



July 2015

A SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY FOR THAME

Thame Town Council

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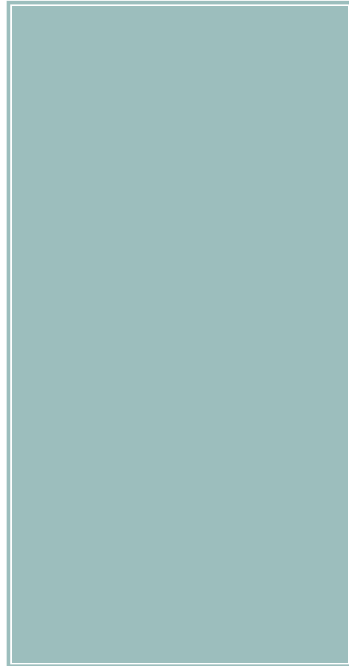
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Introduction

Overview

This Sports Facility Strategy has been developed on behalf of Thame Town Council (the Council) and presents a framework for the development of high quality and accessible sports facilities for the Thame community for the period to 2028.

The vision of the Council is to work with partners and stakeholders to plan, provide and maintain a network of high quality accessible community and specialist sporting facilities that reflect and meet the needs of Thame today and in the future.



Purpose & objectives

It is proposed that the Sports Facilities Strategy (the Strategy) will act as a guidance document, setting context to identify priorities and to facilitate the decision making process for delivery.

The Strategy was commissioned to research, explore and consider current and future sports facility provision and demand, and to identify needs and priorities for the future.

It is intended that the Strategy will set out how the Council's key objectives might be achieved.

Key objectives for sport identified by the Council are:

- 1) To increase and sustain participation, through appropriate facility provision for increased activity and identify priority groups
- 2) Create opportunities for young people and provide wider value to the local community
- 3) Facilitate improved health and quality of life, for those living and working in or visiting Thame
- 4) Contribute to social cohesion and enjoyment
- 5) Bring economic benefit to the town
- 6) Deliver facility provision through innovative, strong and long-term partnerships
- 7) Maximise available resources for investment and development of provision
- 8) Identify potential funding sources and provide robust evidence to support bids for funding and obtaining developer contributions through the planning process
- 9) Have facilities that are sustainable and manageable

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Background and strategy approach

Background

Thame Neighbourhood Plan

In 2013 the Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) was created in conjunction with South Oxfordshire District Council. The TNP identifies significant growth in Thame between now and 2026, with an anticipated 775 new homes proposed for the town.

The new housing is proposed to be delivered primarily across three sites, with a further four sites identified for developments of smaller numbers of new housing.

Recognising the impact on existing infrastructure that this quantum of new development is likely to bring, the TNP includes policies aimed at securing new provision of sport and recreation facilities.

The requirement for a Sports Facility Strategy is specifically identified within these policies.

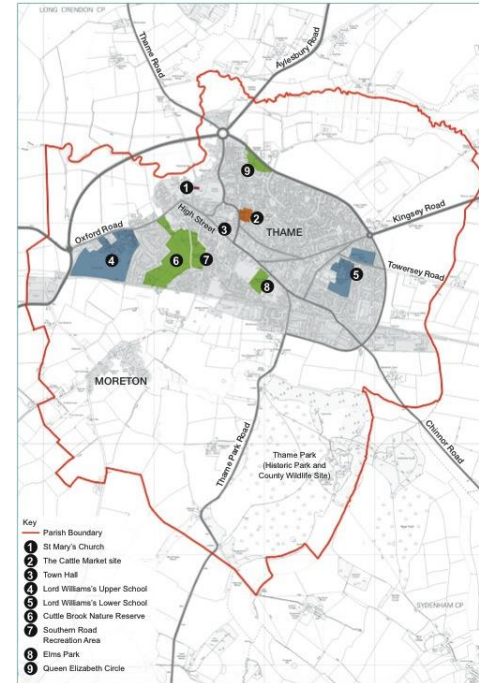
It must be noted that this Sports Facility Strategy does not consider the population impact of any additional “windfall” sites not identified in the TNP that may be developed.

Overview of Thame

Thame is a market town and civil parish in Oxfordshire that lies approximately 9 miles east of the city of Oxford and 7 miles southwest of the Buckinghamshire town of Aylesbury. It derives its name from the River Thames, which flows past the north side of the town.

Thame has a population of c 11,000 people.

An extract from the Thame Neighbourhood Plan showing the parish boundary, which is made of the wards of Thame North and Thame South, is shown opposite. The plan also highlights locations in the town.



Thame – key features

Feature/characteristic	Key points
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of home ownership (81%) and low proportions of social housing • Wide choice of property type • Concerns around affordability of housing for young people and families
Working & shopping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong independent retail offer • Attractive industrial market and most amount of industrial employment floor-space in South Oxfordshire • Shortage of good quality office accommodation
Accessibility & travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairly flat and compact town • Some parts of the town have poor connectivity • Few dedicated cycle routes • Ring road denotes 'the edge' of the town • Considered to have a poor bus service
Leisure & well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active community with many different groups and organisations • No large venue capable of holding more than 200 people

Approach

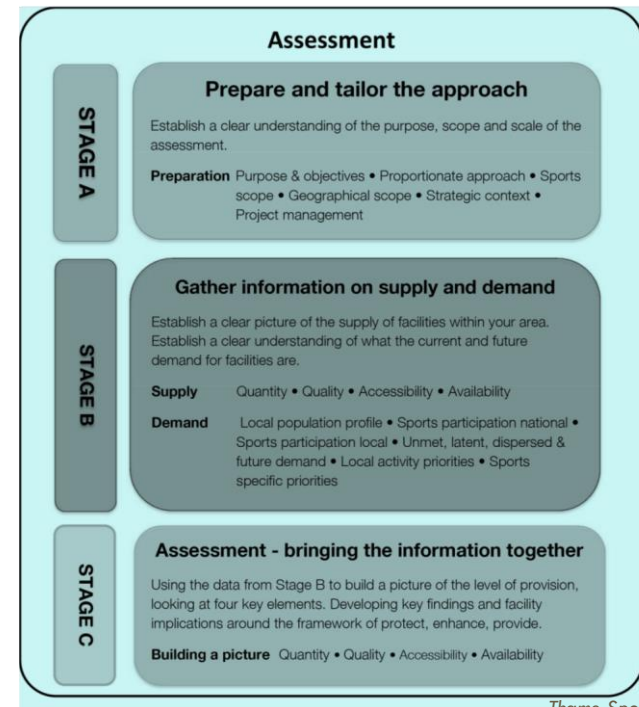
With the purpose of the Strategy clearly defined, the approach undertaken to complete it has in part followed Sport England guidance (identifying Needs and Opportunities) issued in July 2014, and has been tailored as appropriate for the purpose of the Strategy, particularly recognising the relatively small study area and size of population.

As such, the study approach takes a very close look at the sports clubs and facility providers.

Although this Strategy will not directly inform the the local development framework, it will sit alongside the TNP and will be used as an evidence base to inform and shape decisions. As such, the approach applied is considered to be provide a sound and realistic strategy document.

The Sport England guide recommends an approach as shown opposite in Figure 1

Figure 1 – Sport England approach to conducting a needs assessment



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Scope, strategic and planning context

Scope

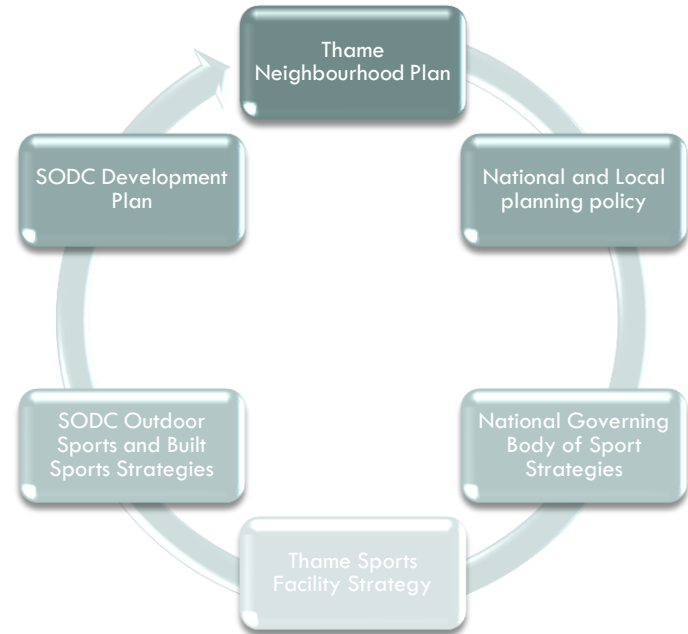
The scope of the strategy has been agreed to focus on the town of Thame.

This covers the wards of Thame North and Thame South.

The combined population of the two wards is 11,567 (*National Statistics, 2011*)

The context for the Sports Facility Strategy is to provide a local view and analysis of sports facility supply and demand for the residents of Thame.

It is intended that the Strategy will form part of the strategic planning framework for sport as captured in the following chart, sitting in amongst a number of local and national strategic and policy documents.



Strategic and planning context

Overview

In considering future demands it is important to understand the context of sport and open space from a planning policy perspective.

The relevant national and local policy has been reviewed with key points and considerations identified which have helped to shape and inform this Strategy.

