

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL SPORT FACILITY STRATEGY

NEEDS ASSESSMENT: FINAL REPORT AUGUST 2024

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

SPORT FACILITIES STRATEGY: NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1: Introduction

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd (KKP) was appointed by Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) to produce its new Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS) and its Sport Facility Strategy (SFS). This work will provide a key piece of evidence to support the emerging Local Plan which covers the period to 2040.

With regard to the SFS, the stated outputs are to:

- ◀ Analyse trends in sport and other physical activity participation within the district (including sports/activities in decline), how these are likely to evolve over the emerging local plan period and the most appropriate responses to them.
- ◀ Analyse the supply, demand and quality of current sport and leisure facility provision within the district - to include an audit of indoor and outdoor facilities provided by public, private, voluntary and education sectors considering suitable catchment areas, sub-area analysis, and demand from both within and outside the district.
- ◀ Identify the areas in which there are quantitative and qualitative deficits and surpluses of different types of provision, having regard to the accessibility and availability of individual facilities.
- ◀ Establish the ownership of facilities and whether there is a likelihood of this changing in the foreseeable future so that SDC can prepare and plan for the potential impacts of this.
- ◀ Achieve comprehensive engagement (and sign off where required) with key stakeholders including Sport England, national governing bodies of sport (NGBs), sports clubs, community organisations and schools.
- ◀ Establish clear, prioritised, specific and achievable recommendations for future sport and leisure provision in the district. The recommendations should consider:
 - ◀ Planning policies for the emerging local plan.
 - ◀ The asset management and planning of SDC owned facilities.
 - ◀ Where future investment should be directed to make the most efficient use of the district's facilities, and providing robust evidence which can be used to support funding bids.
 - ◀ How any deficits could be addressed, providing robust evidence to support any resulting change of use that may be required.

Both the PPOSS and SFS replace the existing studies completed in April 2018 and July 2017 respectively. They underpinned the sport and leisure planning policies included in the proposed submission version of the local plan submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in April 2019. This version of the local plan was subsequently withdrawn from examination in November 2022.

Work has since continued on a newly emerging local plan; Local Plan 2040. SDC conducted a Stage 1 Regulation 18 consultation over autumn/winter 2023, ending in January 2023. This included draft planning policies for sport and leisure. The feedback from Sport England confirmed that the underpinning data, and thus the existing Playing Pitch Strategy (2018) and Sports Facility Strategy (2017) themselves, are now out of date.

SDC accepts that the nature of supply and demand for sport and recreation facilities is likely to have changed since 2017/18 and that it is necessary to update this evidence so that robust planning policies can be developed in the emerging local plan.

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1.2: Scope of the project

This report provides detail as to what exists in the Authority, its condition, location, availability and overall quality. It considers demand for facilities based on population distribution, planned growth, and takes into consideration health and economic deprivation. The facilities/sports covered include sports halls (and associated indoor sports e.g. badminton, netball and basketball), swimming pools, health and fitness, squash, gymnastics, trampolining, tennis, bowls, skating and climbing. In delivering this report KKP has:

- ◀ Individually audited identified sports halls (conventional i.e., 3+ court halls) swimming pools (minimum size 20m+), health and fitness facilities (including, within reason, dance studios), squash courts, gymnastics facilities, indoor tennis courts, indoor bowls facilities, and climbing walls.
- ◀ Analysed supply and demand to identify gaps and opportunities to improve provision.
- ◀ Sought to identify the extent to which delivery of leisure facilities is undertaken with full reference to the corporate strategies of the Council and other relevant strategic influences.
- ◀ Identified areas of good practice and opportunities for improved service in order to drive up participation levels.

This evidence-based report provides a quantitative and qualitative audit-based assessment of the facilities identified above. It is a robust, up-to-date assessment of need and identifies opportunities for new, enhanced, and rationalised provision. Specific deficiencies and surpluses are identified to inform the provision required. In summary, the specific objectives of this audit and assessment are to:

- ◀ Review relevant Council strategies, plans, reports, corporate objectives.
- ◀ Review the local, regional, and national strategic context.
- ◀ Analyse local population demographics at present and in the future (up to 2040).
- ◀ Consider potential participation rates and model likely demand.
- ◀ Audit indoor facilities provided by public, private, voluntary and education sectors.
- ◀ Analyse the balance between supply of, and demand for, sports facilities and identify potential under and over-provision – now and in the future.
- ◀ Identify key issues to address in the future provision of indoor sports facilities.

In addition to conforming to Sport England's ANOG methodology for assessing indoor sports facilities need, it accords with relevant paragraphs of the most up-to-date version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

1.3: Background

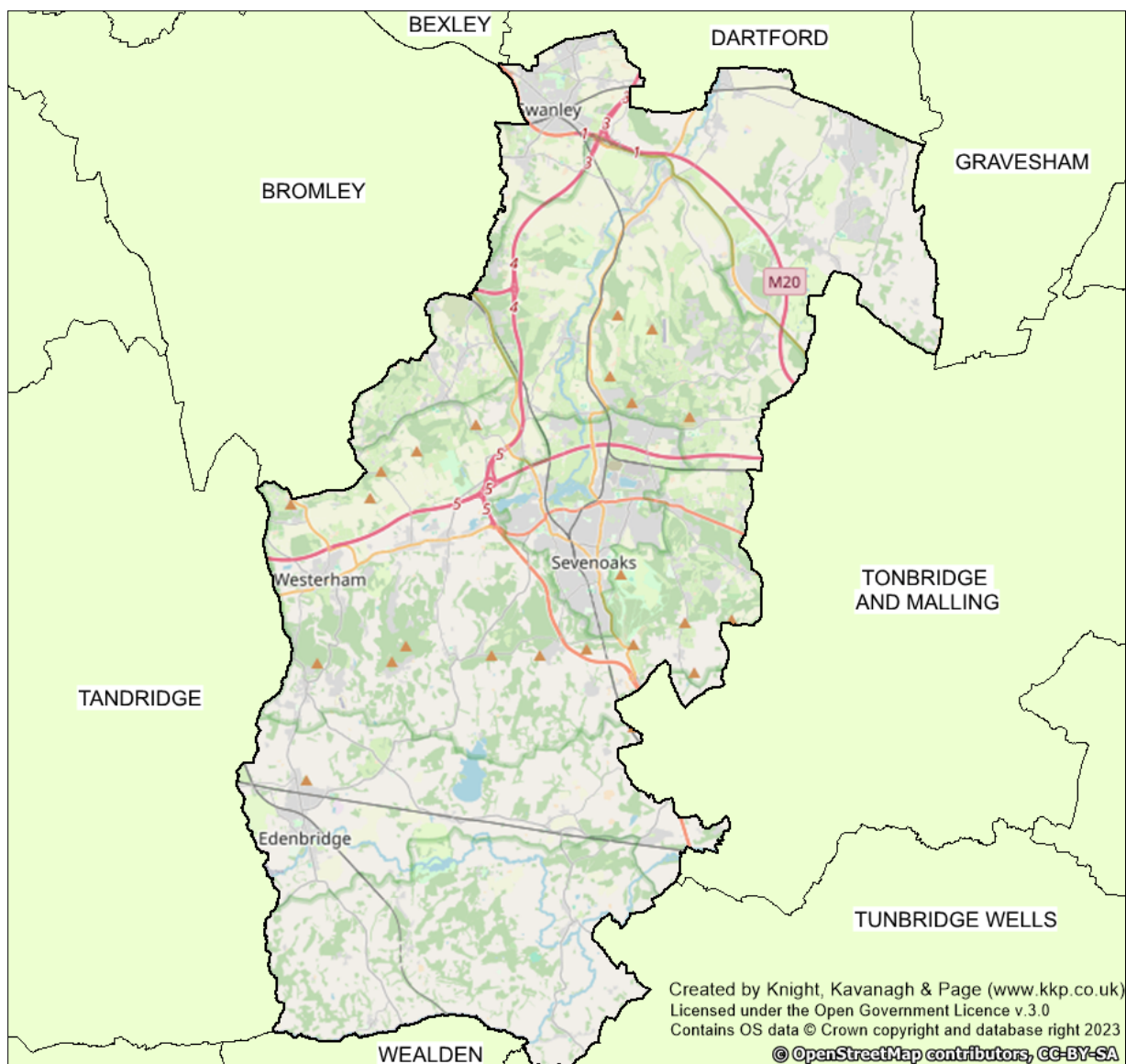
Sevenoaks covers a total area of 370.34km². Situated in west Kent, it borders eight other local authority areas including Dartford to the north, Tonbridge and Malling to the east, Wealden to the south and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley to the northwest.

Major transport links serve the north of the district with the M25, M20 and M26 motorways dissecting it. The A25 and A21 are major trunk roads also serving the district and connecting it to neighbouring authorities.

The area is approximately evenly divided between buildings and infrastructure on the one hand and woodland or agricultural fields on the other. It contains the upper valley of the River Darent and some headwaters of the River Eden. The majority of the district is covered by the Metropolitan Green Belt.

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Figure 1.1: Sevenoaks district with main roads and neighbouring authorities



1.4: Report structure

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) in a report entitled 'Strategic Planning: Effective Co-operation for Planning Across Boundaries (2015)' puts the case for strategic planning based on six general principles:

- ◆ Have focus.
- ◆ Be genuinely strategic.
- ◆ Be spatial.
- ◆ Be collaborative.
- ◆ Have strong leadership and
- ◆ Be accountable to local electorates.

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KKP has paid due regard to these strategic principles and this needs assessment report is, thus, structured as follows:

- ◀ Section 2 - review of background policy documentation (national/regional/local) and a profile of the population and socio-demographic characteristics of the Authority.
- ◀ Section 3 - description of methodology employed to assess provision.
- ◀ Section 4 - assessment of sport halls provision.
- ◀ Section 5 - assessment of swimming pool provision.
- ◀ Section 6 - assessment of health and fitness provision.
- ◀ Section 7 - assessment of squash.
- ◀ Section 8 – assessment of gymnastics.
- ◀ Section 9 - assessment of indoor bowls.
- ◀ Section 10 – assessment of indoor tennis.
- ◀ Section 11 – assessment of climbing walls.
- ◀ Section 12 – strategic recommendations.

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SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

2.1: National context

The Government [Get Active: A strategy for the future of sport and physical activity](#) has the focus on increasing physical activity, making sport more welcoming and inclusive, and ensuring the long-term financial and environmental sustainability of the sector.

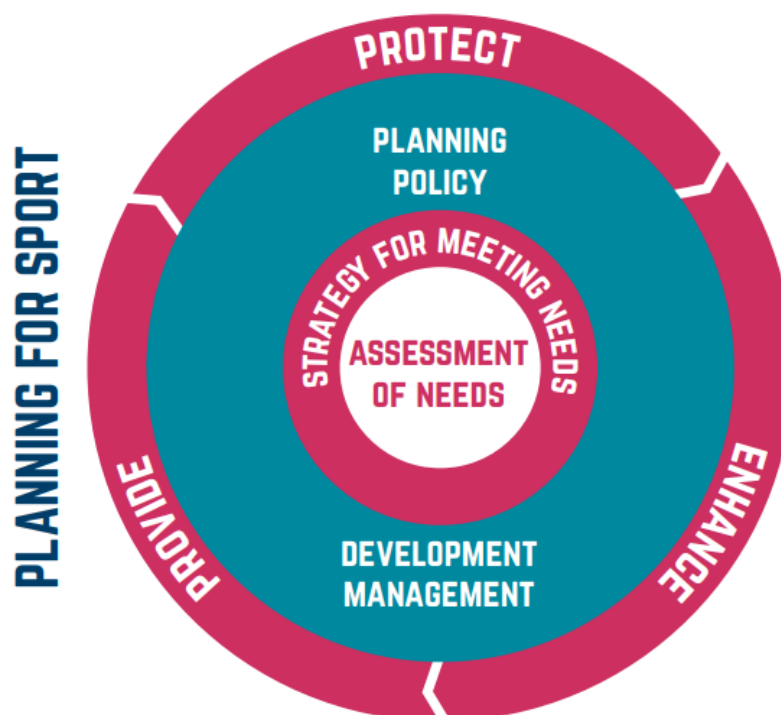
In addition, the recently launched cross-departmental National Physical Activity Taskforce has a focus on environmental sustainability in the sector, clear targets for increasing physical activity rates and a new vision for leisure facilities in 2023.

Get Active sets out how the government will work with the sector to achieve these aims by ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to get active. Central to this is a focus on ensuring that children establish a lifetime of engagement with sport and physical activity. This is accompanied by the introduction of national targets for participation to help hold Government and the sector to account for delivering the change that is needed.

Sport England

Sport England aims to ensure positive planning for sport, enabling the right facilities to be provided in the right places, based on up-to-date assessment of needs for all levels of sport and all sectors of the community. This assessment report has been produced for SDC applying the principles and tools identified in ANOG.

Figure 2.1: The Sport England Planning for Sport Model



Assessment of need is core to planning for sporting provision. It is underpinned by 12 planning-for-sport principles which help the planning system to contribute to sustainable development by fulfilling the key role of the NPPF in creating strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

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Applying them ensures that the planning system plans positively to enable and support healthy lifestyles, delivers community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs, and provides opportunity for all to experience the benefits that taking part in sport and physical activity brings. They apply to all areas of the planning system and to planning at local authority and neighbourhood levels. As such they are of relevance to all involved in, or looking to engage with, the planning system.

Figure 2.2: Sport England’s 12 planning principles



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Sport England: Uniting the movement 2021

This states that sport and physical activity have a major role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities, and rebuilding a stronger society for all following the global pandemic. This strategy is Sport England's 10-year vision to transform lives and communities via sport and physical activity. It advocates tackling inequalities long seen in sport and physical activity noting that 'providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important'. Its key objectives are:

1. Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity.
2. Joining forces on five big issues.
3. Creating the catalysts for change.

As well as advocating sport and physical activity via the building of evidence and partnership development, the Strategy identifies five big issues upon which people and communities need to address by working together. They are described as the major challenges to England being an active nation over the next decade as well as being the greatest opportunities to make a lasting difference. They are designated as a building block that individually would make a difference but tackled collectively could change things profoundly. The issues are:

- ◀ **Recover and reinvent:** Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant, and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.
- ◀ **Connecting communities:** Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
- ◀ **Positive experiences for children and young people:** Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.
- ◀ **Connecting with health and wellbeing:** Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health, and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.
- ◀ **Active environments:** Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

To address these issues, the right conditions for change need to be created: across people, organisations, and partnerships to help convert plans and ideas. This will include a range of actions, including development of effective investment models and applying innovation and digital technology to ensure sport and physical activity are more accessible.

The specific impact of the Strategy will be captured via funded programmes, interventions made, and partnerships forged. For each specific area of action, key performance indicators will be developed to help evidence the overall progress being made by all those involved in supporting sport and physical activity.

Social and economic value of community sport and physical activity in England 2020

Over the three years prior to the production of this report, Sport England focused on bringing together evidence on the contribution of community sport and physical activity to the five outcomes identified in the Government's strategy Sporting Future. These are physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development, and economic development.

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Its aim was to assess the evidence base with a view to demonstrating the contribution of community sport and physical activity to the outcomes. Building on this foundation and other previous work, Sport England quantified the social and economic impact of community sport and physical activity. There are two complementary parts to the research. Part one measures the social impact (including physical and mental health) of sport and physical activity while part two measures the economic importance.

The findings reveal that community sport and physical activity brings an annual contribution of £85.5 billion to the country (in 2018 prices) through social and economic benefits. Its social value – including physical and mental health, wellbeing, individual and community development – is more than £72 billion, provided via routes such as a healthier population, consumer expenditure, greater work productivity, improved education attainment, reduced crime, and stronger communities. It also generates more than £13bn in economic value. The economic value includes more than 285,000 jobs that employ people within the community sport and physical activity sector.

Together, both enable Sport England to demonstrate the contribution of sport and physical activity to the five government outcomes. The research revealed that the combined social and economic value of taking part (participating and volunteering) in community sport and physical activity in England in 2017/18 was £85.5bn. When measured against the £21.85 billion costs of engagement and providing sport and physical activity opportunities, for every £1 spent on community sport and physical activity, a return on investment (ROI) of £3.91 was created for individuals and society in 2017/18.

Sport England: The Future of Public Sector Leisure

Engagement by Sport England with the public leisure sector has highlighted that the pandemic has accelerated the appetite for local authorities to look at leisure services and re-examine the purpose of their provision, delivery against local community outcomes and consider their alignment with broader strategic outcomes, particularly health.

Key insight from the report ([Sport England: The Future of Public Sector Leisure](#)) includes:

- ◀ 68% of sports halls and swimming pools were built 20+ years ago. Although more than £150m was invested in the opening of new public leisure and swimming facilities in 2018/19¹, with another £200m worth of assets in construction or planning there remains significant levels of ageing public leisure stock.
- ◀ 72% of all school swimming lessons take place in a public leisure facility, which included both the statutory learn to swim programme and the water safety curriculum across primary schools. Swimming club usage is also predominantly based at public leisure facilities.

The leisure sector emerged from the pandemic in a fragile state. Emergency funding² helped to avert financial catastrophe and enabled the additional costs of maintaining public assets and reopening services to be met. This funding is, however, finite and is largely exhausted. At best, financial pressures risk limiting the ability of stakeholders to deliver against their commitments; at worst they may result in the permanent closure of some services or facilities.

¹ 2 Mintel Report on Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools (September 2019)

² Local authorities invested £160 million The National Leisure Recovery Fund £100m, Leisure operators drew on £171 million of reserves alongside further relief measures such as the Government's furlough scheme

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In respect of the recovery of the sector to pre-Pandemic participation levels, data generated via the [Moving Communities](#) platform suggests that in October 2021, throughput levels (13.2 million) were still lower than the monthly average in 2019 (17.8 million). Recovery of participation levels across different activities has been imbalanced and has leant towards those activities which deliver a faster return to pre-pandemic revenue levels.

Sites refurbished in the last 10 years are seeing a throughput recovery of 68% compared with a recovery of 62% for those last refurbished 20+ years ago, suggesting that investment in newer facilities creates spaces that have greater appeal, increase user confidence levels and provide a more relevant offer to meet current customer demands.

To address these significant challenges, a repositioning of the traditional offer of public leisure into one akin to an **active wellbeing service** is advocated focusing on added value and supporting delivery of key local priorities, alongside wider government policy around Levelling Up, net zero and health inequalities.

Chief Medical Officer Physical Activity Guidelines 2019

This updated the 2011 guidelines issued by the four chief medical officers (CMOs) of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. They drew upon global evidence to present revised guidelines for different age groups, covering the volume, duration, frequency and type of physical activity required across the life course to achieve health benefits.

Since 2011, evidence of the health benefits of regular physical activity for all groups has become more compelling. In children and young people, it is associated with improved learning and attainment, better mental health and cardiovascular fitness, also contributing to healthy weight status. In adults, there is strong evidence to demonstrate the protective effect on physical activity on a range of many chronic conditions including coronary heart disease, obesity and type 2 diabetes, mental health problems and social isolation.

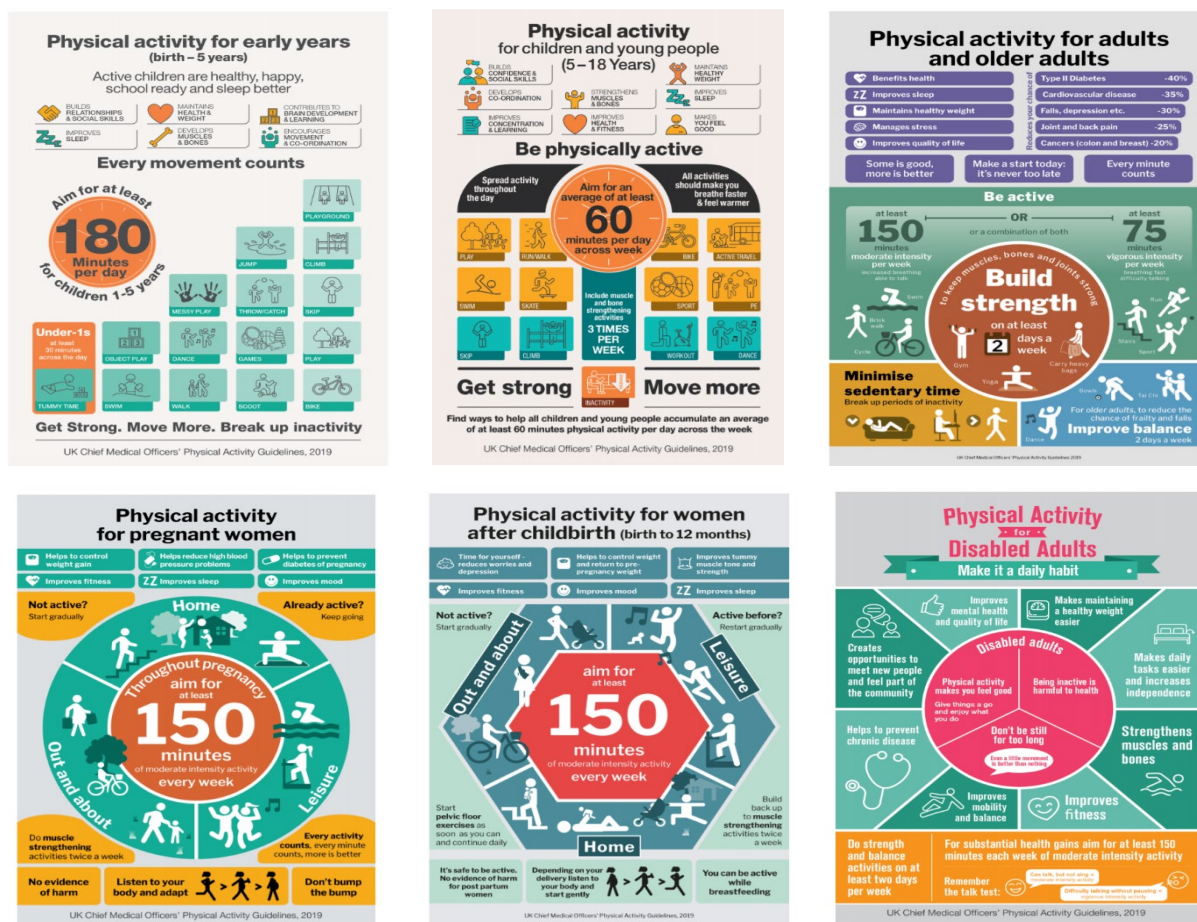
It can also deliver cost savings for the health and care system and has wider social benefits for individuals and communities. Key factors for each age group are as follows:

- ◀ **Under-5s:** This is broken down into infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers. They should spend at least 180 minutes (3 hours) per day in a variety of different exercises, whereas infants should be physically active several times every day in a variety of ways, including interactive floor-based activities.
- ◀ **Children and young people (5-18 years):** they should engage in moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week.
- ◀ **Adults (19-64 years):** For good physical and mental health, adults should aim to be physically active every day. This could be 150 minutes of moderate exercise, 75 minutes of vigorous exercise or even shorter durations of very vigorous intensity activity, or a combination of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity.
- ◀ **Older adults (65+):** should participate in daily physical activity to gain health benefits, including maintenance of good physical and mental health, wellbeing, and social functioning. Each week older adults should aim to accumulate 150 minutes (two and a half hours) of moderate intensity aerobic activity.

The report recognises the emerging evidence base for the health benefits of performing very vigorous intensity activity performed in short bouts interspersed with periods of rest or recovery (high intensity interval exercise, HIIT). It has clinically meaningful effects on fitness, body weight and insulin resistance. This option has therefore been incorporated into the recommendation for adults.

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Figure 2.3: Physical activity guidelines



It, thus, emphasises the importance of regular activity for people of all ages. It presents additional guidance on being active during pregnancy, after giving birth, and for disabled adults. The new guidelines are consistent with previous ones, introducing some new elements and allowing flexibility in achieving recommended physical activity levels for each age group.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation UK Poverty 2024 report

This report notes that poverty in the UK has now increased to just below pre-pandemic levels. Available data provides evidence that more than one in five people now live in poverty (including 4.2 million children. Of these, 40% are described as being in 'deep poverty', with an income considerably below the standard poverty line. Certain groups of people face particularly high levels of poverty. They include (figures relate to 2021/22 unless otherwise stated):

- ✦ Larger families – where 43% of children in families with 3 or more children were in poverty.
- ✦ Families whose childcare responsibilities limit their ability to work – 44% of children in lone-parent families were in poverty.
- ✦ Many minority ethnic groups – many households have higher rates of child, very deep and persistent poverty.
- ✦ 31% of disabled people are in poverty. This rate is higher (at 38%) for people with a long-term, limiting mental health condition.
- ✦ 28% of informal carers (those with caring responsibilities). They have limited ability to work and unpaid social-care givers experience an average pay penalty of nearly £5,000/annum.

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- ◀ Families not in work – more than half of working-age adults (56%) in workless households are in poverty - compared with 15% in working households. Around two-thirds of working-age adults in poverty actually live in a household where someone is in work.
- ◀ Part-time workers and the self-employed - the poverty rate for part-time workers was double that for full-time workers (20% compared with 10%). Self-employed workers are more than twice as likely to be in poverty as employees (23% compared with 10%).
- ◀ 43% of people living in rented accommodation and 35% of private renters are in poverty after housing costs.
- ◀ Families claiming income-related benefits.

Environmental sustainability

The UK Government net zero strategy 'Build Back Greener' was published in October 2021. This sets out how it intends the UK to meet its target for decarbonisation by 2050. It focuses on interventions such as:

- ◀ A fully decarbonised power system by 2035 with all electricity coming from 'low carbon sources'.
- ◀ Improved efficiency of heating for homes and buildings, aiming for all new heating appliances to be based on low carbon technologies, such as electric heat pumps or hydrogen boilers.
- ◀ Low carbon fuel supply – by scaling up the production of low carbon alternatives including hydrogen and biofuels.

[Sport England](#) reports that ³climate change and the increased occurrence of extreme weather that it brings are already affecting sports facilities, meaning that the sector needs to build greater resilience to counter this very real threat.

It proposes that a wide range of issues should be considered when approaching project development to, and the resultant environmental impact of, say, new swimming pool development. This applies to determining whether to refurbish an existing building with its carbon already embedded or to build anew⁴. In establishing a sustainability strategy early on Sport England suggests some key principles as part of a 'pathway to sustainability' and net zero carbon in respect of building design and operation.

- ◀ Reduce energy consumption as a first measure to reduce carbon emissions/energy costs.
- ◀ Change behaviour, eliminate energy waste and operate energy control systems more effectively at no extra cost.
- ◀ Passive design – Building orientation and placement on site is critical to achieving net zero targets. Harness a site's natural resources to benefit cross ventilation, natural lighting, solar gain, shelter or shading.
- ◀ Fabric efficiency –Maximise the building fabric and glazing performance.
- ◀ Minimise initial energy demand to reduce demand on plant and technologies incorporated.
- ◀ Efficient systems – Invest in appropriate energy-efficient products including heating, ventilation, fittings, controls, sensors, heat pumps and recovery systems.
- ◀ On-site renewables – Incorporate low and zero carbon (LZC) technologies to produce energy on site.
- ◀ Off-site renewables – only use energy providers who use renewable energy.

³[Sport England Environmental Sustainability policy](#)

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Investment in school sport

The School Sport and Activity Action Plan (July 2019) set out the Government's commitment to ensuring that children and young people have access to at least 60 minutes of sport and physical activity per day, with a recommendation of 30 minutes of this delivered during the school day (in line with the CMO guidelines which recommend an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week). The action plan has three overarching ambitions - that:

- ◀ All children/young people take part in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day.
- ◀ Children/young people have the opportunity to realise developmental, character-building experiences through sport, competition and active pursuits.
- ◀ All sport and physical activity provision for children/young people is designed around the principles of physical literacy, focuses on fun and enjoyment and aims to reach the least active.

The PE and sport premium can help primary schools to achieve this aim, providing primary schools with £320m of government funding to make additional and sustainable improvements to the quality of the PE, physical activity and sport offered through their core budgets. It is allocated directly to schools, so they have the flexibility to use it in the way that works best for their pupils.

In 2021 the Department for Education announced a £10.1 million funding package to help more schools open their facilities to the public once the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic is over. The funding, administered by Sport England and distributed via the Active Partnership Network helps schools deliver extra-curricular activities and open their facilities outside of the school day during evenings, weekends and school holidays.

The Physical Literacy Consensus Statement for England – Sport England (2023)

This has been developed to facilitate a shared understanding of physical literacy for those working in the sport, education, physical activity, recreation, play, health and youth sectors. It offers a broad overview of physical literacy, why it matters and how it can be developed and supported.

Developing a consensus on the term physical literacy has been a priority, as understanding what impacts people's relationship with movement and physical activity throughout life will enable those working in the sector to ensure their offer is as appealing as possible.

In essence, physical literacy represents the extent to which individuals have a positive relationship with movement and physical activity. The Youth Sport Trust has published findings evidencing that a total of 4,000 hours of physical education (PE) have been lost from the curriculum of state-funded secondary schools. PE hours have fallen victim to more time spent online, poor school attendance and declining health and wellbeing levels in young people. Since 2012, the amount of PE in England has fallen by more than 12%.

Evidence also shows that children with high levels of physical literacy are twice as likely to engage in sport and physical activity. In later life, adults who feel they have the opportunity, ability and enjoy being physically active are more likely to be so. To increase physical activity in both children and adults, it is important to consider the cultural and environmental factors which affect physical activity levels alongside the influence of previous experiences.

Ensuring good quality and regular PE in schools is considered to be essential to improving the mental and physical wellbeing of young people and will enable young people to develop new skills, achieve greater academic success and live longer, happier, healthier lives.

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Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund

In 2023, a funding pot of £63 million was announced to ease the pressure on leisure centres with managing the cost of operating, maintaining and heating swimming pools. The funding will be managed by Sport England and is available to all pools run by councils and charities and those run on behalf of local authorities.

The Sevenoaks Leisure Centre has received funding to assist with its running costs.

Revised National Planning Policy Framework 2023

The NPPF sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies the need to focus on three themes of economic, social, environmentally sustainable development:

A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making, the NPPF states that local plans should meet objectively assessed needs. It is clear about sport's role delivering sustainable communities through promoting health and well-being. Sport England, working within the provisions of the NPPF, wishes to see local planning policy protect, enhance and provide for sports facilities based on robust and up-to-date assessments of need, as well as helping to realise the wider benefits that participation in sport can bring.

The promoting healthy communities theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust, up-to-date assessment of need for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs, quantitative/qualitative deficiencies and surpluses should be identified and used to inform provision requirements in an area.

Summary of national context

In the context both of emergence from the global pandemic and the highly challenging economic environment, there is a need to reconnect communities, reduce inequality and create stronger societies. The aim is to create a catalyst for change, with sport and physical activity a key driver and people in all age groups either getting or remaining active. Ensuring an adequate supply of suitable facilities to support this aim is a key requirement of the planning system in line with national policy recommendations.

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2.2: Local context

Local Plan context

The current Development Plan for the district is made up of the Core Strategy (2011) and the Allocations and Development Management Plan (2015). They contain a vision, objectives and policies relating safeguarding and improving the provision of open spaces, sport and recreational facilities. However, they are out of date and will be replaced by the emerging Local Plan.

The new Local Plan will cover the period up to 2040. A Stage 1 Regulation 18 consultation was carried out in autumn/winter 2023 and it considered sites within existing built-up areas. However, the Council has acknowledged that urban sites alone will not be sufficient to meet its development needs. As the Green Belt covers 93% of the District, the Council subsequently considered potential Green Belt releases in its Stage 2 Regulation 18 consultation which was carried out in autumn/winter 2024, ending in January 2024.

The Plan includes proposals for new homes, protecting business space and supporting high streets and new facilities such as schools, health centres and transport. It also aims to protect the District's character and environment. For open space, sport and recreational facilities, the retention and improvement of facility provision will be sought in accordance with the updated Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy and Sports Facility Strategy.

The local housing need figure for the emerging Local Plan period is currently 712 dwellings per annum for 15 years to 2040 for a total of 10,680 dwellings. Three potential spatial growth options were considered in the Stage 2 Regulation 18 consultation.

As noted in the introduction, the SFS will be an evidence base document which will support the sport and recreational policies in the new Local Plan and will ensure that existing facilities are the most appropriate in terms of quantity, quality and location and consider how best to meet the additional needs generated by the planned housing and economic growth.

Sevenoaks District Housing Strategy 2022-2027

Sevenoaks District is a very popular place to live and access to good housing is fundamental to happy, successful residents and thriving communities. This Strategy establishes the vision for housing in the Sevenoaks District. It sets out four major themes and under each one, the priorities and objectives that the Council wants to achieve. These four key themes are:

- ◀ Developing Sevenoaks District's housing offer and building new affordable homes.
- ◀ Promoting quality and optimising range and suitability of new and existing homes.
- ◀ Reducing homelessness and improving routes into permanent accommodation.
- ◀ Creating healthy people, homes and places

Active Kent & Medway (Active Partnership)

Active Kent & Medway is the active partnership which covers the Authority of Sevenoaks. Its latest strategy, Move Together (2023 – 2027) aims to get Kent and more people, more active, more often across the County.

It sets out how working together can support those who are already active, as well as tackling the inequalities that currently prevent some of us from enjoying the benefits that moving more in our everyday lives can bring to our physical and mental wellbeing.

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It notes that, to get more people active, there is a need to work together to achieve the Strategy five key objectives. These are as follows:

Table 2.1: Active Kent & Medway Strategy's key objectives

Objective	Description
Connecting communities	Making it easier for people to be active locally and using sport and physical activity's unique ability to make places better to live in and bring people together, particularly where inequalities are greatest.
Health and wellbeing	Creating partnerships that enable everyone to benefit from an active lifestyle.
Positive experiences for children and young people	Enabling children and young people to enjoy being active and creating the right foundations for a long, active and healthy life.
Supporting sport	Supporting local organisations to better understand their community and to deliver activities that are appropriate to people's needs and motivations.
Active environments	Creating and protecting places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

Climate Change

SDC is committed to tackling the challenge of climate change across the district and a new Climate Change Strategy was adopted in March 2024. It provides a framework for the Council's actions aimed at reducing carbon emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change that are already happening.

In the 2022/2023 report, Edenbridge, Sevenoaks and White Oak leisure centres are reported to be contributing to c. 1,219.37 tCO₂ emissions as shown below. (It uses the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero - DESNZ).

Table 2.2: Carbon Emissions Report 2022/23

Description	tCO ₂ (tonne of carbon emissions)	% of emissions
Scope 1 (Emissions released from petrol and diesel fuel used in Council owned vehicles and includes the use of gas to heat buildings).	882.16	72.3%
Scope 2 (Indirect emissions released from the Council's consumption of the purchased electricity at Argyle Road offices, the Council's depot at Dunbrik, and the three leisure centres. The emissions occur at sources the Council does not own or control.	305.2	25.0%
Scope 3 (Indirect emissions from the use of water in Council buildings and emissions generated from staff business travel by car.	32.0	2.6%
Total emissions	1,219.37	100%*

*Figures are rounded up to 100%

Leisure operators

Management of the three public leisure centres, which are key sites for sport and physical activity across Sevenoaks, is delivered by Everyone Active (EA). EA operates more than 200 leisure centres nationwide. The centres in Sevenoaks are (White Oak Leisure Centre,

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Sevenoaks Leisure Centre and Edenbridge Leisure Centre). It also operates Lullingstone Park Golf Club (which is not included in the scope of this study).

The new White Oak Leisure Centre has been operated under a 15-year leisure operator contract with Sports & Leisure Management Ltd (operating as EA) since 12 February 2022.

EA's current contract is an interim arrangement to manage the other leisure centres and golf club until April 2025 (or until the procurement of a new operator is completed).

Summary of local policy

SDC has identified several initiatives to create a District which is an attractive place to live, work and visit. The emerging Local Plan features objectives across themes including providing homes and infrastructure to meet identified needs, tackling the challenge of climate change, delivering design excellence, protecting the natural environment, increasing economic competitiveness and creating healthy places and spaces.

The importance of health and wellbeing is recognised in Sevenoaks and is evidenced by the recent development of White Oak Leisure Centre. This process has focused on creating a sustainable sport and leisure offer with affordable access for local people.

