

# Cheltenham Borough Council Cabinet

**Meeting date:** Tuesday, 2 April 2024

**Meeting time:** 6.00 pm

**Meeting venue:** Council Chamber - Municipal Offices

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## **Membership:**

Councillors Rowena Hay, Peter Jeffries, Victoria Atherstone, Flo Clucas, Mike Collins, Iain Dobie, Martin Horwood, Alisha Lewis and Max Wilkinson

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## **SECTION 1 : PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

### **1 Apologies**

### **2 Declarations of interest**

### **3 Minutes of the last meeting (Pages 5 - 20)**

### **4 Public and Member Questions and Petitions**

Questions must be received no later than 12 noon on the seventh working day before the date of the meeting

## **SECTION 2 :THE COUNCIL**

*There are no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Council on this occasion*

## **SECTION 3 : OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

*There are no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this occasion*

## **SECTION 4 : OTHER COMMITTEES**

*There are no matters referred to the Cabinet by other Committees on this occasion*

## **SECTION 5 : REPORTS FROM CABINET MEMBERS AND/OR OFFICERS**

### **5 Cheltenham Ice Rink (Pages 21 - 46)**

Report of Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing, Councillor Max Wilkinson

### **6 Discretionary Business Rates Relief (Pages 47 - 56)**

Report of Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets, Councillor Peter Jeffries

### **7 Discretionary Housing Payments Policy (Pages 57 - 78)**

Report of Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets, Councillor Peter Jeffries

### **8 Employee and Councillor Domestic Abuse Policy (Pages 79 - 94)**

Report of Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities, Councillor Flo Clucas

### **9 Physical Activity and Sports Strategy, Phase 2 (Pages 95 - 250)**

Report of Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing, Councillor Max Wilkinson

**10 Cotswolds Beechwood Mitigation Strategy (Pages 251 - 264)**

Report of Cabinet Member for Customer and Regulatory Services, Councillor Martin Horwood

**11 UBICO Business Plan, 2024-25 (Pages 265 - 292)**

Report of the Leader, Councillor Rowena Hay

**SECTION 6 : BRIEFING SESSION**

- Leader and Cabinet Members

**12 Briefing from Cabinet Members**

**SECTION 7 : DECISIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS**

Member decisions taken since the last Cabinet meeting

**SECTION 8 : ANY OTHER ITEM(S) THAT THE LEADER DETERMINES TO BE URGENT AND REQUIRES A DECISION**

**Section 10: BRIEFING NOTES**

Briefing notes are circulated for information with the Cabinet papers but are not on the agenda

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# Cheltenham Borough Council

## Cabinet

## Minutes

**Meeting date:** 23 February 2024

**Meeting time:** 12.30 pm - 12.40 pm

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**In attendance:**

**Councillors:**

Rowena Hay, Peter Jeffries, Flo Clucas, Mike Collins, Iain Dobie, Martin Horwood, Alisha Lewis and Max Wilkinson

**Also in attendance:**

Claire Hughes (Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer), Gareth Edmundson (Chief Executive), Paul Jones (Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)) and Gemma Bell (Director of Finance and Assets and Deputy S151 Officer)

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### 1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Atherstone. Councillor Jeffries took the Chair.

### 2 Declarations of interest

There were none.

### 3 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13 February 2024 will be approved at the next meeting.

### 4 Public and Member Questions and Petitions

There were none.

**5 Final General Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals 2024-25 and Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report, October-December 2023**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets apologised for the extraordinary meeting, due to the last-minute funding support for local authorities announced by the government. He said officers had taken a bit more time to get the budget right. The paperwork had been circulated, and he said he would present a full report at Council, but was happy to take any questions.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing asked about the difficulties in preparing the budget within the timetable given to us by government as a result of their late declaration. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets confirmed that it is always a challenge, particularly with the one-year settlements of the last few years, and declarations are always made too late in the process. It would make officers' jobs a lot easier if these came earlier, and multi-year settlements would also be very helpful.

The Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities said that, working with the Local Government Association on different matters, she sees council after council unable to meet their obligations, and looking at what officers and Cabinet colleagues have achieved in Cheltenham, she had to say what a good job they have done with the budget – not only investing in council housing, but also in families, children, communities and a host of organisations and facilities around the country which other councils are closing down. She thanked them all for the commitment, consideration and hard work.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets thanked her for her comments.

**RESOLVED THAT: Council is recommended to:**

- 1. approve the revised budget for 2023/24 which is reported as part of the budget monitoring process for 31 December 2023 in Section 6;**
- 2. consider the budget assessment by the Section 151 Officer at Appendix 2 in agreeing the following recommendations:**
- 3. approve the final budget proposals including a proposed council tax for the services provided by Cheltenham Borough Council of £237.68 for the year 2024/25 based on a Band D property (an increase of 2.99%), as detailed in paragraphs 9.1 to 9.6;**
- 4. approve the savings / additional income totalling £2,741,000 and the budget strategy at Appendix 4;**
- 5. approve the revenue growth items totalling £158,000 at Appendix 5;**

6. approve the capital programme at Appendix 6;
7. approve the use of reserves and general balances and note the projected level of reserves, as detailed at Appendix 7;
8. approve the programmed maintenance programme at Appendix 8;
9. approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) detailed in Appendix 9;
10. approve the flexible use of capital receipts strategy as detailed in Appendix 10;
11. note that the Council will remain in the Gloucestershire business rates pool for 2024/25;
12. approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25, including the continued payment of a living wage supplement at Appendix 11;
13. note the responses to the questions raised during the budget consultation in Appendix 12;
14. approve the proposed fees and charges schedule for 2024/25 at Appendix 13, subject to appropriate consultation where required;
15. approve a level of supplementary estimate of £100,000 for 2024/25 as outlined in Section 18.

## **6 Housing Revenue Account Revised Forecast 2023-24 and Budget 2024-25**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets invited any questions on the item. There were none.

**RESOLVED THAT: Council is recommended to:**

1. approve the final HRA budget proposals (shown at Appendix 2);
2. approve a rent increase of 7.7% for social rent homes, affordable rent homes and shared ownership homes and changes to other rents and charges as detailed within the report;
3. approve the HRA capital programme as shown at Appendix 3 and the detailed capital programme at Appendix 4;
4. approve the HRA's Asset Management Plan (AMP) to 2028 at Appendix 5;
5. note the revised HRA forecast for 2023/24.

**7 Briefing from Cabinet Members**

There were no Cabinet Member briefings on this occasion, and no Cabinet Member decisions had been taken since the last meeting on 13 February.



# Cheltenham Borough Council

## Cabinet - Minutes

**Meeting date: 13 February 2024**

**Meeting time: 6.00 pm - 7.05 pm**

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**In attendance:**

**Councillors:**

Rowena Hay, Peter Jeffries, Victoria Atherstone, Flo Clucas, Iain Dobie, Martin Horwood, Alisha Lewis and Max Wilkinson

**Also in attendance:**

Gareth Edmundson (Chief Executive) and Paul Jones (Executive Director of Finance, Assets and Regeneration)

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### **1 Apologies**

Councillor Collins sent apologies.

### **2 Declarations of interest**

Councillor Horwood declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 7, and said he would withdraw from the Chamber when that item was considered.

### **3 Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2023 were approved as a true record and signed accordingly.

### **4 Public and Member Questions and Petitions**

There were no public questions or petitions. One Member question was received, with the answer taken as read:

#### **1. Question from Councillor David Willingham to Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities, Councillor Flo Clucas**

In light of the number of people who arrive severely inebriated at Cheltenham Spa station on early morning trains during race week, and the impact this has on local communities as well as the pressure it puts on Gloucestershire Constabulary, and noting that many football trains are “dry”, would the Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities join me in calling on the British Transport Police and the Train Operating Companies, to designate all trains arriving at Cheltenham Spa station before 10am during March race-week as alcohol-free, to reduce the early morning nuisance caused by racegoers getting incapably drunk on those trains, and to allow those who are likely to become a nuisance to be detrained and detained at locations well away from Cheltenham, such as Bristol, Swindon, Worcester or Birmingham, so they don't get to Cheltenham to cause disorder later?

**Cabinet Member response:**

Thank you for your question, Cllr Willingham.

Contact was made with GWR and the British Transport Police regarding the concerns you have raised and the response from the British Transport Police is below from Mark Cleland, BTP Superintendent, who is responsible for the BTP operation for Cheltenham, explaining why in their opinion “dry trains” is not the right issue to focus on.

- *The BTP policing operation extends far wider than Cheltenham as we police routes into Cheltenham from Birmingham, Bristol, South Wales and London, with a police presence at stations that extend across those routes.*
- *Crime rates on the railway are very low during the festival, on average we make maybe one or 2 arrests and they tend to be on the return after the event which is usually alcohol fuelled as a result of drinking at the event and not on trains. I checked the crime for the 2023 festival and I can see we had no reports of crime at all at that location.*
- *We have no issues with passengers travelling on the forward to the event, even if consuming alcohol. We have very few issues on trains leaving the event as the trains are so full and we tend to have officers travel with the trains. Most issues happen in the queues with people arriving at the station after leaving the racecourse which is where they've consumed too much alcohol.*
- *To manage dry trains would be extremely difficult due to the profile of the event with people travelling from all over the UK, we would have to resource police officers at a huge number of locations to prevent people bringing alcohol onto trains and due to the low levels of crime, this would not be proportionate.*
- *The greatest issue around alcohol consumption is due to people getting drunk at the racecourse and in pubs in Cheltenham. That is what impacts on the railway. There never seems to be an ask around having a dry event, so no alcohol served at the racecourse or in the city centre. If there was to be a complete ban on alcohol for the event, then it would make sense for the railway to have dry trains. As it's the racecourse and the city centre that creates all the issues with alcohol fuelled ASB then it would not be proportionate for the trains to be dry as they aren't what causes the problem.*

*We have a clear evidence base that the railway is not the issue, but rather the serving of alcohol everywhere else is.*

I am very happy to meet with you to discuss the response further should you wish to do so.

## **5 Gloucestershire City Region Board**

The Leader introduced her report, highlighting the following:

- the Gloucestershire City Region Board will bring together the Severn Vale, Rural Ambitions and Central Gloucestershire City Region Boards and the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) as the Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB), serving the whole county;
- the Gloucestershire local authorities' Business Rates Pool created the Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF), administered by GEGJC;
- with the growth of the Business Rates Pool and fund, GEGJC members asked whether a more strategic approach could be taken when considering and allocating SEDF, noting that projects are not always strategic in nature, risking funds being allocated to projects that may not maximise economic benefit and growth for the county;
- the proposal is for the GCRB to administer and allocate the SEDF, developing a longer vision, and applying more rigorous and strategic selection of projects which deliver and add value to the growth of the local economy;
- the county council's GEGJC Scrutiny Committee will be reconstituted to focus on oversight of GCRB activities, including monitoring delivery of projects funded by SEDF and suggesting potential areas for future investment;
- retaining both GCRB and GEGJC was deemed to create duplication and be ineffective.

