

# HOUSING, GROWTH AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

## AGENDA



**Tuesday 9 December 2025**

**at 9.30 am**

**in the Council Chamber,  
Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

MEMBERS: HOUSING, GROWTH AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Councillors Cook, Dodds (VCh), Oliver (C), Lindridge, Napper, Male and Scarborough

Parish Council Co-opted Member:

S Smith (Greatham Parish Council)

S Lee (Headland Parish Council)

E Hurst (Wynyard Parish Council)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

**3. MINUTES**

- 3.1 To receive the Minutes and Decision Record of the meeting held on  
1 October 2025 (*previously published and circulated*)

**4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS**

- 4.1 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2026/27 to 2029/30 – *Director of Finance,  
IT and Digital and Director of Housing, Growth and Communities*

**CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE**

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone.

The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

**5. KEY DECISIONS**

- 5.1 Indoor Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategy – *Director of Housing, Growth and Communities*

**6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

No items.

**7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- 7.1 Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub – *Director of Housing, Growth and Communities*

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

**FOR INFORMATION**

Date of next meeting – Wednesday 14 January 2026 at 5.00pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool



# HOUSING, GROWTH AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

9 December 2025



**Report of:** Director of Finance, IT & Digital and  
Director of Housing, Growth and Communities

**Subject:** MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP) 2026/27  
TO 2029/30

**Decision Type:** Budget and Policy Framework

## 1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

<b>Hartlepool will be a place:</b>
- Where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)
- That is connected, sustainable, clean and green. (Place)
- That is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all. (Potential)
- A place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community. (Organisation)

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the MTFP and to enable the Committee to scrutinise / comment on the savings proposals referred from the Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Comprehensive MTFP reports have been considered by Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 and the latest report on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025, this is attached at **Annex A**. A number of key issues were highlighted within these reports, which are briefly summarised in the following paragraphs.
- 3.2 All councils continue to face significant financial challenges owing to the impact of inflation and demand on services, and historic inadequate increases

in government funding over recent decades to meet these challenges. In addition, Hartlepool and other many other northern councils continue to face acute financial pressures within childrens social care. These issues are the key drivers of the budget deficit facing the Council.

- 3.3 The government's Fair Funding reforms (Fair Funding 2.0) will update grant funding distribution methods and reset the business rates system for local authorities for the 2026/27 financial year. 2026/27 will be the first year of a 3 year funding settlement. A number of consultations with the sector have taken place during 2025, to inform the direction of these long awaited funding reforms.
- 3.4 In terms of funding movements from Fair Funding 2.0, indications are that based on the current interpretation of the changes Hartlepool would be a modest beneficiary, but not to the level a deprived northern town would have expected from a Fair Funding reform package. In part, the increase in funding in 2025/26, particularly through the provision of the recovery grant has resulted in a lower increase for 2026/27. Government are expected to release local authority level allocations, for the 3 year period, late in December.
- 3.5 As outlined in the MTFP report to Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee in November, the Council has a forecast budget deficit (before savings) of £8.572m for 2026/27 and £20.591m over the full MTFP period.
- 3.6 As in previous years addressing the deficit needs to be managed through budget saving actions and limited use of reserves where deemed necessary. As members will be aware the use of reserves to support the budget position is not sustainable, so must be done in a managed way where needed, to provide time for savings to be delivered or for service transformation to embed.
- 3.7 With regards savings, proposals totalling £4.117m have been proposed for 2026/27, with an additional £0.383m of savings reflected in the Council Tax Base position.
- 3.8 The acceptance of the proposals for 2026/27 would leave a remaining budget gap of £4.300m. At this stage based on the current position presented, it is unlikely that the budget can be signed off as robust, given the requirement to utilise significant reserves, cognisant of the risk around budget volatility and increasing cost pressures facing the council. The increase and sustained nature of social care pressures are a particular concern, including that no growth beyond current years pressures is allowed for in 2026/27, whilst additionally a challenging savings target has been set. To achieve a robust budget the following will be required:
  - Significant increased government funding flows from Fair Funding 2.0 and the Local Government Finance Settlement beyond those already forecast; and/or
  - Further significant budget savings or cuts to budgets are agreed; and/or
  - Council Tax is increased in 2026/27.



#### 4. ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED BY POLICY COMMITTEES

4.1 Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee is seeking comments on the savings proposals, which are summarised by committee in the table below.

4.2 Details of the individual savings provided in **Appendix B**.

	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	Total £m
Adult Services and Public Health	(0.664)	(0.214)	(0.878)
Children's Services	(3.000)	0.000	(3.000)
Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services	(0.100)	TBC	(0.100)
Finance and Corporate Affairs *	(0.140)	0	(0.140)
All (linked to Fees and Charges Review)	(0.213)	(0.061)	(0.274)
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>	<b>(4.117)</b>	<b>(0.275)</b>	<b>(4.392)</b>

\* Transformation Savings total adjusted downwards by £0.383m given element achieved through council tax base improvements.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 As requested by Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee, the Committee is requested to consider the recommended savings proposals detailed in **Appendix B** relating to the services within this Committees portfolio and provide any comments to be reported back to Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026, including suggesting alternative proposals if Members do not wish to implement these proposals.

#### 6. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To fulfil the requirement of the Council's Constitution to seek Policy Committee input on proposed savings.

#### 7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee – Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2026/27 to 2028/29 – 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.
- Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee – Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2026/27 to 2028/29 - 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

## 8. CONTACT OFFICER

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Director of Housing, Growth and Communities  
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Sign Off:-

Chief Executive ☒

Director of Finance, IT and Digital ☒

Director of Legal, Governance and HR ☒

# FINANCE AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

24<sup>th</sup> November 2025



**Subject:** MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP)  
2026/27 TO 2029/30

**Report of:** Director of Finance, IT and Digital

**Decision Type:** Budget and Policy Framework

## 1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

### Hartlepool will be a place:

- where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)
- that is connected, sustainable, clean and green. (Place)
- that is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all. (Potential)
- a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community. (Organisation)

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Council's financial position, the government's Fair Funding reforms and to approve the budget savings proposals to be referred to individual Policy Committees.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A comprehensive MTFP update report was presented to the Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee at its meeting in June 2025. The MTFP does not stand still and continuously evolves based on latest information, intelligence, government funding changes and changing circumstances, including the current financial year's forecast budget outturn.

- 3.2 The updated MTFP covers the four financial years 2026/27 to 2029/30. However, in consideration of the position over this period, it is important to recognise that the Council needs to be financially sustainable beyond this 4 year period. Decisions taken should also reflect the position beyond the medium term and into the longer term.
- 3.3 With regards the government's funding reforms, now referred to as 'Fair Funding 2.0', these are currently moving slower than initially indicated. Changes to the Secretary of State for the Ministry for Housing, Culture and Local Government (MHCLG) and the wider ministerial team, alongside significant lobbying on the proposed reforms has delayed the process timescales. Initial indications were that the Local Government Finance Policy Statement would be released in October and the full Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement by late November or early December. Current indications are that the Policy Statement will be released mid to late November and the Provisional settlement in week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> December. The delay in the release of information, on what will be a 3 year funding settlement, continues to hinder budget planning. Further details of the funding reforms consultation and the estimated impact for Hartlepool are included within section 5 of this report.
- 3.4 In addition to the specific local government announcements, the Chancellor will deliver her Autumn budget on the 26<sup>th</sup> November, which is later than in recent years. Speculation of a likely productivity forecast downgrade by the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) is placing further pressure on government finances, with tax increases and spending cuts a possibility in the budget statement. In addition to general tax and spending plans, the Autumn Budget is likely to provide further announcements on areas that impact the Council's budget, for example increases to the National Living Wage from April 2026.
- 3.5 At short notice, the Chancellor delivered a pre-budget statement to the nation on the 4<sup>th</sup> November. In the address the chancellor emphasised the need to responsibly manage the public finances and noted the government's priorities as being: cutting NHS waiting lists, national debt and the cost of living, but not through a return to austerity. Tax increases remain the likely option for the Chancellor to improve the fiscal position, but in response to questions on this, she advised the details of the budget would be provided on the 26<sup>th</sup> November, but she will "do what is right, not popular".

## **4. BUDGET PRESSURES**

- 4.1 The Council must plan for a range of spending pressures and commitments in setting its budget over the MTFP period. Following the comprehensive update provided to members in June, the forecasts in the table below have been updated where necessary, and commentary on the

areas of change provided in the subsequent paragraphs. A number of these changes are in response to additional cost pressures arising during 2025/26, driving a significant forecast overspend, as well as additional pressures forecast from April 2026.

	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m	Total £m
<b>Spending Pressures</b>					
Pay and Price Inflation	6.868	4.118	5.270	4.392	20.649
Children's Social Care	6.000	3.120	2.182	1.726	13.028
Waste Disposal	0.500	0.000	0.000	0.500	1.000
Capital Financing	0.000	0.500	0.500	0.500	1.500
Supported Accommodation	0.250	0.255	0.260	0.265	1.030
<b>Total Spending Pressures</b>	<b>13.618</b>	<b>7.993</b>	<b>8.212</b>	<b>7.383</b>	<b>37.207</b>

### **Pay and Price - Pay Award Inflation**

- 4.2 The national pay award for 2025/26 was agreed during July. The agreed pay increase from April 2025 was 3.2% for all employees.
- 4.3 Given the persistence of pay growth in the wider economy, the MTFP continues to include a pay award assumption of 3% for each year. The inflation forecasts and associated pay assumptions in relation to 2026/27 and beyond will be kept under review throughout the budget setting process.

### **Pay and Price - General Price Inflation**

- 4.4 The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation rose to 3.8% in July 2025 and has remained at this level in both August and September. This continued elevated inflation rate is nearly double the government's 2% target rate. The Bank of England continue to set their policy approach to support their objective of reducing inflation to their 2% target.
- 4.5 Inflation forecasts and general economic stability continues to be heavily caveated around the potentially volatile impacts of geopolitical factors, namely conflict in the Middle East, Ukraine/Russia conflict and the United States economic policy.
- 4.6 Given funding limitations and a focus on generating efficiencies, general inflation has been allowed for at 2% per year over the MTFP period. Bespoke inflation is included for contracts where specific inflation indices are used.

### **Pay and Price – Adult Social Care Contracts**

- 4.7 The net budget for packages of care is approximately £35m and annual increases to care home fees and home care rates are determined using an established formula. The annual inflation uplift is based on a range of

factors and recent increases have been driven predominantly by increases in the National Living Wage (NLW) and the level of non-pay inflation.

- 4.8 The NLW currently stands at £12.21 an hour (April 2025). The Chancellor is likely to confirm the rate from April 2026 in her Autumn budget at the end of November. The independent body who advises the government on the NLW, are the Low Pay Commission (LPC). The LPCs latest projections for 2026/27 were issued in August 2025 and set out an increase to £12.71 from April 2026 (with a range of £12.55 to £12.86).
- 4.9 A prudent, but reasonable assessment of fee uplifts has been included within this MTFP update, this is increased from prior planning assumptions. This remains an area of risk until uplifts are agreed based on confirmed data. Effectively every 1% increase or decrease in fees has a c£0.350m impact on the budget position.

### **Pay and Price - Income**

- 4.10 Historically, for budget planning purposes it has been assumed that all discretionary fees and charges will increase in line with inflation each year. Given the council's financial position and the recent inflationary impact on the council's expenditure budgets, it is proposed to uplift discretionary fees and charges for 2026/27 by a minimum of 5%. Areas with existing income budget shortfalls will still action an increase in charges in April 2026 where appropriate, but prudently the overall income budget target will not be increased, allowing the price increase to address the existing gap.
- 4.11 Following a comprehensive review of fees and charges undertaken during the current year, increased fees and charges will be introduced in a number of areas, and further details are set out within the proposed savings later in the report.

### **Energy Inflation**

- 4.12 Recent years have seen unprecedented market volatility, driven by Covid-19, the Russia-Ukraine war, extreme weather patterns and geopolitical tensions, as well as the UK and Europe's ambitions to move to better security of supply and alternative generation types. This has created a monumental shift in what typical market activity looks like. This movement from traditional market norms has created a market that is very reactive and has the potential to move far more substantially in very short windows of time.
- 4.13 In response to this turbulence, the Council progressed a twofold strategy of increasing the revenue budget for anticipated long term prices, coupled with use of an energy reserve for the shorter term spike. This approach has served the Council well since 2022/23.

- 4.14 The Council purchases its energy via the regional North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO), which has an agreed Risk and Purchasing Strategy in place to forward buy energy as deemed prudent.
- 4.15 Although energy community pricing is forecast to fall during 2026/27, non-energy costs are forecast to rise at a higher rate. These non-energy related cost rises are driven by the Transmission Network Use of System (TNUoS) tariff. The TNUoS tariff is supporting network upgrades to accommodate increased renewable generation assets and support greater national energy security.

### **Children's Social Care**

- 4.16 The budget pressures in this area continue to be of significant concern for our Council, and many across the region and country. Many areas of expenditure relating to children in our care are experiencing significant and on-going demand and inflationary pressures, these include; increasing numbers of children requiring external placements, independent foster agency (IFA) placements, Connected Care and Special Guardianship allowance payments as well as the associated staffing demands.
- 4.17 As part of the 2025/26 budget setting process additional specific resources of £6.9m were provided into Children's Social Care, given their unprecedented budget pressures. This is in addition to normal inflationary budget increases. Notwithstanding this significant budget increase the 2025/26 projected outturn for Children's Social Care is estimating an overspend of £6.195m.
- 4.18 The main reasons for the overspend continue to be the increase in the numbers and costs of children requiring external residential placements and the associated impacts on social work staffing workloads and budgets. This reflects the increasing complexity of children's needs and the significant fees being charged by the external care market. Overall Hartlepool's Children in Care numbers per 10,000 children, continue to be above regional and national averages. This is because of a number of factors including high levels of poverty.
- 4.19 Between the end of quarters 1 and 2 of 2025/26 financial year there was an increase in the number of children in our care (CiOC), from 345 to 352, and inherent within this an increase in placements required to be made with external providers in order to meet the individual needs of the young people coming into care.
- 4.20 With regard to external provider placement pressures, the current top 25 highest cost external placements are costing in the region of £230,000 per week, which equates to c£12m per year. The average cost of the current 49 external placements is £7,010 per week, with a range of £3,900 to £23,290 per week. There are currently 6 placements in excess of £10,000 per week which is as a result of the complexities of their bespoke needs.

- 4.21 As noted above, CiOC numbers are beginning to increase overall, albeit at a relatively small percentage. Within the overall numbers quoted for CiOC it is important to note that this is not a fixed cohort of children. Some children positively return home, and some children move into special guardianship order (SGO) or child arrangement order (CAO) arrangements. These SGO and CAO arrangements, although no longer classified as within our care, still retain financial support payments from the Council. This is another area of budget pressure.
- 4.22 To mitigate these cost pressures, 6 key strands of activity are progressing and are being overseen by Senior Management. The activity strands are focused around: edge of care support, prevention and early help, fostering and placement planning, reunification, care leavers support and corporate parenting.
- 4.23 The Council is in the process of opening a new in-house children's home with the possibility of further new homes in the future. In addition, the council is working with a local charity in their development of a children's home in the town, providing more local, lower cost capacity. Both developments will help reduce our exposure to the significant fees being charged by the external care market.
- 4.24 The Council is considering its own local fostering drive and is also included in a large-scale regional recruitment initiative. In addition, increased staffing resources have been provided during 2025/26. The Edge of Care team are providing support to families who are at risk of having children enter the care system. Increased respite support provision has also commenced.
- 4.25 Local case reviews continue to be carried out to ensure care is being provided at the correct level, whilst also challenging costs. Further activity to maximise partner contributions to care costs where appropriate has commenced. Regionally, in the medium-term, partnership working is being considered to try and address care market failures. Following successful pilots elsewhere in the country supported by the Department for Education, a project to consider a North East Regional Care Cooperative has commenced. Further work and consideration of this partnership will be carried out over the coming months.
- 4.26 From national government's perspective 'The Families First Partnership (FFP) Programme' was published earlier in the year. These changes centre around implementing: "Family Help and multi-agency child protection reforms' that make greater use of Family Group Decision Making. The roll-out of these reforms represents a significant step forward in delivering on the government's mission to provide children with the best start in life and break down barriers to opportunity." The approach to meeting the reform requirements, to commence during 2026/27, is currently being developed.



- 4.27 The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) now provides for £6.0m of budget growth for Children's Services in 2026/27. This is a significant increase on the growth provided for in the June MTFP update (£1.5m) but reflects the current year forecast spending. The service has been tasked with reducing the overspend, and a £3.0m savings proposal is outlined later in the report. However, it should be noted that the budget for 2026/27 does not allow for any growth in Children in our Care numbers or additional cost associated with complexity. As such this poses a real risk to the robustness of the estimate for 2026/27.
- 4.28 Reflecting the significant and sustained pressures, future years growth has been increased, but with a downward trajectory reflecting the anticipation that local, regional and national initiatives may gain positive traction over the MTFP period.

### **Waste Disposal**

- 4.29 Hartlepool has entered into a partnership with six other Local Authorities in the region to procure a new Energy from Waste facility. The procurement process is on-going, with an anticipated go-live date during 2029. The Council has benefitted from very competitive gate fees with the current incumbent, however, these fees stepped up significantly for 2025/26 as part of the contract extension arrangement.
- 4.30 The financial due diligence work continues in relation to the above. A forecast further budget impact of £1m remains within the MTFP period, and the latest understanding of the phasing is incorporated in the latest budget plans.

### **Capital Financing**

- 4.31 A recurring annual saving of £2m has previously been taken over a 12 year period (2017/18 to 2028/29) following a change to the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision policy. This saving unwinds to £1m, with a reduction in 2029/30 of £0.6m and a further £0.4m in 2030/31. To avoid these cliff edge impacts on the MTFP and following a review on borrowing requirements, an increase of the capital financing pressure from £0.250m to £0.500m per annum was included in the MTFP June update.
- 4.32 A further review of borrowing profile and treasury management investment forecasts has indicated the opportunity to remove the £0.500m budget uplift in 2026/27. The council will continue to progress a Treasury Management Strategy that minimises borrowing costs and as such, this increase to the budget provision over the MTFP period will be kept under review.

### **Supported Accommodation**

- 4.33 Supported, “exempt” accommodation provides invaluable support for a range of vulnerable people. Whilst we work with a number of supported accommodation providers, many of which make a positive contribution, there is a growing concern nationally regarding some of the less scrupulous providers. In such accommodation, rental levels tend to be far in excess of private sector Local Housing Allowance Rates, merely by such providers meeting a loose regulatory requirement to provide a level of ‘care, support or supervision’ to claimants. The government is currently reviewing such provision and intends to implement a number of measures to address some of the wider concerns in this area.
- 4.34 Supported, exempt accommodation schemes place an increased burden on Councils as many are delivered by charities or voluntary CIC organisations and not Registered Providers. As such councils can only claim partial subsidy for the Housing Benefit that they pay out. This means that Councils can incur significant costs, and, at times, funding substandard schemes which they do not need or require.
- 4.35 The subsidy loss for the Council was £0.076m in 2021/22. This increased to £0.282m in 2024/25 and is forecast to increase substantially in 2025/26 and over the MTFP period. In order to address this pressure £0.250m is included in each year of the period, but will be kept under review, in conjunction with any legislative changes.

### **Cyber Security**

- 4.36 The growing sophistication and frequency of cyberattacks pose a significant threat to public sector organisations, including councils. Whilst the council has robust arrangements in this regard, the increasing threat requires ever growing diligence amongst our employees, but also on-going and likely increased investment in counter measures. A review of our cyber security arrangements has been carried out and investment in further software and systems is recommended. Provision of £0.200m in 2026/27 and a further £0.200m from 2027/28 has been added to the budget planning.

### **Other Budget Pressure Adjustments**

- 4.37 Other budget pressure changes provided for in 2026/27 include an increase in the concessionary travel budget given in year budget pressures (£0.100m) and the removal of the profit share income budget associated with the Middleton Grange shopping centre given current and forecast lettings performance (£0.196m). A further pressure of £1.0m has been included from 2028/29 for the impact of the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). The scheme is a mechanism for managing the financial

cost of reducing carbon emissions between different sectors of the economy. From January 2028, the ETS will be extended to include emissions from the incineration of waste.

## **5. GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

- 5.1 The Local Government Finance Settlement 2025/26 continued the trend of one-year settlements for councils. It provided Hartlepool with a 8.4% increase in Spending Power, against a national average increase of 6.0%.
- 5.2 The above average increase for Hartlepool, and deprived areas like Hartlepool, was the first step of the new national government to begin to reverse the funding cuts of the former government, which disproportionately fell on deprived councils.
- 5.3 The Settlement Policy Statement for 2025/26 confirmed that the additional core national resource (c£1.3bn) into local government, was to be distributed via existing grants but also via the creation of new grants namely the 'Recovery Grant' and 'Children's Social Care Prevention Grant'. The Recovery Grant was noted as being highly targeted towards those authorities with the highest levels of deprivation.
- 5.4 Looking forward to 2026/27, the government has commenced a Local Authority funding reform process (Fair Funding 2.0) including a reset of the business rates system. In addition, a commitment has been made to 3-year settlements from 2026/27, which will aid medium term budget planning.
- 5.5 The first stage consultation on the Funding Reforms was issued by MHCLG in late December 2024 and closed in February 2025. This early stage consultation focused on the underlying principles of local government funding including; review of relative needs formulae which calculate the cost of delivering services, review of area cost adjustments which take into account cost variations across the country, views on council tax equalisation adjustments for those areas which have low council tax bases, views on introduction of deprivation indices and also the period of transition to increased or decreased funding allocations.
- 5.6 Subsequently, in early April 2025, MHCLG published a further consultation paper specifically on, 'Resetting the Business Rates Retention System'. This consultation closed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025. The processing of 'resetting' the business rates system results in the rates growth currently sitting with those councils able to grow their business rates receipts being redistributed nationally. The current system was introduced in 2013, and under original plans was due to be reset in 2018. The 2018 reset did not take place and continued to be stalled until now (2026/27). Hartlepool is currently a significant loser from this delay, as we are currently c£1m under our business rates base line position, in part due to the reduced valuation of the Nuclear Power Station, whilst other councils are

significantly above the baseline. The consultation does confirm the system will be fully reset in April 2026, although transitional arrangements as part of the wider funding changes will be in place. Hartlepool is a net beneficiary of the resetting of the Business Rates system.

- 5.7 The second round of consultation on the Fair Funding 2.0 reforms was issued by government in June and closed on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2025. This second consultation moved on the 'principles' outlined in the first consultation to a greater level of detail on the direction of travel of the reforms, namely; Relative Need Formulae updates and weightings which drive funding allocations, approach to area cost adjustments which aim to reflect the differing costs of delivery across the country, council tax equalisation approach and lastly and importantly the transition period to the new updated allocations.
- 5.8 Through collaborative working with other local authorities and sector bodies, and engagement with local government funding specialists (Pixel), the information provided through the second round of consultation allowed local authority level, 3-year, funding estimates to begin to be calculated. These estimates continue to be heavily caveated given it is still the consultation stage of the process and MHCLG have not provided full details of the funding quantum available or illustrative examples of distribution, which are needed to provide more certain estimates.
- 5.9 In terms of funding movements, indications were that based on the current interpretation of the changes Hartlepool would be a modest beneficiary, but not to the level a deprived northern town would have expected from a Fair Funding reform package. In part, the increase in funding in 2025/26, particularly through the provision of the recovery grant has resulted in a lower increase for 2026/27.
- 5.10 Based on analysis undertaken by Pixel, the allocation changes currently estimated from Fair Funding 2.0 are particularly unfavourable to the North East, with four NE councils estimated to lose government funding (North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Gateshead). Middlesbrough Council are an outlier where fair funding appears to substantially increase their funding.
- 5.11 Following consultation feedback submissions, ministerial changes and significant and profound lobbying from both expected winners and losers, there are expected to be changes to the detail, but not to the fundamental principles and approach of the funding reforms.
- 5.12 The next step in the process is for MHCLG to issue the Local Government Finance Policy statement, which is expected mid to late November, followed by the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement in week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025.
- 5.13 The current working funding assumption on what the Fair Funding 2.0, including a business rates reset, will deliver for Hartlepool is shown in the

table below. It is important to note that the position estimated as at June 2025 already included an assumed general inflationary uplift on government grants and also a c£3.4m estimated benefit from the business rates reset.

Forecast total increases from Government Grant Funding reforms including Business Rates reset benefit

	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>2027/28</b>	<b>2028/29</b>	<b>2029/30</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
MTFP Update – June 2025	(3.691)	(1.040)	(1.064)	(1.090)	(6.885)
Estimate – November 2025	(5.717)	(3.780)	(4.034)	(1.785)	(15.316)
<b>Estimated Improvement</b>	<b>(2.026)</b>	<b>(2.740)</b>	<b>(2.970)</b>	<b>(0.695)</b>	<b>(8.431)</b>

## **6. LOCAL FUNDING**

### **Business Rates**

- 6.1 Under the Business Rates Retention system, the Council retains locally 49% of Business Rate income. Inherent in the system is an annual uplift usually based on September CPI and this has been factored into the position, although this is yet to be confirmed by government. At present all other assumptions impacting Business Rates have remained unchanged i.e. provision for Appeals, uncollectable debt and discretionary reliefs will remain broadly consistent.
- 6.2 From 2026/27, new powers to set differing rates for particular sectors will likely allow permanently lower charges for those businesses in the Retail Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) sector. For 2025/26 the RHL sector has received relief of 40%, which is a reduction from the 75% relief provided in the 2024/25 financial year.
- 6.3 As noted in section 5, the business rates system will be reset and a new baseline rates position assessed for 2026/27. This provides a position from April 2026 whereby Hartlepool's funding from the government is predicated on an up-to-date view of actual business rates being received, which is welcomed.
- 6.4 As is always the case, the impact of inflationary cost pressures and reduced consumer demand in the wider economy may impact on the collectability of business rates.
- 6.5 The recent news that Venator Materials UK limited has entered administration, will result in a circa £0.250m loss to the council during 2025/26 and a full year loss of circa £0.500m in 2026/27. It should be noted that this has not been included in this MTFP position pending any

positive news regarding future operation. This will be kept under review and the MTFP position updated in January should the need exist.

### **Council Tax**

- 6.6 The Council has a track record of Council Tax base growth in recent years. Whilst new build growth continues to be positive, the position continues to be impacted by exemptions and discounts, including the Single Person Discount (SPD). Hartlepool is not unique in facing these pressures. Investment in fraud detection is providing reductions in the SPD claimants, which positively impacts the base position.
- 6.7 Whilst housing growth continues to be positive, there remains a risk that the wider economic environment i.e. interest rates and cost of living, may have a detrimental impact on growth as well as collectability of Council Tax should household incomes continue to be under strain. Growth in the council tax base of 520 per year is now allowed for in the budget model for 2026/27.
- 6.8 The formal Council Tax referendum limits for 2026/27 and beyond, are expected to be confirmed in the Local Government Finance Policy Statement. Consultation documents, briefings and national modelling are all based on the continued assumption of a total 5% increase referendum limit, in line with recent years.
- 6.9 Formal Council Tax decisions will be made in January and February 2026. The Leader of the Council, and the ruling Labour Group, have pledged to freeze Council tax for 2026/27. In doing so, this would limit the funding available for council services by £0.562m for every 1% foregone. Given the anticipated referendum, limit of 5%, this means foregoing £2.804m in 2026/27, equating to circa £30m cumulative impact available to the council budget over the next 10 years.

## **7. RESERVES**

- 7.1 The Council holds reserves for a variety of purposes, including those allocated for known commitments and risks, including capital schemes, the MTFP budget position and our insurance fund. The reserve position has been volatile in recent years given the significant inflationary and demand pressures experienced. The only unallocated reserve is our general fund reserve, which serves as a reserve of last resort.
- 7.2 Reserves have fallen over recent years and are forecast to fall further over the short to medium term to concerningly low levels. Details of reserves held and forecast reductions can be found at **Appendix C**.
- 7.3 The use of one-off reserves to balance the on-going revenue budget position is not a financially sustainable basis to set our budget. However, the volatility of local government finances over recent years, combined

with local decisions on not to increase Council Tax by the amount allowable, has necessitated we do so. The Budget Support Fund is available to smooth the budget deficits where possible but must be used in a planned and carefully managed way.

- 7.4 For 2025/26 £1.000m of the Budget Support Fund was used to support the overall budget position. The one-off nature of reserves means that the budget position is detrimentally hit in subsequent years as their use unwinds. Given the in-year (2025/26) forecast overspend the Budget Support Fund is now at a concerning low level.

## 8. STRATEGY FOR BALANCING THE BUDGET POSITION

- 8.1 Based on the position outlined in sections 3 to 7 above, which importantly includes the currently estimated impact of Fair Funding 2.0, the consolidated budget position to be addressed over the 4 year MTFP period is shown below. The gap to be addressed for 2026/27 is currently forecast to be £8.572m, with a four year gap to 2029/30 of £20.591m.
- 8.2 The position presented has both uncertainty and risk regarding spending pressures but also continued uncertainty linked to the government's funding allocations which won't be confirmed until the end of December. **Appendix A** provides greater detail of the main risks and associated sensitivities impacting on the position.

	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m	Total £m
<b>Spending Pressures</b>					
Pay and Price Inflation	6.868	4.118	5.270	4.392	20.649
Children's Social Care	6.000	3.120	2.182	1.726	13.028
Waste Disposal	0.500	0.000	0.000	0.500	1.000
Capital Financing	0.000	0.500	0.500	0.500	1.500
Supported Accommodation	0.250	0.255	0.260	0.265	1.030
<b>Total Spending Pressures</b>	<b>13.618</b>	<b>7.993</b>	<b>8.212</b>	<b>7.383</b>	<b>37.207</b>
Government Grant Changes	(3.697)	(3.527)	(3.760)	(1.513)	(12.497)
<b>Gap Before Local Funding</b>	<b>9.922</b>	<b>4.466</b>	<b>4.452</b>	<b>5.870</b>	<b>24.710</b>
Business Rates	(2.020)	(0.253)	(0.274)	(0.272)	(2.819)
Council Tax - Base Increase	(1.083)	(0.625)	(0.656)	(0.689)	(3.054)
Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	0.754	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.754
<b>Gap Before Current Use of Reserves</b>	<b>7.572</b>	<b>3.588</b>	<b>3.522</b>	<b>4.909</b>	<b>19.591</b>
Temporary Use of Budget Support Fund (reversal)	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
<b>Bottom Line Gap to be addressed (before Council Tax increases and Savings)</b>	<b>8.572</b>	<b>3.588</b>	<b>3.522</b>	<b>4.909</b>	<b>20.591</b>
<b>Cumulative Gap (before Council Tax increases and Savings)</b>	<b>8.572</b>	<b>12.160</b>	<b>15.682</b>	<b>20.591</b>	

**Transformation and Efficiency Strategy**

- 8.3 A strategic and transformational approach to addressing the MTFP funding shortfall and wider financial planning has been adopted. The Council's Transformation Plan which was approved by the Finance and Policy Committee in June 2024 outlined the approach and principles to achieve the Target Operating Model for the council.
- 8.4 Transformation activity is progressing in the following key areas;
- **Demand Management;**
    - Adult Social Care – Sustainability
    - Childrens Social Care – Sufficiency
    - Waste and Recycling
  - **Service Reviews;**
    - Leisure, Culture and Performance Venues Review
    - Schools Catering and Cleaning Review
  - **Land and Property Review**
  - **Fees and Charges Review**
  - **Digitalisation and Back Office;**
    - Customer Contact
    - Income and Cash Management
    - Revenues collection and maximisation
    - ICT Transformation
    - Digital Blue Print Reviews
- 8.5 Activity is progressing well on these schemes, to deliver service improvement and savings that will be realised over the MTFP period. The latest activity within the Transformation Programme, and target budget savings impacting the 2026/27 and future years budget planning is provided at **Appendix B**. The budget savings total £4.117m in 2026/27, with an additional £383,000 of savings reflected in the Council Tax Base position.
- 8.6 The forecast MTFP position, taking into account the savings associated with the Transformation Programme is shown in the table below. In order to prioritise and accelerate the delivery of transformation savings for future years, a Transformation and Efficiency Board will be established in December.



	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m	Total £m
<b>Gap to be Addressed</b>	<b>8.572</b>	<b>3.588</b>	<b>3.522</b>	<b>4.909</b>	<b>20.591</b>
Previously Approved Savings	0.155	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.155
Transformation Savings *	4.117	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.500
<b>Bottom Line Gap to be Addressed (after Savings but before Council Tax increases and use of reserves)</b>	<b>4.300</b>	<b>3.588</b>	<b>3.522</b>	<b>4.909</b>	<b>16.319</b>
<b>Cumulative Gap</b>	<b>4.300</b>	<b>7.888</b>	<b>11.410</b>	<b>16.319</b>	

\* Transformation Savings total adjusted downwards by £0.383m given element achieved through council tax base improvements.

- 8.7 The transformation and savings proposals set out above will be referred to the next meeting of the relevant policy committee. Upon consideration and agreement by the Policy Committee, it is imperative that activity to progress the proposals, to deliver the identified saving, commences immediately. Where policy committees choose not to support a proposal an alternative proposal will need to be provided.

### Council Tax

- 8.8 As noted above, the formal Council Tax referendum limits for 2026/27 and beyond, are expected to be confirmed in the Local Government Finance Policy Statement. Consultation documents, briefings and national modelling are all based on the continued assumption of a total 5% increase referendum limit, in line with recent years. Furthermore, there remains the expectation that the government will assume all councils maximise their Council Tax increases, given the national spending restraints and significant financial pressures all councils are under.
- 8.9 As formal Council Tax decisions for 2026/27 will be made later in the budget setting process, and given the current political direction, the position does not currently include any council tax increase for 2026/27. However, given the continued financial strain the council is facing, the MTFP does assume rises at 4.99% in future years.
- 8.10 The MTFP position after assumed council tax rises at 4.99% from 2027/28 is shown in the table below.

	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m	Total £m
<b>Gap to be Addressed</b>	<b>4.300</b>	<b>3.588</b>	<b>3.522</b>	<b>4.909</b>	<b>16.319</b>
Council Tax increase estimates	0.000	(2.836)	(3.010)	(3.194)	(9.040)
<b>Bottom Line Gap to be Addressed (after Savings and assumed Council Tax increases)</b>	<b>4.300</b>	<b>0.753</b>	<b>0.512</b>	<b>1.715</b>	<b>7.279</b>
<b>Cumulative Gap</b>	<b>4.300</b>	<b>5.053</b>	<b>5.565</b>	<b>7.279</b>	

**Use of Reserves**

- 8.11 As previously set out, the use of one-off reserves to balance the on-going revenue budget position is not a sustainable approach to setting the budget. Whilst it shunts some of the budget gap back a year, it presents a danger that the Council simply utilises one-off money on delaying decisions. In addition, this approach reduces the scope for the Council to invest and innovate in order to generate recurring savings.
- 8.12 The aim of setting the Council's budget is that it should be sustainable over the medium term period, with recurring spend funded by recurring income. Decisions on use of reserves should be made consistent with that aim. As such it continues to be proposed that any use of reserves should be done on a prudent basis over the period so that within the current MTFP cycle the budget is fully sustainable.
- 8.13 The Council's Budget Support Fund (BSF) helps to smooth the budget position over the MTFP period as well as meeting any one off costs associated with budget reductions e.g. redundancies. The table below shows the current reserve balance at the end of 2024/25 and forecast, usage to balance the 2025/26 budget. It should be noted that the forecast balance is lower than the forecast gap in 2026/27 alone.

	<b>BSF £m</b>
Balance as at 31 March 2025	7.672
Less	
Use of reserve to support 2025/26 budget (approved)	(1.000)
Use of reserve to support 2025/26 forecast overspend	(3.260)
<b>Forecast uncommitted balance over the period</b>	<b>3.412</b>

- 8.14 As noted in section 7 and shown in detail in appendix C, the council's reserves levels are forecast to dramatically reduce over the short to medium term. There are instances where ringfenced reserves may temporarily improve the position, linked to advanced payment of government grant funding, but these funds are very much linked to specific projects or initiatives. They do temporality support cashflow. In quite contrary fashion the council is currently cash-flowing the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit, which due to temporary accounting regulations currently in place, can be classified as an unusable reserve. This temporary accounting arrangement is scheduled to end in March 2028, at which point, without government support, will be fully chargeable to the council's general fund. This is a real risk and concern to the council's financial position and most other councils across the country.

**Overall Position**

- 8.15 The updated MTFP position outlined in this report presents a significant MTFP gap, with a £4.300m gap in 2026/27 and £7.279m over the MTFP period (after assumed council tax rises from 2027/28)

	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m	Total £m
<b>Gap to be Addressed</b>	<b>4.300</b>	<b>0.753</b>	<b>0.512</b>	<b>1.715</b>	<b>7.279</b>
<b>Cumulative Gap</b>	<b>4.300</b>	<b>5.053</b>	<b>5.565</b>	<b>7.279</b>	

- 8.16 As previously reported, The Leader of the Council and the Labour Group, have pledged a Council Tax freeze for 2026/27. Statutory Section 25 advice will be provided as part of the MTFP report to the Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee in January 2026, and will be based on the latest information available, including the outcome of Fair Funding 2.0 and the Local Government Finance Settlement.
- 8.17 At this stage, based on the current position presented, it is unlikely that the budget can be signed off as robust, given the requirement to utilise significant reserves, cognisant of the risk around budget volatility and increasing cost pressures facing the council. The increase and sustained nature of social care pressures are a particular concern, including that no growth beyond current years pressures is allowed for in 2026/27, whilst additionally a challenging savings target has been set. To achieve a robust budget the following will be required:
- Significant increased government funding flows from Fair Funding 2.0 and the Local Government Finance Settlement beyond those already forecast; and/or
  - Further significant budget savings or cuts to budgets are agreed; and/or
  - Council Tax is increased in 2026/27.
- 8.18 Based on the current position, unless significant additional government funding is received, setting a budget for 2026/27 without an increase in Council Tax is not recommended.
- 8.19 For information - the additional income which could be generated from an increase in council tax at 2%, 3% and 5%, is shown in the table below:

<b>Increase</b>	<b>2026/27 £m</b>
<b>2%</b>	1.124
<b>3%</b>	1.686
<b>5%</b>	2.804

## **9. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

9.1 The following issues are relevant in relation to this report:

- the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires local authorities to set a balanced budget – further reports will enable budget proposals to be approved and then referred to Council to meet this requirement;
- the Local Government Act 2003 requires local authorities to consider the advice of their Section 151 Chief Finance Officer (the Director of Finance, IT and Digital) when making budget decisions. This advice must include details of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. This requirement will be addressed in the January report.

## **10. SINGLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1 The savings proposals put forward may impact on the delivery of frontline services or service users to varying degrees. There are some proposals which simply by the nature of the service area that they cover will impact on those with protected characteristics e.g. children's social care relating to children who are in the Council's care. However, owing to the financial challenges facing the Council we have no choice but to change, redesign and potentially close services to reduce costs. Where we need to change, redesign and close services we are working to minimise the impact on those with protected characteristics and will focus on securing services for those who are the most vulnerable within those protected characteristics.
- 10.2 Members are aware from previous MTFP reports that in making financial decisions the Council is required to demonstrate that those decisions are made in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and the rights of different members of the community. This is achieved through assessing the impact that changes to policies, procedures and practices could have on different equality groups.
- 10.3 An initial analysis has been undertaken to determine the potential impact of the proposals put forward and these are detailed in the table in **Appendix B**.
- 10.4 Further consideration will be undertaken through policy committees and a cumulative assessment will be included in the MTFP report presented to Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee in January.

**11. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	These are outlined in <b>Appendix A</b> .
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	As set out in the main body of the report.
<b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b>	No subsidy control issues are expected to arise from the proposals within this report.
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	As set out in the main body of the report
<b>SINGLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	As set out in the main body of the report
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	Asset Management implications of the proposed savings are included, where appropriate, within the Savings detailed in <b>Appendix B</b> .
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	Environmental, Sustainability and Climate Change considerations of the proposed savings are included, where appropriate, within the Savings detailed in <b>Appendix B</b> .
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	Consultation with local business representatives and Trades Unions will be carried out during January.

**12. RECOMMENDATIONS****12.1** It is recommended that Members:

- i) Note the report;
- ii) Note the initial assessment of the forecast budget gap and proposed approach to address this gap in Section 8;
- iii) Note the advice provided at paragraph 8.17 regarding the robustness of the budget.
- iv) Agree the proposals that relate to Finance and Corporate Affairs committee contained within **Appendix B**;
- v) Refer the savings proposals to individual policy committees and instructs them to identify replacement savings if these proposals are not supported;

- vi) Note the risks and scenarios outlined in the report which may impact upon the financial position presented as part of future MTFP updates; and
- vii) Agree that the previously agreed budget timetable may need to be flexed dependent on the position post settlement, but that final approval of the budget must be made by council on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2026 to ensure annual council tax billing commences promptly.

### **13. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 13.1 To enable the Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee to approve the proposals to progress the development of the MTFP.

### **14. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

- Finance and Corporate Affairs Committee - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30 – 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.

### **15. CONTACT OFFICER**

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Sign Off:-

Chief Executive	Date: 12/11/2025
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 12/11/2025
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 12/11/2025

## Appendix A

## MTFP 2026/27 to 2029/30 - Risk Assessment

Key risks or issues that may impact on assumptions made and impact 2026/27.

Issue and Risk	Potential Impact			
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
<b>Pay Awards</b> - Provision included in the MTFP based on 3% per annum. No contingency is built in for a higher award should inflation and wage growth remain elevated. Each 1% of pay award in excess of the MTFS provision costs c£675k.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
<b>Level of Reserves</b> - the MTFP is currently based on using £1.0m of one-off reserves to set the 2025/26 budget and a further £3.260m to fund the forecast overspend. This in effect utilises a significant proportion of the Budget Support Fund. Revenue reserves overall are forecast to drop from £56m to £13m over the coming four years. This would just leave the emergency unallocated general fund, the insurance fund and a small number of earmarked reserves. There would be very limited reserves available should an in year overspend occur. The above position is not inclusive of the significant Dedicated Schools Grant deficit risk.	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
<b>Childrens Social Care Pressures</b> The updated MTFP includes for £11.5m of budget growth over the period.  It is assumed that the Childrens Social care transformation plans will stabilise and contain pressures and deliver £3m of cost reductions.  At present there is no guarantee that this will be achieved. Cost volatility in this area is extreme with a single child potentially adding £0.500m+ to the budget pressure.  This is considered a significant risk and will be kept under constant review as part of the budget setting process.	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative

<p><b>Government Funding –</b> The delayed release of information to inform 2026/27 to 2027/28 government funding understanding is hampering financial planning.</p> <p>Estimates derived from for the 3 year settlement Fair Funding consultation indicate funding increases at lower levels than were anticipated from the reforms.</p> <p>To compound this shortfall, the move to updated allocation levels will be phased over a likely 3 year transition period.</p>	Positive	Positive	Neutral	Neutral
<p><b>Inflationary Pressures</b> - the risk around inflationary pressures remain, with current CPI inflation of 3.8% being nearly double the government's 2% target. Specific risks remain around the likes of energy prices and certain goods, given the geopolitical environment.</p>	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
<p><b>One-off Grants</b> - the council relies on a number of one off specific grants to support initiatives and day to day spend on key service areas. A number of these grants are currently scheduled to end at March 2026, with no confirmation of continuation. Should this situation occur a number of preventative schemes will end, capacity across the council will be reduced and potential redundancy costs incurred.</p>	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative
<p><b>Borrowing Costs</b> - interest rates and borrowing costs remain stubbornly high. Whilst this is having a short term positive impact on the budget position, over the medium to long term we will need to borrow to fund the capital programme and as such we will require a reduction in these rates to prevent a shortfall in our debt charge budget. This will need to be kept under close review and may require some additional or temporary funding to smooth this budget.</p>	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative



<b>Council Tax Base</b> - the base position has seen a significant increase in 2026/27 due to a positive year of housebuilding, new premiums for empty, furnished properties and anti-fraud work. A more prudent estimate has been assumed for the remaining years but increased housebuilding could lead to an improved position.	Neutral	Positive	Positive	Positive
<b>Waste pressures</b> - there is current uncertainty regarding a number of waste initiatives, including food waste collection, producer responsibility and the suggestion of increased taxation on Energy for Waste facilities. This area will require close monitoring.	Neutral	Negative	Negative	Negative
<b>DSG High Needs Statutory Override</b> - the council held a negative overspend reserve of £1.589m at the end of 2023/24. A further overspend of £3.343m was recorded in 2024/25 leading to an overall deficit of £4.932 at the end of 2024/25. At this point the statutory override is scheduled to end on 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2028. The forecast position at this point is an overspend in the region of £14m. Should the override end as planned, the council would need to fund the deficit position at that point. Current forecasts we would unlikely have the useable resources to do so and as such may be required to use the council's general revenue reserve or seek Exceptional Financial Support.	Negative	Negative	Negative	Negative

Service	Committee	Transformation Theme	Overall Description	MTFS Savings 2026/27 £	MTFS Savings 2027/28 £	Single Impact Assessment (Positive / Neutral / Negative)	Impact Assessment Notes
Adult Social Care	Adult Services and Public Health	Demand Management - Adult Social Care Sustainability	<p><b>Financial Assessment reviews</b></p> <p>To ensure income for the council is appropriately collected by reviewing financial assessments, introducing online financial assessment, accelerating financial contribution and increasing debt recovery.</p> <p>a. Financial Assessment Review - update budgets to reflect the full year impact of the work undertaken during 2025/26 to review financial assessments.</p> <p>b. On-line financial assessments – implement a system module and further review processes to enable quicker indicative assessments, reducing waiting times and thus enabling income collection to commence earlier.</p> <p>c. Debt collection – embed the new strengthened debt collection arrangements via the councils central income and debt management team to sensitively maximise income collection and recovery.</p> <p><b>This is the full year impact of the proposal introduced in 2025/26 and already approved as part of 2025/26 budget setting.</b></p>	250,000	0	N/A	<p>There is no anticipated impact as there is no proposed change to the delivery of the existing service. The proposed change relates to back office processing activities.</p> <p>There is a potential positive impact identified for poverty and disadvantage due to the promotion of welfare benefit maximisation. This should increase the amount of previously unclaimed benefits being accessed by people with social care needs.</p>
Adult Social Care	Adult Services and Public Health	Demand Management - Adult Social Care Sustainability	<p><b>Use of technology to reduce ASC costs</b></p> <p>This project seeks to introduce integrated digital solutions for people with social care needs which will help to manage increasing demand for services and increased costs for people with high levels of need.</p> <p>Using in home digital solutions will allow adult social care teams to better understand the person's behaviours and needs, assess the effectiveness of commissioned support plans and, where appropriate, safely reduce in-person care hours through digital prompts, remote engagement and continuous monitoring.</p> <p>The digital approach will be implemented on a phased approach with the following cohorts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Working-age adults with high-cost support packages</li><li>- Older people in the Discharge to Assess service</li><li>- People requiring unscheduled reviews due to a change in need</li></ul> <p>The project is supported through transformation funding.</p>	250,000	150,000	Positive	<p>The anticipated impact is positive as people with social care needs (primarily working age adults with disabilities and older people) will have another option available that allows them to be supported to live independently in their own homes. This will be based on a comprehensive assessment of needs and remote monitoring. The technology can be adapted to meet the particular communication needs of the person and the support that's offered can be less intrusive than more traditional ways of meeting needs.</p>
Adult Social Care	Adult Services and Public Health	Council Wide Fees and Charges Review	<p><b>Fees and Charges</b></p> <p>This project aims to generate additional charging opportunities for the council and will look to develop and embed a more strategic and policy lead approach to charging. Following an externally commissioned review, utilising national and regional benchmarking information, the following amendments are proposed in relation to financial assessment for Adult Social Care contributions.</p> <p>- Implementing an automatic inflationary uplift in line with published pension and benefit rises and CPI for private income. This means that all contributions will be increased automatically from April each year rather than the current approach which applies an increase at the point of a person's annual review. This is a more equitable approach and will reduce transactions once implemented.</p> <p>- Remove the disregard for the overnight element of higher rate Attendance Allowance / Personal Independence Payment. This element of benefit is currently disregarded in the financial assessment process in Hartlepool, but other Councils have implemented a different approach which increases income. The fees and charges work estimated that 559 Hartlepool residents would be affected and that their contribution would increase by up to £36.50 per week.</p> <p>- Introduce fees for people for whom the Council acts as appointee to offset the costs of providing this service, which is very labour intensive. It is proposed that there will be two levels of fee based on light touch assessment (£55 per month) and comprehensive assessment (£85 per month). These fees are in line with the major national provider of appointeeship support Money Care, a social enterprise working with over 100 Local Authorities and a national partner of the Department of Work and Pensions. Aligning fees in this way ensures a fair and equitable approach and avoids a two-tier fee structure. The proposed future model is that Money Care will support the majority of Hartlepool residents who require an appointee, with the Council maintaining an offer for some existing people and those who have particularly complex needs. A pilot directing new referrals to Money Care will commence in January 2026 prior to the changes being implemented from April 2026 to test the approach and ensure a smooth transition.</p> <p>Introducing these changes will require the Adult Social Care Contribution Policy 'Determining Your Financial Contribution' to be updated and published following the budget consultation.</p>	164,000	64,000	Negative	<p>The proposals will potentially have a negative impact on people with assessed needs for care and support, particularly older people and working age adults with disabilities some of whom will have to contribute more to the cost of their support. The impact will be mitigated by ensuring that the updated Contribution Policy is compliant with the Care Act 2014 and Charging Regulations, the continued use of means testing to assess contributions and adherence to the Minimum Income Guarantee which ensures individuals are left with a minimum income after charges.</p> <p>There is a potential positive impact identified for poverty and disadvantage due to the promotion of welfare benefit maximisation. This should increase the amount of previously unclaimed benefits being accessed by people with social care needs.</p>
Waste Services	Neighbourhood and Regulatory Services	Demand Management - Waste and Recycling	<p><b>Recycling increase and contamination reduction</b></p> <p>Continue the existing project to review options with the aim of increasing recycling rates and associated income and reducing residual waste costs and associated costs. This project will dovetail with the new food waste collection requirements. The project will progress in 2026/27 to more targeted marketing campaigns and on the ground interventions.</p>	100,000	TBC	N/A	<p>The proposals focus on compliance arrangements to reduce contamination. They are not a change in policy or recycling requirement.</p>

Service	Committee	Transformation Theme	Overall Description	MTFS Savings 2026/27 £	MTFS Savings 2027/28 £	Single Impact Assessment (Positive / Neutral / Negative)	Impact Assessment Notes
Childrens Social Care	Childrens Services	Demand Management - Childrens Social Care Sufficiency	<p><b>Service wide demand and cost mitigations</b></p> <p>A comprehensive strategy is being implemented to reduce the number of children entering care, whilst ensuring that those already in care continue to receive the support they need to return home where it is safe to do so. Several key initiatives are being progressed across the service, each designed to address different aspects of the care system, the implementation of social care reforms, and importantly continue to improve outcomes for children and families. Each activity will report into the recently established Children's Services Transformation Board.</p> <p>As an initial priority, the service will conduct a review of the most costly placements to evaluate their effectiveness, ensure best value, and explore alternatives where appropriate. Other activities are listed below.</p> <p>a.Early Help for Families – Review and strengthen our early help offer to families to identify needs early and offer help before issues become more serious and escalate to statutory intervention. The early help team will co-ordinate support across different multi-agency partners to ensure joined-up, consistent support, ensuring children and families get the right support at the right time rather than having less handover points across the system.</p> <p>b.Edge of Care – Provision of an edge of care team to support young people (including those with additional needs) who are at risk of family breakdown, leading to a reduction in the number of children coming into care. The council is also working with Tees Valley councils and the ICB (NHS) to support edge of care for children and young people with complex needs.</p> <p>c. Fostering and Placement Planning – Development of a refreshed model for in-house foster carers that increases capacity of foster placements, including those with higher level of need/complexity. This will be accompanied with a local fostering drive. We will also ensure we fairly maximise Health Funding where appropriate and where the child has a defined health need.</p> <p>d. Reunification – Children have a fundamental right to live with, and be cared for, by their parents so long as this is in a safe environment. Reunification pathways help families to come back together safely and sustainably giving children a chance to grow up with their parents, while making sure that the issues then led to separation do not reoccur. Reunification supports a child’s sense of belonging, identity and continuity. Children’s services will form a dedicated reunification team to support parents in developing the skills and stability necessary to safely care for their children. This initiative aims to facilitate the return of children from external and foster care placements to their family homes, ensuring reunification is both safe and sustainable.</p> <p>e. Updated Education Strategy and SEND Reforms – Having a clear education strategy that covers SEND reforms within children’s services is essential for ensuring that every child, including those with additional needs, receives the right support, at the right time, in the right setting. The Government’s SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) reforms require local authorities to continue to: improve consistency, quality and accountability in SEND support; develop local inclusion plans; strengthen early identification and intervention; and ensure better outcomes in preparation for adulthood. An updated education strategy that aligns with these reforms will enable HBC children’s services to be fully prepared for any changes reforms may bring, compliant with our statutory duties and strategically align with national policy.</p> <p>To this end, the service will update our education strategy which ensures our local offer is well co-ordinated, transparent and accessible to families, emphasising joint working between education, health, social care and families. Our strategy will promote: inclusive practice in mainstream schools; early help and graduated response models; alternative provision supporting reintegration; and one which champions the wider early intervention and prevention ethos.</p> <p>The updated strategy will be included as part of a suite of documents, including our SEND sufficiency strategy; SEND and alternative provision capital strategy, to improve planning and ensure sufficient local provision for those with SEND and those who are looked after.</p> <p>f. Care leavers support – The care leavers pathway is being refreshed to ensure young people transitioning out of care are supported to become confident and independent adults. The Transitions Operational Group (TOG) has been established to review and enhance our approach to pathway planning. This includes preparing care leavers for adulthood by promoting stable relationships, health and wellbeing, raising aspirations, and providing tailored support to access housing, employment, education and training opportunities. A review of a housing pathway for care leavers will be undertaken.</p> <p>g. Workforce demand and capacity mapping</p> <p>h. Corporate Parenting – Enhance understanding and accountability amongst all corporate parents regarding their roles and statutory responsibilities, to ensure the effective implementation of the seven corporate parenting principles (Children and Social Work Act 2017).</p> <p>The target of £3m is based on the current pressures identified at Quarter 1 of the financial year 2025/26, and the growth allowed within the MTFP. The proposals should be viewed as an all-encompassing package, rather than individual proposals with individual targets.</p> <p>The project will be supported by transformation funding. In order to ensure progress prior to April 2026, some financial commitments have already been entered into.</p>	3,000,000	0	Positive	The proposals focus on prevention, placement breakdown and reunification to best support the needs of children within Hartlepool. It is therefore anticipated that implementation of these strands will, on balance, have a greater positive impact than any potential negative impact which may occur in a minority of individual cases.

