

Rugby Borough Council

Sports Facilities Strategy

and

Playing Pitch Strategy

**FINAL REPORT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY AND PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. The Sport Facilities Strategy and the Playing Pitch Strategy both cover the period up to 2026. They are required for Rugby Borough Council to enable the effective delivery of leisure services across the District, and to ensure that a strategic network of facilities and playing fields is in place to cater for the needs of both the current and expected future populations.
2. The Strategies also provide the essential evidence base for relevant planning policies, they give guidance on the phasing of facilities to meet new growth, and the priorities for other investment.

Key drivers

3. The key drivers for the Strategies include the Council's Corporate Strategy 2008-2011, which has the following priorities:
 - Provide high quality leisure and cultural facilities;
 - Develop opportunities for people to enjoy a healthy lifestyle;
 - Increase activities for young people;
 - Improve access to leisure opportunities in rural areas;
 - Look to develop private and public partnerships to deliver value for money services to customers.
4. The adopted Sport and Recreation Strategy 2009-2012 sees the vision for the Borough as 'an active and healthy community', and the Rugby Active Network has a 1% increase per annum in participation as one of its three aims.
5. Another driver is the need to consider future options for the Ken Marriott Leisure Centre (KMLC). KMLC was built in the 1970s and provides the only public leisure centre facility in the Borough. It requires replacement over the next few years, so the strategies identify the community's sport and physical activity requirements, and suggest how some of these might be delivered in a replacement leisure centre.

Current participation in sport and active recreation

6. The rate of participation amongst adults in sport and active recreation is based on: participation in moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes, 3 times per week. At present Rugby is performing well against other similar authorities, and is very slightly above the national average for participation. There has, however, been no overall change in the rates of participation over the past few years in the borough.

Population forecasts

7. In addition to the natural growth in population arising from the existing Rugby residents, the Core Strategy plans some additional population growth. The housing to meet this growth is partially provided by sites within the existing town, and also through two new Sustainable Urban Extensions, known as the Rugby Radio Station and Rugby Gateway sites, to the north and north east of the existing town. There will be limited new housing growth in other areas, meaning that the populations in most of the rural parts of the borough will remain stable throughout the period up to 2026. The population forecasts for Rugby Borough as a whole are:

2011	95,309
2016	102,687
2021	111,650
2026	117,462

8. Due to the impact of the new housing there will be an increase across most age groups between now and 2026. There will also be more older people in the borough by 2026, but no change in the number of those aged 20-24 which is relatively low. There will also be a slight fall in the numbers of people aged 45-50.

Modelling

9. The assessment of each facility type draws on a number of different elements:
 - The theoretical demand for facilities based on various modelling tools;
 - The results of consultation with users, stakeholders and others;
 - Issues associated with facility quality, accessibility for the community etc;
 - The socio-economic background, including future population characteristics;
 - The authority's policies on participation, and sports development objectives;
 - The resources which may be available to meet the future requirements.

10. As each assessment is based on a number of factors which can change over time, the recommendations contained within the strategies will need to be kept under review. Of particular importance would be any significant changes in the proposed housing numbers, which would result in a changed level of demand. On the facility supply side, changes to the independent schools sector might have a major impact on community sport in the borough because several of the significant sports facilities are controlled by them. As there are no formal agreements with these independent schools regarding community access to facilities, there is no long term guarantee that they will be available. If the amount of access for the community were to change, this would affect the balance in supply and demand.

Built facilities

Sports halls

11. There are currently 11 sports halls of 4 plus badminton court size within the borough, the majority of which are on school sites, both independent and state sector. However only three of the education sites, The Griffin Centre at Lawrence Sheriff, Harris School and the new Warwickshire College have formal dual use agreements. The only other site with guaranteed long term community use is the Ken Marriott Leisure Centre which has 5 courts. The largest hall is the Sports Connexion Leisure Club at Ryton which has 9 courts and although it is currently important as a basic pay and play facility, its future is so uncertain that for the purposes of the assessment it is assumed that it will be closed.
12. At the present time there is sufficient sports hall space to meet community needs, but there are issues relating to the security of use by the community for the longer term, and the lack of a good quality 8 court hall which prevents the borough from hosting higher level competitions.
13. As the population of Rugby grows there will therefore be a need to achieve more facilities with long term secure community use. It is proposed to achieve this through a combination of: replacing the Ken Marriott Leisure Centre with a larger sports hall (8 courts); developing a new 6 court hall on the Rugby Radio Station site as a dual-use facility with the proposed new secondary school, and seeking to expand and secure the community use of the existing halls.