She thanked the Chief Executive for a detailed report, confirming that the GCRB won't come into being until each authority has voted on it.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Well-being made the following comments:

- this is a broadly useful evolution of what already exists, but we need to be aware of the pitfalls of these processes – when working across district borders and with county, there are always things that could go wrong, and negotiations to get the best outcomes for Cheltenham and the whole county will be really important;
- there is much that is positive in the paper: Liberals welcome devolution from Westminster to Gloucestershire, and it is to be hoped that this will be followed with resources to carry out the work. In the past, devolution deals and new bodies in our county have been used as a veil for cuts elsewhere, as with the Local Enterprise Partnerships when austerity was at its deepest. We need to be aware of accountability and scrutiny;
- we also need to be mindful of the risk that while powers are being drawn down from Westminster they are also being drawn up from Cheltenham to

Gloucestershire. We already share sovereignty with other councils, such as with the Strategic and Local Plan where we are working positively with Tewkesbury and Gloucester, but with three more partners at district level and one at county level, we need to be aware of the potential for difficulties to arise and to think how Cheltenham voters will hold to account decision makers in this new county body. The Leader will speak for the people of Cheltenham, but we must always be aware that it is local residents who we listen to first. In broad terms, if a Cheltenham resident doesn't like a decision of the new county body, do they go to their local borough councillor, county councillor, to senior officers or the leader of the council. We need to be aware of all the issues around scrutiny and accountability

- the appendix says the board will work on a Gloucestershire City Region Vision – a positive thing – but the Gloucestershire 2050 vision a few years ago included ambitious big picture thinking, some positive vision around houses in right areas and attempts to talk about how to make better progress on environmental matters – but it wasn't communicated in the most sensitive way, and will hopefully be not quite so divisive and better managed this time;
- other combined authority schemes around the country have made some unwise and unpopular choices and wasted several years – hopefully Gloucestershire, with Cheltenham's voice as part of it, won't make similar mistakes;
- we must be wary of a drive towards dangerous deregulation – the recent attempt to introduce investment zones would have been a threat to Cheltenham's key project at Golden Valley, and we need to be aware that the new group is not used as a Trojan horse for that kind of agenda, which would not go down well with people in Gloucestershire;
- hopefully lessons have been learnt from the past, and we won't go down these paths again. This is a positive thing, and working with the county across districts for economic and environmental benefits is clearly the right thing to do.

The Cabinet Member for Customer and Regulatory Services thanked the Leader and Chief Executive for their work, saying that although the title may frighten some people, we must work to adapt the language of government in city regions to a more streamlined and efficient approach to joint working across the county. Particularly welcome is the work done to include clear safeguards and accountability, with the important principle of no decision about us taken without us set out very clearly in black and white. It appears a lot more transparent than the previous set-up, with meetings in public, minuted and reported back to local councils, and despite the scary title, is a very positive step.

### **RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. the establishment of the Gloucestershire City Region Board (GCRB, the Board) is agreed;**
- 2. authority is delegated to the Chief Executive and Corporate Director in consultation with the Leader, to finalise and complete the Inter-Authority**

**Agreement and other key documentation and to take all necessary steps to create the GCRB, including finalising the terms of reference for the GCRB.**

**3. the above recommendations will not be effective until all Gloucestershire Councils pass equivalent resolutions.**

**4. Upon the establishment of the GCRB:**

**4.1 this Council's functions are delegated to the GCRB as are necessary for the delivery of the functions identified in the Terms of Reference at Appendix 2 to this report;**

**4.2 the appointment of the Gloucestershire County Council as the Administering Authority is confirmed;**

**4.3 the appointment of the Leader of the Council to the GCRB as the nominated member of the Board is agreed. If the Leader is unable to attend a meeting of the GCRB the Leader will nominate an alternative member of the Cabinet to attend the Board as a substitute.**

## **6 M5 Junction 10 Improvements Scheme - Delegation Approval**

The Cabinet Member for Customer and Regulatory Services said Cheltenham and Gloucester have been waiting for years for improvements to M5 Junction 10, and this proposal will speed up the process. It will take the form of an examination, similar to major planning applications and appeals, largely in writing, but importantly as fast as possible. The report notes the update of the process and delegates authority to the Director of Communities and Economic Development to take part on CBC's behalf, with the power to respond and make representations on behalf of the council in a more streamlined approach.

The Cabinet Member for Housing thanked the Cabinet Member for Customer and Regulatory Services for the report, saying that improvements to Junction 10 were important for the planned housing development, and nothing should slow down the process.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets welcomed anything which would streamline the process and make it as efficient as possible. He agreed that Junction 10 improvements were much needed as housing applications were being held up and the road network was grinding to a halt, and welcomed the fact that the scheme will be as efficient as possible under the delegation scheme.

### **RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. the update on the M5 Junction 10 process is noted;**
- 2. authority is delegated to the Director Communities & Economic Development to:**
  - a. respond formally on behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council (as statutory consultee) through our appointed consultants**

**AtkinsRealis to the DCO process in consultation with Cabinet Member Customer & Regulatory Services.**

- b. make representations at the DCO hearings and meetings (either directly or through Cheltenham Borough Council designated officer or through our appointed consultants AtkinsRealis) concerning the M5 Junction 10 project in accordance with the Council's responses (as statutory consultee) to the consultation.**

## **7 Award of rent support grant to voluntary sector organisation**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets introduced the report, which set out the level of rent support as assessed and proposed for the Gardens Gallery in Montpellier. He said that supporting voluntary and community organisations through the council's sizable property portfolio is always a pleasure, even sometimes, when the policy has been applied and the rent calculation assessed, organisations are not prepared for the level of rent, however small a contribution it might be. In such cases, he always endeavours to meet with organisations to have a more in-depth conversation and gain an understanding of any specifics, as with this case. At their request, there will be some changes which will enable the Gardens Gallery to be a little more commercial whilst still supporting new and unknown artists.

As these changes will take time to have a positive financial benefit for the Gardens Gallery, he said that he has, with Members' support, applied the 10% discretionary element of the policy, as mentioned in the report. He hoped that colleagues would be able to support the recommendations as laid out.

Members welcomed the report and the agreement, and made the following comments:

- Cheltenham is lucky to have this fantastic gallery in the middle of a public space, supporting local art and artists, and giving them the opportunity to exhibit their work. It is booked up for months, even years, in advance, which shows what a popular and successful formula it is. It is a credit to our many talented and dedicated local artists, and also owes much to volunteers;
- the Gardens Gallery has become an institution, and it is good to note the improvements being made to the building to make it more environmentally friendly and sustainable.

### **RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. a rent support grant of 74% of current market rent to the Gardens Gallery, Proscenium Building, Montpellier Gardens is agreed;**
- 2. authority is delegated to the Participation and Engagement Team Leader, in consultation with the Director: One Legal to agree the terms of a rent support grant agreement with the applicant.**

## 8 Council Tax Premium on Empty Properties and Second Homes

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets introduced his report, highlighting the following:

- with the continuing housing crisis, this administration using the tools at its disposal to bring empty homes back into use, including our discretionary powers to levy council tax on long term empty properties. The current level of premium and number of properties is set out in the report, and changes to the relevant acts of parliament mean that we can now charge the premium after a property has been empty for one year, instead of two;
- there is also a new power afforded to councils through these changes, allowing them to charge a premium for second homes, previously not an option due to a loophole in the legislation which classed a furnished long-term empty home as a second home, thus circumnavigating the empty homes premium;
- whilst accepting that the majority of Cheltenham's current 963 properties classed as second homes are not long-term empty, the changes in the legislation are to be welcomed, and should encourage all owners of second homes to consider freeing them up. Taking this decision now means the council will be prepared and able to be proactive when the changes can take effect from April 2025;
- the full council tax charge applies to second homes. In the legislation, the charge is 50% and the council currently has the discretion to increase this to 100%, which it has been doing since 2004. The 100% premium is on top of the full charge, so from April 2025, second homeowners will be paying 200%.
  - 100% premium means 2 x council tax
  - 200% premium means 3 x council tax
  - 300% premium means 4 x council tax ;
- the new exemptions from the premium with the usual full council tax will still be payable, but he was confident that the exemptions will mostly be time limited. There will be an exemption for properties undergoing probate and for a period after probate has been granted, and most likely be an exemption where the property is actively being marketed for sale or rent but hopefully this will be limited to three months. These new exemptions will apply to both the second homes and the empty homes premium;
- there are already a number of existing council tax exemptions (such as student properties or where the resident has gone in to a care home) but these are completely separate and don't apply to properties that are subject to a premium. He ended by saying that empty homes and second homes do not positively contribute to community cohesion, and he hoped that Members would support the recommendations.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency welcomed the freeing up of more properties, but wanted to be sure that anyone who had lost a family member whose property remained in probate for a long time would not be penalised by the second

home strategy. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets fully expected an exemption for such a case, to be confirmed with officers.

The Cabinet Member for Housing suggested that it would be useful to understand the exemptions, as there could be many reasons why someone can't sell a property straight away and end up owning two properties, although with the new policy not coming into force until April 2025, there is time for anyone in this situation to be encouraged to release the second property for a different resident.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing also welcomed the report and change in legislation, in view of the massive housing crisis. He said there are not enough houses in Cheltenham, people struggle to get onto the housing ladder, with large numbers of homeless and hidden homeless people, and it is disappointing and a moral issue that people with more than one home leave them empty, sometimes for a long time. The potential flow of extra revenue from these changes is less than £200k, but it is important to prompt people who are tempted to leave properties empty to do the right thing and bring them back into use. He hoped further legislation will follow.

**RESOLVED THAT:**

- 1. Council is recommended to approve the change to the Empty Homes Premium so that properties which have been unoccupied and unfurnished for one year, instead of two, will become subject to the 100% premium from April 2025.**
- 2. Council is recommended to approve the implementation of the 100% Second Homes Premium from April 2025.**
- 3. Council is recommended to give delegated authority to the Executive Director for Finance Assets and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member Finance and Assets to amend the policy so that it meets the requirements of any guidance/ regulations due to be issued by Government and to ensure the premiums are administered efficiently.**

**9 Briefing from Cabinet Members**

The Leader invited Members to provide briefings:

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Well-being said that:

- top of the list for good news is that Lansdown Art Studios – the council is going to help artists in the current building to secure a new and fit-for-the-future building. This is an exemplar case study and good result for culture through planning, and credit is due to the planning team and developer for being open-minded;
- he and Councillor Tooke recently visited the Pittville Pump Room and can report that work is going well;



- thanks to St Philips and St James Church for their recent one-day event, From the Ground Up, which focussed on sustainability and what is being done to tackle the climate emergency;
- he has spoken with Canada Life about the future of Cavendish House, and can confirm that positive plans are emerging.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets said that he would normally have presented the budget papers at this meeting, but due to the late announcements on additional government funding, these would be presented at an additional meeting on 23 February.

The Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities highlighted the following:

- the recent No Child Left Behind (NCLB) ceremony at the Town Hall was a unique and heart-warming event, with representatives from almost 100 organisations and businesses in Cheltenham, all aiming to help children to a good present and better future in a variety of fun and practical ways. She thanked everyone concerned for giving their time so generously;
- she also thanked officers who have worked so hard, and also the Leader and colleagues, saying said NCLB is now set to grow outside the borough, helping young people with future employment opportunities. She hoped that by this time next year, she will be able to report on more growth and improvement, resources and opportunities.

The Cabinet Member for Customer and Regulatory Services reported that:

- consultation on the Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) is currently underway, and although it is still early days, this is a really important part of the process: the SLP will ultimately replace the Cheltenham Plan and the Joint Core Strategy, tackling climate change, protecting local green space, allocating housing sites, supporting local businesses, and shaping communities locally. He encouraged everyone to engage with the process via the SLP [website](#) or by emailing [haveyoursay@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@cheltenham.gov.uk);
- congratulations to the public protection and neighbourhood teams for their recent work with a young tagger, for undertaking restorative justice and spending many hours painting over graffiti in Town Centre East car park. This alternative to a punitive approach is more effective in the long run and provides a different perspective;
- thanks to the teams for tackling a range of anti-social behaviour and also their work underway for Gold Cup Week, and to Louis Krog and Sam Robinson for all the work they do.