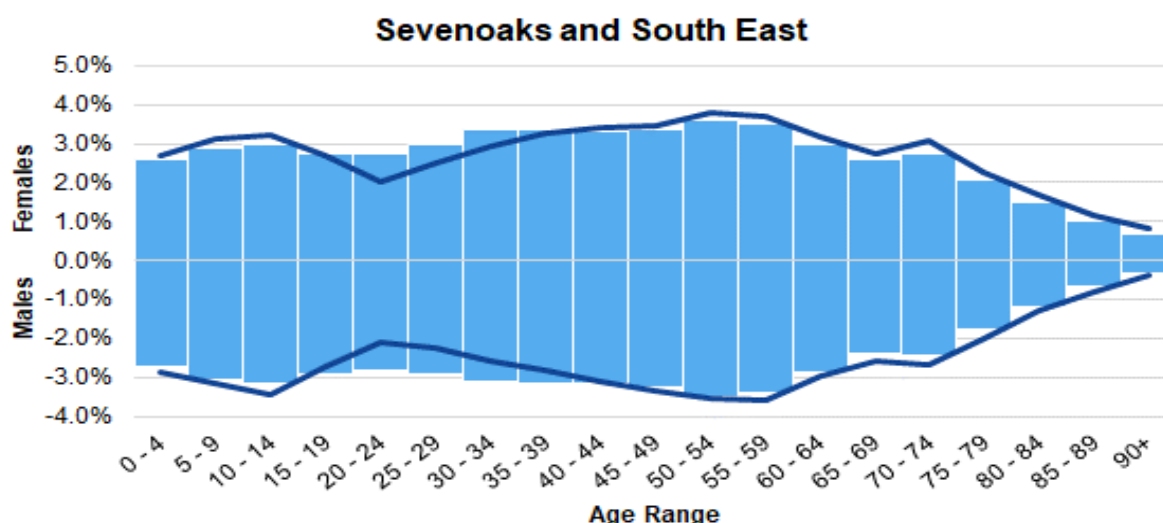
By providing opportunities for local people to take part in sport and physical activity, Sevenoaks DC seeks to enable more people to become active and stay active to ease the burden on healthcare services. Partnerships have been formed with Active Kent & Medway and EA to achieve this, with the latter, as noted, currently managing all three Sevenoaks's main leisure centres in the short term. The Council will be going out to tender for an organisation to operate the centres on a 5-year (plus 2) contract which will commence in April 2025.

2.3: Demographic profile

Population and distribution (Data source: 2021 Census, ONS)

The total population of Sevenoaks is 120,519. This comprises 58,212 males and 62,307 females. The following chart illustrates population age and gender composition. Overlaying the dark blue line for Sevenoaks on top of the lighter blue bars for the region makes it easy to see where one dataset is higher or lower than the other.

Figure 2.4: Comparative age/sex pyramid for Sevenoaks and the Southeast

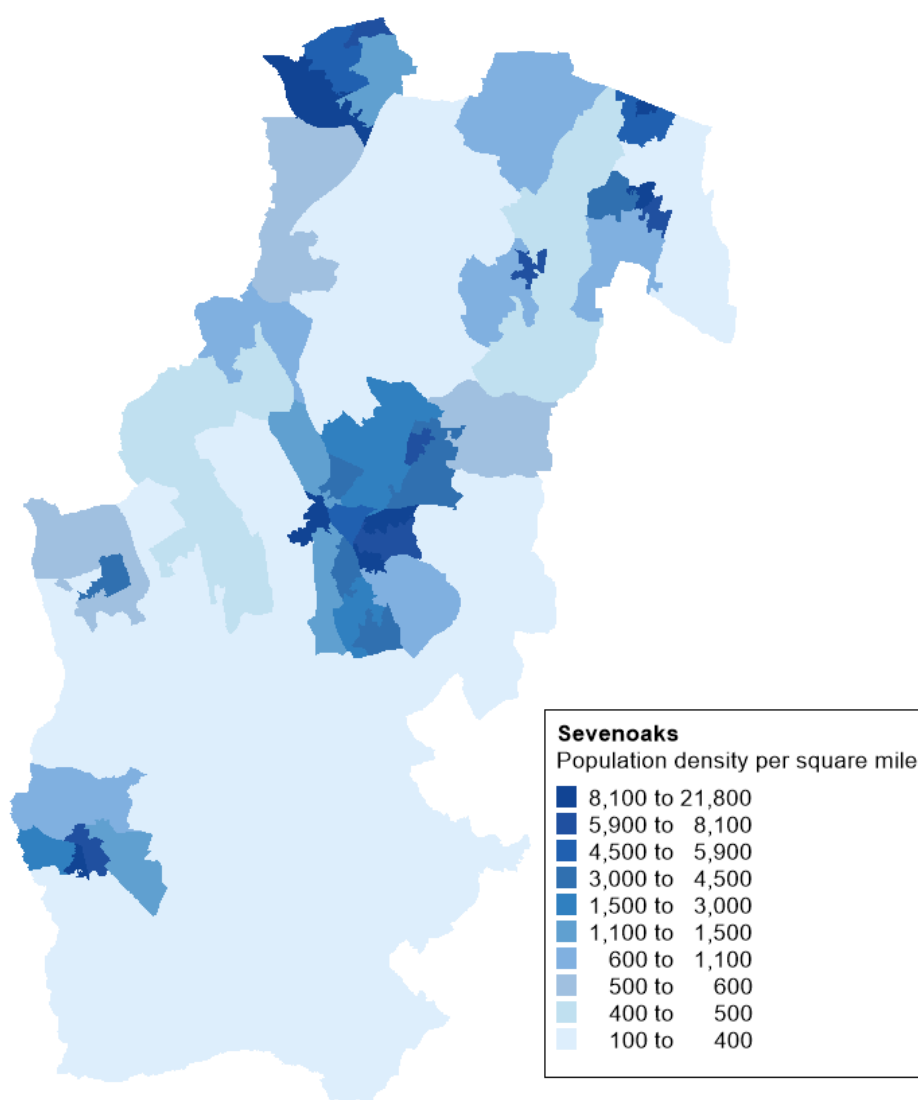


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There is a lower proportion of 20-34 year olds (Sevenoaks: 14.4%, Southeast: 18.0%) but more in the age groups from 10-14 (Sevenoaks: 6.7%, Southeast: 6.0%). As a combination of factors, it suggests that careful consideration should be given to the pitching of sports and physical activity offers within the area – Sport England’s segmentation model may be interpreted in relation to this age structure (see later).

The population density map is based on lower super output areas (LSOAs) from the most recent ONS Census of population. It covers all parts of the country irrespective of whether the SOA is in an area of high-density housing and flats or covers farms and rural villages. Map shading, however, allows population concentrations to be easily identified; major urban areas such as flats, terraced houses and estates tend to be illustrated via the darkest shading while rural areas, housing adjoining parks and other non-residential land uses tend to be the lightest shades.

Figure 2.5: Population density 2021 Census: Sevenoaks (LSOAs)



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Ethnicity (Data source: 2021 Census, ONS)

In Sevenoaks, the largest proportion (92.1%) of the local population classified its ethnicity as White; this is higher than the comparative England rate of 81.0%. The next largest population group (by self-classification) is Asian, at 2.9% this is lower than the national equivalent (9.6%).

Figure 2.6: Ethnic composition

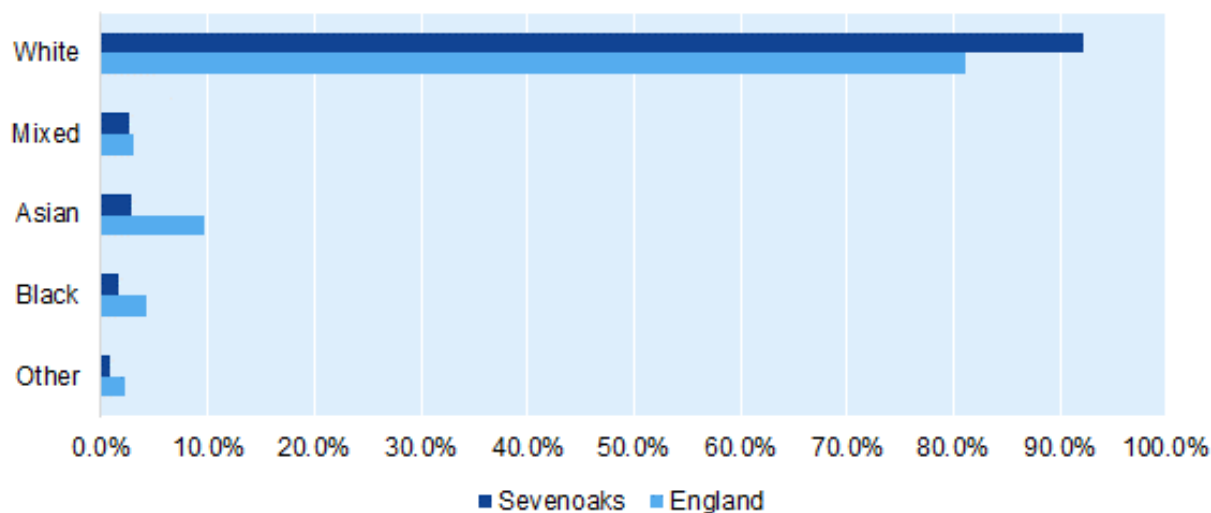


Table 2:3: Ethnic composition – Sevenoaks and England

Ethnicity	Sevenoaks #	Sevenoaks %	England #	England %
White	111,005	92.1%	45,783,401	81.0%
Mixed	3,181	2.6%	1,669,378	3.0%
Asian	3,484	2.9%	5,426,392	9.6%
Black	1,932	1.6%	2,381,724	4.2%
Other	913	0.8%	1,229,153	2.2%
Total	120,515	100.0%	56,490,048	100.0%

Crime (Data source: Crime in England and Wales year ending September 2022, ONS)

Crime data is based upon police force areas. Sevenoaks is in the Kent Police Force Area, which comprises 13 local authorities (Ashford, Canterbury, Dartford, Dover, Folkestone And Hythe, Gravesham, Maidstone, Medway, Sevenoaks, Swale, Thanet, Tonbridge And Malling, Tunbridge Wells). Sevenoaks accounts for 6.5% of the Kent Police Force area population.

During the 12 months to September 2022 the number of recorded crimes per 1,000 persons in Kent was 97.2. (2021 Census) This is higher than the rate for England and Wales (92.8). The number of recorded crimes in the Kent area has risen significantly (by 6.0%) since September 2021 (2020 MYE). The number for England and Wales rose by 12.6%, over the same period.

Table 2.4: Comparative crime rates - Sevenoaks and England & Wales

Authority/area	Recorded crime (Oct '20 – Sep '21)	Population 2021 Census	Recorded crime per 1,000 population
Kent	180,349	1,855,842	97.2
England & Wales	5,531,610	59,597,529	92.8

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As an alternative to the crime figures for police force areas the Index of Deprivation measures the risk of personal and material crime at a more local level. In Sevenoaks, 31.5% of the population are in the top three cohorts most at risk compared to 30.0% nationally.

Income and benefits dependency (Data source: NOMIS 2023):

The median figure for full-time earnings (2022) in Sevenoaks is £38,059. The comparative rate for the Southeast is £35,636 (-6.4%) and for Great Britain; £33,394 (-12.3%). 1,370 people in Sevenoaks claimed out of work benefits⁵ in July 2023. This is an increase of 39.1% when compared to March 2020 (985).

Deprivation (Data source: 2019 indices of deprivation, MHCLG)

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is a measure of relative deprivation for small areas in the United Kingdom. It combines a range of indicators to assess deprivation in seven domains: income, employment, education, health, crime, housing, and living environment.

Relative to other parts of the country Sevenoaks experiences low levels of deprivation; only 5.4% of its population resides in areas covered by the country's three most deprived cohorts compared to a national average of c.30%. Conversely, 51.9% live in the three least deprived groupings in the country, this compares to a 'norm' of c.30%.

This pattern is broadly replicated for health but not to the same extent. Just 5.4% of the population lives in areas covered by the three most deprived cohorts, this compares to a national average of c.30%. Conversely, 85.4% live in the three least deprived groupings.

Table 2.5: IMD cohorts – multiple deprivation in Sevenoaks.

10% bands	Population in band	%	Cumulative %
Most deprived - 10.0	0	0.0%	0.0%
20.0	3,017	2.6%	2.6%
30.0	3,326	2.8%	5.4%
40.0	4,617	3.9%	9.3%
50.0	11,436	9.7%	19.0%
60.0	18,126	15.3%	34.3%
70.0	16,333	13.8%	48.1%
80.0	22,084	18.7%	66.8%
90.0	8,116	6.9%	73.7%
Least deprived - 100.0	31,110	26.3%	100.0%

Table 2.6: IMD cohorts – health deprivation in Sevenoaks.

10% bands	Population in band	%	Cumulative %
Most deprived - 10.0	0	0.0%	0.0%
20.0	0	0.0%	0.0%
30.0	0	0.0%	0.0%
40.0	3,347	2.8%	2.8%
50.0	4,604	3.9%	6.7%
60.0	0	0.0%	6.7%
70.0	9,302	7.9%	14.6%

⁵ This includes both Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and Universal Credit. Universal credit also includes other benefits including employment and support allowance (ESA) and child tax credits.

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10% bands	Population in band	%	Cumulative %
80.0	16,113	13.6%	28.2%
90.0	25,010	21.2%	49.4%
Least deprived - 100.0	59,789	50.6%	100.0%

Figure 2.7: Map of multiple deprivation

Figure 2.8: Map of health deprivation

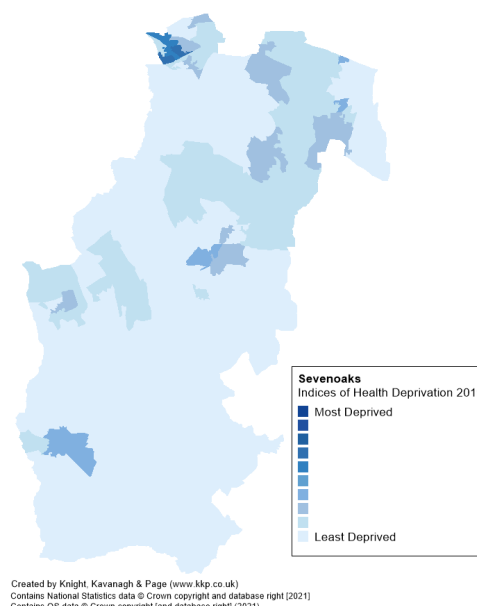
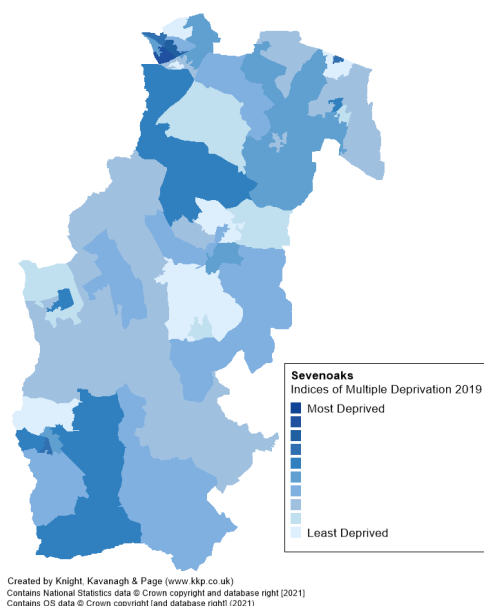
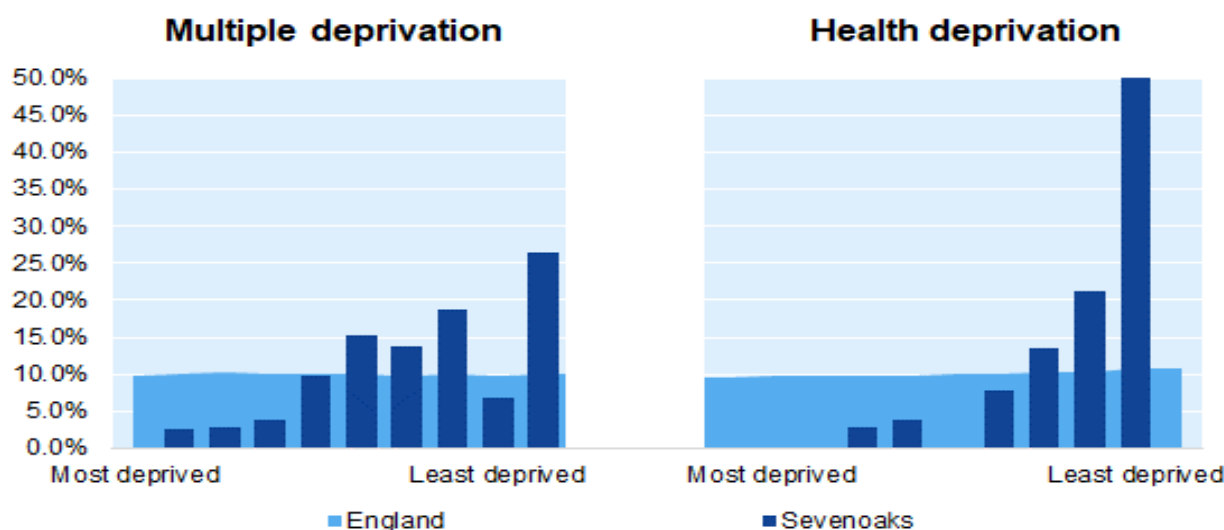


Figure 2.9: IMD and health domain comparisons – Sevenoaks and England.



Health data (Data sources: NCMP⁶ and NOO⁷)

Obesity is widely recognised to be associated with health problems such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer. At a national level, the resulting NHS costs attributable to overweight and obesity are projected to reach £9.7 billion by 2050, with wider costs to society

⁶ National Child Measurement Program

⁷ National Obesity Observatory

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estimated to reach £49.9 billion per year. These factors combine to make the prevention of obesity a major public health challenge.

Adult rates of obesity or overweight in Sevenoaks are below national and regional rates. Child rates are also below both national and regional rates.

Weight and obesity (Data sources: NCMP⁸ and NOO⁹)

Figure 2.10: Adult and child obesity rates

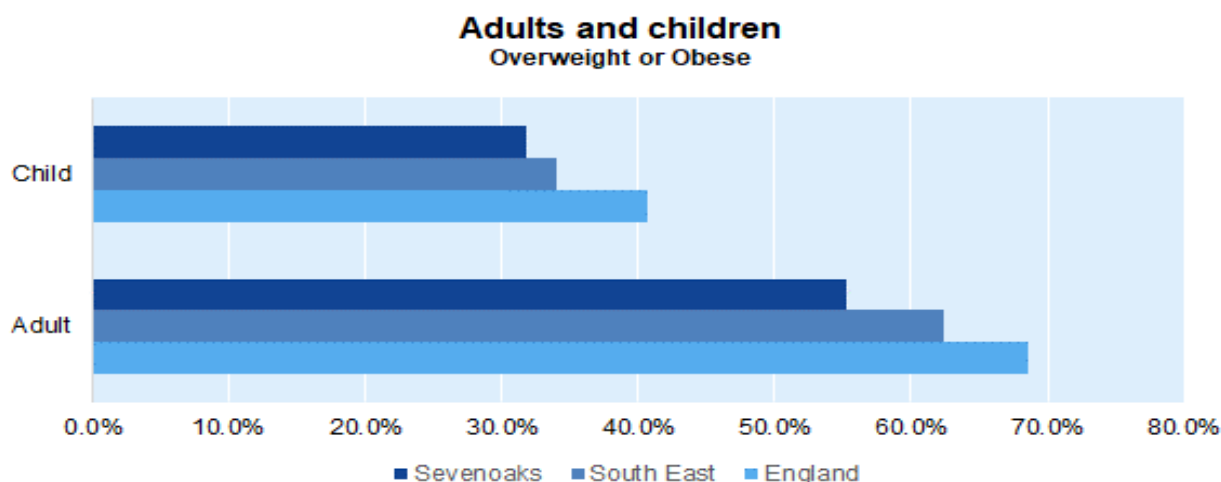
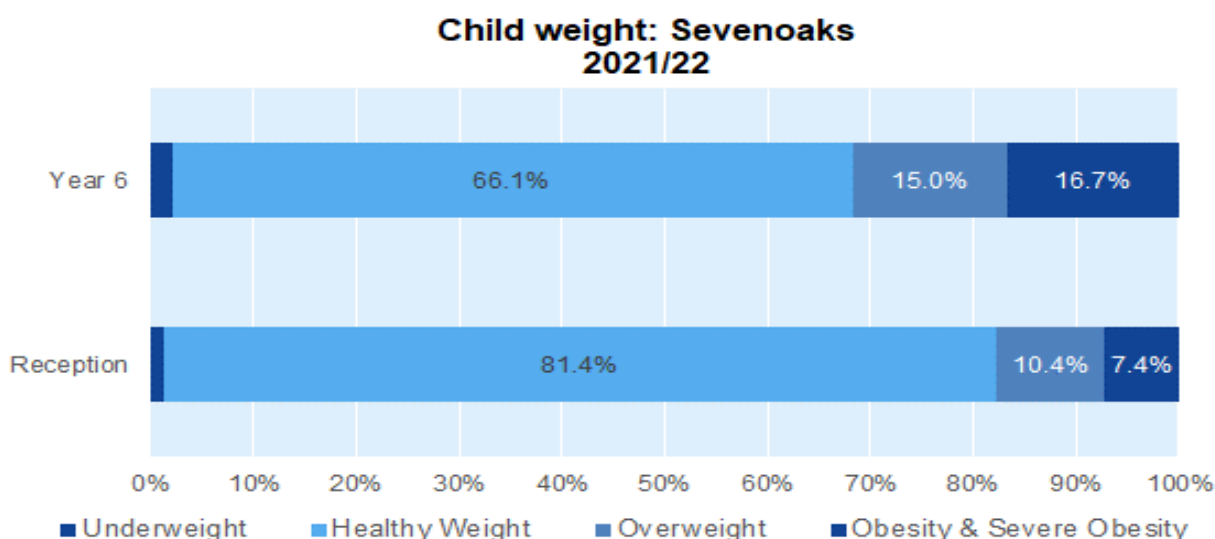


Figure 2.11: Child weight – reception and year 6.



In common with many other areas, obesity rates increase significantly between the ages of 4-11. Fewer than one in 13 children (7.4%) in Sevenoaks are obese in their reception year at school and 10.4% are overweight. By Year 6 these figures rise to more than one in six (16.7%) being obese and 15.0% being overweight. In total by Year 6 over three in 10 (31.8%) are either overweight or obese.

⁸ National Child Measurement Program

⁹ National Obesity Observatory

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Sport England: Active Lives Survey (ALS) 2020/21

This is based on 16+ year olds taking part in walking, cycling, fitness, dance and other sporting activity. As identified in Table 2.5, a lower percentage of the Sevenoaks population is inactive compared to England and the Southeast and a higher percentage is considered to be active. This is specified by Sport England as follows:

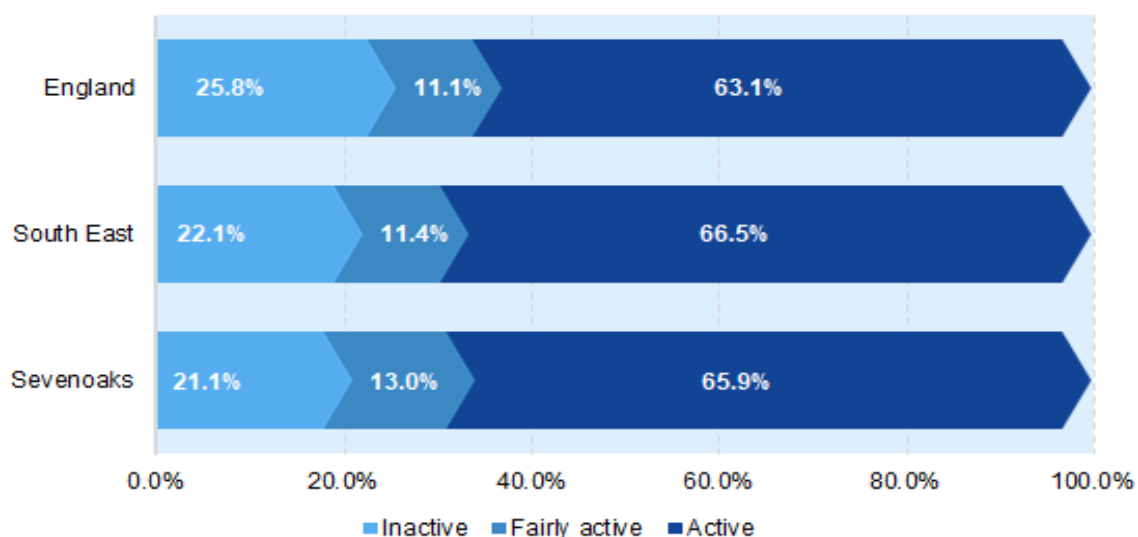
- ◀ Inactive - <30 minutes per week.
- ◀ Fairly Active – 30-149 minutes per week.
- ◀ Active – 150+ minutes per week.

Table 2.7: Active Lives Survey results; November 2021/22.

	Inactive #	Inactive %	Fairly active #	Fairly active %	Active #	Active %
England	11,874,800	25.8%	5,131,700	11.1%	29,062,000	63.1%
Southeast	1,673,800	22.1%	864,200	11.4%	5,034,200	66.5%
Sevenoaks	20,500	21.1%	12,600	13.0%	63,900	65.9%

Rate/population totals for sport and physical activity levels (excluding gardening) of adults (16+) in English local authority areas.

Figure 2.12: Levels of Activity (Active Lives 2020/21)



Most popular sports (Data source: Sport England Active Lives Survey November 2020/21)

This enables identification of the top five sports within Sevenoaks. As with many other areas, fitness and athletics are among the most popular activities and are known to cut across age groups and gender; in Sevenoaks over three in 10 of adults take part in fitness activities, on average, at least twice a month. The next most popular activity is athletics in which 17.1% of adults participate on a relatively regular basis.

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Table 2.8: Most popular sports in Sevenoaks

Sport	Sevenoaks #	Sevenoaks %	Southeast #	Southeast %	England #	England %
Fitness	30,300	31.3%	2,034,600	27.3%	11,374,600	24.9%
Athletics	16,500	17.1%	1,101,400	14.8%	6,252,000	13.7%
Cycling	13,800	14.3%	1,338,000	18.0%	7,472,900	16.4%
Golf	4,000	4.1%	161,400	2.2%	763,000	1.7%
Swimming	3,500	3.6%	369,600	5.0%	2,001,600	4.4%

Sporting segmentation (Data source: Market segmentation, Sport England)

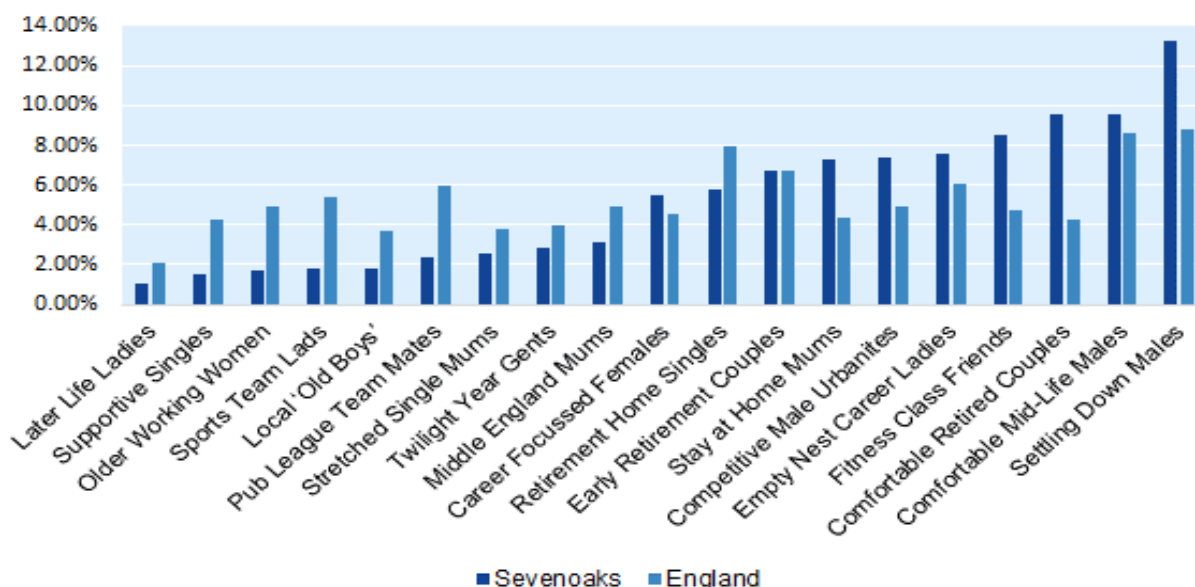
Sport England classifies the adult population via a series of 19 market segments which provide an insight into the sporting behaviours of individuals throughout the country. The profiles cover a wide range of characteristics, from gender and age to the sports that people take part in, other interests, the newspapers that they read etc.

Knowing which segments are most dominant in the local population is important as it can help direct provision and programming. Segmentation also enables partners to make tailored interventions, communicate effectively with target market(s) and better understand participation in the context of life stage and lifecycles.

'Settling Down Males' is the largest segment of the adult population at 13.24% (11,850) - national average; 8.83%. This is followed by 'Comfortable Mid-Life Males' (9.57%) and 'Comfortable Retired Couples' (9.51%). At the other end of the spectrum, there are fewest 'Later Life Ladies' (1.09%), 'Supportive Singles' (1.52%) and 'Older Working Women' (1.73%).

This reinforces the fact that, statistically, people in Sevenoaks have a relatively high propensity to participate in sport and physical activity - plus reasonably high levels of disposable income to enable it to pay for this. Taking this into account, there is a need to make sure that provision is of high quality as this type of 'customer profile' expects good quality experiences from their leisure time.

Figure 2.13: Sport England market segmentation – Sevenoaks compared to England



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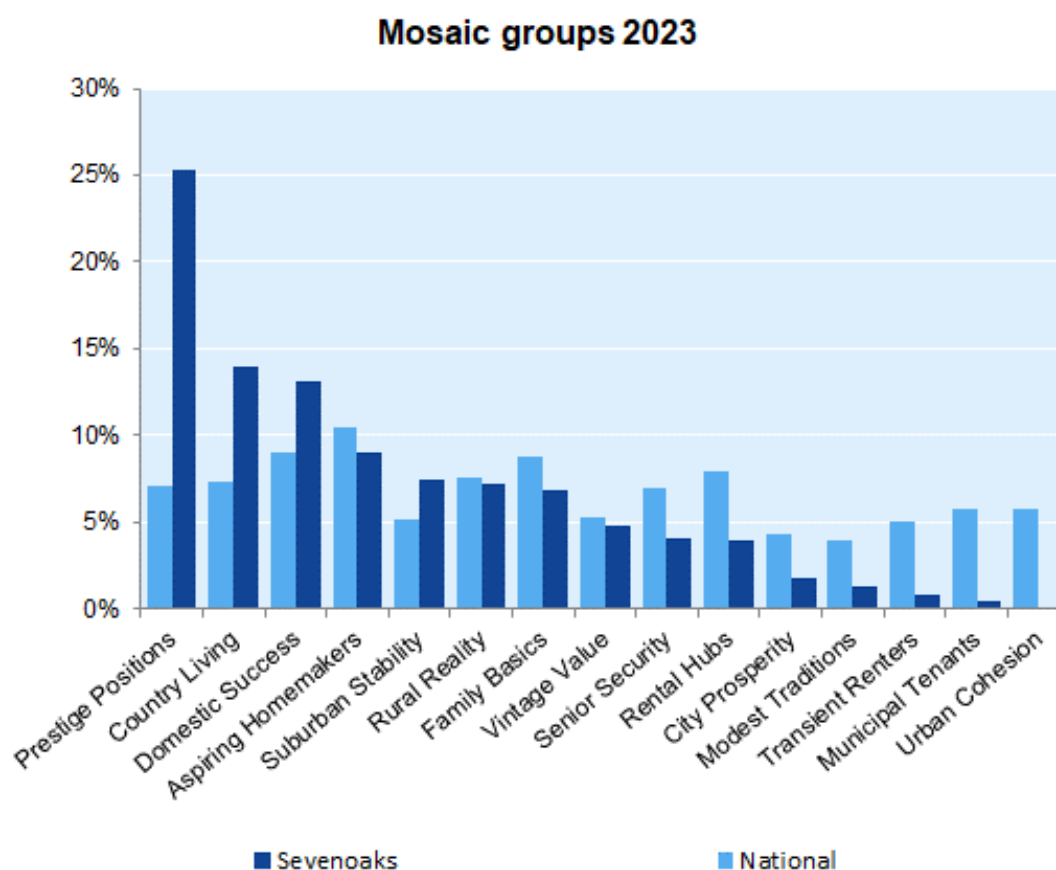
Mosaic (Data source: 2022 Mosaic analysis, Experian)

Mosaic classifies all 28.6 million UK households into 15 groups, 66 household types and 238 segments. Data is used to paint a picture of UK consumers' social-demographics, lifestyles, culture and behaviour. The top five Mosaic classifications in Sevenoaks represent 62.1% of the population compared to a national rate of 39.1%. The Mosaic profile reflects the district's relative affluence. These group have a high propensity to participate in sport/physical activity.

Table 2.9: Mosaic – main population segments in Sevenoaks.

Mosaic group description	Sevenoaks #	Sevenoaks %	National %
1 - Prestige Positions	31,468	25.6%	7.0%
2 - Country Living	16,641	13.5%	7.1%
3 - Domestic Success	16,326	13.3%	8.8%
4 - Aspiring Homemakers	11,844	9.6%	10.5%
5 - Suburban Stability	9,646	7.9%	5.6%

Figure 2.14: Mosaic segmentation – Sevenoaks compared to nationally.

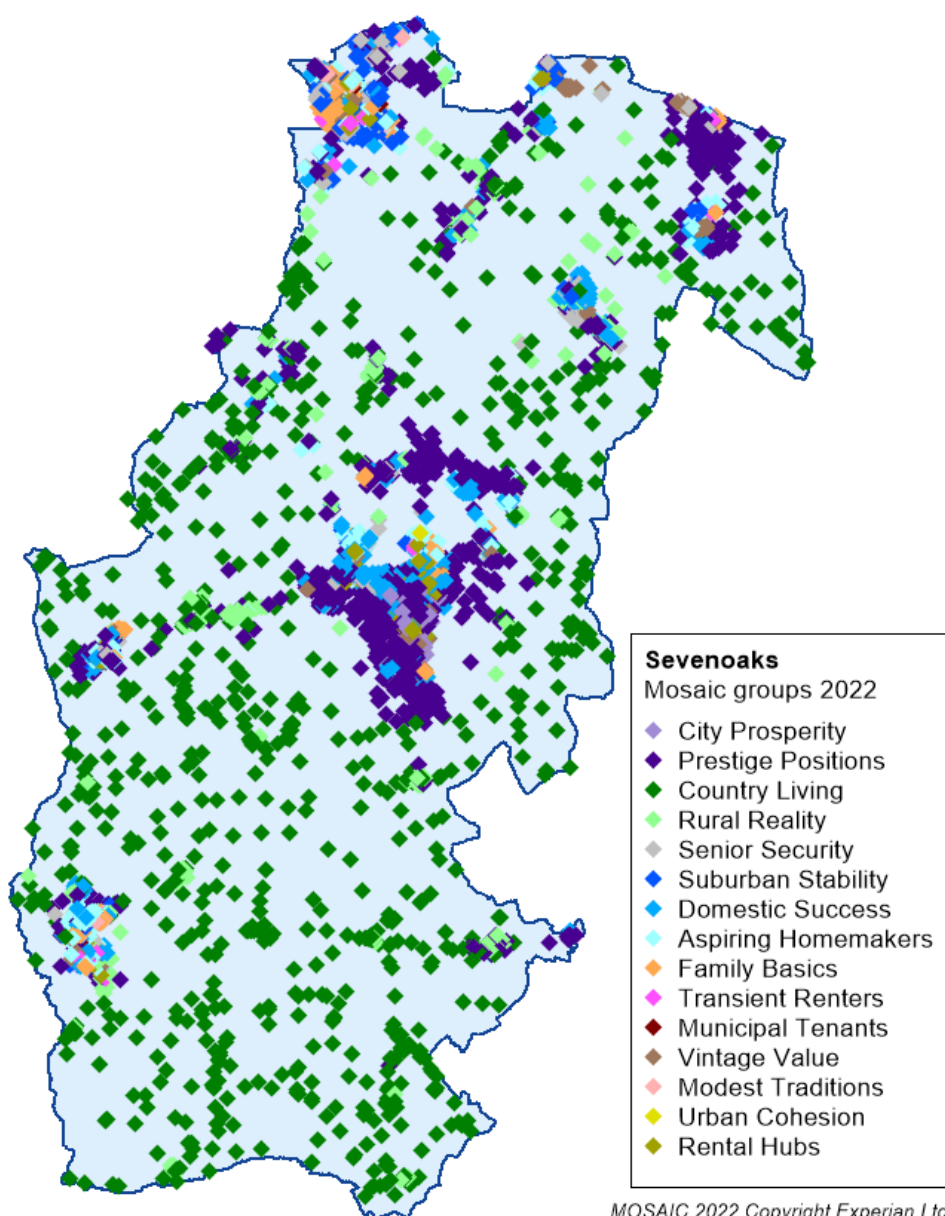


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Table 2.10: Dominant Mosaic profiles in Sevenoaks

Prestige positions	Affluent married couples whose successful careers have afforded them financial security and a spacious home in a prestigious and established residential area. While some are mature empty-nesters or elderly retired couples, others are still supporting their teenage or older children.
Country living	Well-off homeowners who live in the countryside often beyond easy commuting reach of major towns and cities. Some people are landowners or farmers, others run small businesses from home, some are retired and others commute distances to professional jobs.
Domestic success	High-earning families who live affluent lifestyles in upmarket homes situated in sought after residential neighbourhoods. Their busy lives revolve around their children and successful careers in higher managerial and professional roles.