Swimming pools

14. There is only one public pool in the borough, at the Ken Marriott Leisure Centre. Other pools are found on two independent school sites and at two commercial leisure sites. Taken together these give a large amount of swimming pool space, but the school sites are restricted in hours and have no security of community use. The use of the commercial pools is also restricted to members. The relatively poor attractiveness of the Ken Marriott Leisure Centre means that it is only operating at an average of about half full in the peak period.
15. Although there is plenty of water space overall for swimming in the borough, the lack of secure community use provision is of concern. The authority has therefore committed itself to replacing the Ken Marriott Leisure Centre, but the final size and design of the new pool have yet to be agreed. The current centre has an important role in enabling competitive swimming including disciplines such as synchro, which requires deep water. This needs to be retained and strengthened in the proposed replacement pool.
16. As the population of Rugby grows and as participation rates increase there will be some need for additional water space. However if Ken Marriott is replaced by an 25 m x 8 lane competition pool plus teaching pool, both with moveable floors and with the same total area as the existing pools, the new Centre should be able to accommodate all of

the additional demand for swimming up to 2026, without significantly increasing the reliance on the other pools in Rugby, over which the borough council has no control.

Synthetic turf pitches

17. There are currently 7 synthetic turf pitches (STPs) in the borough. Of these, six have some community use but only 3 have formal dual use agreements. The six sand-based STPs are all on education sites, and the 3G pitch is owned by Rugby Town Football Club.
18. If the current levels of community use are retained or improved on those sites without any formal agreements, then there is no general community need for an additional STP in the period up to 2026, reflecting the fact that the current rates of provision are well above the national and regional averages.
19. The exception may be the development of a rugby-specific STP, probably located at Broad Street RFC. This is an identified priority in the RFU regional facilities strategy, and its development would support this major club's aspirations.

Athletics tracks

20. There is one 8-lane athletics track in the borough, located next to the Ken Marriott Leisure Centre. It has recently been refurbished, which should give the track another 15 years life, and enable the large and successful club to host competitions.
21. The current track gives a high level of provision per 1000, and its central location within the town means that it is accessible to most people in the borough. The track at Nuneaton is also accessible to people living in the north.
22. Even with the increased population and anticipated increase in participation in the period up to 2026, there is no justification for additional athletics track provision for the foreseeable future. However upgrading and improvements at the existing track and its ancillary facilities are and will continue to be needed.

Health and fitness

23. There are currently five main sites offering health and fitness gym facilities, of which one is the Ken Marriott Leisure Centre. The others are commercial venues and of these, only the Sports Connexion Leisure Club at Ryton offers pay and play access.
24. The current rates of provision are approximately in line with the national average. In the future, with the increased population and anticipated increases in participation, there will be a need for some additional provision, of around 130 stations in total. Around half of this extra demand is expected to be arising from the two SUEs, the Rugby Radio Station site and the Rugby Gateway site.
25. It is proposed that about 50 extra fitness stations are provided at the replacement Ken Marriott Leisure Centre, with the remainder being met by the commercial sector.

Indoor bowls

26. There is currently one 8-rink indoor bowls centre at a site adjacent to the Ken Marriott Leisure Centre. This is managed by Rugby Thornfield Indoor Bowls Club. With its central location, most people in the borough can reach it within about 20 minutes travel time by car, and residents in the south can also reach the indoor bowls centre in Daventry.
27. Given the nature of bowling in this part of Warwickshire, the provision rate per 1000 is well above the national or regional averages, but it is in line with similar authorities elsewhere.
28. As the population increases in Rugby and also ages, there is likely to be a need for an additional facility in the period up to 2026. The theoretical modelling suggests that this needs to be approximately 3 rinks in size, but the opportunity to develop a 4-rink facility in the future as part of an indoor and outdoor bowling centre should be explored. If one is developed, it is important to ensure that the site is easily accessible by public transport as well as by car.