The Cabinet Member for Waste, Recycling and Street Services was happy to report the planting of a new community orchard at Weavers Field in Warden Hill, in conjunction with Cotswold National Landscape and a representative of the Gloucestershire Orchards Trust. He said there was an orchard on this site centuries ago, growing Warden Pears – from which Warden Hill took its name. It was satisfying to plant the trees, led by the green team and with children from three local schools delighted to be involved in creating a place where people will come together in the future to celebrate trees.

The Cabinet Member for Housing had two updates:

- with the return to CBH to the council, it was important to collect tenants' feedback – the consultation was launched in early December and closed on Sunday, and resulted in a good response, well above the hoped-for 10%. She gave huge thanks to residents for making the effort to share their thoughts, helping to shape the future services from the council's housing services;
- she has signed up to an annual fundraising event organised by Cheltenham YMCA, to highlight the issue of homelessness and rough sleeping. The YMCA does great work in supporting vulnerable residents; more information can be found and shared via their [website](#).

The Cabinet Member for Housing gave huge thanks to all the small and medium-sized businesses who applied for Cheltenham Zero business funding - £100k in small grants to help businesses reduce their energy use. £177k worth of applications was received.

The Leader welcomed all these positive and exciting updates,

### **10 Cabinet Member decisions since the last meeting**

There had been six Cabinet Member decisions since the last meeting:

- i. Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets,  
[Replacement Fire Alarm Systems](#)
- ii. Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets,  
[Award of contract to carry out External Component Repair, Replacement & Improvement, Energy Efficiency \(Decarbonisation\) and Associated Works at council owned properties](#)  
This decision was subject to final Council ratification.
- iii. Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets,  
[Council Tax Support Scheme for working-age customers](#)
- iv. Leader  
[Appointment of interim Chief Executive of Cheltenham Borough Homes](#)  
The Leader explained that this was a temporary measure to 23 February.
- v. Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets  
[Award of contract to carry out External Component Repair, Replacement & Improvement, Energy Efficiency \(Decarbonisation\) and Associated Works at council owned properties](#)
- vi. Cabinet Member for Housing  
[Approve the appointment of BDP consultants in respect of the potential development at the former Monkscroft Primary School site](#)

The Cabinet Member gave huge thanks to officers for their brilliant work on the procurement exercise and thorough report.

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## Cheltenham Borough Council

### Cabinet – 2 April 2024

## Cheltenham Ice Rink – Review and Future Plans

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**Accountable member:**

Councillor Max Wilkinson, Cabinet member for Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing

**Accountable officer:**

Helen Mole, Head of Place Marketing and Inward Investment

**Ward(s) affected:**

N/A

**Key Decision:** No**Executive summary:**

Cheltenham Borough Council (“the council”) ran a Christmas ice rink event from Friday 17 November 2023 to Monday 1 January 2024. It is evident that the ice rink was a success in influencing visits and bringing new money into the town centre during the Christmas period with 31,100 visitors to the ice rink who spent a total of £1.6m during their visits. £860,000 of this was additional spend which wouldn't have been spent in Cheltenham without the presence of the ice rink. This means that the return on investment to the economy for the council's spend was approximately £11.50 per £1.00 invested.

A total of £1.2m additional business turnover occurred in Cheltenham as a result of the presence of the ice rink (indirect and induced) and this additional money supports the equivalent of 13 FTE jobs or 17 estimated actual jobs in the town.

The ice rink was designed to be accessible to all, being fully wheelchair accessible and with dedicated relaxed sessions for people with additional needs, as well as discounts for families, schools, home educators and groups. The team ensured that local residents were engaged throughout the development and delivery of the event with the intention of preventing negative impacts for them.

In line with the council's corporate plan priority of making Cheltenham net zero by 2030, the team worked in partnership with suppliers to develop an innovative approach to powering the event. This led to the rink using only 12.7% of the fuel and reduced carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 98.7%, when compared to the town's 2021 ice rink.

This report sets out the key outputs of the 2023-24 event and seeks approval to commence planning for a 2024-25 event. The report highlights lessons learned which will positively impact the results of a future event.

**Recommendations: That Cabinet:**

1. **Notes the information about the outputs of the 2023-24 ice rink;**
  2. **Approves, in advance of planning permission being considered by the Planning Committee, noting the costs and risks set out in this report, for Cheltenham Borough Council to lead the delivery of an ice rink in Cheltenham for the 2024-25 Christmas period;**
  3. **Subject to planning permission, approves extension to the contract for delivery and management of the Christmas Ice Rink at Imperial Gardens, Cheltenham for 12 months;**
  4. **Approves a total potential financial commitment as set out in section 4 of this report;**
  5. **Notes that officers are progressing procurement and delegates appointments of contractors to the Director of Communities and Economic Development, as per section 5 of this report.**
- 

**1. Implications****1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications**

The ice rink was delivered by the Council in 2023 at a direct cost of £74k however this does not take into account the wider economic benefits for businesses operating in the town centre and in particular our own car parks. For the period over which the ice rink was operating the income generated from car parking income performed significantly above budget, generating the Council itself around £80k of direct financial benefit in November and December. Had the ice rink operated for the first week of January, this would have been even higher. It is this additional income which we will look to use to offset any gap in the financials for the direct delivery of the event in 2024/25, in light of the wider investment benefits for our visitors, residents and businesses.

**Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Director of finance and assets (Deputy Section 151 Officer),  
[gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk)

**1.2 Legal implications**

The Council contracted with S3K Limited following a procurement exercise in 2023, for the delivery and management of a Christmas Ice Rink at Imperial Gardens, Cheltenham. This contract commenced on 3rd July 2023 and is set to expire on 2nd July 2024, unless the Council opts to extend the Term by (up to) 24 months. In order to effect this extension (or part thereof) the Council must give S3K Limited no less than one months' notice (no later than 2nd June 2024) of its intention to extend the Contract.

**Signed off by:** One Legal, [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

**1.3 Environmental and climate change implications**

Climate Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 2.

**Signed off by:** Louise Forey, Programme and engagement officer, Climate Team.  
[Louise.forey@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:Louise.forey@cheltenham.gov.uk)

## 1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Key Priority 2 - Working with residents, communities and businesses to help make Cheltenham net zero by 2030.
- Key Priority 4 - Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity.

## 1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

An equality impact assessment is attached at Appendix 3.

## 1.6 Performance management – monitoring and review

If permission is granted, the event will be recorded as a project with the corporate projects team. Outputs and financial information will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. An economic impact assessment will also be carried out for the 2024-25 event so that we can compare the results of the event to the 2023-24 event.

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## 2 Background

- 2.1 Cheltenham Ice Rink was located in Imperial Gardens from Friday 17 November 2023 to Monday 1 January 2024 (closed Christmas day). This location was chosen because of its proximity to the town centre and the positive impacts this would have on local businesses, its history of hosting events (including the ice rink in 2021), and the onsite event infrastructure such as electricity and water.
- 2.2 The overall event was managed by the council team with the provision of the ice rink and day-to-day rink management outsourced to S3K Group Ltd, an established ice rink operator. Separate suppliers were procured for other elements, including power, security, toilet hire, and more. All costs were met by the council with income to the council from ticket sales (less card fees), sponsorship, advertising, and commission from the onsite café concession.
- 2.3 The ice rink was undercover and provided a memorable festive experience in all weathers, for approximately 31,100 people, including 600 free tickets to local residents coordinated by No Child Left Behind. The fully wheelchair-accessible ice rink offered relaxed skating sessions for people with sensory issues or additional needs, and discounts for families, schools, home educators, and group bookings, as well as dedicated student sessions and themed skates.
- 2.4 It is evident from the results of the independent visitor survey conducted, that the ice rink was successful in influencing visits and bringing new money into the town centre during the Christmas period, an important time for local businesses. See section 3.1.4 for more detail.

## 3 2023-24 Ice Rink Performance

### 3.1 Economic Impact

- 3.1.1 A visitor survey was commissioned by the council with an independent agency, The South West Research Company. The survey sought to understand the economic impact of the event, visitor profile, length of stay, motivation for visit, and satisfaction levels. The survey was analysed using the Cambridge Model, a standardised and industry accepted methodology.

## Page 24

3.1.2 An email containing the online survey link was sent out to the database of ice rink ticket purchasers and promoted via social media. A total of 823 useable online survey responses were submitted by the closing date including 799 respondents who had visited the ice rink.

3.1.3 Not included within the economic impact report is the fact that car parking revenue figures for November and December show that the council over-performed on parking revenues by over £82,000 highlighting significant numbers of additional visitors to the town during the ice rink period.

3.1.4 Key results are as follows:

- A total of £1.6m was spent in Cheltenham by all those visiting the ice rink, £860,000 of which would not have occurred without the presence of the ice rink.
- A total of £1.2m additional business turnover occurred in Cheltenham as a result of the presence of the ice rink (indirect and induced). This is new money that would not have occurred without the ice rink being in place. This additional money supports 13 FTE jobs or 17 estimated actual jobs in the town.
- 83% of all those who had visited Cheltenham Ice Rink said it had been the main reason for their visit to Cheltenham / coming into the town.
- 58% of all visitors to the ice rink went on to undertake other activities in Cheltenham.
- 76% of visitors were from the GL postcode area, with 19% of visitors from elsewhere in the UK, 3% from elsewhere in the South West, and 2% from overseas.
- On the whole user satisfaction levels with visitor experiences of going ice skating whilst in Cheltenham over the Christmas period were 'good' to 'very good'.

3.1.5 It is evident from the analysis of the survey that the ice rink was a success in influencing visits and bringing new money into the town centre during the Christmas period with 31,100 visitors to the ice rink (including free HAF funded tickets, groups). People visited an average of 1.9 times so the total visitor figure was generated by 19,600 unique visitors.

### 3.2 Environmental Sustainability

3.2.1 The innovative power supply solution created for the event has led to a clear reduction in the environmental impact of the rink when compared with the previous rink and the industry standard for events. The improvement has been so notable that the council has been invited to share the results from the ice rink at industry forums to inspire other organisations to consider adopting similar measures to improve the environmental sustainability of their events.

3.2.2 Key results are:

- The 2023 ice rink used **12.7%** of the fuel used by the 2021 ice rink.
- The 2023 ice rink generated 1.778 tonnes of CO2e compared to approximately 139.07 tonnes generated in 2021 - **a reduction of 98.7%**.



- 3.2.3 A reliable power source was required 24/7 for chillers to protect the integrity of the ice and power was also required for other operational aspects of the rink, including lighting, payment systems and CCTV. The ice rink was powered by onsite grid power, a high-capacity battery system and an efficient and silenced generator. The generator was fuelled by sustainably sourced hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) instead of traditional diesel.
- 3.2.4 The existing grid supply onsite has been a great benefit to the event this year, contributing to the environmental efficiencies achieved, but it is not quite adequate for total operation of the event. A project is currently underway to implement this via a new substation. Progress is ongoing with this project and a full update will be presented in due course. With more power available onsite in the future, it would be possible to operate the event without any generator.
- 3.2.5 Initially it was anticipated that the battery would operate for up to eight hours overnight and then be charged via a combination of generator and onsite grid power during the day. However, upon operation, it quickly became apparent that the battery, once charged, was able to power the chillers for between 21 and 23 hours per day meaning that the generator was required for only 1-3 hours per day on average. The 2021 rink required the generator to be running 24 hours a day, so this represented a significant improvement in terms of the environmental sustainability of the event and contributed to the reduced emissions and fuel usage, as well as minimising the noise impact of the event.