In addition, the most recent evidence bases that have been produced by South Oxfordshire District Council, which record and assess the provision of sport facilities for the District, have also been reviewed.

The key documents and policies that have been reviewed are:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- South Oxfordshire Development Plan
- Thame Neighbourhood Plan
- South Oxfordshire Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facility Assessment 2008
- South Oxfordshire Leisure & Sports Facility Strategy March 2011

Planning context - National

National Planning Policy Framework

In March 2012 the Government published its new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in doing so set out a framework of simple and clearly written policies with the objective of supporting sustainable development from which Councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans.

NPPF does not change the statutory role of the development plan but provides guidance as a material consideration for local authorities when determining applications.

Section Eight of NPPF relates to Promotion of Healthy Communities and sets out the approach that local authorities should take when considering applications.



National Planning Policy Framework



Planning context - National

Para 70 states:

"To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

Plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments"

Para 73 states:

"Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to health and wellbeing of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits of surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. The information gained from this assessment of needs and opportunities should be used to set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities".

Planning context - Local

At local level the Development Plan is the South Oxfordshire Development Plan, and consists of the following:

- Saved Policies in the Local Plan (adopted January 2006)
- Core Strategy (adopted December 2012)
- Adopted Neighbourhood Plans

There is also an emerging Local Plan 2031, which is currently being consulted on.

Key Policies within the Development Plan are:

Saved Policy R2:

'When granting planning permission for new residential development, developers will be required to provide outdoor playing space for the new residents to a minimum standard of 2.4 hectares per 1000 persons. Developers will be required to demonstrate that satisfactory provision for long-term maintenance has been made.

On housing sites which are less than 0.4 hectares or which would accommodate less than 15 dwellings, where it may not be reasonable to expect the developer to provide the outdoor playing space within the development site, improvements to an existing outdoor playing space or, if appropriate, provision in a nearby area will be sought.'

Planning context - local

Saved Policy CF1;

Proposals that result in the loss of a recreation facility or an essential community facility or service, through change of use or redevelopment, will not be permitted unless:

- ☐ *suitable alternative provision is made for the facility (or similar facilities of equivalent community value) on a site elsewhere in the locality, or*
- ☐ *in the case of recreational facilities, it is not needed, or*
- ☐ *in the case of commercial services, it is not economically viable.*

Policy R2 identifies a requirement for the provision of 2.4ha per 1,000 population of Public Open Space as a result of new housing development.

Of this 1.6ha is to be provided for formal sports provision such as pitches, greens and courts.

The subsequent Open Space Assessment carried out on behalf of SODC adopted in 2008 identified specific quantity, quality and accessibility standards for different types of sports facilities.

These are set out in the table overleaf.

Standards identified in the Core Strategy derived from the SODC 2008 Open Space Assessment

Facility Type	Quantity & Quality Standard	Accessibility Standard
Senior Football Pitch	One pitch (1.4ha) of high quality standard per 525 16 – 45 year olds with changing facilities	Within 5 miles (10 minute drive time)
Junior Football Pitch	One pitch (0.5ha) of high quality standard per 150 10 – 15 year olds with changing facilities	Within 5 miles (10 minute drive time)
Mini Football Pitch	One pitch (0.3ha) of high quality standard per 150 6 – 9 year olds with changing facilities	Within 5 miles (10 minute drive time)
Senior Rugby Pitch	One pitch (1.2ha) of high quality standard per 2,800 8 – 45 year olds with changing facilities	Within 5 miles (10 minute drive time)
Cricket Pitch	One pitch (2.0ha) of high quality standard per 1,400 11 – 55 year olds with changing facilities	Within 5 miles (10 minute drive time)
Hockey Pitch (Synthetic)	One pitch (0.6ha) of high quality standard per 15,000 11 – 45 year olds with changing facilities	Within 10 miles (20 minute drive time)
Outdoor Tennis Court	One court per 1,250 people	Within 5 miles (10 minute drive time)
Bowls green	One six rink green per 13,000 people	Within 7.5 miles (15 minute drive time)
Squash Courts	One court per 5,000 people	Within 7.5 miles (15 minute drive time)
Swimming pools	One 25m x 6m pool and one 13m x 10m pool per 45,000 people equivalent to	Within 7.5 miles (15 minute drive time)
Sports Hall	One four badminton court hall per 14,000 people	Within 7.5 miles (15 minute drive time)

Strategic context - local

South Oxfordshire Open Space Assessment 2008

The Open Space Assessment was published in 2008 and included an assessment of playing pitch provision in South Oxfordshire following the Sport England guidance in 'Towards a Level Playing Field' (Sport England methodology). It summarised the level of adequacy of playing pitches in the district, according to levels of identified demand.

This study set the standards for quantity, quality and accessibility for different types of sports facilities and also identified surpluses and shortfalls in certain types of provision.

Overall, a requirement of 1.6ha of formal sports provision per 1,000 population was identified.

The standards for different types of facilities that were identified have been provided on the previous page.

Strategic context - local

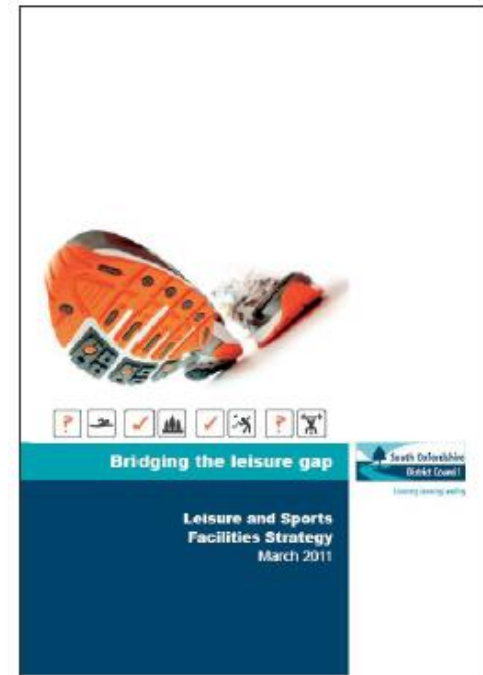
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South Oxfordshire Leisure & Sports Facility Strategy 2011

South Oxfordshire District Council's most recent Leisure and Sports Facility Strategy was published in 2011. It is understood that the Council is in the process of completing a new Playing Pitch Strategy and Built Sports Strategy. However, it is understood that this study will not be available for review until later in 2015.

As such, the latest open space evidence base for South Oxfordshire remains the 2011 study and as such we have reviewed this data to inform parts of this strategy. Data from the study provides a useful snapshot for strategic context of sports facility provision for Thame and how the current facilities there serve the local community. The study updates the findings of the 2008 Open Space Assessment.

It is noted that a new Outdoor Sports Facility study is being carried out on behalf of South Oxfordshire District Council, and as a consequence this Sports Facility Strategy may need to be reviewed once the findings of this study are available.



Planning context - Local

Thame Neighbourhood Plan

Policy ESDQ10

Developer Contributions will be sought from new residential development to fund a Sports Facilities Strategy and for the subsequent implementation of sports facilities. Once CIL is introduced Thame Town Council will seek funding for the Sports Facilities Strategy from CIL.

The Delivery Strategy provides guidance on the Sports Facilities Strategy, and sets out financial contributions. Consultation with local people must be undertaken in producing the Strategy.

The Strategy is to be agreed and adopted by Thame Town Council.

Future reviews of this Plan (TNP) must incorporate the Strategy's recommendations.

The Sports Facilities Strategy will be co-ordinated by Thame Town Council and will involve Lord William's School and local sports clubs such as:

- ☐ Chinnor Rugby Club
- ☐ Thame Tennis Club
- ☐ Thame Bowls Club
- ☐ Thame Hockey Club
- ☐ Thame Cricket Club
- ☐ Racquets Squash Club
- ☐ Thame Football Partnership
- ☐ Thame Swimming Club

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Supply; review of existing provision

Auditing local provision

Quantity

Quality

Accessibility

A desktop audit was initially carried out to identify all relevant sports and physical activity facilities across the town. This included undertaking a review of the online national databases of sports facilities, Active Places Power planning tool, desk top and telephone research. Further knowledge and information on the identified facilities was then gathered through visits to the majority of sports facilities and consultation with providers and users.

Quantity

The quantity of facilities available has been mapped out and sites reviewed and utilises previous evidence bases. This identifies the number of facilities and type of pitches, courts or sports facilities that exist at each location.

Quality

Through analysis of the site visit data collected, desk top research and consultation, we have considered the quality of existing facilities at high level and have identified where quality improvements may be necessary. The Strategy has not included detailed quality assessments.

Accessibility

Accessibility has been assessed through the consultation process and has been reviewed in terms of:

- ☐ opening hours and level of community use.
- ☐ physical access to a site
- ☐ preferred mode of transport and journey time to get to a facility.

Audit – Active Places Power & SODC Evidence base

The audit of facilities using the Active Places Power tool identified the following facilities as shown on the map overleaf. Details of each facility are provided on the following pages as recorded by Active Places Power.

It should be noted that the Active Places Power tool did not identify a number of sports facilities that are known to exist, including Thame Sports Club (Tennis & Bowls), tennis courts at Lord Williams Lower School and tennis and squash courts at Lord Williams Upper School; these have however been included in our own audit.