Figure 2.15: Distribution of Mosaic segments in Sevenoaks



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Population projections: (Data source: 2018-based population projections, ONS)

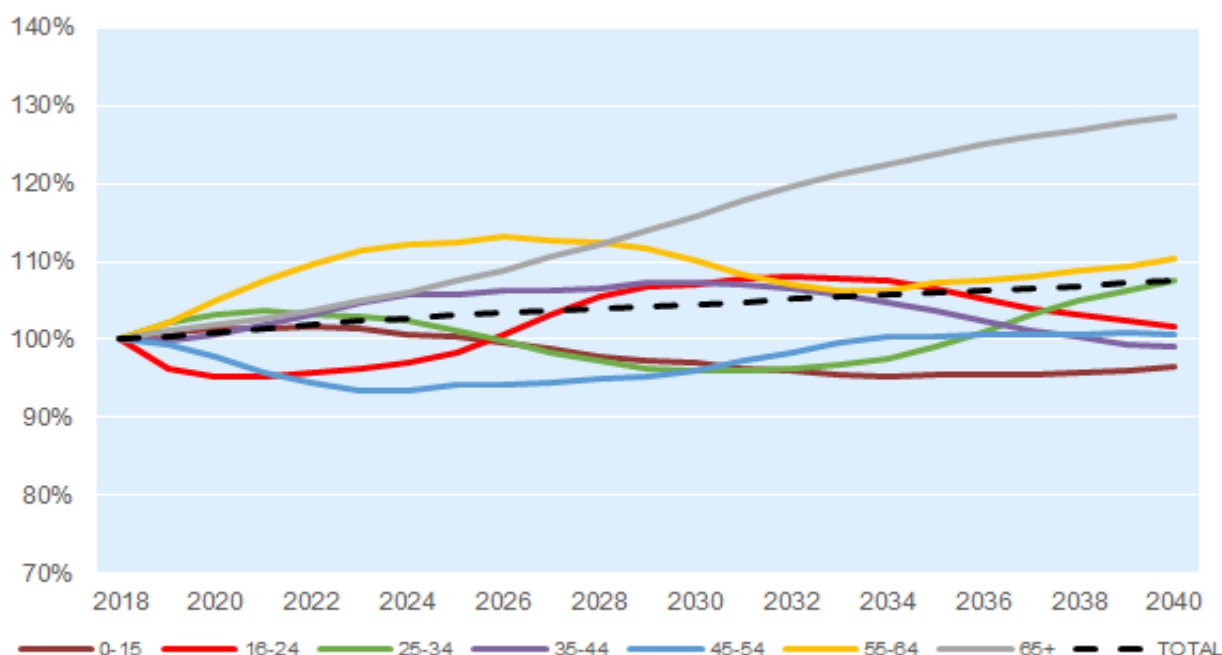
The most recent ONS projections indicate a rise of 7.6% in Sevenoaks's population (+9,149) over the 22 years from 2018 to 2040. Key points include:

- ◀ The number of 0-15 year olds falls by -646 (-2.7%) over the first half (to 2029).
- ◀ There is a predicted increase in the number of 16-24 year olds, +6.8% in the first period (+689) followed by a decline of -4.7% (-513) in the second period.
- ◀ There is a continuous increase in the numbers of persons aged 65+; of +13.9% (+3,594) in the first period continuing to rise to +28.6% (+7,365) between 2018 and 2040. They accounted for 21.4% of the population in 2018 and will be 25.6% of the total by 2040.

Table 2.11: Sevenoaks - ONS projected population (2018 to 2040)

Age (years)	2018 #	2029 #	2040 #	2018 %	2029 %	2040 %	2029 Change	2040 Change
0-15	24,148	23,502	23,299	20.1%	18.7%	18.0%	97.3%	96.5%
16-24	10,165	10,854	10,340	8.5%	8.6%	8.0%	106.8%	101.7%
25-34	11,972	11,537	12,882	10.0%	9.2%	10.0%	96.4%	107.6%
35-44	15,335	16,453	15,192	12.7%	13.1%	11.7%	107.3%	99.1%
45-54	17,877	17,020	17,995	14.9%	13.6%	13.9%	95.2%	100.7%
55-64	15,012	16,755	16,586	12.5%	13.4%	12.8%	111.6%	110.5%
65+	25,784	29,378	33,149	21.4%	23.4%	25.6%	113.9%	128.6%
Total	120,293	125,498	129,442	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	104.3%	107.6%

Figure 2.16: Projected population change (2018 -2040)



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Summary of the demographic profile and population projections

Sevenoaks's population is expected to rise by 7.6% by 2040. A significant factor in this is the continuous rise in the number of people aged over 65. A key issue is whether the current stock of facilities can accommodate this increase or whether there is sufficient demand in specific areas to justify development of new facilities. There will also be a need to consider how the ageing population chooses to use leisure time which may affect levels of demand for different activities.

The importance of ensuring that the proportion of the population which is currently active remains so and that more of the presently inactive become active (sustaining and improving the general health of the local population) will become increasingly relevant. The importance of health and wellbeing is recognised in Sevenoaks as evidenced by the recent development/refurbishment of White Oak Leisure Centre. This process has focused on creating a sustainable sport and leisure offer with affordable access for local people.

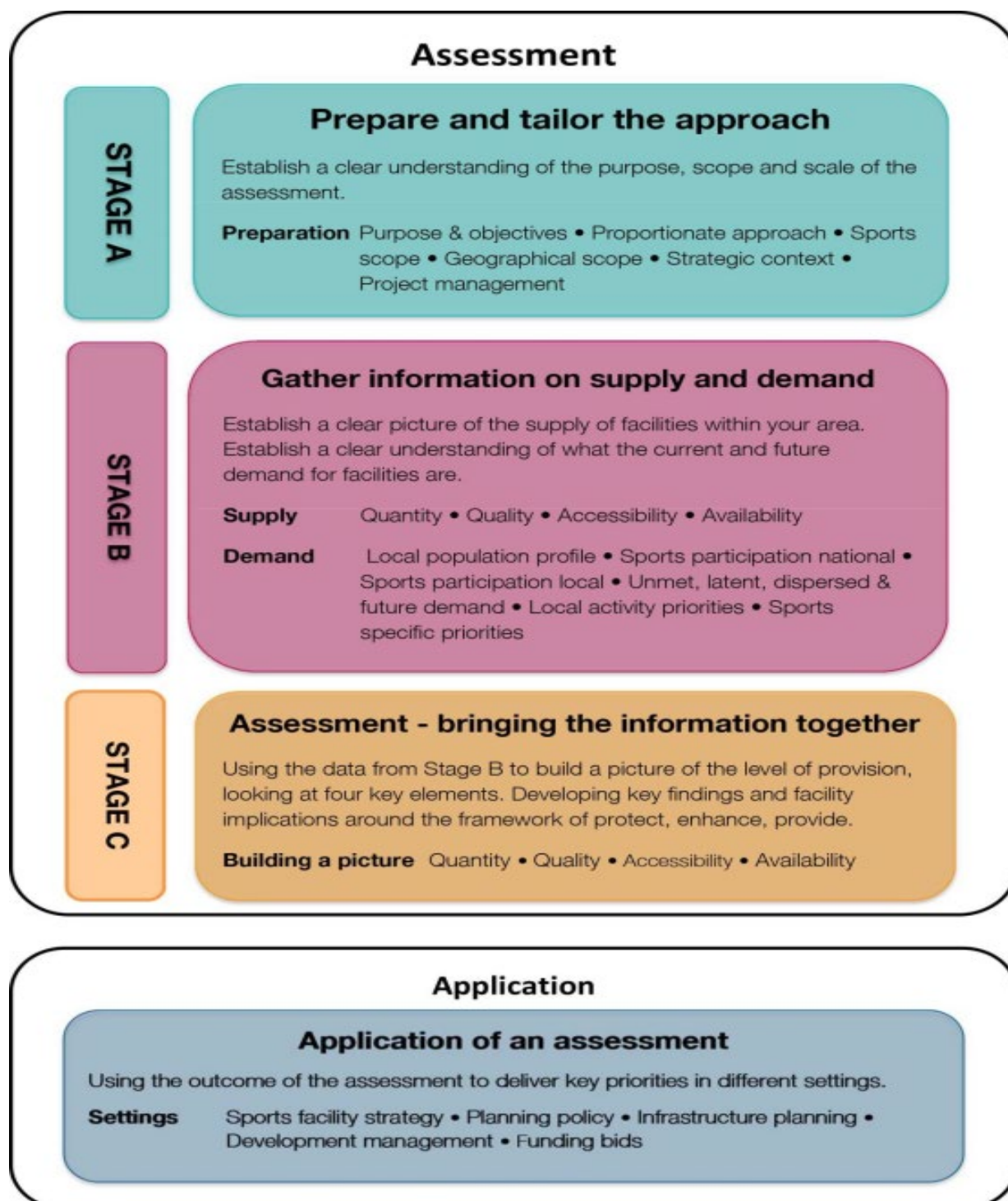
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SECTION 3: SPORTS FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

3.1: Methodology

As noted above, the assessment of provision is based on the Sport England Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide (ANOG) for indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

Figure 3.1: Recommended approach



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ANOG has been produced to help (local authorities) meet the requirements of the Government's NPPF, which states that: 'Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.' (NPPF, Paragraph 102).

Provision assessment involves analysis of quality, quantity, accessibility and availability for the identified facility types (e.g., sports halls and swimming pools). Each venue is considered on a 'like for like' basis within its own facility type, to enable it to be assessed for adequacy.

Demand background, data and consultation is variable, depending upon levels of consultation garnered. In some instances, national data is available whilst in others, it is possible to drill down and get some very detailed local information. This is evident within the demand section.

The report considers the distribution of and interrelationship between facility types in the Authority and provides a clear indication of areas of high demand. It identifies where there is potential to provide improved and/or additional facilities to meet this demand and, where appropriate, to protect or rationalise the current stock.

3.2: Site visits

Active Places Power (APP) is used to provide baseline data to identify facilities in the study area. Where possible, assessments are undertaken in the presence of facility staff. This tends to add value as it enables access to be gained to more areas within venues and more detailed in-situ discussion of issues such as customer perspectives, quality, maintenance etc. Where possible it adds value to the audit (which is a 'snapshot' visit) enhancing the accuracy of insight gathered about the general user experience.

Site visits to key indoor facilities, those operated by other partners and the voluntary sector were undertaken. Where a physical visit was not possible a telephone consultation with the facility/site manager was delivered. Via the audit and via informal interviews with facility managers this report identifies 'relevance' and 'condition' and describes (e.g.):

- ◀ Facility and scale.
- ◀ Usage/local market.
- ◀ Ownership, management and access arrangements (plus, where available, facility owner aspirations).
- ◀ Management, programming, catchments, user groups, gaps.
- ◀ Location (urban/rural), access and accessibility.
- ◀ Condition, maintenance, existing improvement plans, facility 'investment status' (lifespan in the short, medium and long term).
- ◀ Existing/ planned adjacent facilities.

The assessment forms utilised capture quantity and quality data on a site-by-site basis and feeds directly into the main database allowing information to be stored and analysed. Quality assessments undertaken are rated in the categories set out in Table 3.1 overleaf. These ratings are applied throughout the report, regardless of facility type.

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Ratings are based on non-technical visual assessments. These consider facility age and condition. Surfaces, tiles and walls, line markings and safety equipment are considered and problem areas such as mould, damage, leaks etc. are noted. The condition of fixtures, fittings and equipment is recorded.

Maintenance and facility 'wear and tear' is considered as is compliant with the Equality Act, although this is not studied in detail for the purposes of this report. When all data is collated, key facility elements receive an overall quality rating.

Table 3.1: Quality ratings of indoor sports facilities using ANOG

Quality rating	Description
Good	Facility is new (less than 10 years old) or recently invested in, up to date, clean, well maintained and presented. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are new or relatively new with little if any wear and tear. They are well-lit with a modern feel. Ancillary facilities are new or well maintained, fit for purpose, modern and attractive.
Above average	Facility is in reasonable condition and is well maintained and presented. May be older but it is fit for purpose and safe. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are in an acceptable condition but may show some signs of wear and tear. Ancillary facilities are good quality, but potentially showing signs of age and some wear and tear.
Below average	Facility is older and showing signs of age/poor quality. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces show signs of wear and tear. It is usable, but quality could be improved. The facility is not as attractive to customers and does not meet current expectations. Ancillary facilities are deteriorating, reasonable quality, but usable.
Poor	The facility is old and outdated. Fixtures, fittings, equipment and sports surfaces are aged, worn and/or damaged. The facility is barely usable and at times may have to be taken out of commission. The facility is unattractive to customers and does not meet basic expectations. Ancillary facilities are low quality and unattractive to use.

3.3: Catchment areas

Applying catchments areas for facility types listed in Sections 3-15 enables identification of areas currently not served. These vary from person to person, day to day, hour to hour. This problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchment'; the distance travelled by around 75-80% of users (used in the Sport England Facilities Planning Model - FPM). Sport England data indicates that most people will travel up to 20 minutes to access sports facilities. This, coupled with KKP's experience of working in/with leisure facilities and use of local data enables identification of catchment areas for sports facilities as follows.

Table 3.2: Facility catchment areas

Facility type	Identified catchment area
Sport halls, health and fitness, swimming pools, squash courts	20-minutes' walk/ 20 minutes' drive
Indoor bowls/tennis centre, dedicated gymnastics centre, climbing wall	30-minutes' drive

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SECTION 4: SPORTS HALLS

Indoor multi-purpose sports halls are prime venues for community sport enabling a range of sport and recreational activities to be played. The standard methodology for measuring sports halls is the number of badminton courts contained within the floor area.

Sports halls are generally considered to be of greatest value when of at least 3+ badminton court size with sufficient height to allow games such as badminton to be played. 4-court sports halls provide greater flexibility accommodating major indoor team sports such as netball and basketball. They have sufficient length to provide indoor cricket nets and indoor athletics and offer greater sports development flexibility than their 3-court counterpart. There is variance in the dimensions of 4-court halls; only those which meet current Sport England Design Guidance of 34.5m x 20m can properly accommodate the full range of indoor sports, especially competition/league activities.

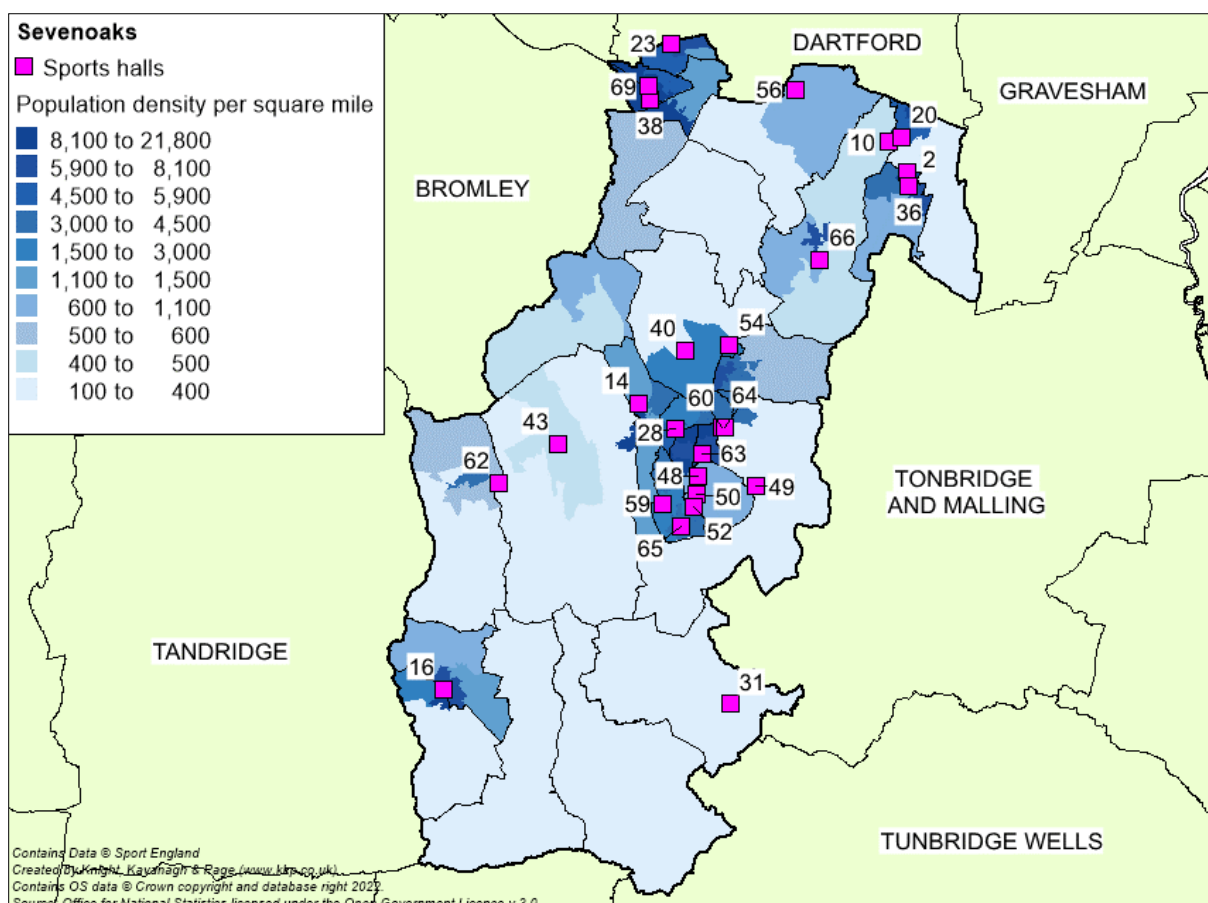
Larger halls, for example those with 6-8 courts, can accommodate higher level training and/or competition and meet day-to-day need. They also provide an option for more than one pitch/court increasing flexibility for training and competition and hosting of indoor central venue leagues for sports such as netball. This assessment considers all 3+ court facilities in Sevenoaks. Halls that function as specialist venues (e.g., dance studios) are excluded.

4.1: Supply

Quantity

Sevenoaks's 30 sports halls accommodate 68 badminton courts.

Figure 4.1: All sports / activity halls in Sevenoaks – regardless of size



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As illustrated in Figure 4.1, they are well distributed throughout the authority with more sports halls located in the more densely populated areas.

Table 4.1: All sports / activity halls in Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Courts
2	Ash Green Sports Centre	2
10	Corinthians Sports Club	4
14	Donnington Hall	1
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	4
20	Hartley Country Club	1
23	Hextable Primary School	2
28	Knole Academy	0
28	Knole Academy	4
31	Leigh Village Hall	1
36	New Ash Green Primary School	0
38	Orchards Academy	4
38	Orchards Academy	1
40	Otford Village Memorial Hall	0
43	Radnor House Sevenoaks	4
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	4
49	Sevenoaks Prep School	2
50	Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	8
52	Solefield School	0
54	St. Michaels School	4
56	Sutton At Hone Village Hall	0
59	The New Beacon School	1
60	Trinity School Sevenoaks	4
62	Valence School	1
63	Walthamstow Hall	4
63	Walthamstow Hall	0
64	Weald Of Kent Grammar School	4
65	West Heath School	4
66	West Kingsdown Village Hall	1
66	West Kingsdown Village Hall	1
69	White Oak Leisure Centre	2

(0 court halls identified in Active Places but not large enough to accommodate 1 badminton court)

Some venues have more than one activity/sports hall on site. Eighteen sports/activity halls have two or fewer badminton courts marked out. While often appropriate for mat sports, exercise to music and similar provision, the size of smaller (0-2 court) halls limits the range and scale of recreational/sporting activity that can be accommodated.

Only sites with sports halls containing three or more marked badminton courts were subject to assessment for the purpose of the needs assessment as these can accommodate a range of sports and be potentially used by the community depending on the access policy.

There are 12 sports halls with 3+ marked badminton courts in Sevenoaks, totalling 52 badminton courts.

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Figure 4.2: Sports halls with 3+ badminton courts in Sevenoaks

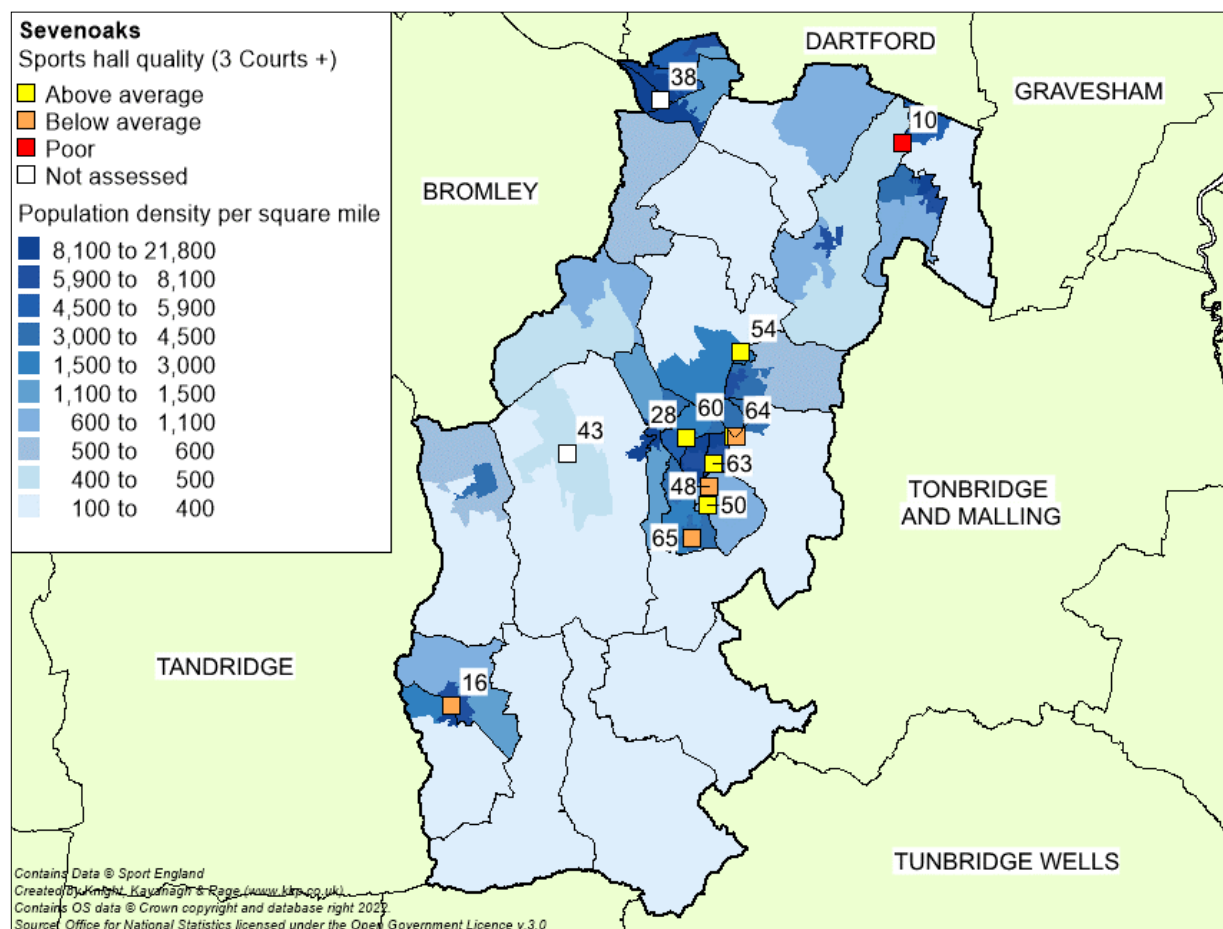


Table 4.2: Sports halls with 3+ badminton courts

Map ID	Site name	Courts
10	Corinthians Sports Club	4
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	4
28	Knole Academy	4
38	Orchards Academy	4
43	Radnor House Sevenoaks	4
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	4
50	Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	8
54	St. Michaels School	4
60	Trinity School Sevenoaks	4
63	Walthamstow Hall	4
64	Weald Of Kent Grammar School	4
65	West Heath School	4
-	Total	52

As with most authorities the 4-court sports hall is the most common. A larger sports hall can cater for sports which require more floor space such as futsal and handball or offer multiple courts for events and competitions. The largest sports hall in the Authority is Sevenoaks School (8-courts).

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Table 4.3 Summary of sports hall sizes in Sevenoaks.

1-courts	2- courts	4-courts	8- courts
8	4	11	1

Facility quality

As noted, sports halls with 3+ courts were subject to non-technical assessment to ascertain quality, details of which are found in Figures 4.3 and Table 4.4. Access was not obtained to Orchards Academy and Radnor House Sevenoaks despite numerous contact attempts.

Figure 4.3: Sports halls with 3+ courts in Sevenoaks by condition on population density

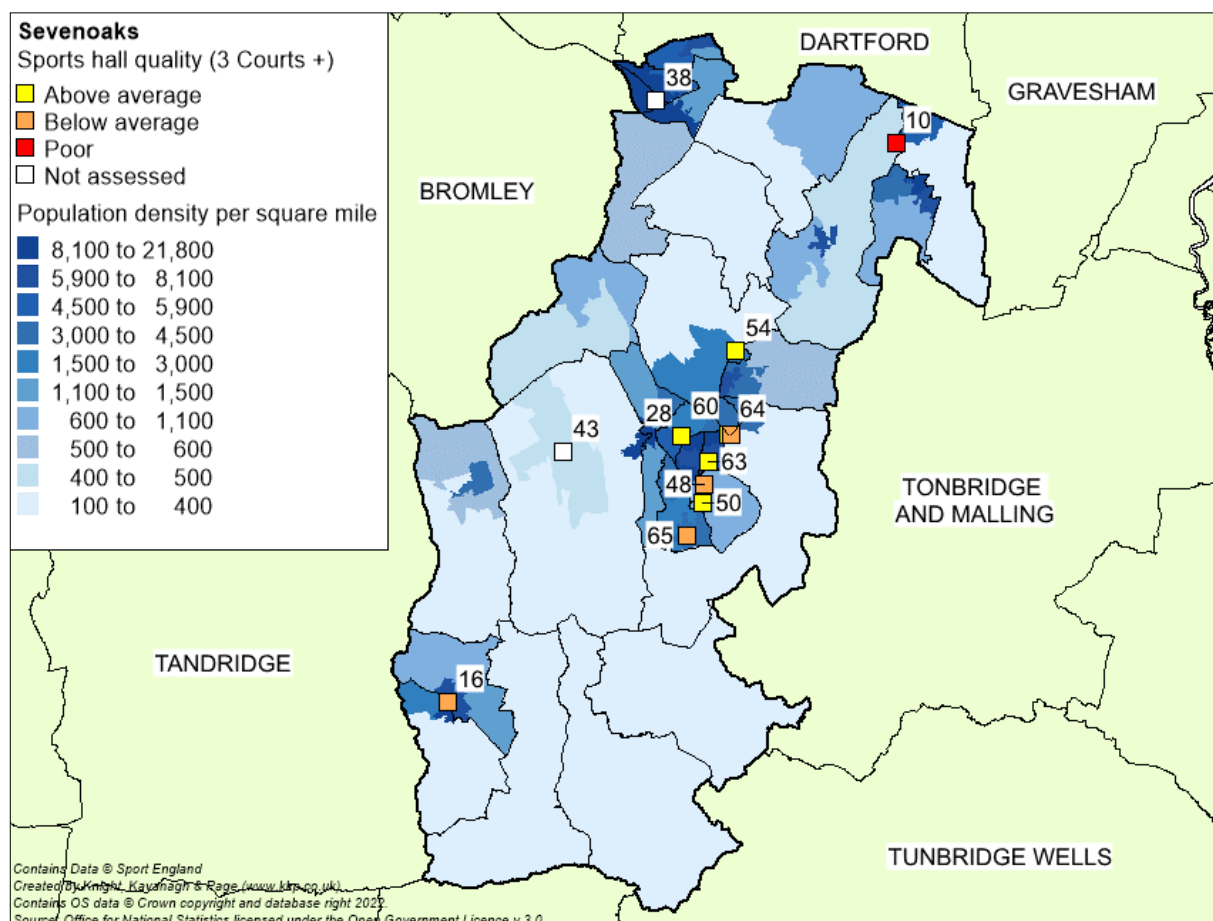


Table 4.4: sports halls with 3+ courts with quality assessment

Map ID	Site name	No. of courts	Court condition	Changing condition
10	Corinthians Sports Club	4	Poor	Poor
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	4	Below average	Below average
28	Knole Academy	4	Above average	Below average
38	Orchards Academy	4	No response	No response
43	Radnor House Sevenoaks	4	No response	No response
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	4	Below average	Below average
50	Sevenoaks School (Sennocke	8	Above average	Above average
54	St. Michaels School	4	Above average	Above average

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Map ID	Site name	No. of courts	Court condition	Changing condition
60	Trinity School Sevenoaks	4	Above average	Below average
63	Walthamstow Hall	4	Above average	Below average
64	Weald Of Kent Grammar School	4	Below average	Below average
65	West Heath School	4	Below average	Below average

There are five above average sports halls (24 courts), four below average (16 courts) and one poor quality hall (4 courts). As noted above, two 4- court sports halls were not assessed as no response was received. Of those assessed, 54.5% are above average in quality.

Changing room provision for sports halls at some educational sites was unassessed due to pupil use at the time of the site visit. In general, changing room quality is commensurate with sports hall quality, and generally at education facilities, they are of poorer quality.

Residents in Hartley only have access to poor quality provision although better quality provision may be available in the neighbouring authorities of Dartford /Gravesham. Residents in Edenbridge only have access to below average facilities.

Table 4.5: Reported quality issues at below average and poor-quality sports halls

Site name	Assessment rating	Audit findings
Corinthians Sports Club	Poor	Poor roof condition requires replacement, poor lighting, poor indoor 3G surface (2014)
Edenbridge Leisure Centre	Below average	Dated and showing signs of wear and tear. Requires replacement floor.
Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	Below average	The floor is showing signs of wear and tear and requires replacement.
Weald Of Kent Grammar School	Below average	Requires investment and modernisation. The sports hall did not benefit from any investment when the school was refurbished and still has the original floor.
West Heath School	Below average	Requires new floor and modernisation. Has had lights upgraded to LED to improve energy efficiency.

Consultation at St Michael's School identified scheduled plans to replace the sports hall floor and a roof replacement in c.5-10 years' time.

Sevenoaks School plans to replace the sports hall floor in the summer of 2024.

One quarter (25%) of the sports halls in the area were built within the last 20 years, the majority are more than 20 years old. Two thirds of all sports halls are reported to have had some form of refurbishment in the last 20 years.

Sport England Active Places database reports that the Weald of Kent was built in 2017, however, the audit identified that the sports hall was not included in the rebuild of the school and the original hall and original floor have simply been painted and modernised.

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Table 4.6: Age and refurbishment dates of sports halls

Site name	Year opened/built*	Year refurbished*	Age since opened/ refurbishment
Corinthians Sports Club	1972		52
Edenbridge Leisure Centre	1986	2004	20
Knole Academy	1970		54
Orchards Academy	1965	2002	22
Radnor House Sevenoaks	2003		21
Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	2001		23
Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	2005	2017	7
St. Michaels School	1996		28
Trinity School Sevenoaks	1974	2015	9
Walthamstow Hall	2015		9
Weald Of Kent Grammar School*	2017		7
West Heath School	1970	1998	26

*As reported by Sport England Active Places database and updated via consultation

Accessibility

Sports hall accessibility is influenced by how far people are willing and able to travel to and from them. Walk and drive-time catchments are applied to determine facility accessibility to different communities. The normal (industry) standard is a 20-minute walk time (one-mile radial catchment) for urban areas and a 20-minute drive time for rural areas.

Table 4.7: Accessibility to sports halls with 3+ courts

IMD ¹⁰ 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10.1 - 20	3,017	2.6%	3,017	2.6%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	3,326	2.8%	3,326	2.8%	0	0.0%
30.1 - 40	4,617	3.9%	4,324	3.7%	293	0.2%
40.1 - 50	11,436	9.7%	3,049	2.6%	8,387	7.1%
50.1 - 60	18,126	15.3%	8,369	7.1%	9,757	8.3%
60.1 - 70	16,333	13.8%	6,673	5.6%	9,660	8.2%
70.1 - 80	22,084	18.7%	4,447	3.8%	17,637	14.9%
80.1 - 90	8,116	6.9%	2,066	1.7%	6,050	5.1%
90.1 - 100	31,110	26.3%	26,143	22.1%	4,967	4.2%
Total	118,165	100.0%	61,414	52.0%	56,751	48.0%

The audit identified one sports hall at Orchards Academy (4-court) which does not provide community use. All others are available to the community with varying levels of access.

¹⁰ The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is a measure of relative deprivation for small areas in the United Kingdom. It combines a range of indicators to assess deprivation in seven domains: income, employment, education, health, crime, housing, and living environment.

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Orchards Academy is in one of the most deprived areas and it is important that the new facility serves the local community, with a community use agreement (this is already being in place).