### 3.3 Social Impact

- 3.3.1 Every effort was made to add social value at all stages of the operation from procurement through to delivery, with suppliers required to explain what their social value offer would be in relation to this project and how it would be of benefit to Cheltenham residents. This resulted in the following outputs:
- C.£73,000 direct spend with Cheltenham suppliers as a result of the project, including local contractors, accommodation for the ice rink team, and supplies purchased locally.
  - Local suppliers were invited to respond to an invitation for an onsite catering concession and this was awarded to local caterer, StrEatery.
  - No Child Left Behind coordinated the delivery of 600 free tickets over four sessions to ensure accessibility for families across Cheltenham where cost may be a barrier. This was funded through a combination of the Holiday Activity and Food scheme and the Holiday Activity Programme, funded by the Department for Education and Gloucestershire County Council. These sessions included food and drink while at the ice rink, and the opportunity for members of CBC staff to engage with local residents.
  - 14 local people were recruited and trained as ice stewards and rink staff.

### 3.4 Accessibility

One of the key priorities for delivery of the ice rink was that it was accessible to as many people as possible. This element was integral to the procurement exercise for the ice rink operator. People with all ranges of access requirements were invited to input into the operation of the rink to inform processes, and adaptations were made to standard operating procedures when required.

- 3.4.1 Wheelchair users were welcome on the ice at all times, special relaxed sessions were introduced

for people with sensory issues and staff were specially trained to respond appropriately to anyone with additional needs. In addition, No Child Left Behind funded four dedicated sessions plus individual tickets to ensure accessibility for families across Cheltenham for whom cost may have been a barrier.

### 3.5 Noise impact

- 3.5.1 Due to the noise mitigation measures in place and the successful implementation of the battery set up, no complaints about noise attributable to the ice rink were received.
- 3.5.2 One complaint was received about a persistent noise heard at around 3am every morning. However, this was subsequently found to be emanating from a nearby building, not the ice rink. That building's management were informed to enable them to respond and deal with this. Further to this, one comment was received about some noise from a vehicle during the first day of the de-installation and this was responded to and dealt with appropriately.
- 3.5.3 This is in contrast to significant numbers of noise complaints received about the 2021 ice rink and highlights the positive engagement work carried out by the team and through the support of local residents to ensure that residents' needs were considered at every stage of the planning and delivery of the event.

### 3.6 Financial Results

3.6.1 The ice rink cost the council £74,276 to deliver. Based on the results of the economic impact analysis of the event, this represents a return on investment of approximately £11.50 per £1.00 invested by the council.

#### 3.6.2 Income (subject to reconciliation)

- £314,685 was generated through ticket sales, sponsorship and commission from the onsite catering concession.
- Compared with 2021, fewer tickets were purchased in 2023. This can be attributed to factors including:
  - School holidays started a week later than normal in 2023 which meant that there was less time to maximise income from the traditionally busy pre-Christmas week.
  - The ice rink closed a week before schools went back, reducing sales potential.
  - The number of competitor rinks is greater now than in 2021. There were at least six competitor rinks within an hour of Cheltenham in 2023, compared to three in 2021.
  - Despite residual Covid concerns, 2021 was a 'bumper year' for attendance at outdoor Christmas events because so many events had been cancelled in 2020.
- The cancellation of the 2022 rink led to some uncertainty in the market for sponsors that the 2023 rink would go ahead. Sponsorship sales efforts could not begin in earnest until planning was progressed for the event which meant that some marketing budgets had already been committed. It can be anticipated that a 2024 event, if agreed earlier, would not suffer from this effect as the positive impact of 2023 would carry over.

- For the same reason, the team missed the opportunity to capitalise on school trips and, in particular, a collaboration with the Christmas pantomime. Initial discussions have commenced (in principle) to investigate joint ticket deals for schools visiting Cheltenham over Christmas in 2024.
- Income was generated from the onsite café concession, a new addition for 2023. The team would investigate options for enhancing this and creating additional income generating opportunities in 2024.
- A reserve of £37,092 was set aside in 2023 to cover potential overspend for the 2023 event.

### **3.6.3 Expenditure (subject to reconciliation)**

- £388,961 was spent to deliver the rink, not including staff time which was accounted for from within existing budgets.
- The fuel bill was c.£19,000 lower than initially estimated thanks to the efficiencies created by the power solution.
- However, additional expenditure was incurred in some areas because of unknown factors from the development of the previously untested power arrangement. Now that this system has been proven in situ, it would lead to further savings of c.£23,000 if the ice rink takes place utilising the same solution in future years.

## **4 Delivery of future events**

4.1 A lot of lessons have been learned and documented by the team involved in the 2023-24 event, and good relationships with suppliers have been formed which would support both cost savings and additional income generation in future years.

4.2 The nature of temporary ice rinks, or any event installations of this nature, are that they are inherently high-cost - yet equally offer the potential for high return through the revenue generated by ticket sales. Inevitably however, the costs are almost entirely fixed, whilst the income from ticket sales cannot be guaranteed. This will always present a risk for any event of this nature.

4.3 The following factors will inform the team's approach to future delivery of ice rink events:

- Change the dates to reflect the school Christmas holidays.
- Investigate the cost variation if the number of days on which the ice rink is open is reduced.
- Review and simplify the pricing structure.
- Enable reduced price hire for schools, especially those visiting Cheltenham for the pantomimes to encourage more hires at quieter times.
- Start work on the rink earlier in the year to allow time to get more income from sponsors and advertisers and look to achieve a headline sponsor.
- Reconsider the food and drink and wider ancillary offer to support enhanced activation of the site and potential income generation.

- 4.4 In 2023/24 expenditure exceeded income, requiring an investment by the council of £74,276. Our forecast for 2024/25 shows a reduced investment of around £22,000 will be required.
- 4.5 There are a number of factors based on lessons learned from this year which should positively impact this, as set out in section 4.3 above, but nonetheless this is highlighted as a risk in the risk assessment at Appendix 1.
- 4.6 Permission to run an ice rink in the current location, for 2023/24 and 2024/25, was granted by the planning committee on 22 September 2022. If the decision is taken by Cabinet to run the ice rink again in 2024, an application to discharge the conditions set against the existing planning permission will be submitted as soon as possible after the Cabinet meeting. It is anticipated that this will be heard by Planning Committee at the meeting on Thursday 30 May which, if approved, will allow the team to commence work earlier than in previous years thereby maximising income generation opportunities.
- 4.7 Future events for 2025 onwards would need to be subject to a new planning application as the existing permission will expire. This will enable the team to carry out a full location analysis to review alternative sites and the potential implications of changing the location.

## **5 Procurement with contractors**

- 5.1 The ice rink operator, S3K Group Ltd was selected via a competitive procurement process for the 2023-24 event. The contract permits the council to extend the term of the contract by up to 24 months (or two further events). Should Cabinet permit, it is proposed to take up this option for 2024 to ensure continuity of service from the operator.
- 5.2 All other contractors will be subject to new procurement exercises and, subject to Cabinet permission, work on this process will commence after the Cabinet meeting with agreements put in place only if planning permission is awarded by Planning Committee.

## **6 Reasons for recommendations**

- 6.1 The independent economic impact evaluation has clearly demonstrated a positive impact for the town and its businesses with £1.3m business turnover supported and £860,000 additional spend as a result of the event. This is directly in line with Key Priority 4 of the Corporate Plan, ensuring that residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity.
- 6.2 Concerns raised about the energy usage and environmental impact following the previous ice rink have been addressed with significant improvements achieved. Work by the council events manager and partners in the innovative use of new technologies has led to a reduction of 98.7% in CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions and only 12.7% of the fuel being used. These factors, along with the use of sustainably sourced HVO fuel instead of traditional diesel, have proven to be an inspiration to other event organisers with discussions ongoing with industry colleagues across the country.
- 6.3 Feedback for the rink was positive from residents, businesses, and visitors to the rink. The team worked hard to engage local residents to ensure that they had a better experience than previous events. The No Child Left Behind project, via HAF funding, provided four free sessions for local families and individual tickets to ensure accessibility for families across Cheltenham where cost may be a barrier. These sessions included food and drink while at the ice rink, and the opportunity for members of CBC staff to engage with local residents.
- 6.4 The social value impact was also monitored, with money spent in local businesses, local staff trained

and employed, local companies contracted, and engagement with community projects and charities.

6.5 The Cheltenham Cultural Strategy recognises the importance of building on the quality and scale of Cheltenham's already renowned festivals and events programme. Events of this nature raise the profile of the town and, in this case, the impact of the innovations created for powering the event more sustainably, have further highlighted both the cultural offer and the importance that the council places on achieving net zero targets as a borough. This will also inform the forthcoming council events strategy.

6.6 Despite the challenges highlighted in this report, the ice rink has generated significant positive impact for the town. The strategic rationale for a return of an ice rink in 2024 is therefore based on the following objectives:

- To support the town's economy, in particular the retail and hospitality businesses;
- To drive incremental footfall and spending in the town and to ensure that Cheltenham remains competitive at this critical time of year;
- To help position Cheltenham regionally and nationally as a destination of choice and drive continued investment.

## **7 Alternative options considered**

7.1 As demonstrated by the economic impact report, the ice rink has been effective in attracting new and repeat visitors into the town and generating positive feedback. The alternative is not to deliver this event which is not recommended as then the town would lose the opportunity to generate the additional spend, economic impact, and community engagement opportunities.

## **8 Consultation and feedback**

8.1 Visitors to the ice rink were consulted for the economic impact assessment.

8.2 A feedback meeting has taken place with local residents, with further meetings planned in the coming weeks.

8.3 A summary of the town's tourism and town marketing offer, including reference to the Christmas ice rink and marketing campaign, was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee on Monday 26 February 2024.

8.4 If Cabinet agrees to officers delivering an ice rink in 2024, the following consultation and feedback activities will take place:

8.4.1 Resident engagement programme for 2024-25, following the same process as 2023.

8.4.2 Planning Committee Thursday 30 May

8.4.3 Conversations with potential sponsors and advertisers.

8.4.4 Conversations with local partners who may contribute to the delivery of the rink or to look at potential collaborations to increase mutual ticket sales and economic impact.

