please outline your proposal, including: ● Aims and objectives ● Key actions ● Expected outcomes ● Who will be affected and how ● How many people will be affected	To increase FPN fine levels for environmental crimes in line with the community and environmental impact due to gov increasing the fine levels. Those who breach the law will be impacted by this change in fine level to deter them from acting in such a a way and reduce risk to the environment and cost to the council and private landowners in removal of fly tipped waste.
What relevant data or information is currently available about the customers who may use this service or could be affected?	A monthly report monitors issuance and ensures there are no concerns. Majority of offenders are Male and middle aged.

Is the decision relevant to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, which are listed below?		
Aim	Yes/No	Explanation
Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	No	
Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No	

Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No	

Assess the relevance of the proposal to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the proposal on people with different protected characteristics.			
Protected characteristic	Relevance to proposal High/ Medium/ Low/None	Impact of proposal Positive/ Neutral/ Negative	Explanation
Age	None	Neutral	
Disability	None	Neutral	.
Gender reassignment	None	Neutral	
Marriage and civil partnership	None	Neutral	
Pregnancy and maternity	None	Neutral	
Race	None	Neutral	
Religion or belief	None	Neutral	
Sex	None	Neutral	
Sexual orientation	None	Neutral	
Low Income	Medium	Negative	Perpetrators breaching a PSPO could be issued with a FPN requiring financial payment. This could impact those on low incomes.
People Who Don't Speak English As A First Language	Medium	Negative	Efforts needed to ensure that communication caters for differing needs when required.

Are you going to make any changes to your proposal as a result of these findings, in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts identified? If yes, what are they?	No

If no, why not?	
Is there any potential negative impact which cannot be minimised or removed? If so, can it be justified? (for example, on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for another protected characteristic)	No

What additional information would increase your understanding about the potential impact of this proposal?	This could be provided by: • Monitoring the impact that the policy is having on the community to reduce the likelihood of any disproportionately negative impacts on those with protected characteristics.

Appendix 3 Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2026

The Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2026

Appendix 4 – Code Of Practice On Litter and Refuse

Code of practice on litter and refuse

Appendix 5

Proposed Fly Tipping Enforcement Criteria

1. Introduction

The proposed two-tier approach recognises that fly-tipping incidents vary in scale and impact. A previous Level 1 FPN for fly-tipping will automatically result in a Level 2 FPN for a subsequent offence, unless prosecution is considered more appropriate. The remaining criteria support consistent and transparent decisions while allowing each case to be considered on its individual circumstances. Serious cases may be prosecuted rather than dealt with through an FPN.

2. Level 1 fly-tipping offence: £500

A Level 1 FPN would ordinarily be appropriate where the offence is relatively small-scale and the overall environmental, community and financial impact is limited.

Factor	Indicative criteria

Volume	A small deposit, generally capable of being transported in a car or small van. As an operational guide, this may be up to approximately 1 cubic metre or a few individual items or sacks.
Type of waste	Ordinary non-hazardous household-type waste, furniture, small electrical items, garden waste or a limited quantity of non-hazardous building material.
Clearance and disposal cost	Straightforward collection without specialist equipment or treatment. As an operational guide, estimated direct clearance and disposal cost is below £250.
Location	An accessible location with limited environmental sensitivity or disruption.
Water and environmental risk	No waste deposited in water and no material likelihood of pollution of a watercourse, drain, groundwater, coastal environment or sensitive habitat.
Highway and community impact	The deposit does not materially obstruct a highway, footway, access, public amenity or create a material safety risk.
Commerciality	No evidence that the deposit forms part of systematic or organised commercial waste offending.
Previous offending	A Level 1 FPN is available only where the person has not previously received a Level 1 FPN for fly-tipping. Where a previous Level 1 FPN has been issued, Level 2 automatically applies, unless prosecution is considered more appropriate.
Other factors	No aggravating factor sufficient to move the matter to Level 2 or prosecution.

3. Level 2 fly-tipping offence: £1,000

A Level 2 FPN will automatically apply where the person has previously received a Level 1 FPN for fly-tipping. It would also ordinarily apply where one or more other features make the offence materially more serious.

Factor	Indicative criteria
Volume	Larger deposit, ordinarily over approximately 1 cubic metre, multiple bulky items or bags, or a load consistent with van or trailer disposal.
Type of waste	Larger quantities of construction or demolition waste, commercial waste, mixed waste, tyres, significant electrical waste, or material creating an enhanced environmental or public-health risk.
Clearance and disposal cost	A material clearance burden for the Council or landowner. As an operational guide, estimated direct clearance and disposal costs are £250 or more, even where the physical volume is relatively modest.
Location	Woodland, countryside, beach or coastal location, park, open space, verge, heritage or sensitive site, or another location where

	the deposit causes greater harm or clearance difficulty.
Water and environmental risk	Waste placed in, immediately adjacent to, or creating a credible pollution risk to a watercourse, surface-water drain, pond, lake, wetland, groundwater or coastal or marine environment.
Highway and community impact	The deposit obstructs or creates a material hazard to a road, pavement, cycleway, access point or public space.
Commerciality	Evidence suggests that the waste arose from commercial activity or paid waste collection or disposal, particularly where avoidance of legitimate disposal costs appears relevant.
Persistence	A previous Level 1 FPN for fly-tipping automatically triggers Level 2. Other relevant previous enforcement, repeated deposits, or evidence of deliberate or persistent offending may also justify Level 2 or prosecution, depending on seriousness.
Additional harm	Significant visual blight, impact on wildlife or habitats, contamination potential, or other appreciable community or environmental impact.

4. Cases where prosecution will be considered

An FPN should not be treated as the automatic or maximum response. Prosecution will be considered where the circumstances include:

- hazardous or potentially hazardous waste;
- substantial pollution or serious environmental harm;
- very large-scale dumping;
- organised or systematic commercial waste crime;
- repeated offending;
- significant risk to people, wildlife or the environment;
- an obstruction creating a serious highway or public-safety risk;
- deliberate dumping into a watercourse;
- any other circumstance where an FPN would inadequately reflect the seriousness of the offence.