Figure 4.4: All sports halls with 3+ courts on IMD with one-mile radial catchments

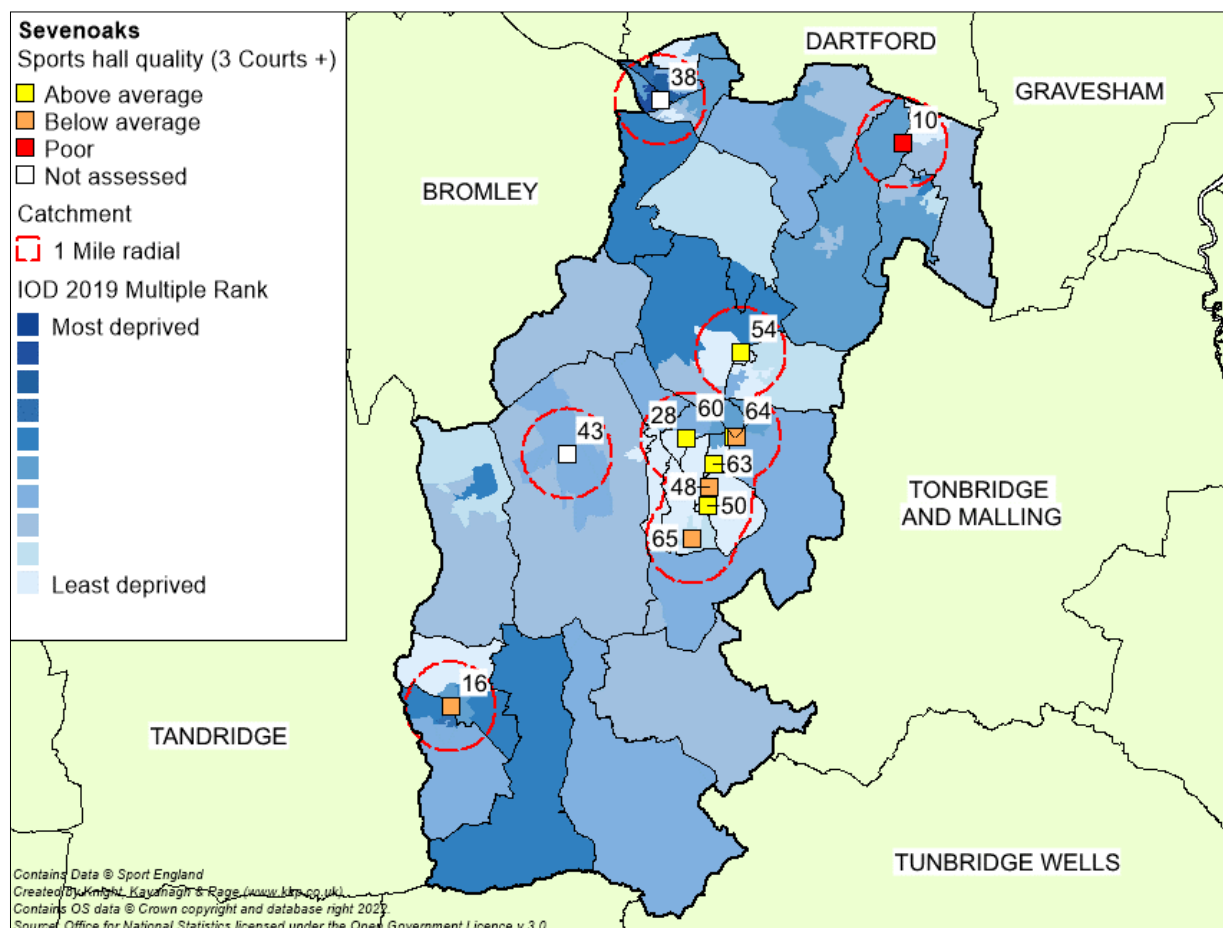


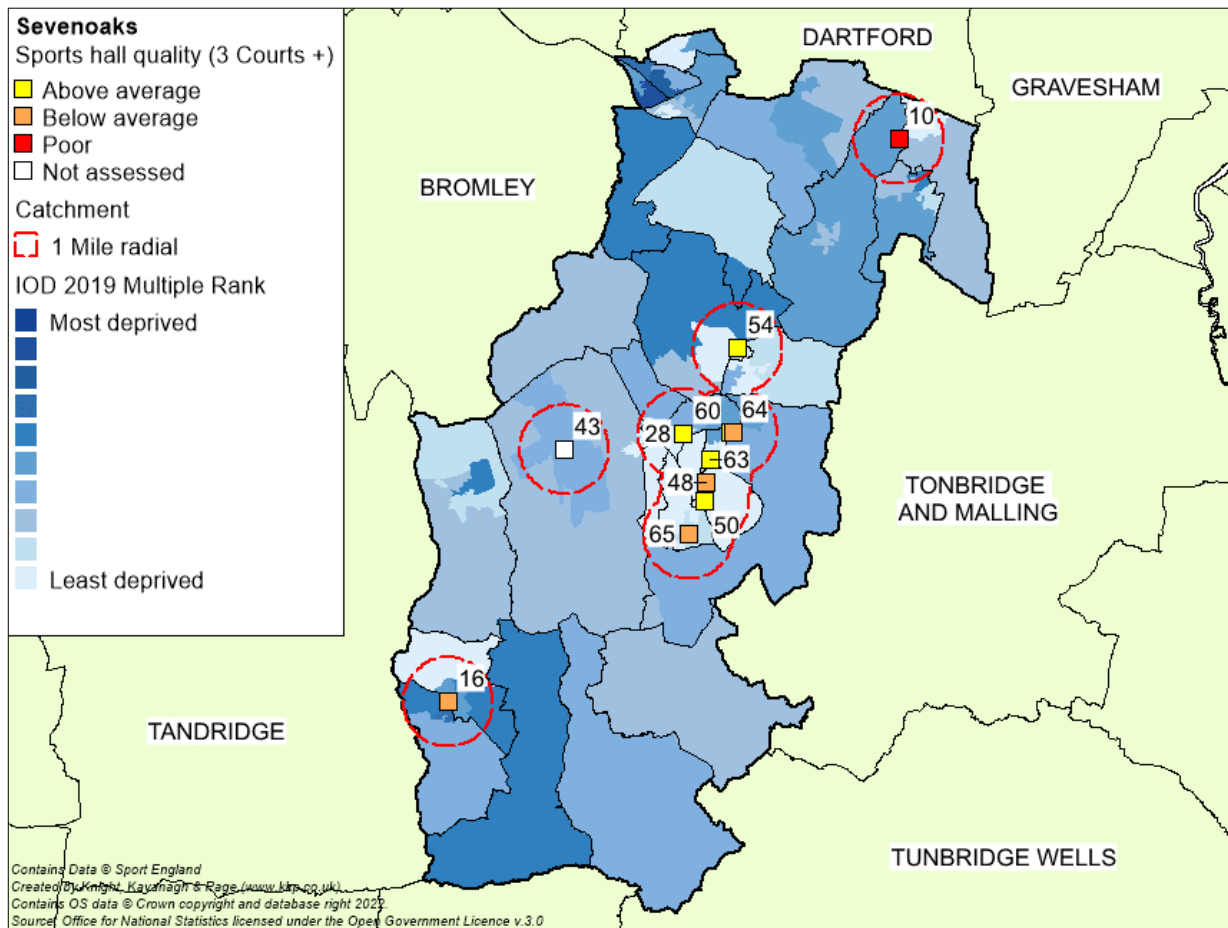
Table 4.8: Accessibility to community use sports halls with 3+ courts

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10.1 - 20	3,017	2.6%	0	0.0%	3,017	2.6%
20.1 - 30	3,326	2.8%	0	0.0%	3,326	2.8%
30.1 - 40	4,617	3.9%	2,950	2.5%	1,667	1.4%
40.1 - 50	11,436	9.7%	2,671	2.3%	8,765	7.4%
50.1 - 60	18,126	15.3%	6,699	5.7%	11,427	9.7%
60.1 - 70	16,333	13.8%	5,249	4.4%	11,084	9.4%
70.1 - 80	22,084	18.7%	1,748	1.5%	20,336	17.2%
80.1 - 90	8,116	6.9%	2,066	1.7%	6,050	5.1%
90.1 - 100	31,110	26.3%	23,733	20.1%	7,377	6.2%
Total	118,165	100.0%	45,116	38.2%	73,049	61.8%

In Sevenoaks, 52% of residents live within a one mile walk of a sports hall. This reduces to 38.2% (45,116) when applying the same calculation to sports halls with community access.

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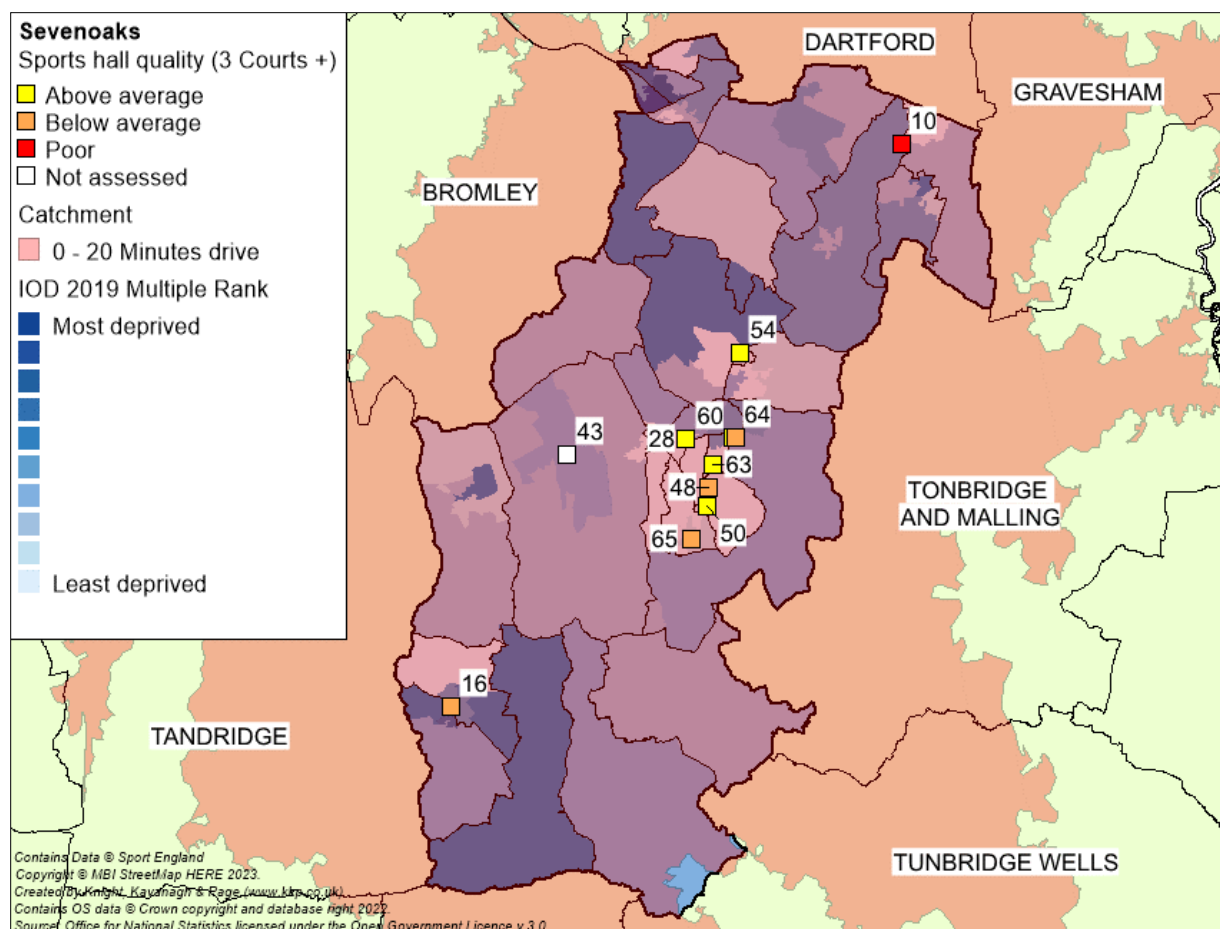
Figure 4.5: Community use sports halls with 3+ courts on IMD with one-mile radial catchments



Almost all (99.36%) of Sevenoaks residents live within a 20-minute drive of a sports hall with community use with three or more badminton courts.

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Figure 4.6: Community use sports halls on IMD background based on 20 minutes' drive-time



Facilities in neighbouring authorities

Accessibility is influenced by facilities located outside the authority, 29 sports halls with 3+ courts are located within two miles (indicative of how far people may travel) of Sevenoaks's boundary. They offer 116 courts, 42 of which are in Tonbridge and Malling. Table 4.9 provides a detailed list of all 3+ court sports halls in neighbouring authorities within a 20-minute drive time.

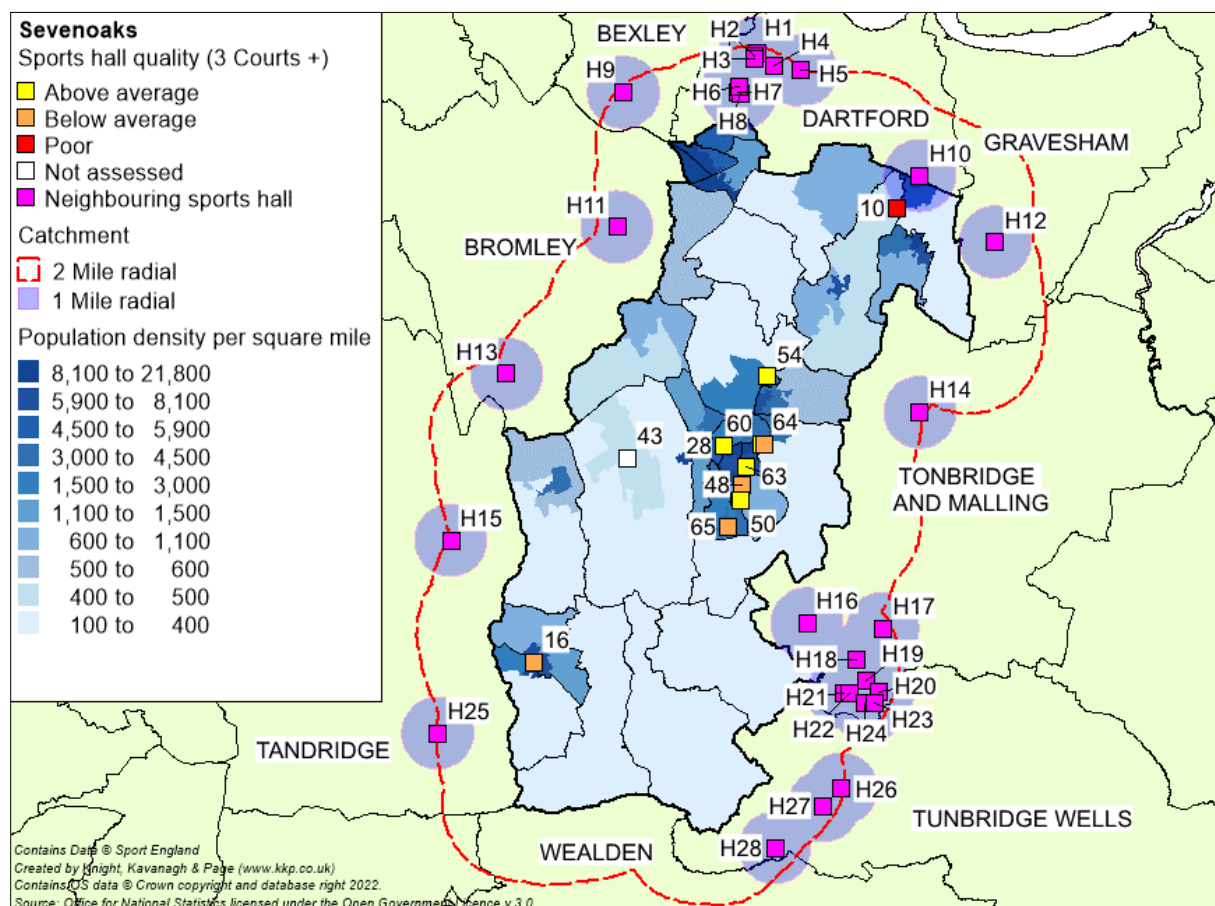
Table 4.9: Neighbouring sports halls with 3+ courts

ID	Site name	No. of courts	Access type	Local authority
H1	Becket Sports Centre	4	Pay and play	Dartford
H2	Dartford Grammar School	4	Sports club / CA	Dartford
H3	Dartford Science and Technology College	4	Sports club / CA	Dartford
H4	Fairfield Leisure Centre	4	Pay and play	Dartford
H5	The Leigh Academy	4	Sports club / CA	Dartford
H6	Wilmington Grammar School for Girls	4	Sports club / CA	Dartford
H7	Wilmington Academy	4	Sports club / CA	Dartford
H8	Wilmington Grammar School for Boys	4	Sports club / CA	Dartford
H9	Cleeve Park School	4	Sports club / CA	Bexley
H10	Longfield Academy	4	Sports club / CA	Dartford

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ID	Site name	No. of courts	Access type	Local authority
H11	Harris Academy Orpington	3	Pay and play	Bromley
H12	Meopham Leisure Centre	4	Pay and play	Gravesham
H13	Darwin Leisure Centre	4	Pay and play	Bromley
H14	Wrotham School	4	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge & Malling
H15	Hazelwood School	4	Sports club / CA	Tandridge
H16	Sackville School	4	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge & Malling
H17	Hugh Christie School	4	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge & Malling
H18	Tonbridge School Centre	5	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge & Malling
H19	Angel Centre	6	Pay and play	Tonbridge & Malling
H20	Hillview School for Girls	3	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge & Malling
H21	Hayesbrook Academy	4	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge & Malling
H22	Judd School	4	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge & Malling
H23	Weald of Kent Grammar School	4	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge & Malling
H24	Tonbridge Grammar School	4	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge & Malling
H25	Lingfield College	3	Sports club / CA	Tandridge
H26	Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre	4	Pay and play	Tunbridge Wells
H26	Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre	4	Pay and play	Tunbridge Wells
H27	Bennett Memorial Diocesan School	4	Sports club / CA	Tunbridge Wells
H28	Holmewood House School	4	Sports club / CA	Tunbridge Wells

Figure 4.7: Sports halls in neighbouring authorities



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Availability and facility management

Management and ownership vary. Sevenoaks DC owns two venues with 3+ court sports halls, Edenbridge Leisure Centre and Sevenoaks Leisure Centre, both managed by EA. School sports halls are owned and managed in-house. Only one site is used privately only, this is Orchards Academy. When privately used sports halls are removed from analysis, there are 11 sports halls at 11 sites in Sevenoaks with 3+ courts. This equates to 48 available courts.

Table 4.10: Ownership and management of 3+ court sports hall facilities with community access

Site name	Ownership	Management
Corinthians Sports Club	Sports Club	In house
Edenbridge Leisure Centre	Sevenoaks DC	Everyone Active
Knole Academy	Academy	In house
Orchards Academy	Academy	In house
Radnor House Sevenoaks	Independent school	In house
Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	Sevenoaks DC	Everyone Active
Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	Independent school	In house
St. Michaels School	Independent school	In house
Trinity School Sevenoaks	Academy	In house
Walthamstow Hall	Independent school	In house
Weald Of Kent Grammar School	Academy	In house
West Heath School	Independent school	In house

Three sites in Sevenoaks offer daytime (off peak) availability to community users. They are Edenbridge and Sevenoaks leisure centres and the sports hall with a 3G carpet at Corinthians Sports Club. Given the nature of school sites, their availability is normally limited to evenings and weekends.

Availability during the day and relevant programming can be important (and attractive) for residents who wish to use facilities at such times (typically unemployed, older people, home workers and shift workers). Given that the number of older people in the authority is increasing, providing adequate daytime available sports hall space is essential.

Total community use hours available for each sports hall are calculated using intelligence gathered via the audit and desk research. Usage percentages are determined based on booking information provided by the site and detail gained via consultation. It is not possible to precisely gauge used capacity due to the changing nature of bookings on a week-by-week basis, the seasonality of sports and the varied use of sports halls for school exams.

Table 4.11: Opening hours and activities in sports halls 3+ courts in Sevenoaks

Community use hours	ID	Site	No. of Courts	Main sports played
None	38	Orchards Academy	4	N/A
20.0	65	West Heath School	4	Archery, tennis, mini kickers
29.5	64	Weald Of Kent Grammar School	4	Badminton, netball, karate
35.0	54	St Michaels School	4	Badminton, indoor cricket, netball, judo.
36.0	60	Trinity School Sevenoaks	4	Football, basketball, hockey, tennis, badminton, netball, cricket nets, football

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Community use hours	ID	Site	No. of Courts	Main sports played
36.0	28	Knole Academy	4	Indoor hockey, badminton, football, basketball
41.0	50	Sevenoaks School	8	Basketball, physiotherapy, mini football, triathlon, netball, indoor cricket.
48.0	43	Radnor House (Sevenoaks)	4	Unknown**
55.5	63	Walthamstow Hall	4	Badminton
90.0	10	Corinthians Sports Club	4	Football
91.0	16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	4	Gymnastics, cricket nets, short mat bowls, netball.
98.5	48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	4	Cheerleading, roller skating, martial arts, gymnastics, badminton and trampolining.

*Usage provided by Sport England Active Places Power database

**Radnor House did not respond to consultation requests

Walthamstow Hall has a long-term lease with Hildenborough Badminton Club. It hires the sports hall every evening during the week and both days at the weekend. Corinthians Sports Club sports hall floor has a 3G surface installed and is used exclusively for football.

A good range of sports is on offer in sports halls across the authority. A number, however, accommodate football which can indicate limited provision of 3G pitches (see PPOSS 2024 findings). To increase space availability for indoor sports, there is scope to free up sports halls by providing increasing 3G provision/availability for football.

Used capacity

Non-technical site audits identify the used capacity of each sports hall. This is the percentage of available community use hours used. Sport England identifies 80% as a 'comfortably full' benchmark. For example, the 20 hours available at West Heath School are used for 90% of the time. The Corinthian Sports Club is available for 90 hours per week during the peak period, is operating at 90% of used capacity at peak times and has virtually no daytime use.

Table 4.12: Used capacity of sports halls

Used capacity	Site
Unknown	Radnor House
50%	Weald of Kent Grammar School
60%	Trinity School
60%	Corinthians Sports Club
70%	Edenbridge Leisure Centre
80%	St Michaels School
80%	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre
80%	Knole Academy
80%	Walthamstow Hall
80%	Sevenoaks School
90%	West Heath School

(80% -Sport England's guidance threshold which is considered to be a "comfortably full" sports hall)

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Only Weald of Kent Grammar School expressed interest in increasing the availability of its sports hall to the community. All other education sites offer limited availability due to school use.

Six sites in Sevenoaks are operating at/above Sport England's 80% threshold where they are deemed to be comfortably full. This demonstrates the high demand for sports hall space in some areas of Sevenoaks. All other sites have capacity to accommodate further demand.

West Heath School which is operating at 90% used capacity although it is only available for 20 hours per week is an example of where community use hours could potentially be extended if club demand can be evidenced and other issues such as staffing can be addressed.

Future developments

Consultation with Knole Academy identified that it is working in partnership with Sevenoaks Sons Basketball Club on the potential development of the following:

- ◀ Show basketball court with 500 spectator seats (Basketball and netball FIBA and Super League dimension).
- ◀ Two basketball training courts (multi-sport hall).
- ◀ Weights room.
- ◀ Office and meeting space.
- ◀ Changing provision.
- ◀ Four outdoor basketball courts and eight half courts.

The funding has yet to be secured and no application for planning consent has, as yet, been submitted for this potential development.

The school stated that the existing sports hall will remain open even in the event of the new development coming to fruition.

In addition, there are approved plans to replace the sports hall at Orchards Academy (as part of the wider school redevelopment). These include a replacement (4-court) sports hall and an activity studio, and a community use agreement is already in place. Detailed timescales are yet to be determined but the whole school development is due to complete in Autumn 2026.

4.2: Demand

NGB consultation

NGBs and active clubs were consulted to ascertain current use, participation trends and the needs/challenges facing sports halls in the area.

Badminton England (BE)

BE is the national governing body of sport (NGB) for badminton. Its latest strategy, Discover Badminton 2017-2025 presents a vision for the sport to become one of the nation's most popular and to consistently win medals at world, Olympic and Paralympic levels. To achieve this, it has identified three key objectives:

- ◀ Grow grassroots participation.
- ◀ Create a system that identifies and develops player potential to deliver consistent world class performers.
- ◀ Built financial resilience to become a well governed organisation and demonstrate compliance with the UK governance code.

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There are two BE affiliated clubs in Sevenoaks with a collective total of c.150 affiliated adult members; They are:

- ◀ Sevenoaks Badminton Club.
- ◀ Hildenborough Badminton Club.

BE considers Kent to be a very strong county and supporting growth in the area is a priority. It reports having two level 2 coaches operating in the area; what is on offer includes no strings, SmashUp and Racket Pack.

A further five unaffiliated clubs were identified via the audit:

- ◀ Christ Church Swanley Badminton Club.
- ◀ Whiteoaks Fun and Active Junior Badminton Club.
- ◀ Prime Time.
- ◀ Angel Badminton Club.
- ◀ ETC Youth Club.

Club consultation

All clubs were approached for consultation but no response was received from any.

Desk research indicates that the two affiliated clubs are the main participation and player development vehicles for the sport in Sevenoaks. The other badminton clubs appear to be largely social/recreational groups:

Sevenoaks Badminton Club is based at Weald of Kent Grammar School and has a club night on Mondays 20.00-22.00. It runs four teams in the men's, women's and mixed divisions of the Tunbridge Wells Badminton League.

Hildenborough Badminton Club has a lease agreement with Walthamstow Hall School. It runs six teams in the men's, women's and mixed divisions of the Tunbridge Wells Badminton League. In addition, it also has c.200 junior members. It is actively advertising for new players for club and league matches.

Netball

The England Netball (EN) strategy, Your Game, Your Way, aims to establish it as a top performing, financially sustainable NGB that promotes 'Netball for Life' and develops more world class athletes. The four key stated priorities are:

- ◀ Grow participation in the game by an average of 10,000 participants per annum.
- ◀ Deliver a 1st class member and participant experience.
- ◀ Establish England as the number one team in the World.
- ◀ Lead an effective and progressive infrastructure enabling all involved in the netball experience to collaborate as one team aligned behind one dream.

EN reports the sport to be growing fast. Its YouGov¹¹ report indicated that the 2019 World Cup inspired 160,000 adult women to take up the sport. In addition, at that time, 71% of clubs reported that more people had shown an interest in playing netball than before the tournament started.

¹¹ <https://www.uk sport.gov.uk/news/2019/10/02/netball-world-cup>

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Netball is played both indoors and outdoors. The Sevenoaks PPOSS 2024 will detail the area’s outdoor netball provision.

Indoor provision in the Sevenoaks area is as follows:

- ◀ Back 2 Netball sessions designed to re-introduce players to the sport and run by netball coaches are reported to take place at Edenbridge Leisure Centre.
- ◀ Walking Netball (netball played at a walking pace) designed to enable anyone to play regardless of age or fitness level – are held weekly at Edenbridge Leisure Centre.
- ◀ No affiliated indoor netball league is currently operating in Sevenoaks.
- ◀ Go Mammoth (commercial operator) runs a league out of Knole Academy on its outdoor courts.

The following clubs deliver sessions in sports halls over the winter period:

Table 4.13: Netball clubs using sports hall venues

Club name	Site
CFX	Sevenoaks School, St Michaels School, Weald of Kent School
Halstead Netball Club	Weald of Kent School
Ortford Netball Club	Trinity School

Club consultation

CFX - is a private enterprise established in 2000 as a centre of excellence to provide netball opportunities for talented players. Its management and coaches are all paid professionals. Its activity takes place at three school sites in Sevenoaks and it has sessions running on every evening. It is reported to have 60 teams and c. 170 players in seven junior teams plus eight Bee Section teams (formerly known as High 5). Schools identify talented players and make referrals to the programme. It caters for players aged from school year 4 upwards.

It accesses indoor provision at St Michaels School and Weald of Kent School. It reports a lack of available indoor courts in the area. It reports a large amount of imported demand from East Grinstead, Tonbridge Wells, Wealden, Bexley Heath and Halstead.

Halstead Netball Club - is a community club playing in the Sevenoaks Junior Netball League. It is a non-selective club open to players in school year 3-10. It runs Bee Netball, junior and adult teams.

Otford Netball Club - hires Trinity School for four hours on Tuesday evenings. It runs teams for players in school years 4-11. It has 11 junior teams and five Bee Netball teams.

Sevenoaks School hosts London Pulse Performance Team sessions on a regular basis.

Sevenoaks Junior Netball League currently uses the annexe building at the Weald of Kent and the outdoor courts at Trinity School and Weald of Kent (5 courts in total). Outdoor courts are covered withing the PPOSS 2024.

Swanley Netball Club reports that all play is outdoors, indoor provision is not available to accommodate demand. For further details regarding outdoor provision please refer to the PPOSS 2024.

The Club used to play at Whiteoak Leisure Centre however, the reduction in size of sports hall for the new centre has meant that all play is outdoors.

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Consultation identified that Swanley District League are very active in the area. It currently plays outdoors in Swanley but once the sports hall is complete at Orchards Academy it intends to return to using it. It previously had to stop using the facility due to the poor-quality sports hall flooring.

Basketball England (BBE)

BBE's strategy, Transforming Basketball in Britain Together (2016 - 2028) aims to improve basketball from grassroots to GB teams, by adopting a whole sport approach and working closely with the basketball community. To achieve this, a series of key objectives have been identified:

- ◀ Develop successful GB teams.
- ◀ Build high-quality men's and women's leagues and teams.
- ◀ Support talented players, officials and coaches and coach development pathways.
- ◀ Drive increased awareness and profile of the sport.
- ◀ Increase opportunities to play the game at every level.
- ◀ Transform the leadership and culture of the sport.

To increase the opportunities to play the game at every level, BBE has produced a facilities strategy which aims to create community hubs including, where appropriate, arenas that sit at the heart of communities and are homes for the leading British Basketball League (BBL), Women's British Basketball League (WBBL) and community clubs.

The stated intent is that as part of its facilities strategy implementation, BBE will regularly monitor provision in schools, colleges, universities, clubs and at local authority sites and identify any gaps, looking to improve connections between these organisations to increase the availability and affordability of facilities of the right quality.

BBE reports having one affiliated club in the Authority, Sevenoaks Sons Basketball Club. According to BBE, it has c.170 affiliated club members and runs one senior men's team and 13 junior teams. It has 123 junior male members, 18 senior men and 26 junior females.

Club consultation

Sevenoaks Sons Basketball Club reports having c.400 members, it also delivers a school outreach programme which it suggested is likely to double the number of people playing.

It reports that, in recent years, it has been growing at 20% per annum but that this growth has now stagnated primarily due to it having limited access to facilities and also facility costs.

Its membership fee is £800 per year and, simply to breakeven, it reports needing to attract 21 players to each session. It runs a bursary programme to support lower income families and also offers a payment plan option for membership payment. It reports that many young players attend taster sessions but do not return due to the cost of participation. It also indicated that it is unable to take on as much outreach work as it would like (for example, to work harder to attract and retain more female members).

It uses eight venues in three local authority areas; Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tonbridge Wells. This means that players have to travel to different venues and incur additional costs. It reports not being able to gain access to sufficient sports hall time and that what it does get access to is not always at its preferred times due to other sports clubs' demand.

Locally, it currently uses Knole Academy, Sevenoaks School – the traditional base of the club (six hours per week) and Sevenoaks Leisure Centre. It previously hired Trinity School.

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It reports that, at Knole Academy, the playing surface is good and that while it is a good training facility with 10 baskets, the overall dimensions of the sports hall are too small and that runoffs are, thus, inadequate. There is also no spectator space, so parents often have to wait in cars in the car park and cannot spectate.

It reports that the playing surface at Sevenoaks School is good but peeling up and that the backboards are in need of replacement. (As reported earlier, the School does have plans to replace its sports hall floor). It previously played its WBBL games at this venue, albeit with special dispensation from Basketball England.

It notes that the sports hall floor at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre is hardwood and has 'no give'. This venue is only used for men's recreational sessions.

It stated that it pays c. £50 per hour to hire sports halls and that it will pay out more than £80,000 in court hire fees in 2024. It also reports having an insufficient workforce to accommodate school outreach demand and having to turn down schools because it does not have available coaches.

In the past, the Club ran a professional women's team at the highest level of English basketball. Many of its players went on to secure college scholarships in America. Not being able to find a court locally that met Basketball England standards, it had to play in Surrey and thus struggled to build a fanbase – making the franchise hard to maintain.

It has been looking for a site and a partner with which to build its own facility for a long time and has been liaising with schools to try and deliver this. Having initially discussed options with Swanley it is now in discussion with Knole Academy with regard to options to build an indoor centre plus outdoor courts on its site.

As noted above, its aspiration at Knole is to develop a basketball hall incorporating a FIBA and netball Super League dimension show court with 500+ spectator seating plus two other training courts – in effect creating a multi-court hall which can accommodate a range of all sports. Also, part of the plan is changing rooms, fitness room, offices and meeting space, four outdoor courts and eight half courts. Its ambition is that this will host international junior tournaments. It is also open to involving other sports and to offering youth provision to ensure that the venue is used to its full capacity.

Should such a facility be developed in Sevenoaks; it is still likely to need to hire courts in Tonbridge & Tonbridge Wells to cater for the demand in those authorities. This said, a dedicated basketball facility would be able to cope with 80% of the court hours it needs.

Should a venue generate profit, it suggested that this would be invested in paying professional coaches to go into schools and deliver basketball outreach sessions.

The audit did not find any disability specific sports clubs in the area. As many of the existing clubs are inclusive and accessible, it is likely that disabled participants are joining mainstream clubs, although it is possible that some are not participating in a club environment.

Summary of current demand

There is currently a moderate level of demand for sports hall space from a number of clubs operating in and across Sevenoaks. The audit indicates that the use of sports halls to accommodate badminton, basketball, netball and indoor cricket, is particularly important in the area.

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Basketball has an unusually strong presence, with one large club routinely utilising sports hall space. It reports struggling to source additional court time and that the absence of a venue with spectator accommodation is restricting its aspiration to enter a men’s team in the (semi-professional) British Basketball League.

Indoor netball activity is limited. Most recreational play reportedly takes place on outdoor courts, although there is evidence of some indoor use in the winter months across a number of facilities. Cricket demand primarily consists of club training.

Most sites report football being played in sports halls. As indicated, this may indicate a need for more outdoor 3G provision (see PPOSS 2024). Moving football training outdoors would release capacity to enable more indoor sports activity to take place.

4.3: Future demand and Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC)

Sport England’s SFC helps quantify additional demand for community sports facilities generated by new growth populations, development and regeneration areas. It is used to estimate facility needs for whole area populations but should not be applied for strategic gap analysis as it has no spatial dimension and does not take account of:

- ◀ Facility location compared to demand.
- ◀ Capacity and availability of facilities – opening hours.
- ◀ Cross boundary movement of demand.
- ◀ Travel networks and topography.
- ◀ Attractiveness of facilities.

Table 4.14: Sport England: Sports Facilities Calculator

Description	Population 2018: (ONS)	Population estimate: 2040 (ONS)
ONS population projections	120,293	129,442
Population increase	-	9,149
Facilities to meet additional demand	-	+0.63 halls or 2.55 courts
Estimated cost*	-	£2,074,583

(Build costs as of Q3 2023)

Calculations assume that the current sports hall stock remains available for community use and the quality remains the same. It appears that the projected increase in population will lead to an increase in demand for sports hall space. The SFC indicates a requirement for an additional 2.55 (badminton) courts, up to 2040 (estimated cost: £2,074,583).

It is anticipated that current sports hall stock will be in a position to accommodate the increased demand, especially when considering the significant level of spare capacity at some venues in the area and the ability to increase the number of available hours at some sites where the number of community available hours is relatively low.

There is a need to improve quality at the four sites identified as below average quality. Options and scope for improvement will be covered in more detail in the Strategy. There may also be a need to increase levels of daytime facility accessibility as the number/proportion of older people in the local population increases, however, it is recognised that this is often challenging at education sites for programming and safeguarding reasons.

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4.4: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	Sevenoaks has 30 sports halls and 68 badminton courts). There are 12 halls with 3+ courts (a total of 52 badminton courts).	Population growth may create additional demand for up to 2.55 badminton courts. Make better use of available facility capacity. Conduct a programming review and extend hours at sites that presently offer limited hours. Orchards Academy will replace its sports hall with a same size sports hall. The potential basketball arena would provide (at least 12 possibly 15) additional badminton courts.
Quality	Sevenoaks has five above average, 4 below average and one poor quality sports hall. Two were not assessed.	Maintain the quality of good/above average sites. Improve the sports halls rated below average/poor. Modernise older facilities showing wear and tear. Invest in green and energy reduction technologies (LED lights, PV panels and insulation). Refurbish sports halls that have had no investment within the last 20 years. Ensure that planned and preventative maintenance is implemented at existing sites.
Accessibility	Virtually all residents live within 20 minutes' drive and 38% live within a one mile walk of a community available sports hall. There are 29 3+court halls within two miles of the SDC boundary.	Main population settlements are all serviced by sports hall facilities.
Availability (Management and usage)	All sports halls other than Orchards Hall Academy are community available. Some are at 80%, others have spare capacity. Football use may be exacerbating this. Current levels of community use at Radnor House School and Orchards Academy are unknown due to no consultation response.	Maintain good relationships between schools and clubs to ensure continued/increased use of sites. Improve availability for club activities and secure community use agreements (CUAs) with educational sites, where they are not currently in place. Extend community hours where there is an agreement and demand for increased activity. Ensure that community use at future developments is secured via CUAs. Orchards Academy is a priority for this.