8.4.5 Commissioning of an economic impact assessment of the 2024-25 event.

## 9 Key risks

- 9.1 Financial – costs outweighing income. As highlighted throughout the report, there are always inherent risks that the cost of this activity will outweigh the income generated. Early approval of this event will mitigate some of these risks and the team are committed to securing as much income as possible. The positive experiences of visitors to the 2023-24 ice rink supports the forecast that they will visit again. In addition, the economic impact of the event and the benefit to the town, its businesses and residents should be considered alongside this.
- 9.2 Reputational – negative impact on residents. This has been highlighted as a risk but acknowledges the improvement in event management processes and the ongoing positive engagement with residents and businesses in 2023, as well as the positive feedback provided by visitors to the rink.
- 9.3 Environmental – the developments in battery technology and the innovative use of this, alongside HVO fuel and existing grid power have reduced emissions by 98.7% compared to the previous event. With further understanding of the capabilities and capacity of the battery available, this may reduce further.
- 9.4 Planning – There is a risk that Planning Committee will not permit any use of generators for future events. The application to vary the conditions on the existing permission will focus on the fact that generators were in use for only 1-3 hours per day on average and that the fuel has been sustainably sourced.
- 

### Report author:

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### Appendices:

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Climate Change Impact Assessment
- iii. Equality Impact Assessment

### Background information:

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26 February 2024 - [Agenda for Overview & Scrutiny Committee on Monday, 26th February, 2024, 6.00 pm - Modern Council \(cheltenham.gov.uk\)](#)

**Appendix 1: Risk Assessment**

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
1	Financial – potential exposure to financial pressures should costs exceed income from ticket sales and sponsorship.	Director of finance and assets	2	3	6	Reduce	<p>Ensure sufficient lead-time to secure sponsorship and to maximise commercial opportunities.</p> <p>Review opening hours and dates for the rink to maximise school holiday period.</p> <p>Review and simplify the pricing structure.</p> <p>Enable reduced price hire for schools, especially those visiting Cheltenham for the pantomimes to encourage more hires at quieter times.</p> <p>Continue to invest in effective marketing and sales strategy,</p>	Head of place marketing and inward investment	June 2024

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
							<p>with sufficient lead-time to maximise ticket sales.</p> <p>Rink will be an all-weather structure with a roof and will therefore continue to operate during spells of poor weather.</p>		
2	Reputational – negative impact on local residents and businesses.	Head of place marketing and inward investment	2	3	6	Reduce	<p>Continued engagement with local residents and businesses.</p> <p>Build on the good practices introduced and developed for the 2023-34 event.</p> <p>Early engagement with Planning and Environmental Health teams to ensure that lessons learned from previous events and</p>	Events Manager	Ongoing



Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
							that negative impacts on noise, light, visual, and other aspects are mitigated.		
3	Environmental	Head of place marketing and inward investment	2	2	4	Reduce	Ensure timely procurement to secure the same measures as introduced during the 2023-24 event to ensure reduced emissions and fuel usage	Events Manager	June 2024
4	Planning – risk of Planning Committee refusing permission for the event based on requirement to use a generator.	Head of place marketing and inward investment	4	3	12	Reduce	Utilise the knowledge, experience and information gained from the operation of the 2023-24 event to highlight the developments in fuel and power technology and the positive impact this	Events Manager	April 2024 submission of permission to vary conditions.  May 2024 Planning Committee.

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
							<p>has had on emissions.</p> <p>Provide expert testimony on the use of HVO fuel, in particular the fact that this is sustainably sourced.</p> <p>Highlight the fact that the generators were in use for comparatively low hours compared to the previous ice rink and other events, thanks to the battery technology.</p>		

## Appendix 2: Climate Impact Assessment Tool

### Cheltenham Christmas Ice Rink 2024



#### Key

	Significant and/or long-term positive impact identified. No changes needed.
	Slight or short-term positive impact identified. No changes needed but could be reviewed to improve.
	Not applicable or no cause for concern.
	Slight or short-term negative impact identified. Review to identify possible improvements.
	Significant and/or long-term negative impact identified. Changes needed before proceeding.

ENVIRONMENTAL	Scores	Action	Justification
GHGs	-2	Review - identify possible improvements	<p>The power generation for site will consist of a high capacity battery system as well as a silenced generator. The generator will run exclusively with sustainably sourced HVO as opposed to traditional diesel. Based on evidence from 2023's event, the battery unit, in conjunction with a trickle feed of supplied mains power will power the operation for approximately 21-23 hours each day. The generator will only be required to run for approximately 1-3 hours each day, and always within sociable hours e.g. between 8am-11pm, not overnight.</p> <p>This system is fully self-contained, automatically handing power over between each supply. In addition, the generator is in a super silence housing rated to 55dB(A) at 7m away without mitigation. This technology was employed for the first time for an installation such as this in the UK at the 2023 Cheltenham Ice Rink. It proved to be industry leading and hugely effective in reducing both exhaust and noise emissions. The rink used only 12.7% of the fuel and reduced carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 98.7%, when compared to the town's 2021 ice rink.</p> <p>Unfortunately, at the moment there is not sufficient power available to run this event entirely off grid in Imperial Gardens but there are plans to address this in the future.</p>

Air quality	-2	Review - identify possible improvements	HVO fuel will be used in place of traditional diesel. HVO demonstrates large reductions in emissions of nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide (NOx) and particulate matter (PM) relative to conventional diesel. For example, the fuel supplier procured for 2023's event confirmed their fuel demonstrated 30% and 85% reductions respectively.
Sustainable Transport	2	No action required	In our marketing material we are emphasising the convenient, central location of the ice rink and listing the various ways in which people can reach the attraction using more sustainable modes of travel. This will include by foot, rail, bus, where to find electric car charging points etc.
Biodiversity	-2	Review - identify possible improvements	This event will have a short-term impact on the park's biodiversity due to increased footfall and consequent noise. There will also be a temporary, very slight increase in artificial light levels which may impact nocturnal animals.
Land use change	-2	Review - identify possible improvements	The quadrant will need to be re-turfed following removal of the rink. This will be booked well in advance and the work will commence the week after the rink is removed to ensure minimal impact on the aesthetics of the garden. The flower beds will be replanted later in January, which would be the case regardless of whether the rink takes place or not. Experience from the 2023-24 event has shown that the re-turfing planted well and that the impact of the event was barely discernible within 2-3 weeks of the closing date.
Soil and waterway health	0	No action required.	0

<p>Climate Change Adaptation</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>No action required</p>	<p>The creation of a much more sustainable power solution for the 2023 event has had, and will continue to have, a positive impact on other event organisers. The innovations developed have led to the council being invited to share their findings with other event organisers, including Cheltenham Festivals, to highlight the possibilities of battery power solutions. The developments will also feed into the council's forthcoming events strategy, potentially impacting future policies for the hire of council land for events.</p>
<p>Energy Use</p>	<p>-2</p>	<p>Review - identify possible improvements</p>	<p>The ice rink undeniably requires a lot of power to run. Consumption is at its highest during ice creation which takes place over several days of the build phase. Once the rink is live this settles at a lower level as the ice is simply maintained. The ambient temperature will also have an impact on energy use over the course of the event. However, we will run the event using sustainably sourced HVO in an industry-leading hybrid set-up (as detailed in section 1) to maximise efficiency and minimise reliance on generators.</p>
<p>Waste</p>	<p>-2</p>	<p>Review - identify possible improvements</p>	<p>Waste bins situated throughout the structure allow for the collection of waste. Ubico will provide infrastructure to enable waste streams to be separated by both the general public and suppliers. Marketing Cheltenham will sign this in a user-friendly way.</p> <p>No waste is left on site overnight. Installation and dismantle of the rink produces zero waste as every item is accounted for. The site is walked on exit to ensure it is handed back in a satisfactory condition. Where possible everything regarding the ice rink is operated on a paperless basis, machines are contactless and ticketing software confirmed via email and QR code in person on arrival.</p>

Sustainable Materials	-1	Review - identify possible improvements	<p>Waste bins situated throughout the structure allow for the collection of waste. Ubico will provide infrastructure to enable waste streams to be separated by both the general public and suppliers. Marketing Cheltenham will sign this in a user-friendly way. No waste is left on site overnight.</p> <p>Installation and dismantle of the rink produces zero waste as every item is accounted for. The site is walked on exit to ensure it is handed back in a satisfactory condition. Where possible everything regarding the ice rink is operated on a paperless basis, machines are contactless and ticketing software confirmed via email and QR code in person on arrival.</p>
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SOCIAL	Scores	Action	Justification
Food	1	No action required	0
Health	0	No action required.	This event will encourage people to be physically active and promote social connection.
Housing	1	No action required	0
Education	0	No action required.	<p>Schools and community groups e.g. scouting groups will be encouraged to attend and offered preferential rates to help facilitate access at suitable times of day. Marketing Cheltenham will explore coach hire options for 2024 as this cost is the key hurdle for schools who would otherwise like to attend. HAF funding will be applied for to offer free skating sessions to families and young people who may otherwise not be able to afford to attend. SEND and pre-school sessions will also be in place.</p>

Community	0	No action required.	This event will bring people from the community together to enjoy spending time in our green spaces. It will bring a new audience to Imperial Gardens with the hope they will connect with the space and return in the future.
Culture	0	No action required.	The ice rink will be a key attraction for a diverse community audience over the winter period. Accessibility is at the heart of the project. The ice rink is fully accessible to people with additional or alternative access needs. With varied opening hours, specialised sessions i.e. Relaxed Sessions, student themed nights, and discounted tickets for families, the council strive to make the event as accessible as possible.
Accessibility	0	No action required.	The ice rink will be accessible with ramps and specific SEND / Relaxed Sessions will be run at various times/days to encourage those with access needs to participate safely and comfortably. Extremely positive feedback was received by users with additional or alternative access needs in 2023 and a new Accessibility Video Guide has been created for use in 2024 outlining exactly what to expect, before and during a visit to the ice rink. The site is located in the town centre and is easily accessible by foot, car or using public transport. It is anticipated that discount codes will be offered to families of children experiencing hardship via HAF to help overcome financial barriers.



<p>Local Economy and Jobs</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>No action required.</p>	<p>This is best demonstrated by a looking at post-event analysis from 2023 with similar results forecast for 2024:</p> <p>An independent economic impact assessment shows that a total of £1.6m was spent in Cheltenham by all those visiting the ice rink in 2023. A total of £860,000 of this is classed as ‘additional’ and would not have occurred without the presence of the ice rink. This represents a return on investment of around £11.50 per £1.00 invested by the council in the delivery of the event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 83% of all those who had visited Cheltenham Ice Rink said it had been the main reason for their visit to Cheltenham/coming into the town.</li> <li>• A total of £1.2m additional business turnover occurred in Cheltenham as a result of the presence of the ice rink (indirect and induced) and this additional money supports 13 FTE jobs or 17 estimated actual jobs in the town.</li> </ul> <p>Car parking revenue figures for November and December 2023 show that the council over-performed on parking revenues by over £82,000 highlighting significant numbers of additional visitors to the town during the ice rink period.</p> <p>In 2023 approx. 30,000 visits were made to the ice rink. Many local suppliers were used throughout the project and the ice rink recruited and trained skate marshals from the local area. Local businesses were promoted via the onsite advertising and sponsorship as well as social media and websites.</p>
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<p>Safety</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>No action required.</p>	<p>With greater footfall and lighting in the area, this should automatically present fewer opportunities for crime. The rink will be covered by multiple CCTV cameras and there will be an overnight security presence during non-operational hours. All PAYE staff will be First Aid trained and able to provide a quick response in the event of an accident/injury.</p>
<p>Democratic Voice</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>No action required.</p>	<p>A thorough resident engagement plan was created for 2023's event and this resulted in positive engagement with and feedback from the residents of Imperial Square. This feedback highlighted improvements in the look and feel of the rink, noise management, communication, and power solutions. Post-event wash-ups have already taken place and communication is ongoing with representatives from FISG to build upon that success as we look ahead to 2024.</p> <p>An application to vary the conditions of the existing planning permission will soon be submitted which will offer local stakeholders the opportunity to input with support/areas of concern.</p>
<p>Equity</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>No action required.</p>	<p>Those with access needs have been carefully considered. The rink will be accessible by ramp and is fully wheelchair accessible. In addition, there will be Relaxed Sessions, reduced rate tickets will be available to those in need and free carer tickets will be available.</p>

### Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Name of service / policy / project and date</b>	<b>Cheltenham Christmas Ice Rink 2024-25</b>
<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Helen Mole, head of place marketing and inward investment</b>
<b>Other people involved in completing this form</b>	<b>Hannah Ward, events manager</b>

#### Step 1: About the service, policy or project

<b>What is the aim of the service / policy / project and what outcomes is it contributing to</b>	<p>To deliver an ice rink over the Christmas season 2024-25.</p> <p>This contributes to the Cheltenham Corporate Plan Priority 4 - Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity.</p> <p>The objectives of the event are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support the town's economy, in particular the retail and hospitality businesses;</li> <li>• To drive incremental footfall and spending in the town and to ensure that Cheltenham remains competitive at this critical time of year;</li> <li>• To help position Cheltenham regionally and nationally as a destination of choice and drive continued investment.</li> </ul>
<b>Who are the primary customers of the service / policy / project and how do they / will they benefit</b>	<p>Cheltenham residents – invited to participate in a fun, engaging activity over the Christmas season.</p> <p>Community engagement – opportunities for CBC and No Child Left Behind team to host engagement sessions and free activities for the Cheltenham community.</p> <p>Cheltenham businesses – benefitting via increased footfall and spend by visitors in local businesses, stays in</p>

	<p>local accommodation providers, as well as Cheltenham suppliers who will be contracted by or make sales to the ice rink team.</p> <p>Potential visitors to Cheltenham – providing further encouragement to visit and stay in Cheltenham during this key trading time for local businesses.</p>
<b>How and where is the service / policy / project implemented</b>	The ice rink is proposed for Imperial Gardens.
<b>What potential barriers might already exist to achieving these outcomes</b>	If the ice rink is permitted to go ahead, the event will generate significant economic impact and social value for the town. If the ice rink is not permitted then alternative promotional methods will be considered, but it is unlikely that any would have the same level of sustained benefit for the economy.

**Step 2: What do you already know about your existing and potential customers?**

<b>What existing information and data do you have about your existing / potential customers e.g. Statistics, customer feedback, performance information</b>	<p>We have data from customers to the 2023 ice rink who provided their details and GDPR permission for us to contact them.</p> <p>We know via the visitor survey where customers have come from and how much they spent in the local area.</p>
<b>What does it tell you about who uses your service / policy and those that don't?</b>	An economic impact assessment was carried out from the results of the visitor survey to help us to understand the impact of the event, customer feedback about their experiences, motivation for visiting, and how much they spent. We also collected data from customer services and social media comments to further help inform planning for the event.
<b>What have you learnt about real barriers to your service from any consultation with customers and any stakeholder groups?</b>	<p>School customers highlighted that the costs of coach travel was prohibitive in many cases. We are investigating options to combine with other school trips, e.g. the pantomime to see if it's possible to make the event more affordable for school trips.</p> <p>We had feedback from some visitors that the ice rink was too crowded at busy times. Numbers will be reviewed to ensure this isn't the case for future years.</p>
<b>If not, who do you have plans to consult with about the service / policy / project?</b>	We will continue to consult with local residents, members, businesses and stakeholders.

### Step 3: Assessing community impact

How does your service, policy or project impact on different groups in the community? Please outline what you are already doing to benefit this group, what you are doing that might disadvantage this group, what you could do differently to benefit the group.

People from black and minority ethnic groups  
People who are male or female  
People who are transitioning from one gender to another  
Older people / children and young people  
People with disabilities and mental health challenges  
People who have a particular religion or belief  
People who are attracted to their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.  
People who are married or in a Civil Partnership  
People who are pregnant or who are on maternity leave  
Other groups or communities

It is important to consider all visitors and potential ice rink customers in these plans. There are a number of ways in which the ice rink might impact people from different groups in the community:

1. Accessibility for all is at the heart of the event. This was written into procurement exercises and reviewed continually throughout the delivery of the 2023-24 event and this will continue / be enhanced for 2024-25.
2. Operational procedures have considered users with alternative or additional access needs, including via consultation with representative groups. Policies and processes have been updated as feedback has been provided.
3. Dedicated SEND and relaxed sessions were introduced in 2023-24 (and will be in 2024-25) at varying times and on different days each week, to ensure accessibility.
4. Training will be provided to ice rink and council staff to ensure that terminology is used correctly and that everybody is treated equitably.
5. Family discounted tickets will be offered to make the activity more affordable.
6. Free carer tickets will be provided.
7. The ice rink will be fully wheelchair accessible.
8. We will seek a partnership with No Child Left Behind / HAF to ensure access for people who may not otherwise be able to afford this experience.

**Step 4: What are the differences?**

<b>Are any groups affected in different ways to others as a result of the service / policy / project?</b>	As a result of the measures being implemented, every visitor to the ice rink will be treated equitably.
<b>Does your service / policy / project either directly or indirectly discriminate?</b>	No
<b>If yes, what can be done to improve this?</b>	n/a
<b>Are there any other ways in which the service / project can help support priority communities in Cheltenham?</b>	We will seek further engagement with local community groups and will look to identify more relaxed sessions.

**Step 5: Taking things forward**

<b>What are the key actions to be carried out and how will they be resourced and monitored?</b>	See Cabinet report
<b>Who will play a role in the decision-making process?</b>	Head of place marketing and inward investment, Events Manager, Cabinet, Portfolio Holder, stakeholders, community groups.
<b>What are your / the project's learning and development needs?</b>	We would like to understand any other measures we can introduce to ensure the ice rink is as accessible as possible. We will engage with community groups and representatives to help with this.
<b>How will you capture these actions in your service / project planning?</b>	Ice rink event management plan and action plan will cover all of these aspects.

## Cheltenham Borough Council

### Cabinet – 2 April 2024

## Discretionary Business Rates Reliefs

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**Accountable member:**

Councillor Peter Jeffries, Cabinet Member Finance and Assets

**Accountable officer:**

Jayne Gilpin, Head of Revenues and Benefits

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

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**Key Decision:** Yes

**Executive summary:**

In the Autumn statement 2023 the Government confirmed that business rate reliefs for retail, hospitality, leisure business would continue in 2024/25. This scheme was introduced as a temporary measure. Legislation has not been changed and the Council is expected to use discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended) to grant these reliefs. The reliefs are fully funded by the Government provided they are awarded in accordance with the guidance.

**Recommendations: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Approves the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief scheme 2024 as detailed in Appendix 2.**
- 2. Authorises the Head of Revenues and Benefits in consultation with the Cabinet Member Finance and Assets to implement any changes to the reliefs detailed in appendix 2 as required by Government or to ensure the successful operation of the scheme.**
- 3. Due to the volume of cases, delegates decisions relating to the application of these reliefs to the Head of Revenues and Benefits and officers in the Business Rates team. In the case of a dispute reconsideration is to be made by the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer.**

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## 1. Implications

### 1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications

As detailed within the report and appendices central government is providing funding for the business rate relief and expects council to use discretionary powers to award reliefs to businesses in line with guidance provided.

The Government will also provide funding to cover administration costs for the scheme referred to in this report although the amounts have not yet been confirmed.

**Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets [gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### 1.2 Legal implications

Under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended by S69 of the Localism Act 2011) the Council as the billing authority has the discretion to grant locally determined business rate discounts.

Although the relief is discretionary the Council should ensure that decisions are made in a consistent manner as failure to do so could result in a legal challenge ultimately by way of judicial review. Having a scheme in place will assist in clear and consistent decision making.

**Signed off by:** One Legal – [legal.services@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legal.services@onelegal.org.uk)

### 1.3 Environmental and climate change implications

There are no environmental and climate change implications arising from the content of the report or recommendations.

**Signed off by:** Climate Team, [climate@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:climate@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### 1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

The proposals in this report don't directly contribute to Corporate Plan Priorities. Implementing the relief scheme will ensure that eligible businesses pay reduced business rate bills.

### 1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

None

### 1.6 Performance management – monitoring and review

The number of businesses benefiting from this scheme and the total amount awarded will be monitored by the Head of Revenues and Benefits and are reported to the Government periodically.



## 2 Background

2.1 Business rates is a national scheme and rates are charged on most non-domestic properties. They are based on a property's rateable value, which is assigned by the Valuation Office Agency, and the multiplier, which is set by the Government each year. As the billing authority this Council's role is to administer the scheme but it has no power to set the level of business rates. There are currently 4,000 properties assessed for business rates in Cheltenham. Some reliefs are available which reduce business rate bills for eligible businesses, particularly small businesses. In Cheltenham 1,300 small businesses benefit from Small Business Rate Relief and most of these have their bill reduced to nil.

2.2 In recent years the Government has also introduced some temporary business rate reliefs, including Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief which reduces business rate bills for businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors. In the Autumn statement 2023 it was confirmed that this relief will continue for 2024/25, reducing bills for eligible businesses by 75%.

2.3 As the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief scheme is a temporary measure the Government has not changed legislation. Councils are expected to use their discretionary powers to award relief under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, and adopt a scheme using the detailed guidance provided by Government.

## 3 Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 As the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief scheme is a temporary measure the Government has not changed legislation. Councils are expected to use their discretionary powers to award relief under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and adopt a scheme using the detailed guidance provided by Government. The scheme, with reference to the guidance is detailed in appendix 2.

3.2 Businesses eligible for the relief are those occupying properties that are wholly or mainly used as:

- shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas and live music venues,
- assembly and leisure; or
- as hotels, guest & boarding premises and self-catering accommodation

3.3 The scheme is subject to a cash cap meaning that no business can receive more than £110,000 worth of relief across all eligible properties in England. It is also subject to subsidy controls which limits the amount of support a business can receive in any 3 year period.

3.4 Just under 600 businesses are being awarded Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief worth £4.4 million on 2024/25 business rate bills.

#### **4 Alternative options considered**

4.1 None. A scheme needs to be approved so that the relief can be awarded to local businesses.

#### **5 Consultation and feedback**

5.1 No consultation has been taken in relation to the implementation of this scheme.

#### **6 Key risks**

6.1 The risks are in Appendix 1

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#### **Report author:**

Jayne Gilpin, Head of Revenues and Benefits, [jayne.gilpin@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.gilpin@cheltenham.gov.uk)

#### **Appendices:**

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Retail Hospitality and Leisure Relief 2024/25

#### **Background information:**

1. Section 47 Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended by clause 69 of The Localism Act 2011
2. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/business-rates-relief-202425-retail-hospitality-and-leisure-scheme>

**Appendix 1: Risk Assessment**

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	If the recommendations in this report are not approved funding will not be distributed to businesses and residents in need of support which could cause reputational damage to the Council	Jayne Gilpin	3	1	3	Accept	Approve the scheme	Jayne Gilpin	08/03/2024

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## Cheltenham Borough Council

### Retail Hospitality and Leisure Relief 2024/24

#### Cabinet 02 April 2024

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 In the Autumn Statement 2023, the Government confirmed that the scheme for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief would be available in 2024/25.
- 1.2 As the relief is a temporary measure for 2024/25, the Government is not changing the legislation. Instead, local authorities are expected to use their discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended) to grant relief in accordance with the guidance provided.
- 1.3 The Government will fully reimburse Councils for the cost of relief provided it is awarded in line with the guidance.
- 1.4 This document sets out the Council's policy regarding the Retail Hospitality and Leisure Relief Scheme for 2024/25.