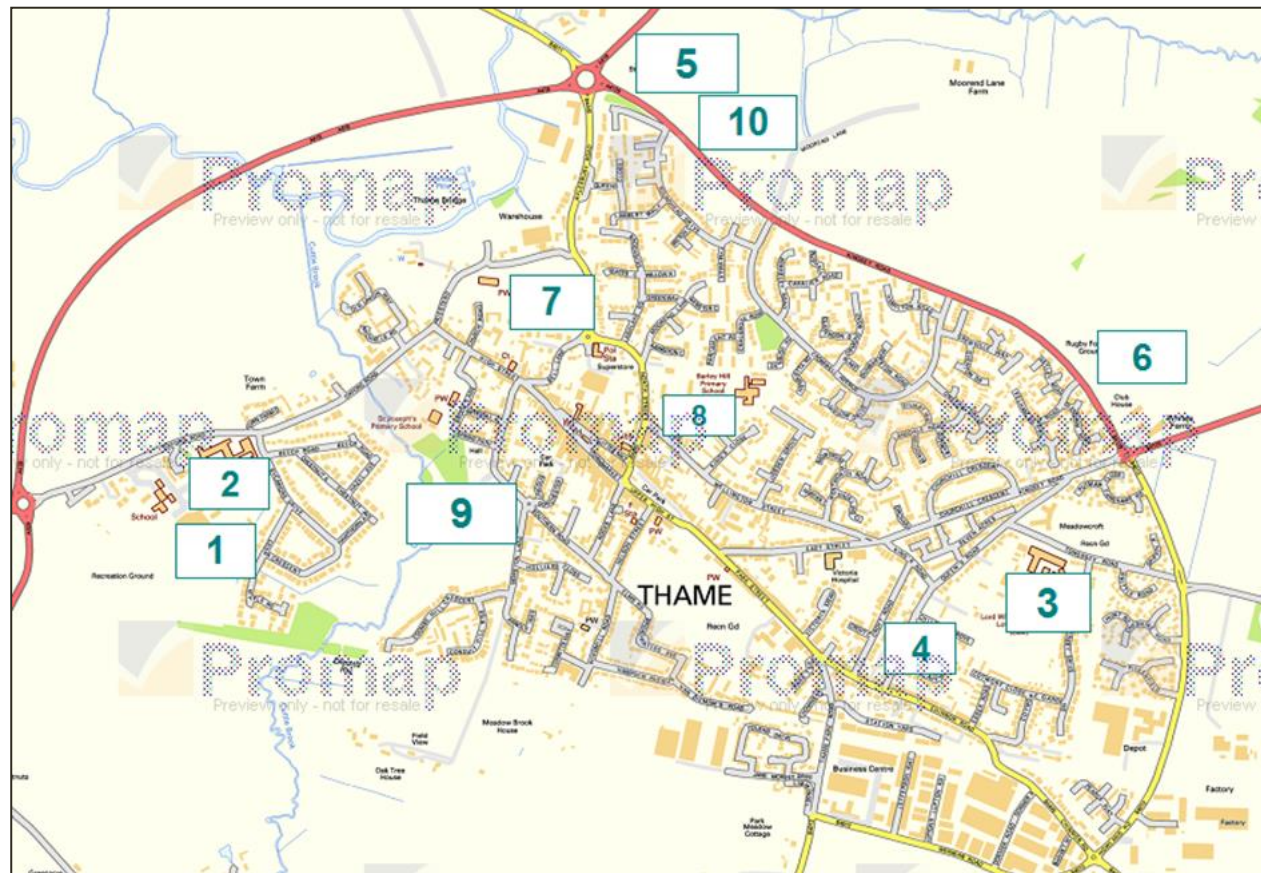
As noted in Section 3, the existing SODC evidence base is as follows:

- South Oxfordshire Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facility Assessment 2008
- South Oxfordshire Leisure & Sports Facility Strategy March 2011

Information on site quality, facilities and standards has been taken from these studies to help inform this Strategy.

A map of the location of existing sports facilities in Thame is provided overleaf and an overview of each facility on the following pages.

Ref	Site
1	Thame Leisure Centre
2	Lord Williams Upper School
3	Lord Williams Lower School
4	Thame Sports Club
5	Meadow View Park
6	Chinnor RFC
7	Thame Town Cricket Club
8	Racquets Fitness Centre
9	Southern Road Rec
10	Thame Skate Park



A summary of current sports facility provision that has been identified in Thame is as follows:

Map ID	Facility Name	Senior football pitch	Junior football pitch	Mini football pitch	Senior rugby pitch	Junior rugby pitch	Cricket pitch	Synthetic Turf pitch	Tennis court	Bowls Green	Sports Hall	Squash Court	Swimming Pool (sqm)	Health & fitness (stations)
1	Thame Leisure Centre										1		300	60
2	Lord Williams Upper School	2			2		1	1				2		
3	Lord Williams Lower School	2			1				5		1			
4	Thame Sports (Tennis & Bowls) Club, Queens Road								6	1				
5	Meadow View Park	3	1	6				0.25						
6	Chinnor RFC, Kingsey Road				3.5									
7	Thame Cricket Club, Church Meadow						1							
8	Racquets											4		39
9	Southern Recreation Ground	1	2											
10	Thame Skate Park													
	Total	8	3	6	6.5	0	2	1.25	11	1	2	6	300	99

Notes

1. These are facilities which are identified as 'secure' i.e. the sites are designated as public open space.
2. It is noted that there are additional areas of land which have occasional sporting use, but these are not secure and are not identified as public open space.

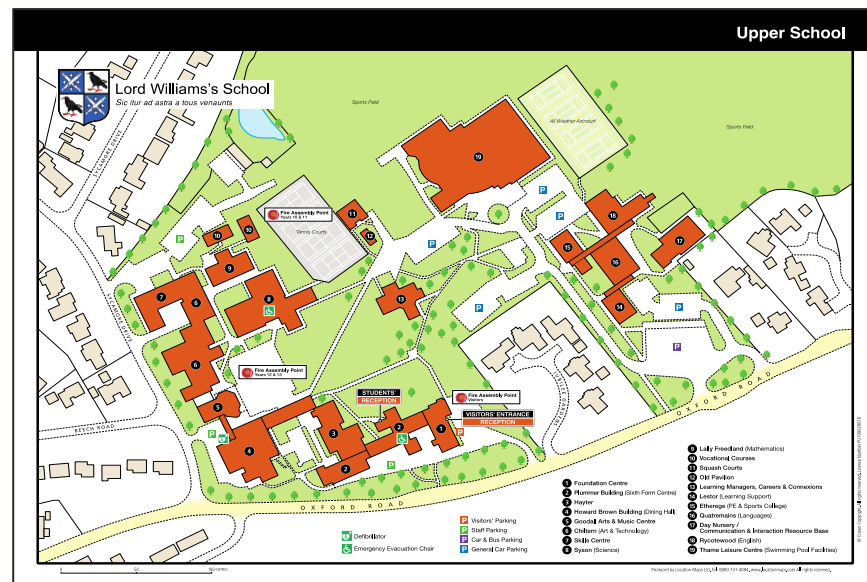
Thame Leisure Centre

Map reference and location	Map reference 1 Oxford Road, Thame
Date built	Centre built in 1982. Pool constructed in 2003. Health & Fitness refurbished in 2009.
Facilities	Swimming pool (5 lane main pool plus learner pool) 4 court sports hall Small hall Dance studio Spinning studio 60 station gym
Ownership	Local Authority/Voluntary Controlled
Operating status	Local Authority – Leisure management contract to GLL
Quality	Extensive refurbishment in 2009
Accessibility	Opening hours; Mon – Fri 06.00 – 22.30, Sat & Sun 07.00 – 22.00 Public access. Gym membership available. Sports Hall only available after 6pm as in use by Lord Williams School until then. On site car-parking (172 spaces) and 45 bicycle racks. Number 280 bus stop outside centre (Thame to Aylesbury) and 8 other stops in Thame.

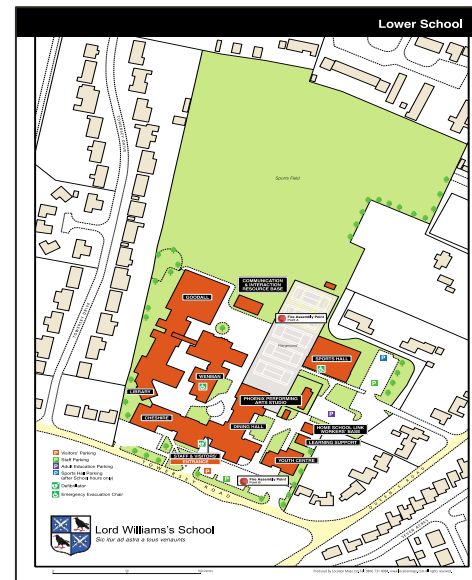


Lord Williams Upper School

Map reference and location	Map reference 2 Oxford Road, Thame
Date built	Artificial pitch constructed in 2007, Squash courts constructed in 1982.
Facilities	2 squash courts (in stand alone building) 4 tennis courts (not used) Sand dressed full size synthetic turf pitch Cricket pitch 2 x Rugby pitches 2 x Senior Football pitches
Ownership	School
Operating status	School
Quality	Refurbishment of squash courts in 2005.
Accessibility	Facilities are available for hire out of school hours. There is limited community use of the natural turf pitches. Booking are undertaken through contacting school. On site car-parking and Number 280 bus stop outside school (Thame to Aylesbury) and 8 other stops in Thame.