Strategic summary

Key recommendations are to:

- ◀ Improve the quality of below average/poor sport halls.
- ◀ Maintain good relationships with schools, to retain and improve levels of community use.
- ◀ Consider whether and how community use can be extended at certain school sites enabling existing sport and physical activity participation to grow.
- ◀ Accommodate increased demand during peak hours via extending levels of community access at existing venues. Developer contributions could/should thus, be directed at improving sports hall quality as part of a trade-off which enables more community hours.
- ◀ Work to enable more football training/play to be accommodated outdoors to increase the availability of sports halls for netball, basketball, badminton and gymnastics.

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SECTION 5: SWIMMING POOLS

A swimming pool is defined as an “enclosed area of water, specifically maintained for all forms of water-based sport and recreation”. It includes indoor and outdoor pools, freeform leisure pools and specific diving tanks used for general swimming, teaching, training and diving. Many small pools are used solely for recreational swimming and will not necessarily need to strictly follow the NGB recommendations. It is, however, generally recommended that standard dimensions are used to allow appropriate levels of competition and training and to help meet safety standards. Relatively few pools need to be designed to full competition standards or include spectator facilities.

Training for competition, low-level synchronised swimming, and water polo can all take place in a 25m pool. With modest spectator seating, pools can also accommodate competitive events in these activities. Diving from boards, advanced synchronised swimming and more advanced sub-aqua training require deeper water. These can all be accommodated in one pool tank, which ideally should be in addition to the main pool.

The NGB responsible for administering diving, swimming, synchronised swimming and water polo in England is Swim England.

Swim England’s report ‘A Decade of Decline: The Future of Swimming Pools in England’ provides a national analysis of the current swimming pool stock across England. It notes that the average age of a pool built from 1960 onwards is 43 years. On this basis it suggests that many of these pools are now coming to the end of their lifespan.

Many pool operators were placed in a serious financial situation during the pandemic, when many local authorities provided emergency financial support through direct grants, deferred payments or loans to subsidise pool operators who had suffered loss of income due to pool closures.

UK Government’s £100 million National Leisure Recovery Fund also provided assistance to enable pools to re-open once restrictions had been lifted. Despite this, Swim England reports that 206 pools (including 68 public pools) closed, either permanently or temporarily over the period of the Pandemic.

In preparing for the future, Swim England recommend that local authorities conduct analysis of their pool stock to understand if they have the right pools in the right places to meet the needs of the local community. In the light of leisure facilities accounting for over 40% cent of some councils’ direct carbon emissions it advocates capital investment into renewal of pool stock in order to support efforts to reach net zero targets, alongside combating the predicted overall future deficit of water space nationally.

5.1: Supply

This assessment is mostly concerned with larger pools available for community use (no restrictions to accessing the pool as a result of membership criteria). As such, those less than 160m² (e.g., 20m x 4 lanes) water space and/or located at private member clubs are deemed to offer limited value in relation to community use and delivery of outcomes related to health and deprivation. It is recognised that smaller pools can accommodate learning/ teaching sessions, but they are, for modelling/needs assessment purposes, deemed unable to offer a full swim programme and, thus, eliminated from the supply evaluation, when considering accessibility and availability later in this section.

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Quantity

Including all pools irrespective of size and access, the audit identifies 19 at 16 sites. The public leisure centre pools and pool provision is well located across all main population centres.

Figure 5.1: All swimming pools in Sevenoaks

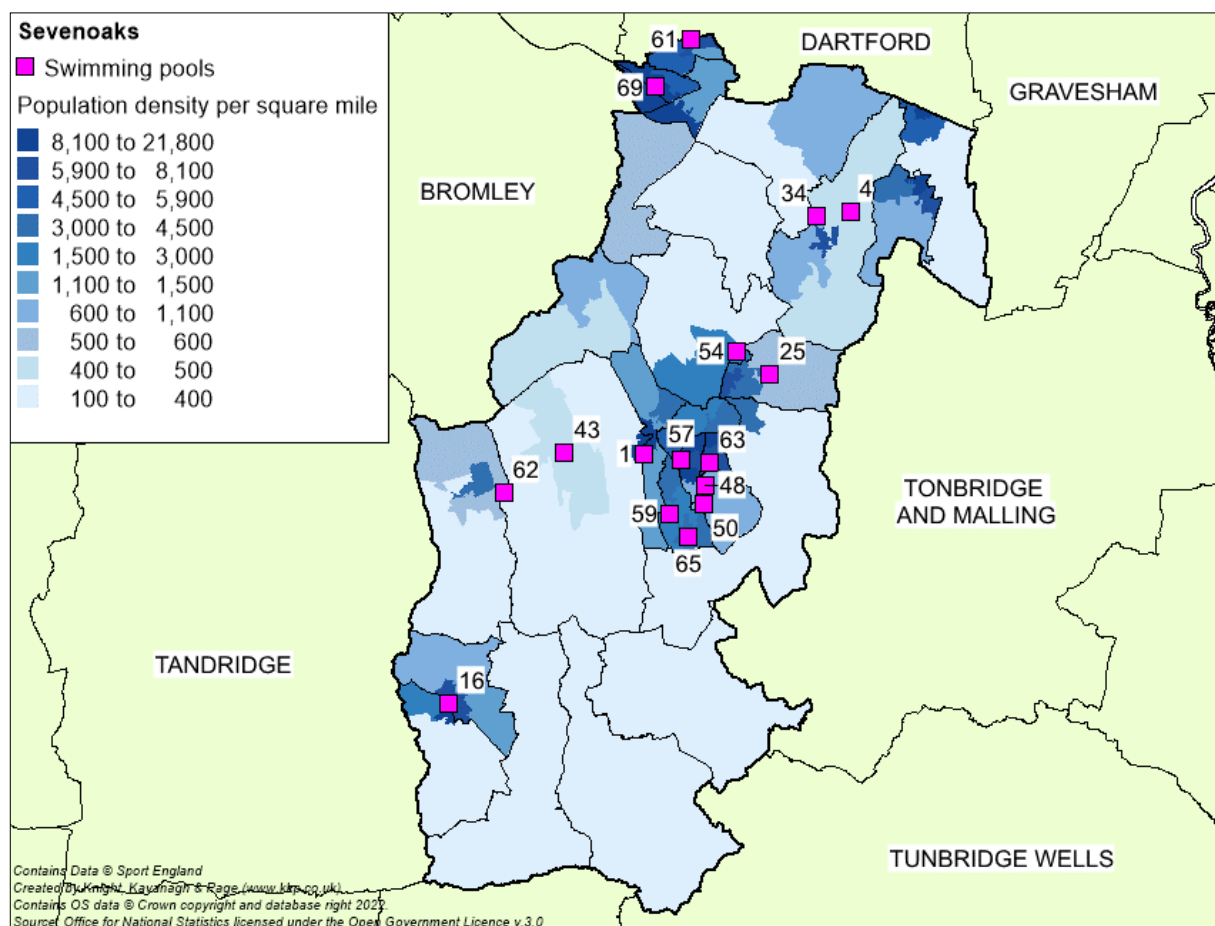


Table 5.1: All swimming pools in Sevenoaks

ID	Site	Facility type	Lanes	Width x length (m)	Area (m ²)
1	Amherst School	Lido	0	9 x 15m	135
4	Brandshatch Place Hotel & Spa	Learner/teaching/training	0	5 x 12m	63
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	Main/general	5	10 x 25m	250
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	Learner/teaching/training	0	10 x 10m	100
25	Kemsing Primary School	Learner/teaching/training	0	6 x 15m	90
34	Mercure Dartford Brands Hatch Hotel	Main/general	0	7 x 15m	105
43	Radnor House Sevenoaks	Main/general	5	8 x 25m	200
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	Main/general	6	13 x 25m	325
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	Learner/teaching/training	0	7 x 13m	91
50	Sevenoaks School	Main/general	6	6 x 25m	325
54	St Michaels School	Main/general	4	10 x 25m	250

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ID	Site	Facility type	Lanes	Width x length (m)	Area (m ²)
57	The Granville School	Learner/teaching/training	0	7 x 20m	140
59	The New Beacon School	Main/general	4	8 x 15m	128
61	Utopia Spa (Rowhill Grange)	Learner/teaching/training	0	7 x 11m	77
62	Valence School	Main/general	3	7 x 17m	119
63	Walthamstow Hall	Main/general	6	12 x 25m	313
65	West Heath School	Main/general	4	8 x 20m	160
69	White Oak Leisure Centre	Main/general	6	13 x 25m	325
69	White Oak Leisure Centre	Learner/teaching/training	0	7 x 13m	91

The largest swimming pools are all six lanes x 25m in size, they are located at Sevenoaks and White Oak leisure centres plus Sevenoaks School. Whiteoak and Sevenoaks leisure centres both have learner/teaching pools which enhance programme flexibility and income generation capacity and are both considered to be strategic sites for swimming.

Quality

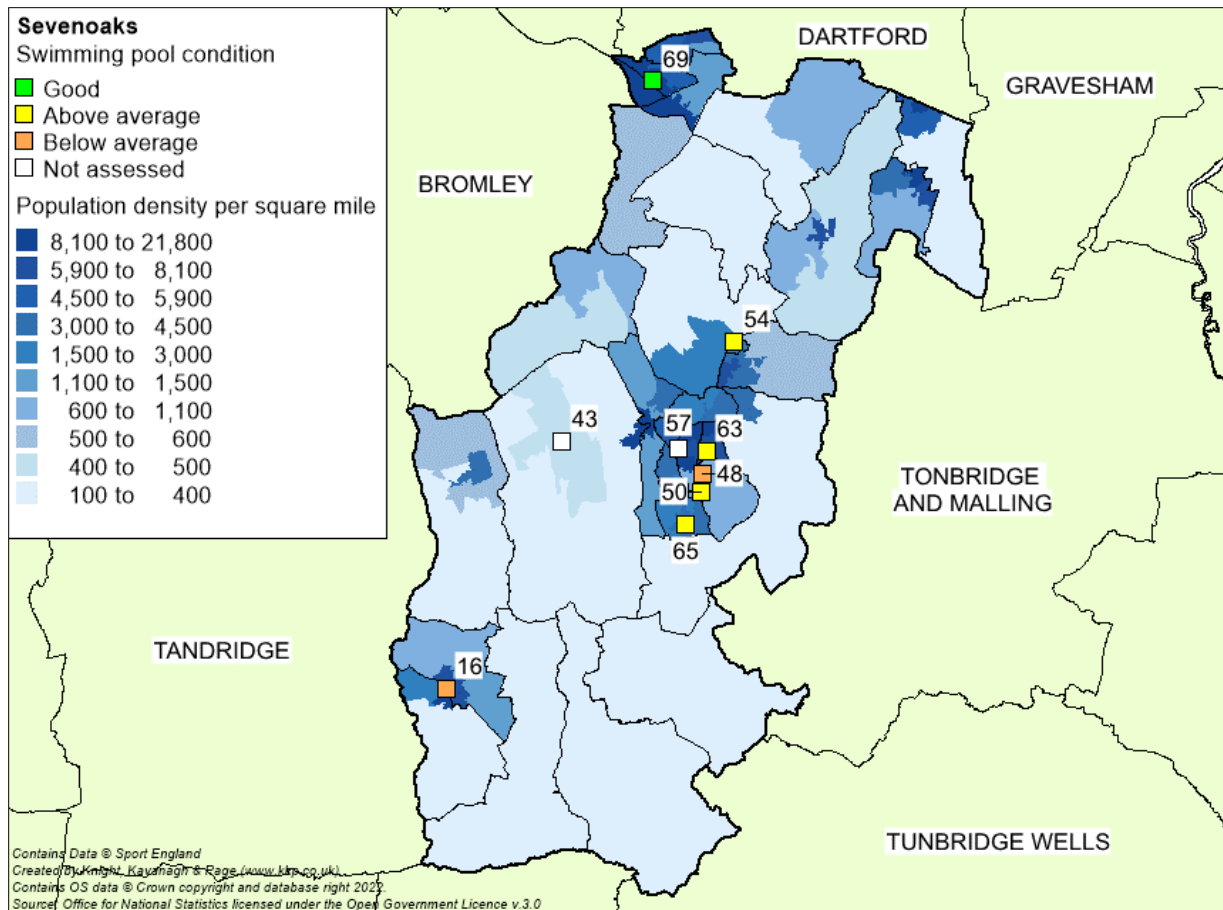
Of the nine pools (20m+ in length) in Sevenoaks, one is rated good quality, four above average, two below average and two could not be assessed due to no consultation response (Radnor House Sevenoaks and The Granville School). Changing room provision was also assessed during site visits as this can play a significant role in influencing and attracting users. Quality is assessed as described in Table 5.2. Some changing rooms could not be assessed due to them being in use at the time of audit.

Table 5.2: Quality of 20m+ swimming pools in Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Lanes/length	Area (m ²)	Pool condition	Changing condition
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	5 x 25m	250	Below average	Below average
43	Radnor House Sevenoaks	5 x 25m	200	Not assessed	Not assessed
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	6 x 25m	325	Below average	Below average
50	Sevenoaks School	6 x 25m	325	Above average	Below average
54	St Michaels School	4 x 25m	250	Above average	Above average
57	The Granville School	0 x 20m	140	Not assessed	Not assessed
63	Walthamstow Hall	6 x 25m	313	Above average	Below average
65	West Heath School	4 x 20m	160	Above average	Below average
69	White Oak Leisure Centre	6 x 25m	313	Good	Good

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Figure 5.2: Quality of audited swimming pools in Sevenoaks



Photograph of White Oak Leisure Centre pool



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Residents in the North of the Authority have access to good quality swimming provision. White Oak Leisure Centre opened in 2022.

The two below average quality swimming pools are at Edenbridge and Sevenoaks leisure centres - both in more densely populated settlement areas of the Authority. Other swimming pools in the Sevenoaks settlement area are rated above average quality, however for residents of Edenbridge, the below average quality pool is the only one in the area.

Sevenoaks Leisure Centre is the oldest swimming pool in the authority. It was refurbished in 2001 when dryside elements were added to the venue. Edenbridge Leisure Centre has reportedly not been refurbished since being built but has had benefitted from ongoing essential maintenance. It is now beyond its anticipated life expectancy. There is a need to undertake an options appraisal to determine whether it should be extensively refurbished or replaced.

West Heath School swimming pool received significant investment in 2022 involving extensive works to the pool tank and surrounds.

The Granville School did not respond to consultation requests, so the quality rating is based on age only. Given its recent refurbishment, it is assumed that there are no quality issues.

Walthamstow Hall recently invested in two new gas boilers and is considering installation of a swimming pool cover.

St Michaels School has identified a need to install new air handling units in the next 10 years. It is also in the process of considering energy efficiency upgrades.

The pool at Sevenoaks School requires new filters and replacement of the dosing unit pumps in the short term. It is also considering the installation of a pool cover.

Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund

In 2023, a funding pot of £63 million was announced (Sport England Swimming Pool Support Fund) to ease the pressure on leisure centres managing the cost of operating, maintaining and heating swimming pools. Managed by Sport England, all pools run by councils and charities and those run on behalf of local authorities are eligible. There has also been a Phase 2 funding. Whiteoak Leisure Centre has been successful in receiving £612.950 to fund new solar panels

Table 5.3: Age of swimming pools and refurbishment dates (where applicable)

Site name	Year built/ opened	Refurbishment*	Age (years) since built/refurbished
Edenbridge Leisure Centre	1986		38
The Granville School	1957	2017	7
Radnor House Sevenoaks	2003		21
Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	1985	2001	23
Sevenoaks School	2005		19
St Michaels School	2005		19
Walthamstow Hall	2007		17
West Heath School	1970	2022	2
White Oak Leisure Centre	2022		2

*Dates as according to Active Places database unless identified at the time of audit.

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Availability of swimming pools

Swimming pool availability differs dependent upon ownership and/or management. Facilities audited all offer some form of public access. The access policy for each site is detailed below.

Table 5.4: Access policy of swimming pools

Site name	Access policy
Edenbridge Leisure Centre	Pay and play
Radnor House Sevenoaks	Sports club / community association
Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	Pay and play
Sevenoaks School	Pay and play
St Michaels School	Sports club / community association
The Granville School	Private use
Walthamstow Hall	Sports club / community association
West Heath School	Sports club / community association
White Oak Leisure Centre	Pay and play

The Granville School pool is private use only, The three public leisure centre sites offer pay and play options. Four other pools are available to the community via a swim school or swimming club and one, Sevenoaks School, has its own registered membership for alumni and associates of the school. The three public leisure centres also offer membership options which may be a more cost-efficient option to pay and play depending on usage.

Considering all the above, the following facilities are considered to be fully available for general public use and pay and play access.

- ◀ Edenbridge Leisure Centre.
- ◀ Sevenoaks Leisure Centre.
- ◀ White Oak Leisure Centre.

Accessibility

Swimming pool accessibility is influenced by the built environment. Appropriate walk and drive-time catchments are applied to determine accessibility to communities. The normal acceptable standard is 20-minutes' walk time (1-mile radial catchment) for an urban area and a 20-minutes' drive time for a rural area. This enables analysis of the adequacy of coverage and helps identify areas currently not serviced by existing provision. Figure 5.3 and Table 5.4 illustrate the walk-time based accessibility of all swimming pools in Sevenoaks.

Catchment analysis indicates that 43.9% of the population lives within one mile of a swimming pool 160m² or larger that has some level of community use. Of the 6,343 people living in areas of higher deprivation in Sevenoaks (i.e., those living in the 30% most deprived areas), all (100%) live within one mile of a swimming pool. Pools are, thus well located to attract users from areas of higher deprivation, assuming that other barriers to access can be overcome.

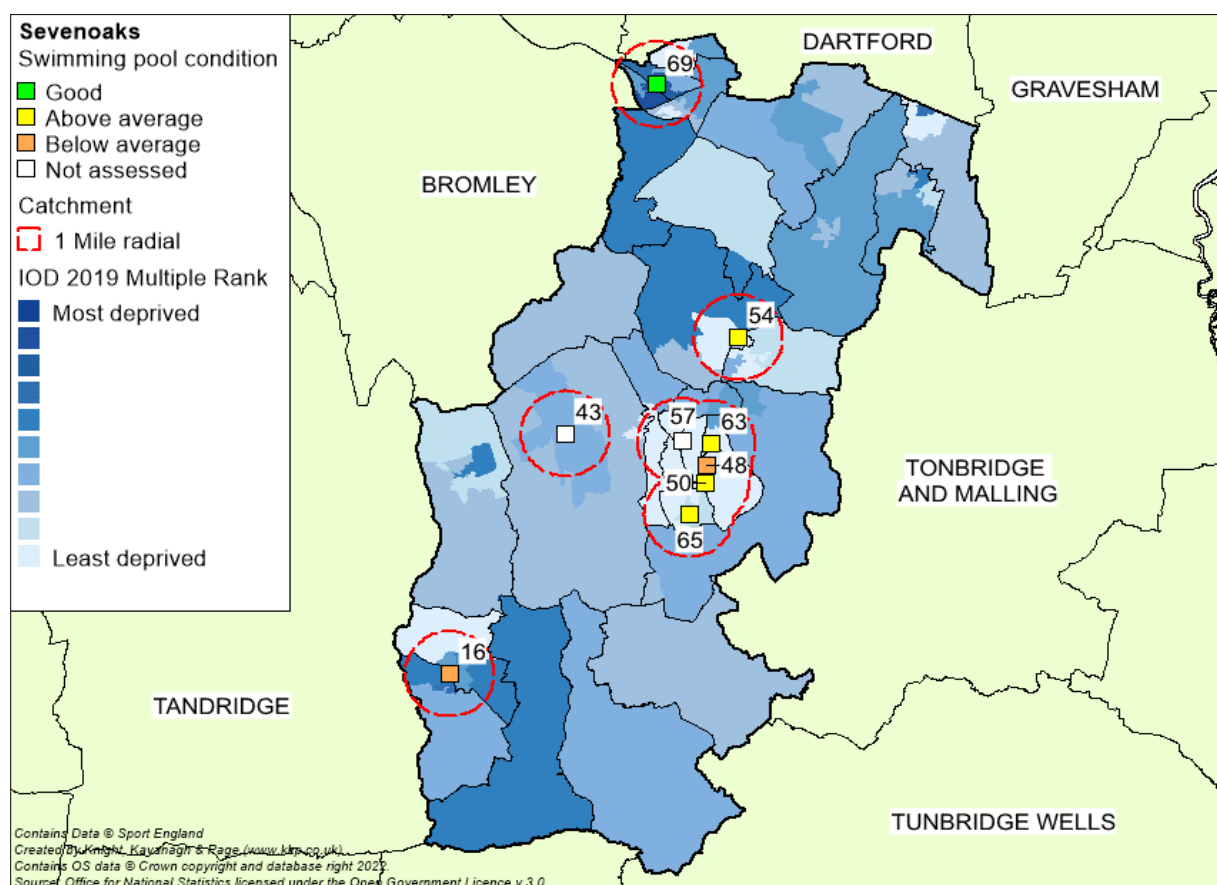
Over 93% of the Sevenoaks's population lives within a 20-minute drive time of a swimming pool (2022 ONS MYE). Pools are, thus, also well located when considering the rural makeup of most of the Authority. 7,545 residents in the far north and far south of Sevenoaks fall outside the 20-minute drive catchment; however, these areas are sparsely populated. Furthermore, residents who do not live within the drive time catchment area of a pool can potentially access pools in neighbouring authorities such as Gravesham and Tunbridge Wells.

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Table 5.5: Accessibility of swimming pools in Sevenoaks

IMD ¹² 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10.1 - 20	3,017	2.6%	3,017	2.6%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	3,326	2.8%	3,326	2.8%	0	0.0%
30.1 - 40	4,617	3.9%	3,271	2.8%	1,346	1.1%
40.1 - 50	11,436	9.7%	2,148	1.8%	9,288	7.9%
50.1 - 60	18,126	15.3%	5,949	5.0%	12,177	10.3%
60.1 - 70	16,333	13.8%	5,154	4.4%	11,179	9.5%
70.1 - 80	22,084	18.7%	2,717	2.3%	19,367	16.4%
80.1 - 90	8,116	6.9%	2,059	1.7%	6,057	5.1%
90.1 - 100	31,110	26.3%	24,195	20.5%	6,915	5.9%
Total	118,165	100.0%	51,836	43.9%	66,329	56.1%

Figure 5.3: Accessibility of swimming pools in Sevenoaks



Edenbridge Leisure Centre (ID16), St Micheal's School (ID 54), The Granville School (ID57), Walthamstow Hall (ID63) and White Oak Leisure Centre (ID65) are situated in areas that could serve areas of high IMD.

¹² The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is a measure of relative deprivation for small areas in the United Kingdom. It combines a range of indicators to assess deprivation in seven domains: income, employment, education, health, crime, housing, and living environment.

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Figure 5.4: All pools 20m+ with 20 minutes' drive time

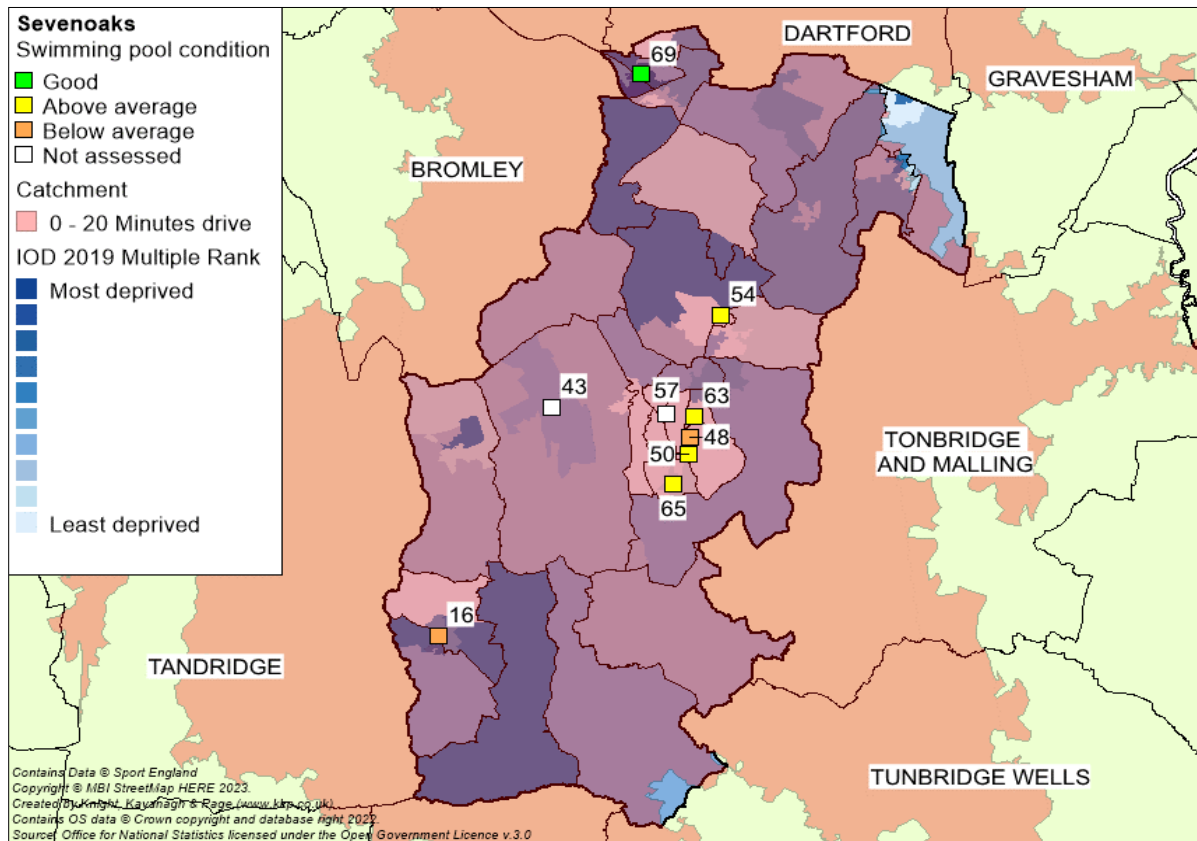
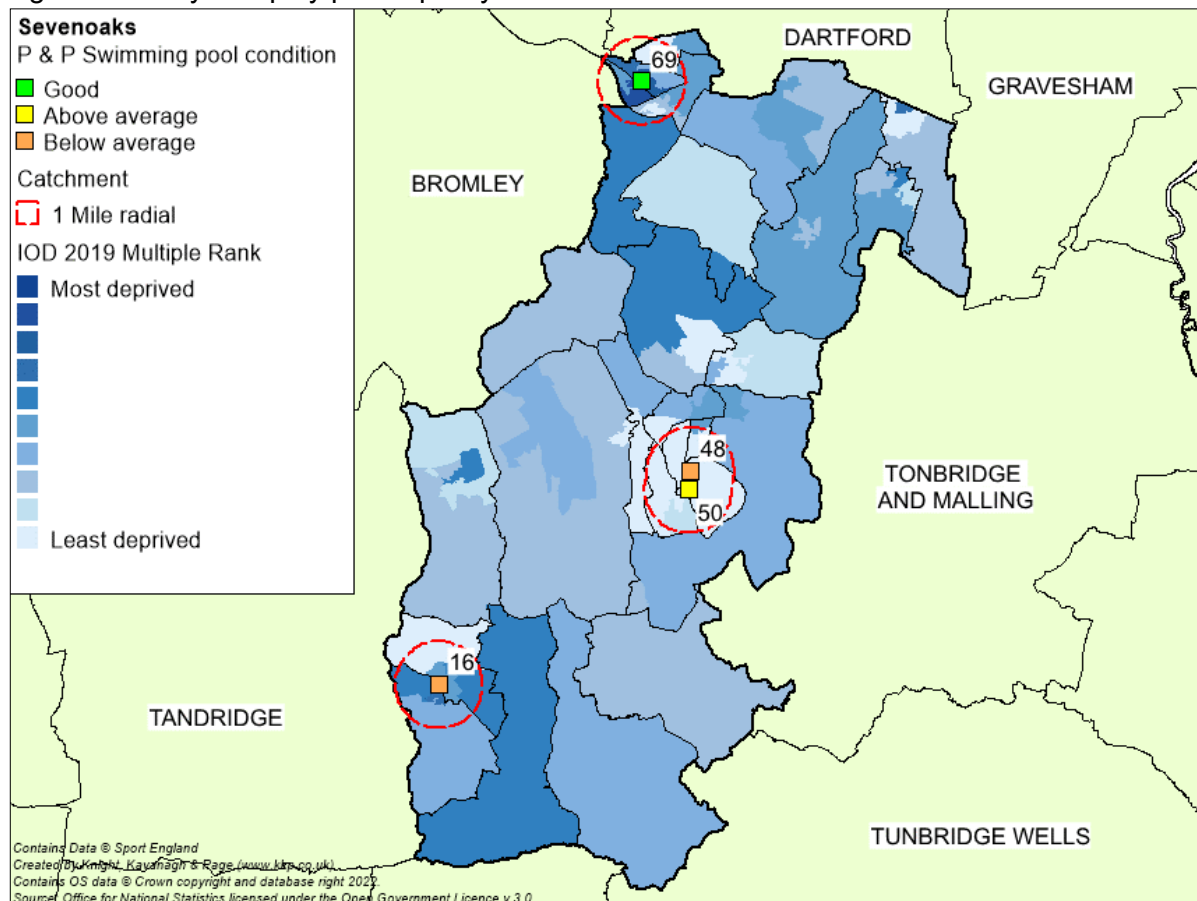


Figure 5.5: Pay and play pools quality on IMD 1-mile catchment



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Table 5.6: Accessibility of pay and play swimming pools in Sevenoaks

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10.1 - 20	3,017	2.6%	3,017	2.6%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	3,326	2.8%	3,326	2.8%	0	0.0%
30.1 - 40	4,617	3.9%	3,271	2.8%	1,346	1.1%
40.1 - 50	11,436	9.7%	1,941	1.6%	9,495	8.0%
50.1 - 60	18,126	15.3%	4,094	3.5%	14,032	11.9%
60.1 - 70	16,333	13.8%	1,818	1.5%	14,515	12.3%
70.1 - 80	22,084	18.7%	2,371	2.0%	19,713	16.7%
80.1 - 90	8,116	6.9%	1,571	1.3%	6,545	5.5%
90.1 - 100	31,110	26.3%	15,430	13.1%	15,680	13.3%
Total	118,165	100.0%	36,839	31.2%	81,326	68.8%

Accessibility as a walk to facility on a pay and play basis is reduced to 31.2% of the population. 100% of people in areas of higher deprivation live within one mile walk of a swimming pool offering pay and play access.

Facilities in neighbouring authorities

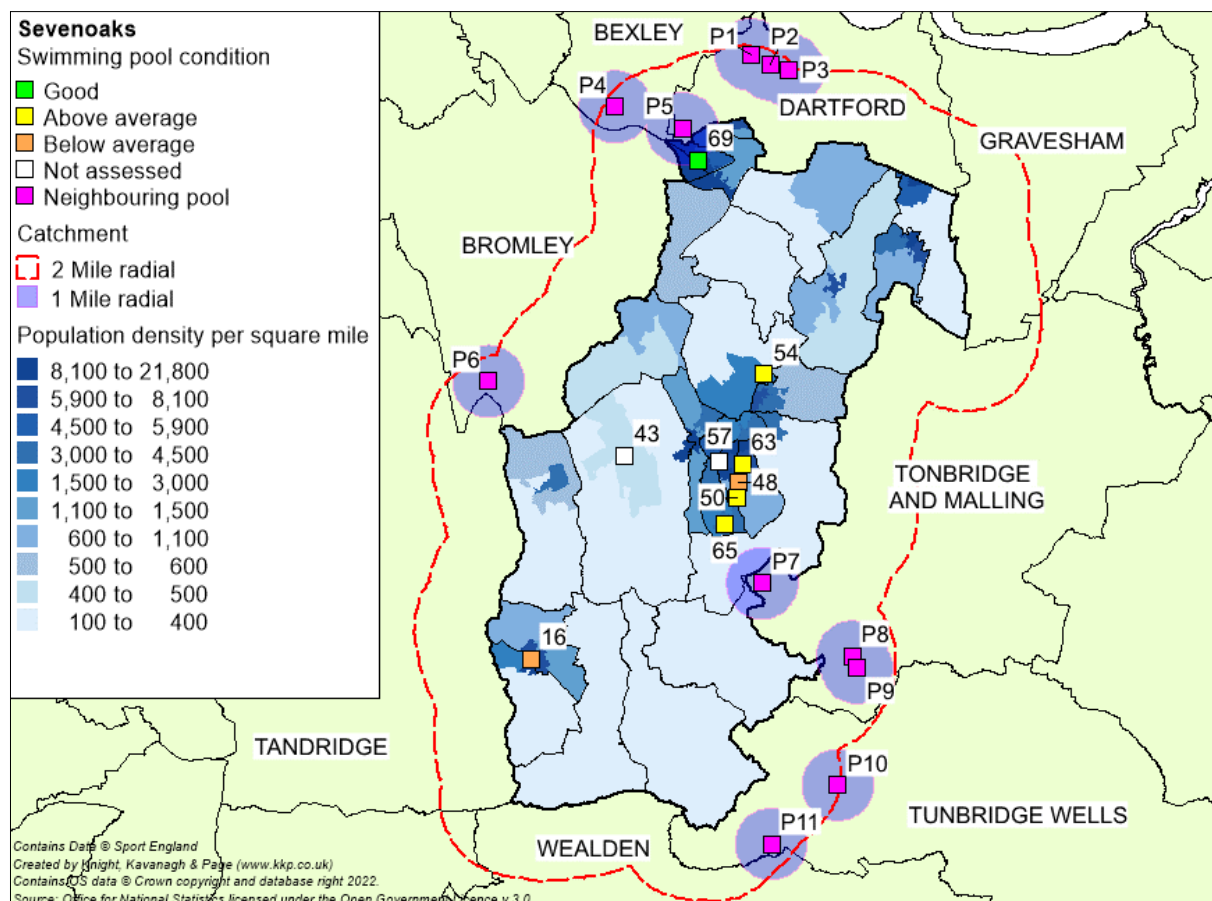
Accessibility is influenced by facilities located outside an authority. Eleven (20m+) pools, eight of which have 5 lanes or more, at eleven sites are located within two miles of Sevenoaks. Four are in Dartford, one in Bexley, one in Bromley, three in Tonbridge & Malling and two in Tunbridge Wells. Four offer pay and play access, four require registered membership and three are accessed via sports club/community association. These can serve Sevenoaks residents, especially those living outside the 20-minute drive time of facilities within the district.

Table 5.7: Neighbouring community available pools within 2-mile radial of Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Lanes/length	M ²	Authority
P1	Dartford Grammar School	4 x 20m	200	Dartford
P2	Fairfield Leisure Centre	6 x 25m	625	Dartford
P3	David Lloyd (Dartford)	5 x 25m	325	Dartford
P4	David Lloyd (Sidcup)	5 x 25m	275	Bexley
P5	Birchwood Park Golf Club	4 x 25m	213	Dartford
P6	Biggin Hill Pool	6 x 25m	350	Bromley
P7	Nizels Golf & Country Club	2 x 25m	250	Tonbridge and Malling
P8	Tonbridge School Centre	6 x 25m	313	Tonbridge and Malling
P9	Tonbridge Swimming Pool	6 x 25m	325	Tonbridge and Malling
P10	Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre	6 x 25m	313	Tunbridge Wells
P11	Holmewood House School	6 x 25m	200	Tunbridge Wells

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Figure 5.6: Pools within 2 miles of Sevenoaks boundary (Active Places Power 24/1/2024)



Future enhancements / new developments

There are no known swimming pool developments at the time of audit.

5.2: Demand

Consultation with Swim England confirms that in relation to UK wide participation local authorities with swimming pool water deficits are its highest priority. It notes that:

- ◀ The district as a whole has adequate water provision at the current time with a significant surplus accessible to the public equating to four 6-lane (25m pools).
- ◀ Currently two facilities (Brandshatch Place Hotel & Spa and Edenbridge Leisure Centre) are past or approaching the critical lifecycle point (*38 years).
- ◀ Edenbridge Leisure Centre provides water space equivalent to a 5-lane x 25m pool therefore consideration should be given as to the impact of any loss of provision in the event of the facility reaching its usable lifespan.
- ◀ This is of more relevance given that it is the only site located to the south of the local authority area. There is, thus, potential for high imported demand from neighbouring authorities and a gap in provision in the event of facility closure.
- ◀ There is a mixture of local authority, education, and commercial facilities with differing access policies including pay & play, membership and club or other organised group use, therefore pricing and usage capacity should be considered when assessing how accessible the water space is for the community.