#### 2 Retail Hospitality and Leisure Relief Scheme 2024/24

- 2.1 The 2024/25 Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief scheme will provide eligible occupied, retail, hospitality and leisure businesses with 75% relief of the chargeable business rates liability. Businesses may claim the relief up to a limit of £110,000 per business across all eligible properties in England.
- 2.2 Properties that are eligible for Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Relief will be occupied and wholly or mainly used as shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas, live music venues, assembly for leisure, hotels, guest and boarding premises or self-catering accommodation. The full guidance provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is available here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/business-rates-relief-202425-retail-hospitality-and-leisure-scheme>
- 2.3 The relief will be awarded to business ratepayers that meet the eligibility criteria in the guidance.
- 2.4 The level of relief is 75% of the chargeable amount, to be applied after mandatory reliefs and other discretionary reliefs. There is no rateable value threshold limit.
- 2.5 The relief is subject to a cash cap preventing any business from receiving more than £110,000 of relief across all of its properties in England. Ratepayers that occupy more

than one property will be entitled to relief for each eligible property up to maximum £110,000 cash cap to the business. Where a business has a qualifying connection with another business it will be treated as one for the purposes of this cash cap.

- 2.6 Businesses may be required to declare that they will not exceed the cash cap if relief is awarded.
- 2.7 The Retail Hospitality and Leisure Relief Scheme in 2024/25 is likely to amount to subsidy. Any relief provided under this scheme will need to comply with the UK's domestic and international subsidy control obligations.
- 2.8 Business ratepayers, on a self-assessment basis, must declare that by receiving the relief they will not exceed subsidy limits.
- 2.9 Businesses can refuse the relief up to 30 April 2024. Once refused the business will become ineligible and cannot withdraw their refusal.

### **3 Administration**

- 3.1 Cheltenham Borough Council will administer the schemes under Section 47 of The Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended by The Localism Act 2011 and The Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989 (S.I. 1989/1059).
- 3.2 Eligibility for reliefs will be determined in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- 3.3 Reliefs in this policy may be changed to reflect changes to Government guidance or to ensure successful operation of the schemes.
- 3.4 Retail Hospitality and Leisure reliefs under the provisions in this policy will be awarded in respect of the financial year 2024/25 only and they will end on 31 March 2025.
- 3.5 All reliefs will be recalculated or cancelled to reflect any change in circumstances that affect entitlement, changes to entries in Rating List, or where any conditions cease to be met.
- 3.6 Decisions relating to the granting of relief are be delegated to the staff within the Revenues and Benefits Service.
- 3.7 Relief may be granted automatically where information held on the business rate account confirms eligibility in line with the qualifying criteria and that cash caps or subsidy control limits will not be exceeded. In these cases businesses will be asked to notify the council if they are in not entitled. in all other cases an application must be submitted with a cash cap and/or subsidy control declaration.
- 3.8 Where reliefs have been awarded businesses must notify the Council within 21 days of any change of circumstances that could affect their entitlement to the relief.
- 3.9 Businesses will be required to provide any information requested to support their application for a relief.

- 3.10 There is no statutory right of appeal against a decision made by the Council in respect of Retail Hospitality and Leisure Relief. However, the Council will reconsider the decision if the ratepayer is dissatisfied with the outcome.
- 3.11 The request for a reconsideration must be made within 28 days of the business or agent acting on behalf of the business being issued with an award decision.
- 3.12 The review will be carried out by the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer
- 3.13 If an unsuccessful applicant requests a reconsideration they will need to continue to pay their rates bill. Once the reconsideration has been carried out, the ratepayer will be informed, in writing, of the decision.
- 3.14 Cheltenham Borough Council will not tolerate any business falsifying their records or providing false evidence. A ratepayer who falsely applies for any relief or provides false information or makes false representation in order to gain relief will face prosecution and any relief awarded will be revoked.

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## Cheltenham Borough Council

### Cabinet – 02 April 2024

## Discretionary Housing Payment Policy

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**Accountable member:**

Councillor Peter Jeffries, Cabinet Member Finance and Assets

**Accountable officer:**

Jayne Gilpin, Head of Revenues and Benefits

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

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**Key Decision:** No

**Executive summary:**

The council has powers to award Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to provide additional financial assistance towards housing costs where claimants are in receipt of Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit. The policy was last approved in 2018 and this report proposes some changes to update the policy in line with latest best practice and guidance and to ensure funding continues to be allocated to those most in need.

**Recommendations: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Approves the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy in Appendix 2**
- 2. Delegates decisions relating to the award of Discretionary Housing Payments, in line with the policy and DWP guidance, to the Head of Revenues and Benefits and designated officers within the Benefits team, with the final decision in the event of dispute being taken by the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer.**
- 3. Authorises the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer to apply to DLUHC for an accounting direction if it appears that the annual allocation will be exceeded in any financial year.**

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## 1. Implications

### 1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications

The Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Scheme enables local authorities to provide financial assistance towards housing costs through the General Fund. Government provides grant funding each year and the Council has the option to add this amount by up to a maximum of two-and-a-half times the grant allocation. Where due to demand Councils need to add to the funding application can be made to DLUHC for a specific accounting direction which would allow any payments made to its own tenants to be paid from the Housing Revenues Account (HRA) rather than from the General fund. It is recommended that the level of payments continue to be monitored and the S151 Officer is authorised to apply for such a direction if it appears probable that the annual allocation will be exceeded in any financial year.

The Government also provides funding each year to cover administration costs.

**Signed off by:** Gemma Bell, Director of Finance and Assets [gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### 1.2 Legal implications

The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 (as amended) set out the legal framework empowering the council to make discretionary awards to assist residents with their housing costs.

**Signed off by:** One Legal, [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk) Tel: 01684 272254

### 1.3 Environmental and climate change implications

There are no environmental and climate change implications arising from the content of the report or recommendations.

**Signed off by:** Climate Team, [climate@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:climate@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### 1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity
- Being a more modern, efficient and financially sustainable council

### 1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

This purpose of Discretionary Housing Payments is to provide additional financial support with housing costs for residents in receipt of Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit. The policy ensures that eligibility criteria is applied fairly and consistently so that the

most vulnerable residents including those with Protected Characteristics receive support. An equality impact assessment has been completed and is in Appendix 3.

### **1.6 Performance management – monitoring and review**

The number and category of discretionary housing payments are monitored on a monthly basis and reported to the Department for Work and Pensions periodically. The effectiveness of the policy will be kept under constant review and the policy will be updated as required.

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## **2 Background**

2.1 The Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) scheme is designed to provide additional help with housing costs for recipients of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit where the award includes an element for housing costs. A payment can be made where there is a shortfall between the housing benefit award or rent element in Universal Credit and the actual rent due to be paid. In certain circumstances payments can also be made to help with deposits and moving costs. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) provides funding for the scheme each year. In 2023/24 this Council received £106,443 and the same level of funding is confirmed for 2024/25. Funding is also provided to cover administration costs.

2.2 DHP schemes have been in existence since 2001 and awards are made under the statutory framework set out in the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001. This provides Local Authorities with broad discretion and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) provides formal guidance which sets out how schemes should be administered.

2.3 DHPs do not normally provide long term support for individuals. Instead, they provide short term support to allow people the time to resolve their current financial difficulties and to move to a position which is financially sustainable for them in the longer term.

## **3 Reasons for Recommendation**

3.1 The DHP policy supports the decision-making process, ensuring that fair and consistent decisions are made when considering applications and that financial support goes to those most in need. The policy was last updated in 2018. The policy is being updated to reflect the latest guidance from DWP and to broaden the aims of the scheme to ensure that funding is allocated to support our most vulnerable residents.

## **4 Alternative options considered**

4.1 None. The Council is expected to administer Discretionary Housing Payments and the policy sets out the basis for making consistent and fair awards.

## **5 Consultation and feedback**

5.1 Discussions have taken place with representatives from Cheltenham Borough Homes and various advice agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau.

## 6 Key risks

6.1 The risks are in appendix 1

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### Report author:

Jayne Gilpin, Head of Revenues and Benefits, [jayne.gilpin@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:jayne.gilpin@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### Appendices:

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Discretionary Housing Payments Policy 2024
- iii. Community Impact Assessment

### Background information:

1. The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2001/1167/contents/made>
2. DWP Discretionary Housing Payments Guidance Manual  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/discretionary-housing-payments-guidance-manual>

## Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	If the updated Discretionary Housing Payment Policy is not approved Cheltenham residents who would be eligible to apply will not receive the financial assistance towards their housing costs	Jayne Gilpin	3	1	3	Accept	Approve the scheme	Jayne Gilpin	02/04/2024
	If DHP awards are made in excess of the DWP funding the Council will be required to fund the excess	Jayne Gilpin	2	2	4	Accept	Ongoing monitoring of the DHP budget throughout the year as part of internal controls. Authorise the S151 officer to apply for an Accounting Direction	Jayne Gilpin	02/04/2024

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# Cheltenham Borough Council

## Discretionary Housing Payment Policy 2024

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) scheme is designed to provide further financial assistance to recipients of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit where the housing costs element is included in their current award. It is payable where additional help with housing costs is required with awards being made under the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 which provide Local Authorities with broad discretion on the amount of money paid out and the way the scheme is administered.
- 1.2. The Government has provided additional funding in recent years to enable local authorities to provide transitional support to customers affected by size criteria in the social housing sector, the benefit cap and changes to Local Housing Allowance but it is entirely at the Council's discretion as to how much is awarded in each area. In most cases a customer will need to demonstrate that they are unable to meet housing costs from their available income or that they have a shortfall in rent as a result of the welfare reforms.

### 2. What DHPs cover

- 2.1. DHPs are intended to support people who are receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit within Cheltenham and need additional support to cover housing-related costs. Housing-related costs are:
  - Rental liability as defined in the Housing Benefit and Universal Credit legislation
  - Lump sum payments for deposits or rent in advance where the applicant is moving to accommodation either inside or outside of the borough
  - Removal costs where the applicant is moving to accommodation either inside or outside of the borough.
- 2.2. Lump sum payments will be considered to help customers, where their current tenancy is unsustainable, to move to more affordable accommodation. In order to receive a lump sum payment, the customer must be receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (that includes a housing costs element) at their current address in Cheltenham.
- 2.3. **What DHPs do not cover:**
  - service or rental charges ineligible for Housing Benefit
  - increases in rent due to outstanding rent arrears
  - certain sanctions and reductions in benefit
  - Council Tax liability