Lord Williams Lower School	
Map reference and location	Map reference 3 Towersey Road, Thame
Date built	Pitches built in 1971 and sports hall constructed in 1995.
Facilities	4 court sports hall 2 x senior football pitch 1 x senior rugby pitch 5 x tennis courts
Ownership	School
Operating status	School
Quality	No recent refurbishment
Accessibility	Facilities are available for hire out of school hours. There is limited community use of natural turf pitches. Bookings are undertaken through contacting the school. On site car-parking Bus service to Thame Town Hall or North Street



Thame Sports (Tennis & Bowls) Club

Map reference and location	Map reference 4 Chiltern Grove, Queens Road, Thame
Date built	Not known. Club established in 1924.
Facilities	Bowls green 4 macadam tennis courts 2 grass tennis courts
Ownership	Club
Operating status	Club
Quality	Courts and green are in good condition Pavilion is old and in need of renovation/replacement
Accessibility	Open Membership Limited parking available Public transport nearest stop Town Hall (5 routes) or North Street



Meadow View Park – home to Thame Football Partnership

Map reference and location	Map reference 5 Tythrop Way, Thame
Date built	2010
Facilities	Floodlit & enclosed senior football pitch 2 x Senior football pitch 1 x junior pitch 6 x mini/junior pitches Small sized 3 rd Generation Artificial Grass Pitch Clubhouse with changing & social facilities
Ownership	Local Authority – leased to Club
Operating status	Club
Quality	Good quality.
Accessibility	Facility open for public hire Club membership system in operation On site car-parking for 150 cars plus bicycles Public transport 280 bus to Queens Close.



Chinnor RFC

Map reference and location

Map reference 6
Kingsey Road, Thame

Date built

1987

Facilities

4 x senior rugby pitches, two floodlit
Clubhouse with social and changing facilities
Junior pitches on land not formally secured

Ownership

Club

Operating status

Club

Quality

Good quality and well maintained

Accessibility

Facility open for public hire
Club membership system in operation
On site car-parking for 100 cars plus bicycles
Public transport 280 bus to North Street



Thame Town Cricket Club

Map reference and location	Map reference 7 Church Meadow, Thame
Date built	1975
Facilities	Cricket pitch Clubhouse with social area and changing
Ownership	Freehold by Thame Town Council – leased to Cricket Club
Operating status	Club
Quality	Ageing building that does not comply with ECB requirements and is in need of replacement. Pitch quality very good.
Accessibility	Facility open for public hire Open membership system in operation Limited on site car-parking shared with adjacent Barns Centre Public transport 280 bus stop to Cricket Ground



Thame Racquets Fitness Centre

Map reference and location	Map reference 8 North Street
Date built	1970
Facilities	4 squash courts Fitness studio 40 station Gym Social facilities
Ownership	Private
Operating status	Private
Quality	Fair. Some facilities in need of refurbishment
Accessibility	Opening hours; Mon – Fri 06.00 – 22.30, Sat & Sun 07.00 – 22.00 Some public/pay and play access. Gym and squash membership available. Public car-park available on site. Number 280 bus stop at Town Hall and North Street.



Southern Road Recreation Ground

Map reference and location	Map reference 9 Southern Road, Thame
Date built	n/a
Facilities	1 x senior football pitch 2 x mini soccer pitches Pavilion with changing rooms
Ownership	Local Authority
Operating status	Local Authority
Quality	Pavilion appears in need of updating
Accessibility	Pay and Play, booked through Council



Thame Skate Park

Map reference and location	Map reference 10 Tythrop Way, Thame
Date built	Not known
Facilities	Sheet metal and plyboard ramp, concrete base and associated seating.
Ownership	Local Authority – Thame Town Council
Operating status	Local Authority – Thame Town Council
Quality	Ageing and in need of replacement. Maintenance costs are high.
Accessibility	Turn up and play.



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Demand; consultation and data review

Demand

From the facility audit exercise we have identified the quantity, condition and context of sport and leisure facilities that are being provided in Thame. It is important to understand 'where we are now' in terms of the sports facility infrastructure and how it actually caters for the Thame community.

Understanding how the existing facility stock actually meets the needs of its users is a key element for the Sports Facility Strategy.

This section considers the views and opinions of different sports and the users of the current facilities. More general information about the characteristics towards sport that the Thame population displays, and national and regional priorities from the National Governing Bodies of Sport are also reviewed.

The findings are summarised and have been gathered through consultation and from use of theoretical strategic planning tools and national governing body data. We also consider and explore any issues that face the users and operators of these facilities, and in particular consider the impact of future growth in the town.

Information sources

Sources to inform the demand assessment are as follows:

Club/facility provider consultation	National governing body consultation (responses received)	Data reviewed
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thame Town Cricket Club• Thame Hockey Club• Chinnor RFC• Thame Badminton Club• Lord Williams School• Thame Netball Club• Racquets• Thame Football Partnership• Thame Swimming Club• Thame Bowls and Tennis Club• Thame Leisure Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• England & Wales Cricket Board• Rugby Football Union• The Football Association• Lawn Tennis Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sport England Local Sport Profile• Sport England Market Segmentation Tool

Club and facility provider consultation

The list of consultees was agreed at the outset of the study with the Council.

Each consultee was initially contacted via email or by telephone, and meetings arranged for further discussions as appropriate.

Information gathered and discussed with each consultee covered the following topics:

- Membership, teams and user information (numbers and catchment) and trends over recent years
- Current facilities they have access to
- Opportunities and aspiration
- Issues and challenges

The findings for each are summarised and presented on the following pages.

THAME TOWN CRICKET CLUB



Club information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & challenges
<p>Club has played at Church Meadow since 1975.</p> <p>Has achieved the ECB 'Clubmark' accreditation and is an identified Focus Club.</p> <p>Currently operates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 senior teams • 5 junior teams <p>Over 160 members</p>	<p>Cricket pitch (13 wickets), clubhouse and nets on site which are used by the Club.</p> <p>Utilises cricket pitch at Lord Williams Upper School for third XI team.</p> <p>Church Meadow also hosts representative matches and fixtures for Oxford Brookes University and memorial games.</p>	<p>Potential for partnership with other clubs and organisations, and possible facility share</p> <p>Utilise the facility all year round</p> <p>Support ongoing sports development with live-in coach</p> <p>Club has developed proposals for a replacement clubhouse as shown overleaf.</p>	<p>Clubhouse facility is inadequate</p> <p>Club considers this does not match their playing standard and is not on par with other sporting clubs (football and rugby) in the town.</p> <p>Changing facilities do not comply with ECB and Sport England guidelines</p> <p>Retention of players as other clubs have better facilities.</p> <p>Capital funding to deliver clubhouse replacement</p>

Thame Town Cricket Club – desired improvements

Replacement pavilion to provide:

- ECB compliant Changing facilities
- Multi-purpose/community rooms
- Grounds maintenance store



THAME HOCKEY CLUB



Club information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & challenges
<p>Club was formed in 2008.</p> <p>Currently operates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 senior teams • 3 junior teams <p>Growing membership</p>	<p>Uses the synthetic turf pitch at Lord Williams Upper School for matches and training.</p> <p>Has no permanent clubhouse facility of its own</p> <p>Holds post match refreshments & hospitality at Thame Leisure Centre at present.</p>	<p>Potential for partnership with other clubs to establish a permanent home base for post match refreshments and social activities.</p> <p>The Club is in discussions with Thame Cricket Club about shared use of their facility.</p> <p>It is considered that this would help grow membership and make the club more sustainable.</p>	<p>Having no home base is a major issue.</p> <p>Would like more pitch time for training but capacity and other bookings on the sand dressed pitch prevents this. Will need more access to pitch time if club grows and this is already becoming a constraint for coaching and training.</p>



Club information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & challenges
<p>Club formed in 1963 and moved to Kingsey Road in 1987.</p> <p>Currently operates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 senior teams • 1 vets team • 5 junior teams • 7 mini teams <p>Over 1,000 club members</p> <p>First XV competes at National League 2 South.</p> <p>Has secured the RFU Club Mark Award and is an accredited Club.</p>	<p>4 senior pitches on site, one of which is floodlit. However only has secure use of 3.5 of these pitches.</p> <p>Clubhouse with changing facilities and good social rooms.</p> <p>Club has access to additional land on Thame Showground but this is not secure. Mini pitches are currently marked out on this land.</p>	<p>Proposals developed for four phases of redevelopment, as shown overleaf.</p> <p>Support from the RFU and other sporting and funding agencies has been secured.</p> <p>Planning permission obtained for facility improvements.</p> <p>Potential for longer term improvements such as conversion of a natural turf pitch to an artificial surface.</p>	<p>Insufficient changing facilities</p> <p>The club needs further social space – size of membership has outgrown what it has. Also needs more spectator accommodation.</p> <p>Lack of security over number of pitches needed to play and train. Four pitches isn't enough.</p> <p>Club has had to prioritise its needs and distilled these into four target projects.</p> <p>Capital funding to deliver all of the identified improvements.</p>