Service	Committee	Transformation Theme	Overall Description	MTFS Savings 2026/27 £	MTFS Savings 2027/28 £	Single Impact Assessment (Positive / Neutral / Negative)	Impact Assessment Notes
Cross Cutting	All	Council Wide Fees and Charges Review	<b>Fees and Charges</b>  This project aims to generate additional charging opportunities for the council and will look to develop and embed a more strategic and policy lead approach to charging. Following an externally commissioned review, utilising national and regional benchmarking information, amendments are proposed in a number of areas to bring the council more into line with charges elsewhere, or to more closely recover costs. In order to limit the impact, some of these proposals cover a number of years. All proposals are individually less than £100,000 in impact and as such are progressing through normal officer delegations. Where service area have operated at a shortfall on existing income targets, savings will be retained by the service to mitigate the existing shortfalls.  Furthermore, fees and charges generally will increase at 5% for the 2026/27 financial year.	213,000	61,000	Neutral	The bulk of the changes to fees and charges relate to charges for third party organisations rather than individual residents. Where changes do relate to individual residents, they are predominantly discretionary services.
ICT / Council Wide	Finance and Corporate Affairs	Digital Reviews	<b>Application Insight and Rationalisation</b>  A review of all software applications in operation within the councils IT estate and their usage to reduce unnecessary applications, avoid future costs, improve procurement and ensure we fully utilise the data held on these systems to inform decision making.  The project will be supported by transformation funding. In order to ensure progress prior to April 2026, some financial commitments have already been entered into.	63,000	0	N/A	There is no anticipated impact, since this is a review of internal software applications.
Accounts Payable / Council Wide	Finance and Corporate Affairs	Digital Reviews	<b>Invoice Payment Processing</b>  This project will improve the efficiency of invoice processing for the Council and generate a new income stream associated with amendments to supplier invoice payment terms. This will be achieved through:  a) E-invoicing - introduction of e-invoicing software to capture information direct from suppliers e-invoices. The software is integrated direct to Integra, the Council's Financial Management System (FMS) and will improve the speed and accuracy of this current manual process and generate staff time savings.  b) Early Payment Solution (EPS) – introduction of an EPS into the current payments process. The EPS allows suppliers to be paid more quickly in return for a discount on the invoice value being paid. This discount generates an income stream into the Council.  Both solutions are widely used by public bodies across the country and councils in the Tees Valley and wider North east region.  The project will be supported by transformation funding. In order to ensure progress prior to April 2026, some financial commitments have already been entered into.	77,000	0	N/A	There is no anticipated impact. The saving arises from more efficient processes and a discount on invoices paid early.
				4,117,000	275,000		

Savings Proposals shown as an Increase in the Council Tax Base

Revenues and Benefits	Finance and Corporate Affairs	Revenues Collection and Maximisation	<b>Council Tax Support accuracy reviews</b>  The Council has the highest proportion of working age Council Tax support claimants in the country. 14.4% of the working age population receive support, compared to the Tees Valley average of 11.0% and the England average of 5.8%. We have the 16th highest claimant count for pensioners with 22.6% receiving support compared to the Tees Valley average of 17.8% and the England average of 12.2%. The cost of the scheme is £13.5m a year for the council. The reasons for the high numbers include deprivation, but also our approach to promoting the scheme to those eligible.  The rest fraud prevention work on Single Person discount has seen the reduction of over 1,000 claimants (circa 5%). During this work, a number of cases where identified that pointed to fraud or out of date eligibility for council tax support.  As such it is proposed to undertake ongoing accuracy and eligibility review of our council tax support caseload.  It is envisaged that this could achieve a 3% reduction in costs of the scheme, equally to £400,000 of annual on-going savings. To do so, two additional benefit officers will be employed and data intelligence will be utilised to prioritise and reviews, thus reducing the net target to £325,000.  It should be noted that those residents remaining on Housing Benefit within Hartlepool, are subject to similar checks instigated by the DWP on Housing Benefit eligibility.  Anti-fraud work on our Single Person discount caseload will continue, and this will support an increase in the target to £375,000.  In order to secure progress prior to April 2026, recruitment has commenced for the two additional posts.	383,000	0	N/A	Accuracy reviews are intended to ensure the right support is provided to those eligible to receive it. Whilst the exercise will result in a reduction in the number of people receiving Council Tax support and/or a reduction in the value of support, it will ensure the appropriate amount of support is provided, and that fraud and error is reduced.
				4,500,000	275,000		

Service	Committee	Transformation Theme	Overall Description	MTFS Savings 2026/27 £	MTFS Savings 2027/28 £	Single Impact Assessment (Positive / Neutral / Negative)	Impact Assessment Notes
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- A - Age

B - Disability

C - Gender Reassignment

D - Marriage and Civil Partnership

E - Pregnancy and Maternity

F - Race
- G - Religion and Belief

H - Sex

I - Sexual Orientation

J - Poverty and Disadvantage

K - Care Leavers

L - Armed Forces Community

## RESERVES FORECASTS (EXCLUDING SCHOOL BALANCES, HRA AND UNUSABLE RESERVES)

## APPENDIX C

	Balance as at 31st March 2025	Forecast Use of Reserves				Forecast Balance as at 31st March 2029
		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revenue Reserve	5,500	0	0	0	0	5,500
Budget Support Fund (BSF)	7,672	(4,260)	0	0	0	3,412
BSF - Transformation Costs	2,000	0	(500)	(750)	(750)	0
BSF - Invest to Save	1,400	(700)	(350)	0	0	350
Revenue Grants Unapplied	9,107	(6,266)	(1,257)	(1,003)	(125)	456
Business Rates Risk Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0
Insurance Fund	2,902	(65)	(65)	(65)	0	2,707
Children in our Care Reserve	1,230	(200)	(1,030)	0	0	0
BSF - Treasury Management Income	650	(650)	0	0	0	0
Asset Management Reserve	840	(840)	0	0	0	0
Earmarked Revenue Reserves under £1m	7,038	(3,028)	(2,401)	(846)	0	763
<b>Revenue Reserves Total</b>	<b>38,339</b>	<b>(16,009)</b>	<b>(5,603)</b>	<b>(2,664)</b>	<b>(875)</b>	<b>13,188</b>
Earmarked Capital Reserves	6,303	(5,940)	(363)	0	0	0
Capital Grants Unapplied	11,680	(11,680)	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>56,322</b>	<b>(33,629)</b>	<b>(5,966)</b>	<b>(2,664)</b>	<b>(875)</b>	<b>13,188</b>
<b>Cumulative Balance</b>		<b>22,693</b>	<b>16,727</b>	<b>14,063</b>	<b>13,188</b>	
<b>DSG Reserve</b>	<b>(4,932)</b>	<b>(4,670)</b>	<b>(3,596)</b>	<b>(5,214)</b>	<b>(6,773)</b>	<b>(25,185)</b>
<b>DSG Reserve Cumulative Balance</b>		<b>(9,602)</b>	<b>(13,198)</b>	<b>(18,412)</b>	<b>(25,185)</b>	

# HOUSING, GROWTH AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

9 DECEMBER 2025



**Subject:** INDOOR FACILITIES & PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
**Report of:** Director of Housing, Growth & Communities  
**Decision Type:** Key (HGC 176/25)

## 1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

<b>Hartlepool will be a place:</b>
- Where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)
- That is connected, sustainable, clean and green. (Place)
- That is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all. (Potential)

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To present to Members, the findings and recommendations of the Indoor Facility Strategy.
- 2.2 To receive an update regarding progress in the revision of the Council's outdoor playing pitch strategy.
- 2.3 To provide background detail in support of a presentation to be made at committee by the consultants commissioned to develop the strategy/ies.

## 3. PREFACE

- 3.1 It is important to note that this committee paper is singularly focussed on the indoor facilities element of the wider strategy.

The outdoor playing pitch section is yet to be completed, as this needs to take into account research into current provision and demand over the winter season 2025/26. The outdoor playing pitch report will therefore be presented to committee in spring 2026.

In addition to a headline summary within this covering report and the attachment of an electronic version to the committee papers, Max Associates will be presenting the indoor facilities report at the committees meeting itself.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Strategic planning for investment in sport and physical activity is fundamental in ensuring that in the future, the right facilities are provided in the right places to meet the wider social, health and wellbeing needs of local people.
- 4.2 The existence of an up-to-date indoor facilities and playing pitch strategy is key, in helping the Council to understand future local demand and needs, but also in enabling the Council to meet the requirements of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, which amongst many other things, includes a focus on supporting and promoting healthy and safe communities.
- 4.3 The Council's existing indoor facilities and playing pitch strategy, is now considered out of date, developed in 2018 and published in 2019. Sport England and other partners such as National Governing Bodies of sport, are no longer willing to rely on its findings and recommendations as a basis for informing or making decisions in support of local opportunities. The existence of a robust, up-to-date indoor facilities and playing pitch strategy is therefore considered by Sport England and other partners, as being fundamental, both as a planning tool and also as a framework against which funding applications for capital resource can be considered.

#### **5. INDOOR FACILITIES AND PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

- 5.1 Following a robust procurement process, Max Associates were appointed in early 2025, to develop a new, current and refreshed indoor facilities and playing pitch strategy, which, as the name suggests, consists of two distinct parts:
  - an analysis of indoor sports facilities provision
  - an analysis of outdoor playing pitch provision
- 5.2 The development of the strategy, which follows Sport England's 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities' (ANOG) will focus on providing an updated evidence base to support investment into the future sport and recreation needs of the town.
- 5.3 The indoor facilities and playing pitch strategy is set in the context of the Council's Local Plan, which runs until 2033. The assessment of demand for facilities will be set in the same time frame, by understanding the likely demographic position at that point, alongside consideration of issues such as the growth in housing provision. The development of the strategy has and



will continue to involve colleagues from the Council's planning policy team.

- 5.4 The strategy will focus on all local provision in the town, whether linked to public, private or voluntary ownership and relating to sports clubs, education or commercial delivery. Additionally, the strategy will reflect cross boundary needs and demand from the neighbouring authorities of Redcar & Cleveland, Middlesbrough, Stockton and Durham local authorities.

The report will include:

- an up-to-date picture of population
- an up-to-date picture of current provision
- an assessment of future needs, identifying any under/over provision up to 2033

## 6. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 The development of the indoor facilities strategy has followed a nationally accepted format, comprising:

- a headline review of national policy, strategy and data
- a reprise of Sport England's role in strategic planning for sports facilities
- a detailed understanding of Hartlepool, including policy, strategy and data
- an assessment of current and future supply of facilities in Hartlepool
- introduction to Sports England's facility planning model
- systematic assessment of supply and demand in relation to sports halls; swimming pools; activity halls and in relation to court sports; netball; indoor bowls; health and fitness; gymnastics; squash; indoor tennis/padel; table tennis and martial arts

- 6.2 Importantly, local communities have been engaged with the process throughout, including consultation with local sports clubs and schools, alongside engagement with National Governing Bodies of sport at a regional and national level.

- 6.3 Following the processes outlined above the report concludes with a table of recommendations, which are summarised in section 6 of this report.

## 7. HEADLINE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The full table of facility and sport specific recommendations are provided in section 19 of the full strategy (**Appendix 1**), however the key issues to note are outlined below.

### 7.2 Sports Halls

Application of the planning model for sports halls indicates that there is sufficient space in the town, provided by the Council, schools and other partners, to meet future demand.

The report analysis confirms that the existing provision of sports halls is adequate to meet future demand, even after accounting for the closure of Mill House Leisure Centre.

However, the report acknowledges that there is a need:

- For the Council to work with education partners to develop community use agreements to protect and where possible increase access to facilities
- To ensure that ageing facility stock is refurbished, to retain availability and access
- For the Council to work with local clubs where there has been a significant recent growth in demand, to support such clubs to develop their own venues

### 7.3 Swimming Pools

Application of the planning model for swimming pools indicates that there is sufficient water space in the town, once the completion and opening of Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub and with the retention of High Tunstall College of Science's swimming pool.

Even though the changing rooms and pool plant at High Tunstall School have recently been refurbished, the pool is now over 50years old and consequently the Council should consider beginning to plan for additional water space, over the next 2-3 years, to meet future demand from population growth, beyond 2033.

### 7.4 Indoor Bowls

Application of the planning model for indoor bowls indicates that future demand could be accommodated in a facility comprising six rinks and not eight, as is currently the case, were a new facility to be built in the future.

This assessment is based upon modelling future demand; however, it does not consider Hartlepool indoor Bowls Club's desire to continue to host regional and national events, which require eight rinks.

The indoor bowls club currently sits within the proposed/agreed Hartlepool Development Corporation area, although plans for the development of the area are yet to be confirmed. Were the site to be fully redeveloped, evidence shows the need for ongoing provision, either through a new build facility or the use of an adapted space. Further consideration is needed on the future development opportunities for indoor bowls and this evidence base is intended to support inform the demand on a population now and in the future.

## 7.5 Other sports

To briefly summarise the report in relation to other sports that make use of indoor facilities, the headline recommendations are to:

- Retain provision that is needed to meet future demands as outlined within the strategy, with and through partners and structures such as community use agreements
- make or consider some relatively minor adjustments to support delivery (i.e. add new court markings; provide some new equipment)
- explore commercial opportunities to develop new sites or sports provision (i.e. padel)
- support those clubs seeking to develop their own dedicated facilities (i.e. netball; basketball; martial arts), through technical guidance of planning.

## 7.6 Strategic considerations

The report also makes reference to a number of policy, planning and strategy recommendations, including:

- Continuing to secure and use developer contributions to support formal and informal activity provision
- Protection of built sports provision within the Council's Local Plan
- Updating the indoor facility audit annually, including developments in Hartlepool and by maintaining communication with neighbouring facilities, in relation to facility and housing developments.

## 8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	<p>Failure to acknowledge, adopt and then implement report recommendations will ultimately lead, long-term, to a reduction in the quality, availability and accessibility of appropriate, fit-for-purpose facilities for the community. The associated risks will be an escalation in maintenance and replacement costs; the potential reluctance of funders such as Sport England to be a "gap funder", if local investment isn't available or appropriately prioritised. Additionally, the costs of facility replacements or significant improvements will continue to increase, potentially outstripping the Council's ability to fund solutions.</p> <p>In terms of wider risks, a reduction in the availability of suitable facilities will impact on a range of wider social outcomes, such as health and wellbeing, community cohesion, educational attainment and workforce development/productivity.</p>
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<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	The report indicates that whilst the Council is in a relatively strong position, as there is no immediate need to make additional, significant capital investment, forward planning is essential to make sure that future facility stock continues to keep pace with a growth in actual and latent demand.
<b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b>	There are no subsidy control considerations at this time.
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<p>The Council has the statutory power to provide indoor sports facilities as it thinks fit in accordance with Section 19 (Recreational Facilities) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976</p> <p>With regard to sports halls, the report recommends the development of community use agreements with local schools, to secure their availability for formal and informal sport and physical activity. Without such agreements, there is a risk that supply will fail to meet demand.</p>
<b>SINGLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	In relation to community engagement and consultation, this has been with community clubs and local partners (i.e. Schools), as a means of gathering insight, data, and understanding of demand and need. <b>(Appendix 2)</b>
<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	There are no significant staff implications from the report, however there is a need to ensure that the necessary capacity and responsibilities are in place for the implementation of the appropriate recommendations.
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<p>There are a number of generic and specific asset management considerations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The recommendation to initiate a process of options planning for additional swimming pool provision in the future.</li> <li>• Exploration of options regarding the provision of indoor bowls in partnership with HDC.</li> <li>• Implicitly, there is a need to ensure that Council facilities are maintained appropriately over time, to ensure that they remain fit-for-purpose and accessible to local people, for as long as possible.</li> <li>• Engagement with schools and colleges to understand and advocate for appropriate repairs and maintenance of their facility stock, to mitigate the risk of closure and hence pressure on the Council to invest in new stock</li> </ul> <p>Engagement with schools and colleges regarding community use agreements</p>

<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	All current management arrangements and future developments will be considerate of this.
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	<p>Internal consultation has been undertaken with appropriate staff through meetings and document sharing</p> <p>Public consultation with clubs and community partners has been undertaken through online surveys, direct engagement and meetings.</p> <p>Comments have been invited from the following statutory consultees: Public Health; Sport England</p>

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 For committee to approve the adoption of the Indoor Facility Strategy and associated recommendations.
- 9.2 For committee to note the progress being made in relation to the Outdoor Playing Pitch Strategy which will be shared at a future committee in 2026.

## 10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure Hartlepool has high quality and sustainable facility stock for sport and physical activity.

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 25 January 2025, Indoor Facility and Playing Pitch Strategy. Adults and Community Based Services Committee.

## 12. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 27 November 2025
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 27 November 2025
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 27 November 2025



## *Indoor Built Facilities Strategy*

November 2025 – Final Draft

2025



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Glossary	
<b>Accessibility</b>	The FPM uses a distance decay function where the further a user is from a facility, the less likely it is they will travel. On average, a 20-minute travel time accounts for approximately 90% of journeys to pools. See travel time definition below.
<b>ATE</b>	Active Travel England
<b>Active Design</b>	Active Design <a href="#">Active Design   Sport England</a> was produced in partnership with Public Health England and is a guide to help implement an active environment. It is a combination of ten principles that promote activity, health and stronger communities through the way we design and build our towns and cities. The ten principles have been developed to inspire and inform the layout of cities, towns, villages, neighbourhoods, buildings, streets and open spaces, to promote sport and active lifestyles.
<b>Active Environment</b>	Active Environments <a href="#">Active Environments   Sport England</a> is about the places and spaces that we move through in our daily lives that can have a bearing on if and how we move more. We know that the physical environment, through the spaces we live and work in, impact people being physically active. It's about ensuring our built and natural environments, and the connections in-between them, are designed or adapted around people, creating the opportunities to increase physical activity levels.
<b>Active Lives</b>	The Active Lives Survey <a href="#">Active Lives   Sport England</a> comprises both an adult and a children and young people element. The survey is carried out on behalf of Sport England by the leading social research company Ipsos MORI. Active Lives measures the number of people taking part in sport and physical activity across England and their attitudes associated with this. It provides the most comprehensive and authoritative picture of sports participation in England and is central to Sport England's measurement of its own strategy.
<b>Active Places Power</b>	<a href="#">Active Places Power</a> Active Places Power is a website to help those involved in providing sport provision with a series of tools to guide investment decisions and develop sport provision strategies. Primarily for local authorities and national governing bodies of sport it can help to build an evidence base when identifying and planning where to target interventions for facilities, clubs or other activities.
<b>Active Travel / Active Transport</b>	'Active travel' (or active transportation or mobility) means walking or cycling as an alternative to motorised transport (notably cars, motorbikes/mopeds etc.) for the purpose of making every day journeys. <sup>1</sup>
<b>ANOG</b>	Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance <a href="#">Planning for Sport   Sport England</a> is a guide to help carry out comprehensive assessment of the needs for a range of indoor and outdoor sports facilities. This guidance is currently being reviewed and updated by Sport England. The guide focuses on the practicalities of producing a clear and robust assessment to help develop and apply local planning policy. As a result the guide will be able to assist local authorities with meeting the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 98).

<sup>1</sup> PHE 'Working Together to Promote Active Travel' A briefing for local authorities 2016

Glossary	
<b>Assessment of Needs</b>	An assessment within a given geographical area of the current and future needs for a type of sports facility which takes into account the quantity, quality, accessibility and availability of facilities.
<b>BCSC</b>	Brierton Community Sports Centre
<b>BMA</b>	British Medical Association
<b>CMO</b>	Chief Medical Officer
<b>CIL</b>	Community Infrastructure Levy
<b>DCMS</b>	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
<b>Demand</b>	Who wants to use facilities?
<b>Facility (ies)</b>	The areas available within a centre such as sports hall, pool, tennis courts, changing rooms etc.
<b>FPM</b>	Sport England Facilities Planning Model <a href="#">Facilities Planning Model   Sport England</a> is a computer model that helps assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities. It looks to assess whether the capacity of existing facilities are capable of meeting local demand for a particular sport. It covers sports halls, swimming pools and artificial grass pitches, and has also been used for indoor bowls centres.
<b>HBC</b>	Hartlepool Borough Council, the borough council area
<b>HAWH</b>	Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub
<b>HSB</b>	Headland Sports Hall
<b>Leisure Activity</b>	Activities people do to relax or enjoy themselves outside of work and other duties.
<b>Local Share</b>	Which areas have better or worse provision, considering number of people who want to use them? It considers the size, availability and quality of facilities, as well as 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, divided by the demand for that capacity in the area (considering deprivation). Local share decreases as facilities age.
<b>LSDG</b>	Leisure Services Delivery Guidance <a href="#">Strategic Outcomes Planning and Leisure Services Delivery   Sport England</a> supports understanding of appropriate facility management models to deliver strategic outcomes through public leisure facilities.
<b>LTA</b>	Lawn Tennis Association
<b>Members</b>	Current leisure centre known users
<b>MHLC</b>	Mill House Leisure Centre
<b>Moving Communities</b>	Moving Communities is a service that helps local authorities, leisure providers and policymakers to understand the performance of their leisure centres.
<b>NGBs</b>	National Governing Bodies
<b>NPPF</b>	The National Planning Policy Framework <a href="#">National Planning Policy Framework - updated Dec 2024</a> sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework guiding the preparation of development plan documents, associated evidence base and supplementary planning documents (Planning Policy). It is also a material consideration which should be taken into account when determining applications for planning permission (Development Management).
<b>OHID</b>	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities
<b>Peak Period</b>	Weekday: 09:00 to 10:00, 12:00 to 13:00, 15:30 to 21:00 Weekend: 08:00 to 15:30
<b>PHE</b>	Public Health England
<b>Physical Activity</b>	Active living, recreational activity, sport, exercise, play and dance
<b>Planning Obligations</b>	Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), commonly known as S106 agreements, are a mechanism which make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation of the impact of development. S106 agreements are often referred to as 'developer contributions' along with highway contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy.
<b>PPS</b>	Playing Pitch Strategy sets out recommendations and prioritised actions to ensure the current and future needs of the population in given geographical area can be met.
<b>Satisfied Demand</b>	This represents the proportion of total demand that is met by the capacity at the sites (pools, sports halls) from Hartlepool residents who live within the driving, walking or public transport travel time of a pool/sports hall. This includes pools/sports halls located both within and outside Hartlepool.
<b>SE</b>	Sport England
<b>SFC</b>	The Sports Facility Calculator <a href="#">Sports Facility Calculator   Sport England</a> uses the parameters of the FPM and is designed to estimate the demand for sports facilities created by a new community as part of a residential development. The SFC is hosted and accessed through Active Place Power.

Glossary	
<b>Site Capacity</b>	Visits per week in the peak period.
<b>SOPG</b>	The Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance <u>Strategic outcomes planning and leisure services delivery</u>   Sport England is designed to help create a focus and vision on local outcomes informed by customer insight. This will deliver interventions that affect behavioural change in target audiences, ultimately delivering the desired results for that local authority.
<b>Sport</b>	“All forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competitions at all levels.” (Council of Europe, 2001).
<b>Supply</b>	How many facilities are there and what is their capacity.
<b>Travel Time</b>	The FPM uses travel time to define facility coverage in terms of driving and walking. The model includes three different modes of travel – car, public transport and walking. Car access is also considered. The model includes a distance decay function, where the further a user is from a facility, the less likely they will travel. Survey data 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 catchments for sports halls and swimming pools.
<b>Unmet Demand</b>	Who is unable to use facilities and why? Is there insufficient capacity or are people too far away from facilities?
<b>Used Capacity</b>	How full are the facilities and where are people coming from (inside and outside the authority)? This is a measure of usage at pools/sports halls and estimates how well used or full facilities are. The FPM is designed to include a ‘comfort factor’ beyond which the venues are too full/too crowded to participate comfortably. In the model Sport England assumes that usage of more than 70% of capacity is busy and that the pool/sports hall is operating at an uncomfortable level above that percentage.
<b>Weekly peak period</b>	This is when the majority of visits take place and when users have most flexibility to visit.
<b>VPWPP</b>	Visits per week in peak period.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Hartlepool Borough Council requires an Indoor Built Facilities Strategy (IBFS) to support the preparation of the emerging local plan and follows Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities (ANOG).
- 1.2. The current local plan covers the period up to 2033 and allocates sites for housing and employment development and ensure sufficient infrastructure and service provision to support housing and employment growth.
- 1.3. The Council vision is: *"Hartlepool will be...*  
*...a place where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives (People)*  
*...a place that is connected, sustainable, clean and green (Place)*  
*...a place that is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all (Potential)*  
*...a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community (Organisation)."*
- 1.4. One of the aims of this Indoor Built Facilities Strategy is to provide the updated evidence base to support investment into provision to meet the sport and active wellbeing needs of Hartlepool now and into the future.
- 1.5. The strategy will focus geographically on all local provision in Hartlepool, including both public and private ownership in the council area relating to club, education, voluntary sector and commercial ownership. The review will also take into account any cross boundary needs and demand for sports facilities from other local authority neighbours. It will also include:
  - An up to date picture of the population
  - An up to date picture of current provision
  - An up to date assessment of future needs in respect of sports and recreation facilities, clearly identifying any under/over provision up to 2031
  - The role of Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 obligations in meeting needs
- 1.6. The Council needs to understand whether it has the right facilities in the right place to meet the current and future needs of its residents.
- 1.7. Local authorities are under great pressure in terms of budgets, changing demographics and increasing demands on health services, meaning sport, physical activity and health, including mental health, are increasingly being seen as co-producers of local outcomes.
- 1.8. The new Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub (HAWH), Hartlepool's flagship leisure development, which is under construction, will afford the local community a range of activities to take part in promoting wellbeing and boosting the local economy. As well as state of the art facilities for all ages, it will also incorporate an NHS consultation suite. Due to open Spring 2026.
- 1.9. Mill House Leisure Centre (MHLC) is intended for demolition in 2026.

1.10. The following indoor sports and leisure facilities are included in the scope of this strategy:

**Table 1 – Built Leisure & Sports Facilities Scope**

<b>Built Leisure &amp; Sports Facilities</b>
Sports halls (3+ courts)
Other activity halls
Swimming pools
Health & fitness
Gymnastics and trampolining
Indoor tennis and padel
Indoor bowls
Table tennis
Dance
Martial arts
Basketball
Netball

1.11. Consultation has been undertaken with National Governing Bodies (NGBs), sports clubs, schools, colleges, neighbouring authorities, and the assessment uses Sport England tools, such as Active Places Power and Active Lives data, to understand existing provision and future need.

## 2. National Picture

### 2.1. National Strategic Review

- 2.1.1. The strategic review outlines the key local and national strategic priorities and considers how sport, leisure and wellbeing can contribute towards achieving them.
- 2.1.2. There are several national strategies and reports that are important to consider in the shaping of local authority active wellbeing services. It is recognised that increasing participation rates in physical activity can have a far wider impact than an individual's physical wellbeing. It cuts across all sectors from public health to environmental sustainability and regeneration and economic growth. The priorities from these strategies have common themes including, connecting communities, inclusivity, improving environmental sustainability and taking a place-based approach to the delivery of services and investment.
- 2.1.3. In August 2023, the Government released its latest strategy, 'Get Active: a strategy for the future of sport and physical activity', which details the ambition to help build a healthier nation by tackling high levels of inactivity and by making sure the sport and physical activity sector thrives for future generations. The Government aims to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be active, with a vision to; make sport and physical activity accessible, resilient, fun and fair, for now and the years to come - for the benefit of individuals and the country. The target by 2030 is to see 2.5 million more adults and one million more children being classed as active in England.

Figure 1 – National Strategic Review

#### → Sport England

- Uniting the Movement 2021-2031.
- Future of Public Leisure Services 2022.
- Every Move Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2024.
- Sustainable Facilities & Planning 2020.

#### → Department for Culture, Media and Sport

- Get Active: A Strategy for the Future of Sport and Physical Activity 2023.
- Proide in Place Strategy 2025

#### → NHS England

- Core 20 plus 5 - An approach to reducing health inequalities for children and young people

#### → Public Health England

- PHE Strategy 2020-2025.

#### → British Medical Association

- BMA Physical Activity Briefing - Get a Move On 2019.

#### → Department for Education

- School Sport and Activity Action Plan - July 2023.
- National Curriculum in England - Physical Education Programmes of Study.

#### → Department for Transport

- Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Cycling and Walking 2020.
- The Second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2) - March 2023.

#### → Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

- National Planning Policy Framework - Dec 2024.



- 2.1.4. “Public leisure provision has an important role to play in contributing to a happier and healthier society. Providing more than just a venue for people to play sport and get active, public leisure and sport facilities also support wider community wellbeing. For the leisure sector to be fit for the future, it needs to be flexible and innovative in adapting to changes in participation habits and in securing investment. This includes consideration within the wider local authority landscape for how it can contribute to improving physical and mental health outcomes for individuals across the community, rather than sometimes just offering an alternative to other gym provision.”
- 2.1.5. In December 2022, Sport England published its “Future of Public Sector Leisure” report. The report prompts local and national partners to re-examine the purpose of their leisure services and assess whether they are delivering local community outcomes and aligning to broader strategic outcomes, particularly around health and wellbeing. It advocates that local authorities follow its direction of travel.
- 2.1.6. In November 2023, Sport England announced £250m investment into their Place Partnership expansion programme. £190m of this funding will be focused on over 100 new places which have the greatest need. An additional £35m will be invested to strengthen work with existing place partnerships and a further £25m being made available to create a Universal Offer of key tools and resources, ensuring every area of England can access support. The first tranche of Places was announced in March 2025. Hartlepool has been successful in securing development phase funding as part of the Place Expansion programme and is intending to submit a multi-year bid for development funding to support local people and communities, in 2026.

Figure 2 – Sport England – Future of Public Leisure Services

## Public Sector Leisure: Direction of Travel

### From a leisure service to an active wellbeing service

A new approach that formalises the relationship between health and leisure built on:

- Social prescribing.
- Co-location.
- Delivery of preventative activity.
- Collaboration through Integrated Care Systems.

An approach that brings forward new thinking, products and services requires proactive and skilled leadership to focus on:

- Addressing the fragmented nature of the leisure sector.
- Building strong working relationships across multiple stakeholder.

Provision that is placed based and at the heart of local communities.

Provision that is aligned to needs and provided in a way that seeks to reduce inequalities and address deprivation.

Provision that is low carbon and delivers a step change in carbon emissions at the local authority level.

## Uniting the Movement

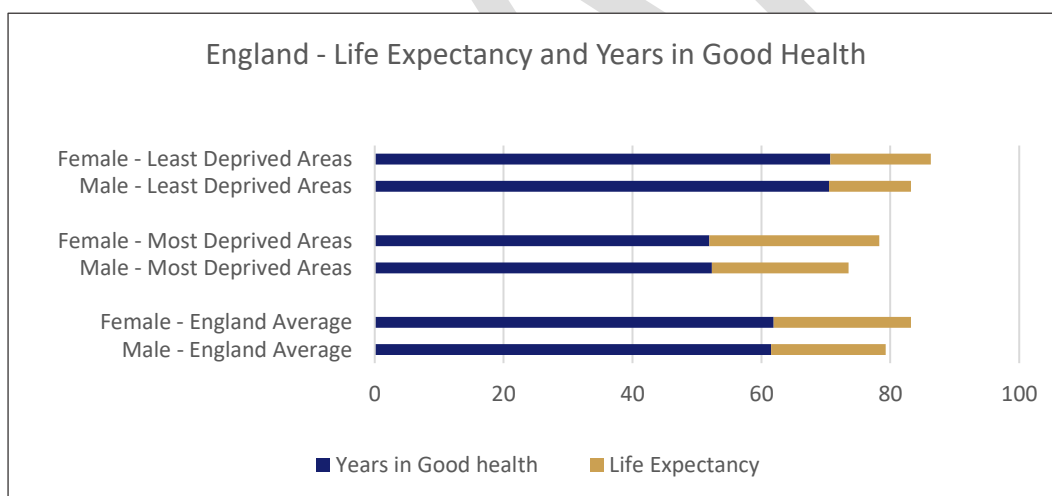
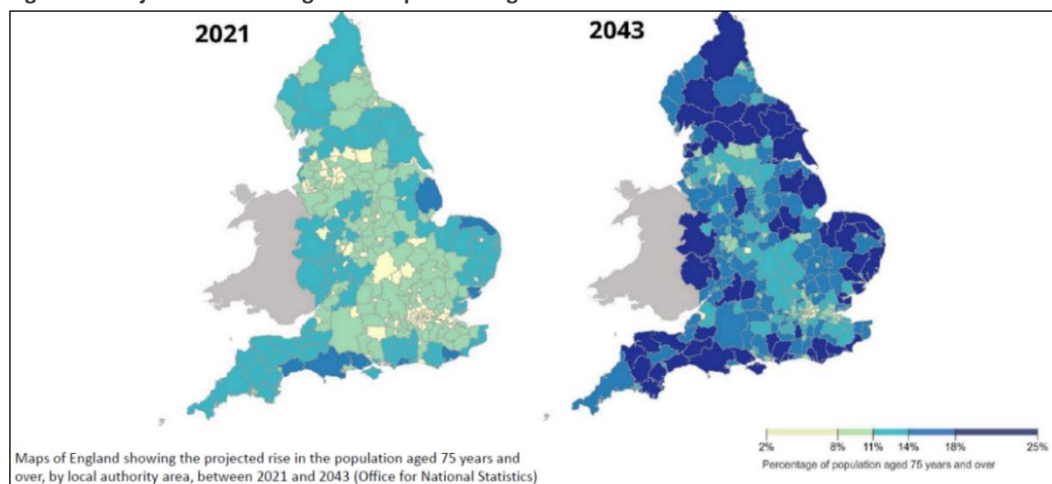
### 2.2. Health of the Nation

- 2.2.1. The need to increase participation in physical activity is highlighted when looking at the current health profile of England.



- 2.2.2. England has an ageing population with many rural and coastal areas ageing at a faster rate and, over recent years (post-Covid), healthy life expectancy at birth has reduced<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.2.3. People living with multiple health problems is increasingly common, particularly in people of working age. This includes conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, mental illness and musculoskeletal conditions, many of which can be positively impacted by increased participation in physical activity.
- 2.2.4. Evidence is also stark when comparing health issues and life expectancy for those living in the most and least deprived areas. The graph opposite<sup>3</sup> demonstrates how those in the most deprived areas have a significantly lower life expectancy to those in the least deprived areas, as well as a considerably lower healthy life expectancy (how many years spent in good health).

Figure 3 - Projected Rise in England's Population Aged 75 and Over



<sup>2</sup> DCMO – Improving Life Expectancy for all through activity and creativity – November 2024

<sup>3</sup> [Inequalities in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy | The Health Foundation](#)

2.2.5. Some of the key national statistics for health conditions across England are set out below.

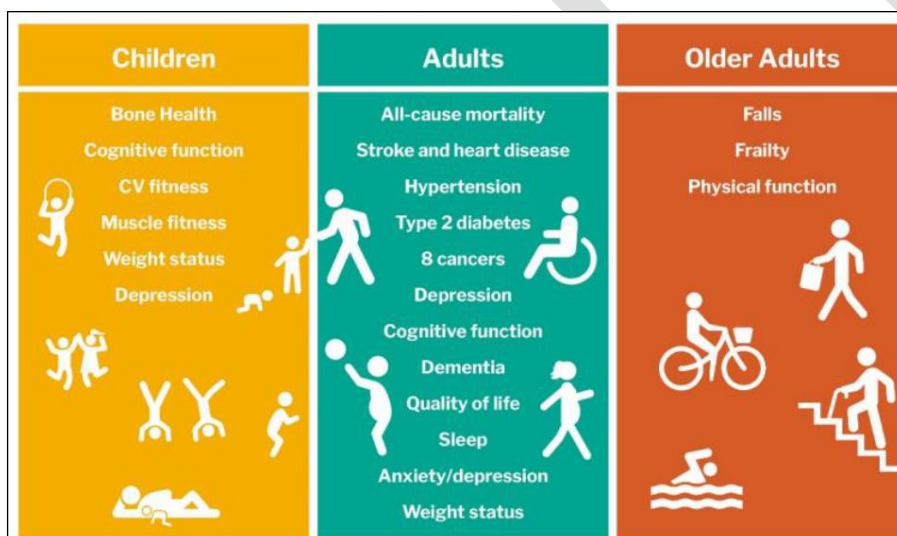
- **64% of adults are overweight (including obesity)**, adult obesity prevalence has doubled over the last two decades.
- 35.8% of year 6 children are overweight (including obesity).
- From 2021-2022 to 2022/23 **Type 2 Diabetes registrations rose by c.168k.**
- **982k people are estimated to be living with dementia** in the UK and this is projected to rise to 1.4m in 2040.
- **20.3% of 8–16 year-olds had a mental health difficulty** in 2023.
- The rate of emergency hospital admissions for **hip fractures is 547 per 100,000 people.**

### 2.3. Benefits of Physical Activity

2.3.1. Data shows there is a strong correlation between regular physical activity and reducing the risk of several health conditions, such as those in figure 5<sup>4</sup>. Given the concerning national health statistics, there is an opportunity for active wellbeing to play a critical role in prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.

2.3.2. Additionally, recent research by the Youth Sport Trust<sup>5</sup> shows sports participation in schools is associated with higher levels of wellbeing for young people and a significant predictor of self-belief and mental toughness, which are key life skills for young people.

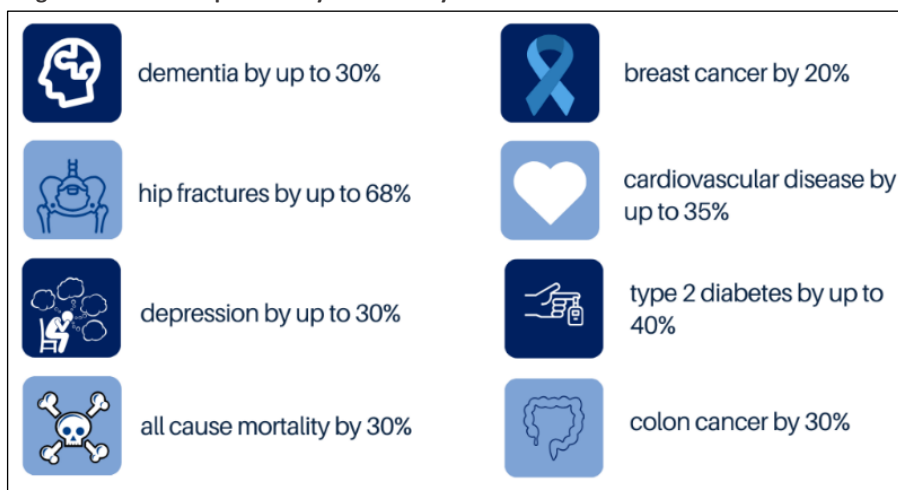
Figure 5 - Health Conditions Physical Activity can Positively Impact



<sup>4</sup> [Physical Activity applying All Our Health](#)

<sup>5</sup> [The benefits of sport participation and physical activity in schools - Youth Sport Trust](#)

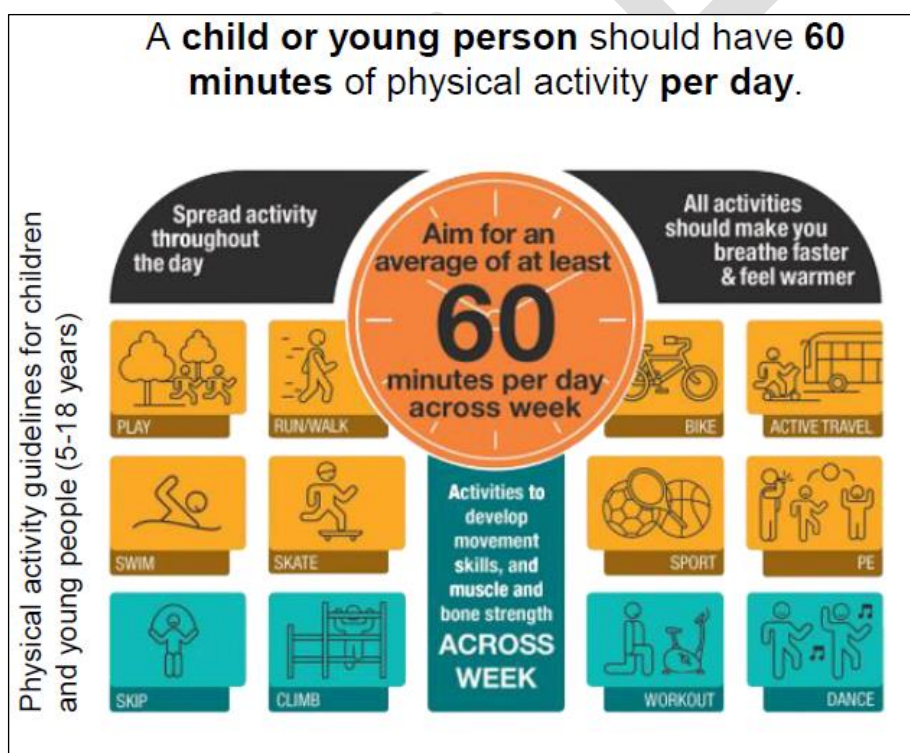
Figure 6 - Health Impact of Physical Activity



2.3.3. There is also a positive association between activity levels and mental wellbeing as people who engage in sport and physical activity are less likely to feel lonely.

2.3.4. To achieve health benefits, the following levels of physical activity are recommended by the Chief Medical Officer<sup>6</sup>.

Figure 7 - Recommended Levels of Physical Activity - Children



<sup>6</sup> [UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines](#)

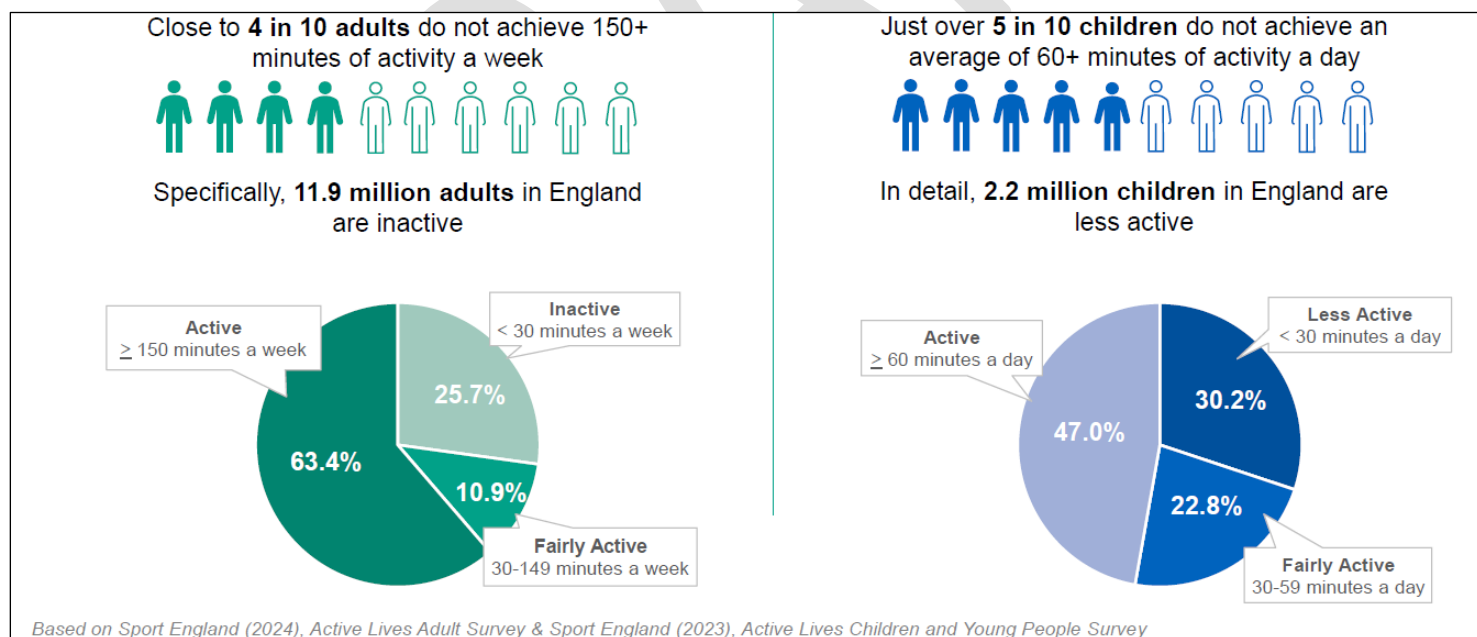
Figure 8 – Recommended Levels of Physical Activity - Adults



2.4.

2.4.1. The UK population is currently around 20% less active than in the 1960's and if this trend continues it will be 35% less active by 2030.<sup>7</sup>

Figure 9 - Adult & Children Rates of Physical Activity – Sport England (2024)



reaching the Chief Medical Officers (CMO) Guidelines of being active for at least 60 minutes per day<sup>8</sup>.

## 2.5. State of the UK Swimming Industry Report 2024

2.5.1. The most recent State of the UK Swimming Industry Report key findings are below;

- Across the UK, there are now 1,613 public sector centres with pools, down 2% from 1,646 in 2023.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/physical-activity-applying-all-our-health/physical-activity-applying-all-our-health>

<sup>8</sup> [Active Lives | Sport England](#)

- The average pay-per-swim fee across the top ten public sector operators is £6.07, passing £6 for the first time. This represents an increase of 7.1% on 2023, when the average fee was £5.67. In comparison, the average fee for the whole of the UK has risen to £5.59 from £5.50 for the first time, a 7% increase on 2023.
- 76.4% of the total UK population lives within two miles of a public sector swimming pool, dropping 0.6% from 2023.
- The sector is seeing high levels of demand and decreasing levels of supply.
- School swimming is increasing by 4% year-on-year, with over 220,000 swim students every week, and casual swimming is up 10%. The decrease in public sector swimming pools is looking to be a future concern, with demand exceeding supply.
- Furthermore, the consistent decrease in public swimming pools is concerning, leaving 8,000 vacant swim teacher positions across the UK, with an estimated 370,000 children missing out on swimming lessons this year as a result.

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## 2.6. State of the UK Fitness Industry Report 2024

- 2.6.1. The key findings from the Leisure Database 2024 report for public gyms are set out below and shown in the infographic overleaf.
- 2.6.2. There are now 2,496 public sector gyms in the UK, down 1.7% from 2,538 in 2023, but member numbers are up 1.9% to 3.36 million, and the penetration rate has reached 5%. Both metrics remain below their previous highs but continue to move in the right direction.
- 2.6.3. There was a net loss of 16 public sector gyms in 2024.
- 2.6.4. The top ten operators account for 30% of all public sector gyms, 38% of public sector members and 41% of public sector market value. The top three operators account for 19% of all public sector gyms in the UK. GLL remains the leading UK public sector operator, with the trust operating 195 gyms.
- 2.6.5. The total number of members across the top ten operators has risen by 75,000 and the combined market value by £63m (+11.9%).
- 2.6.6. One in 20 people are a member of a public gym.