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Swim England's recommendations include:

- ◀ Future water provision should look to have open public access, making the water space even more accessible to the local population.
- ◀ The facility mix in the future needs to consider the versatility of its water space including provision of a moveable floor/boom to offer greater flexibility in programming.
- ◀ Condition surveys should be carried out / updated on the identified older sites to assess the need for future investment in refurbishment works or potential redevelopments.
- ◀ Involve Swim England's business engagement team to help maximise operations.

Swim England reports that the following clubs are operational in the Sevenoaks District area:

Table 5.8: Swimming clubs located in Sevenoaks

Swimming club	Venue	No. affiliated members
Sevenoaks Swimming Club	Sennocke Sports Centre Radnor House School Walthamstow Hall School Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	369 (181 competitive)
Whiteoak Swimming Club	White Oak Leisure Centre	153 (89 competitive)
Aquaoaks Artistic Swimming Club	Sennocke Centre Radnor House School Tonbridge Wells Sports Centre (Diving pool)	108 (29 competitive)
Tonbridge Swimming Club	Tonbridge Town Pool Radnor House Tonbridge School Pool Walthamstow Hall School Pool	267 (108 competitive)
Edenbridge Piranhas	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	126 (110 competitive)
7Oaks Triathlon Club	Walthamstow Hall School Sevenoaks Leisure Centre Sevenoaks School	133
Dartford and White Oak Triathlon Club	White Oak Leisure Centre Fairfield Leisure Centre (Dartford)	77
Bexley Waterpolo Club	White Oak Leisure Centre	23

Club consultation

Whiteoak Swimming Club was established 1968, the Club has 110 members and capacity for 120. It operates five squads and is based solely at the Whiteoak Leisure Centre.

The Club hires the pool for 14.5 hours per week in the evenings (it has access to 3 lanes, not the entire swimming pool). The Club reports it requires more lanes to increase the time it requires for its swimmers; however, it recognises the Operator (Everyone Active) must balance the programme and offer its member pool time as well as learn to swim and so the Club cannot access more lanes. The Club reports that it has been offered early morning sessions however, it does not want to early morning sessions due to swimmers being of school age.

It also reports that clubs from other areas are hiring the pool which the Club could utilise. Dartford District Swim Club hires a Thursday 18.00pm – 19.30pm and Erith & District Swim Club Saturday 18.00pm – 20.00pm and Sunday 10.30-12.00pm.

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The Club reports a good relationship with EA and good links to the swimming lessons for the recruitment of members. It also recognises the operational challenges it has in trying to meet the needs and demands of all users.

The Club reports that the pool is not suitable for its galas as it does not have sufficient spectator seating and pool surround for the capacity of swimmers and so hires other pools twice a year to meet its competition needs. (Whitgift Boys School, Croydon and Glass Mill Leisure Centre, Lewisham).

Edenbridge Piranhas was established in 1994, is it based at Edenbridge Leisure Centre and hires the pool for 12 hours per week. For long course training the club hires K2 (Crawley). The Club reports to be at capacity with 110 swimmers and cannot accommodate any more swimmers unless it has access to more lanes at the time it hires, or someone leaves. Ideally it requires all six lanes for the 12 hours it hires the pool. To access K2, the club is required to confirm bookings one year in advance.

The Club reports a good relationship with the Everyone Active and is establishing a pathway from the swimming lesson programme to the club.

It reports that the facility itself is dated and is in need of modernisation. There is limited space on the pool deck and spectator viewing and has to hold its galas at other venues. At present it hires a swimming pool in East Grinstead twice a year and hosts in conjunction with another club. The Club has recently been increasing its workforce and has now the required number of officials to host galas without the need for support.

Aquaoaks Artistic Swimming Club was established two years ago. It has c.80 members, 99% of whom are female, 13 are aged over 18 years while all others are juniors.

It was previously part of Sevenoaks Swimming Club and, at that point, had c.30 members. It has grown significantly in recent years but reports not having capacity to grow further partly due to limited pool time but mainly because of lack of available coaches. It reports that there is limited number of coaches in the country and that to address this shortfall it trains up its own coaches to enhance workforce capacity.

It is based at Radnor House School for most of its training. It also trains at Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre in the diving pool and at Sevenoaks School.

The challenge it faces is that it requires deep pools (minimum 2.5-3m deep), Radnor House School has deep sections but is not six lanes in width and it, thus, not large enough. Sevenoaks School pool is insufficiently deep. The Tunbridge Wells diving pool is deep enough but is located outside the Authority which, given that all club members live in Sevenoaks, means a c.30-minute drive to access the facility.

Hire of The Radnor House School pool does not include lifeguards and reception cover so club staffs all of this itself on a voluntary basis – this adds to the workforce challenges faced.

The Club considers itself to have adequate access to the pool time it requires. However, it experienced recent challenges when Radnor House School was not available for a month having had an issue with the boiler. Over that period, all use transferred to Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre significantly increasing travel time for club coaches and members.

Ideally, it would like a 6-lane, deep pool or one with a moveable floor - in Sevenoaks. it would like to access the Sevenoaks Leisure Centre pool but, to date, its efforts to do so have been unsuccessful.

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It reports that Radnor House School pool operate on a first come first served basis and that it does not hold slots for previous group bookings. It reports Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre pool to be underused and does not have any issues securing the times and dates it requires.

It has ambitions to host competitions and grade days in Sevenoaks but at present must travel to Reading, Crawley and beyond. (Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre is unsuitable for competitions as it requires a main pool size (larger than a diving pool) with adequate depth.

Dartford and Whiteoak Triathlon Club uses the swimming pool at Whiteoak Leisure Centre Wednesday 21.00-22.00 and a Sunday 19.00-20.00. It also has a swim session at Fairfield Leisure Centre (Dartford) on a Friday 12.00 – 13.00. For its run and cycle sessions, a variety of venues is used. It has c. 77 members.

7oaks Triathlon Club has c.133 members and uses accesses swimming pools as follows:

- ◀ Sunday 16.30-18.00 (Sevenoaks School)
- ◀ Tuesday 20.00-21.00 (Sevenoaks Leisure Centre)
- ◀ Thursday 19.10-20.10 (Sennocke Centre)

It reports growth in recent years and would like additional pool sessions for its members however, it is not currently available.

The Club has introduced an intro2Tri course which has been popular. The course entails a six week programme across all three disciplines (1x run session, 2x pool sessions and 2x bike sessions followed by a 'Race Rehearsal).

Sevenoaks Swim Club is based at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre and also hires Sevenoaks School, St Michaels School, Radnor House School and Walthamstow Hall School.

Training sessions per week:

Site name	Hours per week
Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	18
Radnor House School	12
Sevenoaks School	16
St Michaels School	2
Walthamstow Hall School	8.5

It currently has 375 members and as a small waiting list with capacity within a number of squads. It wants to increase membership numbers across the squads that are not full.

It has a range of competitive and non-competitive members. It would like to host galas at the Sevenoaks Leisure Centre however, the current facility is not able to for a number of reasons including poor quality equipment, poor design, lack of viewing space and age of equipment (rusting of wires).

It reports a good relationship with Everyone Active, EA has recently purchased new starting blocks, new anti-wave ropes, the Club has purchased new timing boards but there are still issues with the timing boards and timing system.

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The Club reports a number of issues with the swimming pool plant, which it states has been neglected by the previous operator. It reports the pool being too warm. It reports changing rooms being adequate, clean and functional.

For long course training, the Club hires the 50m pool in Crawley however, there is very limited availability due to high demand.

The Club also has a water polo section, it needs new water polo goals as the facility and the Club do not have any. It would like additional training time for the water polo section as it currently only has late evening mid-week which is insufficient for its needs.

The Club has aspirations to be based solely at the Sevenoaks Leisure Centre however, it is not currently possible.

The club delivers its own learn to swim school at the school sites, it currently has 123 members.

Future Club ambitions include:

- ◀ Develop an alumni programme so coaches still train with club members whilst they are at university and then when they are back over summer, they re-join the club.
- ◀ Have a female team GB swimmer at Paris 2024.
- ◀ To be the best in Kent and top 10 for the southeast. (Recently had 70 swimmers at county finals).
- ◀ Recruit a masters coach and improve master's session time.
- ◀ Have a development pathway on competitive side for people just short of county standard.
- ◀ Teenage fitness squad for fitness rather than competition which they are prioritising more and more.
- ◀ Recruit more disabled swim coaches to upscale what they currently do.
- ◀ -Support a new swimming pool in the Sevenoaks area (requirements for an 8-lane pool, and a moveable floor)
- ◀ -Continue to have a good relationship with the Council's operator of facilities.

Bexley Waterpolo Club is based at White Oak Leisure Centre. It has c.23 members and has both a junior and an adult team. Each team has 1 hour training session per week.

Erith & District Synchro Club has two sessions per week at Whiteoak Leisure Centre, both are of a weekend. It has two hours on a Saturday evening and two hours on a Sunday morning. It is based mainly at Erith Leisure Centre, Charlton Lido, Dartford Grammar School for Girls, Thamesmere Leisure Centre, Crook Log Leisure Centre and Cobham School.

It has the following 12 squads ranging from fitness and academy level to National level.

5.3: Sport England's Facilities Calculator (SFC)

As noted earlier, this assists local planning authorities to quantify additional demand for community sports facilities generated by new growth populations, development and regeneration areas. It can be used to estimate facility needs for whole area populations but should not be applied for strategic gap analysis as it has no spatial dimension as it does not take account of:

- ◀ Facility location compared to demand.
- ◀ Capacity and availability of facilities – opening hours.
- ◀ Cross boundary movement of demand.

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- ◀ Travel networks and topography.
- ◀ Attractiveness of facilities.

Table 5.9: Sports facilities calculator

Factor	Population 2018 ONS	Population estimate 2040 (ONS)
ONS population projections	120,293	129,442
Population increase	-	9,149
Facilities to meet change in demand	-	+1.86 lanes; 0.46 swimming pools
Estimated Cost		£2,314,329

(Build costs as of Q3 2023)

Calculations assume that the current swimming pool stock remains available for community use and the quality remains the same. The projected increase in population will lead to an increase in demand for swimming space. The SFC indicates a requirement for an additional 1.86 lanes (equivalent to 0.46 swimming pools, up to 2040 (estimated cost: £2,314,329).

Swim England identifies that there is an over supply of provision in the area and that existing provision has capacity to accommodate the population increase.

The current location of swimming pools in Sevenoaks meets a very high proportion of resident demand, so focus should be placed on a) increasing programmed peak time availability and b) considering the capital investment strategy for the replacement/refurbishment of the Edenbridge and Sevenoaks leisure centre pools.

In the shorter term, programming at all key public leisure sites should be investigated to ensure that the most popular activities are available at peak times.

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5.4: Summary of key facts and issues

In summary, the above consultation and analysis indicates that Sevenoaks is in the following position with regards to its swimming pool provision:

Element	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are 19 pools across 16 sites. Nine are main/general pools 20m+ in length.	Swim England analysis indicates that current and future provision is adequate for the population currently and in the future. There is a need to determine the long-term future of the Edenbridge and Sevenoaks leisure centre pools.
Quality	There is one good quality swimming pool, four are above average, two are below average and two were not assessed.	There is a need to maintain and invest in the current stock of swimming pools especially those which are of below average quality. A medium-long term plan is required to replace/refurbish Edenbridge and Sevenoaks leisure centres.
Accessibility	93% of the population lives within 20 minutes' drive and 43.9% live within a one mile walk of a swimming pool which is 20m+ in length or larger.	There is a need to ensure that swimming pools are accessible particularly for those that have health inequalities and are from areas of higher deprivation. There is a need to ensure that pay and play options are affordable and easily accessed.
Availability (Management and usage)	Four pools are available for pay and play use (the three Council leisure centres and Sevenoaks School). The remainder can be accessed via registered membership at a commercial operated facility. In general school provision, offers pool access to swimming clubs and commercial learn to swim schools. Swimming clubs report displacing use to neighbouring authorities due to the facilities in the area not meeting their needs.	There is a need to balance the swim programme in public pools in the context of casual swimming, swimming lessons and club swimming - to meet the needs of the whole SDC community. Maintain good relationship with educational providers.

Strategic summary

- ◀ Main settlement areas have access to a pay and play pool. If the current stock remains open, there is sufficient supply to cater for future population growth.
- ◀ There is a need to determine the long-term future of both Edenbridge Leisure Centre and Sevenoaks Leisure Centre and whether to either extensively refurbish or replace them.
- ◀ There is a need to improve the quality of pool provision for Edenbridge residents who only have access to below average quality provision.

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SECTION 6: HEALTH AND FITNESS SUITES

According to the most recent ALS data¹³, around 11.4 million adults regularly engage in some form of fitness type activity (i.e., using gym equipment, a weights session, fitness class, or interval session). The popularity of fitness activities is reflective of their taking place across a wide range of facilities including larger gyms (run on behalf of the local authority by companies and/or Trusts, managed in-house or private sector operators), and also other smaller activity spaces such as village and community halls.

Fitness studios also vary in their size and function, from relatively large rooms within leisure centres often containing a sprung floor, to smaller spaces (often within community and village halls) which may serve as dedicated spinning (indoor cycling) studios or to hold virtual fitness classes. Studio based timetabled classes such as Pilates, yoga, dance, step, boxercise and Zumba usually generate a significant amount of activity within publicly operated provision and comprise a core benefit of a health and fitness membership.

In terms of trends in the market, prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the UK health and fitness industry was enjoying a strong period of growth. It had more gyms, more members and a greater market value than ever before. The State of the Fitness Industry Report UK for 2022 found that membership levels dropped by around 5% since 2019 as a result of the Pandemic and numbers of facilities had also reduced. This correlates with ALS data which measured regular pre-Pandemic activity levels at around 14 million. Pure Gym and GLL remain the UK's leading operators (by number of gyms and members).

Health and fitness facilities are a core element within the transitioning of public leisure facilities towards delivering on wider health improvement outcomes. A leisure operator's role in providing for people with long term health conditions, including via exercise referral is critical. Fitness studios may 'double up' as spaces where NHS services such as physiotherapy, health screening, and weight management can take place alongside gentle exercise classes.

Larger health and fitness gyms containing a mix of flexible spaces (such as cardio, free weights and boxing equipment, (80 stations +¹⁴) remain central to the financial viability of public sector leisure centres. When combined with multiple studio facilities offering a good mix (and sufficient number) of classes, these usually offer the most profitable spaces within a typical leisure centre.

The past decade or so has also seen a growth in the prevalence of operators offering 'functional fitness' type equipment and activities. This form of fitness is a type of strength training that readies your body for daily activities and includes lifting, loading, pushing, pulling, squatting and hauling. This is manifested both in terms of small private facilities, and the incorporation of functional fitness spaces within publicly operated health and fitness facilities.

6.1: Supply

Quantity

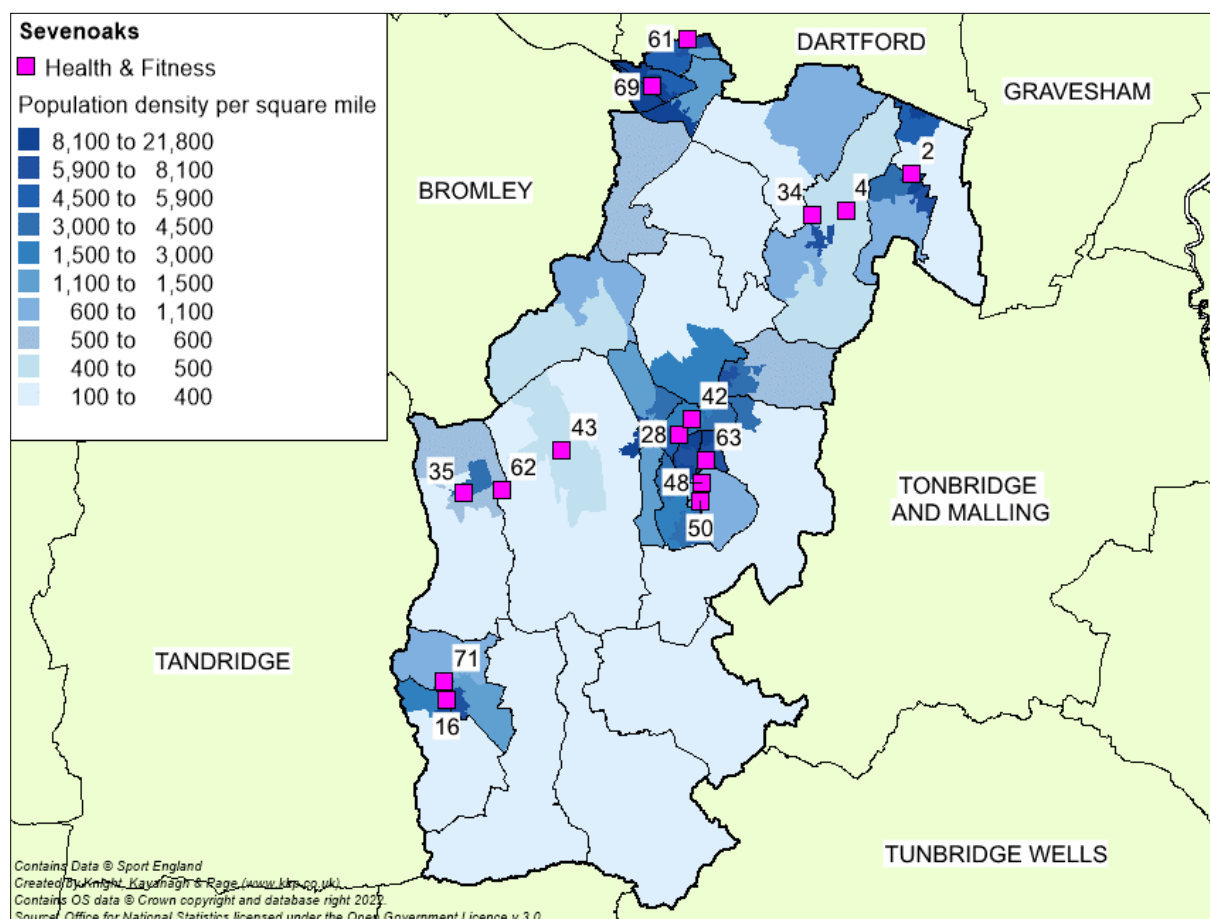
There are 15 health and fitness gyms in Sevenoaks, with a total of 717 stations. Generally, they are located in more densely populated areas. Spatially, there is a good even spread of facilities across the authority, with all main population centres being served.

¹³ [Active Lives adult survey Nov 20-21 report](#)

¹⁴ A health and fitness 'station' is defined as a piece of static fitness equipment – KKP normally audits facilities of 20 stations or more.

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Figure 6.1: All health and fitness facilities in Sevenoaks on population density



Fitness facilities with fewer than 20 stations are typically not assessed/considered large enough to be a community gym although they can service small sections of the community; nine venues are larger than 20 stations in size. This equates to 644 stations.

Table 6.1: All health and fitness gyms in Sevenoaks

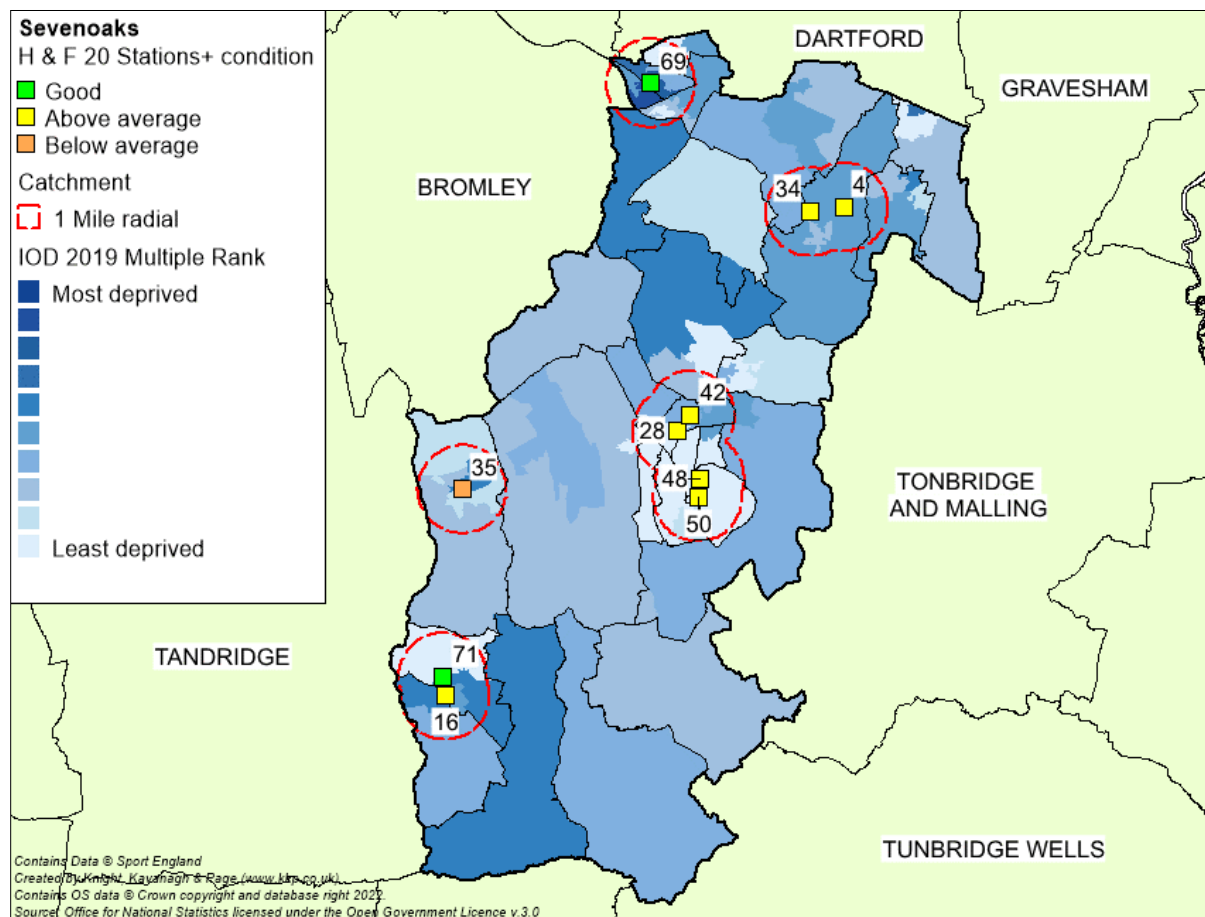
ID	Site name	Stations
2	Ash Green Sports Centre	16
4	Brands Hatch Place Hotel & Spa	30
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	36
28	Knole Academy	20
34	Mercure Dartford Brands Hatch Hotel	50
35	Moor Energy Fitness Club	25
42	Puregym	220
43	Radnor House Sevenoaks	18
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	52
50	Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	46
61	Utopia Spa (Rowhill Grange)	19
62	Valence School	8
63	Walthamstow Hall	12
69	White Oak Leisure Centre	120
71	Fortitude Fit Gym	45

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Quality

All community available health and fitness suites received a non-technical quality assessment. Two are rated good quality, seven above average and one below average.

Figure 6.2: Health and fitness suites with 20+ stations on population density by condition



Residents in Westerham area of Sevenoaks only have access to below average health and fitness provision. All other residents have access to good and above average provision.

Table 6.2: Health & fitness suites with 20+ stations by condition

Map ID	Site	Stations	Condition
4	Brands Hatch Place Hotel & Spa	30	Above average
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	36*	Above average
28	Knole Academy	20	Above average
34	Mercure Dartford Brands Hatch Hotel	50	Above average
35	Moor Energy Fitness Club	25	Below average
42	Puregym	220	Above average
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	52	Above average
50	Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	46	Above average
69	White Oak Leisure Centre	120	Good
71	Fortitude Fit Gym	45	Good

*Plans are in place to increase to 50 stations in early 2024

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Most health/fitness gyms are modern, attractive and have received recent investment. There is strong local competition between EA, commercial and education providers.

Accessibility

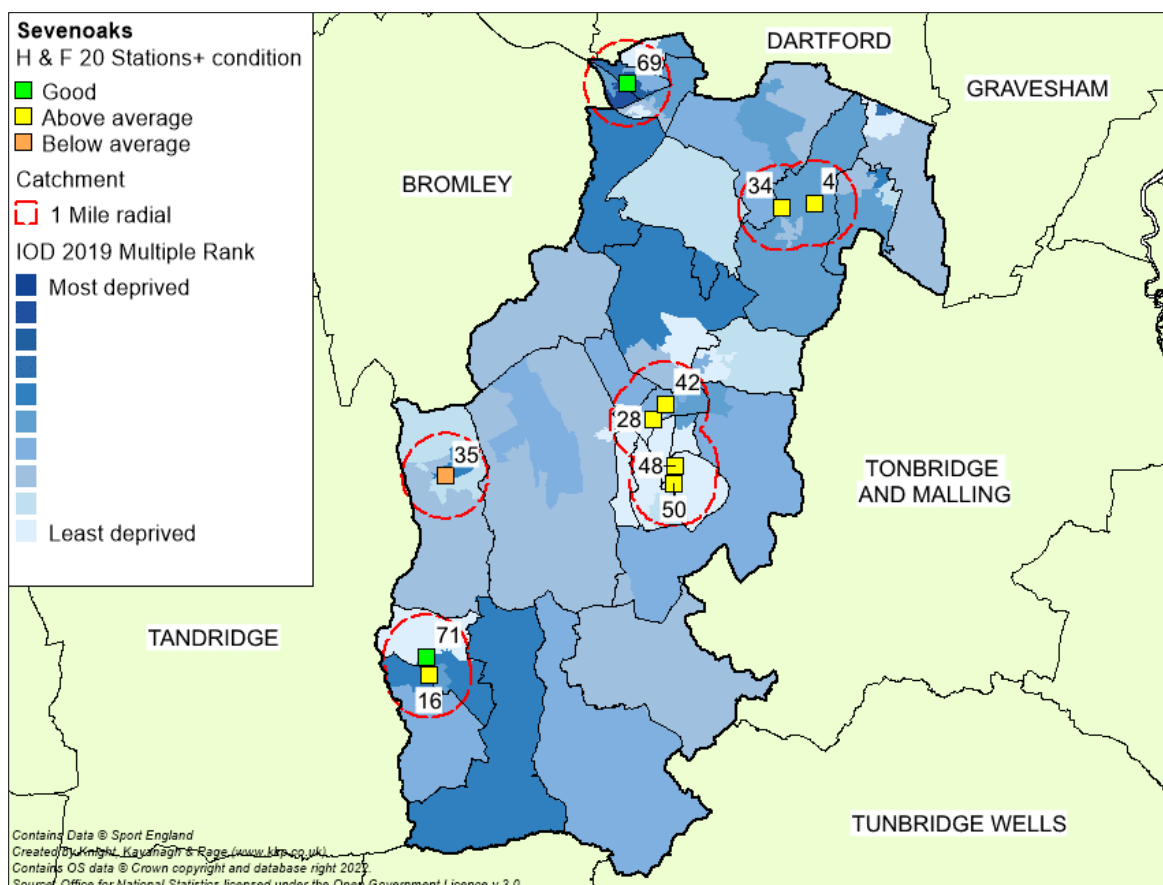
The Sport England classification of access type defines registered membership use facilities as being publicly available. For health and fitness suites, this generally means payment of a monthly membership fee which can vary considerably. Private operators do not have a contractual obligation to, for example, offer exercise referral nor do they necessarily actively target hard to reach groups. It is also acknowledged that some memberships are expensive while others are cheaper than those offered by public sector venues. There is little doubt that the various private operators can take pressure off the more available public facilities.

As with pools and sports halls, appropriate walk and drive-time accessibility standards are applied to health and fitness suites to determine provision deficiencies or surpluses. The normal acceptable standard is a 20-minutes' drive time. Over 47% of Sevenoaks population lives within 20 minutes' walk of a health and fitness facility with 20+ stations and community access. Consequently, 52.8% of the population is likely to need to use a car or public transport to access facilities.

Almost all (99.4%) of the population lives within 20 minutes' drive of a health and fitness facility.

5.4% of the population lives in the top 30% most deprived IMD bandings. All of these people (6,343 – 5.4%) live within one mile of a health and fitness facility. This suggests that health and fitness facilities are well placed in Sevenoaks.

Figure 6.3: Health and fitness gyms 20+ stations+ with 1-mile radial catchment

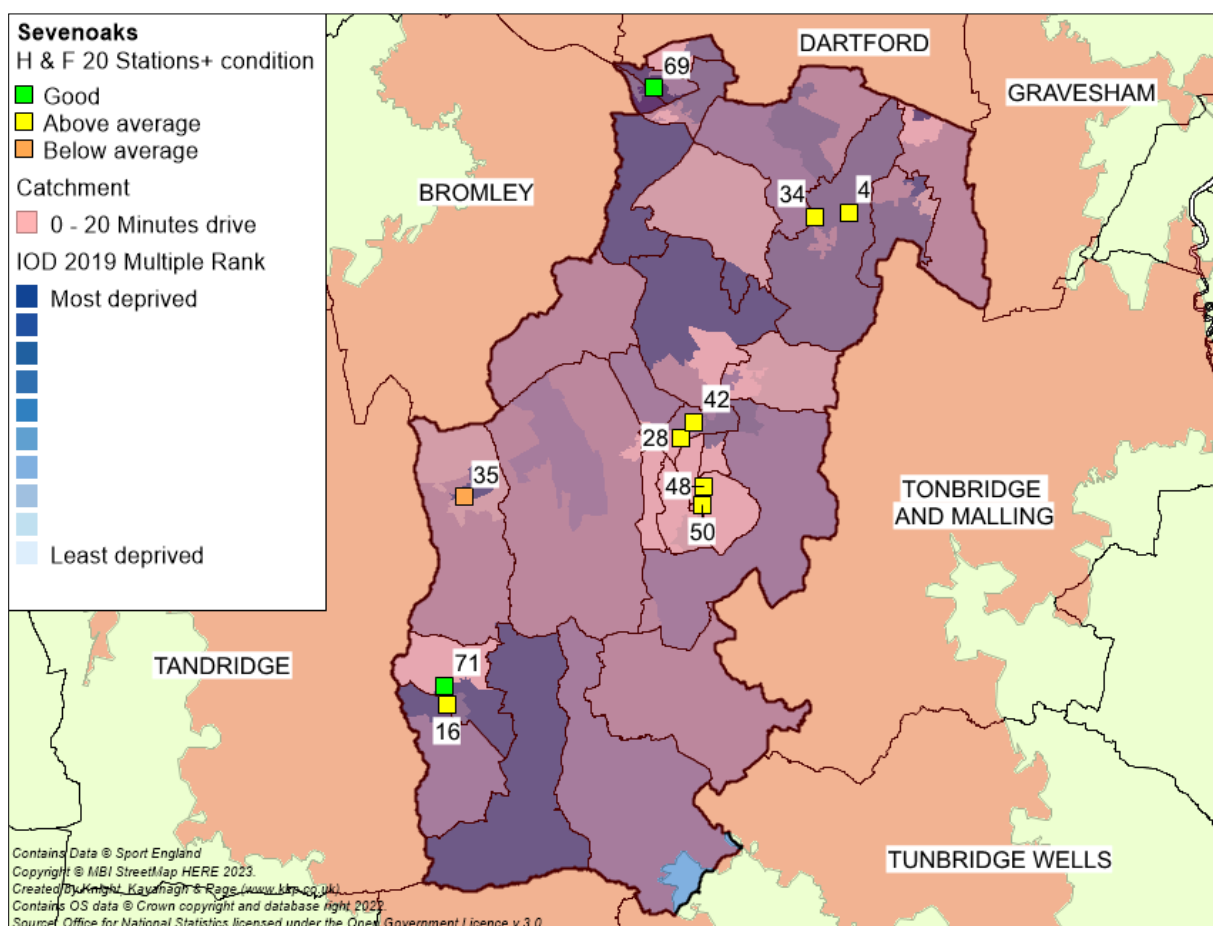


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Table 6.3: Health and fitness 20+ stations with one mile radial

IMD 10% bands	Persons	Population %	Persons inside catchment	Population inside (%)	Persons outside catchment	Population outside (%)
0 - 10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
10.1 - 20	3,017	2.6%	3,017	2.6%	0	0.0%
20.1 - 30	3,326	2.8%	3,326	2.8%	0	0.0%
30.1 - 40	4,617	3.9%	3,271	2.8%	1,346	1.1%
40.1 - 50	11,436	9.7%	3,707	3.1%	7,729	6.5%
50.1 - 60	18,126	15.3%	8,682	7.3%	9,444	8.0%
60.1 - 70	16,333	13.8%	4,584	3.9%	11,749	9.9%
70.1 - 80	22,084	18.7%	5,488	4.6%	16,596	14.0%
80.1 - 90	8,116	6.9%	2,394	2.0%	5,722	4.8%
90.1 - 100	31,110	26.3%	21,346	18.1%	9,764	8.3%
Total	118,165	100.0%	55,815	47.2%	62,350	52.8%

Figure 6.4: Health and fitness suites with 20+ stations with 20-minute drivetime catchment



Neighbouring facilities

Fitness facility users do not just use venues in their own authority so those within two miles of the border are considered. There are 23 health and fitness venues within two miles of Sevenoaks (1,628 stations). Four offer pay and play access, one is available to sports clubs/community organisations whilst the remainder all require some form of membership.

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Figure 6.5: Fitness gyms with 20+ stations within 2 miles of the Sevenoaks boundary

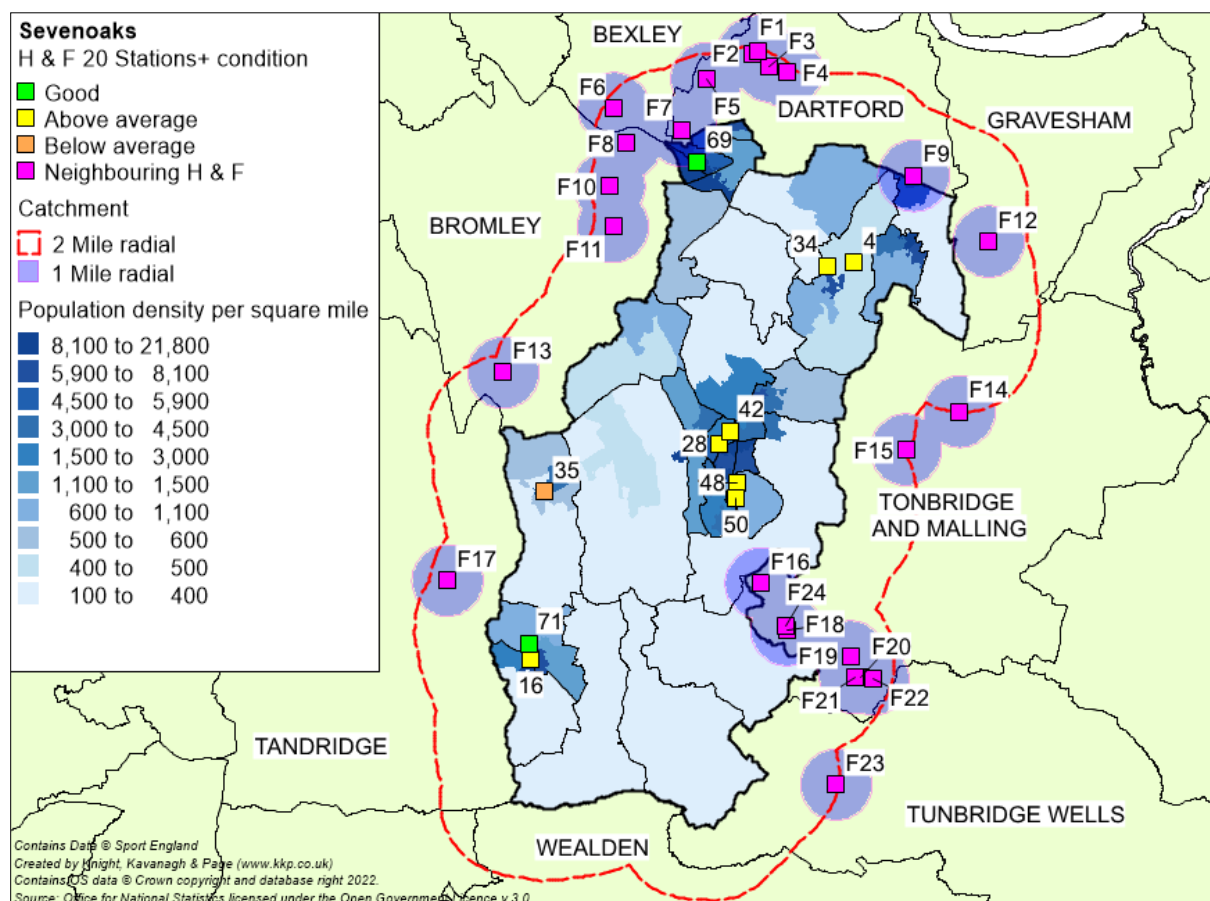


Table 6.4: Community available health and fitness (20+ stations) within 2 miles of Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Stations	Access type	Local authority
F1	Reflexions Muscle & Fitness Gym	30	Reg. membership	Dartford
F2	Becket Sports Centre	28	Pay and play	Dartford
F3	Fairfield Leisure Centre	100	Pay and play	Dartford
F4	David Lloyd (Dartford)	125	Reg. membership	Dartford
F5	Reynolds Fitness Spa (Bexley)	42	Reg. membership	Dartford
F6	David Lloyd (Sidcup)	200	Reg. membership	Bexley
F7	Birchwood Park Golf Club	56	Reg. membership	Dartford
F8	Bannatyne Health Club	58	Reg. membership	Bromley
F9	Longfield Academy	30	Reg. membership	Dartford
F10	Muscleworks Gym	60	Reg. membership	Bromley
F11	Harris Academy Orpington	20	Pay and play	Bromley
F12	Meopham Leisure Centre	50	Reg. membership	Gravesham
F13	Darwin Leisure Centre	33	Pay and play	Bromley
F14	Spirit Health Club (Maidstone)	23	Reg. membership	Tonbridge and Malling
F15	Reynolds Retreat	50	Reg. membership	Tonbridge and Malling
F16	Nizels Golf & Country Club	72	Reg. membership	Tonbridge and Malling

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ID	Site name	Stations	Access type	Local authority
F17	Lifeline Fitness (Oxted)	22	Reg. membership	Tandridge and Malling
F18	Bodymentors	40	Reg. membership	Tonbridge and Malling
F19	Tonbridge School Centre	55	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge and Malling
F20	Angel Centre	84	Reg. membership	Tonbridge and Malling
F21	Puregym (Tonbridge)	220	Reg. membership	Tonbridge and Malling
F22	Snap Fitness (Tonbridge)	150	Reg. membership	Tonbridge and Malling
F23	Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre	80	Reg. membership	Tunbridge Wells
F24	Hilden Park Golf, Range & Gym Club	25	Reg. membership	Tonbridge and Malling

Source: Active Places Power 25/01/2024

Availability and programming

Sport England's classification of access type defines registered membership use facilities as publicly available. However, the cost of monthly membership fees can vary considerably. It is acknowledged that those which may be considered expensive offer access to different market segments and can ease pressure on facilities which offer cheaper membership options.