Chinnor RFC – proposed improvements

Phase A – Extension to changing rooms/covered viewing terrace

Phase B – New entrance, stairs and lift/kitchen extension

Phase C – Two new changing rooms/increased function space

Phase D – Covered grandstand



THAME BADMINTON CLUB

Club information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & challenges
<p>Offers competitive opportunities in leagues in Oxford and Aylesbury.</p> <p>Operates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 mens teams • 1 mixed doubles team <p>No junior membership.</p> <p>Has approximately 50 senior members and is growing rapidly.</p> <p>Plays all year round.</p>	<p>Uses courts at Thame Leisure Centre</p> <p>Training nights are on Wednesday evenings 8 -10pm</p> <p>Matches on Mondays</p>	<p>Aspirations to attract more female players – club has higher male membership</p>	<p>Club does not have a social facility although it does have an active social side.</p> <p>Club does not have access to all four courts at the Leisure Centre on Wednesdays. Fourth court only available after 8.40pm.</p> <p>Would welcome better quality nets and for the floor to be improved at the Leisure Centre.</p>

THAME FOOTBALL PARTNERSHIP



Club information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & challenges
<p>Thame Football Partnership was formed in 2009 and moved into Meadow View Park in 2010.</p> <p>Formed of Thame United FC and Thame Boys, Girls and Youth FC.</p> <p>Currently operates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 senior teams (inc ladies & vets) • 11 youth teams • 10 junior/mini teams • 3 girls teams <p>Senior team competes at Step 5 of the Non league pyramid in the Hellenic League.</p>	<p>Senior floodlit pitch is a stadium ground.</p> <p>Two further senior pitches and four junior and mini pitches.</p> <p>Small sized 3rd Generation Artificial Grass Pitch on site.</p> <p>Clubhouse with social facilities and six changing rooms.</p> <p>Uses artificial pitch at Lord Williams School for training and occasional uses of pitches at Southern Road.</p>	<p>Priorities are to increase number of pitches.</p> <p>Small sided artificial pitch not big enough to accommodate training. Also, does not generate income levels that had been hoped for.</p>	<p>Club is at capacity and needs additional pitch space, particularly for full size pitches.</p> <p>Ideally would need a second full size pitch.</p> <p>Further mini /junior pitches also needed.</p> <p>Irrigation to outside pitches would improve quality and capacity.</p>

THAME SPORTS CLUB (TENNIS & BOWLS)



Club information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & challenges
<p>Thame Bowls Club</p> <p>Membership over 125 and has grown from c 80 members five years ago</p>	Natural turf bowls green	<p>Floodlighting has increased capacity.</p> <p>There is now more scope for pay and play opportunities.</p> <p>Club owns its land therefore could redevelop and relocate. Suitable relocation sites may be challenging to secure.</p> <p>Covered courts desirable</p> <p>Important for bowls green to remain accessible and in walking distance of town centre</p>	<p>Clubhouse is too small to accommodate both clubs</p> <p>Clubhouse is ageing and unattractive, expensive to maintain</p> <p>Facilities offer limited scope for winter use</p> <p>No viewing of sports from inside building</p> <p>Capital to deliver improved clubhouse</p>
<p>Thame Tennis Club</p> <p>Membership now exceeds 300, even split between senior and junior players</p>	Six courts, all floodlit		

Thame Sports Club – potential improvements

New clubhouse to provide:

- Social lounge
- Community room
- Changing facilities
- Viewing galleries



Information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & challenges
<p>Managed by GLL/Better under a 10 year contract with SODC, commenced in September 2014.</p> <p>Range of membership options across gym, swimming and activity programmes.</p> <p>Membership exceeds 10% of the Thame population.</p> <p>Users include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General public • 5 x badminton clubs • 4 x martial arts clubs • Fencing club • 2 x Basketball club • Dance clubs 	<p>Recently refurbished facilities:</p> <p>Swimming pool (5 lane main pool plus learner pool)</p> <p>4 court sports hall</p> <p>Small hall</p> <p>Dance studio</p> <p>Spinning studio</p> <p>60 station gym</p> <p>No current plans for expansion.</p>	<p>Opportunities to promote activities for Over 50s.</p> <p>Would like to develop a table tennis club and has recently secured new equipment.</p>	<p>Parking is inadequate and is particularly problematic when the school has events on.</p> <p>General public use of the pool and sports hall is limited due to programming of activities and number of local clubs that use the facilities.</p> <p>Demand for new activities that cannot be accommodated such as roller hockey</p>

RACQUETS FITNESS CLUB

Club information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & challenges
<p>Privately owned and operated centre. Range of membership options across gym, squash and activity programmes and pay and play opportunities.</p> <p>Membership has fallen below 10% of the Thame population in recent years.</p> <p>Home to the following clubs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thame Squash Club • Thame Runners 	<p>Facilities:</p> <p>4 squash courts</p> <p>Strength & conditioning studio</p> <p>40 station gym</p> <p>Outdoor exercise/gym area</p> <p>Social lounge area</p>	<p>Would like to increase classes because of demand for activities.</p> <p>Promoting and developing links with schools and running coaching sessions during and after school – would like to expand this more.</p>	<p>Centre has been impacted in membership terms following refurbishment of TLC.</p> <p>Gym membership important for overall sustainability of the centre.</p> <p>Car-parking is a challenge – farmers market days are a particular challenge.</p> <p>Funding to deliver improvements</p>

THAME SWIMMING CLUB

Club information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & challenges
<p>Club launched in 2009, starting with 63 members.</p> <p>Now has 120 members and a waiting list.</p> <p>Operates a Swimming Academy and a Learn to Swim programme.</p>	<p>Uses pool at Thame Leisure Centre.</p> <p>Also uses pools at Risborough Springs and Headington Girls School.</p>	<p>Membership demand is high and club has a waiting list.</p>	<p>Training capacity is 8-9 swimmers per lane. 5 lane pool at TLC limits this to 40 swimmers. Programming and public use of the pool at TLC means they cannot access as much pool time as they would like.</p> <p>TLC not suitable for competition.</p> <p>Lack of access to a competition pool limits club's ability to grow.</p>

LORD WILLIAMS SCHOOL

School information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & Challenges
School split over two sites; Upper and Lower School	<p>Lower School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Court Sports Hall • 5 x tennis courts • Senior football pitch • Senior rugby pitch <p>Upper School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthetic turf pitch • Cricket pitch • Senior football pitch • Rugby pitch • 4 x tennis courts (not used) 	<p>School is seeking to consolidate upper and lower schools on to an extended Upper School site</p> <p>Lower School site identified in TNP for redevelopment.</p> <p>Replace existing sports facilities with new, modern facilities that cater for demand.</p>	<p>Potential for loss of sports facilities if Lower School site is redeveloped – Sport England may object to proposals.</p> <p>The Lower School site is identified in the Neighbourhood Plan for redevelopment.</p>

THAME SKATE PARK

Site information	Facilities & access	Opportunities & Aspirations	Issues & Challenges
<p>The current skatepark has a mix of users from across all varieties of wheeled based sports including skateboarding, BMXing, rollerblading and scooters.</p> <p>In recent research undertaken by the Thame Skatepark Project Working Group they found that 42% of the users visited the park from 3 to 5 times per week, with 19% visiting 6 to 7 times per week.</p>	<p>Ageing skatepark in need of modernisation.</p> <p>Facility is managed by the Town Council and has open access.</p>	<p>Planning permission has been secured for a new skatepark and costs identified of £250,000.</p> <p>The park is an important facility for non-traditional sports and attracts a range of users.</p> <p>An improved park would increase accessibility and appeal.</p>	<p>Funding to deliver the new park.</p> <p>Council fundraising has secured £165,000.</p> <p>An application to Sport England's Inspired Fund has been recently refused and other avenues of funding are being pursued.</p>

National Governing Body consultation

National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) were contacted to provide their views on sports facility provision in Thame now and in the future.

Again, the guidance notes from Sport England in respect of Identifying Needs & Opportunities was used for NGBs to complete in addition to telephone discussions.

Summaries of the consultation carried out and the responses that were received are provided overleaf – not all NGBs responded.