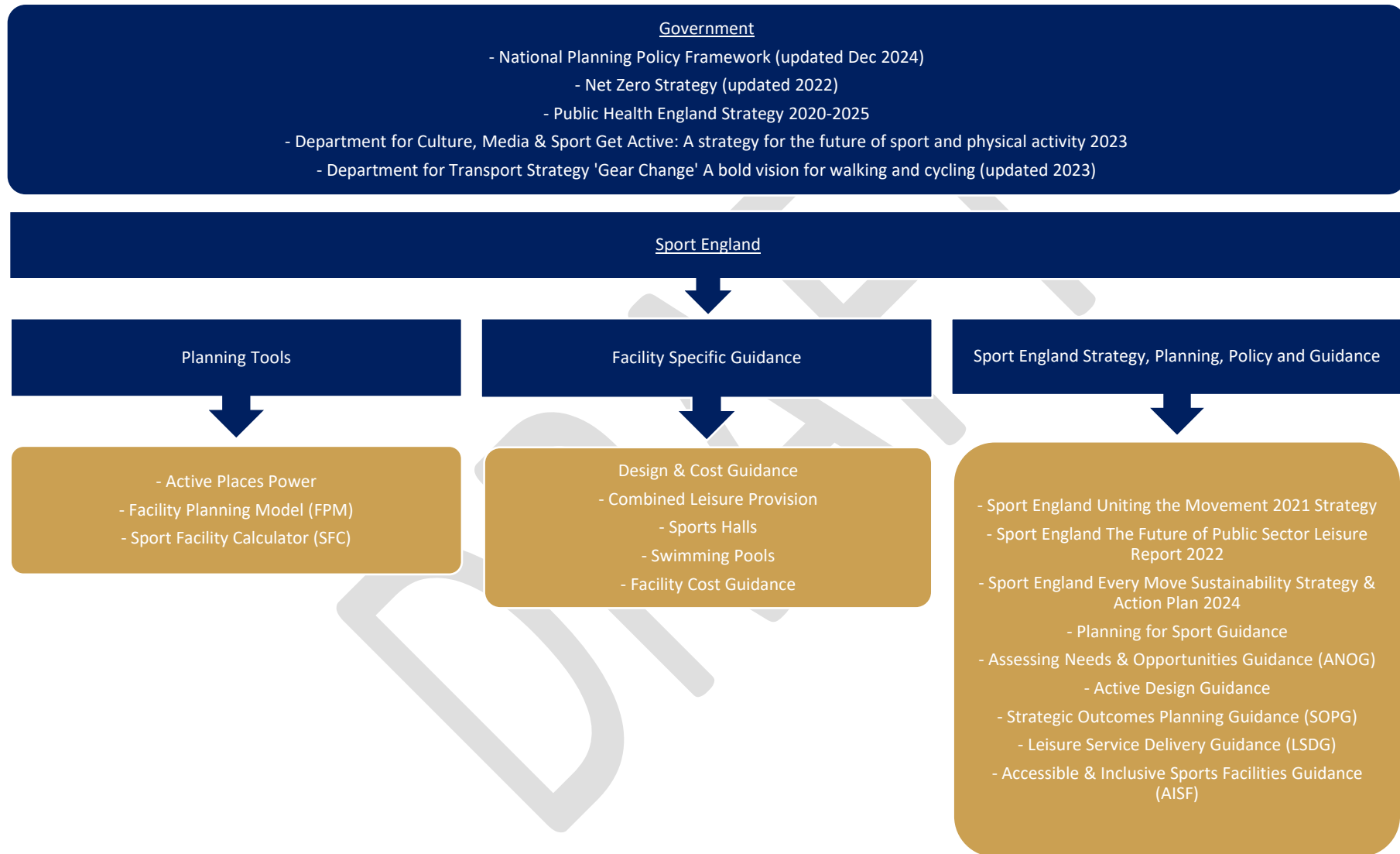
## 2.7. National Strategic Plan, Policy and Context Review for the Development of Sports Facilities Needs Assessments

- 2.7.1. In addition to the strategies referenced in Section 2, there are a number of key national strategies, policies and guidance which inform and influence the development of sports facilities need assessments.
- 2.7.2. The relationship of these national strategies, policies and plans is multi-faceted: national policy, plans, programmes and strategies should inform the development of the Built Facilities Strategy. They should also support the delivery of the Built Facilities Strategy
- 2.7.3. The key national strategies, policies and plans are outlined in figure 10 and in Table 3. They include ensuring communities have access to the local indoor and outdoor facilities needed to enable sport and physical activity to be more inclusive and accessible for all residents. By increasing opportunities to be physically active, residents can benefit from improved mental and physical wellbeing, which helps to reduce health inequalities, improve health outcomes and connect communities.
- 2.7.4. Key priorities outlined in the national strategies, policies and plans when considering the development of built facilities needs assessments include:
- More investment in the sector is targeted at inactive groups and a more strategic approach to facilities is needed to ensure communities have access to the facilities they need
  - Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all so that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport
  - Connecting Communities - Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together
  - Positive experiences for children and young people
  - Connecting with health and wellbeing
  - Transitioning from traditional leisure services into an active wellbeing service
  - Provision is place-based (ensuring health and wellbeing services are at the heart of local communities and aligned to the needs of people in the communities)
  - Promote good mental health and contribute to the prevention of mental illness
  - Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities - Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which;
    - Promote social interaction
    - Are safe and accessible
    - Enable and support healthy lifestyles
  - People's health and quality of life is improved by more people walking and cycling

- Sport and physical activity sector to become environmentally sustainable, enabling a greater opportunity for all people to participate in sport and physical activity, now and in the future

DRAFT

Figure 10 – Key National Policies, Guidance and Strategies for Sports Facilities Needs Assessments





2.7.5. Whilst the delivery of sport and physical activity is not a statutory service for local authorities, there are statutory requirements which have implications for the delivery of sports, swimming and physical activity facilities and opportunities. These are;

- Integrated Care Systems (improve outcomes in population health and healthcare and tackle inequalities);
- The Health and Social Care Act (duties on local authorities to improve public health) and;
- The Department of Education national curriculum for physical education, with all schools to provide swimming instruction either in key stage 1 or key stage 2.

2.7.6. Further details on the national strategies, priorities and implications for the Indoor Built Facilities Strategy can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

## 2.8. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.8.1. The *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*, updated in December 2024, outlines the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. It reinforces the importance of strategic policies that support the pattern, scale and design quality of development, while making sufficient provision for housing, infrastructure, community facilities, and environmental protection.

2.8.2. The framework emphasises the role of planning in promoting healthy, inclusive and safe communities, where access to green infrastructure and local services supports social interaction, wellbeing, and the reduction of health inequalities.

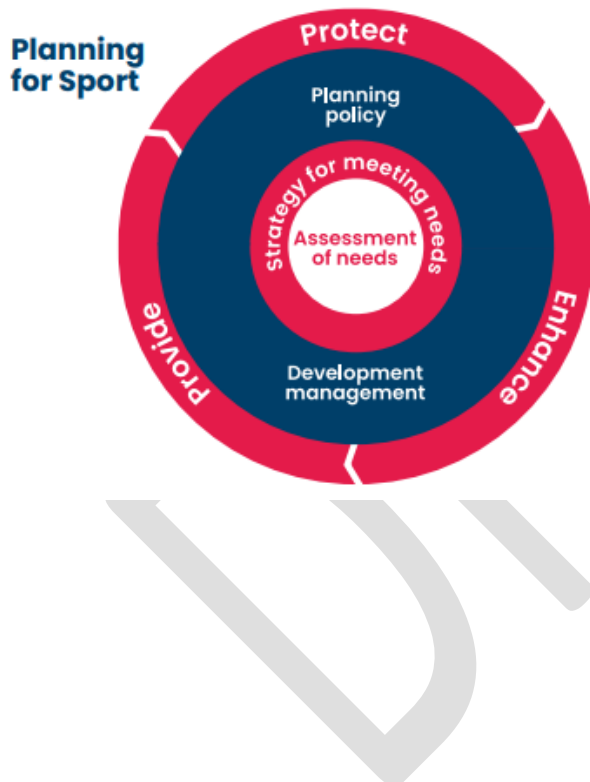
2.8.3. It requires Local Authorities to plan positively for shared spaces and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities. Paragraphs 102–104 highlight the need to protect existing recreational spaces and ensure future provision is informed by robust assessments of local need. This places a clear responsibility on local planning policy and planning decisions to prioritise access to sport, leisure and open space as critical components of sustainable, equitable communities.

2.8.4. More information can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

### 3. Sport England's Role in Strategic Planning for Sports Facilities

- 3.1. Sport England has a role in the strategic planning for sport and physical activity facilities and provides best practice tools and guidance for developing strategic plans.
- 3.2. Sport England has a statutory role which relates to development that prejudices the use of playing fields. The organisation aims to improve the quality, access and management of sports facilities as well as investing in new facilities to meet unmet demand.
- 3.3. Sport England recommends local authorities to have an up-to-date assessment of sports facility needs and an associated strategy, including a recommendation that the evidence base is reviewed every five years. This strategy contributes to that requirement. It is also a requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 103.
- 3.4. **Sport England Planning for Sport Guidance**
  - 3.4.1. Sport England sets out guidance on how the planning system can help to provide opportunities for all to take part in sport and be physically active. There are three objectives:

Figure 11 – Sport England Planning Objectives



1. **PROTECT** – To protect the right opportunities in the right places. Existing provision should be protected unless an assessment has demonstrated there is an excess of the provision and the specific buildings or land are surplus to requirements; or the loss 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 former or current use.
2. **ENHANCE** – To enhance opportunities through better use of existing provision. The use of existing provision should be optimised, for example through quality, access and management improvements supported by appropriate ancillary facilities.
3. **PROVIDE** – To provide new opportunities to meet the needs of current and future generations. Appropriate new provision that meets needs and encourages people to play sport and be physically active should be provided by adapting existing places and through new development.

3.4.2. Sport England's planning aim and objectives are supported by 12 planning-for-sport principles included within the Planning for Sport Guidance Planning for Sport Guidance which are split into four categories: **overarching**, **protect**, **enhance** and **provide** and shown in figure 12 below.

Figure 12 – Sport England Planning for Sport Guidance 12 Principles



3.4.3. Ur  
re:  
Sustainable communities.

ilities and land  
ate healthy and

3.4.4. Sport England's guidance sets out a staged approach to assessing needs and developing and delivering a strategy to meet the needs which focuses on four key elements – the quantity, quality, accessibility and availability of provision.

### 3.5. Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance

3.5.1. Sport England sets out, through the Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG) mentioned above ANOG guidelines published 22072014, a framework for the production of this strategy.

### 3.6. Sport England Active Design Guidance

- 3.6.1. National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024) [paragraph 96]: Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: c) enable and support healthy lives, through both promoting good health and preventing ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs and reduce health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities – for example, through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.
- 3.6.2. Active Design and active environment guidelines feed into the Sport England’s Planning for Sport guidance. The updated Active Design guidance [Active Design | Sport England](#) provides ten principles which, when applied to built and natural environments, can create an active environment that encourages people to be active through their everyday lives.
- 3.6.3. The ten principles are shown in figure 13 below.

Figure 13 – Sport England’s Active Design Guidance Ten Principles



### 3.7. Spo

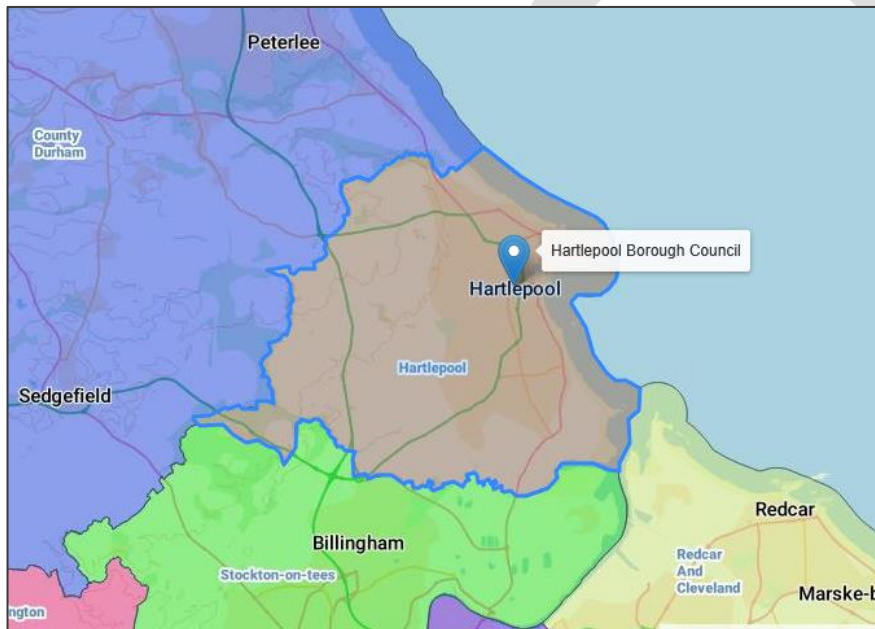
- 3.7.1. This checklist<sup>9</sup> highlights key environmental sustainability principles to consider for environmental sustainability and net zero carbon. In some cases these may determine whether to refurbish an existing building with its carbon already embodied or to build anew.

<sup>9</sup> [Sport England Environment Sustainability Guide](#)

#### 4. Understanding Hartlepool

- 4.1. Hartlepool is a coastal town and unitary authority area, in the North East of England. It is known for its maritime heritage, coastal setting, and strong industrial history. Hartlepool forms part of the Tees Valley and is bordered by Stockton-on-Tees and County Durham, with the North Sea to the east.
- 4.2. The area covered by Hartlepool Borough Council spans approximately 93 square kilometres. It comprises a largely urban settlement focused around Hartlepool town, alongside smaller communities such as Seaton Carew, Greatham, Hart, Dalton Piercy, Newton Bewley, Wynyard and Elwick, as well as extensive coastal and rural areas.
- 4.3. Hartlepool benefits from good transport connectivity. The A19 and A689 provide strategic road links to Teesside, Sunderland, Durham, and beyond, while the nearby A1(M) connects the area to the wider national motorway network. Teesside International Airport, located around 30 kilometres away, offers domestic and international connections.
- 4.4. The area is well served by rail, with Hartlepool Station providing direct services to Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, and Middlesbrough, as well as connections on the Durham Coast Line to London King's Cross via Grand Central. These transport links strengthen Hartlepool's role as part of the wider Tees Valley sub-region.

**Map 1 – Map and Location of Hartlepool**



- 4.5. The figure overleaf sets out the context and characteristics of Hartlepool to help understand the local area and priorities.



Figure 14 – Hartlepool Place Based Narrative



4.6. The table below sets out the facility mix for the council sites included in the scope of this report.

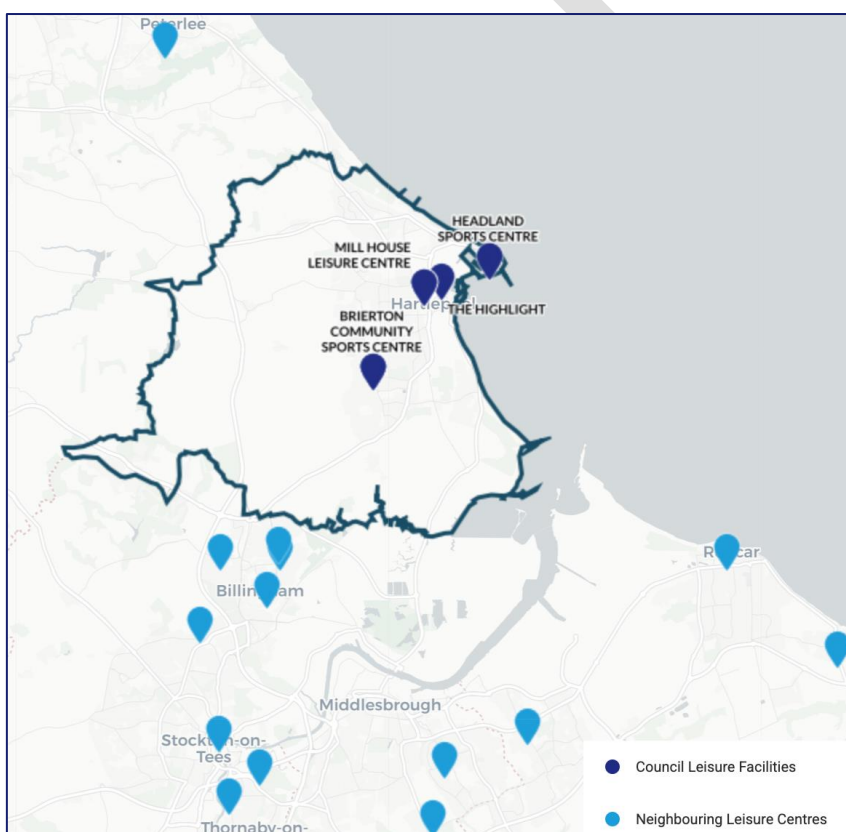
**Table 2 – Council Leisure Portfolio Facility Mix**

Mill House Leisure Centre (due to close 2026)	Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub (due to open 2026)	Brierton Sports Centre	Headland Sports Hall
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20m pool</li> <li>• 25m pool</li> <li>• 14m learner pool</li> <li>• 6 court sports hall</li> <li>• gym</li> <li>• studio</li> <li>• squash courts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25m 8 lane pool</li> <li>• 25m 4 lane learner pool</li> <li>• leisure pool</li> <li>• 100 station gym</li> <li>• Spinning studio</li> <li>• 2 inter-connected studios</li> <li>• active and soft play areas</li> <li>• café</li> <li>• external and ground floor terraces</li> <li>• NHS consultation suite</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 court sports hall</li> <li>• 1 court activity hall</li> <li>• 43 station gym</li> <li>• Dance studio</li> <li>• Fitness suite</li> <li>• 3 meeting rooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 court sports hall</li> <li>• gym</li> </ul>

4.7. All sites are currently managed in-house directly by the Council.

4.8. The map below sets out Hartlepool Borough Council and neighbouring local authority indoor leisure centres.

**Map 2 – Location of Hartlepool Borough Council and Neighbouring Border Leisure Facilities**



#### 4.9. Key Local Strategies

4.9.1. Local strategies play a key role in guiding Hartlepool's built facilities strategy by aligning facility provision with borough-wide priorities such as health and wellbeing, active lifestyles, community inclusion, and environmental sustainability. They ensure that investment decisions respond directly to local needs, participation trends, and demographic changes.

4.9.2. The figure overleaf outlines the key strategic documents and plans within the Council and surrounding area which the Built Facilities Strategy can contribute towards.

4.9.3. The built facilities strategy will need to consider the following priorities from these local strategies and plans:

- To increase participation in physical activity through access to fit for purpose leisure, sport and recreational activities.
- Support initiatives that ensure longer term prevention plans are put in place and to reduce health inequalities.
- Develop an integrated mental health offer for children and young people.
- Reducing carbon emissions and to aid Hartlepool to achieve its aim of being sustainable, clean and green.
- To work in partnership with the Council and other appointed partners in a joined up approach to improve the health and lifestyles of residents to reduce obesity and increase physical activity in both adults and children.

4.9.4. The Council's strategies have common themes that include:

- Reducing inequalities;
- Improving health – physical and mental;
- Connecting people and creating empowered communities;
- Creating a healthy local economy, including increasing visitors to the town, which will be supported through high quality attractions and events; and
- Environmental sustainability.

4.9.5. The full vision and priorities for each strategy can be found in [Appendix 2](#).



Figure 15 – Hartlepool Borough Council Local Strategies



#### 4.10. Hartlepool Demographic, Health, and Physical Activity Profiles

4.10.1. To understand the socio demographic context of Hartlepool and the needs of the future population, a review of the borough's demographic, health and physical activity profile was undertaken and the findings are set out below.

4.10.2. The figure overleaf is an overview of the demographic and health profile.

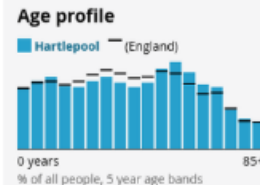
Figure 16 – Demographic and Health Profile

# Demographic and Health Profile

## Hartlepool



**Population**  
**92,300** 2021 census people  
56,490,000 people in England  
Rounded to the nearest 100 people  
**2024 mid-year estimate - 98,180<sup>1</sup>**



**65-69** is predicted to be the largest age group in 2031 <sup>2</sup>

**23.4%** of all dependent children under 16 live in relative low income families. This is higher than the England average of 19.8% <sup>3</sup>

**per 100,000 people** Hip fractures in people aged 65 and over is 574, higher than the national average of 547 <sup>4</sup>

**78.6%** is the estimated diabetes diagnosis rate, in line with the England average of 78% <sup>5</sup>

**174.1** is the under 75 mortality rate from cancer, higher than the England average of 122.4 <sup>6</sup>

**78.5 per 100 people** is the estimated dementia diagnosis rate, higher than the England average of 63 <sup>7</sup>

Life expectancy is 76.6 years for males and 80.4 years for females, both lower than the England average.  
Life expectancy is 13.1 years lower for men and 11.6 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of the council area than in the least deprived areas. <sup>8</sup>

**71%** of adults aged 18+ are classified as overweight or obese which is higher than the England average of 64% <sup>9</sup>

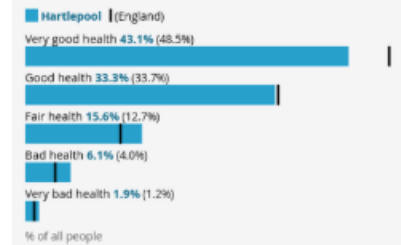
**27.5%** of Year 6 children are classified as overweight (including obesity) which is higher than the England average of 22.7% <sup>10</sup>

**733 per 100,000 people** is the rate of hospital admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions, higher than the England average of 475 <sup>11</sup>

**Emergency hospital admissions** for intentional self-harm is 208.9 per 100,000 people, higher than the England rate of 126.3 <sup>12</sup>

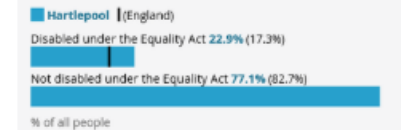
## Hartlepool

### General health



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

### Disability



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

SOURCE: 1, 2, 3 - ONS DATA (2018/2021/2022) / 4-12 - PHE FINGERTIPS 2018-2023

#### 4.10.3. Key Demographic Statistics

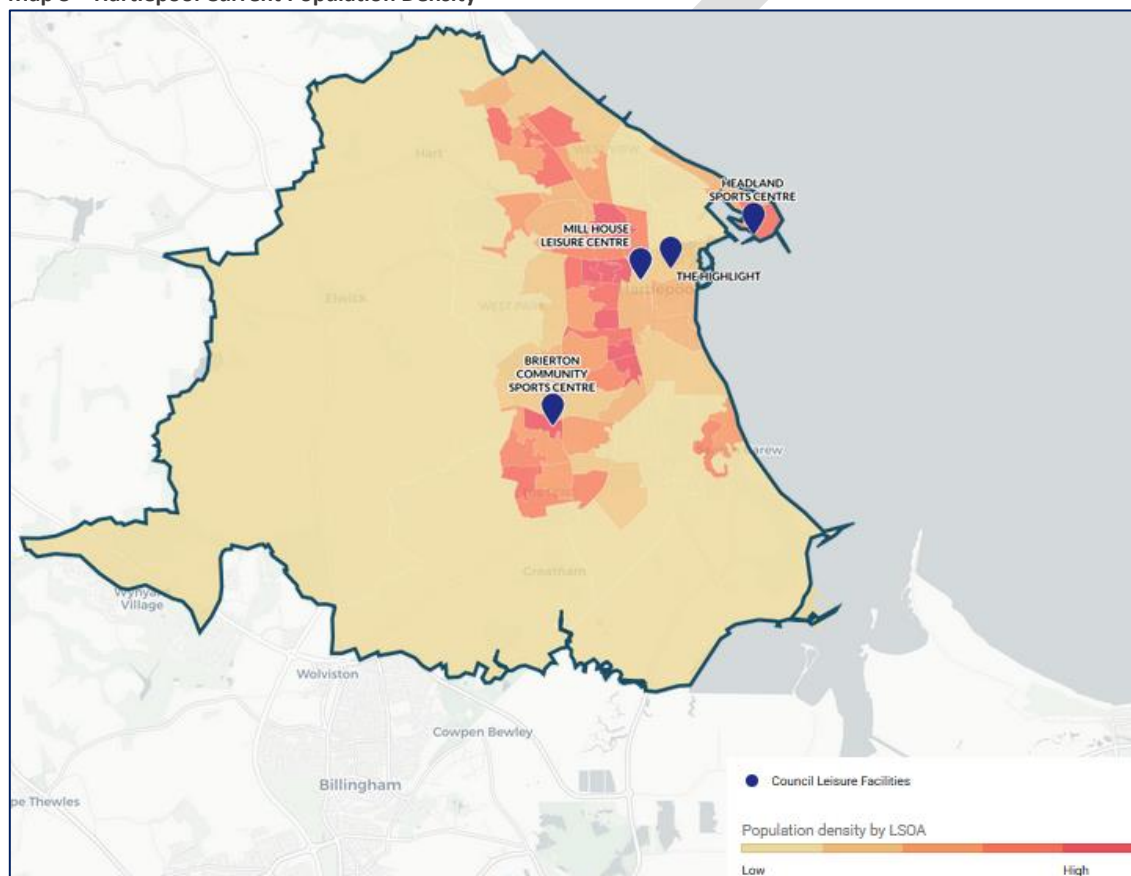
4.10.4. The population in 2025<sup>10</sup> is 94,881 which is projected to increase by 1.37% to 96,181 in 2031<sup>11</sup>. The age group 65-69 years is projected to have the largest increase of 25%. The 65-69 age group is also predicted to be the largest in 2031. The second largest predicted age group in 2031 is the 40-44 age group<sup>12</sup>.

4.10.5. Hartlepool currently has lower numbers of residents aged 20-49 years compared to the England average, but higher numbers of people aged 50 to 74 years when compared to the England average. For those aged 0-14 years the numbers are comparable to the England average.<sup>13</sup>

4.10.6. Hartlepool has a low proportion of residents from ethnic minority groups, 15.5% below the national average.<sup>14</sup>

4.10.7. Currently, the areas of high population density and therefore demand for indoor sports facilities are in the centre and east of Hartlepool, as shown in the map below.

**Map 3 – Hartlepool Current Population Density**



<sup>10</sup> Note this is based on 2022 based projection figure, 2024 mid-year estimates are currently higher

<sup>11</sup> ONS mid-2022 population projections

<sup>12</sup> ONS Data 2018/2021

<sup>13</sup> ONS Census 2021

<sup>14</sup> ONS Census 2021

#### 4.10.8. Key Health Statistics

4.10.9. Residents self-reporting as being in 'very good health' is significantly lower than the national average. However, those reporting as being in fair or bad health is higher than the national average,<sup>15</sup> suggesting that overall health in Hartlepool is below average.

4.10.10. Hartlepool also has significantly higher than average rates of people classified as disabled.

4.10.11. Levels of adult obesity are 71%, 7% higher in the Hartlepool area compared to the England average and 4.8% higher for Year 6 children classified as overweight, including obesity, when compared to the England average.<sup>16</sup>

4.10.12. Life expectancy is 1.7 years lower for men and 4 years lower for women than the England average.

4.10.13. There is significant inequality in life expectancy across the most and least deprived areas across the council area. Life expectancy is 13.1 years lower for men, 3.4 years higher than the England average and 11.6 years lower for women, 3.7 years higher compared to the England average.<sup>17</sup>

4.10.14. The estimated dementia diagnosis rate, under 75 mortality rates from cancer, hospital admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions and emergency hospital admission for self-harm rates and hip fracture rates are all higher than the England average.<sup>18</sup>

4.10.15. The Health Index score for Hartlepool (which measures a range of health outcomes and risk factors over time) is 87.3, significantly lower than the England average of 100.8.<sup>19</sup>

4.10.16. The diabetes diagnosis rate is lower than the England average.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> ONS Data 2021

<sup>16</sup> PHE Fingertips 2022-23

<sup>17</sup> PHE Fingertips 2022

<sup>18</sup> PHE Fingertips 2022-23

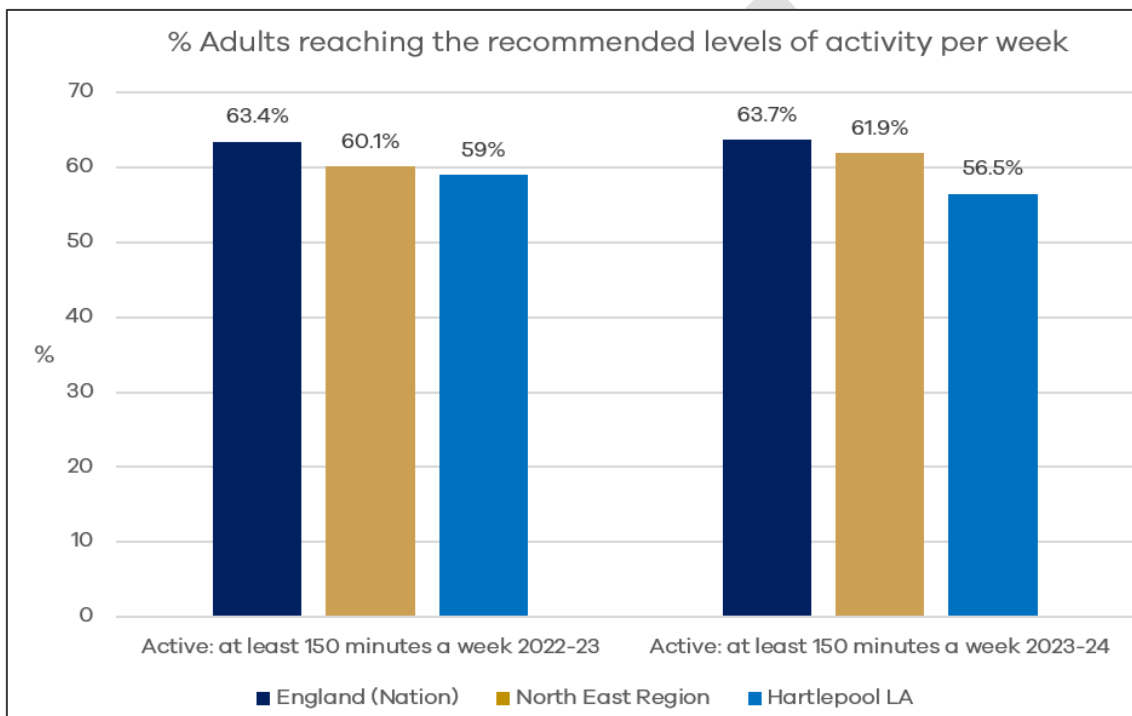
<sup>19</sup> Health Index Scores England 2021. Measures a range of health outcomes and risk factors over time for different geographic areas

<sup>20</sup> PHE Fingertips 2022-24

#### 4.11. Physical Activity Overview

- 4.11.1. It is important to understand the council area's current activity levels and whether levels of activity are impacted by socio-economic and demographic factors.
- 4.11.2. In 2023/24 the number of adults classed as active under the CMO guidelines (achieving 150 minutes per week) in Hartlepool is lower than the England average and county average.
- 4.11.3. The percentage of adults reaching the CMO recommended levels of physical activity has decreased by 2.4 percentage points between 2022/23 and 2023/24. This decrease goes against the national trend where activity levels have remained comparable and also at regional level where the rate of number of adults classed as active has increased.

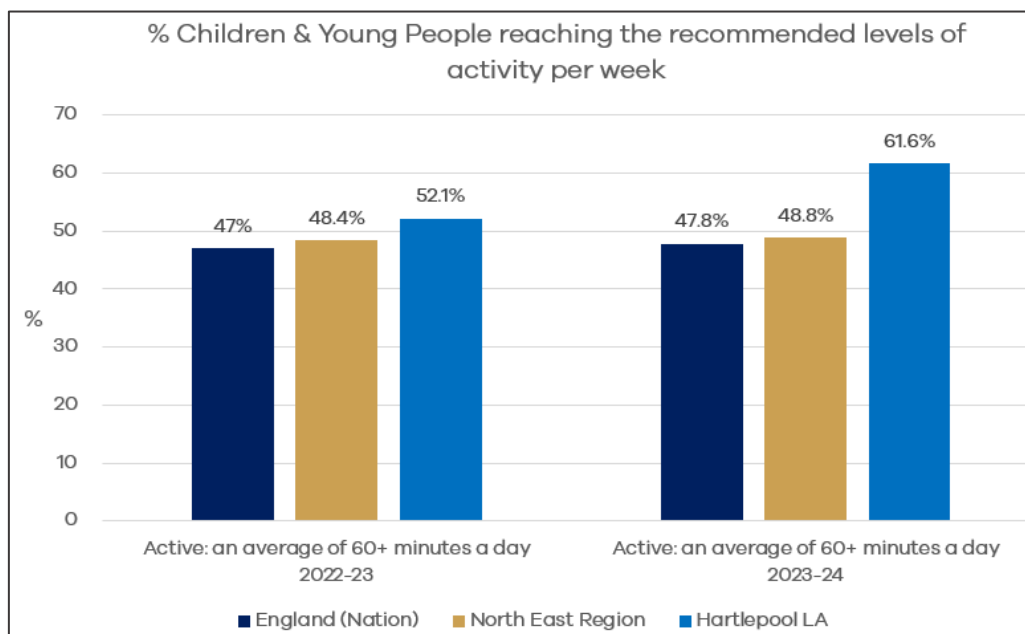
Figure 17 – Hartlepool Borough Council Physical Activity Levels in Adults<sup>21</sup>



- 4.11.4. The number of children and young people in the council area that were meeting the CMO guidelines in 2023-24 is significantly higher than the regional and national average.
- 4.11.5. The latest data for 2023-24 in Figure 18 shows that there has been a significant rise of 9.5 percentage points in children and young people classed as active when compared to 2022-23. This is also significantly higher than the England average of 47.8%.
- 4.11.6. Regional data has been used for children and young people as county level data is not available.

<sup>21</sup> Sport England Active Lives 2022/

Figure 18 – Hartlepool Children and Young People Physical Activity Profile<sup>22</sup>



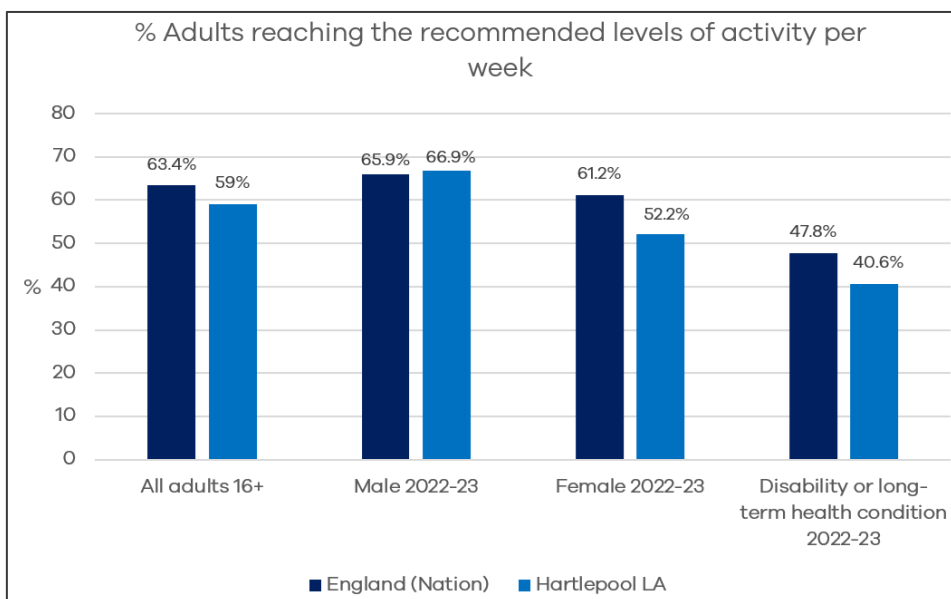
#### 4.12. Summary of Demographic Differences

- 4.12.1. As well as differences in activity levels within people living in more deprived places, there are also differences in other demographic groups, including gender, age, ethnicity and people who have disabilities and long-term conditions.
- 4.12.2. Data is available at regional and national levels and demonstrates that levels of inactivity are directly affected by differing demographic groups.
- 4.12.3. On average, England's adult activity rate is 63.7%. The infographic below highlights lower average rates for; women, older age groups, people with long-term health conditions and disabilities, people from lower socio-economic groups and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Hartlepool has a low proportion of residents from ethnic minority backgrounds but has high levels of deprivation and an ageing population, so is likely to experience lower activity rates.
- 4.12.4. The largest difference being for females classed as active, which is 9% lower than the England average. For males, the rate is comparable with the England average.
- 4.12.5. Those classed as active and living with a disability or health condition is 40.6%, 7.2% lower than the England average.
- 4.12.6. Local level data is not available for activity levels for those from ethnic groups, those aged 75+ years or for lower socio economic groups.

Figure 19 – Adults Classed as Active Across Four Demographic Groups<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Sport England Active Lives 2022-23/2023-24

<sup>23</sup> Sport England Active Lives 2022-23



#### 4.13. Hartlepool and Population Growth

4.13.1. As well as the influence of neighbouring leisure centres, future needs and population growth in the council area should be considered.

4.13.2. According to most recent ONS data the population in 2025 is circa 94,881 and is predicted to increase to 96,181 by 2031<sup>24</sup>. An increase of 1.4%<sup>25</sup>.

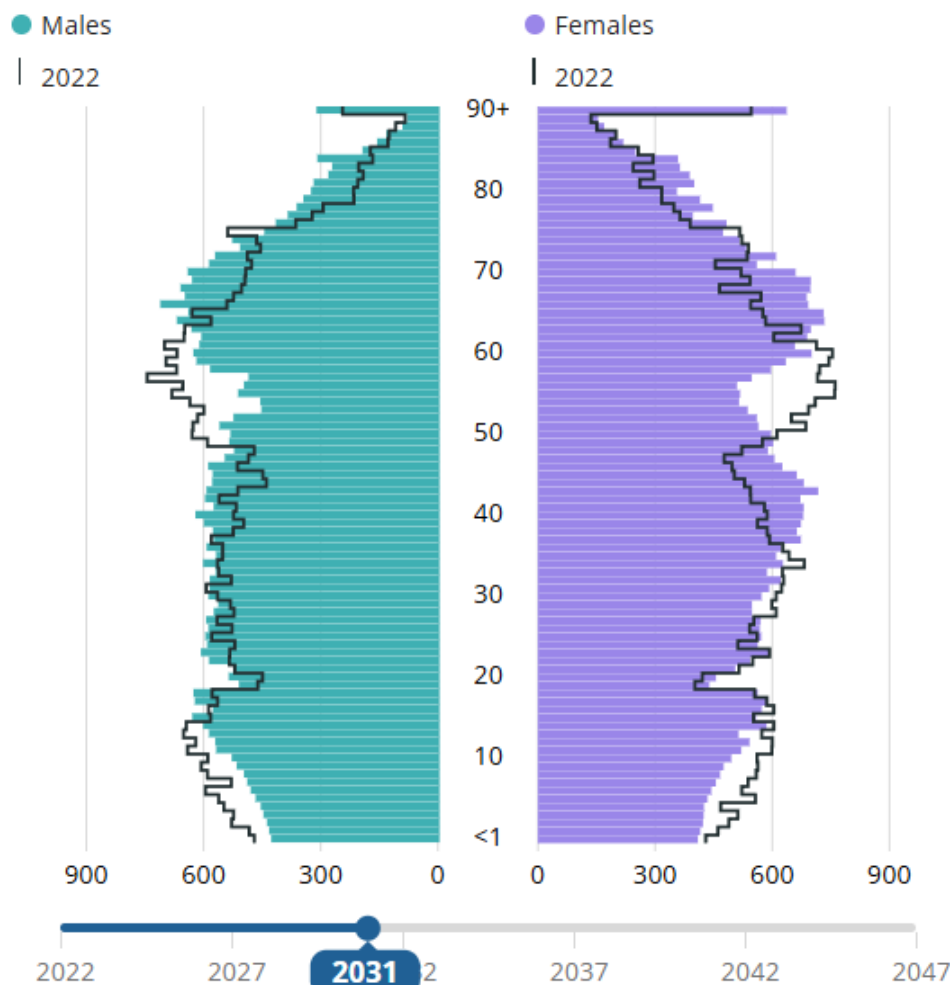
4.13.3. The figure below shows the change in population by age from 2022 to 2031. The colours represent Hartlepool's current population while the black line represents the population numbers from 2022.

4.13.4. This predicts that there will be a decrease in younger age groups 15 and under as well as a reduction in the 50-60 age group. 35 – 50 age groups and over 60's age groups are predicted to increase.

<sup>24</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2022 Data

<sup>25</sup> Note this is based on 2022 based projection figure, 2024 mid-year estimates are currently higher

Figure 20 - Hartlepool Predicted Population Change by Age from 2022-2031

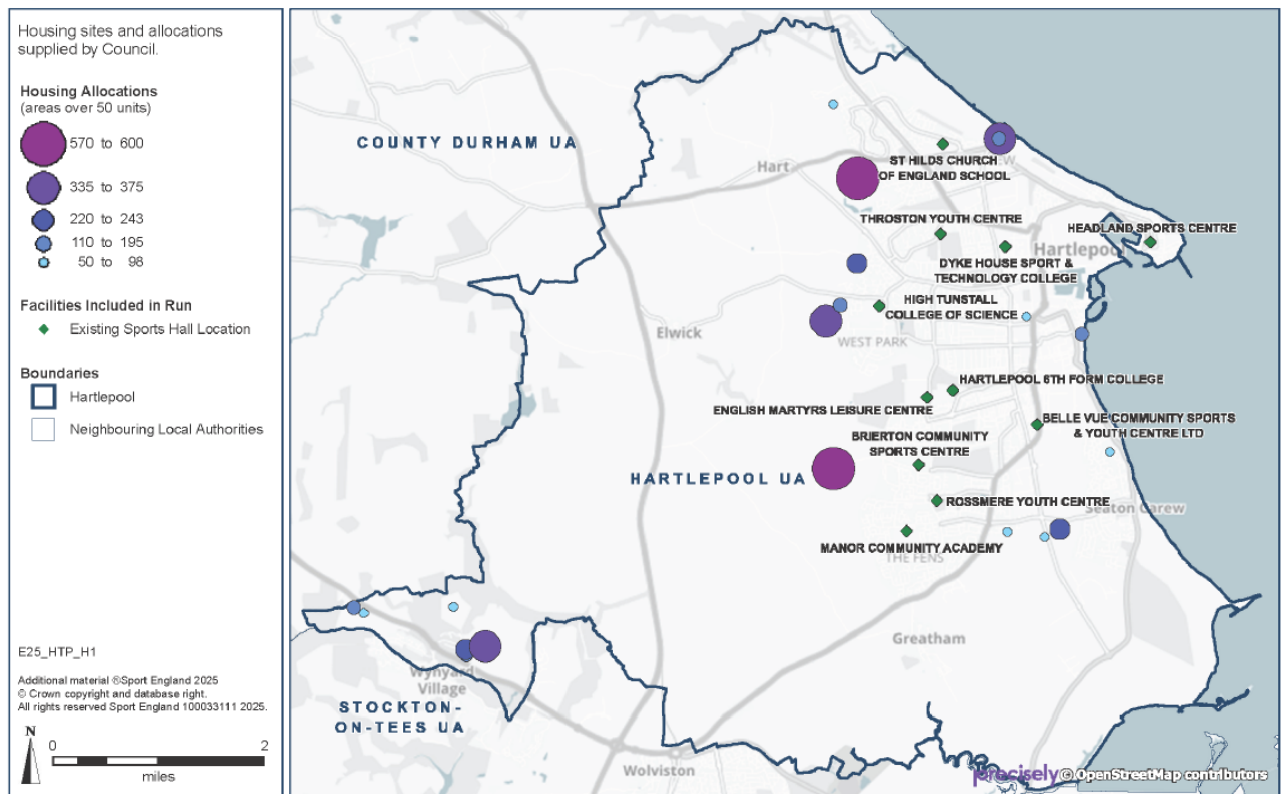


#### 4.14. Housing Allocation

- 4.14.1. The Council is required to increase the supply of housing and associated infrastructure (including sports facilities) to meet the needs of population growth.
- 4.14.2. Hartlepool Borough Council housing targets are 480 new homes per year.
- 4.14.3. The map below shows the housing growth areas in Hartlepool to 2031. There is significant housing allocation toward Hart in the North and near BCSC and Wynyard Village in the south.
- 4.14.4. The majority of the housing completions were from existing large developments at Wynyard, Upper Warren, Marine Point, Antler Park in Seaton and Quarry Farm 2.



Map 4 – Housing Projections in Hartlepool



4.14.5. There is already a higher population density around the central spine of Hartlepool. However, Wynyard Park Estate near Stockton-on-Tees border currently has a low population density, so the new housing in this area will increase the demand for local indoor sports facilities.

4.14.6. The main housing developments are shown in the table below. Each of these is at a different stage from approved to under construction.

Table 3 - Housing Developments

Site	Development – Nos of Houses
Hartlepool waterfront/Marina/Maritime sites	A major £120 million mixed use development involving Jomast & Hartlepool Development Corporation. It will build up to 650 homes (houses & apartments), plus retail, leisure, medical facilities
Hart Reservoirs site (east of Hart Lane)	Persimmon approved to build 70 new “high quality” homes (mix of 4- & 5-bed semis/detached) around the smaller of two disused reservoirs. Includes green space and play area etc
Marine Point (Old Cemetery Road, brownfield site, former Britmag plant)	A housing estate being built by Persimmon; final phase approved: extra 20 homes, bringing total close to 393
Hartlepool South West Extension (between A689 & Brierton Lane)	Persimmon Homes approved to build 1,260 new homes in total in several phases. First phase: 316 homes including bungalows and apartments. Also infrastructure: primary school, medical centre, restaurant
Wynyard Park Estate (north of A689) <sup>26</sup>	Approved for up to 1,200 new homes on 61 hectares. Currently Northfield School in Billingham provides closest secondary education. According to the Wynyard Masterplan, as the Wynyard development develops the Councils recognise the need for new secondary school provision to serve the area. Should the secondary school element at Wynyard come forward at the sports facilities at the school should be made available to provide publicly accessible sports facilities at that location. The level of need for other built facilities, such as swimming pools and indoor bowls is only minimal for the level of population expected and can be delivered at strategic locations across the two Council areas, whilst some private leisure opportunities can be delivered in the area through commercial premises in Local Centres.

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/media/2494/Wynyard-Masterplan/pdf/>

Site	Development – Nos of Houses
	The Hartlepool Local Plan identifies a need for sports pitches, changing facilities and parking at Wynyard Park, planning permissions will secure the delivery of these in the short term to ensure timely delivery of these elements, including a 3G pitch. There may also be an opportunity in the future, when education facilities are provided, to secure other associated sports and leisure facilities for the area. This can be achieved by a community use agreement and may include use of a school hall for community usage on an evening or weekend.

#### 4.15. Areas of Deprivation and Access to Leisure Centres

4.15.1. Hartlepool is ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> most deprived local authority area in England and is more deprived than 90% of Local Authority districts<sup>27</sup>; 36% of Hartlepool residents are living in the 10% most deprived areas of England<sup>28</sup>.

4.15.2. Hartlepool is one of the 53 Sport England place partnership areas that has been identified as an area in the top 10% of the country for inactivity, social need, deprivation and health inequality. The work is set up through Tees Valley Sport Active Partnership to address regional inequalities, designed so those in greatest need are able to be active.<sup>29</sup>

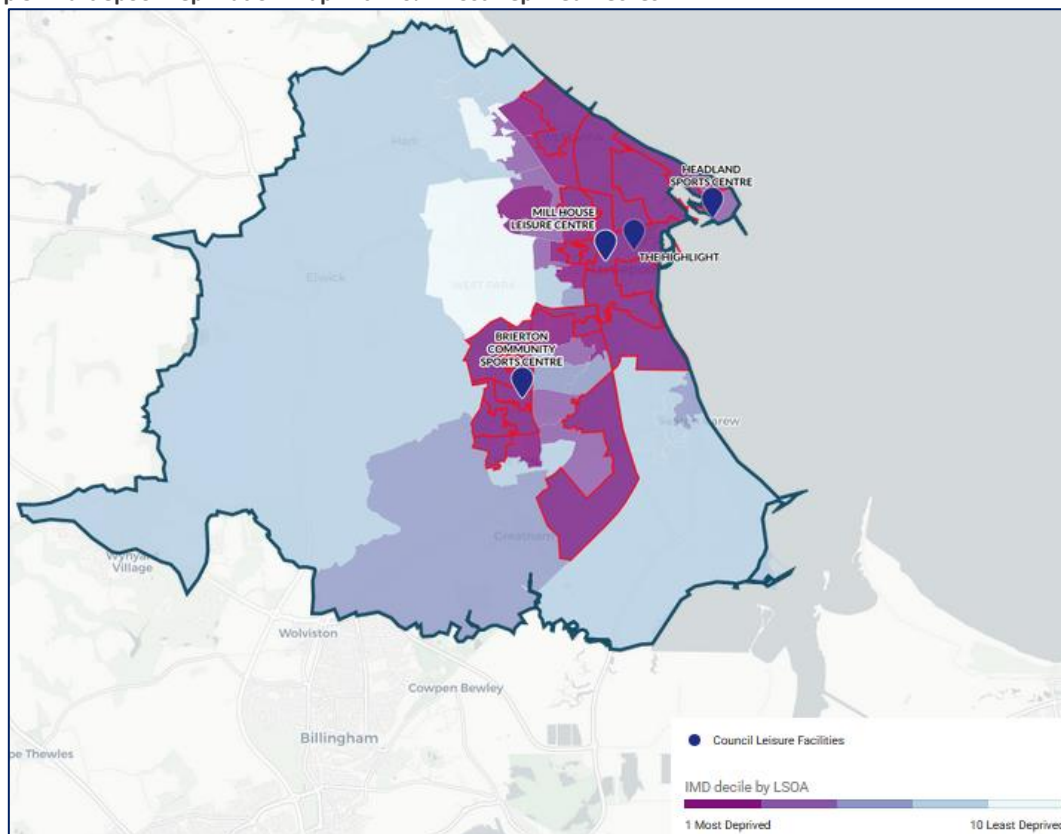
4.15.3. The map below shows areas of deprivation, including those areas in the top 10% most deprived wards (outlined in red). The second map shows that all these areas of deprivation are within a 20-minute drive or cycle time of a council leisure centre.