Indoor and outdoor tennis

29. There are currently no indoor tennis facilities in the borough, and the closest site in Coventry is not accessible to most people in Rugby within 20 minutes drive. The theoretical modelling suggests that there may be justification for one covered court for community use in the period up to 2026, but the Lawn Tennis Association prefers a minimum of 3 courts and associated outdoor courts. An opportunity to develop this larger tennis facility might arise in conjunction with one of the independent schools. However if located on such a site, a formal community use agreement will be crucial.
30. There are currently 26 outdoor tennis courts with some degree of community use in the borough, but there are no floodlit pay and play courts available. Most of the courts are situated at schools or at tennis club sites and most of the multi-court sites are within the town. It is expected that a further 12 community courts will be needed in the period up to 2026, and almost half of the demand will arise from the two SUEs. It is therefore proposed that a 4-court facility is developed on the Rugby Radio Station site either as an independent club or as part of a dual-use school facility. The remaining demand should ideally be met through increasing the levels of community access on the existing sites.

Other sports

Table tennis

31. There is currently one specialist table tennis centre, the Rugby Table Tennis Centre, in a specialist sports hall building at Lawrence Sheriff School. The centre has a 21 year security of tenure agreement and Rugby Table Tennis Club is based there. Whilst this dual use agreement is in place for evening, weekend and holiday use, the centre does not cater for daytime use by the community. There is some limited daytime provision at Ken Marriott Leisure Centre but the club feel that this is not sufficient to meet demand. The club also considers that there is a need for a smaller space, sufficient to cater for one or two tables for match play and coaching.
32. The recommendations for table tennis are therefore to:
 - Improve school/club links and support the development of the existing centre;
 - Explore opportunities for providing table tennis in other existing venues such as sports halls, church halls and community centres;
 - Consider providing a suitable area for table tennis in the replacement Ken Marriott Leisure Centre as part of a multi-purpose space.

Gymnastics

33. There are two clubs in Rugby, Rugby Gymnastics Club and Rugby Trampoline Club. Rugby Gymnastics Club has a Dedicated Gymnastics Centre (DGC) housed in a former factory building. Rugby Trampoline Club does not have a dedicated facility and is based at Lawrence Sheriff School.
34. The Gymnastics Club has been established for 30 years and currently has 850 members, plus a waiting list. The club owns its buildings which are former factories, but they are old and there are a number of issues regarding their suitability, including poor disabled access. The Club needs to relocate to a more suitable/purpose built venue, and positive planning support from the Borough Council to enable this move is the subsequent recommendation.

Water sports

35. The focus for water sports in Rugby is Draycote Water, a large 650 acre drinking water reservoir owned and operated by Severn Trent Water. It is home to the Draycote Sailing and Windsurfing Club, and to Rugby Canoe Club.
36. The biggest issues facing both of the clubs is the lack of a long lease from Severn Trent Water. The previous lease expired in March 2010 and at the time of writing no agreement has been reached on a new lease. The lack of a long lease means that clubs cannot apply for grants or funding.
37. Draycote Sailing Club has aspirations to become a paralympic training venue. This would involve the installation of jetties as all boats for people with disabilities have a keel to

prevent them capsizing. The club could also become a centre of excellence for the Midlands.

38. Until recently the Canoe Club also used the canal at the Royal Oak/Hungry Horse public house on Crick Road. The training, which caters for beginners as well as some high level/elite athletes, involved the use of hanging slalom gates. Although fitness and paddle stroke training continues, the loss of the gates does have a negative impact.
39. The recommendations are therefore to secure a new lease for water sports on Draycote Water, including the necessary jetty development for disabled sailing, and to support the canoe club for river and/or canal access, particularly including a replacement site for the slalom training.

Squash

40. There are two clubs in Rugby, the Ken Marriott Patrons Squash Club with 5 courts and Rugby Stags Squash Club, with 3 courts, based at Rugby School. Peak time for the league based at KMLC is Monday to Thursday, from 6pm to 9pm. There is little daytime use and there is potentially “spare capacity” as some midweek evening games could be moved to weekends.
41. Under the current proposals for the replacement leisure centre, the number of squash courts is proposed to be reduced to 2 or 3 courts. This should only have a limited impact, as matches could be rescheduled to quieter times.