In total, six of the gyms in Sevenoaks offer some element of pay and play, through the pre-purchase of a one-day pass or pay on arrival. All six offer pay and play options and monthly membership schemes, which are normally more cost-effective option based on good usage levels. Five gyms in Sevenoaks only offer access via registered membership.

Community use of the fitness suite at Sevenoaks School is limited to associates of the School; parents, alumni, employees and wider school associates.

Whilst the three public leisure sites are accessible on pay and play basis, it should be noted that customers are still required to register with EA via its website. Furthermore, pay and play pricing is difficult to locate on the EA website. This has potential to limit residents' awareness that pay and play access is available.

Table 6.5: Health and fitness gyms access policy (20+ stations)

Map ID	Site name	Stations	Access type
4	Brandshatch Place Hotel & Spa	30	Reg. membership
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	36	Pay & play
28	Knole Academy	20	Pay & play
34	Mercure Dartford Brands Hatch Hotel	50	Reg. membership
35	Moor Energy Fitness Club	25	Pay & play
42	Puregym	220	Pay & play
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	52	Pay & play
50	Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	46	Reg. membership
69	White Oak Leisure Centre	120	Pay & play
71	Fortitude Fit Gym	45	Reg. membership

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Table 6.6: Pricing structure of health and fitness facilities in Sevenoaks

Site name	Pay & play	Annual	12-month DD	Notes
Brandshatch Place Hotel & Spa	-	-	£90.00	Additional joining fee of £50.00. Includes access to pool. Cheaper off- peak membership also available.
Edenbridge Leisure Centre	£11.77	£299.99	£29.99	Includes access to swimming pool and exercise classes. Concessionary rates also available. More expensive platinum packages also available.
Knole Academy	£7.50	£310.00	£29.00	Non-contracted and concessionary rates also available. Some exercise classes included.
Mercure Dartford Brands Hatch Hotel	-	£499.00	£59.00	Additional joining fee of £25.00. Includes access to pool. Cheaper off peak/concessionary rate available.
Moor Energy Fitness Club	£10.00	£420.00	£37.00	Exercise classes included in membership. Various concessionary rates also available.
Puregym	£12.99	-	£32.99	Additional £20 joining fee. Membership includes access to exercise classes.
Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	£11.50	£349.00	£34.99	Includes access to swimming pool and exercise classes. Concessionary rates also available. More expensive platinum packages available.
Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	-	Unknown	Unknown	Includes access to exercise classes and pool.
White Oak Leisure Centre	£11.50	£349.90	£34.99	Includes access to swimming pool and exercise classes. Concessionary rates also available.
Fortitude Fit Gym			£55.00	Includes unlimited classes, sauna and co-working

*pricing as published February 2024

As shown, the cost of accessing health and fitness facilities varies across the Authority. The three sites managed by EA offer the most comprehensive membership, including access to exercise classes and spa facilities (where relevant) alongside gym and pool use. Pay and play pricing at sites managed by Everyone Active is in the range of £11.50-£11.77 per visit.

Knole Academy is the most cost-effective pay and play option (£7.50 during peak times). Most commercial gyms also offer pay and play options, although this becomes less cost-effective option if people attend on a regular basis. Overall, the pay and play offer across Sevenoaks is widespread; six health and fitness suites are open for such access.

The most expensive registered membership is Brandshatch Place Hotel & Spa at £90.00 per month for an adult 12-month membership. Lower cost off-peak memberships and more flexible (higher price point) rolling contracts are also available. The least expensive are Knole Academy and Edenbridge Leisure Centre both at £29.99 per month for the basic membership. Some packages include multi-sport/swimming pool access making direct comparison difficult.

Membership at the public leisure centres offer multi activity options (e.g., swimming and fitness classes) and multiple site usage. It is recognised that well run health and fitness facilities with

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studios can offset the costs and enhance the financial viability of other venue elements such as swimming pools and in many instances are used to cross subsidise such facilities.

Serving the most deprived areas is Edenbridge and White Oak Leisure Centres, both are good and above average quality. It is important that these centres continue to offer affordable options and have the option access centres on a casual basis. In addition, the centres need to be delivering health initiatives and programmes targeting those most in need. (Funding may need to be sought).

Future developments

Knole Academy identified the potential to develop new fitness provision as part of the basketball centre development. It is envisaged that it will be more strength and conditioning based to complement the existing fitness gym at the school.

6.2: Demand

Health and fitness via exercising in a gym or class environment is a highly popular form of exercise, appealing to men and women across a range of age groups. To identify provision adequacy a demand calculation based upon the assumption that 'UK penetration rates' will increase slightly in the future is applied. Population increases are also factored in to enable a calculation of whether current supply will meet future demand.

Table 6.7: UK penetration rates; health/fitness in Sevenoaks (ONS Data)

	Curent (2018)	Future (2040)
Adult population (16+ years)	96,145	106,144
UK penetration rate	16.0%	17.0%
Number of potential members	15,383	18,044
Number of visits per week (1.75/member)	26,921	31,578
% of visits in peak time	65	65
No. of visits in peak time (equated to no. of stations required i.e., no. of visits/39 weeks*65%)	449	526
Number of stations (with comfort factor applied)	673	789

Model applies 1.75 visits/week by members and 65% usage for 39 weeks of the year. (Figures rounded up/down)

Based upon UK penetration rates there is current need for 673 stations in Sevenoaks. This will grow to 789 by 2040, taking account of a comfort factor (particularly at peak times). Given the current number of community available stations (717) and accounting for the comfort factor, there is a small positive balance. This indicates that there is limited capacity to accommodate future demand based on projected population growth. There will be a need for 72 more stations projecting to 2040. This will reduce to 58 once Edenbridge Leisure Centre gym is extended in early 2024. It is, however, presumed that some residents in the north, east/southeast of Sevenoaks access facilities in neighbouring authorities, especially larger sites.

It is not uncommon for the private sector to identify niche markets and fill them with stations which make the market appear congested. The key issue is that while some may be budget operators their venues are necessarily available to people with health inequalities and people from areas of (relative) disadvantage (cost is only one factor which may hinder usage). This applies particularly to those who require transport to access facilities.

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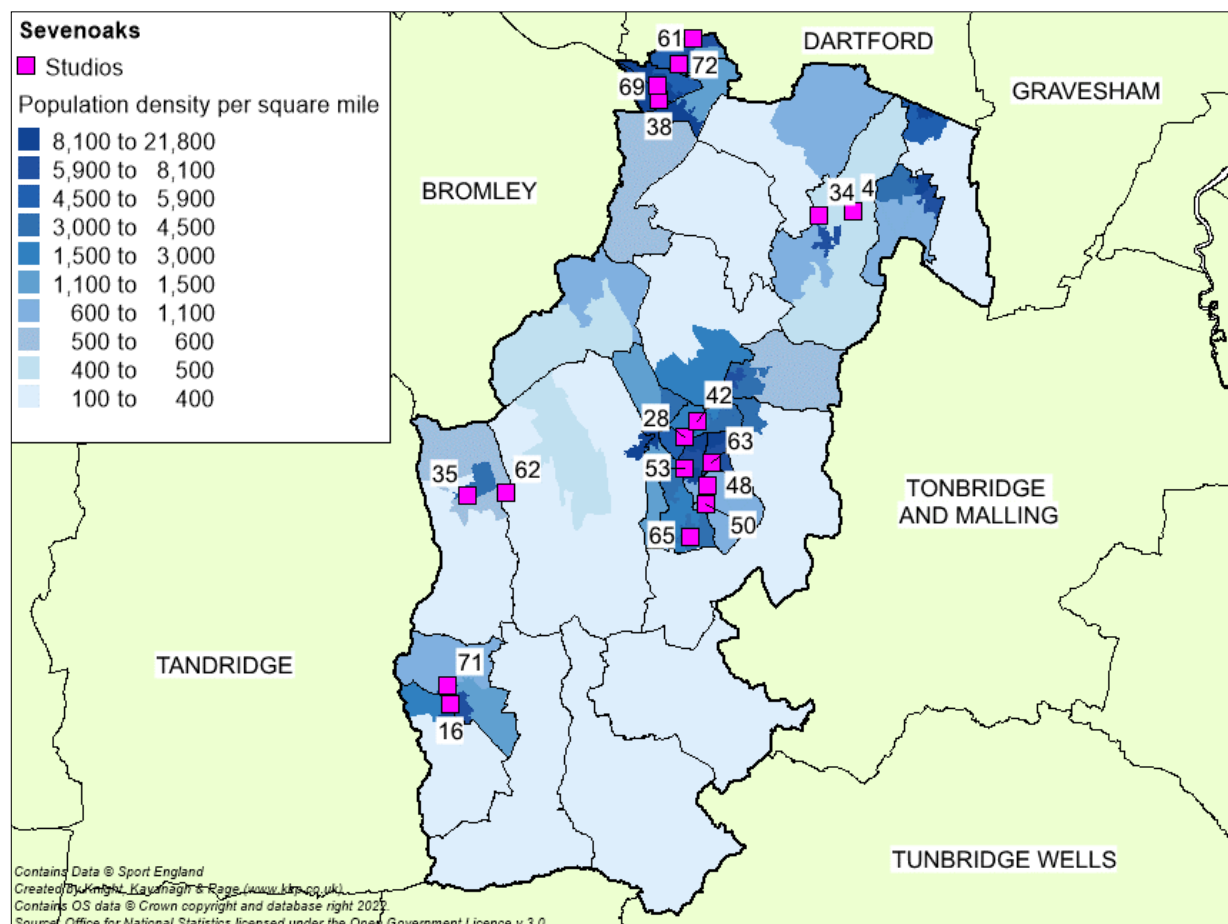
Supply and demand analysis

Fitness facilities are an important facet of leisure provision and have been a successful addition to sports centres over the past three decades. Income derived can help offset the cost/underpin the viability of other areas of provision such as swimming pools or targeted physical activity programmes (i.e., GP referral). In Sevenoaks, the challenge is to provide opportunity for people from areas of higher deprivation who are less likely to be able to afford or choose to access provision and do not have the transport to access them. This applies particularly at the EA-run leisure centres where pay and play costs are high at c £11.50 a visit.

6.3: Dance studios

Dance studios are an important element of the wider health, fitness and conditioning market. They vary in size, shape, quality of environment, access to sprung wooden floors and quality of ancillary facilities. There has been an increase in the number of people accessing fitness classes as identified in increased UK penetration rates. Activity types offered also vary from low impact classes such as Pilates and yoga to dance, step, boxercise and Zumba. It is worth noting that dance classes/clubs are key users of studio spaces throughout the country.

Figure 6.6: Dance studios in Sevenoaks



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Table 6.8: Table of studios in Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Studio sub type	Access	Condition
4	Brandshatch Place Hotel & Spa	Studio	Reg. membership	Above average
4	Brandshatch Place Hotel & Spa	Studio	Reg. membership	Good
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	Studio	Pay and play	Below average
28	Knole Academy	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
28	Knole Academy	Studio	Sports club / CA	Not assessed
34	Mercure Dartford Brands Hatch Hotel	Studio	Reg. membership	Above average
35	Moor Energy Fitness Club	Studio	Reg. membership	Below average
38	Orchards Academy	Studio	Private use	Not assessed
42	Puregym	Studio	Reg. membership	Above average
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	Studio	Reg. membership	Above average
48	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	Studio	Reg. membership	Below average
50	Sevenoaks School	Studio	Pay and play	Above average
53	SPN Sevenoaks	Studio	Reg. membership	Not assessed
61	Utopia Spa	Studio	Reg. membership	Not assessed
62	Valence School	Studio	Private use	Not assessed
63	Walthamstow Hall	Dance	Sports club / CA	Above average
65	West Heath School	Studio	Sports club / CA	Above average
69	White Oak Leisure Centre	Studio	Pay and play	Good
71	Fortitude Fit Gym	Studio	Reg. membership	Good
71	Fortitude Fit Gym	Studio	Reg. membership	Good
71	Fortitude Fit Gym	Studio	Reg. membership	Good
72	The Howard Venue	Studio	Pay and play	Above average
72	The Howard Venue	Studio	Pay and play	Above average
72	The Howard Venue	Studio	Pay and play	Above average
72	The Howard Venue	Studio	Pay and play	Above average

(NB: Sports Club/CA= Sports Club / Community Association use)

Both good quality studios are available for pay and play. Studios across all sites are popular and a variety of different classes is available ranging from Pilates to Yoga.

The Howard Venue facility was built in 2003 at a cost of £3.8m and it also had a £1m fit out in high quality dance and performance equipment as a specialist dance venue. It has since been asset transferred to the local community. It is now a thriving community hub. In addition to its community available studios, it has a partnership with the NHS to deliver community clinics e.g. diabetes clinics from the venue and a partnership with Healthshare (private healthcare). It is operated by volunteers and has a licenced bar and café within.

The centre offers a range of hire options, from 6-week initial bookings to all year-round block bookings. It also offers subsidised rates for community activity starting out.

It has professional equipment and facilities and has attracted recently high-profile bookings including ITV filming and band rehearsals (before going on tours). It has a pricing policy that charges minimal to the community and maximum rates to commercial providers that can pay the top rates.

Two of the studios have a moveable wall between them that can be pushed back to create one larger hall. The wall is coming to the end of its anticipated life (it is 20 years old) and requires replacement. This is anticipated to cost in the region of £65k.

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It also requires a new tiered electronic seating system to maximise bookings and down time when converting the hall. This is estimated to cost in the region of £75k (it reportedly has saved 50% of this so far).

Future developments

Orchards Academy plan to develop a studio as part of the school redevelopment project. The extent of community use of its facilities is unknown.

6.4: Summary of key facts and issues

Facility type	Health & fitness	
Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	Ten fitness gyms have 20+ stations providing 717 stations. There are 25 studios. Of the 24 gyms in neighbouring authorities, five are 100+ stations and draw on a wider catchment. A new studio may be developed at Orchards Academy.	There is sufficient supply to meet current and future demand. There are plans to increase the number of stations at Edenbridge Leisure Centre by 14 stations.
Quality	Of the 10 gyms, two gyms are good quality seven are above average, and one below average. The Howard Venue requires a new moveable wall and electronic seating system.	Maintain quality across the stock.
Accessibility	Virtually the whole population lives within a 20-minute drive of a health and fitness gym - all main population areas have facilities. 47% of the population lives within one mile of a gym. 100% of residents in areas of higher deprivation live within one mile of a gym.	Ensure that harder to reach groups and people with specific health needs can access facilities.
Availability (Management and usage)	There are six publicly accessible pay and play health and fitness facilities with 20+ stations in Sevenoaks. Three require a membership to access.	Ensure that gyms cater fully for the full range of market segments and residents from targeted groups can afford them.

Strategic summary

- ◀ Use of fitness facilities and studio space helps increase physical activity in the wider population. Sevenoaks supply is sufficient now and up to 2040. Monitoring is needed as the market is still growing; this is explored further in the Strategy report.
- ◀ The importance of the financial contribution that health and fitness make to the viability of other facilities such as swimming pools is an important facet.
- ◀ There is a need to seek funding to invest in the replacement moveable wall at The Howard Venue and upgrade the seating to electronic tiered seating system.

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SECTION 7: SQUASH

Squash is now on a new strategic path, implementing a rebrand and undergoing a major restructure. England Squash (ES) has achieved core strategic goals agreed with Sport England and is committed to supporting the traditional infrastructure of county associations, clubs, coaches and officials to grow the game via key programmes (e.g., Squash101) and campaigns (e.g., Squash Girls Can) but will be apportioning resources in a significantly different manner.

Table 7.1: England Squash strategic aims:

Element	Aim
Governance	Adhere to the highest standards of organisational governance.
Membership	Provide a membership model that caters to and provides benefits for anyone interested in playing and coaching squash irrespective of their ability.
Programmes	Enabling and supporting partners to be at the forefront of adult and player recruitment and retention.
Talent & high performance	Provide a support and development programme that identifies, develops and delivers world leading individuals and teams.
Commercial	Create a diversified and effective revenue model that minimises risk and reduces dependency on funding.

Squash In a Changing World (2021-2025) outlines the vision, principles and strategic pillars for ES. Its vision for the future of squash in England is a thriving, diverse and growing community. Its Purpose is to serve as custodians of the game's past, its present and its future. It is to serve as a catalyst for positive change across the sporting community at home and abroad. The 2021-2025 strategy sets six key objectives:

- ◀ Drive increased participation in the game, with a radical advance in equality, diversity and inclusion.
- ◀ Inspire and train a community of world class coaches, referees and volunteers at every level, who drive participation and increase engagement in the game.
- ◀ Sustain world-leading talent pathways and programmes for high performing players who achieve success on the global stage and inspire others to realise their potential.
- ◀ Empower creativity and innovation in the game and in ES's culture, using ideas and technology to support the squash community and to engage with new audiences.
- ◀ Spearhead new and creative ways to enhance the visibility and appeal of squash at local, national and international levels, including the pursuit of Olympic inclusion.
- ◀ Provide leadership for the game nationally and internationally, including addressing the Climate and Ecological Crisis.

ES has set a benchmark of one court per 10,000 people in each local authority in order for squash to thrive. It estimates that there is currently one court per 12,617 people in England. This reflects the significant number of court closures and/or non-replacements when new facilities are developed to replace older venues - seen over the past two decades.

Sevenoaks's current population is 121,106 (2022 Census) and it has 11 courts. Applying the ES model would suggest that there is demand for one additional court to meet local community needs. When taking future population growth (to 2040) into account there is a need for a total of 13 courts.

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7.1 Supply

There are 11 squash courts in Sevenoaks at six sites.

Figure 7.1: Location of squash courts in Sevenoaks with 20-minute drive time

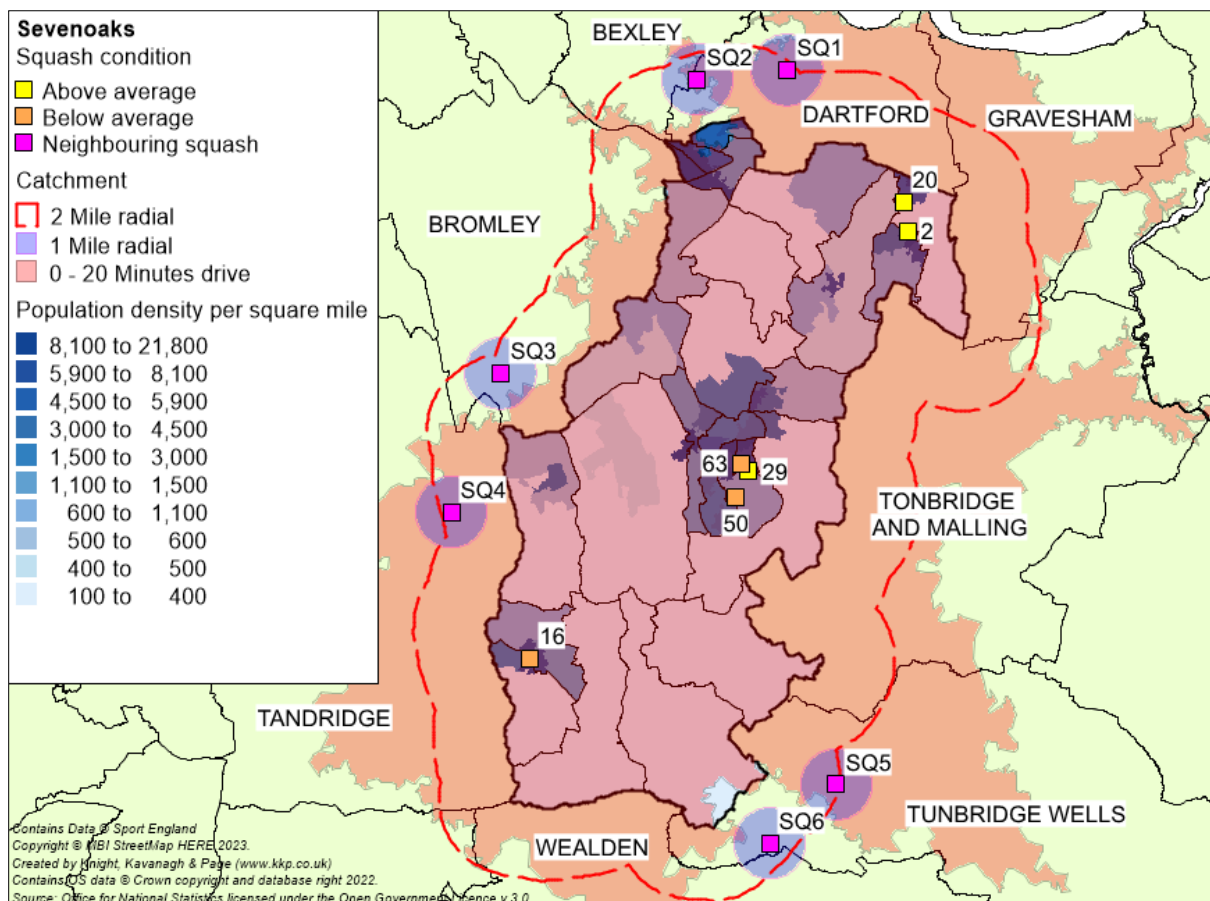


Table 7.2: Squash courts in Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Access policy	Courts	Condition
2	Ash Green Sports Centre	Reg. membership	1	Above average
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	Pay and play	1	Below average
20	Hartley Country Club	Reg. membership	3	Above average
29	Knole Park Golf Club	Pay and play	2	Above average
50	Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	Pay and play	3	Below average
63	Walthamstow Hall	Private use	1	Below average

Table 7.3: Squash courts in neighbouring authorities within 20 minutes' drive of Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Access policy	Total	Local authority
SQ1	David Lloyd (Dartford)	Reg. membership	3	Dartford
SQ2	Bexley Park Sports & Social Club	Sports club / CA	2	Dartford
SQ3	Blundells Fitness Sports & Leisure	Pay and play	4	Bromley
SQ4	The Limpsfield Club	Reg. membership	6	Tandridge
SQ5	Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre	Pay and play	3	Tunbridge Wells
SQ6	Holmewood House School	Sports club / CA	3	Tunbridge Wells

Source: Active Places Power 18/03/2022 (CA = community association)

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Quality

Of the 11 courts in Sevenoaks, six are of above average quality. A further five are below average, of which three are glass-backed.

The three courts at Sevenoaks School are the only glass backed courts in the Authority. The School has identified plans to refurbish its squash courts at Easter 2024. These include installing new flooring and cosmetic work to the walls.

The two courts at Knole Park Golf Club are of above average quality. They are used and maintained by Knole Park Squash Club. One was re-surfaced three years ago; however, a new front wall will be required in the near future. The second has had a new front wall installed but its flooring still needs to be replaced. Completing the work on each court will result in them being taken out of use for approximately two weeks. Squash members can access excellent quality changing, shower and toilet facilities within the golf club.

The Club would ideally like a third court on site so casual matches can take place at the same time as league matches. In addition, there is no show court, this means that only a maximum of ten members can spectate matches.

Accessibility and availability

Table 7.4: Access policy of squash courts in Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Access policy
2	Ash Green Sports Centre	Reg. membership
16	Edenbridge Leisure Centre	Pay and play
20	Hartley Country Club	Reg. membership
29	Knole Park Golf Club	Pay and play
50	Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	Pay and play
63	Walthamstow Hall	Private use

As illustrated in Figure 7.1 above, drivetime catchment suggests that approximately 97% of Sevenoaks residents live within a 20-minute drive of a squash facility within the Authority. In addition, a further 21 squash courts across six sites can be accessed in neighbouring authorities within two miles of the Sevenoaks boundary.

Within the district, Edenbridge Leisure Centre, Knole Park Golf Club and Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre) – six courts in total, accommodate pay and play access. A further four can be accessed via a registered membership, and one court, at Walthamstow Hall is private use only. A further seven courts can be accessed on a pay and play basis taking those in neighbouring authorities within two miles of the Sevenoaks border into account.

7.2: Demand

England Squash was invited to take part in consultation with regard to squash provision in Sevenoaks. Despite multiple attempts to contact, no response was received.

Club consultation

Knole Park Squash Club has 170 members, 89% of whom are male. Following the Pandemic, it has re-grown membership numbers while more recent trends evidence an influx of younger members replacing older members who have retired or moved on. It has capacity to take on additional members as its courts are currently under-utilised.

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It enters two teams in the local league, in which 22 Club members participate. 42 members compete in its internal box league, and on average nine attend its club night on Wednesday evenings for three hours, where a round robin competition takes place.

Knole Park Squash Club confirmed that a number of squash members have developed an interest in padel tennis. The Golf Club has no appetite to install padel tennis provision on site, meaning the Club would need to explore options to build padel tennis courts (four) at external venues. This would result in it operating across multiple sites.

Edenbridge Leisure Centre has seen a decline in the demand for squash and currently utilises its courts for alternative provision chiefly table tennis.

7.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are 11 squash courts at six sites. Three are glass backed.	The ES ratio-based deficit is one court. This increases to two based on population growth.
Quality	Six courts are of above average quality, and five are below average. Sevenoaks School has plans to refurbish its three glass-backed courts.	Continued investment is needed to maintain court quality across the stock.
Accessibility	97.5% of Sevenoaks' population lives within a 20-minute drive time of a squash court. A further 21 courts can be accessed in neighbouring authorities within two miles of the Sevenoaks border.	-
Availability (Management and usage)	Six courts are available on a pay and play basis - at Edenbridge Leisure Centre, Knole Park Golf Club and Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre). A further five can be accessed via registered membership. Seven courts in neighbouring authorities offer pay and play access.	-

Strategic summary

Despite squash provision being slightly below England Squash's recommendation of one court per 10,000 people, squash provision in Sevenoaks is adequate to meet current demand.

The audit identified capacity within existing stock and a number of courts are not accessible to the community (private use only) or are underutilised. There is a need to explore if the existing private use courts could be made available for community use prior to the development of any new courts.

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SECTION 8: GYMNASTICS

In 2023 British Gymnastics released its new strategy – Leap Without Limits: A New Vision for a New Era. It has been developed as a shared vision for gymnastics across all four home nations. To help achieve the vision It focuses on five ‘leaps’:

- ◀ **The Why Leap** - Nurturing and celebrating the positive impact of gymnastics on individuals, communities and wider society.
- ◀ **The Empowerment Leap** – Supporting everyone involved in gymnastics to play their part in making a positive difference.
- ◀ **The Experience Leap** – Making positive experiences and memories central to everything we do, at every stage, in every role.
- ◀ **The Creative Leap** – Encouraging and welcoming new ideas to support meaningful change.
- ◀ **The Together Leap** – Uniting the community, existing and new partners to maximise impact, learning and growth.

To bring the vision to life, British Gymnastics are working on the following actions:

- ◀ **Membership** – Develop a new more relevant membership offer that provides value for all its members, and an improved membership system.
- ◀ **Education** - Implement a reformed and reimagined approach to supporting the learning and development of the gymnastics workforce, ensuring it feels valued and supported by British Gymnastics and the clubs and delivery environments you operate within.
- ◀ **Community** – Celebrate and recognise the contribution and stories of those in the gymnastics community on British Gymnastics channels and more widely, including further developing the British Gymnastics Awards as an annual platform for this.
- ◀ **Reform** - Deliver all of the 40 actions British Gymnastics has committed to in Reform '25 over the next two years to create safe, positive and fair experiences for all in gymnastics, including a major Safe Sport campaign.
- ◀ **Events** - Work with its Technical Committees to agree a clearly defined and sustainable long-term national event programme for each discipline and develop new competitions and events at a recreational level.
- ◀ **Disability** - Work to build international support for our ambition for gymnastics to become a Paralympic sport, with the aim of agreeing a plan and pathway for this to become a reality.

The new strategy outlines six key impacts:

- ◀ More people enjoying the sport and its benefits, across all abilities, ages, and backgrounds, and as a gymnast, coach, club owner, official or fan.
- ◀ Everyone is safe, supported and is able and confident to speak up, whatever their role or involvement in gymnastics.
- ◀ More inspirational moments that are seen, shared and enjoyed by more people.
- ◀ The NGB membership experience is a positive one, which meets your needs, is easy from start to finish. and being a member of British Gymnastics is something that provides you with both pride and value.
- ◀ Members/participants feel connected to British Gymnastics and trust it to be positive custodians of this incredible sport.
- ◀ A united sport, where everyone is working together to ensure that collectively we deliver an uplifting gymnastics experience for all.

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8.1: Supply

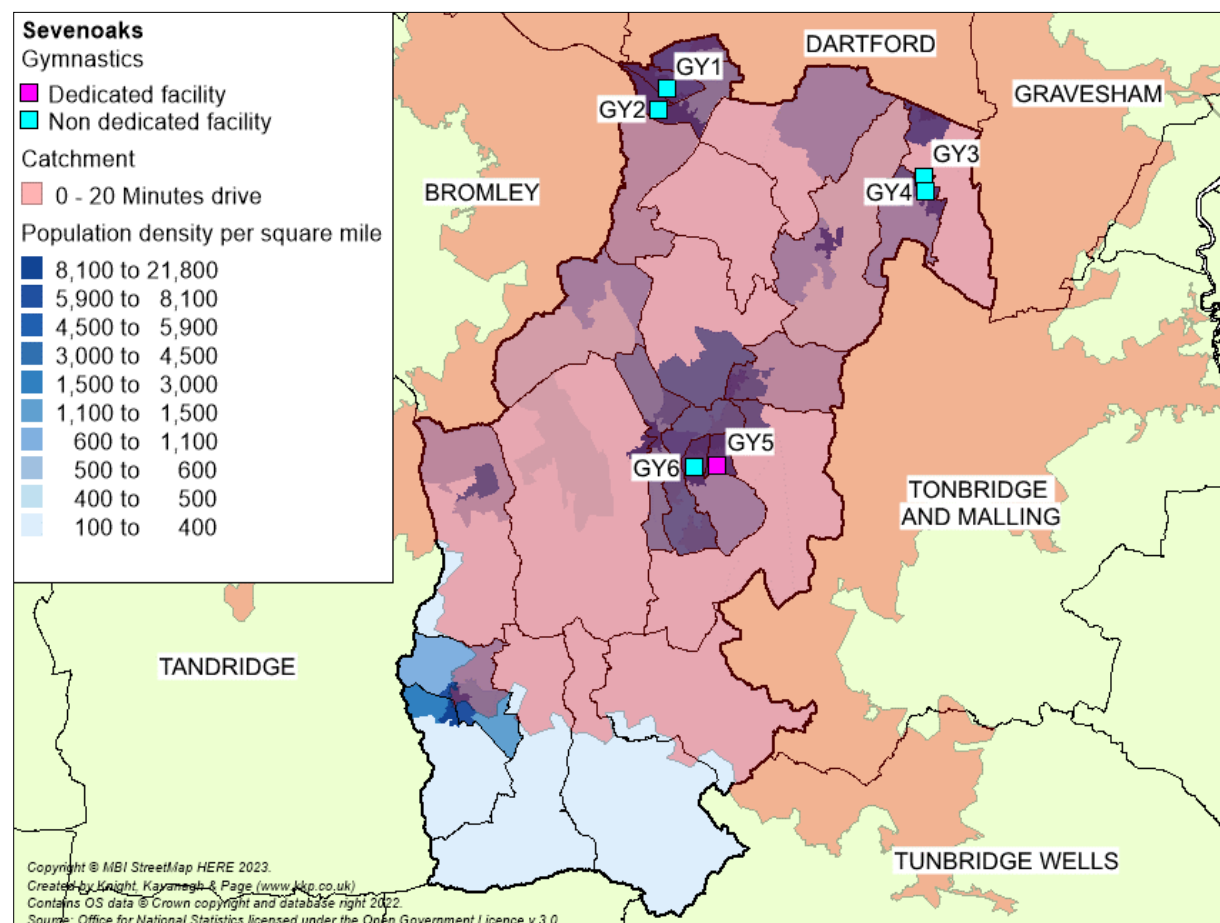
There is one dedicated gymnastics venue in Sevenoaks plus five non-dedicated venues that accommodate gymnastics activity.

Table 8.1: All facilities which accommodate gymnastics in Sevenoaks

ID	Club name	Site name	Dedicated?
GY1	White Oak Gym Club	White Oak Leisure Centre	No
GY2	Swanley Gym Fit Rec Gym Club	Swanley Comprehensive School	No
GY3	Beaming Stars	Milestone Academy	No
GY4	New Ash Green Gymnastics	Milestone Academy	No
GY5	Lightning School of Gymnastics	Walthamstow Hall Senior School	Yes
GY6	Sevenoaks Royals	Bradbourne Park Road, Sevenoaks	No

Lightning School of Gymnastics is the only dedicated gymnastics venue. It uses the old swimming pool for its activities. All other clubs deliver programmes in sports hall spaces.

Figure 8.1: Gymnastics provision in Sevenoaks and neighbouring authorities



Accessibility and availability

As shown in Figure 8.1 over 90% of Sevenoaks's population lives within 20 minutes of a gymnastics club/facility.

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8.2: Demand

British Gymnastics reports that participation in gymnastics is increasing rapidly. It also reports substantial demand and that many clubs have waiting lists - restricting access to gymnastic activity due to lack of time within dedicated and generic facilities.

A key part of the NGB's strategy to increase participation is to support clubs, leisure providers and other partners to move to their own dedicated facilities, offering more time and space for classes. It provides a range of products and programmes and expert assistance to support local delivery; gymnastic activities which are successfully driving membership growth and retention across the country.

Club consultation

All clubs were approached for consultation; three responded although all received numerous requests.