<sup>27</sup> IMD 2025 - [Overall \(IMD\) | Local Deprivation Explorer](#)

<sup>28</sup> IMD 2019

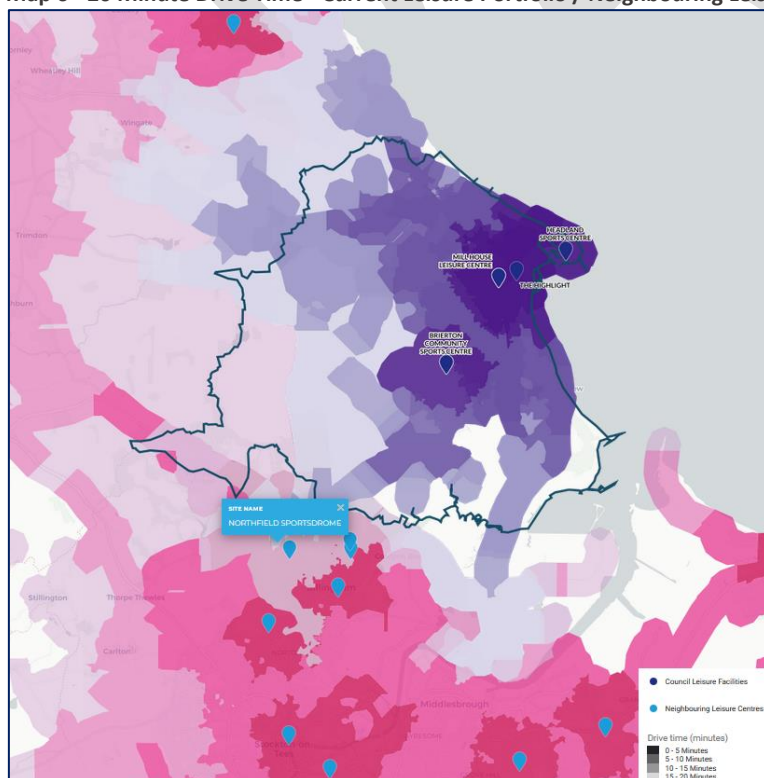
<sup>29</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/news-and-inspiration/partnerships-with-53-new-places-announced>

Map 5 - Hartlepool Deprivation Map with 10% Most Deprived Deciles



4.15.4. The maps also highlight that the majority of the borough is within a 20-minute drive of a Council-owned leisure facility, apart from the rural west area to the southwest and a pocket in Seaton and Fens & Greatham wards.

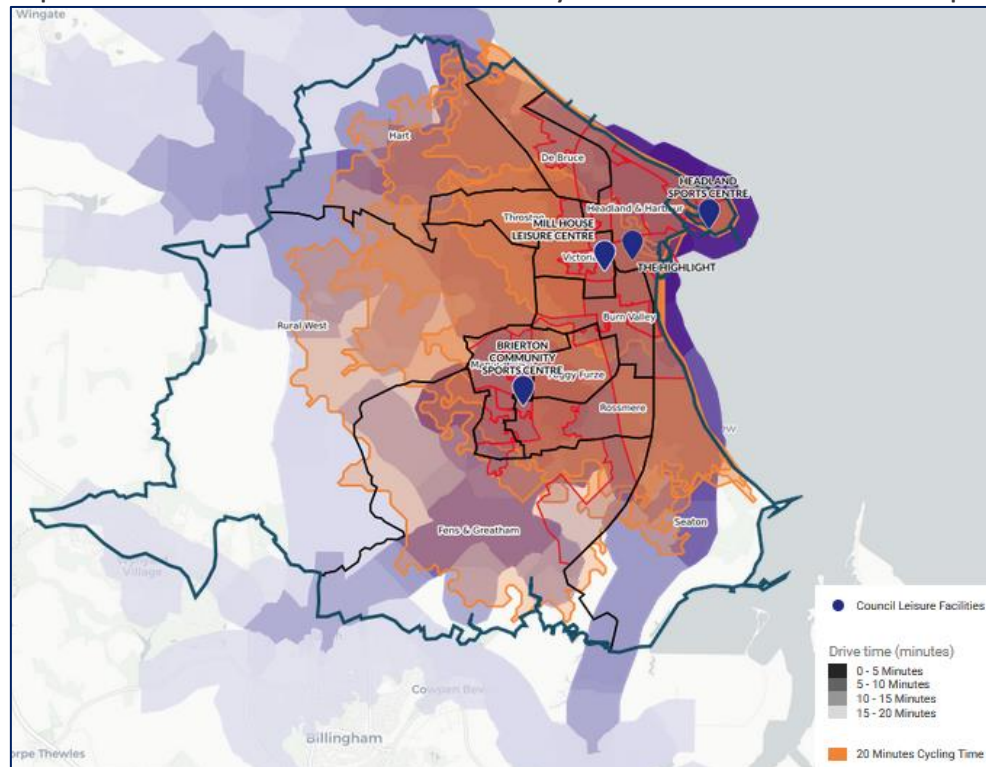
Map 6 - 20 Minute Drive Time - Current Leisure Portfolio / Neighbouring Leisure Centres



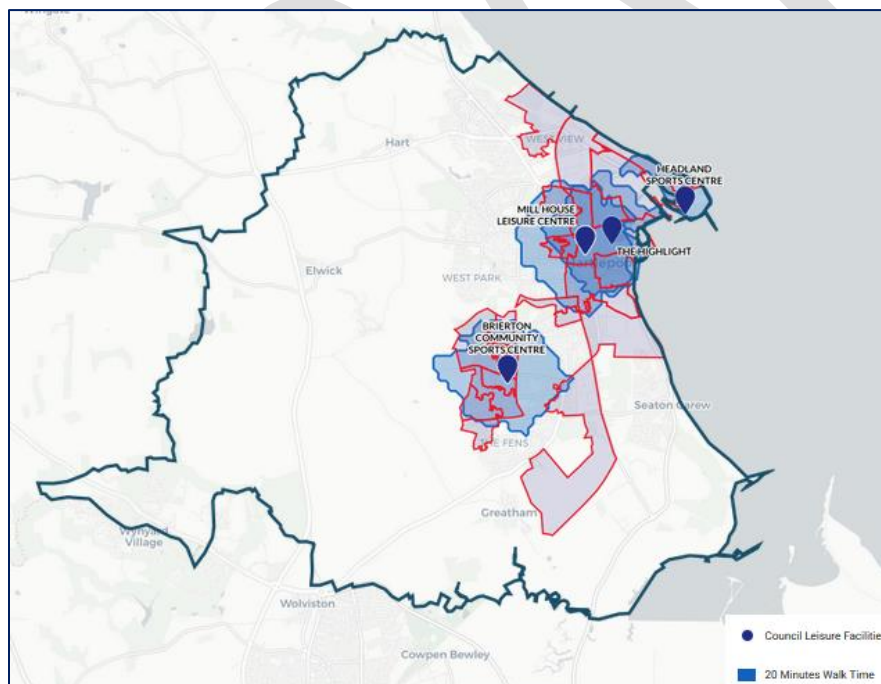
4.15.5. This drive time catchment analysis is based on the assumption that people have access to a car; 29.6% of people do not own a car or van in Hartlepool. Overall, car/van ownership levels are lower in the borough than nationally

so it is important to consider both accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport and other spaces where people can be active locally in their community.

**Map 7 - Current Leisure Portfolio - 20 Minute Drive & Cycle Time Catchment with 10% Most Deprived Deciles**



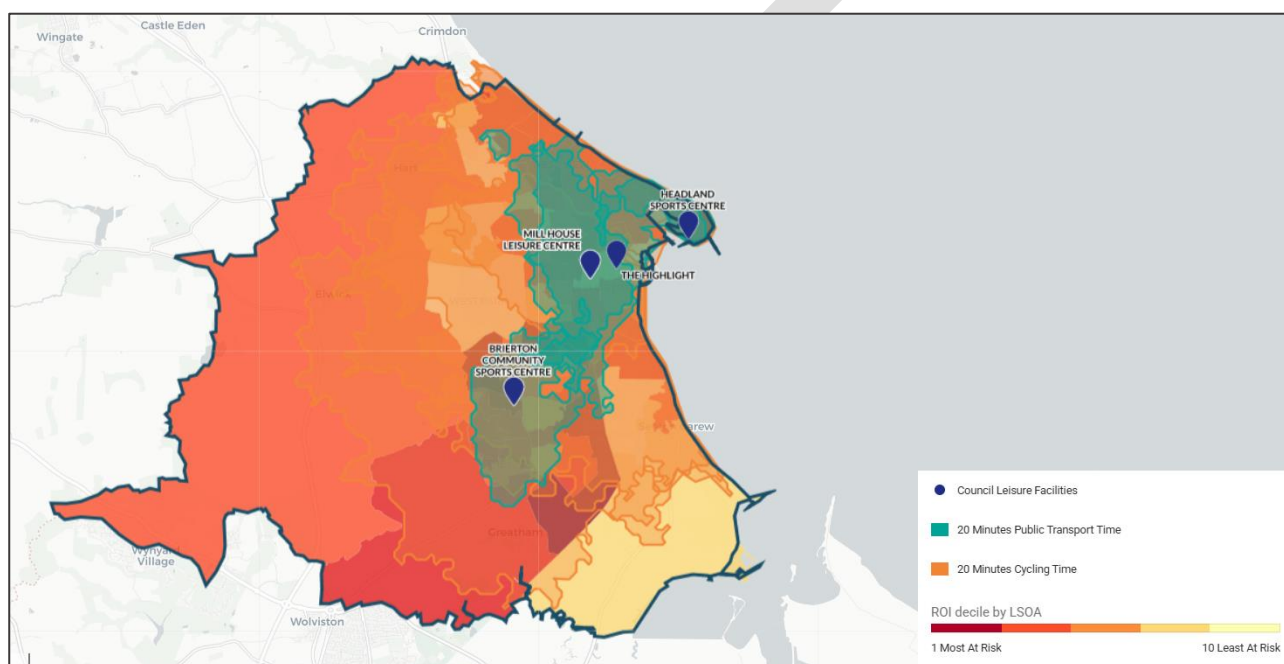
**Map 8 - Current Leisure Portfolio - 20 Minute Walk Time Catchment with 10% Most Deprived Deciles**





- 4.15.6. The rural area to the south west around Wynyard Village is within a 20 minute drive time of Northfield Sportsdome in neighbouring Stockton on Tees local authority. This area has high projected housing growth.
- 4.15.7. A small proportion of the Council area is within a 20-minute walk or public transport time of a Council-owned leisure facility.
- 4.15.8. The Council leisure facilities serve the majority of the most deprived areas based on a 20-minute cycle time but areas in Fens & Greatham, Rossmere and De Bruce wards are outside the centres walking or public transport catchment.
- 4.15.9. Similarly, Map 9 demonstrates the areas of higher risk of inactivity being outside a 20-minute walk, public transport or cycle catchment in the Rural West, Hart and Fens & Greatham area with no Hartlepool Council-owned leisure facility nearby.

**Map 9 - Current Leisure Portfolio – 20-Minute Cycle Time and Public Transport Catchment with Risk of Inactivity**



**Strategic, demographic, health and physical activity summary - What does this mean for leisure provision in Hartlepool?**

- Council strategies align with national priorities, promoting healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities. Priorities include reducing inequalities; Improving health – physical and mental; connecting people and creating empowered communities; creating a healthy local economy, including increasing visitors to the town, which will be supported through high quality attractions and events; and environmental sustainability.
- Hartlepool's population is projected to grow by 1.4% from 2025 to 2031, with higher numbers of 50-74 years than nationally and an ageing population. The 65-69 age group is predicted to be the largest in 2031. The second largest predicted age group in 2031 is the 40-44 age group. Facilities will need to be accessible to these growing age groups.
- 400 new homes planned annually with large housing growth projected around Hartlepool waterfront, Hart Reservoirs site, Marine Pont, Wynyard Park Estate and Hartlepool South West Extension. The Council leisure centres will serve the growing populations in the north and central area. However, Wynyard Park Estate is out of Hartlepool leisure centre catchment but is within the catchment of Northfield Sportsdrome based at Northfield School & Sports College in neighbouring Stockton-on-Tees local authority.
- People living in deprived areas are more likely to be inactive, and with c.36.2% of Hartlepool residents living in the 10% most deprived deciles, sports facilities should be accessible to those living in the most deprived areas. Currently the leisure centres are well placed to serve the Council's most deprived communities.
- Sports facilities have a role to play in tackling local health issues through increasing children's and adult participation in physical activity. Particularly as adult physical activity levels declined in the last year and there are higher levels of overweight and obesity.
- Children and young people's activity levels are above the national and regional average. It is important to retain these activity levels, particularly as children's obesity and overweight rates are increasing.
- Females and those living with a disability or health condition are significantly less active than the national average, by approximately 9% and 7.2% respectively. Sport facilities should be inclusive and have good accessibility for disabled users particularly as Hartlepool has higher than the national average of disabled residents and with lower activity levels.

## 5. Assessment Of Current and Future Supply Hartlepool Borough Council Sports Facilities

### 5.1. Consultation and Engagement

5.1.1. As part of the Built Facilities Strategy surveys were issued to the following:

- National Governing Bodies – for all the sports facilities in the scope
- Sports Clubs – all known sports clubs in Hartlepool (using sports facilities)
- Schools – all schools in the borough as per list provided by the Council

5.1.2. The surveys aimed to obtain the groups' local knowledge, including an overview of supply and demand, the current and future needs along with their priorities for the local area.

5.1.3. Additional consultation took place with neighbouring local authority Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

5.1.4. Full reports for each group can be found in [Appendix 5](#). A summary of the relevant key findings for each sport being assessed in this strategy is included in sections six to nineteen.

### 5.2. Facility Audit

5.2.1. A facility quality audit of the council owned leisure facilities and key education sites was undertaken, as shown overleaf.

5.2.2. These audits were completed through onsite inspections of the facilities. The facilities were rated<sup>30</sup> from very poor to excellent. Those facilities considered as poor or very poor are likely to require investment to improve them as a priority.

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<sup>30</sup> Rating:

**Very poor** – Centre is unlikely to be compliant with legislation and requires significant investment

**Poor** – Centre is compliant with legislation but building is in need of investment/replacement, the facility is no longer meeting the needs of the local community/not fit for purpose

**Average** – Centre is functioning but likely to have some areas that are not working and require maintenance/improvements

**Good** – Centre is likely to be recently refurbished, clean and well maintained

**Excellent** – Fit for Purpose, recent investment, meets need and demand of local population

Table 4 – Main Leisure Facility Quality Audit

Council Owned Sites	Facility	Year Built	Community Use	Quality	Considerations
<b>Brierton Sports Centre</b>  Site ID- 1005160  Postcode: TS25 4AS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>43 station gym</li> <li>4 court sports hall</li> <li>1 court activity hall (North Gym)</li> <li>Studio 1 - dance</li> <li>Studio 2 - fitness</li> <li>Reception</li> <li>3 meeting rooms</li> <li>Changing rooms</li> </ul>	Built 2002  Refurb 2008	Public	Good 79%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main sports hall with seating. New lighting installed in 2024. Sprung floor tired.</li> <li>Activity hall (called the North gym). New lighting installed April 2025. <b>Would benefit from better windows and renovation</b></li> <li>Gym – <b>upgrade 2025, increase footprint with new equipment</b></li> <li>Class room/spin room – no storage for bikes</li> <li>Changing rooms dated but clean</li> <li>Dance studio – Includes a main stage.</li> <li>Reception – plans to move staff rooms behind reception desk area</li> <li>Ample free parking, bike storage</li> <li>On bus routes, good signage, located in residential area</li> <li><b>Rating will improve once gym refurbishment completed</b></li> </ul>
<b>Millhouse Leisure Centre</b>  Site ID - 1005182  Postcode: TS24 8AR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 court sports hall</li> <li>Gym</li> <li>20m pool</li> <li>25m pool</li> <li>Learner pool</li> <li>Squash x 2 (normal)</li> </ul>	Built 1987	Public	Poor 39%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site closing 2026</li> <li>20m pool partially closed</li> <li>Old and dated building across all facility areas</li> </ul>
<b>Headland Sports Hall</b>  Site ID - 1014236  Postcode: TS24 0NZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 court sports hall</li> <li>Gym</li> </ul>	Built 2006	Public	Average 50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main sports hall in average condition.</li> <li>No cricket nets in hall</li> <li>Gym – new gym equipment and gym refurbishment in June 2025</li> <li>Reception area no turnstiles</li> <li>New spin bikes</li> <li>Centre requires better signposting as hidden and tucked away</li> <li>Limited parking</li> <li>Serves the local community well</li> <li>Popular with older demographic and runs regular sportability sessions</li> </ul>
Education Sites	Facility	Year Built	Community Use	Quality	Considerations
<b>HARTLEPOOL 6TH FORM COLLEGE</b>  Site ID - 1005173 Postcode: TS25 5PF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 court sports hall</li> <li>Gym</li> <li>Dance studio</li> </ul>	Built 2010	Limited	Good 75%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main sports hall only available on a Tuesday evening for community use throughout the year</li> <li>Limited due to cost of security to open more frequently</li> <li>Has cricket nets but not used</li> <li>Table tennis tables (4/5) not used</li> <li>Gym and dance studio in good condition but only used by students</li> </ul>



Council Owned Sites	Facility	Year Built	Community Use	Quality	Considerations
<b>HIGH TUNSTALL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE</b>  Site ID - 1005176  Postcode: TS26 0LQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 court hall</li> <li>1 activity hall</li> <li>1 activity studio</li> <li>1 hydro pool</li> <li>1 dance / theatre</li> <li>4 lane pool 20 x7.2</li> <li>Gym</li> </ul>	Built 1973  Refurb 2022	Yes	Good 70%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main sport halls in good condition. Available weekdays 5-9pm and at weekends.</li> <li>Used for exams</li> <li>Activity studio – excellent condition. Purpose built for dance and well used. Used for exams</li> <li>Theatre in excellent condition, used by dance school.</li> <li>Pool in separate building to school, no hoist for disabled access.</li> <li>Pool refurbished but has pump room breakages</li> <li>Used by Strokes Swimming Club, Hartlepool Swim Club.</li> <li>Small gym in separate building next to gym block that is managed externally by C&amp;S Fitness</li> <li>Activity hall next to gym holds group exercise and extra dance. In average condition</li> </ul>
<b>Belle Vue Community Sports &amp; Youth Centre</b>  Site ID - 1002904 Postcode: TS25 1QU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 court sports hall</li> <li>2 court activity hall</li> <li>Gym (18 station)</li> <li>Youth centre with table tennis tables</li> <li>Reception / café area</li> <li>Nursery</li> <li>Conference facilities</li> <li>Dance studio (now nursery)</li> </ul>	Built 1985 Refurb 2002	Public	Poor 30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Main sports hall open to the public but minimal use in mornings. 16:00-21:00 fully booked in Winter. Starting to see some bookings coming from MLC but limited capacity for extra bookings in evenings.</li> <li>Main sports hall tired, needs decorating, new floor and LED lighting</li> <li>Activity hall pay as you go and used for badminton, circuits, football, local groups, youth club, HAF programme. They would like to add a mezzanine floor to be able to provide additional activities. Needs better lighting</li> <li>Gym small and limited</li> <li>Dance studio converted to children's nursery</li> <li>Small boxing gym area off sports hall mainly used for storage</li> <li>Youth Centre for 11 years+, has table tennis and other activities, well used</li> <li>Reception / café – well run community area</li> <li>Conference rooms – moveable / flexible walls allows for different activities. Yoga twice a week (used to be in dance studio before converted)</li> <li>Limited parking as taken over by local business who are renting area. Walkable by local community it serves. Near bus routes. Limited signposting.</li> <li>Facility serves the local community</li> </ul>
<b>Hartlepool Indoor Bowling</b>  Site ID - 1010943 Postcode: TS24 8AR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8 rink indoor bowls</li> </ul>	Built 1972 Refurb 2014	Public	Good 64%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club (open daily 9am - 10pm) bar and seating area</li> <li>Average natural presence from road. Some signposting</li> <li>Some car parking next door at MHLC</li> <li>Disability accessible</li> <li>Changing rooms refurbished in 2006</li> <li>Some worn patches on bowling surface</li> <li>Well lit over bowling rinks</li> </ul>

### 5.3. Condition of Buildings

- 5.3.1. No building conditions surveys were available to identify significant work required and associated costs. MHLC is in poor condition and due to be demolished in 2026. In 2024/25 there was limited spend on repairs and maintenance, MHLC had the highest spend at c.£25k, this low spend will in part be due to the known closure of the building. It is also understood that maintenance is managed centrally by the Council and therefore the leisure centres could be competing against other Council assets for the completion of maintenance and lifecycle work.

## 6. Sport England Facility Planning Model - Sports Halls, Swimming Pools and Indoor Bowls

- 6.1. As well as the current facility audit and the demand information gathered through the consultation, there are two main tools used to inform the assessment of supply and demand: Sport England's Facility Planning Model (FPM) for Sports Halls and Swimming Pools and the Sport England Facility Calculator, (SFC) which is used to estimate future need of facilities from population growth.
- 6.2. Planned housing growth predicts an additional 400 homes annually.
- 6.3. It is, therefore, important to consider future leisure provision up to 2031, to take into account population increases. For the FPM modelling, Hartlepool Borough Council provided its population forecast as 93,641 in 2033 rather than 2031.
- 6.4. To inform the Indoor Sports Facilities Needs Assessment, Sport England Facility Planning Models were completed for sports halls, swimming pools and indoor bowls in August 2025, the key findings of these are set out in sections 7, 10 and 11. These studies are a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access.
- 6.5. The full Sport England Facility Planning Model Report for sports halls is provided at [Appendix 6. The Sports Hall FPM only captures three badminton court sports halls and above](#) and the Sport England Facility Planning Model Report for swimming pools is provided in [Appendix 7](#) and indoor bowls [Appendix 8](#)
- 6.6. The limitations and reason for use are identified below.

**The Facilities Planning Model** is a computer-based supply/demand model, which has been developed by Edinburgh University in conjunction with SportScotland and Sport England since the 1980's.

The model is a tool to help assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities in an area. It is currently applicable for use in assessing the provision of sports halls that provide three badminton courts and above and provide play and pay community use or sports club community use. It excludes smaller sports halls and those that are private use. The swimming pool FPM assesses the provision of swimming pools larger than 160 m<sup>2</sup> (four lanes and above), indoor/covered swimming pools that provide pay and play community use or water-based club usage.

### Use of FPM

Sport England uses the FPM as one of its principal tools in helping to assess the strategic need for certain community sports facilities. The FPM has been developed as a means of:

- **assessing requirements for different types of community sports facilities on a local, regional or national scale;**
- **helping local authorities 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; and,**
- **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 needs for sports facilities.**

Its current use is limited to those sports facility types for which Sport England holds substantial demand data, i.e. swimming pools, sports halls and indoor bowls.

The purpose of the report is to provide the Hartlepool Borough Council with an updated evidence base for sports halls and swimming pools, which the Council can use to inform their strategic planning for the future provision of these facility types.

The FPM should only form part of the robust assessment as it's a theoretical model. The findings should be considered alongside consultation, etc., to form a facility assessment/strategy

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## 7. Sports Halls Supply and Demand Assessment

### Sports Halls – Number of facilities (Quantity)

48 badminton courts at the main sports halls in Hartlepool across 12 sites (including MHLC).

Three sites (14 courts) are council public leisure centres – BCSC, HSH and MHLC. MHLC has six courts and is due to close in 2026. From then there will be eight courts at council public leisure centres.

Two sites (7 courts) are based at youth centres – Rossmere Youth Centre and Throston Youth Centre which are open to the public. As is Belle Vue Community Sports & Youth Centre run as a community charity (4 courts).

Education sites – 6 (23 courts).

The education sector is a key provider, so it is essential to protect access to these halls for community use out of school time.

### Sports Halls - Activities

Sports halls can host a wide range of sports, including but not limited to, badminton, basketball, indoor cricket, gymnastics, indoor football (5-a-side, futsal), netball, table tennis, indoor hockey, volleyball, handball, korfbal, martial arts and trampolining.

### Sports Halls – FPM Key Findings / Recommendations

The FPM modelling is based on a forward assessment of demand for sports halls and their distribution, based on the projected changes in population between 2025 and 2033.

The FPM modelling is based on 15 sports halls across 11 sites. This excludes MHLC, which will close in 2026.

The supply of sports halls across Hartlepool (included in the FPM runs) is provided in the table below, together with the size of courts, available hours and capacity.

**Table 5 - Sports Hall Supply (FPM Report)**

Site	Provider	Type	Dimensions (m)	Area (sqm)	Peak Period Hours	Available Hours	Capacity visits in the weekly peak period
Brierton Community Sports Centre	Public	4-court	33 x 18	594	46	86	1,472
Headland Sports Centre	Public	4-court	33 x 18	594	32.5	65	1,040
Rossmere Youth Centre	Public	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	42	96	1,344
Throston Youth Centre	Public	3-court	27 x 18	486	28	63	672
Dyke House Sport and Technology College	Educational	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	31	32	992
English Martyrs Leisure Centre	Educational	4-court	33 x 18	594	35.3	35.8	1,130
Hartlepool Sixth Form College	Educational	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	25	30	800
High Tunstall College of Science	Educational	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	24	26	1,218
		Activity	18 x 10	180	24	26	
Manor Community Academy	Educational	4-court	27 x 22	594	34	34	1,088
		3-court	27 x 18	486	31.5	33.5	
St Hild's Church of England School	Educational	Activity	18 x 10	180	31.5	33.5	1,937
		Activity	18 x 10	180	31.5	33.5	
Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre	Other	4-court	34.5 x 20	690	18	58	1,469
		Activity	18 x 17	306	28	40	

The full fpm report for sports halls can be found in [Appendix 6](#). The assessment, recommendations and interventions from the fpm reports are:

- Hartlepool has an extensive offer with nine four-court halls, of which five have dimensions suitable for club development.
- Over one-third of demand is located in the most deprived areas. Six sports hall sites are located in these areas, with a further two very close by. Nearly all of Hartlepool's most deprived residents are within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall.

- The stock in Hartlepool is ageing. In 2033 the average age of all the sports hall sites in Hartlepool is 37 years, and 32 years for the public leisure centres. There is a good track record of refurbishment at the sports halls built before 2000.
- The assessment is that demand can be met by the available supply and there is no need to increase provision.
- Interventions – based on the FPM assessment, the interventions are about management of the existing stock to ensure that:
  - Availability and capacity at Rossmere Youth Centre is increased
  - The educational supply is protected for community use
  - Modernisation of the sports halls is maintained
- Rossmere Youth Centre is the only sports hall estimated to be highly utilised at peak times. It is an important site because it is the most recent public four-court sports hall to open in Hartlepool and its dimensions are suitable for club development. It is located in an area of high demand and close to a high deprivation area. Its availability could be increased by 4.0 hours in the weekly peak period. This is only a 10% increase of its current capacity, but it would improve the offer by slightly reducing proportion of used capacity.
- The key sites in terms of the FPM assessment are as follows:

**Dyke House Academy (Sport and Technology College):**

- Four-court hall suitable for club development / Located in an area of high demand and in an area of high deprivation / Built in 1996, it needs to be refurbished to improve the offer.

**English Martyrs Leisure Centre:**

- Most recent sports hall to open in 2019 / Located close to areas of high demand and in an area of high deprivation / Most availability for community use of the educational sites

**Sports Halls – Consultation**

**Table 6 - Sports Hall Consultation**

School Name	Marked Sports	Clubs using sports hall	Future Plans
Dyke House Academy	Basketball. Football. Handball	A variety of local clubs – Seaton Carew, Pools Youth	
Hartlepool Free School			
High Tunstall College of Science	Basketball. Netball. Handball	Hartlepool Cricket Club, Hartlepool Athletics club, Hartlepool Badminton Club, Hartlepool Huskies	
Manor Academy	Basketball. Netball. Volleyball	St. Francis Football Club, Tom Helston Football Club, Stockton Athletic Football Club, Stockton Shadows Basketball Club, Josh Scott Coaching	
St Hild's CofE School	Netball. Basketball		
Rossmere Academy		Seaton Academy of Dance	
Barnard Grove Primary School			Currently have a multi-use hall that is inadequate for sports related activities. Would like an indoor sports hall that to host clubs and groups on evenings and weekends. School has large grounds that would accommodate new indoor built facility. Successful school participation in basketball and dodgeball. Long term, school would like to become a sports hub for local community
Catcote Academy			School would benefit from an indoor sports hall, or multi use area. Currently they make use of outdoor space or local venues but this has some challenges. Current indoor space is a dining hall which is not fit for purpose for sports and physical activity
Rift House Primary School			Need for a sports hall / separate to dining hall for PE

School Name	Marked Sports	Clubs using sports hall	Future Plans
Springwell School			Would like larger indoor sport/sensory activity spaces including a sports hall
St Aidan's CofE Memorial Primary School			School hall too small for effective PE provision. Ideal scenario would be a sports hall to enable PE to be taught more effectively in a dedicated space

Clubs have highlighted issues regarding availability of sports hall, quality of provision and accessibility. Specific club/sport feedback can be found under the relevant sports, in following sections.

#### Sports Halls – Quality

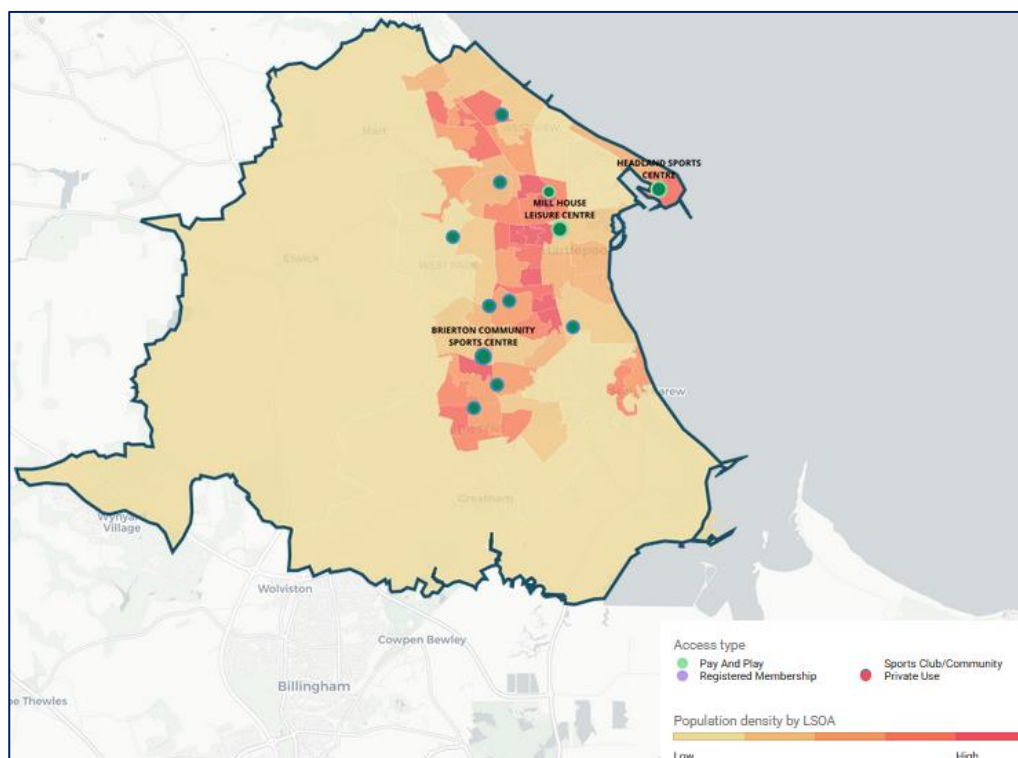
Five of the six sports hall sites built between 1970 and 2002 have been modernised. St Hild's Church of England School, built in 2004, and Headland Sports Hall, built in 2006, have not been refurbished. It will be essential to refurbish these sports halls to maintain the quality of the offer.

**Table 7 - Sports Hall Quality**

Site Name	Year Built	Year Refurb	Comments	Known Planned Investment
Brierton Community Sports Centre	2002	2008	Sprung floor tired	
Headland Sports Hall	2006		Sports hall average condition	
Rossmere Youth Centre	2012	2025	New floor and LED lighting	
Mill House Leisure Centre	1987		Poor standard.	To be demolished
Dyke House Academy (Sport & Technology College)	1996			
English Martyrs Leisure Centre	2019			
Hartlepool Sixth Form College	2010		Sports hall in good condition	
High Tunstall College of Science	1973	2022	Sports hall in good condition	
Manor Community Academy	1970	2015		
St Hild's Church of England School	2004			
Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre	1985	2002	Sports hall needs redecorating, new floor, LED lighting	

#### Sports Halls – Location of sports halls (accessibility)

#### Map 10 - Location of Sports Halls



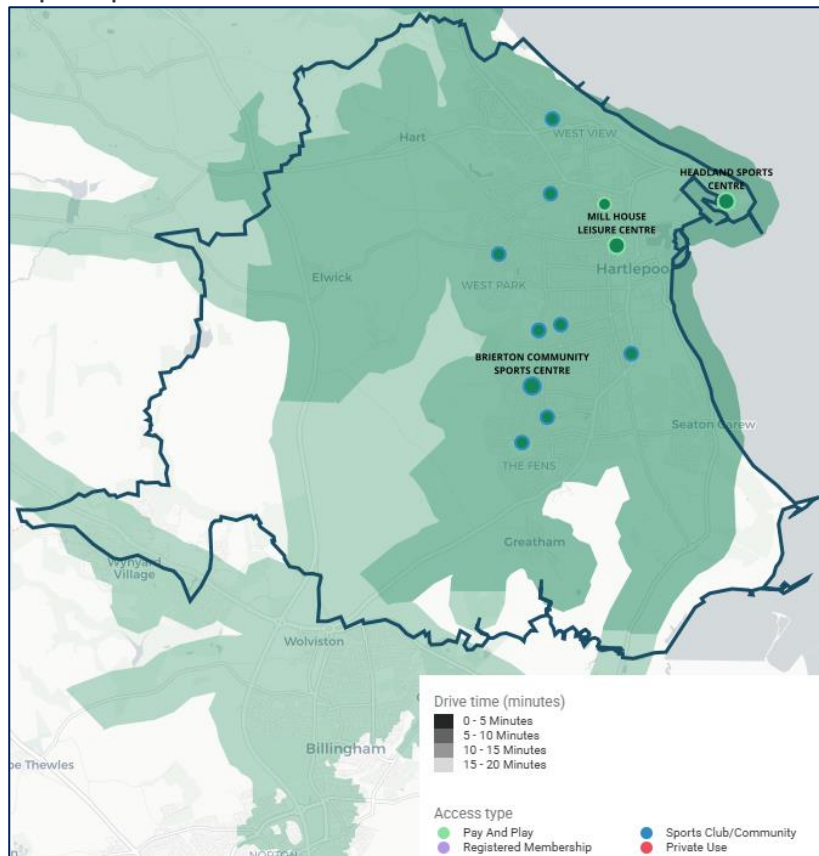
The map shows the location of sports facilities across Hartlepool, with three main leisure centres highlighted: **MHLC**, **BCSC** and **HSH**. These are identified as pay-and-play sites, while the other facilities shown are either sports club/community venues or private-use sites. The majority of provision is located within the main urban area of Hartlepool with highest population density, facilities are spread through neighbourhoods such as West View, West Park, The Fens, and Seaton Carew.

#### Sports Halls – Catchment / accessibility to sports halls

**Car Access** - The map shows the geographic distribution of all sports halls across the Council area, within a 20 minute drive time catchment. The entire borough is covered by a 20 minute drive time catchment of a sports hall apart from the south west corner and a strip down the centre of the borough. The FPM run, estimated that 66% of all journeys to sports halls by Hartlepool residents are by car.

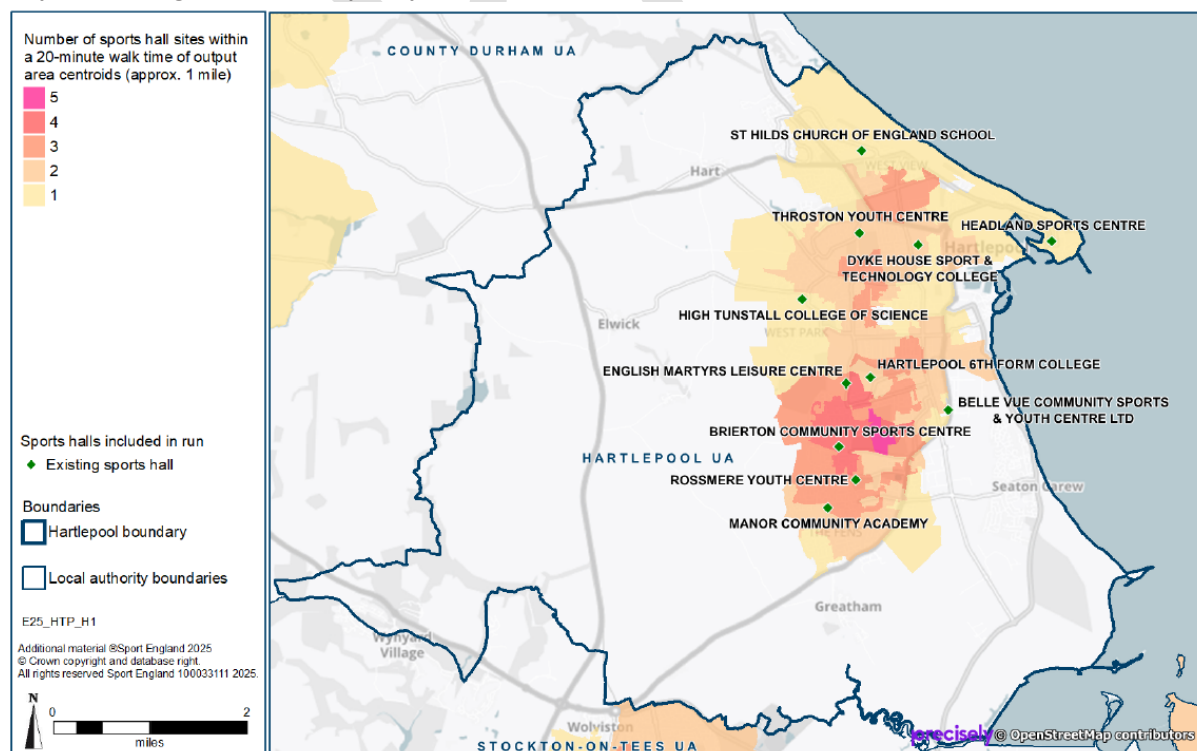


Map 11 - Sports Halls - 20-Minute Catchment



**Walking Access** – The proportion of residents within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall is estimated to be 76% with 90% of Hartlepool's most deprived residents are within a 20 minute walk of a sports hall. Not all residents in these areas will walk to a sports hall, and some will travel further.

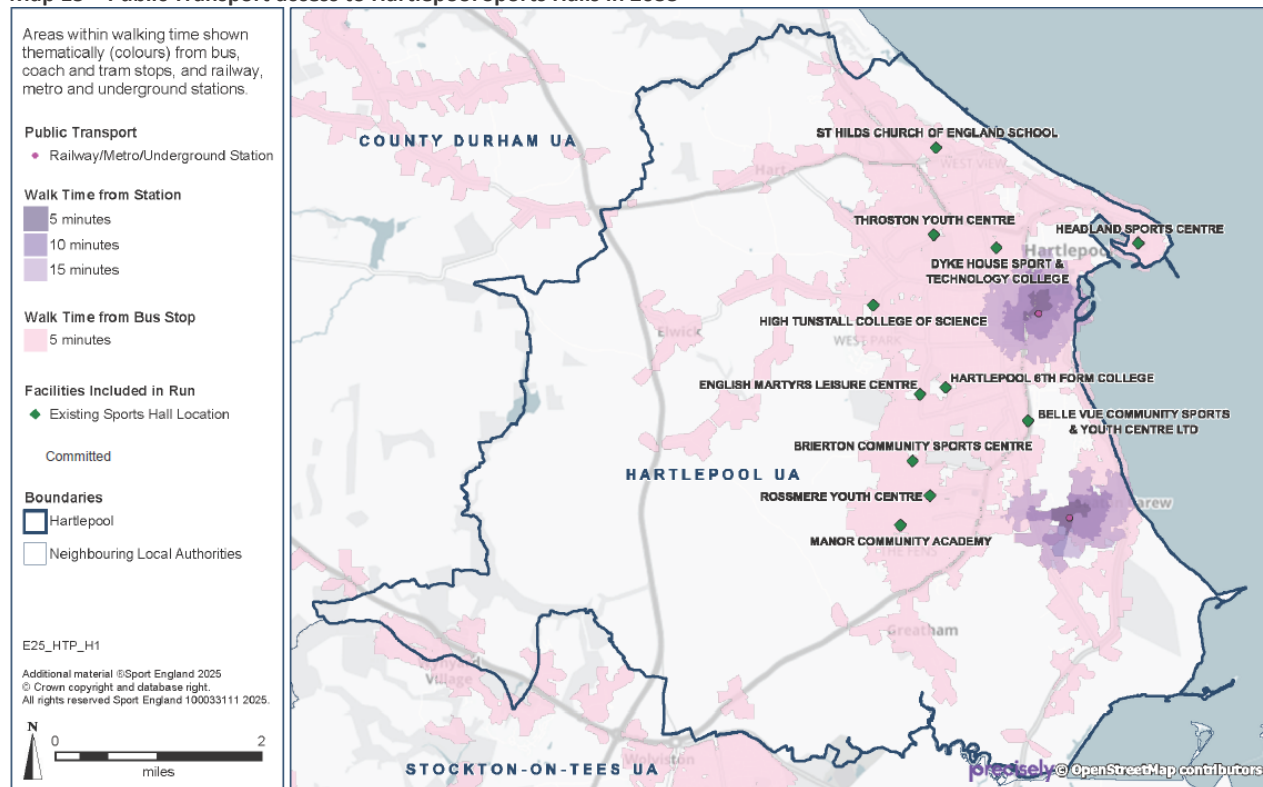
Map 12 – Walking access to Hartlepool Sports Halls in 2033



**Public Transport Access** – All the sports halls are within a five-minute walk from an existing bus stop (pink areas in the map below). None of the sports hall within a 15 minute walk of a railway station (purple areas).

While most Hartlepool 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. It is estimated that 10% of journeys to sports halls in Hartlepool residents are made by public transport or bicycle.

**Map 13 – Public Transport access to Hartlepool Sports Halls in 2033**



## Sports Halls – Availability

Three sites are council public leisure centres – BCSC, HSH and MHLC so open to the public on a casual pay and play basis.

Two sites are based at youth centres – Rossmere Youth Centre and Throston Youth Centre which are open to the public. As is Belle Vue Community Sports & Youth Centre run as a community charity, one side of the building is for youth activities only.

Community use of school sports facilities in Hartlepool is widespread. Typical availability is weekday evenings (from around 5/9pm) and weekends during the day. These sites provide a vital base for a broad range of local clubs and community groups. However, access is significantly disrupted by exam timetabling. From the consultation six schools lose their sports halls for periods ranging from 4-16 weeks per academic year, with Dyke House Academy, High Tunstall College of Science, and Manor Academy among those with the largest closures. This create considerable challenges for clubs reliant on school facilities, particularly during peak indoor season, reducing consistency and limiting opportunities for participation and growth.

**Table 8 - Sports Hall Availability**

School Name	Community Use	Availability / Exam usage
Dyke House Academy	Yes	Monday to Friday 5pm-9pm Saturday and Sunday – depending on request. 14 weeks used for exams. Sports Hall hired on a pay and play and block/club booking basis and handled in-house
Hartlepool Sixth Form College	Yes	Community use just on Tuesday evenings. Used for exams for approximately 10 weeks a year
English Martyrs Leisure Centre	Yes	6pm-10pm
High Tunstall College of Science	Yes	Monday to Friday 5-9pm, Saturday to Sunday 9-4pm. Exams 14-16 weeks. Sports Hall hired on a 'pay and play' basis and bookings are handled in-house.

School Name	Community Use	Availability / Exam usage
Manor Academy	Yes	Monday to Friday 4.30pm-9pm, Saturday and Sunday 9am-7.00pm, Exams – 15 weeks. Sports Hall hired on a pay and play and block/club booking basis and uses the external booking provider School Hire.
St Hild's CofE School	Potential	6-8 weeks. School did say have capacity to increase usage, however not during exam weeks

#### Sports Halls – Summary

- All of the sports halls are within a top 20% most deprived area apart from High Tunstall College of Science.
- Sports halls are in the right locations – serving areas of higher population density, deprived communities and are within a 20 minute drive time of the majority of the borough.
- Future housing growth will be served by the following sport hall sites:
  - North – St Hild's CofE School, Throston Youth Centre
  - West Park - High Tunstall College of Science
  - South West expansion – Brierton, Rossmere Youth Centre, Manor Academy
- However, Wynyard housing development currently has no sports hall site nearby. The Wynyard masterplan and Hartlepool Local Plan 2018 reference a future requirement of a new secondary school to serve this development. A sports hall facility at this school if built will provide for this area.
- Modernisation is required as facilities age. Priority refurbishment should be considered for:
  - St Hild's Church of England School
  - HSH sports halls
  - Belle Vue Community Centre
  - Dyke House Academy
- Opportunity for Hartlepool Sixth Form College to expand their community use to other weekday evenings and weekends not just Tuesday evenings.
- Availability and capacity at Rossmere Youth Centre should be increased.
- The educational supply across Hartlepool is protected for community use.
- Whilst the evidence suggests sufficient supply of sports halls, there are known local issues regarding capacity and availability of sports halls at peak times for clubs such as netball and basketball. The Council should provide support to clubs seeking additional use or development of their own facilities, for example through planning advice.

- 7.1. A wide range of sports such as netball, badminton, basketball, volleyball, table tennis, indoor hockey, cricket nets and football take place in sports halls. Where these sports do not have a dedicated indoor built facility they are covered in the tables overleaf.

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## 7.2. Sports Halls – Netball

### Number of Facilities – Quantity

There are no sites providing dedicated indoor netball facilities in Hartlepool. There are 13 sports hall sites providing 13 indoor netball courts across the borough.

**Table 9 - Netball Court Supply**

Site Name	Netball Courts
BELLE VUE COMMUNITY SPORTS & YOUTH CENTRE	1
BRIERTON COMMUNITY SPORTS CENTRE	1
DYKE HOUSE SPORT & TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE	1
ENGLISH MARTYRS LEISURE CENTRE	1
HARTLEPOOL 6TH FORM COLLEGE	1
HEADLAND SPORTS HALL	1
HIGH TUNSTALL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE	1
MANOR COMMUNITY ACADEMY	1
MILL HOUSE LEISURE CENTRE	1
ROSSMERE YOUTH CENTRE	1
ST HILDS CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL	1
THROSTON YOUTH CENTRE	1
Manor Community Academy Activity Hall	1

### Number of Netball Clubs

Affiliated clubs

1. Allstars Netball Club – Belle Vue Community Centre
2. Hartlepool Netball Club – English Martyrs School
3. Oaksway Netball Club – Mainly uses Brierton Sports Centre and also The Dodgeball Centre Winterbottom Avenue and English Martyrs School. Site visits also identified that Oaksway use Hartlepool Sixth Form College on a Tuesday evening.

Non-affiliated

4. Northern Harts Junior Netball Club
5. West Hartlepool Netball Intraleague – Mill House LC

### Level of Competition

The level of competition in Hartlepool is mainly at a regional level. Allstars Netball Club provides coaching for children and runs walking netball. In contrast Oaksway Netball Club play some National Premier League at BCSC but under special dispensation due to inadequate runoff areas.

Oaksway Netball Club offers activities that are inclusive for people with disabilities and minority groups. West Hartlepool Netball Intraleague offers social and back to netball activities and would like to offer more activities for minority groups.

Walking Netball is also available at BCSC.

### Consultation

**England Netball did not respond the consultation**

#### National Overview

England Netball's programmes of recognised and authorised activities are;

- Seven-a-side Netball – single gender full seven aside version of the game in accordance with England Netball and/or World Netball rules
- Fast5 / FastNet – single gender five/seven aside version of the game in accordance with England Netball and World Netball rules and regulations
- Indoor Netball (or Nets) – single gender or mixed gender version of the game in accordance with England Netball and/or World Indoor Netball Association (WINA) rules and regulations
- ParaNetball – Versions of the game that are endorsed by England Netball in recognition of the participants' disability

England Netball participation programmes delivered by approved persons/groups, including:

- Back to Netball
- Bee Netball
- Netball Now
- Walking Netball

England Netball welcomes Mixed Netball as a growing form of the game and recognises Mixed Netball.

### Sports Club Consultation

Consultation with Hartlepool's netball clubs shows strong and growing demand, but also highlights facility challenges.

Oaksway Netball Club (300 members, over 100 juniors) and West Hartlepool Netball Intraleague (71–80 members, no juniors) have both expanded in recent years.

Oaksway reports barriers: high hire costs, limited booking availability, programming pressures from other sports, inadequate refreshments space, and facilities not meeting competition standards. Their future needs include a double-court facility with proper runoffs, sprung floors and spectator seating to host county, regional and national competitions, expand opportunities, and grow men's netball. No funding has been accessed in the past five years. BCSC itself is rated good for cleanliness, staff and storage, but concerns remain over limited spectator space and inadequate runoffs.

West Hartlepool Netball Intraleague mainly uses MHLC (rated as poor standard), with some use of Belle Vue Sports Centre, holding sessions on weekday evenings. The club reported barriers of high hire costs, limited hours, dated equipment, and insufficient space around courts to place posts correctly. The club reports not enough hours are available and notes that closure of MHLC would leave them without a venue. Future plans include affiliating with England Netball, expanding to minority groups, increasing membership, and securing a full-size netball court. No funding has been accessed in the past five years. The club comments that it is disappointing the new leisure centre does not have netball facilities despite demand.

Table 10 - Netball Club Consultation

Sports club name	Own/lease/hire premises	Most Used Venue	Facility Quality Rating	Main hours of use	Sufficient Hours	Barriers Yes/No	Level of Competition	Development needs for future/higher competition	Plans for further development of your sport	Disability Sessions or Specific Sessions for minority groups available?
West Hartlepool Netball Intraleague	Hire a facility at a leisure centre/venue	Mill House Leisure Centre	Poor	• Weekdays in the evening	No	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of use/hire charges</li> <li>• Opening times/hours of use</li> <li>• Quality of equipment</li> </ul>	Social and back to netball	No	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would like to affiliate with England Netball and provide training for more people, minority groups etc.</li> </ul>	No
Oaksway Netball Club	Hire a facility at a leisure centre/venue	Brierton Sports Centre	Good	• Weekdays in the evening • Weekends during the day	No	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of use/hire charges</li> <li>• Facility always full/hard to book</li> <li>• Meeting competition standards</li> <li>• Opening times/hours of use</li> <li>• Programming and availability given over to other sports and activities</li> </ul>	National Premier League	With the correct standard of facilities we can attract additional competitions to Hartlepool, local leagues, county, regional and national competitions. It would also assist us to develop men's netball and retention of members.	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We would love to offer more sessions in more venues.</li> </ul>	Yes

### Summary

- There is a good variety and standard of netball provision in Hartlepool ranging from back to netball, walking netball to league games.
- This equates to a high demand for netball and pressure on facilities for bookings particularly in the evenings.
- There is recognised potential for the sport to grow locally if access to more suitable indoor built facility availability can be secured.
- West Hartlepool Netball Intraleague will need to find a new base when MHLC closes. There are potential options if Hartlepool Sixth Form College extended their community use.
- The Dodgeball Centre allows netball to be played in addition to existing sports hall space.
- Opportunity for more inclusive and minority netball activities across all netball clubs.
- Indoor club netball takes place in a wide range of venues across education sports halls, leisure centres, community centres. There is no one site that has sole netball usage.

- HBC should support engagement with local netball clubs and England Netball to explore potential opportunities to support the expansion of the sport to meet local demand.

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### 7.3. Sports Halls – Volleyball

#### Volleyball Facilities (Quantity)

There are no dedicated volleyball facilities in the Hartlepool council area. There are eight sports halls with volleyball markings. Five are sports club & community use, two pay & play and one private use.