Playing fields

42. In terms of the overall provision of playing field space, the following are the key points relating to each of the main sports.

Football

43. There is currently an approximate balance between the demand for football and the supply of pitches in secure community use. However the remarking of some senior pitches to junior size would better maximise the space available.
44. The high proportion of senior games taking place on a Sunday morning means that the senior pitches are not used to their full potential.
45. New playing field space will be required to meet both the growth within the town and in the SUEs. The amount of playing field space for football needed by 2026 is an extra 22 ha, of which 12 ha arises from the demand within the SUEs. This SUEs provision should be on-site, and the Rugby Gateway site pitch space should be expanded to meet some of the other need from the town.

Cricket

46. Borough-wide it is estimated that there is a slight “surplus” of pitch provision now and that this will continue through to 2026. However the current network of sites is unevenly distributed, with the surplus of provision being almost wholly within the rural southern area of the authority.
47. It is therefore proposed to develop three new cricket pitches, two as a double pitch site in the Rugby Radio Station SUE, and one in the Rugby Gateway SUE.
48. In the Southern area the focus should be on improving sites, reducing where possible, the overlap between cricket and winter sports where they share sites. Elsewhere the priority will be to maintain and improve sites.

Rugby

49. There are high rates of participation in this sport, whose home town is Rugby, and there are several successful clubs. These clubs include ones which draw primarily from local residents, but also Broad Street RFU on the extreme boundary of Rugby Borough close to Coventry, and which acts primarily as a Coventry club.
50. The high level of participation means that with the planned growth of the town, more space will be needed. Support should be provided to the existing clubs to improve and expand their sites, but a new rugby club site will be needed in the longer term, ideally situated in the north or north-east side of Rugby.

Gaelic football

51. Requires a clubhouse for changing and may require a further pitch in the longer term. This may necessitate relocation of the club to a new site.

Standards for playing fields

52. Future playing field provision should be measured against standards for quantity, quality and accessibility. For example, sites should be appropriately located and sited, and wherever possible sites should be multi-pitch. The quality standards for the pitches and ancillary facilities should meet the requirements of the relevant national governing bodies.
53. A standard for accessibility within the urban area is a requirement for football and cricket. The new provision for football and cricket associated with the two SUEs will be on-site, but will be off-site for other housing developments and also for the sports of rugby, gaelic football and polo.
54. Quantity standards per 1000 people for grass playing fields, including an allowance for ancillary facilities and car parking are :
 - 1.4 ha per 1000 for areas outside of the two SUEs
 - 1.5 ha per 1000 for the Rugby Radio Station and Rugby Gateway SUEs.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

55. Figures 1 and 2 provide a summary of the major proposals relating to built facilities and playing fields; they also include the estimated costs and phasing.
56. Improvements to the existing built facilities and playing fields and their ancillary facilities will also be a significant factor in the future, including in relation to developers' contributions for sites other than the two SUEs. The priorities and costs of these improvements will be developed by Rugby Borough Council as part of the Action Plan arising from the strategies.

Figure 1: Summary of built facility proposals

Facility type	Proposal	When needed	Cost ¹
Sports Halls	8 badminton court sports hall at the new leisure centre (increasing provision by 3 courts from 5 at current KMLC)	With redevelopment of KMLC	See KMLC Options Report
	6 badminton court sports hall at new secondary school at the Rugby Radio Station site	By 2026	£3,170,000
Swimming Pools	8 lane x 25m competition pool with teaching pool at the new leisure centre (replacement of KMLC pools with equivalent water area)	With redevelopment of KMLC	See KMLC Options Report
Athletics Tracks	Upgrade facilities at Rugby Athletics Track to incorporate spectator facilities and improved storage.	As club develops	Unknown
Health and Fitness	120 station health and fitness suite at the new leisure centre (increasing provision by 50 stations from 70 at current KMLC)	With redevelopment of KMLC	See KMLC Options Report
Indoor Bowls	Multi-code bowling facility with 4 indoor rinks	When local demand can be identified but by 2026	£1,200,000 indoor centre only
Indoor Tennis	Rugby School currently considering a 4 court framed fabric structure with adjacent outdoor courts. If this site is not progressed another suitable location should be identified.	By 2026	² £450,000-550,000 for two courts £600,000-700,000 for four courts
Outdoor Tennis	4 outdoor courts at Rugby Radio Station site	By 2026	£275,000
Squash	2-3 courts in the new leisure centre	By 2026	See KMLC Options Report