National priorities & strategic investment	<p>Key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase provision of integrated changing facilities Improve quantity and quality of pitches and floodlighting Increase quantity of artificial pitches 	<p>Key priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult male participation Adult female participation Youth to adult transition 	<p>Facility Strategy is currently awaiting approval from LTA.</p>	<p>One Game Strategy – focus on reaching, recruiting and retention.</p>
Is Thame an identified area?	<p>RFU plan does not work on priority areas but on priority clubs. Chinnor RFC are seeking to develop a 4 phase redevelopment of their facilities, and the RFU would support this approach.</p>	<p>Yes, based on the size and Charter Standard status of Thame Football Partnership there is an identified need for a full size 3rd Generation Artificial Pitch for the Thame area.</p>	<p>Oxford is an identified priority area but unsure whether this would include Thame.</p>	<p>Thame is an important traditional area of cricket development and the ECB recognises the need to continue to invest revenue into sports development and capital into enhancing facilities.</p>
Scope for growth	<p>There is an under representation of rugby pitches in the Thame area. The new Playing Pitch Strategy being carried out by SODC will confirm this. It is considered there is significant scope for growth in the area and the Rugby World Cup 2015 will be a springboard for this.</p>	<p>With additional housing in Thame, the expansion of housing provision in Oxford and the pull of the facilities at Meadow View Park we would see there would be potential for further growth in the area.</p> <p>Scope for growth also in women's game, which Chinnor FC are promoting.</p>	<p>Regional Participation Manager is active in Oxford and this may give rise for additional demand locally.</p>	<p>Yes, and there is scope for a more joined up approach, potentially with other local clubs.</p>
Threats	<p>Lack of accessible space to grow.</p> <p>Need for pitches or a 3G pitch</p>		<p>Not aware of any.</p>	<p>Technical specification of the proposed new pavilion needs to be reviewed.</p>

Sport Participation

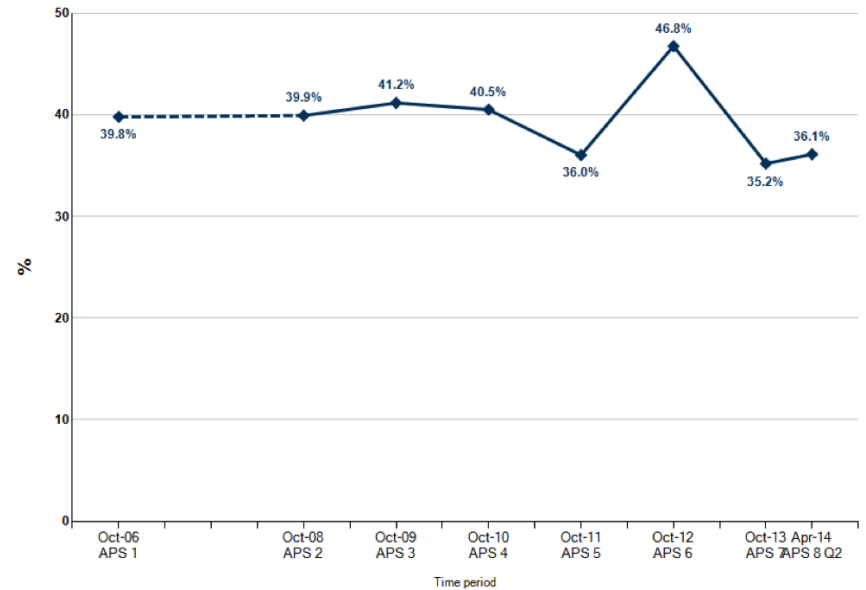
Active People Survey

This was commissioned by Sport England to study the pattern of sporting behavior with samples of between 500 to 1,000 people in every local authority area. To date eight surveys have been completed and tracked trends across a seven year period. Trends included participation, volunteering, coaching, facility satisfaction and club membership.

Participation is the key trend to assist with understanding demand.

Data is only available at Local Authority level and therefore is not specific to Thame. It does however provide an indication of how active the population in a geographical location is and is useful to compare with regional and national figures.

For South Oxfordshire, participation in sport at least once a week has been consistently slightly above the regional average since 2005 and peaked at 46.8% in 2012. Current levels however are recorded as 36.1%, just slightly below the regional average of 36.9%



Market segmentation

This is valuable data from Sport England on participation in sport and physical activity. Built from a combination of 'Taking Part' and 'Active People' surveys and Experian sourced social-demographic data, it classifies the population into one of 19 sports market segments.

The segments help explain individual's habits, motivations, attitudes, behaviour and barriers towards sport and active recreation; they also provide additional context through lifestyle information such as age, affluence, marital status, health statistics and preferred marketing and communication channels.

Data covering a 15km catchment from the centre of Thame has been explored using different searches and data input. Searches included sporting behaviour, preferred sports, motivators for sport and barriers to stop people doing more sport.

The purpose of this was to assess the current type and degree of sport participation and to apply this to what might be appropriate sports provision for an increased population in this area.

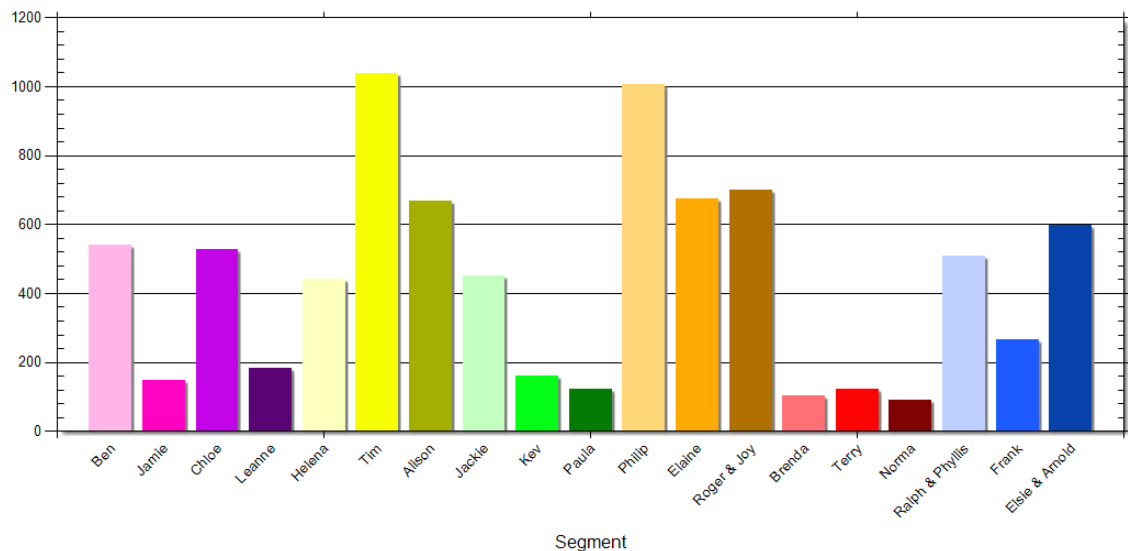
It should be noted that the Market Segmentation data only applies to the **adult** population in that catchment.

The findings are presented overleaf.

Adult population in catchment

8,346

Breakdown of Thame catchment into segments



Dominant market segments

Segment name	Description & characteristics
'Tim'	Settling down males Sporty male professionals, buying a house and settling down with partner.
'Philip'	Comfortable mid life males Mid-life professional, sporty males with older children and more time for themselves.
'Roger & Joy'	Early retirement couples Free time couples nearing the end of their careers
'Alison'	Stay at home Mum's Mums with a busy, but comfortable life.
'Elaine'	Empty nest career ladies Mid-life professionals who have more time for themselves since their children left home.

Market segmentation – snapshot of findings

Search type	Data findings
Once a week participation	20 – 40% of population
Member of a sports club	20 – 40% of population
Taken part in competition in past year	10 – 20% of population
Play sport to make friends	10 – 20% of population
Do sport to lose weight	5 – 10% of population
Better facilities would make me do more sport	5 – 10% of population
Work commitments stop me doing sport	20 – 40% of population
Take part in sport just because I enjoy it	40 – 80% of population

Sport	Currently do	Would like to	% demand of existing
Keep fit/gym	1565	613	39%
Football	561	112	19%
Cricket	91	52	57%
Tennis	219	228	104%
Rugby	140	40	28%
Swimming	1274	1175	91%
Badminton	214	179	83%
Bowls	91	26	28%
Hockey	42	28	66%
Martial arts	95	68	71%
Individual sport	3696	2851	77%

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Supply and demand assessment

Current picture

The assessment has identified that there are ten sites that serve the Thame sporting community. These range in terms of scope and extent of facilities but all are considered to be important parts of the sports landscape. All cater for local people, and collectively offer a good range of sports and activity opportunities across all age groups.

There is a healthy range of sports clubs and as a result Thame residents are able to participate in many different sports without the need to travel out of the locality.

It is evident however that some of the existing facilities are no longer able to support their growing membership and that capacity to accommodate any further growth is limited. In particular, the fabric and quality of buildings that support many of the team and pitch or court based sports have reached their lifespan and need to be replaced.

Only three of the sporting venues have benefitted from any major investment in the past 20 years.

Before considering the impact of any future population growth in the town, it is necessary to establish whether the current provision of sports facilities is appropriate for the existing population.

This has been considered by taking the quantity standards recommended by the 2008 Open Space Study and applying these to the Thame population data and comparing this to the facilities identified through the audit exercise.

The process and assessment is set out overleaf.

Application of Quantity Standards (outdoor facilities)

The SODC adopted quantity standard for Formal Sports Provision (outdoor) is 1.6ha per 1,000 population.

The population of Thame is 11,567.

Application of the adopted quantity standards would equate to a requirement of **18.5 ha** in total of playing pitch and court space.

Actual total site areas are not known. Therefore in assessing the quantity of provision that exists in Thame in comparison to the requirement based on adopted standards, we have taken the playing pitch or court area based on Sport England Comparative Pitch Sizes guidance and FA Pitch Dimensions guidance. This applies to the pitch and run off area only and makes **no allowance** for ancillary facilities such as land where clubhouses and car-parks might be provided. It is not known whether this additional space was used to inform the standards.

The results are shown opposite and suggest that in quantity terms, there is more playing pitch and court space in Thame than the standards require.

However, it must be noted that the quantity standards are District wide and when applied to a small catchment area are not wholly reliable, particularly when considering the different catchments for different pitch types.