**Table 11 - Volleyball Court Supply**

Site Name	Volleyball Courts
BELLE VUE COMMUNITY SPORTS & YOUTH CENTRE	1
DYKE HOUSE SPORT & TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE	1
HARTLEPOOL 6TH FORM COLLEGE	2
HEADLAND SPORTS HALL	1
HIGH TUNSTALL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE	1
MANOR COMMUNITY ACADEMY	1
MILL HOUSE LEISURE CENTRE	1
ST HILDS CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL	1

#### Facility Requirements

Volleyball can be played in sports halls with a clear height of 7,500mm for premier league level and below or 12,500mm for international level. Therefore, sports halls in Hartlepool with suitable court markings and nets can be used for volleyball in lower leagues.

#### Number of Volleyball Clubs

There are no volleyball clubs based directly in Hartlepool, there are several clubs in the surrounding area that welcome players from Hartlepool: Marske Valley, Durham Palatinates Women, Haughton Darlington, Cleveland Bulls (Saltburn), Grangefield (Stockton on Tees) and Middlesbrough College has a Volleyball Academy.

#### Consultation

Volleyball England did not respond to consultation.

Volleyball England strategy [The Game Plan](#). Three key priorities

- Get. Keep. Grow
- Volleyball For Life
- An Ace Service

#### Summary

- There are no dedicated volleyball facilities or clubs in Hartlepool
- Good supply of sports halls in Hartlepool, but facilities are often limited due to exam use and competition for bookings, and not all sites have volleyball-ready facilities.
- Currently no demand for additional volleyball facilities in Hartlepool.



## 7.4. Sports Halls – Basketball

### Number of Facilities - Quantity

There are no dedicated basketball facilities in Hartlepool.

There are 11 sports halls with 11 basketball courts in Hartlepool, of which one is private use, two are pay and play, and eight are sports club/community use. The largest is MHLC. There are five sites with 34.5 x20m courts (Rossmere Youth Centre, Dyke House Academy, Hartlepool Sixth Form, High Turnstall and Belle Vue).

Basketball can be played in sports halls<sup>31</sup> with dimensions of:

- International
  - Overall space - 32.1m (Length), 22.1m (width) and 7m (height), which equates to a four-court badminton sports hall
  - Playing area - 28m x 15m x 7m
- Premier
  - Overall space – 32.1m x 22.1m x 7m
  - Playing area – 26-28m x 14-15m x 7m
- Club
  - Overall space – 32.1m x 22.1m x 7m
  - Playing area - 26-28m x 14-15m x 7m
- Community
  - Overall space - 32.1m x 19.1m x 7m
  - Playing area – 26-28m x 14-15m x 7m

### Number of Basketball Clubs

There are two basketball clubs operating in the Hartlepool area:

- Hartlepool Heat – train and play at Dyke House Academy.
- Huskies Basketball –train and play at MHLC, BCSC, High Tunstall College of Science, HSH and St. Hild's school.

### Level of Competition

Hartlepool Heat men and women senior and junior teams compete in local and regional leagues. By contrast, Huskies Basketball compete in National League at youth (U14, U16, U18) and senior men's level, and run its own junior leagues (U8, U10, U12).

### NGB Consultation

Basketball England did not respond to consultation

Basketball England's 2018–2024 strategy focuses on four overarching ambitions: retaining and growing participation, developing a world-class talent system, enhancing infrastructure, and delivering a high-performing governing body. Central priorities include widening access for young people through schools and clubs, addressing gender and diversity imbalances, expanding informal formats such as 3x3, and improving the affordability and accessibility of participation. Investment in a sustainable network of clubs, coaches, officials and volunteers, alongside the delivery of a 10-year facility plan, underpins these ambitions.

### Sports Club Consultation

Huskies Basketball Club responded: 325 active members including 20 juniors, four volunteers. Membership is expected to increase. The club provides activities for people with disabilities and minority groups.

**Table 12 - Basketball Club Consultation**

Sports club name	Own/lease/hire premises	Most Used Venue	Facility Quality Rating	Main hours of use	Sufficient Hours	Barriers Yes/No	Level of Competition	Development needs for future/higher competition	Plans for further development of your sport	Disability Sessions or Specific Sessions for minority groups available?
Huskies Basketball Club	Hire a facility at a leisure centre/venue	Mill House Leisure Centre	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekdays in the evening</li> <li>• Weekends during the day</li> <li>• Weekends in the evening</li> </ul>	No	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of use/hire charges</li> <li>• Meeting competition standards</li> <li>• Opening times/hours of use</li> <li>• Quality of equipment</li> <li>• Quality of facilities</li> </ul>	National League at youth U14s, U16s U18s for boys and girls. National League at Senior men's and we have our own league for u8s, u10s and u12s	Yes Better facilities when they secure promotion	Yes Continue to go and expand in line with our internal development plan	Yes

<sup>31</sup> [basketballengland.co.uk/facilityrequirements](https://basketballengland.co.uk/facilityrequirements)

They said, “when we get promoted, the bleacher and seating requirements are for 250 seats minimum, we have no place for that currently, a double sports hall with seating for 1,000 would be great.”

The club has accessed funding in the last five years and continues to grow. Priorities include improved facilities, appropriate courts and equipment, and sufficient hall time to sustain expansion.

### Schools Consultation

The schools consultation confirmed that Manor Academy sports hall is also used by Stockton Shadows Basketball Club.

### Quality

Huskies Basketball Club described standard of MHLC as poor and nearing end of life. They said, “all facilities bar Brierton need updating. Basketball lines at Headland and Mill House are wrong so inappropriate for competition. The rims are also not fit for competition. The only ones with the right rims and lines are the Brierton facilities as Huskies club purchased the Hoops and got them installed.”

Four of the sports hall sites with basketball courts have been modernised. St Hild’s Church of England School, built in 2004, and HSH, built in 2006, have not been refurbished. It will be essential to refurbish these sports halls to maintain the quality of the offer

**Table 13 - Basketball Court Quality Feedback**

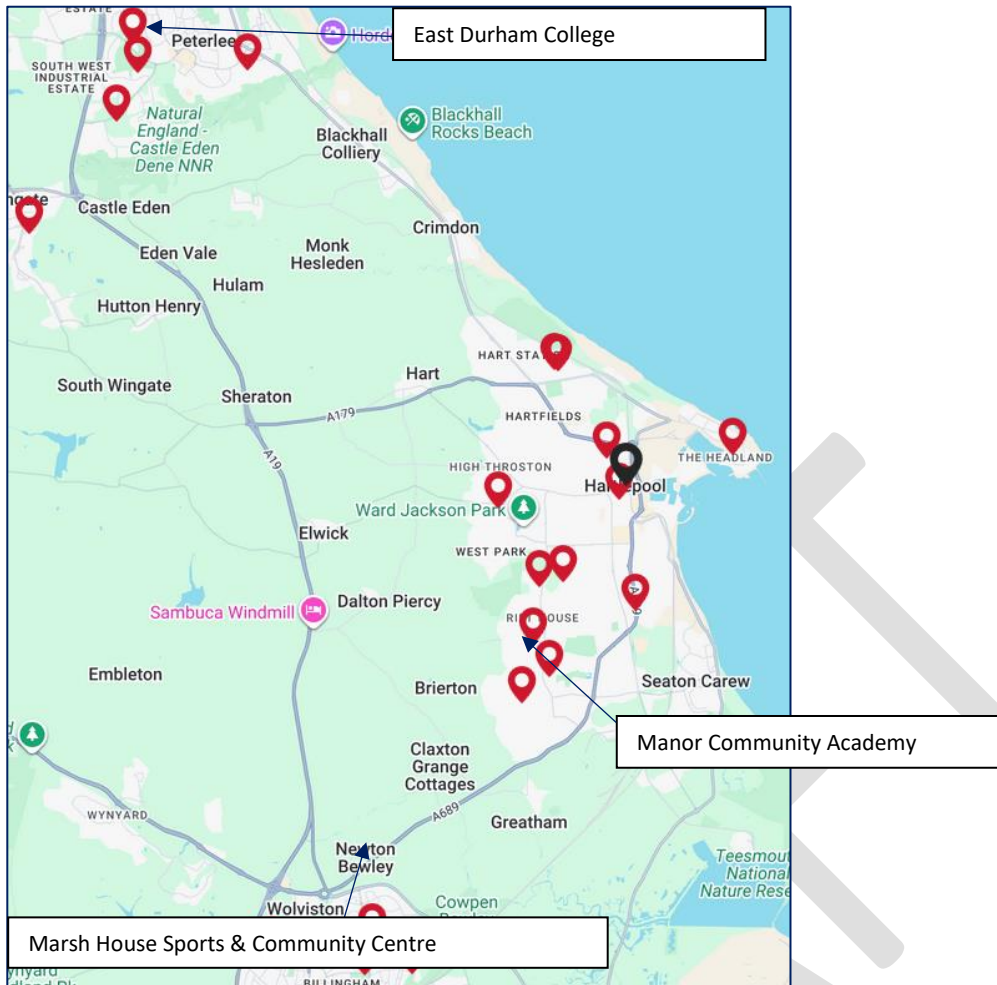
Site Name	Year Built	Year Refurb	Comments	Known Planned Investment
Brierton Community Sports Centre	2002	2008	Good basketball rims, lines and new hoops. Sprung floor tired	
Headland Sports Hall	2006		Basketball lines & rims not appropriate for competitions. Sports hall average condition	
Rossmere Youth Centre	2012			
Mill House Leisure Centre	1987		Poor standard. Markings not appropriate for competitions	To be demolished
Dyke House Sport & Technology College	1996			
English Martyrs Leisure Centre	2019			
Hartlepool Sixth Form College	2010		Sports hall in good condition	
High Tunstall College of Science	1973	2022	Sports hall in good condition	
Manor Community Academy	1970	2015		
St Hild’s Church of England School	2004			
Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre	1985	2002	Sports hall needs redecorating, new floor, LED lighting	

### Location (Accessibility)

The Basketball England<sup>32</sup> map below shows the location of the sports halls with basketball courts in Hartlepool and surrounding area. East Durham College is the only facility nearby with two basketball courts. It is used by Durham Huskies basketball club. In the south Marsh House Sports & Community Centre (MHSCC) has basketball provision and is used by Stockton Huskies Basketball Club. This club also use Manor Community Academy in Hartlepool. Manor Community Academy, BCSC and Rossmere Youth Centre are all close to the new housing growth at Hartlepool South West extension. MHSCC, will be serve housing growth near Wynward.

**Map 14 - Sports Halls with basketball courts in Hartlepool and surrounding area**

<sup>32</sup> <https://basketballengland.co.uk/get-involved/play/court-finder>



## Availability

School consultation and site visits identified that several education sites have reduced availability due to exam usage of their sports hall.

- Dyke House – 14 weeks a year
- High Turnstall - 14-16
- Manor Academy – 15
- St. Hilds CoFE – 6-8 weeks
- Hartlepool Sixth Form – 10 weeks

Site visits revealed that Belle Vue Community College has had increased interest in bookings including basketball since closure of MHLA announced. They already have busy schedule of evening bookings so hard to fit anymore in. Hartlepool Sixth Form college only have community use of their sports hall on a Tuesday evening which is already booked by a netball club. Rossmere Youth Centre holds youth club sessions in the evenings 7-9pm which is probably why no basketball clubs play there despite having basketball facilities. Research shows that English Martyrs Leisure Centre sports hall is available to hire 5-10pm weekdays, 8.45 – 4.30pm Saturday, 9.30am-12.30pm Sundays and is understood to have no basketball club bookings.

## Summary

- Dyke House Academy, MHLA, BCSC, High Tunstall, Headlands and St. Hild's key sites for basketball in Hartlepool.
- There are five other sites in Hartlepool that have basketball court provision but not currently used by the Hartlepool based basketball clubs. These courts could provide alternative provision when MHLA closes in 2026. However, there are some limitations:
  - Rossmere Youth Centre – evening use for youth club sessions
  - Hartlepool Sixth Form – community use only on Tuesday evening, already booked with netball. Also used for exams.
  - Belle Vue Community Centre – busy evening booking schedule already
  - Manor Community Academy – booked by Stockton Huskies basketball club

- Opportunity for Hartlepool Sixth Form College to expand their community use to other weekday evenings and weekends. English Martyrs Leisure Centre sports hall available to hire
- HSH to improve basketball markings and hoops to allow competitions to take place at venue
- Sports Hall sites other than BCSC need to update their basketball facilities.

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## 7.5. Sports Halls – Indoor Cricket

### Number of Facilities – Quantity

There are no dedicated indoor cricket halls.

There are six facilities that have indoor nets for winter training, some of which are regularly used by local cricket clubs. These are:

**Table 14 - Indoor Cricket Net Supply**

Facility	Cricket Club	No's of Nets
Belle Vue Community Sports & Youth Centre LTD		2
English Martyrs Leisure Centre		2
High Tunstall College of Science	Hartlepool Cricket Club	2
Headland Sports Hall		2
Hartlepool 6 <sup>th</sup> Form College		1
Mill House Leisure Centre	Seaton Carew Cricket Club	2
<b>Total nets</b>		<b>11</b>

Site visits confirmed cricket nets at Hartlepool Sixth Form College, and Belle Vue Community Sports & Youth Centre, feedback was they are not used regularly.

### Facility Requirements

Batting ends length 11.22m (10m in front of popping crease) by 2m wide. Bowling ends length 10m (6m behind bowling crease, 4m in front) by 2m wide.

**LUX Light Meter Readings** - ECB Indoor Sports Halls with Cricket Provision states how these are the lighting levels, measured at pitch level, required over the practice net/playing area (wicket and run up):

- Low-level - Club/Local Club - Design illumination: 750 lux average. Design uniformity: min/ave = 0.8
- Mid-Level Competition - Regional/Club level - Design illumination: 1000 lux average. Design uniformity: min/ave = 0.8
- Top-Level Competition - International/National level - Design illumination: 1500 lux average. Design uniformity: min/ave = 0.8

**ECB Indoor Sports Halls with Cricket Provision requires:**

- Net Lane Width of 3.6m per lane.
- ECB Indoor Sports Halls with Cricket Provision requires Height of Horizontal top net to be 5m (a clear minimum).
- ECB Indoor Sports Halls with Cricket Provision requires Blinkers to be 7.72m from the back netting and 5m in front of popping crease
- ECB Indoor Sports Halls with Cricket Provision requires 1.5m of space behind stumps.
- A safety margin of at least 1m surrounding the nets

### Number of Cricket Clubs

There are three cricket clubs in Hartlepool, these are Hartlepool Cricket Club, Power Station Cricket Club and Seaton Carew Cricket Club. All are affiliated.

### Level of Competition

There is no indication of formal league competition.

### Consultation

The ECB or regional cricket did not respond to the consultation.

#### National Overview

England Cricket Board (ECB) strategy [Inspiring Generations](#). Six key priorities:

- Grow and Nurture the Core
- Inspire through Elite Teams
- Make Cricket Accessible

- Engage Children and Young People
- Transform Women's and Girls' Cricket
- Support our Communities

No cricket clubs responded to consultation.

#### Summary

- There is sufficient indoor cricket net provision to support current demand.
- Seaton Carew Cricket Club will require a new venue for indoor nets when MHLC closes. There are several alternative sports hall venues. Some of these venues are used regularly by other sport bookings throughout the year. Demand for indoor cricket nets tends to be between January – April in preparation for the summer cricket season.

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## 7.6. Sports Halls - Indoor Football and Futsal Supply and Demand Assessment

### Introduction to Futsal

Futsal is a FIFA and FA-recognised indoor format of football, played five-a-side with a smaller, weighted ball that promotes skill, control, and quick decision-making. Sports halls are suited to the game, with standard four- or six-court halls accommodating the required pitch size (25–42m x 16–25m) and portable goals (3m x 2m). Court markings can be overlaid without affecting other sports.

Futsal is delivered recreationally and competitively, providing opportunities for community participation, youth development, and progression into national pathways. Its adaptability makes it a valuable use of sports hall space, complementing wider football programmes and broadening the participation offer.

### Number of Facilities – Quantity

There are no dedicated futsal or indoor football facilities in Hartlepool

### NGB Consultation

The FA did not respond to the consultation in relation to Hartlepool. Recent dialogue with the FA confirms that there is little current or future demand for additional indoor football facilities to support their programmes, as futsal is not a development priority and walking football is mainly delivered on 3G pitches outdoors.

The Football Association's (FA) strategy **Time For Change 2020-2024** has a vision to 'unite the game, inspire the nation' and has the priority objectives of:

- Win a major tournament
- Serve 2m+ through a transformed digital platform
- Ensure equal opportunities for every girl
- Deliver 5,000 quality pitches
- A game free from discrimination
- Maximise the appeal and revenue of the FA cups and draws

The FA also published a report 'The social and economic value of grassroots football in England' in 2021. Whilst this doesn't differentiate between outdoor and indoor football, it does look into the benefits of football overall and, more specifically, walking football as an important offering for older adults.

### Sports Club Consultation

Two football clubs responded to consultation:

Seaton Carew FC uses Hornby Park, Dyke House School, English Martyrs School and BCSC. The club has 380 playing members including 101+ juniors. Membership has grown in the past five years and is expected to keep increasing. Future plans include greater use of indoor sports halls.

Hartlepool St. Francis mainly uses BCSC, also accessing Rossmere Academy, Belle Vue Sports Centre, Manor Community Academy and Eskdale Academy, with sessions on weekday evenings. The club has 300 playing members, including 101+ juniors. Membership has increased year on year and is predicted to grow further. The club reports there are not enough indoor venues to meet need.

### Number of Futsal / Indoor Football Clubs (Demand)

There is one futsal club operating in Hartlepool:

- Hartlepool United FC

Walking football also takes place at BCSC.

### Level of Competition

Hartlepool United FC run a children's futsal team that competes in the Futsal Elite League. Separately, Soccer Sixes operate small-sided football leagues outdoor on AGP's in Hartlepool, based at Dyke House College and West View Primary School, with structured evening fixtures on Mondays and Tuesdays.

## Summary

- The indoor football taking place is mostly existing clubs using the space for training and small sided football leagues.
- Outdoor football provision including 3G will be assessed in the Playing Pitch Strategy.
- Walking football at BCSC provides a good social activity in an area of deprivation.
- Existing provision meets demand.

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## 7.7. Sports Halls – Badminton

### Number of Facilities – Supply

There are no dedicated indoor badminton facilities in the Hartlepool Borough Council area.

There are 12 facilities providing badminton in Hartlepool, of which two are pay and play, one is private use, and nine are sports club/community association.

The 12 facilities provide 48 courts, of which 44 are for public use. This includes badminton courts in main sports halls and activity halls.

Badminton courts are available to hire on a pay & play basis at HSH, BCSC and MHLC.

### Number of Badminton Clubs

There are three affiliated badminton clubs in the Hartlepool Borough council area, these are listed below:

- St Matthew's Badminton Club – St. Matthew's Community Centre
- Hartlepool Badminton Club – High Tunstall College of Science / St. Matthew's Community Centre
- Venator Badminton Club – St. Matthew's Community Centre

### Level of Competition

All three clubs provide coaching sessions at beginner and amateur level. Hartlepool Badminton Club competes in Tees Valley and Cleveland Leagues, with some players at county level.

### NGB Consultation

#### National Overview

Badminton England's 2023–2033 strategy is built around two overarching priorities: engaging more young people, particularly at primary age, and making badminton the most inclusive and accessible sport in England. Delivery is structured through five pillars: inspiring participation and raising the profile of the sport; building a thriving network of clubs, coaches and volunteers; creating clear pathways for players, officials and coaches to progress; supporting elite performance at world level; and protecting and expanding places to play. Of particular relevance to facilities planning, the strategy places strong emphasis on safeguarding access to sports halls, developing dedicated badminton venues, opening up schools and community spaces for play, and improving digital booking systems to make access easier. These priorities are underpinned by investment in coaching, workforce development, governance, commercial growth, and partnerships to ensure long-term sustainability.

#### Local overview

Table 15 - Badminton England Feedback

Questions	Conclusions / Considerations
Summary	Badminton England has three affiliated clubs in the HBC area. They have 51 live members across the affiliated clubs and 0-10 qualified coaches.
What are your NGBs current priorities for indoor facilities in the HBC area?	Our ten year strategy states that we aim to get a dedicated badminton facility in every county in the country as there is no current badminton dedicated facility in Hartlepool/Durham. We require a dedicated facility with a minimum of 12 courts.
What do you believe to be required to support your sports priorities in the HBC area in the coming years?	A social investment model and financials.
Is there a sufficient supply of indoor facilities to meet the current and future demand for your sport in the HBC area?	No - Our data shows it is level but it is not up to date data. We believe there will be a low amount of courts to the demand required.
Key clubs within the HBC area	St. Matthews Badminton Club Venator Badminton Club Hartlepool Badminton Club.
Competition level	County level .
Do you have any long-term plans or developments in mind / progress within the HBC area?	Yes - Gain social investment to work with counties to provide a dedicated badminton facility.
Are there any interventions planned that will increase demand for facilities?	Yes - Currently working with sporting assets towards a social investment fund.
Do you believe there is potential to grow your sport significantly in Hartlepool?	Yes
Are there any barriers that you know of that affect your local NGB sports clubs in the HBC area making full use of indoor facilities?	Yes - Court/facility access. Court costs. Lack of volunteers and workforce.
Which existing and planned facilities are important for your sport and why?	Dedicated badminton facilities - as stated above, it's in our strategy to grow our facilities database to be able to grow and provide opportunities for the growing demand and increase accessibility.
Access to funds	Not for facilities, other than working with Sporting Assets. But we do have funds for sport development.

### Sports Club Consultation

Hartlepool Badminton Club (51-60 members, 20 juniors) responded to the consultation. Membership is expected to grow. The club provides opportunities for people with disabilities and minority groups and would like to expand junior sessions, develop more teams and place a coach in schools.

**Table 16 - Badminton Club Feedback**

Sports club name	Own/lease/hire premises	Most Used Venue	Facility Quality Rating	Main hours of use	Sufficient Hours	Barriers Yes/No	Level of Competition	Development needs for future/higher competition	Plans for further development of your sport	Disability Sessions or Specific Sessions for minority groups available?
Hartlepool Badminton Club	Hire a facility at a leisure centre/venue	High Tunstall College of Science	Good	• Weekdays in the evening	No	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of use/hire charges</li> <li>• Facility always full/hard to book a slot</li> <li>• Opening times/hours of use</li> <li>• Meeting competition standards</li> </ul>	Tees valley League, across each and highest divisions with multiple teams. Players at the club also play to a higher standard e.g. county	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand our number of teams, and also develop more junior players</li> </ul>	Yes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage further participation of all types of players, particularly juniors</li> </ul>	Yes

### Summary

- Moderate badminton set-up in Hartlepool. Increasing demand for space to play badminton at all levels
- Badminton England's main priority is increasing court space and improving access to sports halls
- Badminton England suggests that there is currently insufficient provision to meet demand
- Large proportion of badminton courts at education sites are used for exams, so limited availability

## 8. Activity Halls & Community Spaces Supply and Demand Assessment

- 8.1. With the majority of sports halls based within educational sites (6) it is also worth looking at activity halls and community spaces where physical activities that don't require a high sports hall ceiling can take place e.g. yoga, Pilates and martial arts. This would free up space for activities that require larger and higher ceiling sports courts e.g. basketball, netball, volleyball and badminton.
- 8.2. However, a separate assessment, below, of community spaces such as halls and community centres that offer some form of physical activity shows a wide provision of local places for people to be active.

### Number of Facilities – Activity Halls Quantity

There are 22 activity halls in the Hartlepool area, of which 13 are sports club / community use, four are pay and play, 5 are private use.

### Size of Facilities

Table 17 - Sports Halls - Badminton Courts

Facility	Sports Hall Size (Badminton Courts)
<b>Private Use</b>	
West View Primary School	1
Eskdale Academy	2
Hart Primary School	1
Ward Jackson Primary School	1
Brougham Primary School	1
Sports Club / Community Association	
Stranton Primary School	1
English Martyrs Leisure Centre	1
High Tunstall College of Science	1
St Hilds Church of England School	2
Brougham Primary School	93m2
Six8Nine	180m2
Hartlepool Peoples Centre	180m2
Burbank Community Centre	153m2
Community Hub South	180m2
Throston Grove Community Centre	180m2
Summerhill Country Park	180m2
Manor Community Academy	594m2
Rossmere Youth Centre	N/A
<b>Pay and Play</b>	
Belle Vue Community Sports & Youth Centre	2
Brierton Community Sports Centre	2
West View Community Centre	180m
Dyke House Sport & Technology College	180m

### School Consultation – Activity Halls

Nine schools in Hartlepool responded having an activity hall, ranging from large multi-use spaces to smaller rooms, where only limited activities can take place.

These halls are used for a variety of purposes, including sport, dance, drama, fitness, gymnastics, and community lettings, with clubs such as martial arts, Zumba and Pilates classes benefitting from access.

Where community use is permitted, availability is typically weekday evenings (4.30pm–9pm), weekends and school holidays, though use is only secured through written agreements, and some schools such as the new Hartlepool Free School do not currently have confirmed community access.

Access is further constrained by exam use, with four schools reporting closures in their activity halls on average around 12 weeks per academic year. While activity halls contribute valuable capacity for both curricular and community activity, their availability is inconsistent and heavily affected by timetabling, limiting their reliability as spaces for sustained sports participation

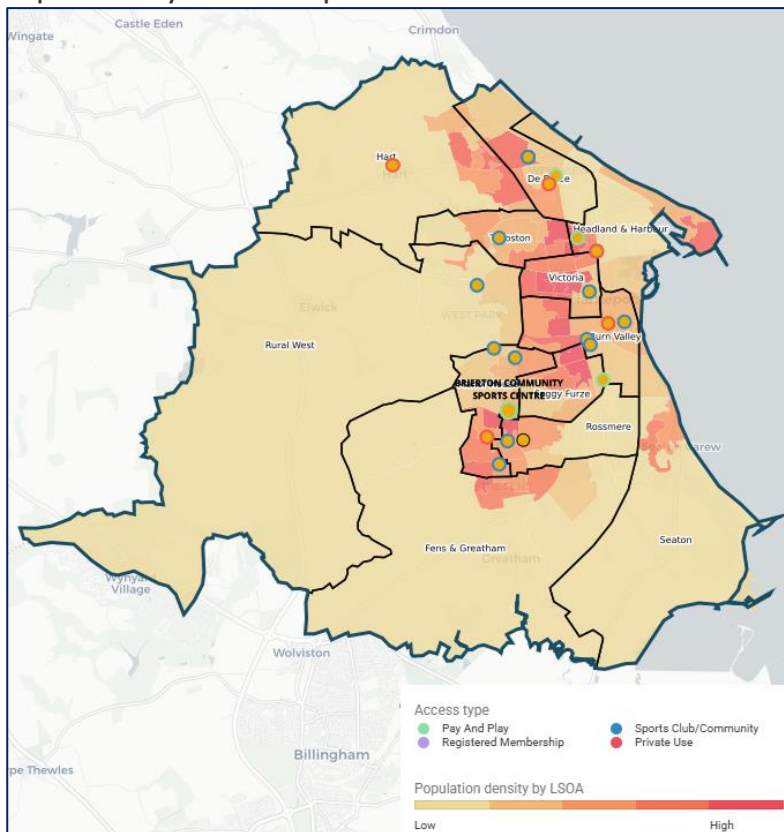
Seven schools reports that the following would help increase usage and/or physical activity in their school.

Table 18 - Schools Barriers to Increasing Community Use

School Name	More Staff	Improvements to the facility - equipment	Improvements to the facility – building works	Better parking	Separate community access point
Barnard Grove Primary School			✓	✓	✓
Grange Primary School	✓	✓	✓		✓
Hartlepool Free School		✓			
Rossmere Academy		✓	✓		✓
Springwell School			✓		
St Hild's CofE School	✓	✓			✓

#### Location of Activity Halls

Map 15 – Activity Halls in Hartlepool

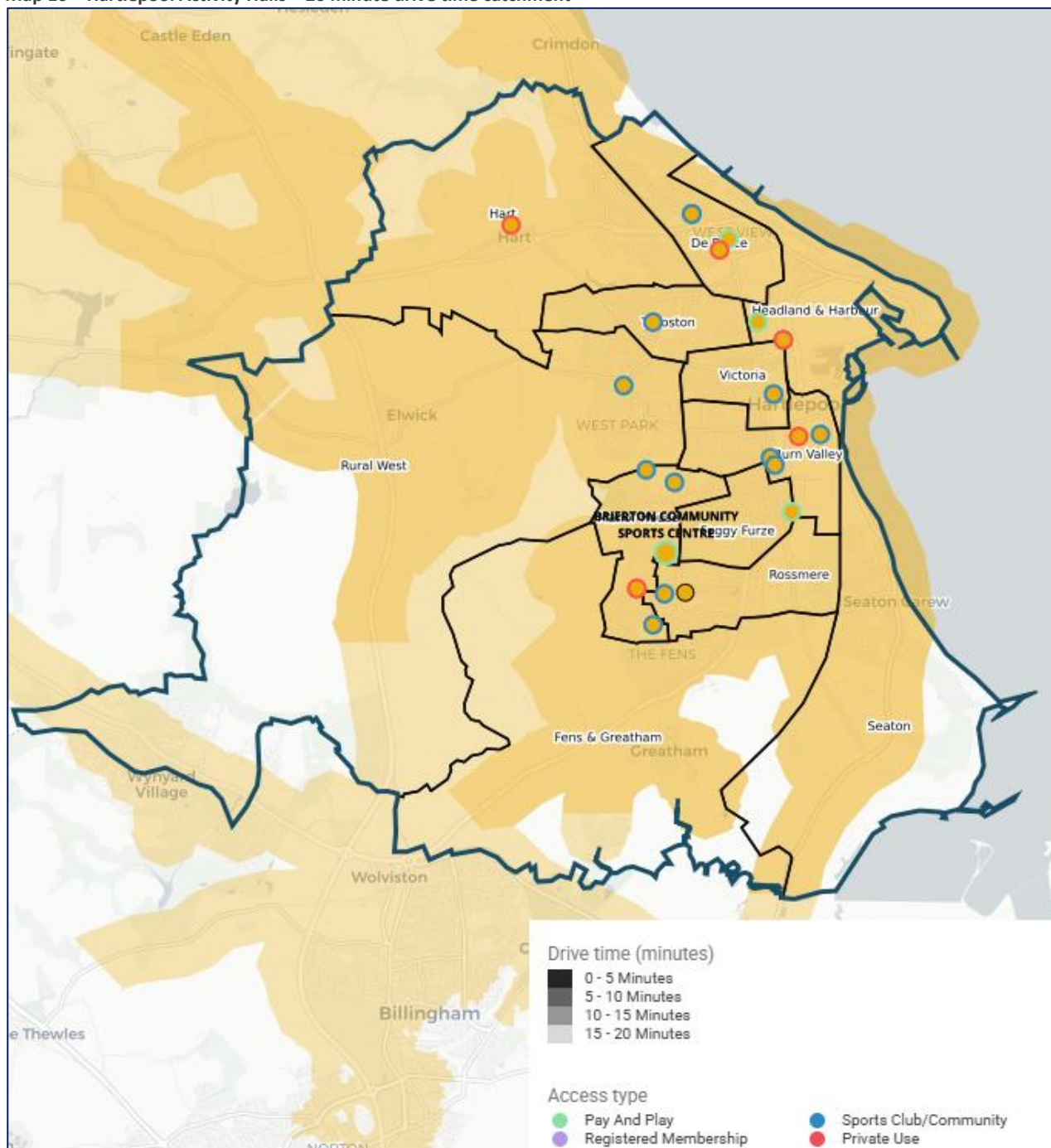


The map shows that activity halls in Hartlepool are concentrated in and around the central and eastern parts of the borough, particularly within Victoria, Burn Valley, and Foggy Furze. These facilities align with areas of higher population density, indicated by the darker red shading. Sites in Rossmere and Brierton also serve some of the more densely populated southern neighbourhoods. A smaller cluster is located further north, in De Bruce and Headland & Harbour wards, ensuring provision for communities in those high-density coastal areas. This distribution suggests that most of Hartlepool's more urbanised and densely populated communities have access to nearby activity halls, especially across the town's central corridor.

By contrast, there are very few activity halls in the western and southern rural areas of the borough, such as Rural West and Fens & Greatham, which are characterised by lower population densities. While this absence reflects the more dispersed settlement pattern, it may still pose access challenges for residents in these outlying communities, particularly those without easy transport links into the town centre.

## Catchment Access to Activity Halls

Map 16 – Hartlepool Activity Halls – 20 minute drive time catchment



This drive time map shows that most of Hartlepool is within a 20-minute drive time of at least one activity hall, with good coverage across central and eastern neighbourhoods including Victoria, Burn Valley, Foggy Furze, and Rossmere. These sites are well placed to serve the town's higher density communities and ensure good access for most residents. Areas such as Rural West, Elwick, and Fens & Greatham lie predominantly outside the 10-minute catchment, with some locations only accessible within a 15–20 minute drive.

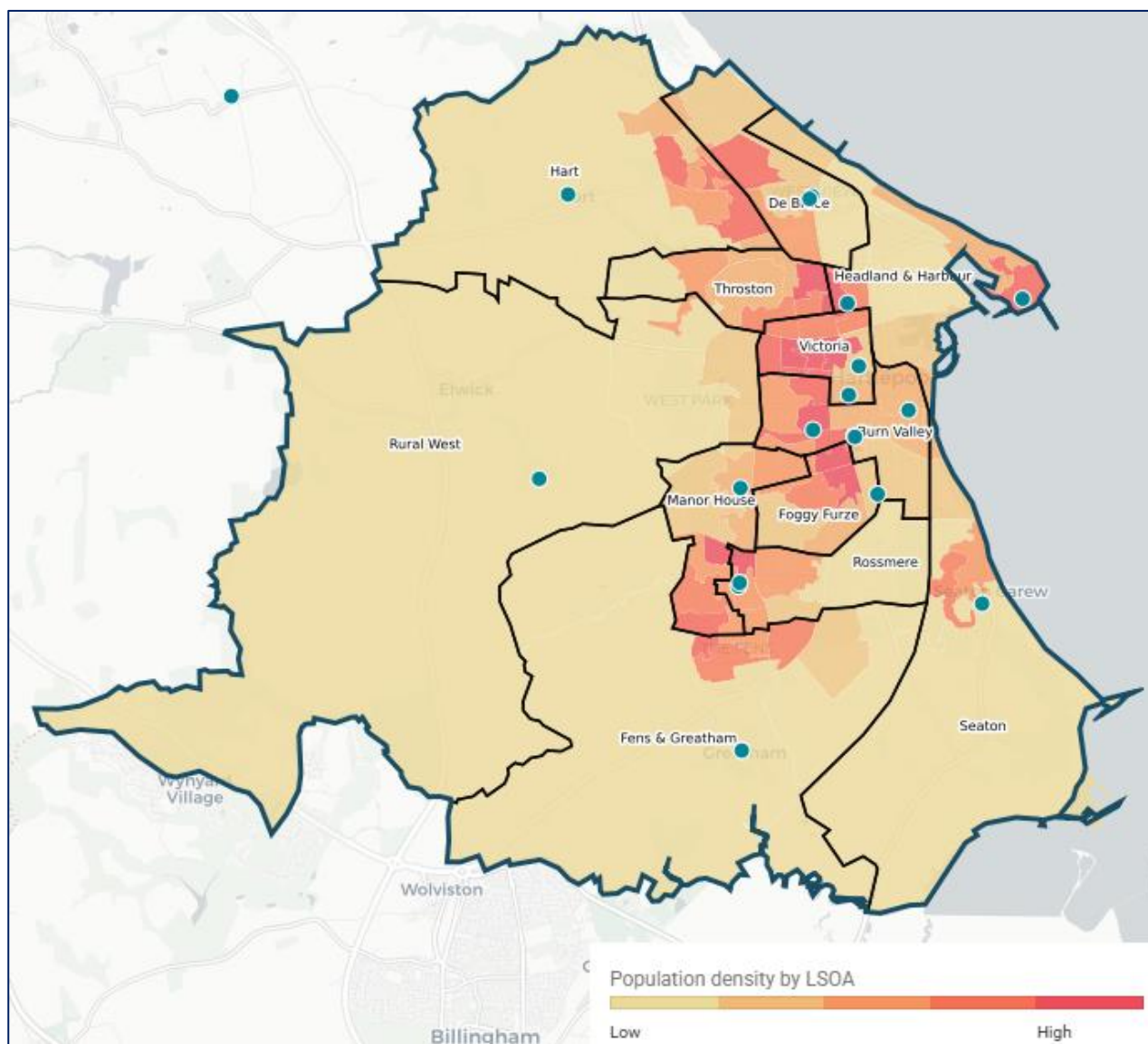
The west and south west rural parts of Hartlepool are less well served. The limited proximity to activity halls may still present barriers for residents, especially those without access to private transport.

## Location of Community Spaces & Quantity

There are 17 community spaces in Hartlepool which offer some form of physical activity.

Map 17 – Hartlepool Community Spaces



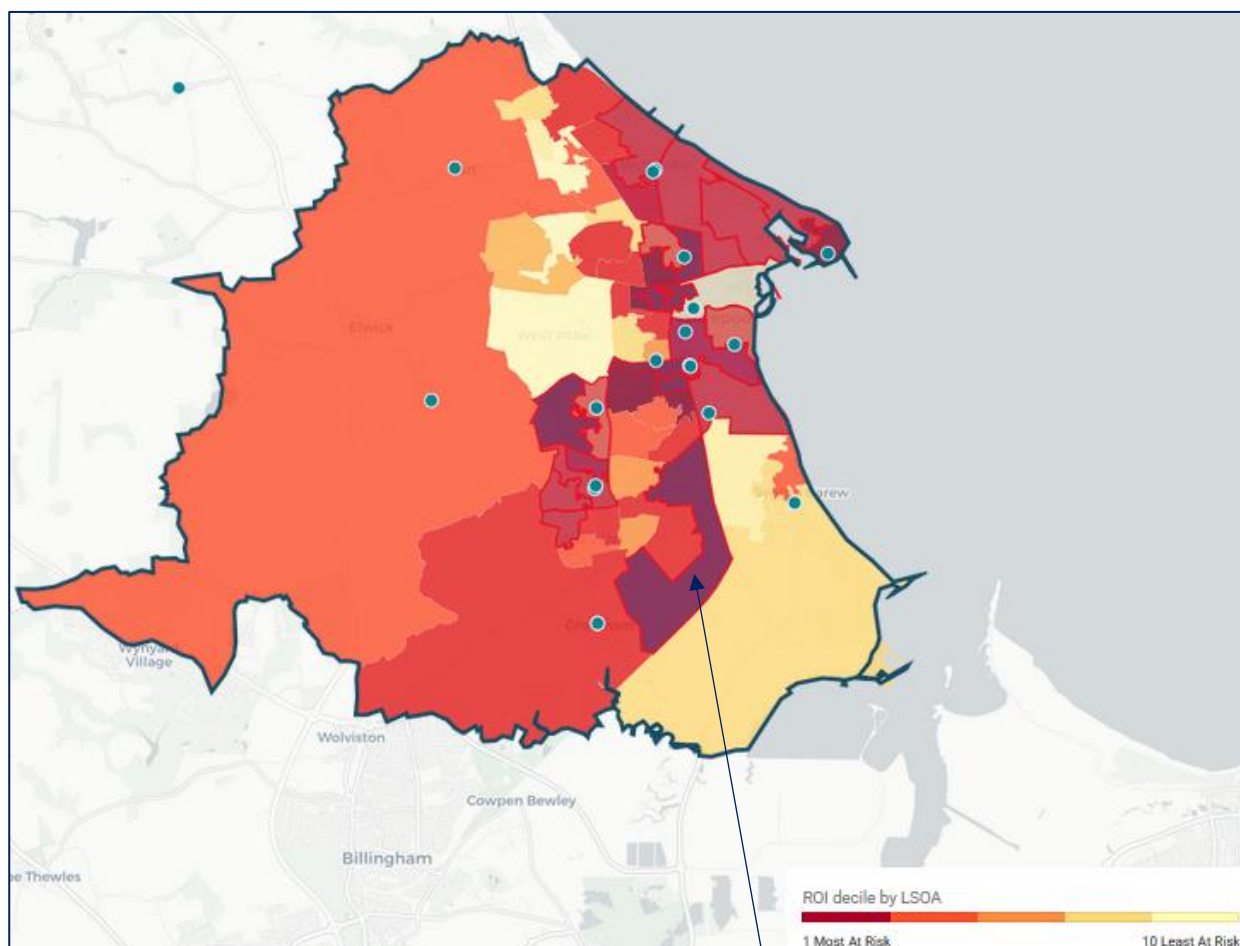


The map shows the location of community spaces in Hartlepool, mapped against population density. Provision is strongest in the central area, where a high number of sites are located close to some of the borough's most densely populated communities, including Hartlepool town centre.

By contrast, much of the western and southern parts of the borough, including Rural West, Elwick, and Fens & Greatham, have no community spaces reflecting the lower population density in these areas. While this absence is consistent with the more rural character of these locations, it may still limit access for residents without private transport.

The new housing development at Wynyard has plans to build a community centre to serve the local residents.

**Map 18 – Hartlepool Community Spaces – Risk of Inactivity / 10% most deprived areas**



Area of need with no community space

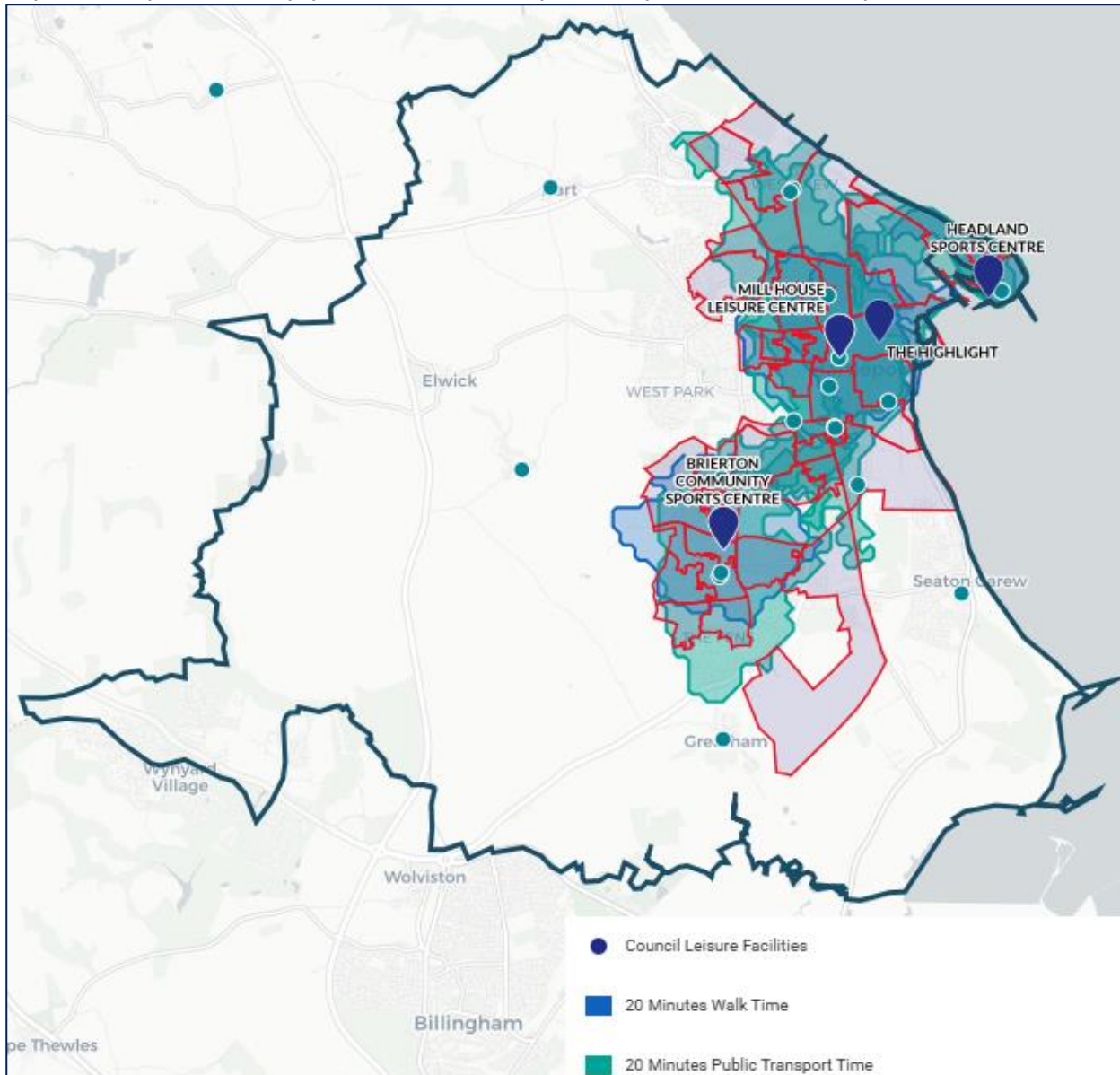
The map above shows that community spaces serve areas at risk of inactivity and high deprivation. However there is no provision in the 10% most deprived and high risk of inactivity area that runs from Rossmere ward down into Fens & Greatham.

#### Catchment – Access to Community Spaces

This map illustrates the 20-minute walk time and public transport catchments from Hartlepool's four council leisure facilities (Mill House Leisure Centre, Brierton Community Sports Centre, Headland Sports Hall, and Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub) against community spaces. The mapping highlights the importance of community spaces, particularly in the rural areas where population density is low, so there is not demand for traditional leisure facilities but there are spaces that can still offer some form of physical activity.

Hart Village Hall, Dalton Piercy Village Hall to the north west, west and Greatham Village Hall provide some form of physical activities in rural areas.

Map 19 – Hartlepool Community Spaces – 20 minute walk / public transport time / 10% most deprived areas



#### Activity Halls / Community Spaces – Summary

- There are 22 activity halls and 17 community spaces which offer some form of physical activity. This is a good number of local spaces available to residents to be physically active in places they feel comfortable. These community spaces vary from community centres, faith places and voluntary organisations.
- Community spaces serve areas at risk of inactivity and high deprivation. Most of these areas are within walking distance of a community space to be active.
- There are few community spaces offering physical activity in the rural or south west area. Rural populations tend to be more isolated and rely on access to local spaces nearby. A new community centre as part of the Wynyard development will be important for residents in that area.
- There is also no community centre or space within the area at risk of inactivity and deprivation stretching from Rossmere ward to Fens & Greatham. There are also no other facilities in this area of need apart from Off the Floor aerial arts and Fit House. However, the new padel facility (see section 16 ) that has been approved will be in the vicinity, although likely to be inaccessible to people on lower incomes. Although there is no housing growth planned within this area therefore demand for facilities is not expected to increase.



## 9. Swimming Pools Supply and Demand Assessment

### Swimming Pools – Quantity

Four sites providing five pools:

- Mill House Leisure Centre - main, diving and learner pool – pay & play
- High Tunstall College of Science – 3 lane 20m x 7.2m, registered membership use
- Oasis Hydropool – 6m x 3m – private hire
- Springwell School – hydrotherapy pool 5.5m x 4m

New Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub pool opening in 2026 will provide - 25m 8-lane main pool, 25m 4-lane learner pool with movable floor, leisure pool including race slide, water play and spectator seating

The leisure centres are available to use by all residents and provide a range of swimming activities:

- Learn to swim
- Casual recreational swimming
- Lane and fitness swimming activities
- Swimming development through clubs
- Diving
- Water polo
- Masters swimming

Developing confidence in water with fun and family-based activities is enhanced at the leisure pool sites.

### NGB Consultation

#### National Overview

Swim England has a new strategy – [The One Strategy](#). **Vision** – Great experiences in water. For all. For life.

**Mission** – To lead and serve an aquatics community to enable safe, enjoyable and successful experiences.

#### **Foundations**

- Shift the culture
- Trusted welfare and safeguarding
- Stronger clubs
- Effective Learn to Swim
- Access to water
- Outstanding events
- Success on the world stage

#### Local Overview

The Swim England Facilities team have provided a report (Appendix 9) for the development of aquatics facilities in Hartlepool.

The Swim England assessment is based on 12m<sup>2</sup> per 1000 population. On this basis the suggested total water space required in the borough is 1,125m<sup>2</sup>. The new pools at Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub will provide 671m<sup>2</sup>, suggesting there will still be a shortfall in the region of 450m<sup>2</sup> in the future. This would equate to a 6 lane 25m pool plus learner pool.

The Swim England calculations only take into account publicly accessible facilities.

### Swimming Club Consultation

Aqua Force Swimming Academy reported that they mainly use MHLC, with additional use of High Tunstall Pool. The club has 51–60 active members including 40 juniors and is expected to increase in the next five years.

Table 19 - Swimming Club Consultation

Sports club name	Own/lease/hire premises	Most Used Venue	Facility Quality Rating	Main hours of use	Sufficient Hours	Barriers Yes/No	Level of Competition	Development needs for future/higher competition	Plans for further development of your sport	Disability Sessions or Specific Sessions for minority groups available?
Aqua Force Swimming Academy	Hire a facility at a leisure centre/venue	Mill House Leisure Centre	Good	• Weekdays in the evening	No	No	National level	Yes • We would like more land based exercise	Yes • When new pool opens we will support master swimmers	Yes

### Swimming Pools – School Consultation

Consultation shows that two schools in Hartlepool provide swimming pool access for community use, only through secured agreements. High Tunstall College of Science operates a 20m x 7m pool that supports a wide range of clubs, including Hartlepool Swimming Club, Strokes Ahead, Aqua Force, Endeavour Swim School, and Water Babies, making it a key site for both competitive and learn-to-swim activity. Springwell School has a smaller 3m x 5m pool, used by Dinkies Swim School for early-years provision.

### Number of Sports Clubs

There are two affiliated clubs in the Hartlepool Borough Council with a total membership of 119 adults, 107 junior members, three registered as having a disability:

- Aqua Force Swimming Club – use MHLC
- Hartlepool Swimming Club – MHLC, High Tunstall College of Science

### Sports Clubs Level of Competition

Aqua Force Swimming Club trains at all levels. Including learn to swim sessions, triathlons and regional competitive swimming.