Swanley Gym Fit – provides recreational gymnastics opportunities. It currently has 25 members which is lower than its usual numbers (normally c.35). It runs at Orchards Academy and currently hires the hall for one hour on a Thursday 18:00 – 19:00. It reports that 35 members was the maximum number of participants it could accommodate due to the size of the hall and so it has a waiting list in operation.

The school is undertaking a re-build. As a consequence, the Club reports having to cancel sessions at the last minute due to the school requiring access at short notice – this has had a negative impact on the Club's programme and on its membership. Once construction timescales are known, the Club will re-build accordingly. In addition, it has been suggested to the Club that it may not be offered the option to use the new sports hall.

It reports that the existing sports hall is of poor quality and has not been in receipt of any refurbishment /investment in c. 40 years. The Club has not yet started to look for alternative provision but intends to once it is clearer about its options with regard to future use of the new sports hall.

Lightning Gymnastics has c.500 members, some are British Gymnastics affiliated to enable them to compete, but the others are recreational members. 80% are female. The Club caters for recreational activity, floor and vault, tumbling and acrobatics. It has boys' specific classes and stunt classes but reports struggling to recruit boys. It reports a waiting list of c.2,000 young people and that its capacity is limited by both facilities and the number of qualified coaches it has available to it.

It is based at Walthamstow Hall where it is also able to store its equipment. It reports incurring increasing hourly rate charges noting that these have risen from £11.00 per hour and now stand at £25.00 per hour.

The hall ceiling is not quite high enough for aerial gymnastics and the club has to take account of the pitch of the roof when delivering certain activities. It is based in a filled in swimming pool and can only access the site during out of school hours due to its location within the school grounds. The Club reports that if it could increase facility availability, it would be based solely at the site.

It reports occasional roof leaks and that the heating system has not worked for the last three years. Changing and toilet provision is located in the main school building so is not ideal.

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It also has a satellite centre at The G.A.P. Centre in the village of Riverhead in Sevenoaks – to which it has 24 hours access. It acquired the lease to this site c.3 years ago. This has one large main activity area. It is equipped with an inflatable tumble track (6m x 12m), a full set of bars, parallel bars, preschool equivalent, beams, rings and trapeze – all in good condition. The ceiling is too low to enable use by competition squads. Changing areas and toilets are in good condition. Whilst it meets some of the clubs needs, it is too small for the Club to re-locate all of its operation to it.

The Club identified that it has recently secured a much larger venue which will be able to accommodate all its demand in the one centre. The ceiling at this location is higher as it is a converted hay barn. It is currently arranging the head of terms and raising funds to make the building watertight and convert it for gymnastics. It will have a ten-year lease and intends to have conversion/repair work completed by the end of 2024.

The facility is larger scale and will allow the Club to expand its daytime programme. £170k is the estimated cost of the work required and it is looking to fundraise most of this as well as contributing some company reserves and taking out a loan. At present, however, it is however, still around £50-70k short.

The larger dedicated facility will have a 30-minute drivetime catchment and will cover the majority of the authority with only a small rural area in the far south outside of the catchment area. The new facility will enable the club to expand its acrobatics, recreational, womens' artistic (floor and vault) and boys' gymnastics provision.

White Oak Gymnastics Club is based in the sports hall at White Oak Leisure Centre which it hires for three hours per week on a Saturday morning. It also hires the multipurpose room with the dividing wall. The Club caters for recreational activity, floor and vault and tumbling.

The Club has members aged four years to adult. It has c.120 members and reports a large demand from members with additional needs. It has a waiting list in place for the majority of age groups.

It reports limited storage space which is a challenge for setting up and packing down. Ideally, the Club would like to access increased activity space (it had 4-badminton courts prior to the new White Oak Leisure Centre being built) which has reduced its capacity to meet demand. It also must consider its programme as the multipurpose room has a low ceiling so typically uses that room for its youngest members.

The Club needs to recruit more coaches in order to increase capacity in groups hence the waiting lists. There is also a need to consider long term succession planning of the Club as the current owner is approaching retirement age.

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8.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific needs
Quantity	There are six clubs in Sevenoaks. There is one dedicated gymnastics venue in Sevenoaks. In the main, non-dedicated venues are used to host gymnastics activity.	Swanley Gym Fit may need to find an alternative venue due to Orchards Academy being re-built. Lightning Gymnastics is in the process of sourcing a larger dedicated facility. This development will increase the catchment to 30 minutes and will cover almost all the authority bar a very small area in the rural south.
Quality	Both Swanley Gym Fit and Walthamstow Hall report issues with current facility condition.	Current gymnastics facilities are not fit for purpose.
Accessibility	90% of Sevenoaks's residents reside within a 20-minute drive time of a club/venue within the Authority.	
Availability (Management & usage)	There is opportunity to grow participation in gymnastics in Sevenoaks. There will be a need to develop the coaching and volunteer workforce to support an increase in participation in gymnastics.	Expand the coaching and volunteer workforce to develop the sport locally to enable it to offer further gymnastics opportunities. Maintain good relationships with community gymnastic providers.

Strategic summary

- ◀ Current supply in the Authority does not meet current demand and will not meet future demand.
- ◀ There is a need to support clubs to expand provision to increase their capacity to meet demand.
- ◀ The new facility at Lightning Gymnastics will increase the catchment to 30 minutes and provide for almost the whole of the Authority. There is no need for additional provision.
- ◀ Gymnastics clubs require large open spaces with sufficient height to accommodate the gymnastic disciplines they deliver, for example clubs delivering trampolining and aerial disciplines may require up to 8m in height. Industrial units can lend themselves well due to the expansive size clubs but require change of use planning consent and have challenges with parking of a daytime.
- ◀ There is a need to work with gymnastics clubs and British Gymnastics over future provision of club-led developments for dedicated gymnastics and trampolining facilities.

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SECTION 9: INDOOR BOWLS

The five forms of bowls that are played indoors (flat/level green, crown green, long mat, short mat and carpet mat) each require a different venue and each format of the game has a different technical specification for their indoor facility.

Indoor flat/level green bowls is played on a purpose-built indoor green which complies with the laws of the sport of bowls. The NGB is the English Indoor Bowling Association (EIBA). It requires a standard bowling green; a flat area 31-40 metres long divided into playing areas called rinks. The number of these varies, depending on the width of the green.

Crown green bowls requires a standard crown green, artificial grass (carpeted) area of approximately 38m square which is crowned i.e. higher in the centre than round the perimeter. Indoor crown greens are relatively rare – substantially less common than those provided for flat green bowls. The NGB is the British Crown Green Bowling Association (BCGBA).

Carpet bowls is played on a rectangular carpet (45 x 6 feet) that is rolled out. It can be accommodated in any indoor space large enough to accommodate the mats which come in different lengths. It tends to be played at a recreational level. The NGB is the English Carpet Bowls Association (ECBA).

Short mat bowls is typically played in sports halls, parish council rooms, outdoor bowls club pavilions and on indoor flat green bowls club greens. The NGB is the English Short Mat Bowling Association (SMBA). Long mat bowls is played on a rolled carpet typically laid on a sports hall floor. There are no ditches in this game. It is typically found in areas of low flat-green supply and/or where crown green bowls is played outdoors. There is no NGB for this version of the game.

An indoor bowling centre typically comprises a single flat green with a number of rinks and ancillary accommodation such as changing rooms, lounge/bar, viewing area, kitchen, office/meeting rooms and stores plus designated car parking. Ancillary accommodation scale varies according to the number of rinks available. A successful indoor bowls centre requires a combination of the right location, design, and financial and general management. Sport England¹⁵ guidelines on catchment for indoor bowls centres are set out to be interpreted in the light of local circumstances:

- ◀ Assume the majority of users live locally and not travel more than 30 minutes.
- ◀ Assume that 90% of users will travel by car, with the remainder by foot.
- ◀ As a guide, calculate demand on the basis of one rink per 14,000-17,000 total population.
- ◀ The number of rinks required can be related to the estimated number of members, assume 80-100 members per rink.

EIBA stated priorities are:

- ◀ Recruitment of participants.
- ◀ Retention of participants.
- ◀ Clubs are recommended to:
 - ◀ Develop and implement a robust sports development plan
 - ◀ Actively review the Sport England 'Buddle' website.
 - ◀ Actively promote the club in the local community amongst those who are able bodied and disabled. Wheelchair users and visually impaired people are particularly keen on the sport of bowls.
- ◀ Retention and improvement of facilities.
- ◀ New indoor facilities in areas of low-supply and high-demand.

¹⁵ Sport England Design Guidance Note Indoor Bowls 2005

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EIBA Outline Plan 2022-2025

The EIBA plan is focused on: recruit and retain 45+ and recruit and retain 70+. Both markets require growth. The idea is that people aged 45+ need new versions/formats of the game to play and the 70+ will wish to continue with current formats. Its focus areas are:

- ◀ Getting core bowlers back playing following COVID lockdowns.
- ◀ 45-59 year old participants.
- ◀ Volunteers.
- ◀ Health and Wellbeing.
- ◀ Inclusivity – women, ethnic communities.
- ◀ Facilities: build, improve, retain.
- ◀ Youth and the family.
- ◀ Disability.
- ◀ Competitions.
- ◀ Internationals.
- ◀ Promotion.
- ◀ Commercial partnerships.

The “Recruit and Retain Strategy” is to concentrate on encouraging and supporting clubs to increase participation and improve the experience of all participants. Its objectives include:

- ◀ Growing participation across the adult population in local communities. Targeted work to increase female participation.
- ◀ Growing participation in the 12-18 age range as part of the EIBA Development Pathway.
- ◀ The provision of an excellent sporting experience for new and existing participants.
- ◀ A growth in Indoor Bowls participation by people who have disabilities.

Running alongside this is the Sport England funded development work provided jointly by the Indoor NGB (EIBA); Outdoor NGB (Bowls England) and the “Bowls Development Alliance” (BDA). Each NGB has two directors on the Board of BDA.

The Sport England funding for the 2022-2025 period, focuses on the delivery of:

- ◀ **Club hubs:** ensure that all clubs remain sustainably positioned at the heart of the communities, and there are good pathways to increase membership.
- ◀ **Communities:** develop healthy bowling communities, with good quality competitions, options to increase coaches and volunteers and healthy relationships between clubs.
- ◀ **Health and wellbeing:** support clubs promote health and wellbeing of members with a range of programmes and activities.
- ◀ **Inclusion:** ensure clubs are as inclusive as possible, promoting the sport to all including females and people from diverse communities.

Alongside these core objectives the BDA works with key partners on:

- ◀ **Safeguarding:** ensuring the sport is safe for everyone to play by working across all five National Governing Bodies (NGBs) [BE, EIBA, British Crown Green BA, English Short Mat BA and English Bowling Federation] to have policies and processes in place. Training is also available to support the network of Club Safeguarding Officers.
- ◀ **Disability:** the BDA works in partnership with Disability Bowls England, Activity Alliance, BE and the EIBA to ensure everyone regardless of disability can access the sport of bowls.
- ◀ **Women Can:** the BDA are driving a campaign alongside BE and the EIBA to encourage more women to play bowls, coach bowls and volunteer in bowls.
- ◀ **Equality & Diversity:** the BDA, BE and the EIBA are all striving to ensure the sport of bowls is as diverse as it can be.

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL SPORT FACILITIES STRATEGY: NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

9.1: Supply

The two indoor bowls facilities in Sevenoaks offer a total of 16 rinks. Both have 8-rink facilities. There are six indoor bowls facilities in neighbouring authorities - within 30 minutes' drive of Sevenoaks.

Figure 9.1: Indoor bowls facilities in Sevenoaks & within 30 minutes' drive time

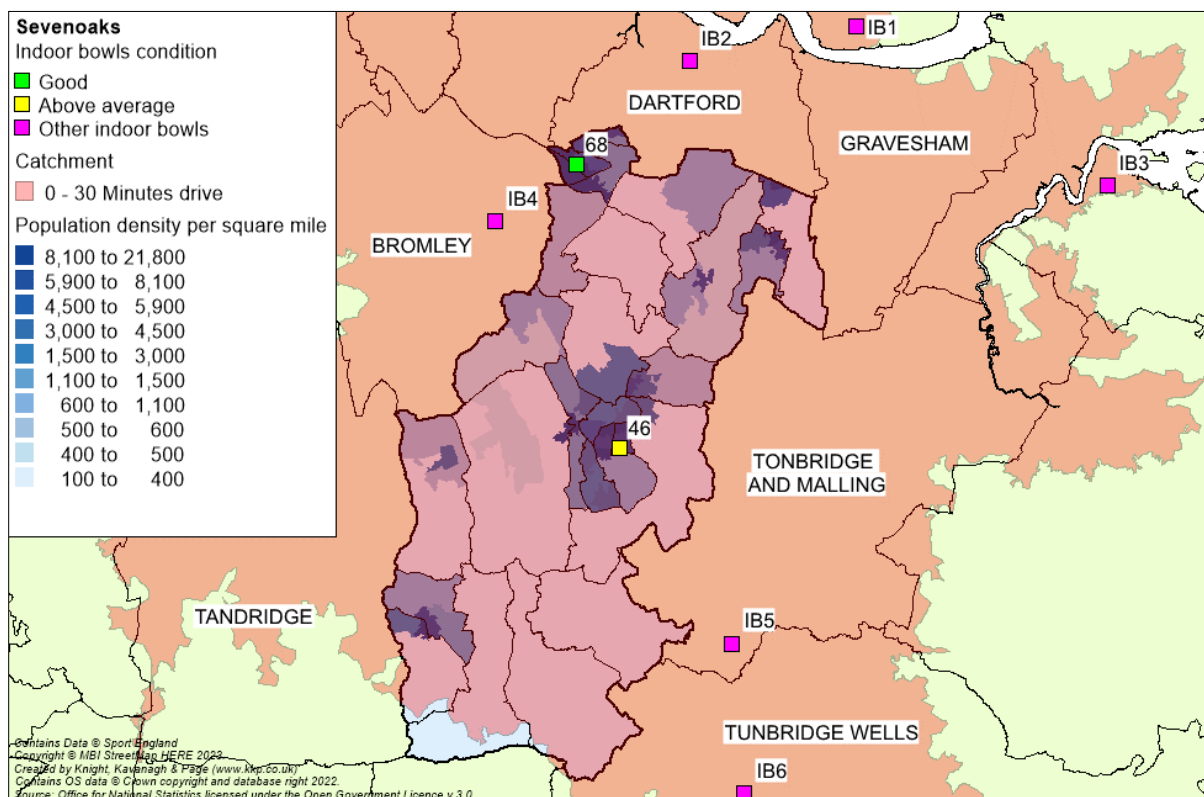


Table 9.1: Indoor bowls facilities in Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Rinks
46	Sevenoaks Indoor Bowls Club Ltd	8
68	White Oak Indoor Bowls Centre	8

Table 9.2: Indoor bowls facilities within a 30-minute drive of Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Rinks	Access type	Local authority
IB1	Tilbury Community Association	6	Sports club / CA	Thurrock
IB2	Dartford Stone Lodge Indoor Bowls & Social Club	6	Reg. membership	Dartford
IB3	Prince Arthur Road Indoor Bowls Club Ltd.	8	Sports club / CA	Medway
IB4	Bromley Indoor Bowls Centre	8	Sports club / CA	Bromley
IB5	Angel (Tonbridge) Indoor Bowls Club	6	Sports club / CA	Tonbridge & Malling
IB6	Royal Tunbridge Wells Indoor Bowls Club	6	Sports club / CA	Tunbridge Wells

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Quality

White Oak Indoor Bowls Club Ltd is rated good quality, Sevenoaks Indoor Bowls Club is rate as above average quality. Site specific quality issues are listed within Section 9.2. All Sevenoaks residents have access to good and above average facilities.

Table 9.3: Quality of indoor bowls clubs in Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Rinks	Access type	Condition
46	Sevenoaks Indoor Bowls Club Ltd	8	Sports club / CA	Above average
68	White Oak Indoor Bowls Centre	8	Sports club / CA	Good

Accessibility

Drive time catchment modelling suggests that essentially the whole Sevenoaks's population (99%) lives within a 30-minute drive of an indoor bowls facility within the Authority.

Availability

The two indoor bowling clubs require people to be club members to access facilities. Both sites are available during the day and in the evening, five to seven days per week.

Short mat bowls is played at Edenbridge LC.

9.2: Demand

Consultation with the clubs suggests that there is currently sufficient provision both in Sevenoaks and in adjoining local authority areas. Both report a decline in membership since the Pandemic and each has the capacity to accommodate increased demand.

Club consultation

White Oak Indoor Bowls Club has c.340 playing members and 120 social members. Its centre opened in 1992 and was initially owned and managed by Sevenoaks Council. In 2004, it was leased to a private company 'White Oak Indoor Bowls Club' for a period of 25 years. It is open every day of the week during winter months and five days a week in the summer. (Closed Tuesday/Sunday).

At the time of audit, it had a roof leak and was in the process of getting it fixed. A new rink carpet was laid in December 2022.

It reports itself to be a vibrant club which offers many other activities and caters for a range of groups in addition to its membership. Some of these reportedly include:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Partially sighted | Care home visits |
| Short mat bowls | New Age kurling |
| Rotary Club sessions | Probus Club |
| Men's and ladies sessions | Quiz nights |
| Bingo | Craft mornings |

It reports having c. six years remaining on its lease and that there is a need to secure a long-term lease when the current one expires.

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Sevenoaks Indoor Bowls Club has c. 200 members (it had 325 last year). It operates over five days per week and has ambitions to open seven days a week.

Its building is also Council owned and is leased to the Club on a full repairing lease. The lighting in the centre has recently been upgraded to LED. The current lease has c. six years remaining. It would like to renew it for 25 years. The building requires investment as follows:

- ◀ C.£60k to improve the heating.
- ◀ £700 to fix a door.
- ◀ Carpet and underlay replacement (in c.5 years' time) at c. £50-£60k.

The Club would like to invest in solar panels and improve energy efficiency by installing a suspended ceiling to reduce heating costs, however, it does not have the funds / time remaining on the lease to consider this at present. It accommodates:

Coaching sessions	Children's groups
Scouts	Pilates
Bridge (x3 groups)	Royal British Legion
Sevenoaks Women's Festival	Parkinsons group
Sevenoaks Community (disability group)	Adults learning difficulties.

9.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There are two indoor bowls facilities in Sevenoaks (16 rinks).	There is a need to retain and support existing facilities. There is no requirement for additional provision.
Quality	The authority has one 8-rink facility of good quality, and one 8-rink facility of above average quality. Both require investment in the short, medium and longer term.	Maintain quality and monitor carpet condition at both venues. Supporting clubs to reduce energy consumption and costs. Sevenoaks Indoor Bowls Club needs to replace its carpet in the short term and invest c.£60k in its heating system.
Accessibility	Virtually the whole Authority (99%) population lives within a 30-minute drive of an indoor bowls facility within Sevenoaks's boundary. A further six are within a 30-minute drive of Sevenoaks.	There are no accessibility issues.
Availability (Management and usage)	The facilities in Sevenoaks require membership to access. Both have capacity to take on more members.	No programming and pricing needs

Strategic summary

- ◀ Both indoor bowls centres are maximising use and operate as community hubs for a wide range of community groups. EIBA suggests that there is no requirement for additional purpose-built indoor bowls facilities in Sevenoaks now or in the near future.
- ◀ Given the projected increase in the number of older people it is likely that demand for indoor bowls will increase. Where possible both clubs should be supported to market and promote their activities to help grow/sustain participation and membership.

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SPORT FACILITIES STRATEGY: NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 10: INDOOR TENNIS

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the NGB for all tennis provision within the UK. It administers the sport at national and regional level. One of its key objectives is to get more people playing tennis more often. To achieve this, through its most recent Investment Framework (Vision 2019 – 2023), priority will be given to the following sites:

- ◀ New and existing indoor tennis centres
- ◀ Park tennis
- ◀ Tennis clubs
- ◀ Schools and other educational establishments

This will be supported through the following key funding objectives:

- ◀ Funding through interest free loans.
- ◀ Investing in venues that have a proven record of increasing participation.
- ◀ Investing where there is thorough community engagement.
- ◀ Support venues that encourage participation growth.
- ◀ Target investment that is demand led.
- ◀ Invest in venues that are financially sustainable.
- ◀ Support venues that have successfully sourced partnership funding.

Central to any investment will be the provision of a sustainable business case.

This section considers indoor tennis facilities provision in Sevenoaks. It uses two terms to describe indoor building types:

Traditional - A permanent structure made of traditional materials using traditional construction techniques. This commonly takes the form of a steel or timber portal frame spanning the full length of the court (including run backs) clad in a material to suit local conditions e.g. metal cladding, brickwork or timber boarding.

Non-traditional - A permanent or non-permanent structure made of non-traditional materials using non-traditional construction techniques. Three types of structure fall into this category:

- ◀ Air supported structures (air halls).
- ◀ Framed fabric structures.
- ◀ Tensile structures.

10.1: Supply

Indoor tennis is based on specialist facilities which appeal beyond local authority boundaries. This report considers provision within with a 30-minutes' drive time catchment to demonstrate accessibility. The one indoor tennis facility in the district is at Sevenoaks School.

Quality

The three traditional courts at Sevenoaks School are above average quality. The facility was built in 1984 and the courts were last refurbished in 2005. They are due for re-lining and may, potentially, be re-surfaced dependent upon school budgets.

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL SPORT FACILITIES STRATEGY: NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

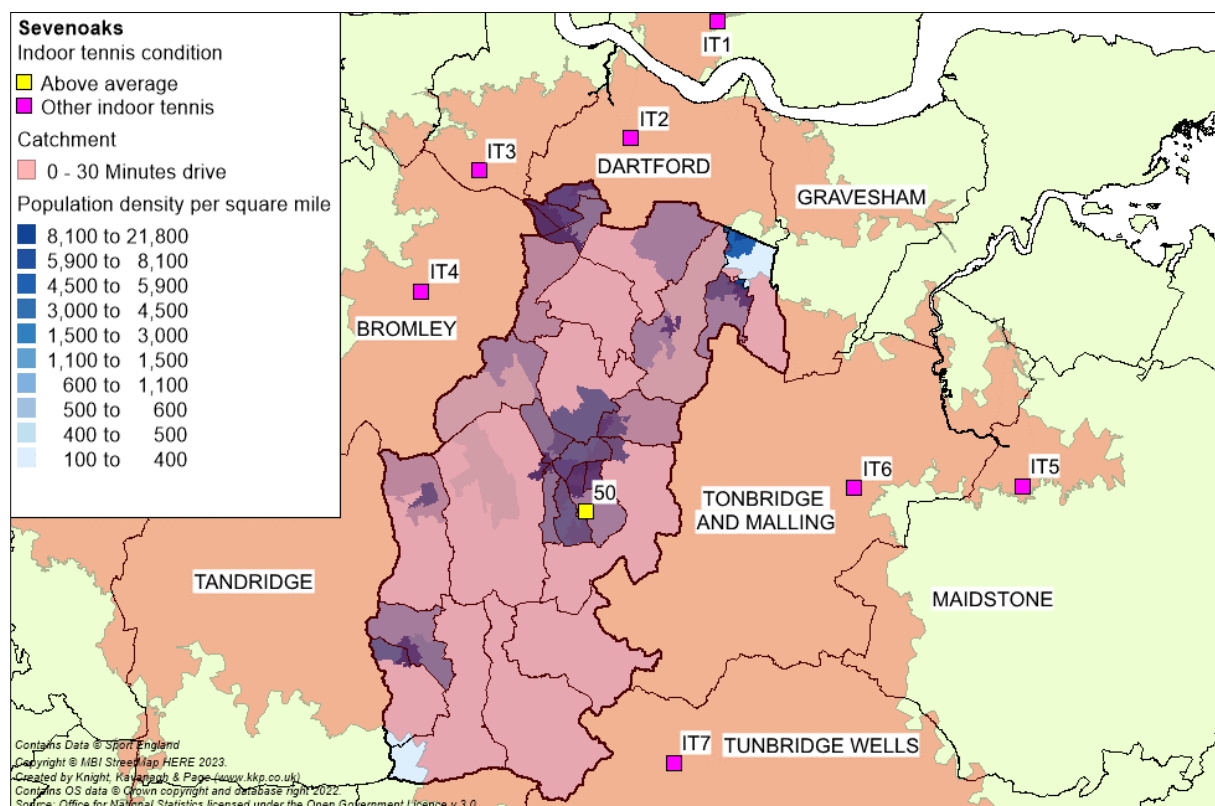
Table 10.1: Quality rating of indoor tennis sites in Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Courts	Access type	Condition
50	Sevenoaks School (Sennocke Centre)	3	Pay and play	Above average

Table 10.2: Indoor tennis facilities within a 30-minute drive of Sevenoaks

ID	Site name	Courts	Access type	Local authority
IT1	Bannatyne Health Club (Chafford Hundred)	2	Reg. membership	Thurrock
IT2	David Lloyd (Dartford)	6	Reg. membership	Dartford
IT3	David Lloyd (Sidcup)	2	Reg. membership	Bexley
IT3	David Lloyd (Sidcup)	1	Reg. membership	Bexley
IT4	Bromley Tennis Centre at Newstead	4 + 6	Sports club / CA	Bromley
IT5	Freedom Leisure Maidstone	4	Reg. membership	Maidstone
IT6	David Lloyd (Kings Hill)	5	Reg. membership	Tonbridge & Malling
IT7	Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre	4	Pay and play	Tunbridge Wells

Figure 10.1 Indoor tennis facilities in Sevenoaks and within 30 minutes' drive time



Accessibility and availability

Drive time catchment modelling confirms that c.95% of Sevenoaks's population lives within 30-minutes' drive of Sevenoaks School. Seven sites offer indoor tennis facilities in neighbouring authorities within a 30-minute drive of Sevenoaks. Of these, only Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre offers pay and play access; all others require a membership to access.

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL SPORT FACILITIES STRATEGY: NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Future developments

Consultation has identified that Sevenoaks Padel Club has an ambition to build some indoor Padel tennis courts in the Sevenoaks area. It is currently in discussions with Polhill Garden Centre.

Its ambition is to build a 6-court indoor facility (frame and fabric type structure) with a bar/café and meeting room. It would utilise current car parking. It would also consider installing an outdoor MUGA with tennis, netball and basketball markings to create a multi-sport offer.

An image of a similar facility to the proposed Sevenoaks Padel Club is shown below:



The Club reports it has discussed the ambition with the LTA who is supportive of the development.

At the time of audit, the Club and garden centre has yet to apply for planning permission but has reportedly had some pre planning advice.

10.2: Demand

Consultation with Sevenoaks School indicates that its courts are heavily used. It also expressed an interest in developing Padel tennis courts at the site.

The LTA recently redesigned its strategic approach to target key national focus areas, ultimately to grow participation. Future investment in facilities is based on detailed analysis of potential demand throughout the UK. It has identified 96 priority target areas for development of new indoor courts in the UK. Sevenoaks is not one of these target areas.

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The audit identified pickleball being played in the area, with Seven Oaks Country Club having four dedicated outdoor courts with floodlights.

10.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	Sevenoaks School is the sole facility for indoor tennis in the authority, it has three traditional courts.	Explore the feasibility of installing padel tennis courts which can cater for a wider audience than tennis.
Quality	The site is rated as above average quality with suitable ancillary provision. There is a need to invest and potentially replace the playing surface when needed to retain its quality.	Maintain facility quality and replace playing surface when needed.
Accessibility	Approx. 95% of Sevenoaks's residents live within a 30-minute drive of Sevenoaks School. Six sites within 30 minutes drivetime of the authority offer indoor tennis provision.	No requirements.
Availability (Management & usage)	Consultation reports that the courts are heavily used by the school which limits availability to the community.	No requirements.

Strategic summary

- ◀ Invest in the playing surfaces of the courts to maintain quality.
- ◀ Explore the potential to install padel tennis courts.

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SECTION 11: CLIMBING WALLS

This section focuses on facilities which provide opportunities for indoor climbing.

The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) is the national representative body that champions the interests of climbers, hill walkers, mountaineers and ski mountaineers in England and Wales. It is recognised by Sport England as the NGB for competition climbing. BMC's latest Strategic Plan (2020-2024) outlines the vision of 'to create a better future for climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers'. It sets out five key strategic themes:

- ◀ Access, conservation & environmental sustainability.
- ◀ Membership engagement, services & support.
- ◀ Education, inspiration & skills.
- ◀ Organisational development & sector leadership.
- ◀ GB Climbing - competitions, talented athletes & the GB Teams.

Sport climbing (speed, bouldering and lead) officially debuted at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. All three disciplines can be hosted at indoor venues and are popular formats of climbing. Bouldering is identified as a high growth area, especially for children entering the sport.

BMC would be open to exploring the feasibility of working with other sports such as Skateboarding to develop a national performance centre with indoor climbing facilities. Early discussions with the BMC and other NGBs have taken place.

The International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC) has several requirements for climbing walls used in Olympic standard competitions, they include:

Boulder: maximum height of 4m and safety mats below, climbers solve (complete) problems on four/ five boulders in the lowest number of attempts over a set period of time.

Lead: climbers secured by a rope, one at a time, on an overhanging route climb to the highest point in an individual attempt on a 15m high wall as possible in six minutes. (Climbers can preview the route for six minutes prior and are kept in isolation before performing their attempt.

Speed: Secured from above, climbers run up standardised parallel routes on a 15m wall. The fastest climber wins.

11.1: Supply

In Sevenoaks, there are no indoor climbing walls. There are, however, four facilities within 30 minutes drivetime catchment of the district.

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL SPORT FACILITIES STRATEGY: NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Figure 11.1: All climbing walls within 30 mins drive time of Sevenoaks (town centre)

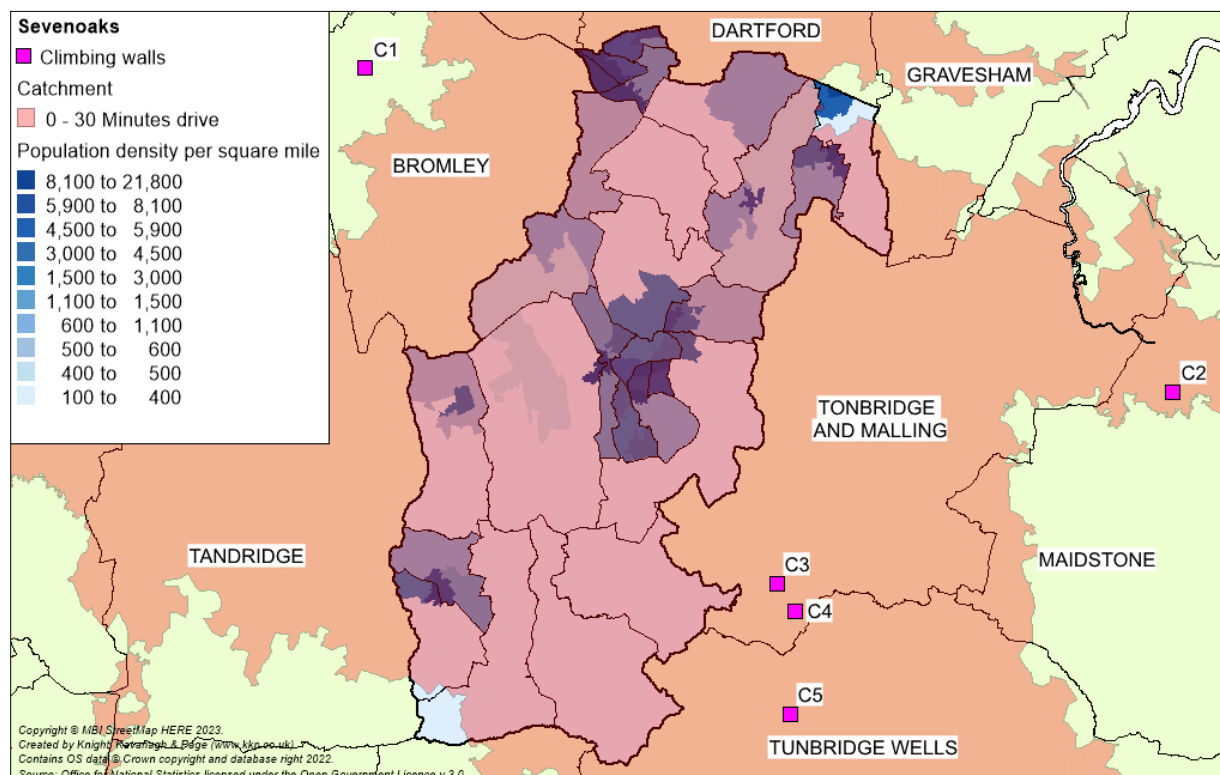


Table 11.1: Climbing walls within 30 mins drive time

ID	Site name	Local authority
C1	Rhino Boulder	Bromley
C2	The Climbing Experience	Maidstone
C3	Prosser Memorial Climbing Wall	Tonbridge and Malling
C4	Clip 'n Climb Tonbridge	Tonbridge and Malling
C5	Chimera Climbing Tunbridge Wells	Tunbridge Wells

Accessibility and availability

Drive time catchment modelling suggests that approximately 95% of the population of Sevenoaks lives within a 30-minute drive of a climbing wall centre.

11.2: Demand

It is likely, on the basis that there are no facilities in Sevenoaks, that the BMC would support the development of dedicated rope climbing facilities, especially where there is potential to support performance training and competition hosting.

No other demand was identified at the time of audit.

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL SPORT FACILITIES STRATEGY: NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

11.3: Summary of key facts and issues

Elements	Assessment findings	Specific facility needs
Quantity	There is no indoor climbing facility in the authority. Four are located within neighbouring authorities within 30 minutes' drive time and one is just outside the 30 minutes.	There is no requirement for more indoor climbing provision.
Quality	-	-
Accessibility	All residents live within a 30 minutes' drive time of an indoor climbing facility.	-
Availability (Management & usage)	-	-

Summary

The audit did not identify demand for a climbing facility in Sevenoaks, however, this could change with the inclusion of speed climbing in the Olympics, which may increase awareness and demand.

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

SPORT FACILITIES STRATEGY: NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

SECTION 12: INITIAL THOUGHTS RE STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◀ Undertake a leisure procurement to source an operator post April 2025.
- ◀ Two public leisure centres are approaching end of critical life (Edenbridge Leisure Centre and Sevenoaks Leisure Centre). There is a need to undertake an options appraisal to determine whether they should be refurbished or replaced.
- ◀ Address the projected future undersupply of health and fitness provision in the area.
- ◀ In line with the Sevenoaks Climate change Strategy, ensure that existing facilities are made as energy efficient as possible, and that new development considers energy efficiency as a high priority.
- ◀ Develop a system to, as early as possible, identify and tackle ongoing investment, maintenance, and refurbishment requirements to protect and improve existing sports facilities.
- ◀ Collaborate with education sites to ensure that sports hall quality remains at/rises to an appropriate standard and that they continue to be made available for community use. This is of particular importance at Orchards Academy.
- ◀ Collaborate with education sites to ensure that swimming pool quality remains at/rises to an appropriate standard and that they continue to be made available for community use.
- ◀ Given the increased number of people aged over 65, look to support providers to increase the range and level of activities and opportunities for these groups – including whether more weekday, daytime hours could be offered.
- ◀ Several clubs in different sports in the Authority are at membership capacity due either to current facility size or reliable availability. Look to support clubs seeking to access new/different facilities to enable them to continue to grow participation. Sports to which this particularly applies include basketball and gymnastics.
- ◀ Ensure that memberships and specific activities are available to people living in the Authority's more deprived communities via enabling low cost, increased use of community facilities (e.g., activity halls and community centres).
- ◀ Review the cost and the processes via which people are able to participate on a casual (pay and play) basis at the Authority's public leisure centres. Ensure that this is straightforward and, for example, that the requirement for online membership and related sign up/booking processes do not deter or digitally exclude key groups.
- ◀ Support the ambitions of the basketball arena plans being developed at Knole Academy by Sevenoaks Suns Basketball Club.
- ◀ Consider options to aid Swanley Gym Fit should it pursue options to develop alternative accommodation.
- ◀ Renew, on a longer-term basis, the leases on both White Oak Bowls Club and Sevenoaks Indoor Bowling Club. Support both clubs where possible to invest in current facilities to ensure that they continue to be high quality attractive community hubs.
- ◀ Support other developments (via planning, developer contributions and officer expertise) to increase levels of sport and physical activity in the wider community.
- ◀ Work with local sports clubs (with/via the leisure operator) to ensure facility and workforce development programmes are geared to meeting the needs of all clubs and residents.