

SODC Draft Sports and Leisure Strategy 2033

Strategy proposal	Thame Town Council comment
Football	
Full-size 3G pitch required at Meadow View Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported. Thame Football Partnership have informed us they have costed the scheme via feasibility work undertaken by the Football Foundation. Significant funding is likely from the Football Foundation, and the preferred contractor chosen.
Support a 3G pitch at Oxford Road to mitigate the loss of Lord Williams's Lower School playing pitches. The need to be confirmed once the housing allocation in the Local Plan has been confirmed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lord Williams's have informed us that the Oxford Road Site is no longer being made available by the land owner at an acceptable price. Furthermore, archaeological remains of national importance have been found to extend under the site and may be subject to a no-dig management policy. It is possible that the drainage and foundation works associated with a 3G pitch could not be supported in this location.
Rugby	
<p>Chinnor RFC must resist the loss of Lord Williams's Lower School pitches without their replacement</p> <p>Expand pitches into the surrounding showground area</p> <p>Improve/enlarge the clubhouse to include changing facilities</p> <p>Subject to feasibility provide AGP Reg 22 training pitch to mitigate loss of playing fields at Lord Williams's Lower School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It may be possible for Lord Williams's to utilise either Meadow View Park, or Chinnor RFC's facilities, particularly if they are improved (see Reg22 and expansion plans, below) There are already two pitches on the showground, plus training areas on land in the showground's ownership, but the club want more land. All of these pitches would need to be provided with greater legal certainty to guarantee their long-term availability. The first phase has completed. Chinnor RFC are considering options other than the planned, costly second phase for the required changing room improvements. S106 money remains available. Investigations are underway into improving an underutilised pitch. Chinnor RFC do not see this as fundamental to the Club's short or mid-term future but would work towards this should significant funding be found elsewhere. Improving the primary pitch lighting and changing facilities are greater short-term needs.
Cricket	
Needs new clubhouse as identified in the Thame Sports Facility Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new clubhouse is under construction and has reached roof level. Completion is estimated to be late Autumn 2018.
Hockey	
If growth continues, then consider a new 3G pitch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thame Hockey Club have seen a doubling of their membership over the past few years and interest in membership shows no sign of abating. The Town Council disagrees with the conclusion that further capacity will not be needed before 2026. The club currently rent an AGP from Lord Williams's Upper School but access is restricted, meaning each age group is limited to one training session per week. No other facilities are available other than changing rooms. Sunday floodlight (possibly planning?) restrictions mean that in the depth of winter pitch availability is shortened and some matches cannot be held. The Town Council does therefore question the

	Strategy's assumption that Wallingford is the only location for a new 3G pitch in order to explicitly free up hockey pitch availability.
Tennis & Bowls	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no recommendations given in the District's strategy but Thame's tennis and bowls clubs, who operate under the shared banner and facilities of Thame Sports Club, were awarded £250,000 by SODC in March 2018 to contribute towards a new clubhouse. It is intended that construction starts as early as October 2018. http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/news/2018/2018-03/quarter-million-pounds-awarded-sports-club-thame
Swimming	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thame Swimming Club are struggling to obtain adequate pool time for their club. They are in discussion with SODC Facilities staff regarding the spare capacity identified at Thame pool through the Sports and Leisure Strategy.
Fitness stations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three weaknesses have been identified with regards to the recommended growth strategy for fitness stations. Growth has been planned for an increase of 0.5% in visits per fitness station, per annum. This does not however accord with the doubling of use in Thame since 2014-15 to 1,340 visits per work station. The strategy does not identify peak-time use for the District's fitness stations; it cannot be imagined that the use of the fitness stations is spread evenly throughout the day. Comparison is made with the number of fitness stations per 1,000 head of population. England's average is 6.1; the Vale area, 4.7; but the District's level of 3.9 stations is not questioned as being above or below need, but just projected ahead as though the figure is naturally correct. When the above issues are linked, the strategy may well be under-recording the peak-time demand and availability for fitness stations.
Play Areas	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thame cannot accept the findings of this section of the report. No recognition has been made for example of Southern Road Recreation Ground, which contains around 25 pieces of play equipment, a fitness centre, a teen shelter, and a basketball hoop. This is adjacent to casual open space and a formal open football pitch. It is not listed, or mapped within the report and neither is Elms Park, a large open space with less play equipment and two MUGAs. Within the play area audit results (Figure 24) the same play area, the Queen Elizabeth Play Area, is listed 3 times. Such inaccuracies lend the Strategy's conclusions suspect.
Allotments	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two of Thame's major housing allocation sites should be completed within the next 2 years. Within these areas is proposed allotment space of 0.66 ha, split equally; and a further allocation site that is less advanced, will bring forward a further

	0.46 ha in allotment and community orchard space over the next 5 years.
Thame Sports Facilities Strategy	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Districts strategy refers to the final Thame Sports Facilities Strategy of March 2015. The final draft was not released until July 2015. It is possible the District do not have access to the correct version. • It is noted that Sport England do not consider Thame's Strategy as being robust (paragraph 2.100). This is presumably linked to the single issue of replacing Lord Williams's Lower School pitches following the school's intended move. Thame's Strategy was brought forward using Sport England's recommended methodology and toolkit.