### Swimming Pools – Participation Rates

Active Lives 2023-24 shows that adult participation in Hartlepool has increased from previous year but at 20.5% is lower than the national average of 26.5%

### Swimming Pools – FPM Findings / Recommendations

Table 20 - Swimming Pool Supply (FPM)

Site	Provider	Type	Dimensions (m)	Area (sqm)	Peak Period Hours	Available Hours	Capacity (visits in the weekly peak period)	Year Built	Year Refurb
High Tunstall College of Science <sup>1</sup>	Educational	3-lane	20 x 7.2	144	7	7	168	1973	2022
Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub <sup>2</sup>	Public	8-lane	25 x 17.2	430	52.5	95	5,821	2026	
		Teaching	25 x 8.4	211	52.5	95			
		Leisure	6 x 5	30	42.5	70			

- In 2023 89% of Hartlepool's demand is satisfied. 36% of the total demand comes from the borough's 10% most deprived LSOAs.
- There are two swimming pool sites in Hartlepool with contrasting provision. Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub is the strategic site in terms of scale, its very extensive swimming offer and its age. The one educational pools is small in scale, and are very limited in their offer, being only suitable for one activity at a time.
- Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub's location is an important site. It is located in a most deprived area and is close to the area of highest demand in the Borough. It is also the most accessible site for all residents.
- Both swimming pools are estimated to be uncomfortably full at peak times, and there is very limited scope to increase availability and capacity. At Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub availability of the leisure water pool can be increased, but it has the smallest capacity.
- The very high level of utilisation does not indicate that further provision to increase capacity and reduce use to a comfortable level is required. While this would reduce unmet demand, the amount is very small.
- The focus for the intervention is to make more use of the swimming pool supply to increase availability and capacity, and therefore reduce the proportion of used capacity to a more comfortable level. However, the scope for this is limited.

- It will be important to understand the long-term intentions for High Tunstall. This pool meets a small amount of Hartlepool's demand, its retention is important as closure would lose available capacity. Closure of the site would lose 3% of the available capacity which could otherwise be increased. Availability is limited due to school use during the day time. However, it is located close to some housing growth sites, and demand is high to the east and north of the site.
- The location in Hartlepool where the most unmet demand can be met is north of the junction of the A19 and A689, at 91 sqm of water. This is an insufficient amount of water space to consider providing a new pool at this location. For context, the minimum amount of reachable water space required to justify a new pool would be 120 sqm, which is a 15m x 8m Sport England Leisure Local facility

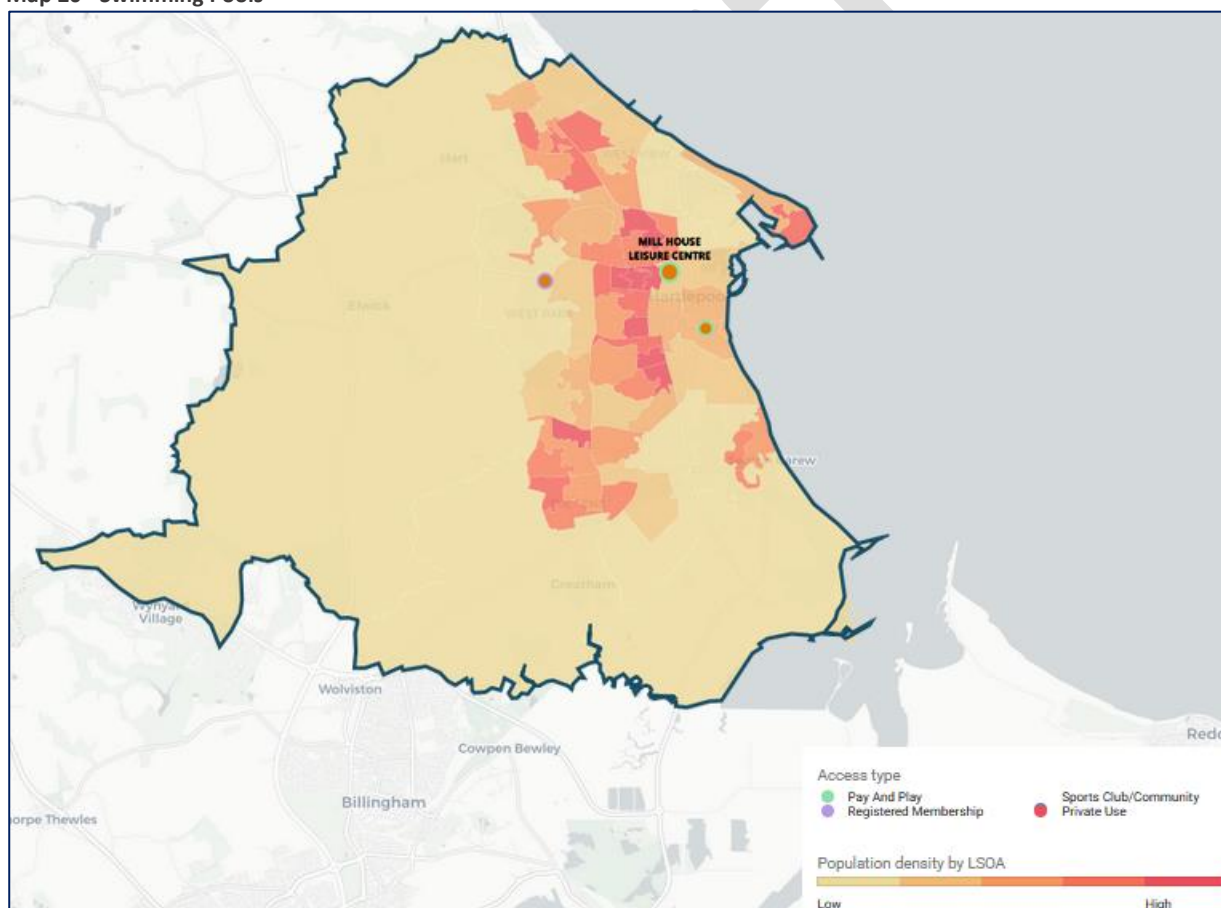
### Swimming Pools – Quality

High Tunstall College of Science was modernised in 2022. The site visit identified that the pool does not have a disability hoist as plinth around pool edge too high to install one. The hydro pool at time of visit was closed, however repairs have now been completed, the hydro pool is used by Water babies and allows access from the local NHS/hospital and disability groups.

HAWH pool and leisure water will be very attractive as modern and new.

### Swimming Pools – Accessibility

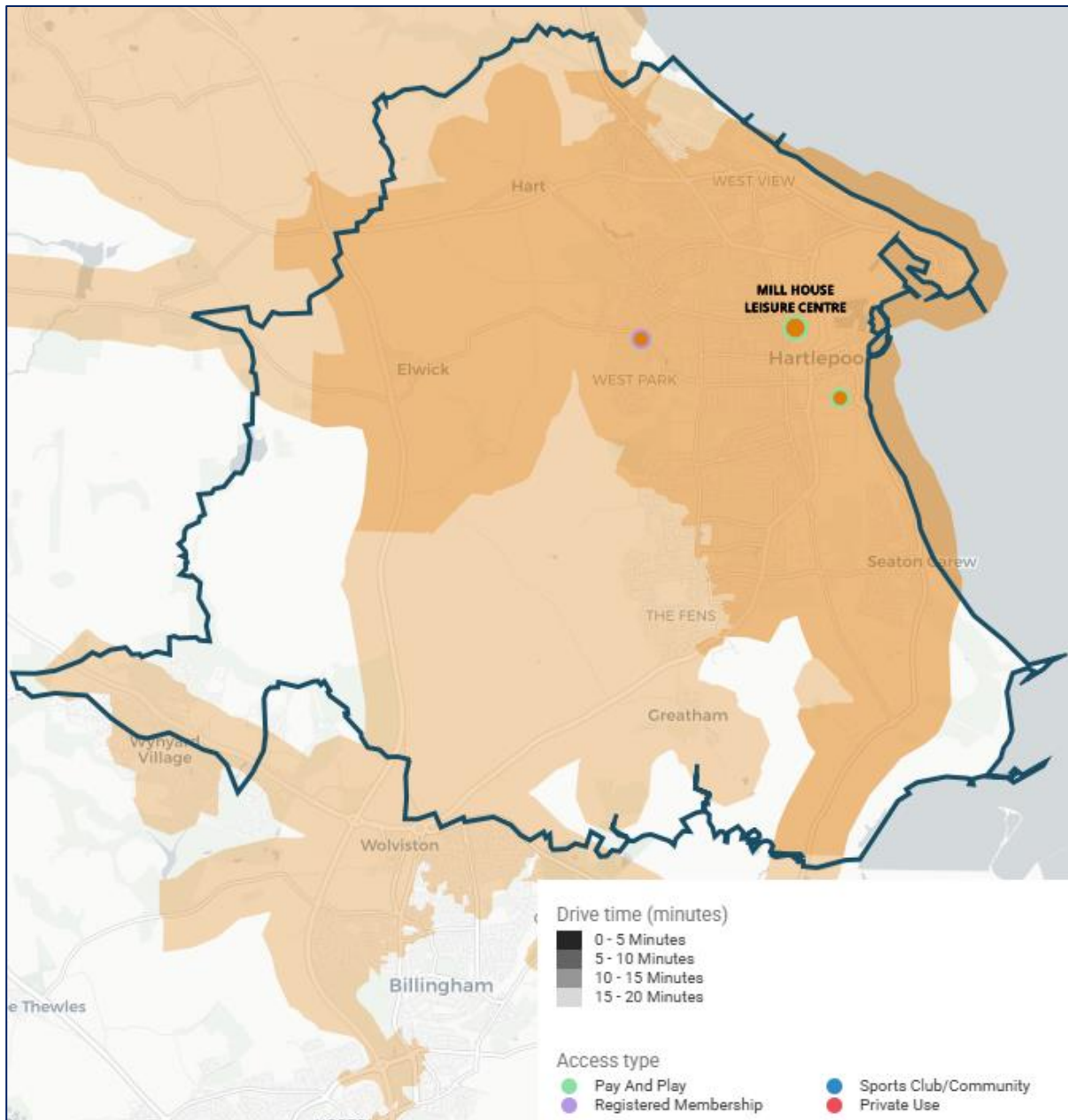
Map 20 - Swimming Pools



All swimming pool provision is located within the central and eastern part of the borough, around Hartlepool town and coastal areas, with no mapped facilities in the more rural western or southern areas.

### Swimming Pools – Catchment / accessibility to swimming pools

Map 21 - Swimming Pools Catchment



The map shows the drive-time catchment for swimming pools in Hartlepool. Most of the urban area, including neighbourhoods such as West Park, The Fens, West View, and Seaton Carew, falls within a 10–15 minute drive of at least one pool. The catchment extends further into rural areas, with **15–20 minute drive times** covering villages such as Elwick, Greatham, Wolviston, and reaching into Billingham to the south. This indicates that the majority of Hartlepool residents can access a swimming pool within a 20-minute drive.

There are four swimming pools in Stockton-on-Tees local authority with Billingham Forum pool and Stockton Splash the closest to the south west border of Hartlepool. Stockton Splash has recently been refurbished so appealing to users. Ingleby Pool is further away and has a new pool and Thornaby Pool is due to be demolished with a new pool opening in 2027 as part of a new leisure centre.<sup>33</sup>

### Swimming Pools - Summary

- The water space at the new HAWH will provide significant swimming and aquatic provision when it opens in 2026 to serve current and future demand, however pools are projected to be operating at high capacity and there is limited opportunity to increase availability at the existing sites.
- Whilst Swim England suggest demand for another main pool, the FPM suggests that there is not sufficient demand in one area to require additional facilities. However, should demand increase or availability at existing sites reduce the Council may need to

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/article/16358/Plans-for-new-Thornaby-leisure-centre-as-part-of-Town-Deal-approved>

consider the provision of an additional community pool in future years, this could be a smaller 'leisure local' community pool (c.15m x 8m).

- Despite participation in swimming levels being lower in Hartlepool than the national levels there is demand from swimming clubs and lesson providers for water time and programming.
- Retention of High Tunstall swimming pool important to meet some of the capacity and to continue as site for swimming lessons.

DRAFT

## 10. Indoor Bowls Supply and Demand Assessment

### Number of Facilities – Quantity

There is one indoor bowls facility in Hartlepool, Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club, it is a sports club / community association with eight bowling rinks.

Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club facility is currently owned by HBC and leased to the indoor bowls club, reflecting its status as an independent, constituted organisation. The area including and surrounding the facility is potentially subject to future plans and proposals being developed by Hartlepool Development Corporation, however at the point of completing this report, further details are not available.

### Consultation - Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club

Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club has 362 active members and 19 volunteers, with no juniors. Membership has not grown in the past five years but is expected to increase in the next five years. The club provides activities for people with disabilities and minority groups. Reported barriers include car parking and hire costs.

Competition takes place at all levels from internal through to county, regional and national, the club also hosts international events. The club wishes to continue competing at national level and to also have a facility suitable for continuing to host national and international competitions. An eight rink venue will continue to meet current and future needs.

Future plans include wider recruitment, introducing evening and weekend sessions, and working with schools and colleges to develop a junior section.

No funding secured due to the short term lease. The lease on the premises expires in June 2026.

### Consultation - NGB

England Indoor Bowls Association (EIBA) priorities are:  
Retention of Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club and ongoing support to the club.

Encourage club to actively promote the club in the local community those who are both able bodies and classified as disabled. Wheelchair users and visually impaired people are particularly keen on bowling.

Encourage the club to develop a robust Sports Development Plan and use Sport England's Buddle website.

Support recruitment and retention through guidance and the Bowls Development Alliance's Club Development Programme. EIBA provide clubs with "Recruitment and Retention" guidance<sup>34</sup> and promote the "Club Development Programme" provided by Sport England funded partner – Bowls Development Alliance.

With only one affiliated club in the HBC area and one club in the adjoining local authority area (only just within the maximum drive-time of 30 minutes – Thornaby), it is vital that the Hartlepool Club continues to operate in the future.

No funding available but do provide coaching bursaries.

### Indoor Bowls – FPM Key Findings / Recommendations

The full fpm report can be found in [Appendix 8](#)

The supply of indoor bowls across Hartlepool and surrounding area (included in the FPM runs) is provided in the table below, together with the size of rinks, available hours and capacity.

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.eiba.co.uk/Guidance/retention.pdf>



Table 21 - Indoor Bowls Supply (FPM)

Site	Provider	Rinks	Dimensions (m)	Area (sqm)	Peak Period Hours	Available Hours	Capacity visits in the weekly peak period	Year Built	Year Refurb
<b>Hartlepool</b>									
Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club	Public	8	37 x 37	1,369	52	94.5	1,248	1972	2014
<b>Redcar and Cleveland</b>									
Eston Leisure Centre	Public	3	31 x 17.4	539	47.5	89	428	1963	1999
Redcar Borough Park Indoor Bowls Club	Sport Club	4	40 x 16	640	52	84	624	1996	2018
Saltburn Leisure Centre	Public	4	34.5 x 18	621	51	92.5	612	1973	2011
<b>Stockton-on-Tees</b>									
Thornaby Pavilion	Public	6	36 x 27	972	52	94	936	1968	2002
<b>County Durham</b>									
Durham Indoor Bowls Club	Commercial	8	36 x 36	1,296	43	84.5	1,032	1996	2014
Ferryhill Sports and Education Centre	Community	4	42 x 21.3	895	52	91	624	1999	
Oak Leaf Sports Complex	Public	4	35.1 x 18.1	635	48.5	84	582	1978	2009
Shildon Sunnyside Leisure Centre	Public	3	35.4 x 13.8	489	20	43.5	180	1982	2013
Stanley Indoor Bowls Club	Sport Club	8	36 x 36	1,296	48.5	84	1,164	1979	2015

- Nearly all the demand for indoor bowling in Hartlepool can be met by Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club. The centre is located in the area of highest demand, and there is no unmet demand from lack of capacity. There is considerable scope to increase the usage of the centre at peak times.
- There is extensive provision of indoor bowling centres across the study area, which have been maintained. However, the stock is ageing and no new centres have opened this century.
- The spatial and quantitative assessment has identified that Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club has more than sufficient capacity to meet demand up to 2033.
- The recommended intervention is to try and make more use of the centre at peak times, most probably by increasing its membership. This need is underlined by Hartlepool importing 105 visits from residents of neighbouring local authorities in the weekly peak period, which equates to 25% of the usage of the centre. Overall, Hartlepool imports 95 more visits than it exports.
- In 2033 the centre will be 61 years old and the refurbishment 19 years old. The age and condition of the centre should be considered, along with the membership numbers and level of use in determining its overall long-term viability.
- The location of the centres in neighbouring local authorities do not provide alternative centres for regular participation. Residents in east Hartlepool can currently only reach one indoor bowls centre within a 20-minute drive. Thornaby Pavilion in Stockton-on-Tees is the nearest centre outside the Borough. It is the oldest centre in the study area, opened in 1968 and modernised in 2002.

#### Indoor Bowls – Quality

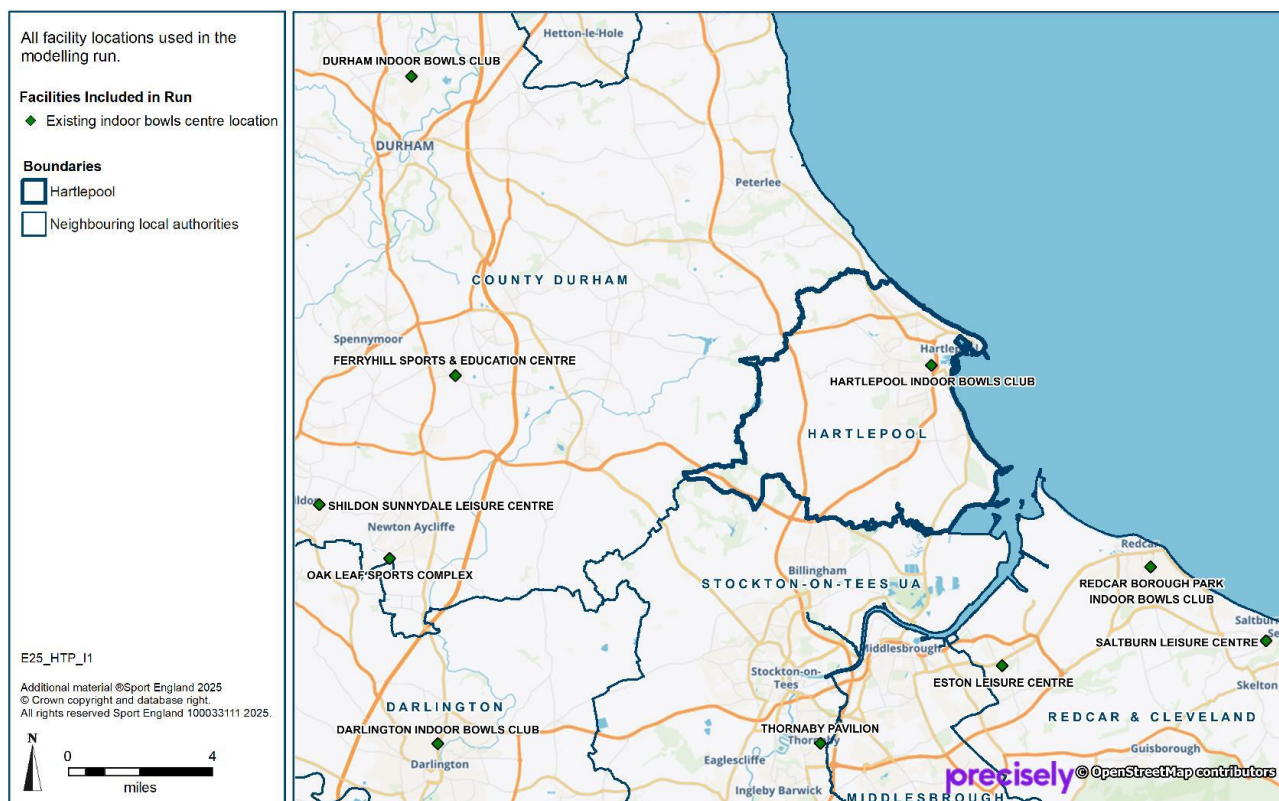
Built in 1972 and refurbished in 2014. Changing rooms refurbished in 2006. Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club rated the facility as standard and said that the heating system needs replacing.

Site visit identified the site as good but some worn patches on bowling green surface which will need repairing.

#### Location of Dedicated Facilities / Accessibility

The map shows the location of Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club located in the central urban area of the town. Site visit confirmed venue has disability access.

Map 22 – Location of Indoor Bowls Facilities in Hartlepool & surrounding area



#### Catchment / Accessibility to Facilities

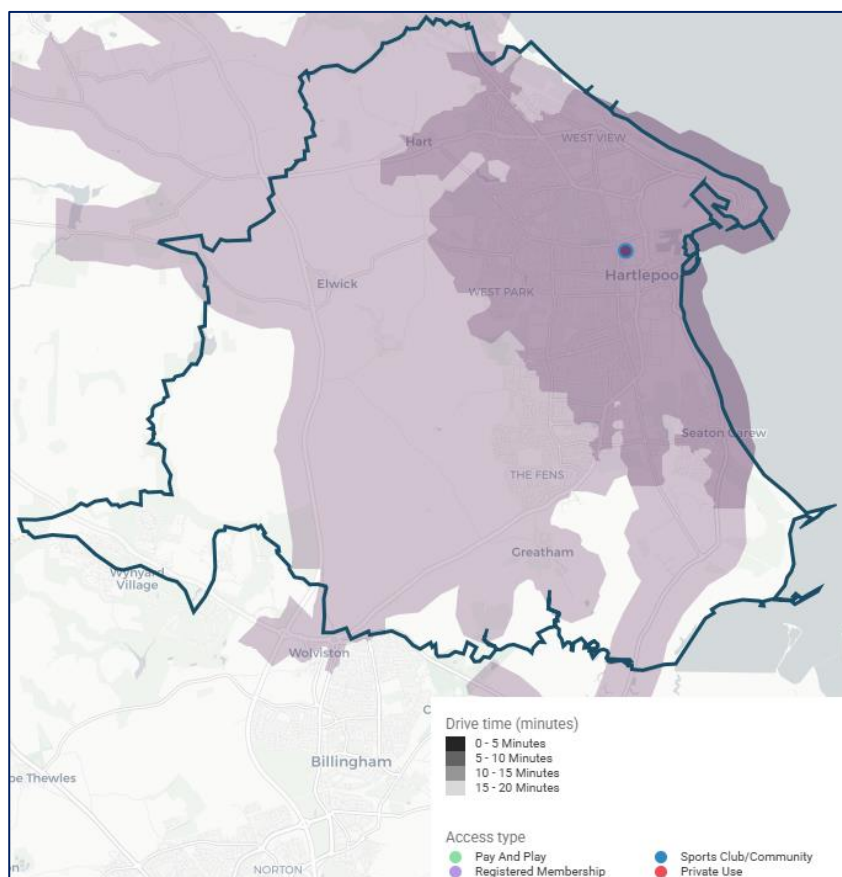
It is estimated that 78% of journeys to indoor bowls centres by Hartlepool residents are made by car.

The catchment shading indicates that most of Hartlepool, including West View, West Park, The Fens, Seaton Carew, and central neighbourhoods, is within a 10–15 minute drive of the facility. The 15–20 minute drive-time area extends coverage into outlying villages such as Elwick and Greatham, and south towards Billingham. This demonstrates that while the majority of residents can reach an indoor bowls facility within 20 minutes, provision is dependent on just one central site.

EIBA considers a 30 minute drive time to an indoor bowling facility as acceptable. This would mean that the whole of Hartlepool is within a 30 minute catchment of an indoor bowling facility.

Map 23 – Location Hartlepool Borough Council Indoor Bowls Facilities (20-Minute Drive Time)

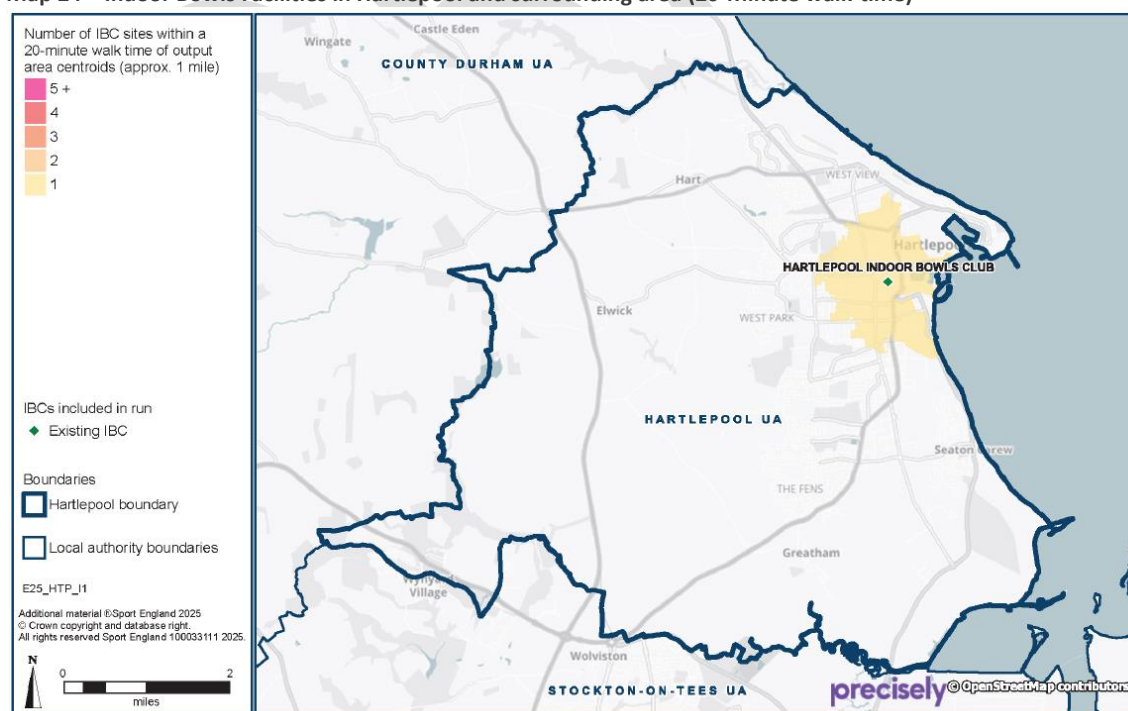




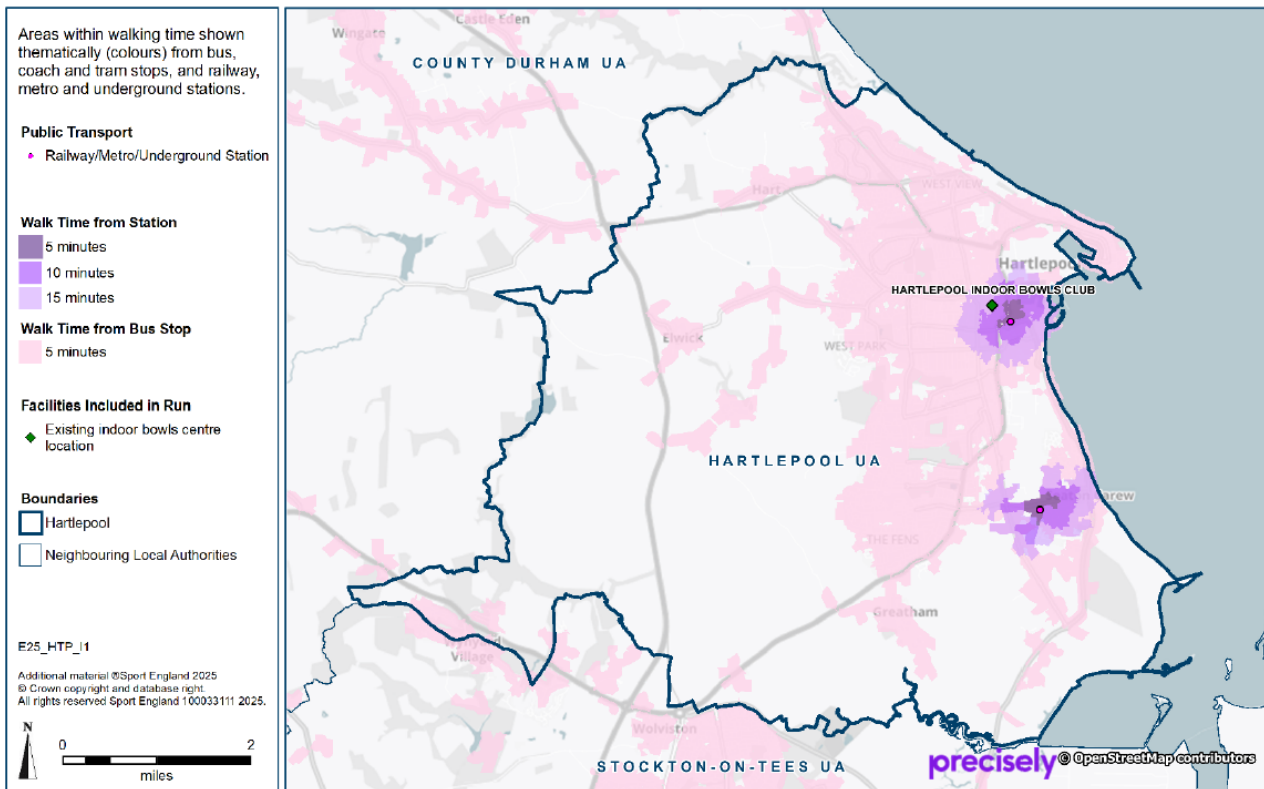
In 2033, 21% of Hartlepool's residents are within a 20-minute walk of an indoor bowls centre (see Map 24). Of Hartlepool's most deprived residents, 31% are within a 20-minute walk of an indoor bowls centre.

However, not all residents in these areas will walk to an indoor bowls centre and some will travel further. It is estimated that 10% of journeys to indoor bowls centres by Hartlepool residents are made on foot.

**Map 24 – Indoor Bowls Facilities in Hartlepool and surrounding area (20-Minute walk-time)**



**Map 25 – Indoor Bowls Facilities in Hartlepool and surrounding area (walk-time to public transport)**



Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Centre is within a five-minute walk of an existing bus stop (pink areas in Map x) and a 15-minute walk of Hartlepool railway station (purple areas).

It should be noted that, while most Hartlepool residents can access an existing public transport stop, it may not mean they can get to an indoor bowls centre within 20 minutes from home via a combination of walking and public transport. Also, in rural areas the service may be irregular. It is estimated that 12% of journeys to indoor bowls centres by Hartlepool residents are made by public transport or bicycle. It should also be considered that indoor bowling participants are generally older so may not wish to or be able to walk or cycle a long distance.

### Indoor Bowls – Availability

Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club states that they have sufficient hours and the centre is open during peak and off peak times. The main hours of use are weekdays during the day.

### Summary

- Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Centre is an important site for indoor bowls in Hartlepool and surrounding area.
- EIBA priority is to retain Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Centre and provide ongoing support to Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club. EIBA state that an eight rink venue will continue to meet current and future needs.
- The club run a wide variety of competitions hosting national and international events and have stated that to continue to deliver this level of activity an eight rink facility is required.
- Whilst both the club and NGB has highlighted their preference to retain an eight rink facility the demand modelling in the FPM states that the resident population creates demand for 365 visits in the weekly period, which equates to 2.3 rinks. Therefore if re-provided a smaller indoor bowls facility (4-6 rinks) could be considered although this should be subject to a feasibility, which will need to recognise the impact this could have on hosting national or regional events.
- The bowling rink has some worn patches which require repairing and the heating system needs replacing, however it is noted that the lease expires in 2026, restricting the clubs ability to invest in the site.
- The club is looking to develop a relationship with schools and colleges in the area to develop a junior section in the club. They also wish to recruit new members, currently introduction sessions are held during the day and we will look to run these at weekday evenings and weekends.
- The club provides indoor bowling for those with disabilities and has disability access.
- It will be important to continue to provide parking & disabled parking when MHLC closes.
- An indoor bowling facility should be retained at the same or close to the location of the existing bowls club, HBC should provide support to the club and Hartlepool Development Corporation to ensure future provision meets future demand.

## 11. Health & Fitness Facilities Supply and Demand Assessment

11.1. A fitness station is a piece of static fitness equipment; health and fitness centres, with over 20 stations, are generally able to make a more attractive offer to both members and pay and play users.

### Number of Facilities – Quantity / Availability

There are 16 health and fitness facilities in the council area:

- 6 - registered membership use
- 2 - private use
- 3 - sports club / community use
- 5 - pay and play.

There are 1,147 stations available across the borough, of which 29 stations are private meaning there are a total of 1,118 stations available for public use. Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub will have a 100 station gym so when Mill House Leisure Centre closes there will be an additional 72 stations so 1,190 stations available for public use.

Table 22 - Supply of Gyms/Fitness Stations

Facility	Number of Stations
<b>Sports Club/Community Association</b>	
Brierton Community Sports Centre	43
Hartlepool 6 <sup>th</sup> Form College	20
English Martyrs Leisure Centre	15
<b>Pay and Play</b>	
Belle Vue Community Sports & Youth Centre	19
Mill House Leisure Centre	28
Headland Sports Hall	23
Rossmere Youth Centre	15
Xtreme Fitness	100
<b>Private Use</b>	
English Martyrs Leisure Centre	10
Dyke House Academy (Sport & Technology Centre)	19
<b>Registered Membership Use</b>	
The Gym Group	150
High Tunstall College of Science	15
Beyond Limits Gym	50
The Luminary Fitness Suite	20
JD Gyms Hartlepool	400
PureGym	220
<b>Unclassified</b>	
Ian Glass Fitness	N/A
Lab Gym	N/A
Evolve CrossFit	N/A
Fit House	N/A
<b>Total Gym Stations</b>	<b>1,147</b>

### School Consultation

Three schools in Hartlepool reported having fitness suites, ranging from just a few stations to over 15 at High Tunstall College of Science. C&S Fitness manages and uses the fitness suite at High Tunstall College of Science. None of the schools allow access without a written agreement.

### Quality

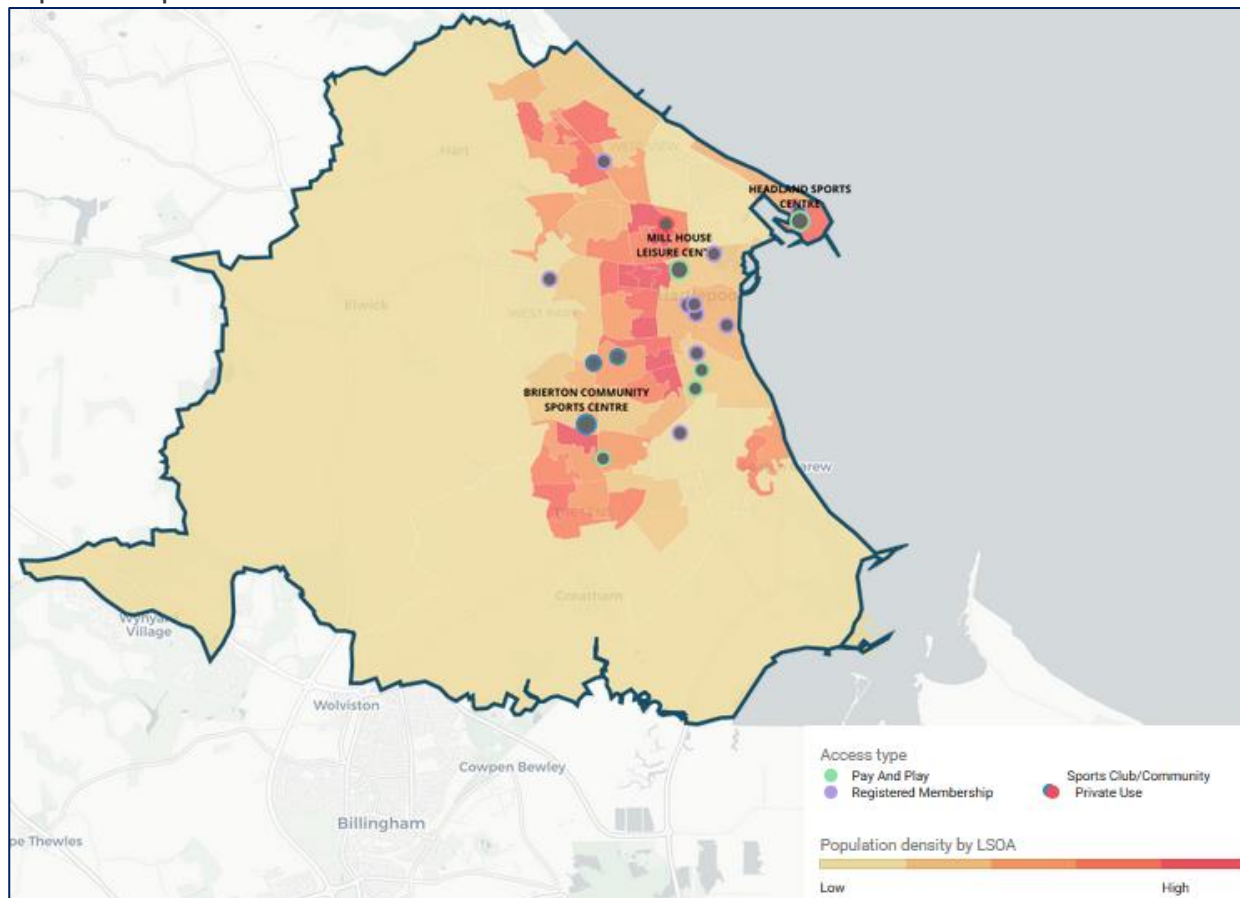
Site visits identified:

- BCSC – gym upgrade due in early 2026, knocking through into one large open plan room with new equipment
- HSH – equipment and refurbishment completed in June 2025, improving quality of offer
- Hartlepool Sixth Form college – gym in good condition
- High Tunstall College of Science – small average gym in separate block

- Belle Vue Community Sports & Youth Centre – small gym with limited equipment

#### Location of Dedicated Facilities - Accessibility

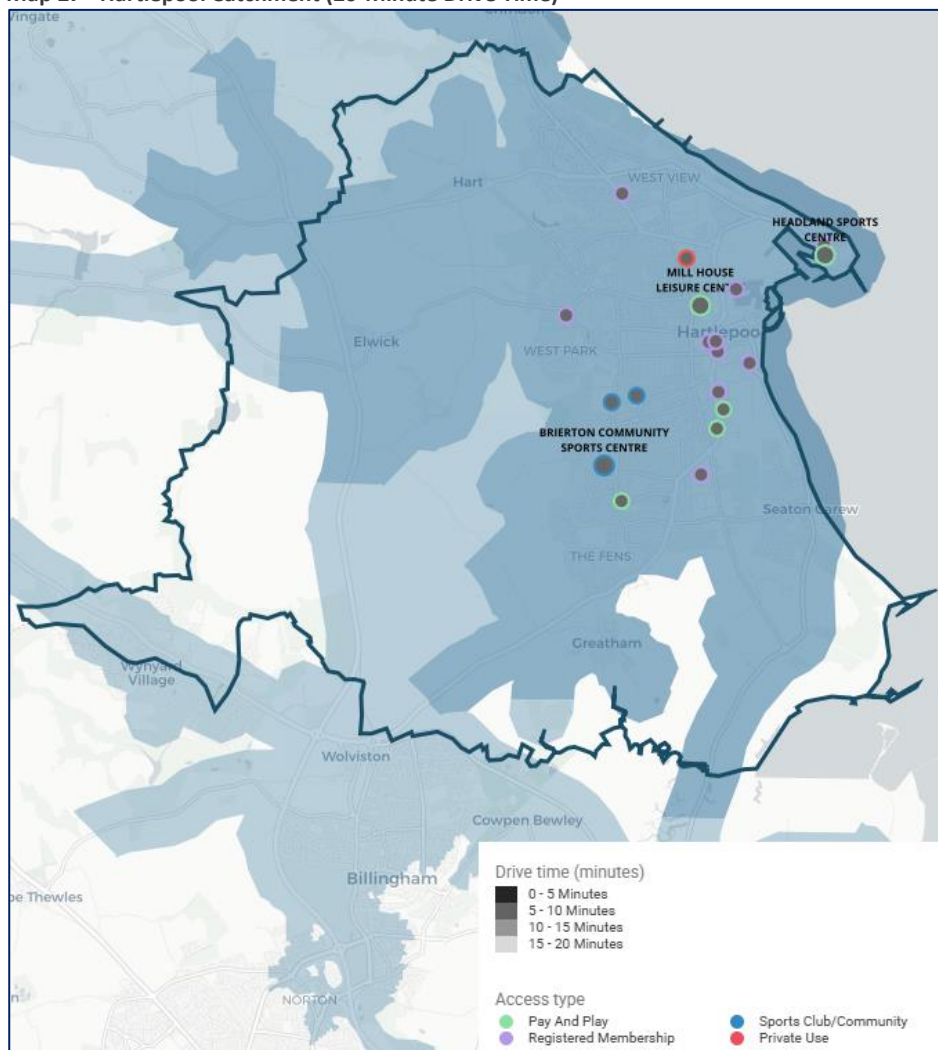
Map 26 - Hartlepool Health & Fitness Facilities



The majority of provision is concentrated in and around Hartlepool town centre, particularly in central and eastern neighbourhoods close to Seaton Carew, The Fens, and West View. There are also a small number of facilities to the west, around West Park and Elwick. No facilities are shown in the more rural southern and western parts of the borough, indicating that access to health & fitness is centred on the town itself and correlates to areas with higher population density.

## Catchment / Accessibility to Facilities

Map 27 - Hartlepool Catchment (20-Minute Drive Time)



Most of the urban area, including neighbourhoods such as West View, West Park, The Fens, Seaton Carew, and central Hartlepool, falls within a 5–10 minute drive of at least one fitness suite. The 15–20 minute drive-time catchment extends coverage into rural areas, including Elwick, Greatham, Wolviston, and as far south as Billingham. This shows that the vast majority of residents in the borough can access a health & fitness facility within a 20-minute drive. However, often users consider a 15 minute drive time more acceptable for health & fitness access. The new housing development in Wynyard Village will be in the 20 minute drive time catchment of a Hartlepool health & fitness facility but likely to be nearer to health and fitness provision towards Billingham.

## School Consultation

Consultation shows that three schools in Hartlepool have fitness suites, ranging in scale from small spaces at Hartlepool Free School (1–4 stations) and Manor Academy (5–9 stations) to a larger facility at High Tunstall College of Science (15–19 stations). Of these, only High Tunstall makes its fitness suite available for secured community use, though all require formal agreements for access. The only external user identified is C&S Fitness, which operates from High Tunstall, highlighting that community use of school-based fitness suites is currently very limited.

## Demand

In the North East, the penetration rate of public gyms is 6.4% of adults. This equates to demand of circa 6,072 public gyms users in 2025, growing to 6,156 in 2031.

## Summary

- There is a good level of gym and fitness provision across Hartlepool.



- The majority of health and fitness suites are in the central area.
- It will be important for gyms at Brierton and Headlands to remain competitive against the private sector. Ongoing refurbishment and modernisation plans will help with this.
- Including assisted fitness equipment into council gyms would provide tailored support for older adults and others requiring additional assistance, promote greater accessibility and encourage physical activity among these populations. Particularly as Hartlepool has higher people with disabilities than the national average.
- The 100 station gym at new HAWH will increase the number of stations available for public use.
- Current level of health & fitness provision (including HAWH) should be retained to meet current and future demand.

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## 12. Studios Supply and Demand Assessment

### Number of Facilities – Quantity

There are 23 studios of which:

- 9 - dedicated dance studios
- 3 - Pilates and yoga studios
- 11 – fitness studios. Of which five are sports club / community use, two are pay and play, three are registered membership use and one is private.

There are studios at BCSC and MHLC. HAWH will have two inter-connected studios and a spin studio, to replace the MHLC provision.

### Facility Requirements

Studios tend to focus on group exercise such as spin, aerobics, dance, Tai Chi and yoga. Maximising flexibility of these spaces for mixed use will increase participation and utilisation of space.

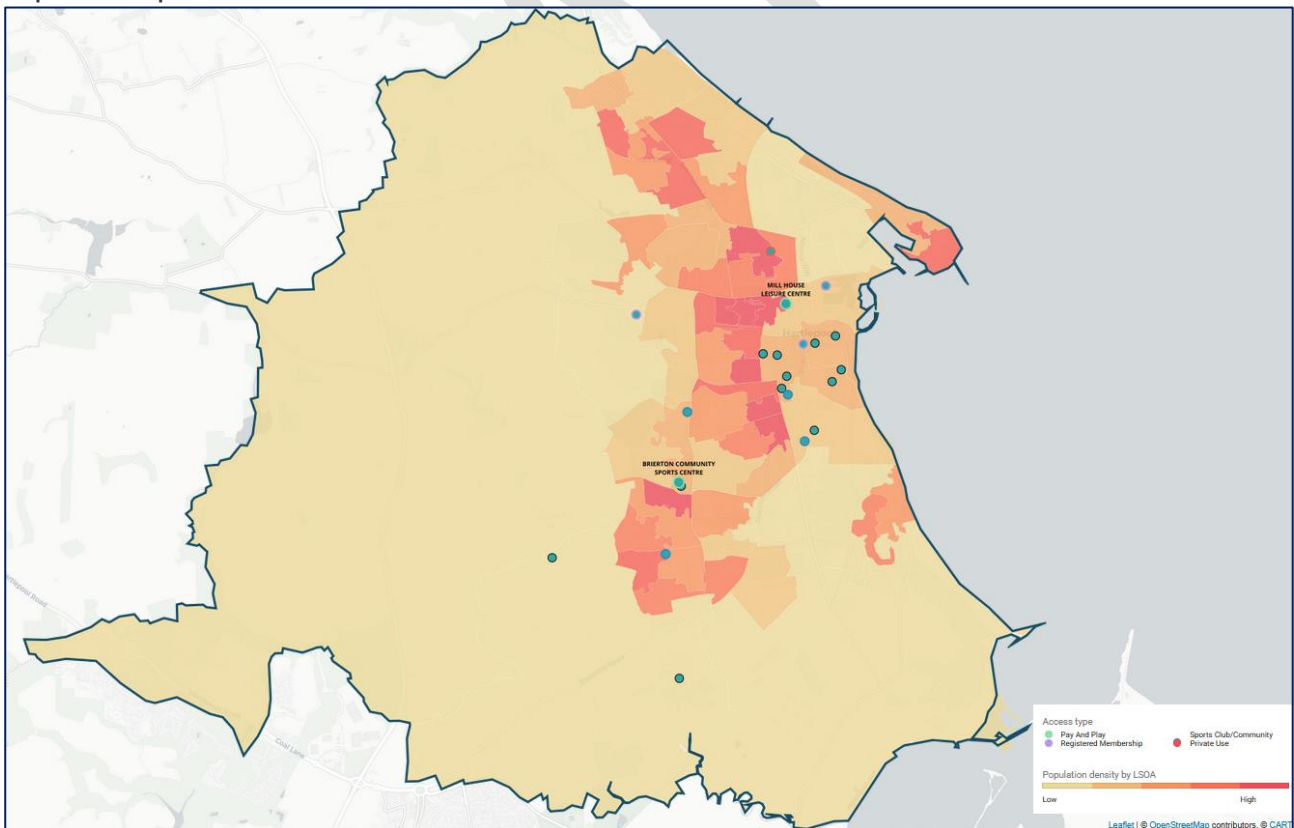
Currently there is a national growing market for boutique fitness studios that are generally viewed as a small gym, 800 – 3500 square feet, that focus on group exercise and specialise in one or two fitness areas..

### Consultation

Two schools that responded to the consultation have dance studios. High Tunstall College of Science has one dance studio and St Hild's CofE Catholic School has two dance studios in a building they lease. Both schools have secured community use and neither allow use without written agreement. St Hild's CofE school hires out their studios for community use Monday to Saturday from 8am-9pm. Just Freestyle Dance is the only group that regularly books the studios at both schools.

### Location of Studio Facilities - accessibility

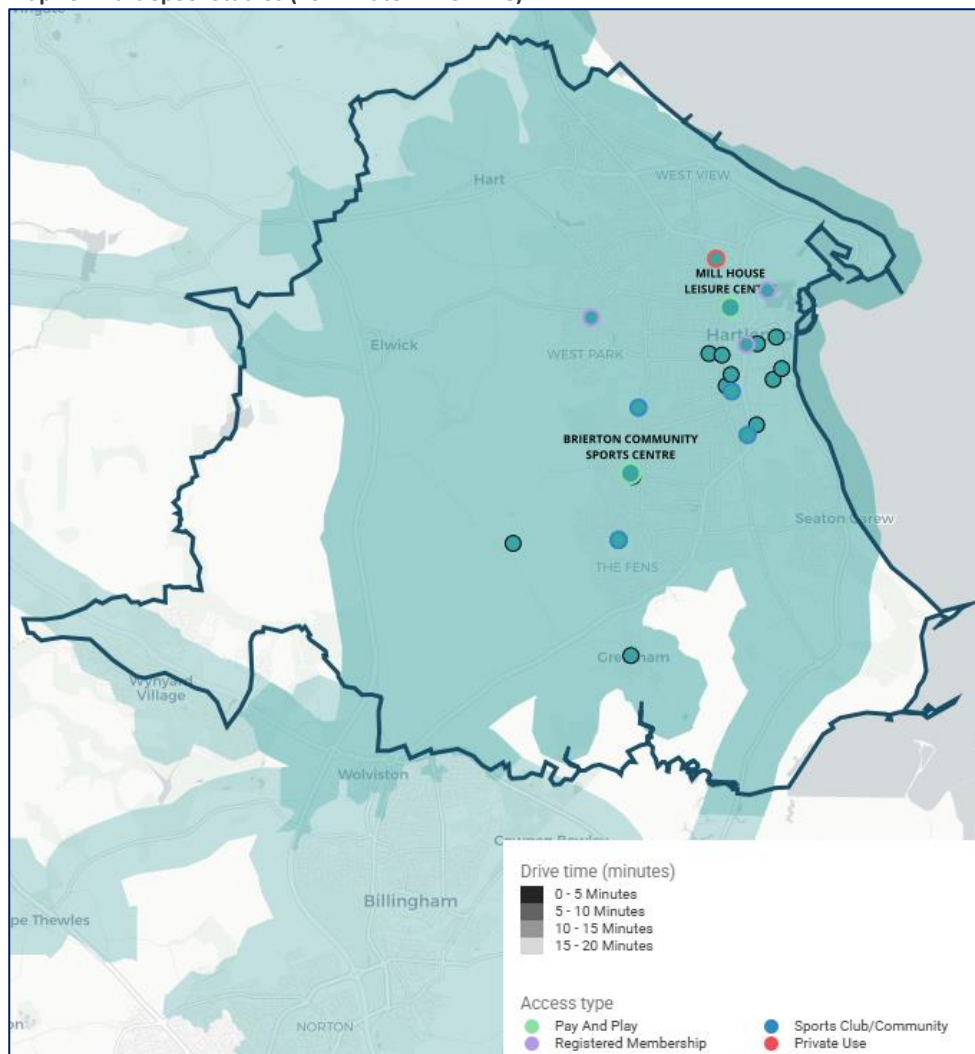
Map 28 - Hartlepool Studios



Most provision is concentrated in and around central Hartlepool and coastal neighbourhoods, particularly near the town centre and extending south towards The Fens and Greatham. A smaller number of sites are located to the west around West Park and Elwick, while rural areas on the borough's edges have no mapped facilities. This indicates that access to studios is clustered in the urban area and areas of higher population density, with a range of different access types available to residents.

### Catchment / Accessibility to Facilities

Map 29 –Hartlepool Studios (20-Minute Drive Time)



The majority of the town, including areas such as West Park, The Fens, Seaton Carew and the central urban area, falls within a **10-minute drive** of at least one facility. The **15–20 minute catchment** extends provision into surrounding rural areas, including Elwick, Greatham, Wolviston and into Billingham to the south. This demonstrates that almost all residents in the borough are within a 20-minute drive of health and fitness provision, with MHLC and BCSC acting as key anchors supported by a wider network of club, membership and private-use gyms.