Pitch/court type	Length (m)	Width (m)	Total	Qty	Total (sq m)
Senior football pitch	117	76	8892	8	71136
Junior football pitch	86	56	4816	3	14448
Mini football pitch	46	36	1656	6	9936
Rugby pitch	144	70	10080	6.5	65220
Cricket pitch	111	115	12765	2	25530
Synthetic pitch	101	63	6363	1.25	7954
Tennis Courts	36	18	648	11	7128
Squash courts					
Sports Halls					
Pool space					
Bowls Greens	40	40	1600	1	1600
Total pitch/court area					203252
Conversion to ha					20.33

Application of Pitch Specific Standards

Examining this further, we have looked at the specific pitch types and standards and have also applied this to the Thame population and compared this to the known current provision.

Facility Standards

Pitch/court	Qty	Per population	Population type
Senior football pitch	1	525	16-45 year old
Junior football pitch	1	150	10-15 year olds
Mini football pitch	1	150	6-9 year olds
Senior rugby pitch	1	2800	8 - 45 year old
Cricket pitch	1	1400	11 -55 year olds males
Hockey pitch (synthetic turf)	1	15000	
Tennis court	1	1250	

Population breakdown for Thame (National Statistics census data 2011)

Pitch/court	Thame population for type	
Senior football pitch	4099	16-45 year old
Junior football pitch	902	10-15 year olds
Mini football pitch	667	6-9 year olds
Senior rugby pitch	5668	8-45 year old
Cricket pitch	3585	11-55 year old males
Hockey pitch (synthetic turf)	11567	All
Tennis court	11567	All

Calculation

Pitch/court type	Required	Actual	Surplus/shortfall
Senior football pitch	7.81	8	0.19
Junior football pitch	6.01	3	-3.01
Mini football pitch	4.45	6	1.55
Rugby pitch	2.02	6.5	4.48
Cricket pitch	2.56	2	-0.56
Synthetic pitch	0.26	1.25	0.99
Tennis Courts	9.25	11	1.75
Bowls Greens	0.89	1	0.11

Application of the pitch specific standards to the current supply in Thame suggests that there is an excess of senior and mini football and rugby pitches, tennis courts, synthetic pitches and an undersupply of junior football and cricket pitches, based on population figures.

However, drive-time application of standards would extend the catchment, and subsequently the number of facilities, that could theoretically serve the Thame community.

Future demand

Based on a projected new housing supply of 775, and assuming an average of 2.27 persons per household (SODC figures), the population for Thame might increase to 13,326.

If the same spatial and pitch specific standards were applied to this increased population, this would generated a theoretical requirement of:

SODC standard for Formal Sports Provision (outdoor) is 1.6ha per 1,000 population

Population of Thame forecast to be 13,326.

This equates to a requirement of **21.32 ha** in total of playing pitch and court space.

New provision of 1 ha might therefore be required.

It should be noted again however that the existing provision only accounts for actual playing pitch space and does not allow for ancillary facilities.

Population pitch specific requirement

Pitch/court type	Future	Current	Surplus/shortfall
Senior football pitch	9	8	-1
Junior football pitch	6.68	3	-3.68
Mini football pitch	5.12	6	0.88
Rugby pitch	2.33	6.5	4.17
Cricket pitch	2.9	2	-0.9
Synthetic pitch	0.5	1.25	0.75
Tennis Courts	10.66	11	0.34
Bowls Greens	1.03	1	-0.03

Application of the pitch specific standards to consider the future supply for Thame indicates that there will a future demand for junior and senior football and one further cricket pitch.

This assumes also that all existing facilities are retained.

Application of facility specific Standards (indoor facilities)

The SODC standards recommend the following quantity standards for indoor sports facility provision:

Squash courts	1 court per 5,000 people
Sports Halls	1 four court hall per 14,000 people
Pool space	10.23 sq m per 1,000 people

It must be noted that a 15 minute drive time also applies to these standards which would extend beyond the Strategy catchment area.

As such, application of these standards solely to the Thame population produces an inaccurate picture.

We have therefore extended the catchment for these facilities, and instead have used the wider Thame analysis area that was used by SODC to inform the Leisure and Sports Facilities Strategy in 2011.

This identified a population of **22,198** as opposed to the local Thame population we have applied for other categories.

This produces current and future demand picture as follows, assuming all existing facilities are retained (or re-provided for example if Lord Williams Lower School is redeveloped)

Facility	Number required	Provision	Surplus/ shortfall
<u>Current</u>			
Squash Court	4.4	6	1.6
Pool space	227 sq m	300sq m	73 sq m
Sports Halls	1.59	2	0.41
<u>Future</u>			
Squash Court	4.8	6	1.2
Pool space	245 sq m	300sq m	55 sq m
Sports Halls	1.7	2	0.3

Analysis

Applying the spatial standards to the current and forecast population of Thame results, in theory, with there being sufficient formal sports provision to meet the needs of the Thame community now and with a small shortfall in the future.

When applying the pitch specific standards, there are existing deficiencies in pitch space now and in the future for football and cricket.

The consultation agrees in part with some of the calculation and assessment findings however demand for particular types of pitches is greater than the pitch specific assessment indicates. This, in part, is likely to be due to lack of access to some of the existing facilities.

It is also important to reiterate that application of the adopted District standards to a small local area such as this can produce results that are not reliable.

In addition, there is a very real qualitative need for improvement to many of the existing facilities, specifically to the ancillary buildings that serve pitches and courts.

A summary and comparison of the audit, assessment and consultation findings is presented overleaf.

Outdoor sports facility evaluation at a glance

Spatial standards assessment	Pitch specific quantity assessment	Consultation/data feedback
Current requirement for 18.5ha Current provision of 20.33 ha (Note: pitch/court space only)	Current surplus/deficit: Senior football 0.19 Junior football -3.01 Mini football 1.55 Rugby 4.48 Cricket -0.56 Hockey (Synthetic) 0.99 Tennis courts 1.75 Bowls green 0.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insufficient secured space for senior and junior rugby pitches and an increased population will exacerbate this• Cricket pavilion in need of replacement• Bowls and tennis pavilion in need of replacement• Need for additional senior floodlit football pitch• Strategic need for a 3G Artificial pitch• Rugby ancillary facilities need increased capacity• No home base for hockey club• Need to deliver an improved skate park for non-traditional sports users
Future requirement for 21.32ha, an increase of 1ha. (Note: pitch/court space only)	Future surplus/deficit: Senior football -1.00 Junior football -3.68 Mini football 0.88 Rugby 4.17 Cricket -0.90 Hockey (Synthetic) 0.75 Tennis courts 0.34 Bowls green -0.03 Note: assumes no additional new pitch space has been provided and that existing facilities have been retained.	

Indoor sports facility evaluation at a glance

Indoor facility needs		Facility specific quantity assessment		Consultation/data feedback	
Current population needs:		Current surplus/deficit:		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Available sports hall space struggles to meet demand.• Neither existing sports hall is available during the daytime for public use• Two of the existing squash courts require renovation at Racquets Fitness Club• Car-parking at Thame Leisure Centre and Racquets fitness Centre is problematic as the parking is shared with other users.• Market segmentation identified high latent demand for indoor sports including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swimming• Badminton• Martial arts• When membership data for health and fitness is combined, it accounts for over 30% of the Thame adult population• The sports hall at Thame Leisure Centre is in need of improvement.	
Sports Halls	1.59	Sports Halls	0.41		
Squash courts	4.4	Squash courts	1.6		
Pool space	227 sq m	Pool space	73sq m		
Future population needs:		Future surplus/deficit:			
Sports Halls	1.7	Sports Halls	0.3		
Squash courts	4.8	Squash courts	1.2		
Pool space	245 sq m	Pool space	55 sq m		
		Note: assumes no additional new facilities would be provided and that existing provision is retained.			

Summary findings

Headlines

In spatial terms the existing quantity of sports facilities appears to be appropriate to serve the Thames community. Application of the facility specific standards however provides a result that is inconsistent with some of the consultation findings.

It is acknowledged that some of the standards apply a catchment that would extend beyond the boundary of the Thames wards, and as a consequence are not reliable in the context of this study. Specifically, the 5 mile catchment that applies to many of the facility types would include a greater number of facilities than the audit for Thames has covered.

As such, it is considered that consultation findings and discussion with users about needs and opportunities are more important and reliable data to inform the Strategy than simple application of the spatial quantity standards.

Some of the existing facilities are located at school sites where access, particularly during the daytime, is not possible. Therefore whilst in quantity terms provision may appear sufficient, their usability may be compromised.

If school provision were removed from the audit there would be under provision in many of the different pitch types.

It is therefore important that current levels of provision are maintained, and where possible access is improved.

Assessment conclusions

Evaluation of the supply and demand assessment has sought to identify key issues and opportunities, and to prioritise these for delivery.

Delivery will be dependent on a number of factors including funding, planning and the capacity within the organisations themselves, and these considerations have been identified where possible and with further information as appropriate.

Capital funding to facilitate delivery is explored further in the next section of this Strategy.

The evaluation considers each facility type in turn and considers the impact on sports facility provision of any action.