¹ Costs have been taken from Sport England's Planning Kitbag which uses 2nd Quarter 2011 figures unless marked otherwise. Figures are inclusive of fees but do not include inflation, site abnormalities, VAT, land acquisition and regional variances in materials and labour. These figures have been extrapolated to estimate figures for the relevant size of facility recommended. Costs are rounded and should be used as an indicative guide only.

² Costs taken from LTA Clubmark Planning Budget Costs

Figure 2: Summary of playing field proposals

Sport	Proposal	When needed	Cost ³
Football	Radio Station SUE: 10 ha, possibly split into 2 sites. Total of 4 senior pitches, 3 junior and 2 mini pitches. Pavilion on site(s) with senior pitches.	2026	£1,120,000
	Gateway SUE: 2.5 ha as single site comprising 1 senior, 1 junior and 1 mini pitch. 2-team changing pavilion.	By 2021	£415,000
	Elsewhere: 9.5 ha, ideally as 2 x multi-pitch sites with mixture of senior, junior and mini pitches. Pavilions on site with senior pitch provision.	1 site by 2021 1 site by 2026	£1,100,000 to £1,175,000 (1 or 2 sites- based on 8 senior pitches and either 1 x 4 team pavilion or 2 x 2 team pavilion)
Cricket	Radio Station SUE: 1 site with 2 pitches plus clubhouse	By 2026	£650,000
	Gateway SUE: 1 site with 1 pitch plus clubhouse	By 2021	£450,000
Rugby	1 multi-pitch site (minimum of 2 senior and 1 mini pitch) plus club house, ideally located within or close to the Radio Station SUE.	By 2026	£505,000
	New pitches and improved / extra facilities at existing club sites.	ASAP	TBC
	Possible relocation of Rugby Lions.	As opportunity arises, ideally by 2016	TBC
Gaelic football	Club house on existing site, or relocate to new site with 2 pitches plus clubhouse	By 2016	TBC

³ Costs have been taken from Sport England's Planning Kitbag which uses 1st Quarter 2010 figures unless marked otherwise. Figures are inclusive of fees but do not include inflation, site abnormalities, VAT, land acquisition and regional variances in materials and labour. These figures have been extrapolated to estimate figures for the relevant size of facility recommended. Costs are rounded and should be used as an indicative guide only.

IMPLEMENTATION

57. In the current economic climate it is important to ensure that all of the available resources are carefully targeted and tailored to meet the needs of the whole community so any initial capital investment and long term revenue commitments can be fully justified.
58. The proposals arising from the strategies are likely to be funded and supported by a range of partners and new facility provision might be via a mix of public and private sources. There are likely to be an increasing number of innovative partnership arrangements over the next few years both in relation to capital and revenue projects, and consideration should be given by the Borough Council to exploring all of the available options to enable the delivery of the strategies' proposals.
59. Improving and securing the access to existing facilities on school sites will be a key factor in maintaining a good network of facilities that are available for the community. There are sports facilities at both local authority and independent school sites and in many cases community access is limited. Options for securing and/or improving this access should be a priority.
60. It is not anticipated that all of the proposals will be implemented at the same time. Some sites/proposals require more urgent action than others. However, all of the identified facilities and proposals should be developed by 2026. Where facilities are proposed to relate to new housing growth, the speed of development will necessarily impact upon the speed of provision of new facilities. However, once development is underway the sports facilities should be provided at the earliest opportunity.

REVIEW AND MONITORING

61. There should be an interim review of the strategies in two years to take account of any changes in housing growth figures, and other issues/opportunities not yet anticipated. A full review should be undertaken in five years to also take account of other factors such as: whether the projected growth in participation has been achieved, and if so, how; any technical changes to sport facility requirements; and the facility investment decisions by Rugby Borough Council.