## Quality

Site visits identified:

- BCSC dance studio good quality used by dance school for competitions. Includes main stage. Fitness studio, spin bikes stored in side of room, not ideal as have to move them to use meeting room.
- Hartlepool Sixth Form College dance studio in good condition only used by students
- High Tunstall College of Science – activity studio excellent condition, purpose built for dance.
- BVCS&YC – Dance studio converted into a children’s nursery. Conference room with moveable walls now used for yoga instead.

## Availability

Consultation shows that two schools in Hartlepool provide access to dance studios for community use, though only through secured agreements. High Tunstall College of Science has a single studio, while St Hild’s CofE Catholic School operates two studios in a leased building. St Hild’s offers the greatest availability, hiring out space Monday to Saturday from 8am–9pm. In practice, community use is limited, with Just Freestyle Dance the only group regularly booking studios at both sites.



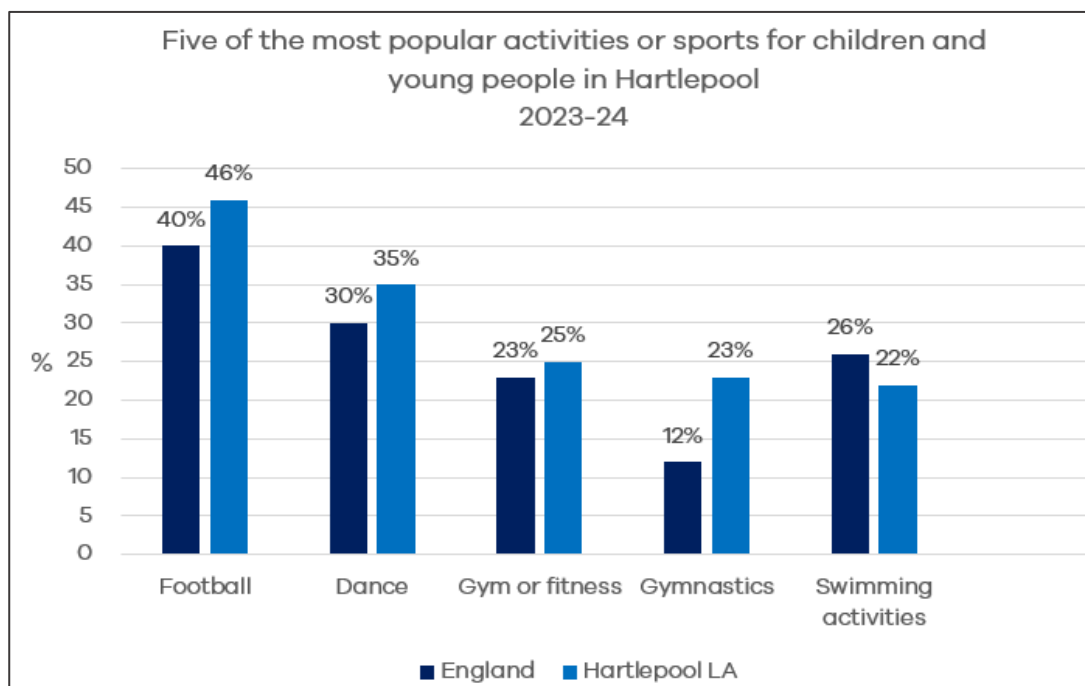
**Table 23 - Studio Supply and Availability**

Facility	Number of Studios	Access Type
<b>Dance studio</b>		
Amy Richardson Studios	1	
Karen Liddle School of Dance	1	
K.R. Dance Studios	1	
Seaton Carew Academy of Dance	1	
Carol Hammond Dance Studio	1	
Watson Academy	1	
Elwick Studios	1	
Val Armstrong School of Performing Arts	1	
On Your Toes Dance Studio	1	
<b>Pilates / Yoga</b>		
Studio 21 Hartlepool	1	
Maria's Yogi Circle	1	
Blue House Pilates	1	
<b>Fitness / Group Ex Studios</b>		
The gym group Hartlepool	1	Registered Membership Use
Belle Vue Community Sports & Youth Centre	1	Sports Club / Community Association
Brierton Community Sports Centre	2	Pay and Play
Stranton Primary School	1	Sports Club / Community Association
High Tunstall College of Science	1	Registered Membership Use
Dyke House Academy	1	Private Use
Manor Community Academy	2	Sports Club / Community Association
The Luminary Fitness Suite	1	Registered Membership Use
English Martyrs Leisure Centre	1	Sports Club / Community Association
Mill House Leisure Centre	1	Pay and Play
<b>Total Studios</b>	<b>23</b>	

#### Demand

Active Place Power data shows that Hartlepool has higher than national levels of dance participation. The graph overleaf outlines five of the most popular sports or activities that were participated in once a week or more during the academic year 2023-24 by children and young people in Hartlepool.

**Figure 21 - Most Popular Activities for Children and Young People in Hartlepool**



#### Summary

- There is a good provision of studios for dance and group exercise across dedicated sites, education sites and council leisure centres.
- Dance appears popular in Hartlepool with higher than national participation in children and young people. It is well provided for currently and in the future.
- Manor Academy Studio, Blue House Pilates, Brierton Community SC, Seaton Carew Academy of Dance will be the closest studios to housing developments at Wynward village and Hartlepool.
- Protect existing studio provision to meet current and future demand recognising higher than average participation in activities such as dance and gymnastics compared to national averages.

### 13. Gymnastics Supply and Demand Assessment

#### Number of Facilities – Quantity

2 dedicated gymnastics and trampolining facilities in the Hartlepool:

- Hartlepool Gymnastics Club
- Off the Floor Aerial Arts

Aeronauts Trampoline Club is based at HSH.

#### Consultation

British Gymnastics did not respond to the consultation

**British Gymnastics participation trends** - Post-pandemic recovery is strong, national membership is back to pre-covid levels and has seen consecutive growth since 2022. High waiting lists, especially in constrained or shared-use environments, underline the need for permanent gymnastics infrastructure investment.

**Funding availability** - Club Capital fund: £10m social impact loan initiative, unsecured loans between £25,000 and £250,000 (up to £750,000 in exceptional cases), supporting move to or safeguarding of dedicated gymnastics space. Available to BG-registered clubs with development guidance.

#### National Priorities

British Gymnastics' **Impact Framework**, underpins all strategic and operational priorities across the organisation. Our approach is guided by the following outcomes:

- Gymnasts are safe, empowered, and have positive experiences in the sport
- Coaches and the workforce feel supported, trusted, and valued
- A culture of inclusion and belonging is embedded across all environments
- Clubs are aligned with BG's mission and receive meaningful support
- Members and parents/carers see clear value in their experience and engagement
- A positive performance sport culture enables athletes to thrive
- Staff feel inspired and their wellbeing is actively supported
- Trust in British Gymnastics is strengthened through transparency, governance, and impact-led initiatives

The main issue for gymnastic development is having access to sufficient dedicated space so that clubs are able to grow and extend their programmes.

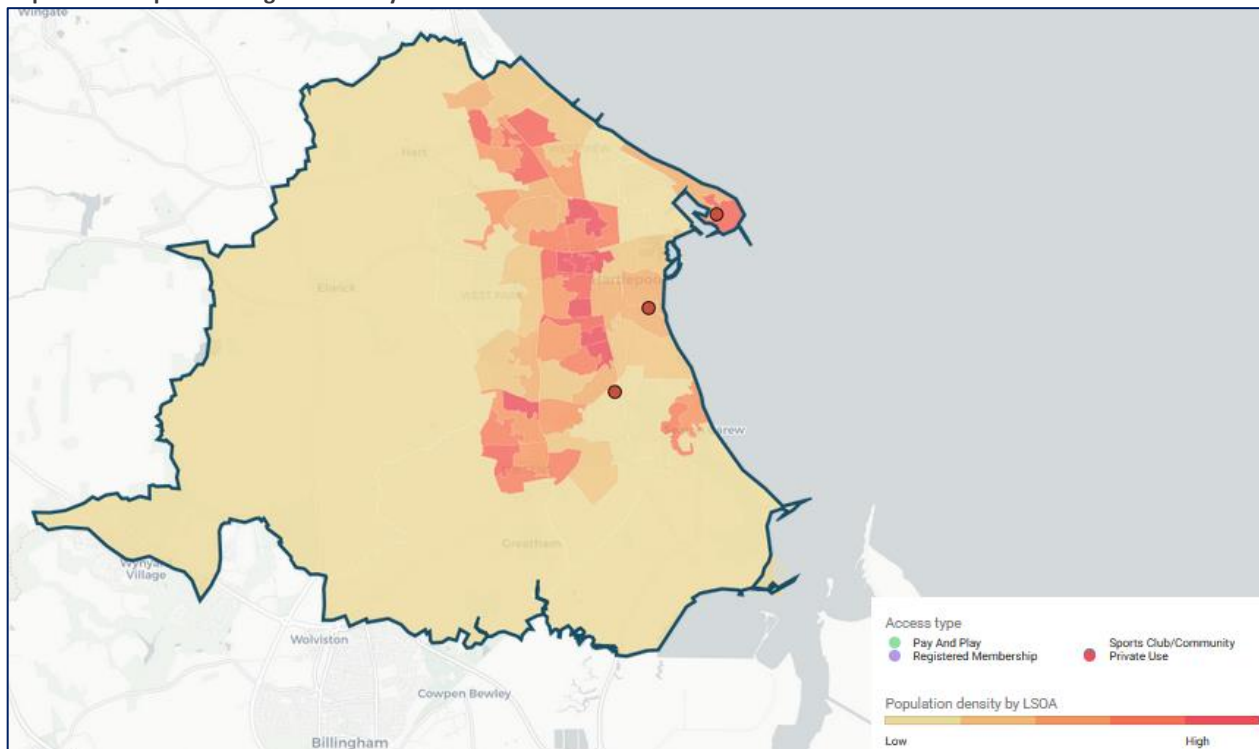
Dedicated provision enables clubs to deal with their waiting lists and expand their operations – as a general rule, clubs experience a 50% growth within a year of relocating. The main element of income for gymnastics is recreational gymnastics for young people, which is also an attraction for leisure operators in terms of their key goal of increasing income generation. British Gymnastics will support clubs to find dedicated gymnastic space

#### Quality

Site visit identified that BCSC used to offer trampolining but no longer has the equipment to deliver. High Tunstall has a good quality trampoline in the sports hall.

## Location of Dedicated Facilities - Accessibility

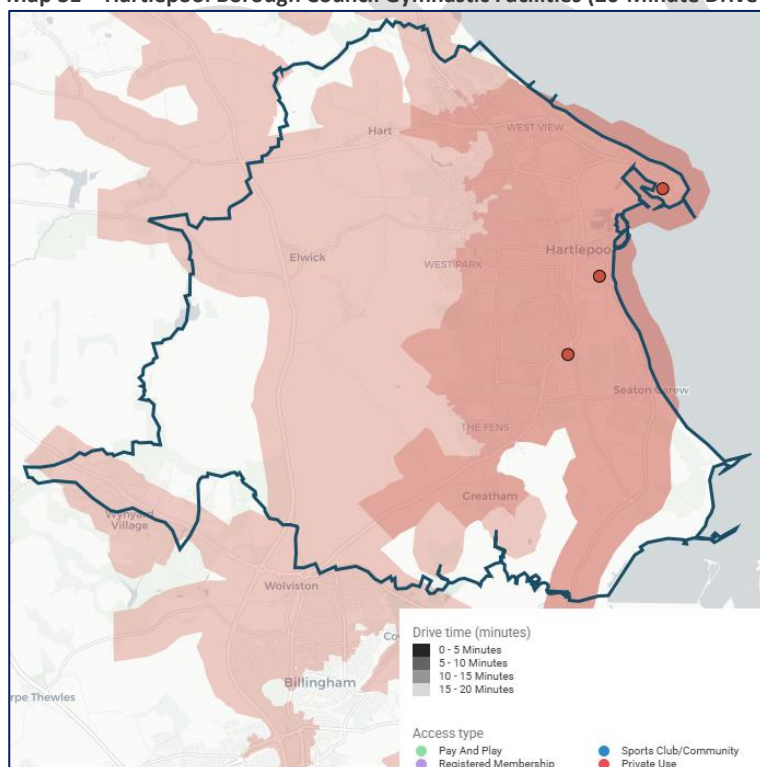
Map 30 –Hartlepool Borough Council Gymnastic Facilities



The map shows the distribution of **gymnastics facilities** in Hartlepool. Three sites are identified, all of which are located in the eastern part of the borough close to the town centre and coastal areas. One club is located at HSH, another south of the town centre, and a third near Seaton Carew.

## Catchment / Accessibility to Facilities

Map 31 – Hartlepool Borough Council Gymnastic Facilities (20-Minute Drive Time)



The map shows the drive-time catchment for gymnastics facilities in Hartlepool. Shading illustrates travel distances from 0–5 minutes up to 15–20 minutes by car. The three identified facilities, all located in the eastern side of the borough around the town centre, Headland, and Seaton Carew, provide coverage across much of the urban area. The 15–20 minute catchment extends westwards to Elwick and out towards Wingate, Castle Eden and Billingham, as well as south towards Greatham and surrounding rural areas. This indicates that most residents within the borough can reach a gymnastics facility within 20 minutes by car, though provision is concentrated in the coastal and central urban parts of Hartlepool.

It should also be noted that recreational gymnastics can be delivered within sports halls or large studio spaces, which are more widely available than dedicated facilities.

#### Number of Gymnastic Clubs

There are two gymnastics clubs in Hartlepool being Hartlepool Gymnastics Club and Off the Floor Aerial Arts and one trampolining club, being Aeronauts Trampoline Club.

#### Gymnastic Clubs Level of Competition

Hartlepool Gymnastics Club is affiliated, competes regionally and provides classes for all ages and ranges of ability. Off the Floor Aerial Arts does not compete. Aeronauts Trampoline Club is affiliated and coach up to level four, competing regionally and nationally.

#### Participation Levels / Demand

Active Place Power data shows that Hartlepool children and young people have significantly higher levels of gymnastics participation than national levels (see Figure 21).

#### Summary

- There is a good supply of gymnastics facilities offering a range of gymnastics disciplines.
- All of the facilities are located around Hartlepool and near to areas of high population density.
- All of the borough is within a 20 minute drive time apart from the south west. This area has high projected housing growth. Gymnastics tends to attract younger age groups which are likely to move into family homes in the Wynward and Hartlepool South West developments. This could see an increase in demand for gymnastics provision in the future.
- Establish dialogue with Hartlepool Gymnastics club to find out if their membership is increasing and if there is a waiting list. Active Lives data suggests high demand for gymnastics facilities.
- Important to maintain the quality of trampolines and support sessions at HSH for Aeronauts Trampoline Club
- Protect existing gymnastics and trampolining facilities.

## 14. Squash Supply and Demand Assessment

- 14.1. Increasingly, squash courts are provided through squash clubs/multi-sport clubs, as opposed to local authority leisure facilities. This reflects the fact that participation in the sport has reduced from its massive growth in the 1970's and there is less demand for community access squash courts.

### Number of Facilities – Quantity

One site with two squash courts at MHLC, with pay and play access, last refurbished in 2005. These courts are not being replaced in HAWH and therefore there will be no squash courts once MHLC closes.

### NGB Consultation

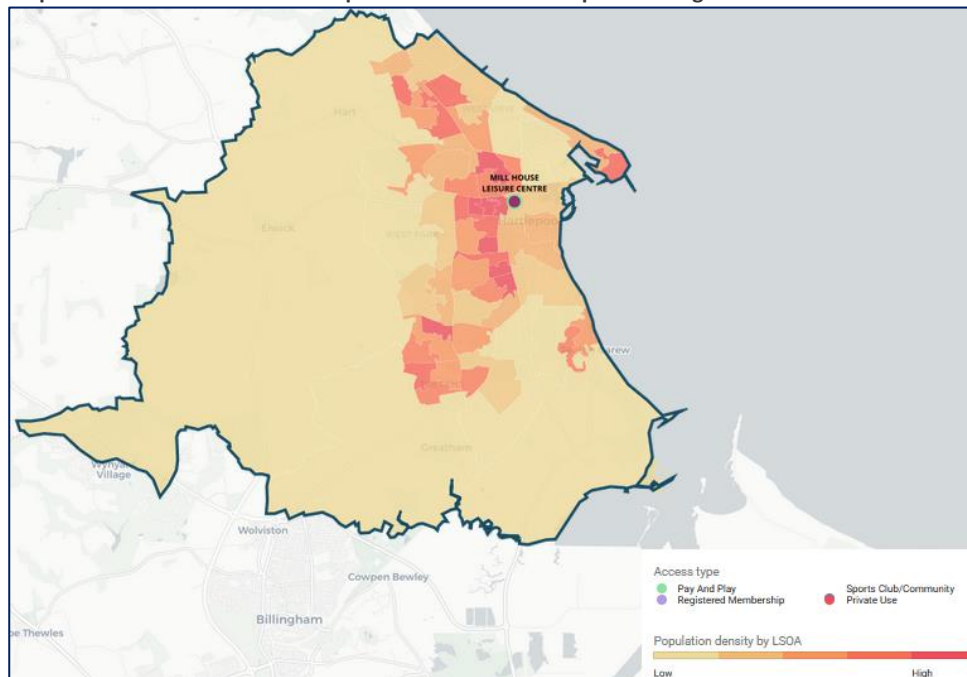
Table 24 - England Squash Response

Questions	Conclusions / Considerations
Does your NGB have any current priorities for indoor facilities in the HBC area?	<b>Yes</b> - As an organisation our priorities are to grow participation, enhance diversity and nurture talent. In an area where there are no courts we can still look to grow participation and enhance diversity through raising awareness of the sport. We can raise the awareness of the sport through our new schools programme coming later this year. The programme can be delivered in a school hall or outside using rebound walls or hard wall surfaces.
What do you believe to be required to support your sports priorities in the HBC area in the coming years?	We need facilities in the area with squash courts, if we are to raise awareness of the sport we need somewhere to direct players to, this could be following on from taking part in a schools programme or attending a holiday activity and food programme, where the participants go to carry on playing squash outside of the sessions they already attend.
Is there is a sufficient supply of indoor facilities to meet the current and future demand for your sport in the HBC area?	<b>No</b> - Hartlepool Borough had a population of 92,571 at the 2021 census, we recommend 1 squash court to every 10,000 people.
Do you have any long-term plans or developments in mind / progress within the HBC area?	<b>Yes</b> - We have our new schools programme that schools in the area will be able to deliver. <sup>35</sup>
Are there any interventions planned that will increase demand for facilities?	<b>No</b>
Do you believe there is potential to grow your sport significantly in Hartlepool?	<b>Yes</b>
Which existing and planned facilities are important for your sport and why?	All facilities are important to our sport, you don't always need squash courts to play squash, using rebound walls and hard wall surfaces you can play an adapted version of the game. Sport halls can provide a space to play an adapted version of the sport.
Access to funds	<b>No</b>
Other comments	A four-court facility could generate between £60,000 and £76,000 per annum. We would recommend looking into building a venue or extending a venue to include squash courts. Four would be a lot to start with, with not knowing the demand but a two/three court venue could support a thriving squash club.

### Location of Dedicated Facilities - Accessibility

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.englandsquash.com/squash-stars> for either teachers or squash coaches to deliver in schools in dinner halls/assembly halls/outside etc. The programme has training and session plans for teacher and coaches so they can deliver the programme in PE lessons. It is curriculum aligned and offers children the opportunity to learn about a new sport whilst developing transferable skills. The programme will work with Active Partnerships to offer training to teachers. It will be free to deliver, there will be kit the school or coach can purchase as England Squash want the programme to be as flexible as possible to ensure there are no barriers to people delivering it

Map 32 – Location of Dedicated Squash Facilities in Hartlepool Borough Council



The current squash courts are in the north of the borough near high population density at MHLC, however these will be removed in 2026. In the surrounding area there are two squash courts at Billingham Forum in Billingham to the south and Norton Squash Club with two courts in North Stockton-on-Tees both which can serve residents in Hartlepool particularly who live in the south of the borough.

#### Catchment / Accessibility to Facilities

Billingham Forum squash courts are approximately 18-20 minute drive from the centre of Hartlepool, and Norton Squash Club a 20 minute drive from the centre of Hartlepool so can serve residents in Hartlepool particularly those who live south of the borough.

#### Number of Squash Clubs

There are no squash clubs in Hartlepool.

#### Availability

Billingham Forum offers pay and play for the squash courts. Norton Squash Club has an annual membership.

#### Summary

- The remaining squash courts at MHLC will be removed in 2026, however there are two other squash courts with community access at Billingham Forum which are within a 20 minute drive time of a large proportion of Hartlepool residents.
- The new England Squash schools programme encourages squash to be played in dinner halls / assembly halls / outside during PE lessons.
- Not sufficient demand for future provision of squash in Hartlepool.



## 15. Indoor Tennis / Padel / Pickleball Supply and Demand Assessment

### Number of Facilities – Quantity

No dedicated indoor tennis, padel or pickleball courts in Hartlepool.

A new indoor padel facility (one single court, two double courts) approved September 2025 to convert a unit at 13 Park View West Hartlepool. There are a number of other proposals under consideration for the planned development of indoor and outdoor padel courts in Hartlepool. All are being led by commercial partners, including one, which is being considered at Brierton Sports Centre.

Short Tennis pay & play is available at HSH.

Table 25 - Outdoor Tennis Provision

2.1 Registered venues within the geographic area							
Name	Status	Type	Non-lit	Lit	Indoor	Padel	Total
Hartlepool Tennis Club	Registered	Club	3	2	0	0	5
Eldon Grove Tennis Club	Registered	Club	7	0	0	0	7
TOWN MOOR	Non-Registered	Park	4	0	0	0	4
SEATON PARK	Non-Registered	Park	4	0	0	0	4
GREATHAM SPORTS FIELD ASSOCIATION	Non-Registered	Park	1	0	0	0	1

### Consultation

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) oversee two affiliated clubs in Hartlepool (Hartlepool Tennis Club and Eldon Grove Tennis Club) with 138 members across the two clubs. Neither club uses indoor tennis courts. The LTA believes that there is potential to grow tennis in HBC. The full report can be found in [Appendix 10](#).

#### Indoor Tennis

The LTA highlighted that HBC is listed as one of the key indoor tennis strategic locations as outlined in the Indoor Community Tennis Projects [plan](#).

The LTA said providing canopy covered courts at existing clubs or venues should be considered as this can provide the benefits of indoor provision at a lower cost. The LTA has access to funds to support projects via the Quick Access Loan Scheme.

#### Padel

LTA current and long-term plans and priorities for padel include:

- Expansion of existing facilities to develop padel to ensure there is an accessible and community-facing pathway for members of the public.
- Support current planning applications where relevant in relation to padel.

The LTA demand modelling<sup>36</sup> estimated 7 padel courts (indoor and outdoor courts) could be sustained within HBC area based on current and future population and padel demand. It does not mean that the suggested number should be seen as a cap, but that the LTA has confidence that there is sufficient demand for the number of courts identified. Some areas where the sport is more established will create higher levels of demand. The three new indoor padel courts at Park View West will contribute to this demand.

The LTA analysis is the first stage in strategic planning for padel by LA boundary. The second phase is to begin to look at potential locations and the demography of the catchment and how they overlay, which will in many instances cut across LA boundaries.

#### Pickleball

While pickleball is recognised as growing in popularity, the LTA support only dual line markings on existing tennis courts rather than replacing tennis courts particularly as there are many alternative options that could support pickleball alongside tennis provision.

### Availability / Accessibility

No dedicated indoor tennis, padel or pickleball courts in Hartlepool. In surrounding area there are:

<sup>36</sup> LTA Methodology

- Total population x. Padel demand = 20% of total population (figure taken from YouGov survey which estimates 20% of the population would be interested in playing if there were local facilities available).
- Padel penetration – 8% of the demand we estimate could convert participants (fitness/sports industry conversion %). Working on the basis of 200 players being accommodated per court (benchmarking figure used for sustainability)



#### Indoor Tennis

- Closest indoor tennis courts is at David Lloyd Teesside (east of Stockton-on-Tees)

#### Indoor Padel

- The Padel Barn, Sedgfield, County Durham – Southwest of Hartlepool, 4 indoor padel courts, adding 4 new pickleball courts
- Padel Up, Stockton-on-Tees, 4 indoor courts

### Future Considerations

Outdoor padel and pickleball supply and demand will be assessed as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy which is being developed.

### Summary

#### Indoor Tennis

- There are no dedicated indoor tennis facilities in Hartlepool
- The LTA identifies that HBC is a strategic location for indoor tennis provision.
- The LTA suggests considering canopy cover over existing outdoor courts as a more cost effective option to a dedicated indoor tennis centre
- There is an indoor tennis centre at David Lloyd Teesside.

#### Padel

- There are currently no dedicated indoor padel or outdoor padel facilities in Hartlepool.
- Padel is a fast growing sport. The LTA modelling identifies that there is enough demand to support 7 padel courts.
- Indoor padel courts have recently been approved in Rossmere area of Hartlepool which will be accessible by majority of the borough. Other proposed developments will meet local demand.
- There are indoor padel courts over the border in neighbouring Stockton-on-Tees and County Durham which are accessible to Hartlepool residents particularly those living in south or south west of the borough.

#### Pickleball

- There are no dedicated pickleball facilities in Hartlepool, Pickleball can be offered in multi-use spaces such as sports halls.

Provision of indoor tennis and padel should be led by club/private sector rather than HBC. However HBC could provide support in areas such as planning.

## 16. Indoor Table Tennis Supply and Demand Assessment

### Number of Facilities – Quantity

There are no dedicated indoor table tennis facilities in Hartlepool.

### NGB Consultation

Table Tennis England did not respond to consultation.

Priorities for Table Tennis England are; working with primary and secondary schools to increase more tennis tables in schools, training for staff with possible growth of school clubs and growth of Ping and outdoor tables.

In addition, growth in women and girls' participation and working in 30% most deprived communities are priority areas. Table Tennis England highlight that future priority needs are the growth of U9 participation in clubs and mentioned barriers to participation are lack of outdoor and community tables for public access and competition spaces for local competition.

Ping! is a programme from Table Tennis England with the concept of taking ping pong to the hearts of communities and places people already spend time, removing the barriers to participation and making the game more visible and accessible. As well as a network of free to play tables, Table Tennis England is introducing pop up Ping Pong Parlours in retail space and working with community groups through the 'Ping in the Community' packages.

### Location of facilities - Accessibility

The map below from Table Tennis England<sup>37</sup> shows that there is one place in Hartlepool to play indoor table tennis which is at Westbourne Methodist Church Stockton Road, Hartlepool (community and social table tennis). HSH also has table tennis tables. The nearest premier club is at Northfield Table Tennis Club which is in neighbouring Stockton-on-Tees near Billingham.

**Map 33 – Location of Table Tennis Facilities in Hartlepool and surrounding area**



### Availability

There are three tables at the Westbourne Methodist Church Stockton Road, Hartlepool that provides community and social table tennis. HSH offers pay & play table tennis sessions on a Monday. Site visits confirmed that there are also table tennis tables at BCSC

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.tabletennisengland.co.uk/table-finder/>

(sports hall), Hartlepool Sixth Form College (5 tables in sports hall), High Tunstall College of Science (10 tables in activity studio), and Belle Vue Community Sports & Youth Centre (which are well used).

#### Summary

- Good level of table tennis provision at a community and pay/play level in Hartlepool offering informal drop in sessions
- No structured club competitions or dedicated facilities
- Opportunity to work with Table Tennis England to support their priority of growing women and girls' participation and working in 30% most deprived communities are priority areas.
- BCSC and HSH in good position to expand table tennis offer to residents in most deprived communities.
- Protect existing provision through sports hall and community spaces.

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## 17. Martial Arts Supply and Demand Assessment

### Number of Facilities – Quantity

There are four dedicated martial arts facilities in Hartlepool: Hartlepool Wadokai Dojo, Bujinkani Iyashi Dojo (training hall for Bujinkan Budo Taijutsu), NETSDA Martial Arts Academy and Muay Thai Academy BT.

### NGB Consultation

British Martial Arts and Kickboxing Association (BMAKA) responded to the consultation. They have one affiliated club in the area, Hartlepool MMA & Kickboxing Academy.

BMAKA states that there are no barriers that affect the club and that there is a sufficient supply of indoor facilities to meet the current and future demand in the HBC area.

Priorities and long term plans include: provide a safe, enclosed, clutter-free matted space specifically designed for martial arts, rather than shared use of sports halls.

Support the development of future leaders and coaches to sustain growth and provide wider life skills benefits.

BMAKA believe there is potential to grow the sport in Hartlepool and always looking to take on new members. Access to funds is available through the club and occasional sponsors.

### Club Consultation

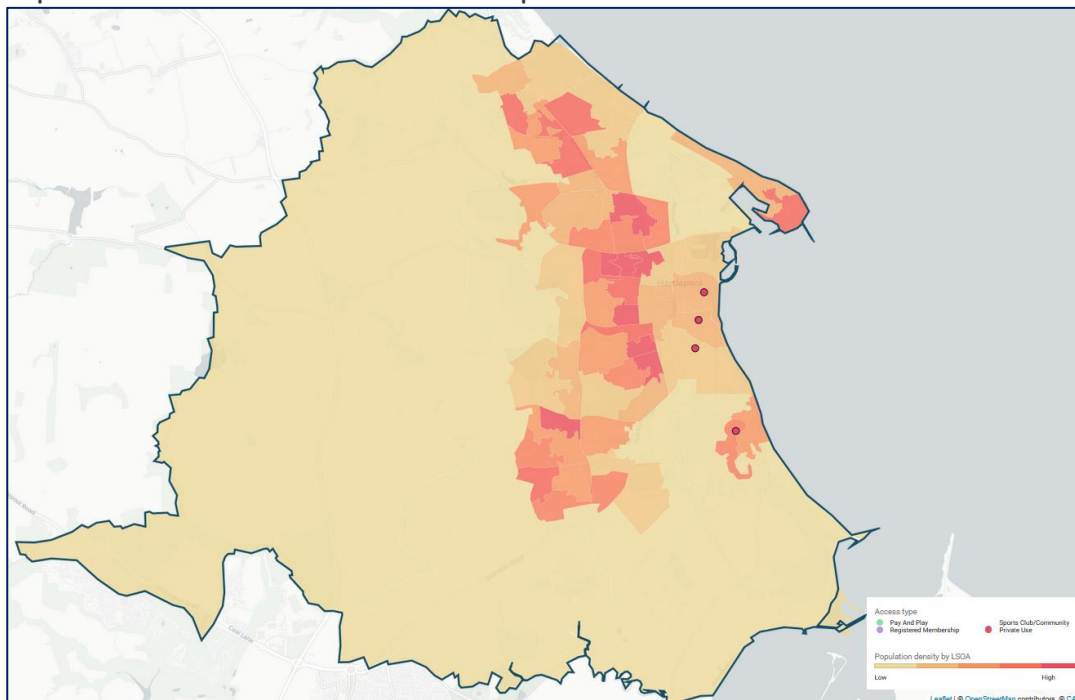
Table 26 - Martial Arts Club Consultation

Sports club name	Own/lease/hire premises	Most Used Venue	Facility Quality Rating	Main hours of use	Sufficient Hours	Barriers Yes/No	Level of Competition	Development needs for future/higher competition	Plans for further development of your sport	Disability Sessions or Specific Sessions for minority groups available?
Blade Taekwondo GBR	Hire a facility at a leisure centre/venue	The Dodgeball Centre	Good	Weekdays in the evening	Yes	No	National and International	Yes  Funding to assist members to travel, and compete at high level	Yes  Expand and/or open a full time venue	Yes

Hartlepool Grizzlies kabaddi club would like to secure a 150sqm training area to develop as a British Kabaddi League team.

## Location of Dedicated Facilities - Accessibility

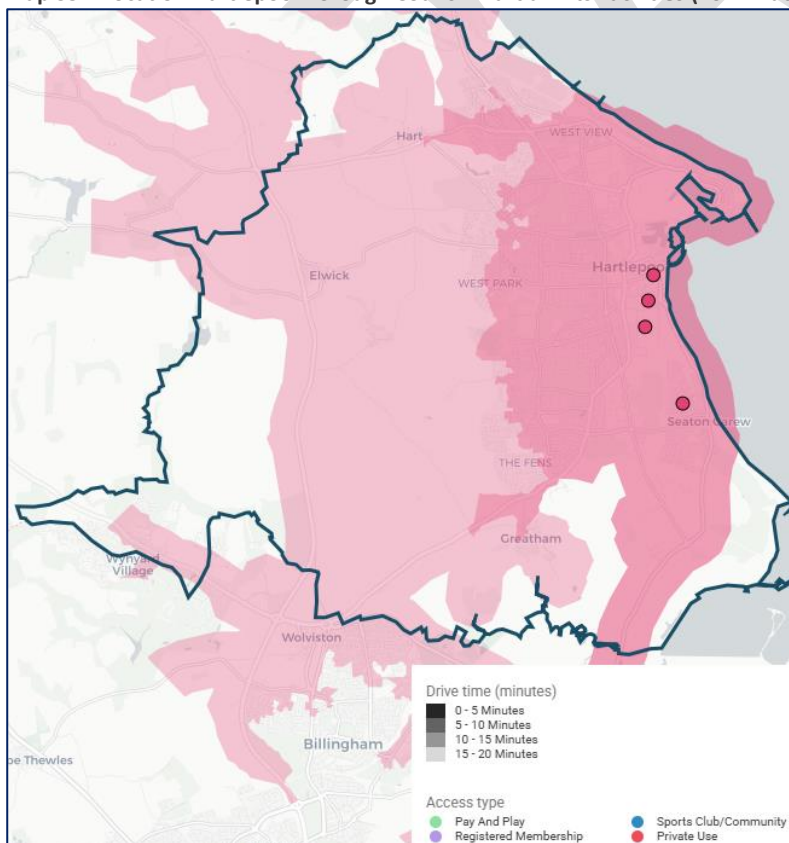
Map 34 – Location of Martial Arts Facilities in Hartlepool



The map shows the distribution of martial arts facilities in Hartlepool. Three sites are identified, all located on the eastern side of the borough, running through the central urban area towards Seaton Carew. These are all marked as private-use venues.

## Catchment / Accessibility to Facilities

Map 35 – Location Hartlepool Borough Council Martial Arts Facilities (20-Minute Drive Time)



The catchment shading indicates that most of the central and eastern parts of Hartlepool fall within a 5–10 minute drive of a martial arts venue. The 15–20 minute drive-time area extends further west and south, covering Elwick, Greatham, Wolviston and reaching into Billingham. This shows that while the urban population has good access to martial arts facilities, all provision is clustered on the coastal side of the borough.

### Martial Arts Clubs / Academies

There are thirteen martial arts clubs / academies in Hartlepool:

- Bujinkan Budo Taijutsu – affiliated – train at their dedicated facility
- Hartlepool Wadokai (karate) – train at their dedicated dojo, Whitby St, Hartlepool
- NETSDA Martial Arts Academy – train at dedicated facility, Unit 1, Greatham Street
- Muay Thai Academy BT – train at unit 12, Hartlepool workshops
- Pheonix Kickboxing – train at the Lab Gym upstairs studio, Darlington Street, Hartlepool
- American Kenpo Karate Academy – Throston Grange Community Centre
- Nazary Nak Muay Thai – Stanton House
- 7 JiuJitsu Hartlepool – Unit 1, Cromwell Street
- British Judo – Mill House Leisure Centre
- Hartlepool MMA and Kickboxing Academy – train at Wadokai Whitby Street and The Dodgeball Centre, Winterbottom Avenue, Hartlepool
- Blade Taekwondo GBR – train at Strandon Primary School and The Dodgeball Centre
- Hartlepool Ju-Jitsu – Wadokai Whitby Street
- The New Welfare Gym is a local gym/community centre offering boxing, martial arts run by volunteers to help provide disadvantaged young people with space for fitness and wellbeing. Based in a former church on Lister Street, Hartlepool
- Mariners United Sporting Club CIC (Hartlepool Grizzlies) also play Kabaddi at Wadokai Whitby Street and Mill House Leisure Centre

### Sports Clubs Level of Competition

Most clubs provide inter-club competitions and coaching. Hartlepool Wadokai host the North East open. Hartlepool Grizzlies kabaddi club compete at national level.

### Availability

There are some classes available early mornings during the weekdays at dedicated sites and weekends. Majority of sessions take place in the evenings. Most of the clubs and academies offer sessions for beginners to experts. Some clubs offer one off sessions others require termly bookings. Hartlepool Wadoaki karate club has the most extensive availability and range of classes including junior sessions teaching over 300 students every week.

### Summary

- There is a good supply and range of martial arts provision in Hartlepool either at dedicated facilities, industrial unit or within community centres or school premises.
- There is sufficient facilities for current and future need.
- Protect and maintain martial art provision in Hartlepool.

## 18. Recommendations

18.1. Key recommendations from the report are provided in the table below.

Table 27 – Key Recommendations

Activity / Facility	Recommendation	Enhance, Protect, Provide
<b>Sports Halls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council to work with education providers to ensure educational supply available for community use is firstly protected, and secondly increased, to achieve better balance between supply and demand</li> <li>If a new secondary school with sports hall is built as part of the Wynward development a community use agreement should be secured as part of the planning process.</li> <li>Need to ensure ageing stock is refurbished.</li> <li>Council to ensure that all new school four-court sports hall projects meet Sport England recommended minimum size of 34.5 x 20.0 x 7.5m<sup>38</sup>.</li> <li>Whilst the technical assessment of sports halls suggests sufficient space based on used capacity and demand, it is recognised that varying sport clubs have demand on sports hall space, often requiring use at the same time (weekday evenings). If additional provision was provided there would still be conflicting demand from clubs at these times. The Council should support any clubs looking to develop their own venues, but based on the technical assessment it is recommended that HBC does not need to provide additional sports hall space.</li> </ul>	PROTECT ENHANCE
<b>Swimming Pools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect and continue to enhance swimming pool stock. Future investment into swimming pools should maximise programme flexibility e.g. use of a movable floor/boom system.</li> <li>Retention of High Tunstall swimming pool important to meet some of the capacity and to continue as site for swimming lessons.</li> <li>HBC may need to consider additional water space in future years to meet demand from population growth or if availability at the current sites reduces.</li> </ul>	PROTECT PROVIDE ENHANCE
<b>Badminton</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See sports hall recommendations.</li> <li>Protect badminton provision at High Tunstall College of Science and St Matthew's Community Centre key venues for club badminton.</li> </ul>	PROTECT
<b>Basketball</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See sports hall recommendations.</li> <li>There are five other sites in Hartlepool that have basketball court provision but not currently used by the Hartlepool based basketball clubs. These courts could provide alternative provision when MHLC closes in 2026.</li> <li>HSH to improve basketball markings and hoops to allow competitions to take place at venue.</li> </ul>	PROTECT ENHANCE

<sup>38</sup> [Sport England sports hall design and layout guidance](#)

Activity / Facility	Recommendation	Enhance, Protect, Provide
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support clubs seeking dedicated venues, through planning process.</li> </ul>	
Indoor football / futsal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See sports hall recommendations</li> <li>Protect existing provision.</li> </ul>	PROTECT
Indoor Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Seaton Carew Cricket Club to find an alternative venue for indoor cricket nets to MHLC when it closes.</li> <li>Provide and maintain indoor cricket nets at HSH.</li> </ul>	PROTECT PROVIDE
Netball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See sports hall recommendations</li> <li>Education site sports halls are key venues for netball in Hartlepool. Netball provision should continue to be provided through maintaining and securing community use.</li> <li>Protect existing sports hall provision and maintain standards at BCSC.</li> <li>Support clubs seeking dedicated venues, through planning process.</li> </ul>	PROTECT
Volleyball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See sports hall recommendations</li> </ul>	PROTECT
Activity halls / community spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any future investment should prioritise community facilities in areas of deprivation outside leisure centres walking or public transport catchment or in areas at risk of inactivity such as in rural communities</li> <li>New community centre at Wynyard development important provision for residents in that area</li> </ul>	PROTECT ENHANCE
Indoor Bowling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect indoor bowls provision in Hartlepool.</li> <li>Support Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club and Hartlepool Development Corporation to secure future indoor bowls facilities. Any re-provision of indoor bowls should meet current demand.</li> </ul>	PROTECT
Health & Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect existing level of provision</li> </ul>	PROTECT
Studios / Dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect existing dance, group exercise and Pilates/yoga studios</li> <li>Studios should be considered within new builds or refurbished leisure centres to ensure sports hall activities are not occupied by fitness classes.</li> </ul>	PROTECT
Gymnastics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure sports hall and trampoline quality at HSH meets needs of local Aeronauts Trampoline Club</li> <li>Protect existing dedicated facilities.</li> </ul>	PROTECT, ENHANCE
Indoor Tennis	No requirement for HBC to provide indoor tennis facilities.	PROTECT



Activity / Facility	Recommendation	Enhance, Protect, Provide
	<p><b>Indoor Tennis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council to support any tennis clubs wishing to cover existing outdoor courts</li> </ul> <p><b>Padel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue a dialogue with the LTA who wish to support <b>current planning applications where relevant in relation to padel.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Pickleball</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure no tennis courts are replaced with pickleball courts, pickleball to be provided in multi-use spaces.</li> </ul>	
<b>Table Tennis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect existing provision.</li> <li>Council to start a dialogue with Table Tennis England about future provision of outdoor table tennis tables in schools and public places, such as parks.</li> <li>Potential to include outdoor tables in new housing developments.</li> </ul>	PROTECT
<b>Martial Arts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect and maintain martial art provision in Hartlepool including community spaces where martial arts take place.</li> <li>Taekwondo GBR and Hartlepool MMA and Kickboxing Academy would like a separate dedicated martial arts space. The Council could support these clubs by providing support through any planning applications.</li> </ul>	PROTECT
<b>Squash</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council to start dialogue with England Squash engagement manager to work in partnership with Active Partnership and schools to deliver the new schools programme.</li> </ul>	ENHANCE
<b>Developer Contributions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where appropriate, HBC and its partners seek to secure developer contributions from strategic developments that could contribute towards the development of strategic facilities, additional and safe walking, running and cycling routes, and, where possible, to open up other informal, multipurpose places and spaces where people can be active.</li> </ul>	
<b>Community Use Agreements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council should develop a detailed approach to securing developer contributions to support the emerging Local Plan e.g. through a Planning Obligations SPD.</li> <li>Sport England's CIL &amp; Planning Obligations Advice Note (or the future Developer Contributions guidance that will supersede it) <a href="#">Sport England CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note</a> provides a step by step guide to assist the Council to use the findings of the strategy to secure financial contribution from developers.</li> <li>The use of Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator should specifically be referenced with assisting to identify demand for and financial contributions towards halls and pools.</li> </ul>	
<b>Local Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect built leisure and sports facilities within new Local Plan. This is to ensure against loss of strategically valuable sports facilities that are available for community use or could contribute to meeting future community needs, unless replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.</li> </ul>	

Activity / Facility	Recommendation	Enhance, Protect, Provide
Strategy Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is recommended that the Council review the BFS annually to update with any known new facilities, closures or planning changes within Solihull Council area and neighbouring authorities.</li> <li>Opportunity to update mapping and audit of facilities annually.</li> </ul>	
Neighbouring Council dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share learnings between councils to enable further understanding of clubs, catchments and leisure usage across the local authority borders.</li> <li>In particular continue dialogue with Stockon-on-Tees Council as housing growth on both sides of the border as part of the Wynyard housing development.</li> </ul>	


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## APPENDIX 1 – National Strategic Review




### Review of Policy, Plans, Programmes and Strategy




Tables 26-29 below show why the Indoor Built Facilities Strategy is required and how it contributes to the wider health and wellbeing, environmental and economic agendas.




Table 28 – National Strategic Review

National Context			
Document	Vision / description	Key Priorities	Implications for the IBFS
 <p><b>Ministry of Housing, Communities &amp; Local Government</b></p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2023) (DLUHC)</p> <p>An updated version was published on 12 December 2024 (replacing the previous December 2023 version). The NPPF states that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.</p> <p>It sets out the government's vision for achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paragraph 20 of the NPPF states that: Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) homes (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development.</li> <li>b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat).</li> <li>c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Para 32 - the NPPF requires that Local Planning Authorities (LPA) ensure that their Local Plans are based on up-to-date and relevant evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and consider relevant market signals</li> <li>Building a strong, competitive economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Para 88(d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities</b> – Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Para 96(a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages</li> <li>Para 96(b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of beautiful, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>To establish and provide adequate and proper leisure facilities to meet local needs</p>


National Context			
Document	Vision / description	Key Priorities	Implications for the IBFS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Para 96(c) - enable and support healthy lives, through both promoting good health and preventing ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs and reduce health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.</li> <li>○ Para 97(a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments</li> <li>○ Para 98 - of the NPPF emphasises the need for Local Plans to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services a community needs. In doing so, policies should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.</li> <li>b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community.</li> <li>c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.</li> <li>d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and</li> <li>e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Open Space and Recreation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Para 102 - Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate</li> <li>○ Paragraph 103 outlines the planning policies for the provision and protection of sport and recreation facilities: "Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

National Context			
Document	Vision / description	Key Priorities	Implications for the IBFS
		<p>assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paragraph 104 of the NPPF specifies that: Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields and formal play spaces, should not be built on unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to require</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
 <b>Ministry of Housing, Communities &amp; Local Government</b>  National Planning Practice Guidance (DLUHC)	National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It adds further context to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When considering how local planning authorities and developers assess the needs for sports and recreation facilities the guidance states that authorities and developers may refer to Sport England guidance</li> </ul>	The development of the BFS is in accordance with Sport England guidance to ensure a best practice approach that is consistent with national policy
 <b>Department for Culture Media &amp; Sport</b>  Get Active: a strategy for the future of sport and physical activity (2023) (DCMS)	<p>Our vision is to make sport and physical activity accessible, resilient, fun and fair, for now and the years to come - for the benefit of individuals and the country</p> <p>Building a healthier nation by tackling high levels of inactivity, and making sure that the sport and physical activity sector thrives for future generations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being unapologetically ambitious in making the nation more active, whether in government or in the sport sector</li> <li>Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all so that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport</li> <li>Moving towards a more sustainable sector that is more financially resilient and robust</li> </ul>	<p>Ensuring that there are enough indoor and outdoor sports facilities of the right quality within Hartlepool will help support residents to be more active and live healthier lifestyles.</p> <p>Sports facilities can also help to connect communities by providing places where people can meet to play or be active.</p>
 <b>Public Health England</b>  PHE Strategy 2020 – 2025 (2019) (PHE)	<p>Our vision for 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lower smoking rates</li> <li>Less sugar, calories and salt in the food eaten every day</li> <li>Less pollution in the air that we breathe</li> <li>Measurable improvements in mental health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take steps towards creating a smoke-free society by 2030;</li> <li>Help make the healthy choice the easy choice to improve diets and reduce rates of childhood obesity;</li> <li>Develop and share advice on how best to reduce air pollution levels and people's exposure to polluted air; and</li> <li>Promote good mental health and contribute to the prevention of mental illness</li> </ul>	Ensuring that there are enough indoor and outdoor sports facilities of the right quality within Hartlepool will help support residents to be more active and live healthier lifestyles.

National Context			
Document	Vision / description	Key Priorities	Implications for the IBFS
<p>This strategy sets out Public Health England's priorities for the next 5 years</p>  <p><a href="#">NHS England » Core20PLUS5 – An approach to reducing health inequalities for children and young people</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved mental health literacy</li> </ul> <p>An approach to reducing health inequalities for children and young people</p>	<p>The approach defines a target population cohort and identifies '5' focus clinical areas requiring accelerated improvement.</p> <p><b>Core20</b> - The most deprived 20% of the national population as identified by the national <a href="#">Index of multiple deprivation (IMD)</a> <b>PLUS</b> population groups include ethnic minority communities; inclusion health groups; people with a learning disability and autistic people; coastal communities with pockets of deprivation hidden amongst relative affluence; people with multi-morbidities; and protected characteristic groups; amongst others. Specific consideration should be taken for the inclusion of young carers, looked after children/care leavers and those in contact with the justice system.</p> <p>5 Clinical Areas of focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asthma</li> <li>Diabetes</li> <li>Epilepsy</li> <li>Oral Health</li> <li>Mental Health</li> </ul>	<p>Importance of sports and leisure facilities to support increased participation in physical activity in children and young people.</p>
 <p>BMA Get Moving Report 2019</p>	<p>This briefing paper does not have a vision but its purpose is to highlight the wide range of benefits of physical activity and where policy should be influenced to increase activity levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel (increased investment in active travel);</li> <li>Leisure (access to open spaces and recreation facilities);</li> <li>School (physical education recognised and protected as an essential part of the school curriculum); and,</li> <li>Work (encourage active travel)</li> </ul>	
 <p>Department for Transport</p> <p>Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking (2020) (DFT)</p> <p><a href="#">Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>(updated 2023)</p>	<p>England will be a great walking and cycling nation. Places will be truly walkable. A travel revolution in our streets, towns and communities will have made cycling a mass form of transit. Cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030</p> <p>A "cycling and walking on prescription" programme to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better Streets for cycling and people</li> <li>Putting cycling and walking at the heart of transport, pace-making, and health policy</li> <li>Empowering and encouraging local authorities</li> <li>We will enable people to cycle and protect them when they cycle</li> </ul>	<p>Consideration will need to be given to how any new provision can contribute to the active travel network, ensuring that they are accessible for people to wish to walk, wheel or cycle to access facilities.</p> <p>People's health and quality of life is improved by more people walking and cycling</p>

National Context			
Document	Vision / description	Key Priorities	Implications for the IBFS
	overcome health inequalities and increase levels of physical activity		
 <p>Uniting the Movement 2021-2031 (2021) (Sport England)</p> <p><a href="#">Uniting the Movement   Sport England 2021-2031</a></p>	<p>Imagine a nation of more equal, inclusive and connected communities. A country where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives</p> <p>A ten year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recover and Reinvent;</li> <li>• Connecting Communities;</li> <li>• Positive Experiences for Young Children and Young People;</li> <li>• Connecting with Health &amp; Wellbeing; and,</li> <li>• Active Environments</li> </ul>	<p>Ensuring that there are enough indoor and outdoor sports facilities of the right quality within Hartlepool will help support residents to be more active and live healthier lifestyles. It will also help target investment at inactive groups, and a more strategic approach to facilities to ensure communities have access to the facilities they need.</p> <p>Sports facilities can also help to connect communities by providing places where people can meet to play or be active.</p>
 <p>Future of the Public Sector Leisure (2022) (Sport England)</p> <p><a href="#">Future of public leisure   Sport England 2022</a></p>	<p>Vision: We will evolve the sector, transitioning from traditional leisure services into an active wellbeing service</p> <p>This report provides an overview of the current position of leisure services in the public sector and outlines a model that will enable the sector to create a more sustainable future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new approach that formalises the relationship between health and leisure on; social prescribing, co-location, delivery of preventative activity and collaboration through integrated care systems</li> <li>• Provision that is place-based and at the heart of local communities</li> <li>• An approach that brings forward new thinking, products and services requires proactive and skilled leadership</li> <li>• Provision that is low carbon and delivers a step change in carbon emissions at the local authority level</li> </ul>	<p>Understanding place-based provision helps ensure health &amp; wellbeing services are at the heart of local communities &amp; aligned to needs of people in the communities transitioning from traditional leisure services into an active wellbeing service</p>
 <p>Every Move: Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan (2024) (Sport England)</p>	<p>Vision for the sector: A positive and regenerative sport and physical activity sector championing environmental sustainability with every move</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just transition: inequalities, inclusion and participation</li> <li>• Carbon emissions: travel and facilities</li> <li>• Circular economy: supply chains, products and waste</li> <li>• Blue-green environment quality and use</li> <li>• Biodiversity</li> <li>• Adapting to climate change and extreme weather events</li> </ul>	<p>Sport and physical activity sector to become environmentally sustainable, enabling greater opportunity for all people to participate in</p>





National Context			
Document	Vision / description	Key Priorities	Implications for the IBFS
<p><a href="#">Every Move sustainability strategy and action plan 2024 (sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com)</a></p> <p>A strategy to lead, inspire and support the sport and physical activity sector to become environmentally sustainable, enabling greater opportunity for all people to participate in sport and physical activity, now and in the future.</p>	<p><b>Mission:</b> Sport England will lead, inspire and support the sector to become environmentally sustainable, enabling greater opportunity for all people to participate in sport and physical activity, now and in the future</p>		<p>sport and physical activity, now and in the future</p>
<p> <b>Ministry of Housing, Communities &amp; Local Government</b></p> <p>Pride in Place Strategy 2025</p>	<p>The UK Government's £5 billion "Pride in Place" initiative is a decade-long commitment to fostering stronger, healthier communities by enhancing local infrastructure, promoting community ownership, and empowering residents to shape their environments. It represents a transformative approach to community development, placing power and resources directly in the hands of those who know their communities best. Through collaborative efforts and strategic investments, it seeks to build a future where every neighbourhood can flourish</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening Social Infrastructure - The strategy targets areas facing both high deprivation and limited social infrastructure – such as community centres, libraries, and public spaces.</li> <li>• Emphasising Community Ownership - Recognising the value of community-led initiatives, the strategy introduces a "Community Right to Buy," granting local groups the first opportunity to purchase and manage assets like underused buildings.</li> <li>• Strategic Investment for Local Impact - The strategy allocates up to £20 million over the next decade to support neighbourhoods with approximately 10,000 residents each. Additionally, the £150 million "Pride in Place Impact Fund" will finance up to 95 locations across the UK to develop shared spaces, revitalise high streets, and enhance public areas. Local communities will have a central role in deciding how these funds are spent, ensuring that investments align with their unique needs and priorities.</li> <li>• Opportunities for VCFSE Organisations - The Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector plays a pivotal role in the strategy's implementation. Organisations are encouraged to participate in Neighbourhood Boards, collaborate with local authorities, and apply for funding opportunities, including the £3 million "Common Ground Resilience Fund," which supports community cohesion and resilience initiatives.</li> </ul>	<p>Investment into leisure facilities should target areas facing high deprivation and limited social infrastructure. Leisure facilities are key community spaces and the local community should be engaged to ensure facilities meet local need. Importance of local community spaces.</p>



The table below shows the priority of the government department, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and the importance of achieving net zero by 2050.