This has informed the the nature of the action, whether this is essential or desirable and if the need to provide the improvement is a short, medium or long-term priority. For the purpose of a quantity audit, the population driven standards only have been used and considerations such as accessibility drawn from the consultation exercise.

Sport/facility type	Current and future need	Opportunity	Cost (estimate)	Priority
Football	A full size 3 rd Generation Artificial Grass pitch for matches and training	Through relocation of LWS Lower School or through conversion of existing pitch at Meadow View Park or Chinnor RFC.	£550,000	Medium
	2 x junior pitches	Improvements to drainage on existing space at Meadow View Park	£40,000	Short
	Enhanced training facility	Extension of existing small Artificial Grass Pitch at Meadow View Park	£150,000	Short
Rugby	Enhanced changing and social facilities	Clubhouse renovation and expansion	£500,000	Short
	Secure additional land for pitches	Showground land adjacent to Club	£100,000 plus land costs	Short
		Potential for 3rd Generation Artificial Grass Pitch as per football (above)		
Cricket	Replacement pavilion	Replace existing at Church Meadow with new build. Suggest current design is modified/scaled back. Note: Estimated costs currently higher than Sport England guidance.	£600,000.	Medium
Hockey	Retained Synthetic Turf Pitch at Lord Williams Upper School.	Facility retained at Lord Williams School.	£ 0	
	Access to a permanent social facility	Combined with Cricket pavilion project	£ 0	

Sport/facility type	Current and future need	Opportunity	Cost (estimate)	Priority
Tennis & Bowls	Replacement pavilion	Replace existing at Queens Road with new build	£300,000	Medium
Sports Halls	Retain existing number.	If Lord Williams Lower School hall is replaced at Upper school site, enhanced hall might offer scope for public access to Thame Leisure Centre hall to be improved. Parking provision at Thame Leisure Centre to be increased	£28,000	Long
	Improvements to floor at TLC			Short
	Re-provide enhanced hall if Lord Williams Lower School relocates		£100,000	Medium
Squash	Assessment suggest surplus of courts. Scope for rationalisation.	Consolidate usage onto single site at Racquets and refurbish 2 courts	£15,000	Medium
Swimming	No demand for additional pool space identified.	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wheeled/non-traditional sports	Improved Skatepark	Replacement park at Tythrop Way. Planning and some funding secured.	£250,000	Short
Total cost			£2.633million	

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Investment and delivery opportunities

Investment

New housing development proposed for Thame will bring with a requirement for developers to make provision for formal sports facilities. It is acknowledged that this provision is likely to be provided off site, with financial contributions being made available to deliver the required facilities.

The TNP Delivery Strategy identifies how such provision might be funded stating:

If financial contributions are required the SODC interim Planning Guidance published in Sept 2007 gave index-linked costs based on Sport England Sports Calculator(@Q42007). Based on an average occupancy rate of 2.27 this gives an indicative index linked cost per person of £326.61 for outdoor pitch provision and £300.27 for indoor sport provision (excluding land acquisition).

Using a proposed new population increase of 1,759 persons, the financial contributions required would be:

Outdoor sports provision;	£574,589
Indoor sports provision:	£528,175
Total	£1,102,764

- ☐ Subject to index linked increases
- ☐ Excludes the cost of any land required

Investment

If further funding were required to deliver the scope of facilities identified to meet the future sporting needs for Thame, it might be possible to secure additional investment from the National Governing Bodies of Sport to supplement any S106 contributions.

During the consultation exercise, NGBs were invited to comment on whether any capital support might be available for new or improved sports facility projects in Thame. The potential for any investment is identified overleaf, however, it must be noted that success of any funding awards would be case specific, and dependent on a number of factors and ability for each project to meet the funders specific criteria.

Key criteria that would apply to all opportunities for NGB investment would include:

- ☐ Security of tenure
- ☐ Strategic need
- ☐ Sustainability
- ☐ Meeting NGB key priorities (eg participation by certain age groups etc)
- ☐ Design compliance

It is estimated that up to £500,000 of grant investment through NGBs might be possible to access through clubs and facility providers to support improvements identified in this Strategy, subject to the ability to meet funders criteria.

Potential additional investment opportunities

Funder/NGB	Fund and/or priorities	Maximum available	Comments	Likelihood
Sport England	Inspired Fund – Smaller scale projects including building modernisation.	Up to £75,000	Very competitive fund but has open application process. Potential to support more than one project in Thame	Yes
	Improvement Fund	Up to £500,000		No
The Football Association	FA & Premier League Facilities Fund – priority supporting 3 rd Generation pitches and community club projects	Up to £500,000	Potential for investment in a new full size 3G pitch but would be dependent on location and delivery route	Possibly but not to maximum amount
ECB	Interest free loan scheme for a range of projects. Potential for ECB grant funding - TBC	Up to £20,000, potentially more via a grant	Applicants need to evidence they can service a loan	Yes
RFU	Loan funding available from the Rugby Football Foundation	Up to £100,000	Applicants need to evidence they can service a loan	Yes
LTA	Loan only funding available for clubhouse projects	Up to £100,000 as 50% of the total project cost	Applicants need to evidence they can service a loan	Yes
Other NGBs	Smaller pots of money available.	Subject to project	Project specific and amounts may vary.	Yes
Local Authority	Community Investment Fund – SODC	Up to £100,000 for each project	Has supported a number of schemes in Thame already	Yes

Summary

Thame is an active town with a healthy supply of sporting opportunities. There is strong representation across different indoor and outdoor sports, with established clubs and consistently growing memberships.

The current level of sports facility supply largely meets demand and is considered to be commensurate to the size of the local population. However, it is recognised that there are capacity issues at a number of existing facilities and that some of the facility stock is ageing and in need of replacement.

Furthermore, there are deficiencies in some types of facilities that need to be remedied, and this has been the case for some time.

It is evident that access to indoor sports facilities during the daytime is problematic. The potential relocation of Lord William Lower School to the Upper School site provides an opportunity to provide an enhanced sports hall. This may provide an opportunity for public access to the sports hall at Thame Leisure Centre to be improved as a result, particularly if programming changes can be implemented.

It is considered that current quantities of all existing facilities need to be retained. The only exception to this, and subject to comment from England Squash & Racketball, is in respect of squash courts. There is an over supply of 3 courts which suggest that viability for the long term for squash might be better achieved if consolidated onto one site.

If future housing development that is currently proposed for Thame is delivered, it is expected to create a population increase of 1,759. This would generate a demand for an additional area of 1 hectare of outdoor formal sports space.

Taking account of the audit and assessment findings, potential funding opportunities and delivery implications, recommendations have been identified and are as set out overleaf.

Ref	Recommendation	Location	Cost	Funded through
SFS1	Provision of 2 new rugby pitches/mini pitches	Chinnor RFC	£100,000 plus land	Developer contributions
SFS2	Expansion of small sized Artificial Grass Pitch at Meadow View Park	Meadow View Park	£150,000	Developer contributions, club fund raising and grant funding
SFS3	Replacement cricket pavilion	Church Meadow	£600,000	Developer contributions, club fund raising and grant funding
SFS4	Replacement bowls and tennis pavilion	Queens Road	£300,000	Developer contributions and grant funding
SFS5	Improvements to rugby changing & social facilities	Chinnor RFC	£500,000	Grant funding and club fund raising
SFS6	Drainage improvements to increase quantity of junior pitches	Meadow View Park	£40,000	Developer contributions
SFS7	Replacement skatepark	Tythrop Way	£250,000	Grant funding and developer contributions
SFS8	Squash court enhancements (if provision is lost elsewhere)	Racquets	£15,000	Developer contributions and Racquets
SFS9	Provision of Full size 3 rd Generation Artificial Grass Pitch – must be subject to community use agreement	Lord William Upper School or alternative site	£550,000	LWS school relocation or developer contributions and grant funding.
SFS10	Improvements to car-parking	Thame Leisure Centre	£100,000	Developer contributions/resulting from LWS relocation
SFS11	Refurbishment of sports hall floor	Thame Leisure Centre	£28,000	Developer contributions

Reflecting back on the aims and objectives of the Strategy, we consider how these might be met or addressed through the recommendations.

1. **To increase and sustain participation, through appropriate facility provision for increased activity and identify priority groups** – Having an identified facility stock that is appropriate for the size and characteristics of the population.
2. **Create opportunities for young people and provide wider value to the local community** – multi pitch sites and shared facilities offer value and choice.
3. **Facilitate improved health and quality of life, for those living and working in or visiting Thame** – accessible and affordable facilities. Maintaining the existing health and fitness facilities, improving access and visitor experience.
4. **Contribute to social cohesion and enjoyment** – investment in the social and ancillary facilities and making sure all clubs have appropriate home bases from which to grow.
5. **Bring economic benefit to the town** – making venues suitable for competitions and matches.
6. **Deliver facility provision through innovative, strong and long-term partnerships** – shared facilities between tennis & bowls, cricket and hockey, fitness and running
7. **Maximise available resources for investment and development of provision** – rationalising, enhancing and maximising what Thame has instead of just providing new.
8. **Identify potential funding sources and provide robust evidence to support bids for funding and obtaining developer contributions through the planning process** – bringing in developer contributions to provide match funding so that grant applications have a greater chance of success
9. **Have facilities that are sustainable and manageable** – ensuring provision is not duplicated and that improvements are based on actual need