These both highlight the focus central government is putting on physical activity and levelling health inequalities and the green agenda as the country recovers from the health and other impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.



Table 29 – National Priorities

National Priority	Vision	Key Priorities	Implications for the BFS
 <b>Office for Health Improvement &amp; Disparities</b>  Office for Health Improvement and Disparities – part of DH&SC  <a href="#">Office-for-health-improvement-and-disparities</a>	We focus on improving the nation's health so that everyone can expect to live more of life in good health, and on levelling up health disparities to break the link between background and prospects for a healthy life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and address health disparities, focusing on those groups and areas where health inequalities have greatest effect</li> <li>Take action on the biggest preventable risk factors for ill health and premature death including tobacco, obesity and harmful use of alcohol and drugs</li> <li>Work with the NHS and local government to improve access to the services which detect and act on health risks and conditions, as early as possible</li> <li>Develop strong partnerships across government, communities, industry and employers, to act on the wider factors that contribute to people's health, such as work, housing and education</li> <li>Drive innovation in health improvement, harnessing the best of technology, analytics, and innovations in policy and delivery, to help deliver change where it is needed most</li> </ul>	Ensuring that there are enough indoor and outdoor sports facilities of the right quality within Hartlepool will help support residents to be more active and live healthier lifestyles.
 <b>Department for Energy Security &amp; Net Zero</b>  Net Zero Strategy – build back greener October 2021  <a href="#">Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener</a>	Levelling up the country, ending our domestic contribution to climate change, and leading the world to a greener, more sustainable future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This strategy sets out this Government's long-term plan to finish the job and end the UK's domestic contribution to man-made climate change by 2050</li> <li>Work with the grain of consumer choice</li> <li>Ensure the biggest polluters pay the most for the transition</li> <li>Ensure that the most vulnerable are protected through Government support</li> <li>Work with businesses to continue delivering deep cost reductions in low carbon tech</li> </ul>	Sport and physical activity sector to become environmentally sustainable, enabling greater opportunity for all people to participate in sport and physical activity, now and in the future

Whilst the delivery of sport and physical activity is not a statutory service for local authorities, the following summaries outline the statutory requirements which have implications for the delivery of sports, swimming and physical activity facilities and opportunities.


Table 30 – National Legislation

National Legislation	Key Priorities	Implications for the BFS
 <b>Department of Health &amp; Social Care</b>  Integrated Care Systems (ICS)  <a href="#">Government guidance-on-the-preparation-of-integrated-care-strategies</a>	<p>42 Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) were established on a statutory basis on 1st July 2022. ICSs are partnerships of organisations that come together to plan &amp; deliver joined up health and care services and to improve the lives of people who live and work in their area. The Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) is responsible for producing a strategy on how to meet health and wellbeing needs of the population in the ICS area to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve outcomes in population health and healthcare and tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access</li> <li>• ICSs will help health and care organisations tackle complex challenges, including:</li> <li>• improving the health of children and young people</li> <li>• supporting people to stay well and independent</li> <li>• acting sooner to help those with preventable conditions</li> <li>• supporting those with long-term conditions or mental health issues</li> <li>• caring for those with multiple needs as populations age</li> </ul>	<p>Ensuring that there are enough indoor and outdoor sports facilities of the right quality within Hartlepool will help support residents to be more active and live healthier lifestyles.</p>
 <b>Department of Health &amp; Social Care</b>  Health and Social Care Act  <a href="#">government health-and-social-care-act-2012-fact-sheets</a>	<p>Local authorities' statutory responsibilities for public health services are set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The Act conferred duties on local authorities to improve public health.</p> <p>It abolished primary care trusts and transferred much of their responsibility for public health to local authorities from 1st April 2013. From this date local authorities have had a new duty to take such steps as they consider appropriate. Local authorities may deliver this by providing a "health wellbeing service", across their leisure portfolio and service; contributing to health prevention and help address health inequalities</p>	<p>Ensuring that there are enough indoor and outdoor sports facilities of the right quality within Hartlepool will help support residents to be more active and live healthier lifestyles.</p>

National Legislation	Key Priorities	Implications for the BFS
 <b>Department for Education</b>  National Curriculum (Jul 2014) (DoE)  The national curriculum sets out the programmes of study and attainment targets for all subjects at all four key stages. All local-authority-maintained schools in England must teach these programmes of study.	As part of The Department of Education national curriculum for physical education all schools must provide swimming instruction either in key stage 1 or key stage 2. In particular, pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres</li> <li>• use a range of strokes effectively [for example, front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke]</li> <li>• perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations</li> </ul>	To protect, enhance and provide adequate swimming pools to enable swimming lessons to take place
 <b>Department for Education</b>  The School Sport and Activity Action Plan (July 2019) (DoE)  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-sport-and-activity-action-plan">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-sport-and-activity-action-plan</a> The action plan was updated in July 2023.	To ensure that PE and sport are an integral part of both the school day and after-school activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aims to improve the quality of PE and school sport provision</li> <li>• encourages 2 hours of PE a week</li> <li>• helps to ensure equality of access to sport for girls and boys</li> </ul> helps to increase the number of children playing sport in school and meeting curriculum expectations, including for swimming and water safety	To protect, enhance and provide school sports facilities to help delivery of high quality physical education (PE) so pupils take part in physical activity and experience wide range of benefits to pupil health and wellbeing

Incorporating opportunities to be active in the wider environment are acknowledged within national strategies and guidance , which are set out in the table below.

Table 31 – Active Design, 20-Minute Neighbourhood and Active Transport Principles

Strategy/Guidance	Key Priorities	Implications for the BFS
 <p>Active Design</p> <p><a href="https://www.sportengland.org/news-and-inspiration/new-active-design-guidance-published">https://www.sportengland.org/news-and-inspiration/new-active-design-guidance-published</a></p> <p>May 2023</p> <p>See <a href="#">Appendix 3</a></p>	<p>Sport England's Active Design guidance developed in partnership with Active Travel England and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), sets out how the design of our environments can help people to lead more physically active and healthy lives. The foundation principle of 'Activity for all' is supported by three themes of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting active travel</li> <li>• Active, high-quality places &amp; spaces</li> <li>• Creating &amp; maintaining activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good quality leisure spaces and facilities in the right places to encourage activity for all</li> <li>• Leisure facilities linked to the active environment</li> <li>• Consideration will need to be given to how any new provision can contribute to the active travel network, ensuring that they are accessible for people to wish to walk, wheel or cycle to access facilities.</li> <li>• People's health and quality of life is improved by more people walking and cycling</li> </ul>
<p>The 20-Minute Neighbourhood</p> <p>Town and Country Planning Association / Sport England (March 2021)</p> <p><a href="https://www.tcpa.org.uk/resources/the-20-minute-neighbourhood/">https://www.tcpa.org.uk/resources/the-20-minute-neighbourhood/</a></p>	<p>The idea of the '20-minute neighbourhood' is around the importance of the 'liveability' of where we live. It is a complete, compact, and connected neighbourhood, where people can meet their everyday needs within a short walk or cycle. It presents multiple benefits including boosting local economies, improving people's health and wellbeing, increasing social connections in communities, and tackling climate change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of good quality local facilities to help create healthier, active, prosperous communities</li> <li>• Right facilities in the right places to encourage residents to be physically active</li> <li>• Consideration will need to be given to how any new provision can contribute to the active travel network, ensuring that they are accessible for people to wish to walk, wheel or cycle to access facilities.</li> <li>• People's health and quality of life is improved by more people walking and cycling</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX 2 – Local Strategic Review

Table 32 – Local Strategy Vision/Purpose and Key Priorities

Strategy	Vision/Purpose	Key Priorities
Local Plan 2018-2031	<p>Hartlepool, by 2031, will be a more sustainable community having achieved the substantial implementation of its key regeneration areas as set out within the Hartlepool Vision; raised the quality and standard of living; increased job opportunities through developing a strong, diverse and thriving local economy which contributes positively to the sub-regional economy; maximised quality housing choices and health opportunities to meet, in full, the current and future needs of all residents. The built, historic and natural environment will have been protected, managed and enhanced and will contribute to making</p> <p>Hartlepool a safe and attractive place to live and an efficient and sustainable transport network will integrate its communities within the Tees Valley City Region and beyond. The town will have become a focal destination for visitors and investment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>creation of a healthy local economy</b> (“thriving” and “ambitious” community)</li> <li>• The creation of mixed communities with all services to hand (“respectful” and “inclusive” community)</li> <li>• Provision of opportunities for recreational activities (“healthy” community)</li> <li>• Improvement of transport links (“outward-looking” community)</li> <li>• Improvements to the quality and design of housing and associated areas and the borough’s natural and historic environment (“attractive environment”)</li> <li>• Reduction of the opportunities for crime and improvements in road safety (“safe environment”)</li> </ul>
The Council Plan 2030	<p>Hartlepool will be...</p> <p>...a place where people are enabled to live healthy, independent and prosperous lives (People)</p> <p>...a place that is connected, sustainable, clean and green (Place)</p> <p>...a place that is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all (Potential)</p> <p>...a place with a Council that is ambitious, fit for purpose and reflects the diversity of its community (Organisation).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put in place interventions to start to tackle the inequalities in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy.</li> <li>• Working together with partners to develop local, accessible services and opportunities for residents to increase their physical activity including the Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub.</li> <li>• Continuing to develop our Community Hubs, providing opportunities for people to access support and services.</li> <li>• Supporting local employers to create cultures that value the health and wellbeing of their workforce and wider community through the Better Health at Work Award.</li> <li>• Delivering Adult Social Care information and advice offer promoting wellbeing and independence and making people aware of what’s already available in the community. Expanding this to include digital and technology solutions that allow people to self-serve, such as online financial assessment.</li> <li>• Focusing on early action and support that promotes care closer to home and prevents avoidable admissions to hospital and to permanent residential care.</li> </ul>

Strategy	Vision/Purpose	Key Priorities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting opportunities for local people to volunteer and improve their confidence, skills, and experience and to contribute to the local community.</li> <li>Delivering new cycle schemes across the Borough to encourage residents to live healthier and more active lives.</li> <li>Delivering targeted health improvement campaigns and interventions to improve the health and wellbeing of local people.</li> <li>Supporting our communities to be strong, resilient, empowered and inclusive</li> <li>Transforming the Museum of Hartlepool and Wingfield Castle into vibrant, welcoming spaces telling the story of Hartlepool.</li> <li>Developing Hartlepool Waterfront into a visitor destination providing leisure, culture and heritage opportunities with improved access from the town centre, along Church Street and into the Marina.</li> <li>Displaying our artistic treasures for the people of Hartlepool.</li> <li>Delivering the Net Zero Strategy and reducing carbon emissions by the Council.</li> <li>Tackling anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>Ensuring a more reliable and efficient bus network and better connectivity across the town.</li> <li>Supporting the health and wellbeing of our workforce.</li> </ul>
Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2025	Hartlepool will develop a culture and environment that promotes and supports health and wellbeing for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starting Well – All Children and young people living in Hartlepool have the best start in life</li> <li>Working Well - Workplaces in Hartlepool promote and support healthy living</li> <li>Ageing Well – Older people in Hartlepool live active and independent lives and are supported to manage their own health and wellbeing</li> <li>Living Well – Hartlepool is a safe and healthy place to live with strong communities</li> <li>Dying Well – People in Hartlepool are supported for a good death</li> </ul>
Strategic Outcomes Planning Model 2022	The Strategic Outcomes Planning Model provides a framework to develop a clear approach to provide effective and sustainable physical activity and sport opportunities for local communities via investment in its stock of leisure facilities and other non-facility interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starting Well – All children and young people in Hartlepool have the best start in life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrow the gap in childhood obesity</li> <li>Secure downward trend in obesity levels</li> <li>Increase the number of children reaching CMO recommended activity levels</li> <li>Promote healthy activities for children</li> <li>Encourage active travel to schools</li> <li>Increase water confidence and safety in children</li> <li>Physical literacy is a focus for school PE delivery</li> <li>Build positive attitudes, experiences and healthy activities for children</li> </ul> </li> <li>Working Well – Workplaces in Hartlepool promote and support healthy living <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage active travel and participation in cycle to work schemes</li> <li>Encourage more participation in wellbeing at work schemes</li> </ul> </li> <li>Living Well – Hartlepool is a safe and healthy place to live with strong communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce proportion of inactive adults</li> <li>Increase the number of adults reaching CMO recommended activity levels</li> <li>Narrow the gap in adult obesity levels against regional and national averages</li> <li>Reduce health inequalities across Hartlepool</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Strategy	Vision/Purpose	Key Priorities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Utilise physical activity to promote mental health and wellbeing</li> <li>○ Promote cohesive, strong and active communities through provision and access to high quality, needs-led, local facilities and opportunities</li> <li>● Aging Well – Older people in Hartlepool live active and independent lives and are supported to manage their own health &amp; wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reduce social isolation and loneliness</li> <li>○ Services and facilities to plan for increasing elderly population</li> <li>○ Increase number of elderly people reaching CMO activity levels</li> <li>○ Increase activity levels in people living with long term health conditions</li> <li>○ Increased usage and throughput of active wellbeing facilities by people aged 45+</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Climate Change and Net Zero Action Plan	Our ambition is for Hartlepool to be a thriving, green and low-carbon neighbourhood and economy. In addition to the Council Plan, the Council's net zero strategy is guided by the following overarching vision for effective carbon management, resource efficiency, sustainable warmth and climate resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduction of local authority CO2 emissions</li> <li>● Resource maximisation &amp; waste reduction</li> <li>● The natural environment</li> <li>● Climate change resilience and adaptation</li> <li>● Domestic energy and sustainable warmth</li> </ul>
A Heritage Strategy for Hartlepool and Headland 2020-2030	Our vision for the Headland is a place that celebrates the story of the Headland, making the most of our remarkable assets to drive forward a future that sustains the preservation of our heritage and brings social, economic and environmental benefits for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To safeguard our heritage by actively protecting and enhancing key assets and aspects of the Headland</li> <li>● To develop our heritage in a way that secures the future of our heritage delivering economic, social and environmental benefits that will sustain the heritage</li> <li>● To promote our heritage in a way that engenders pride in local people and significantly raises awareness of the national and regional significance of our heritage</li> </ul>
Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022-2025	Seeks to highlight the ambitions of Hartlepool to all organisations and people who might invest in the town: start-up businesses, inward investors, tourists, public agencies and other bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development of social enterprises</li> <li>● Learning and skills</li> <li>● A coherent approach to place promotion</li> <li>● A vibrant creative quarter</li> <li>● Action plan to support creative businesses</li> <li>● Business accommodation</li> <li>● Confidence and lack of aspiration amongst young people</li> <li>● Destination management plan</li> </ul>



APPENDIX 3 - State of the industry Report – Swimming & Fitness

Figure 22 – State of the UK Swimming Industry Report 2024

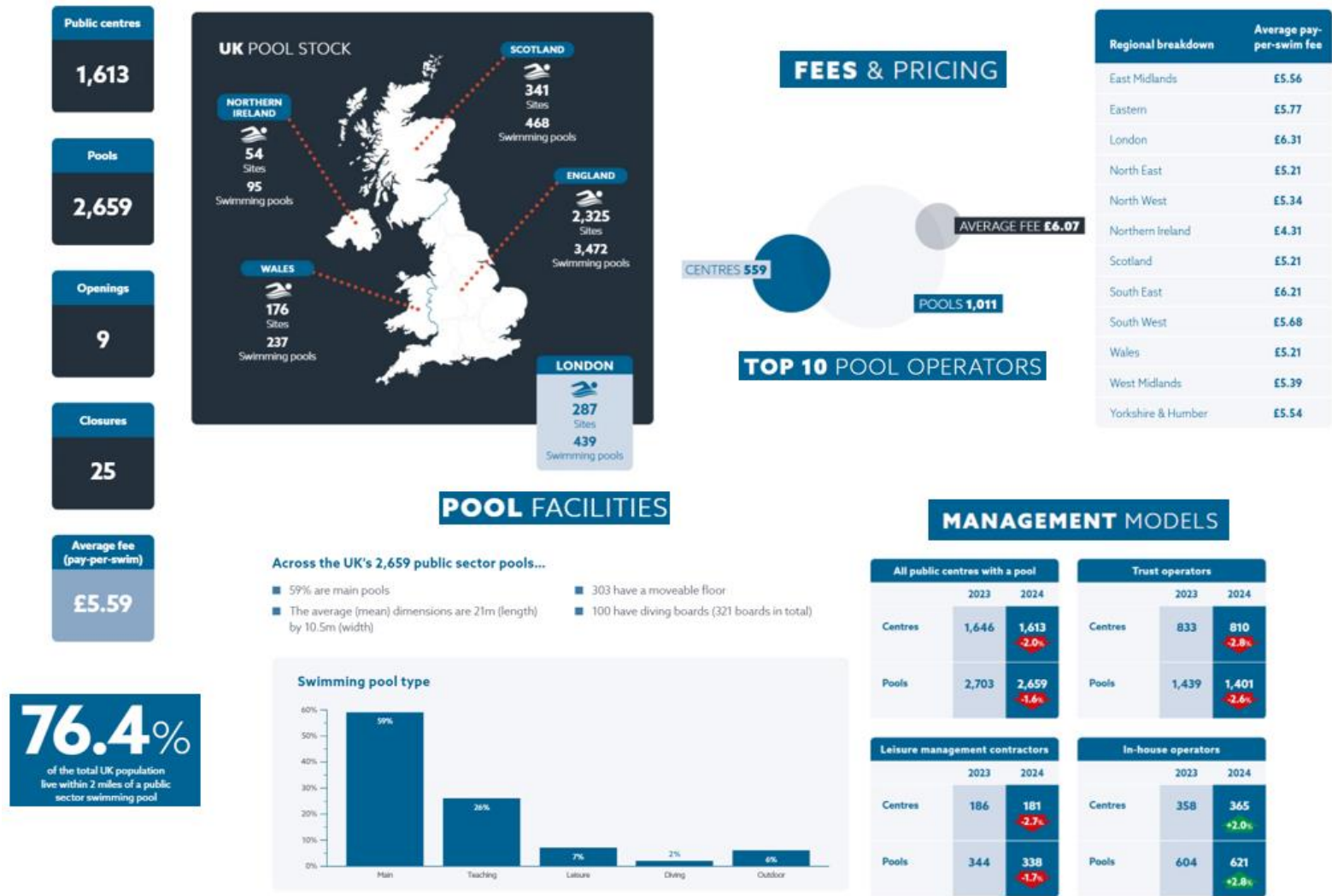
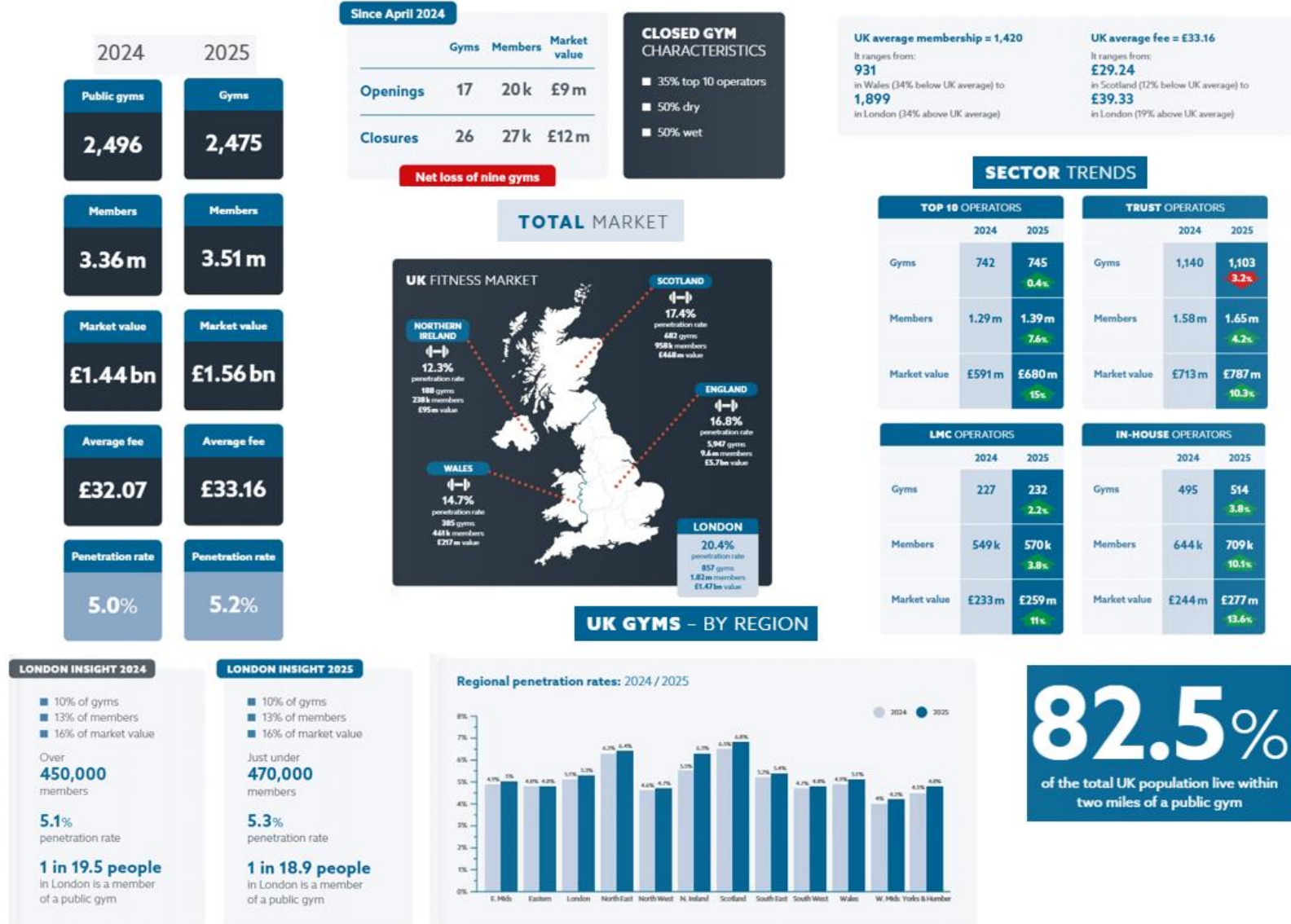




Figure 23 – State of the UK Fitness Industry Report 2025



## APPENDIX 4 – Active Design

The foundation principle of ‘Activity for all’ is supported by the remaining principles which are brought together under the three themes of ‘Supporting active travel’, ‘Active, high-quality places & spaces’ and ‘Creating & maintaining activity’.

Figure 24 – Sport England’s Active Design Guidance 10 Principles

### The ten principles of Active Design

#### FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLE



##### Principle 1 – Activity for all

All environments should support physical activity equitably across all ages, ethnicities, genders, and abilities, enabling everyone to be active and build long-term active habits and behaviours. This is essential for the delivery of all the principles of Active Design and is its foundational principle.

#### SUPPORTING ACTIVE TRAVEL



##### Principle 2 – Walkable communities

Facilities for daily essentials and recreation should be within easy reach of each other by active travel means, making it more likely that people will make the journey by using active travel modes (defined in Theme 1). Good active travel connections should be provided to extend the range of services that are accessible while remaining physically active.



##### Principle 3 – Providing connected active travel routes

Encourage active travel for all ages and abilities by creating a continuous network of routes connecting places safely and directly. Networks should be easy to use, supported by signage and landmarks to help people find their way.



##### Principle 4 – Mixing uses and co-locating facilities

People are more likely to combine trips and use active travel to get to destinations with multiple reasons to visit. Places with more variety, higher densities, and a mix of uses also reduce the perception of distance when travelling through spaces. They also generate the critical mass of travel demand to better support public transport services.

#### ACTIVE HIGH-QUALITY PLACES AND SPACES



##### Principle 5 – Network of multi-functional open spaces

Accessible and high quality open space should be promoted across cities, towns and villages to provide opportunities for sport and physical activity, as well as active travel connections and natural or civic space for people to congregate in and enjoy.



##### Principle 6 – High-quality streets and spaces

Streets and outdoor public spaces should be Active Environments in their own right. They should be safe, attractive, functional, prioritise people and be able to host a mix of uses, with durable, high quality materials, street furniture in the right places and easy-to-use signage. High quality streets and spaces encourage activity, whereas poor quality streets and spaces are much less likely to be used to the same degree.



##### Principle 7 – Providing activity infrastructure

Infrastructure to enable sport, recreation and physical activity to take place should be provided across all contexts including workplaces, sports facilities and public space, to facilitate activity for all.



##### Principle 8 – Active buildings, inside and out

Buildings we occupy shape our everyday lives, both when users are inside and outside. Buildings should be designed with providing opportunities for physical activity at the forefront, considering the arrival experience, internal circulation, opportunities to get up and move about, and making the building an active destination.

#### CREATING AND MAINTAINING ACTIVITY



##### Principle 9 – Maintaining high-quality flexible spaces

Spaces and facilities should be effectively maintained and managed to support physical activity. These places should be monitored to understand how they are used, and flexible so that they can be adapted as needed.



##### Principle 10 – Activating spaces

The provision of spaces and facilities which can help to improve physical activity should be supported by a commitment to activate them, encouraging people to be more physically active and increasing the awareness of activity opportunities within a community.

#### **APPENDIX 5 – Consultation Reports**

See separate document

#### **APPENDIX 6 – Sport England FPMS Runs – Sports Halls**

See separate document

#### **APPENDIX 7 – Sport England FPMS Runs – Swimming Pools**

See separate document

#### **APPENDIX 8 – Sport England FPMS Runs – Indoor Bowls**

See separate document

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APPENDIX 9 – Swim England Report



## HARTLEPOOL BC

The following report has been produced by the Swim England Facilities Team for the development of aquatic facilities in Hartlepool. The following observations have been made based on Sport England Active Places data and the list of swimming pools in the area, included in the text below.

### Findings

**There is currently 1 facility**

**Mill House Leisure Centre  $100+250+288 = 638\text{m}^2$**

**This is being replaced in May 26 when the Highlight Centre will open  $430+211+30 = 671\text{ m}^2$**

*\* Only publicly accessible facilities are used to determine the findings*

- There is currently a water provision deficit of  **$487\text{ m}^2$  and a deficit of  $454\text{ m}^2$  when the new centre opens**  
*\*For comparison, a 6 lane x 25m pool would equate to  $312.5\text{ m}^2$*
- Population – **93.8 k (2022 Census)**
- Target Water Space (to meet  $12\text{m}^2$  per 1000 population)  **$1125\text{ m}^2$**
- Supply in of public water  
*\*Total water supply  **$638$  and  $671\text{ m}^2$***
- Average year built of public sites – 1972 - Refurbishment 2011 -2026 (1999)

### Clubs

Hartlepool SC 70 members and Aquaforce 49 members use the Leisure Centre and a local technical college

### Comments

- The Borough as a whole shows its water provision to be a deficit of  **$487$  and  $454\text{ m}^2$**  the recommended  $12\text{m}^2$  per 1000 population currently and in May 2026.
- The observations above highlight the need to consider future facility needs in the Borough to meet the recommended level of water provision.

### Links to facilities included in the report

## Mill House Leisure Centre

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/8f02fc06a2f24a7e834b13209b38aa22/?siteid=1005182>

## Highlight Centre

<https://yoursay.hartlepool.gov.uk/waterfront-highlight-active-wellbeing-hub/widgets/100232/faqs>

## Recommendations

- Given the deficit in water provision there should be a priority with future planning with the aim of increasing water provision in line with the recommendations
- Future water provision should look to have open community access, making the water space even more accessible to the local population.
- Facility mix in the future needs to consider the versatility of its water space and the use of movable floor/boom system
- Involve our Business Engagement Team to help maximise operations

## Water Provision inclusion / exclusion criteria

- Include all Operational Indoor Pools available for community use i.e. pay and play
- Exclude all pools not available for community use i.e. private use

## \*Methodology

- $\text{Population} \div 1000 = P$
- $P \times 12(\text{m}^2) = \text{Target Water Space}$
- $\text{Water provision} = \text{Public Water Space} - \text{Target Water Space}$

Rob Hardy  
Technical Facilities Officer  
Swim England  
[rob.hardy@swimming.org](mailto:rob.hardy@swimming.org)  
October 2025

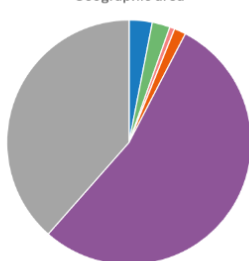
## APPENDIX 10 – LTA consultation response

### 4. Potential

#### 4.1 Potential within the geographic area

Tennis Segment	Population	%
Tennis Titans	2,811	3%
Tennis Troupers	2,174	2%
Seasonal Spinners	617	1%
Wimbledon Warriors	0	0%
Social Butterflies	1,415	2%
Senior Stalwarts	49,604	54%
Non Profile	35,435	38%
<b>Total</b>	<b>92,057</b>	<b>100%</b>

Geographic area



■ Tennis Titans
 ■ Tennis Troupers
 ■ Seasonal Spinners
 ■ Wimbledon Warriors
 ■ Social Butterflies
 ■ Senior Stalwarts
 ■ Non Profile

#### 4.3 Top 5 Postal Sectors within the geographic area by Tennis Profile

Tennis Titans			Tennis Troupers		
Postcode	Location	Potential	Postcode	Location	Potential
TS26 0	Hartlepool	2,233	TS26 9	Hartlepool	934
TS22 5	Billingham	1,693	TS24 0	Hartlepool	546
TS23 3	Billingham	1,086	TS23 3	Billingham	446
TS25 1	Seaton Carew	508	TS21 3	Sedgefield	361
TS21 3	Sedgefield	306	TS26 0	Hartlepool	317

Seasonal Spinners			Wimbledon Warriors		
Postcode	Location	Potential	Postcode	Location	Potential
TS24 0	Hartlepool	285	TS2 1	Clarence	272
TS26 9	Hartlepool	178	TS27 3	Hartlepool	0
TS21 3	Sedgefield	133	TS25 2	Hartlepool	0
TS24 8	Hartlepool	102	TS22 5	Billingham	0
TS25 1	Seaton Carew	44	TS23 3	Billingham	0

Social Butterflies			Senior Stalwarts		
Postcode	Location	Potential	Postcode	Location	Potential
TS26 8	Hartlepool	618	TS23 3	Billingham	10,914
TS24 7	Hartlepool	361	TS26 0	Hartlepool	8,561
TS26 9	Hartlepool	150	TS25 2	Hartlepool	7,838
TS24 8	Hartlepool	143	TS22 5	Billingham	6,994
TS24 0	Hartlepool	143	TS25 5	Hartlepool	5,963

#### 4.2 Demand and Penetration if a Club within the geographic area

	Demand	Penetration
Geographic Area	2,032	163

### 1.1 Basic overview of the Tennis Profiles

We've created 6 different profiles to show what people want from their tennis experience

<b>Tennis Titan</b>	Frequent players & tennis club members for whom tennis is their main sport and key interest.
<b>Tennis Troupers</b>	Often club members, largely family-oriented, middle-aged players for whom tennis is a hobby; interested in playing with teams to partnering with their kids in the sunnier
<b>Seasonal Spinners</b>	Largely young women, they play sport in general for athletic reasons (often being gym-goers and joggers), and enjoy their tennis a lot, though tennis is very intertwined with friends and being social.
<b>Wimbledon Warriors</b>	Largely young men who are keen athletes, they like tennis and want to play more, though are often held back by factors outside of the summer.
<b>Social Butterflies</b>	Infrequent, younger and less experienced players for whom tennis is an occasional fun summer activity.
<b>Senior Stalwarts</b>	An older group of players for whom tennis is a social habit and they play with a regular group as a way of keeping social and enjoyable gentle exercise.
<b>Non Profile</b>	This is a term to identify certain demographics that do not match a tennis profile.

## Disclaimer

Although the information in this report has been prepared in good faith, with the best intentions, on the basis of professional research and information made available to us at the time of the study, it is not possible to guarantee the financial estimates or forecasts contained within this report.

Max Associates cannot be held liable to any party for any direct or indirect losses, financial or otherwise, associated with any information provided within this report. We have relied in a number of areas on information provided by the client and have not undertaken additional independent verification of this data

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# Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form

## Appendix 2

Guidance for completing this form is available in the “Single Impact Assessment: Toolkit for Officers”, available from the Single Impact Assessment page on the intranet at <https://hbcintranet/Pages/Single-Impact-Assessments.aspx>.

## Section 1 – Details of the proposed action being considered

<b>1.1 Lead Department:</b>	Housing, Growth & Communities
<b>1.2 Lead Division:</b>	Active & Creative Hartlepool
<b>1.3 Title of the proposed action:</b>	
Approval and implementation of new Built Facilities Strategy.	
<b>1.4 Brief description of the proposed action:</b>	
Adoption of the new Built Facilities Strategy, which will have implications for strategic development and delivery of facilities through to 2033, involving operational delivery, finance and investment, asset management and planning.	
<b>1.5 Who else is involved:</b>	
HBC Planning team – re planning policy development and implementation HBC Estates & Asset Management team – re buildings stock HBC Development & Growth team – re strategic partnerships with TVCA/HDC etc HBC Finance team - re consideration of capital investment HBC Education - regarding engagement with schools and development of community asset transfers HBC legal – re development of community asset transfers Hartlepool Development Corporation – re development plans involving Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Clubs Hartlepool Indoor Bowls Club – ongoing engagement and consultation Community sports clubs	

# Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form

## Appendix 2

<b>1.6 Who will make the final decision about the proposed action:</b>
Combination of the following, where appropriate: Housing, Growth and Communities Committee Finance & Corporate Affairs Committee Delegated decisions to ELT

<b>1.7 Which wards will be affected by the proposed action? Tick all that apply</b>					
All wards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hart	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seaton	<input type="checkbox"/>
Burn Valley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Headland & Harbour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Throston	<input type="checkbox"/>
De Bruce	<input type="checkbox"/>	Manor House	<input type="checkbox"/>	Victoria	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fens & Greatham	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rossmere	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A - Internal council activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foggy Furze	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural West	<input type="checkbox"/>		

<b>1.8 Completed By:</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
Ian Gardiner	Head of Service (Active & Creative Hartlepool)	24/11/25

<b>1.9 Version</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Date</b>
v1	IGa	First draft	24/11

# Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form

## Section 2 – Explaining the impact of the proposed action

### 2.1 What data and evidence has informed this impact assessment?

The assessment has been informed by a robust piece of independent consultancy work to identify the provision, current and future demand and needs for built infrastructure in the town, linked to sport and physical activity.

The plan and assessment has been informed by data and insight from:

- Strategic national engagement with key partners: i.e. Sport England; UK Fitness Industry; Dept of Health; national governing bodies of sport
- Sub-regional partners: i.e. neighbouring local authorities
- Local strategic documents, insight and data: i.e. HBC local plan; Public Health data; local governing bodies of sport
- Consultation with those organisations operating facilities: i.e. Active Hartlepool; schools; clubs
- Consultation with those participating: local teams

### 2.2 If there are gaps in evidence or not enough information to assess the impact, how have you addressed this or how will you address it?

Gap(s) Identified	How it / they have or will be addressed
The Built facility strategy is based upon a nationally accepted, sector-wide model and all the information required to generate modelled outcomes was gathered and applied. So, there are no headline gaps in the evidence gathered.	

# Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form

## 2.3 Risk Score

Impact	Negative Impact Score	Explanation – what is the impact?
<b>Age</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: n/a e.g. Almost certain 4 Impact score: n/a e.g. Major 3 Overall score: n/a e.g. Red 12	<p>The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable people of all ages to lead active, healthy lives.</p> <p>In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.</p>
<b>Disability</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> xPositive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: n/a Impact score: n/a Overall score: n/a	<p>The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable disabled people of all ages to lead active, healthy lives.</p> <p>In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.</p>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> xPositive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: n/a Impact score: n/a Overall score: n/a	<p>The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable everyone to lead active, healthy lives.</p> <p>In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.</p>
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>		

# Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form

## Appendix 2

Impact	Negative Impact Score	Explanation – what is the impact?
<input type="checkbox"/> Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: n/a Impact score: n/a Overall score: n/a	All members of the community are able to access local facilities. Marital status does not impact on ability to access these opportunities.

Impact	Negative Impact Score	Explanation – what is the impact?
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: Impact score: Overall score:	<p>The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable everyone to lead active, healthy lives.</p> <p>In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.</p>
<b>Race (Ethnicity)</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: Impact score: Overall score:	<p>The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable everyone to lead active, healthy lives.</p> <p>In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.</p>
<b>Religion or Belief</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: Impact score:	<p>The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable everyone to lead active, healthy lives.</p>

**Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form****Appendix 2**

<input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Overall score:	In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.
<b>Sex</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> xPositive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: Impact score: Overall score:	The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable everyone to lead active, healthy lives.  In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.

# Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form

## Appendix 2

Impact	Negative Impact Score	Explanation – what is the impact?
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: Impact score: Overall score:	<p>The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable everyone to lead active, healthy lives.</p> <p>In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.</p>
<b>Care Leavers (Local)</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: Impact score: Overall score:	<p>The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable everyone to lead active, healthy lives.</p> <p>In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.</p>
<b>Armed Forces (Local)</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: Impact score: Overall score:	<p>The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable everyone to lead active, healthy lives.</p> <p>In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.</p>
<b>Poverty and Disadvantage (Local)</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Positive Impact <input type="checkbox"/> Negative Impact <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact	Likelihood score: Impact score: Overall score:	<p>The future protection, improvement, development and operational delivery of accessible local facilities that will encourage and enable everyone to lead active, healthy lives.</p>



## Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form

### Appendix 2

		In particular, consideration will be given to provision of suitable equipment; pricing; programming, marketing/communications and staff training to ensure that targeted communities are appropriately accommodated.
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# Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form

## Section 3 - Mitigation Action Plan or Justification

Group(s) impacted	Proposed mitigation	How this mitigation will make a difference	By when	Responsible Officer

<b>Justification</b> If you need to justify your proposed action explain this here

## Section 4 - Sign Off

<b>Responsible Officer sign off:</b>	
Name	Ian Gardiner
Job title	Head of Service
<b>Assistant Director / Director sign off:</b>	
Name	Gemma Ptak
Job title	Director, Housing, Growth & Communities

Once the Single Impact Assessment is completed please send to [impactassessments@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:impactassessments@hartlepool.gov.uk).

**Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form****Appendix 2****Section 5 - Review (To be completed after implementation)**

5.1 Review completed by:		
Name	Job Title	Date review completed

5.2 Did the impact turned out as expected?

5.3 Were the proposed mitigations the correct ones and were they successful in reducing any negative impacts?

5.4 Were there any unexpected outcomes?

# Hartlepool Borough Council – Single Impact Assessment Form

## Appendix 2

### 5.5 Following the review please identify next steps here (Select one)

- ☐ Additional mitigation required (give details below - 5.6)
- ☐ Original proposed course of action needs to be revisited
- ☐ No further action required

### 5.6 Additional mitigation(s) or justification

Group(s) impacted	Proposed mitigation	How this mitigation will make a difference	By when	Responsible Officer

### Justification If you need to justify your proposed action explain this here

Submit form with completed review to [impactassessments@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:impactassessments@hartlepool.gov.uk)

# HOUSING, GROWTH AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

9 DECEMBER 2025



**Subject:** HIGHLIGHT ACTIVE WELLBEING HUB  
**Report of:** Director of Housing, Growth and Communities  
**Decision Type:** For information

## 1. COUNCIL PLAN PRIORITY

<b>Hartlepool will be a place:</b>
- Where people live healthier, safe and independent lives. (People)
- That is connected, sustainable, clean and green. (Place)
- That is welcoming with an inclusive and growing economy providing opportunities for all. (Potential)

## 2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update Members of progress regarding the development of Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Following a robust process of strategic justification, the development of an appropriate funding package, completion of architectural designs and planning approvals and the commissioning of the principal contractor, Wates Group Ltd formally commenced construction of Highlight Active Wellbeing Hub (HAWH) in January 2024.

## 4. PROJECT PROGRESS AND CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The construction and completion of HAWH is entering its final phase, with the anticipated handover from Wates Group Ltd to the Council, expected in spring 2026. A final date is yet to be agreed, as this remains subject to the completion of final elements of work on site.

Following the handover to the Council, the Active Hartlepool team will work through an 8 week transition and operationalisation plan to ensure that the building can be fully opened to the public. The plan will comprise:

- Installation and commissioning of items of equipment
- Trialling and testing of all operational systems
- completion of staff familiarisation and training
- Trialling and testing of customer journey and customer experience through a programme of “live” sessions and activity delivery, involving selected partners, guests and customers as “guinea pigs”
- Managing the transfer of Active Hartlepool Members to the new site
- phasing-in revised programmes of activity at Brierton Sports Centre and Headland Sports Hall
- Delivery of the final phase of marketing and promotion of the site, including opening opportunities to book activities
- Finalisation and testing of operational delivery plans with key partners such as the café operator (Daisy & Bea’s); North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust; On-Water/Hartlepool Marina and a variety of partner clubs

4.2 Construction progress since January 2024 has been significant, including, in brief:

- Initial site clearance
- Piling and installation of foundations
- Erection of steel work
- Formation of pool tanks and underfloor plant voids
- Installation of the roof, external cladding and glazing
- Construction of internal structures
- Installation of key items of equipment (i.e. pool plant; lifts; moveable floor etc)
- Development of public realm space and car park

In recent months and in the remaining period to handover, the focus will be on completing all internal and external finishes and detail, prior to opening, including:

- Completion of all wall and floor tiling and building decoration
- Installation of lockers, benches and other fixtures and fittings
- Installation of water play, soft play, gym/fitness and café equipment
- Installation of all ICT related systems
- External planting of public realm space
- Installation of external and internal signage
- Completion of the car park

4.3 Over a period of years, the Active Hartlepool team have been working with a wide range of public and voluntary sector partners, to inform the development of the building, to shape how it will be operated, to ensure the connection with local people and to influence opportunities and programming of HAWH, once it opens.

Partners include:

- North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, linked to the operation of pre & post-natal; muscular-skeletal; cardiac and pulmonary clinics on site and the development of collaborative partnership activity delivery with Active Hartlepool.
- Community Led Inclusion Programme, who have advised on equipment detail; building design; colour schemes and programming with and on behalf of local disabled people.
- Hartlepool Marina/On-Water, who are key partners in the development and delivery of outdoor water-based activities at the marina alongside Active Hartlepool, utilising the new pontoon and slipway development and HAWH's external changing and storage.
- Hartlepool Swimming Club/Aquaforce Swimming Club, who have supported and informed the development of the site; equipment purchases and programming of the pools.

4.4 Throughout 2025, the focus has been to engage with local people and to enable them to spread the word amongst family, friends, colleagues and communities, via a number of hosted tours of the site. 8 tours have been completed involving almost 100 local people and feedback indicates that the majority of those who have attended were impressed and excited about HAWH and also keen to visit as a customer, when HAWH opens.

4.5 Whilst HAWH will continue to offer a wide range of services and activities that are already established at Mill House Leisure Centre, such as school swimming; adult and children's swimming lessons; fitness classes and gym opportunities, HAWH will provide a wide range of exciting new opportunities for local people, including:

- Inter-generational programming to cater for grandchildren, parents and grandparents/guardians
- High tech, state of the art gym equipment
- Availability of trained fitness instructors and gym staff to support and personalise fitness and wellbeing activities
- State-of-the-art immersive spinning studio
- Leisure water-play opportunities for families of children aged 0-12yrs
- Exciting poolside water race slide
- Café with external terracing
- Extended water-based fitness opportunities
- Soft play for children up to 8yrs including for children with neuro-divergent needs
- Extensive range of dry, soft play, pool and outdoor/marina focused children's party packages
- Easy access to a programme of paddleboarding, open water swimming, kayaking and canoeing on the marina, with accessible outdoor showers, changing and equipment storage

- The opportunity to engage in informal outdoor activities around HAWH, such as walking, running and cycling, or even to simply sit and enjoy the view
- Ability to deliver outdoor fitness classes using HWAH's various balconies and public realm spaces

The list of exciting opportunities is extensive, but importantly local people will get the opportunity to support their health and wellbeing in a new, high quality, accessible and affordable facility, which has been designed with local people at the forefront.

- 4.6 There are a number of key milestones to open Highlight Active Well Being Hub including the handing over of the building to Hartlepool Borough Council and opening the doors to the public in Spring 2026 and a formal dignitary opening in Summer 2026.

## 5. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

<b>RISK IMPLICATIONS</b>	Highlight Active Well Being Hub is the largest capital project the Council has delivered. A number of risks and challenges have been presented throughout the lifetime of the project and these have been managed proactively through a comprehensive governance structure. The timelines that have been given are achievable however the project remains a live build therefore is subject to change in the event of unforeseen circumstances beyond our control.
<b>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	Highlight Active Well Being Hub is funded through a combination of grants and prudential borrowing. Financial monitoring is robust and monitored through Finance and Corporate Affairs as part of the capital projects monitoring reports.
<b>SUBSIDY CONTROL</b>	This project has been fully assessed in accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and this has included a referral to, and an evaluation by the Subsidy Advice Unit (SAU), (part of the Competition and Markets Authority). The project is fully compliant with all legal and regulatory requirements.
<b>LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	A Legal and Human Resources workstream has been established as part of the governance arrangements for Highlight Active Well Being Hub led by the Assistant Director for Legal, Governance and HR. This has ensured all legal requirements have been managed robustly. A procurement plan was developed early in the project to ensure adherence with policy requirements.
<b>SINGLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	Equality impact has been considered through the lifetime of the project.



<b>STAFF CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<p>Highlight Active Well Being Hub will increase the staffing complement by 50% compared to Mill House Leisure Centre. This includes new apprenticeships and supports access to local jobs.</p> <p>The restructure for HAWH is complete and recruitment will conclude early 2026.</p> <p>All staff at Mill House Leisure Centre will transfer to work within the new facility and training has been ongoing to prepare staff to operate in the new environment.</p>
<b>ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<p>The development of Highlight Active Well Being Hub has been considerate of asset management requirements throughout the design and build. All operating procedures will be in place prior to hand over of the building, including Health &amp; Safety input too and these will be revised during the commissioning phase between March and May 2026. A comprehensive maintenance and management programme will be in place which will not only reflect Wates' ongoing accountabilities and warranties in relation to the building, but also the council's ongoing role.</p> <p>A final date for the closure of Mill House Leisure Centre is yet to be finalised, however, beyond that date the building will be appropriately secured. Discussions remain ongoing with Hartlepool Development Corporate to conclude arrangements for demolition and making good the site.</p>
<b>ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<p>Consideration of all related matters has been consistent throughout the design, development and construction of the project, supported by specialist electrical and mechanical engineering consultants. The building includes a number of sustainable design features including a micro-filtration pool plant system; solar panels; heat recovery air handling systems; underfloor heating; solar efficient glazing and extensive external wall insulation paneling.</p>
<b>CONSULTATION</b>	<p>Consultation has been ongoing throughout the life of the programme dating back to 2019. This has ensured the community have had the opportunity to influence the development of Highlight Active Well Being Hub throughout. Consultation remains an ongoing process to support successful opening and programme finalisation.</p>

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Committee note the progress of Highlight Active Well Being Hub.
- 6.2 Note the detail of the emerging project and available activities and support the profile of these opportunities for the benefit of local people and visitors.

## 7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To ensure the successful replacement of and transition from Mill House Leisure Centre which has served Hartlepool well but is no longer fit for purpose to meet the growing demand for water provision.

## 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 F&P Highlight Leisure Facility 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023
- 8.2 F&P Leisure Facilities Review and Options Appraisal 30 January 2020.
- 8.3 F&P Sport and Leisure Facilities Option Appraisal, Feasibility Study and Design 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019

## 9. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Ian Gardiner [ian.gardiner@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:ian.gardiner@hartlepool.gov.uk) 01429 523471

Sign Off:-

Managing Director	Date: 27 November 2025
Director of Finance, IT and Digital	Date: 27 November 2025
Director of Legal, Governance and HR	Date: 27 November 2025