## 3. Principles governing the award of DHPs

- 3.1. There is no statutory right to a DHP as the scheme is discretionary.
- 3.2. The Council has formulated this policy having regard to the Department for Work and Pensions' DHP Guidance Manual and Local Authority Good Practice Guide (updated May 2022)
- 3.3. Within the above constraints, the Council's broad aim is to support people affected by welfare reform with a view to:
  - alleviating poverty
  - preventing homelessness
  - supporting people to secure paid employment
  - supporting people to secure sustainable and affordable accommodation
  - supporting people who out of necessity are temporarily occupying accommodation which is unaffordable from their benefits, such as foster carers between fostering placements
  - supporting young people and care leavers as they transition to adult life
  - supporting people who are in unaffordable tenancies but cannot move to more affordable accommodation due to particular reasons such as health, disability or child protection
  - supporting domestic violence victims who need to move to a place of safety
  - helping applicants through personal crisis and challenging life events
  - supporting applicants or their partners who are due to reach State Pension age which means they will no longer be subject to an under-occupation reduction
  - assisting working age customers in receipt of UC where a dual liability for rent is unavoidable, including those who have fled their main home because they are a victim of domestic abuse
  - supporting people who are refugees who need to maintain stability in their financial and housing circumstances
  - supporting disabled people who receive informal care and support in their current neighbourhood from family and friends, which would not be available in a new area. In this respect, you may also consider families who have a child with an impairment who rely heavily on local support networks
  - supporting the elderly or frail who have lived in the area for a long time and would find it difficult to establish support networks in a new area
  - supporting people with health or medical problems, either physical or mental, who need access to local medical services or support that might not be available elsewhere
  - supporting families with a social services intervention, for example highly dependent adults, children at risk or involvement in a family intervention project
  - supporting disabled people who need, or have had, significant adaptations made to their property, or where they are living in a property particularly suited to their



needs. This includes properties which have been adapted for other members of the household, such as disabled children or non-dependants

- supporting people with shared care arrangements; the person who does not receive the Child Benefit will not receive calculations for the children in their housing entitlement
- 3.4. The length of time over which a payment is made is at the discretion of the Local Authority. The period of the award and, more importantly any specific end date should be made clear to the customer. DHPs will not normally be used to provide long term support for individuals. They will be used to provide short term support to allow people the time to resolve their current financial difficulties and to move to a position which is financially sustainable for them in the longer term.
  - 3.5. The Council may require customers to demonstrate that their housing costs are unaffordable having regard to all of their sources of income and savings by providing evidence of their income and outgoings.
  - 3.6. DHP customers will be expected to take personal action to mitigate the impact of welfare reforms on them. This action will normally include seeking paid employment and/or moving to more affordable accommodation and, where appropriate, to engage in obtaining personal advice to better manage their finances.
  - 3.7. The Council may require customers to demonstrate that they have taken all options available to them before awarding a DHP, for example, by providing evidence that they have applied for jobs, are seeking more affordable accommodation and have sought advice on managing their finances. An award of DHP may also be conditional on customers demonstrating that they are continuing to take such action.
  - 3.8. The Council may require such claimants to demonstrate that there are particular barriers preventing them from moving to a financially sustainable position before awarding DHP, for example, by providing evidence of serious physical or mental health problems or disabilities or caring responsibilities.
  - 3.9. The Council will, in particular, take into account evidence that the cost to the Council of available alternatives would be greater than the cost of awarding DHP.
  - 3.10. As a general rule, a DHP intended to address a shortfall in benefit to meet housing costs due to the benefit cap will be limited to a period of no more than one year. Additionally, a DHP intended to address a shortfall in benefit to meet housing costs due to other temporary hardship will be limited to a period of no more than six months. However, these periods can be extended if the customer can demonstrate that their circumstances are exceptional.
  - 3.11. Where a particular need for DHP has been demonstrated, the Council is not obliged to award a DHP to cover the full shortfall between benefit and housing costs, or to award DHP in respect of the whole period during which that shortfall is likely to continue. The Council may offer a lump sum, such as a rent deposit, in order to assist a claimant to move to more affordable accommodation however this will be restricted to one award in a twelve month period.

#### **4. Applications for a DHP**

- 4.1. The Council will accept an application from the Housing Benefit or Universal Credit customer or somebody acting on that person's behalf, for example, an appointee. All

claims for a DHP must be made in writing using the prescribed application form, by the customer or their representative. If a customer has difficulties completing the form they should be encouraged to make a personal visit to the Council offices or be referred to an advice agency. Alternatively a visit to the customer's home can be carried out if considered necessary.

- 4.2 Each application will be considered on its own merits, taking into account relevant information provided by the customer in support of their application. If an award of a DHP is made for a period, this will not mean that the award is automatically renewed at the end of the period. A full review of the customer's circumstances will be carried out prior to a further award being made.

### **5. Notification of decisions**

- 5.1 The customer will be notified in writing of the outcome of the DHP claim within 14 days of receipt of the claim and all supporting documentation, or as soon as possible after that. If a claim is unsuccessful, the Council's decision letter will include an explanation of how the decision has been reached and details of the right to request a review.

- 5.2 If the claim is successful, the Council's decision letter will include the following:

- the reason for the award
- the amount awarded
- the period of the award
- who will be paid the DHP
- the customer's duty to report any changes in circumstances
- any conditions associated with the award
- details of the right of review

### **6. Backdating a DHP**

- 6.1 The Council will consider any reasonable request for backdating a DHP award. However, these will be limited to the period in which the customer has been receiving Housing Benefit or Universal Credit during the current financial year unless exceptional reasons for a late claim are accepted. Backdating cannot cover arrears accrued while not in receipt of these benefits.

### **7. Method of payment**

- 7.1. The Benefits Service will decide on the most appropriate person to pay and the method and timing of payments based on the particular circumstances of each case. Where a DHP is awarded in respect of council rental liability any DHP will be credited to the relevant housing rent account and where a DHP is awarded as a lump sum payment for rent in advance or a deposit, payment may be made direct to the landlord.

### **8. Changes in circumstances**

- 8.1 The customer must tell the Council if their circumstances change after a DHP has been awarded. This is made clear to customers in the award letter and application form.
- 8.2 Customers must report all changes of circumstances that may be relevant to the DHP award to the Revenues and Benefits Service even if they have been reported to other services or departments. The Council reserves the right to revise a DHP award at any time if the customer's circumstances have changed.

### **9. Overpayments of a DHP**

- 9.1 The Council will make every effort to minimise overpayments of a DHP. If however, an overpayment does occur, the Council will decide whether or not it is appropriate to recover it. If recovery action is appropriate the Council will use the most appropriate way in which to recover it. A written explanation of how the overpayment occurred and the periods and amounts to which it relates will be issued.

### **10. Disputes**

- 10.1. DHPs are not payments of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit and are therefore not subject to the statutory appeals process. If the customer disagrees with a DHP decision they must put this in writing giving their reasons. This should normally be received by Cheltenham Borough Council within a month of the date of the decision although more time can be given in exceptional circumstances.
- 10.2. Although there is no formal appeals process, if a decision is challenged it will be looked at again in the light of representations made by the customer or their representative by a different, more senior officer to the one who made the original decision.
- 10.3. The customer will be notified of the decision of the review which will clearly state the reasons for the decision. If the customer remains dissatisfied with the decision, the case will be passed to the Council's Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer for further consideration. Ultimately the customer can apply for a judicial review of the decision in the High Court but legal advice should be sought in the first instance.

### **11. Fraud**

- 11.1 The Council takes fraud seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance approach. All allegations of fraud will be investigated; should a person make a false statement or provide incorrect evidence in support of their application for DHP, they may commit a criminal offence. All such instances will be dealt with in accordance with the Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy and any overpaid monies will be recovered.

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# Community impact assessments – for services, policies and projects

**What is a community impact assessment?** ..... 1

**Background** ..... 1

**Step 1: About the service, policy or project** .....Error! Bookmark not defined.

**Step 2: What do you already know about your existing and potential customers?**.....Error! Bookmark not defined.

**Step 3: Assessing community impact**.....Error! Bookmark not defined.

**Step 4: What are the differences?**.....Error! Bookmark not defined.

**Step 5: Taking things forward**.....Error! Bookmark not defined.

## What is a community impact assessment?

A community impact assessment is an important part of our commitment to delivering better services for our communities. The form will help us find out what impact or consequences our functions, policies, procedures and projects have on our communities, as well as employees and potential employees

By undertaking an impact assessment, we are able to:

1. Take into account the needs, experiences and circumstances of those groups of people who use (or don't / can't use) our services.
2. Identify any inequalities people may experience.
3. Think about the other ways in which we can deliver our services which will not lead to inequalities.
4. Develop better policy-making, procedures and services.

## Background

<b>Name of service / policy / project and date</b>	<b>Revenues and Benefits. Discretionary Housing Payment Policy 2024</b>
<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Jayne Gilpin, Head of Revenues and Benefits</b>

Other people involved in completing this form	David Wyatt, Deputy Revenues and Benefits Manager
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## Step 1 - About the service / policy / project

<b>What is the aim of the service / policy / project and what outcomes is it contributing to</b>	The Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) scheme is designed to provide further financial assistance to recipients of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit where the housing costs element is included in their current award. It is payable where additional help with housing costs is required with awards being made under the Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001 which provide Local Authorities with broad discretion on the amount of money paid out and the way the scheme is administered.
<b>Who are the primary customers of the service / policy / project and how do they / will they benefit</b>	<p>The primary customers for this service are those who are in receipt of either Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, where the housing costs element is included in their current award. All other applicants are excluded from the scheme.</p> <p>If an applicant has a shortfall in the level of Housing Benefit or UC housing element, they can be awarded a DHP if they meet one or more of the qualifying conditions. If an award is made the applicant will benefit financially and will be in a better position to meet their rent liability.</p>
<b>How and where is the service / policy / project implemented</b>	The Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) scheme is administered within the Revenues and Benefits Service.
<b>What potential barriers might already exist to achieving these outcomes</b>	If the person requiring help does not make a DHP application and/or engage with the Benefits Service when requests for further information are made.

## Step 2 – What do you know already about your existing / potential customers

<b>What existing information and data do you have about your existing / potential customers e.g. Statistics, customer feedback, performance information</b>	<p>Every applicant making a Discretionary Housing Payment application provides the following personal information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the date of birth, sex and nationality of each person in the household</li> <li>• the income of each person in the household, including non-dependants (for example grown up children)</li> <li>• the capital of each person in the household</li> <li>• whether any person has a disability</li> <li>• whether the person is in a same sex relationship</li> </ul>
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	<p>The information provided by the customer is not for statistical purposes. The information is obtained only to be able to determine a DHP entitlement. No data is held on the system relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sexual orientation</li> <li>• ethnicity and/or race</li> <li>• religion or belief</li> </ul> <p>Information may be held, subject to the customer volunteering it on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pregnancy and/or maternity/paternity</li> <li>• gender reassignment</li> </ul>
<p><b>What does it tell you about who uses your service / policy and those that don't?</b></p>	<p>People are accessing the service as they do not have enough household income to pay their rent. The reason for claiming assistance is purely financial. There are no other advantages. It tells us that those who do not claim assistance and pay their rent from their household income do not require the same level of financial support as those that do.</p> <p>The information and data held tells us the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the age of the customer and others in the household</li> <li>• the number of men and women claiming a DHP</li> <li>• the number of customers who have responsibility for a child or children</li> <li>• the number of people in the household</li> <li>• whether there are any disabilities</li> <li>• the household income</li> <li>• whether any capital is held</li> </ul>
<p><b>What have you learnt about real barriers to your service from any consultation with customers and any stakeholder groups?</b></p>	<p>No adverse feedback has been provided from customers, advice agencies and stakeholder groups.</p> <p>The service is made widely available to ensure that all members of the community can access it. Application forms are available and can be emailed or posted to customers. The application form is also available to be completed on line.</p> <p>There are various other options available in the town centre for people to take advice on claiming a DHP, including CAB.</p> <p>Customers identified as having difficulties in paying their rent are also invited to make claims for council tax support, to ensure that they maximise the welfare benefits available to them.</p>

**If not, who do you have plans to consult with about the service / policy / project?**

Not applicable.



### Step 3 - Assessing community impact

How does your service / policy / project impact on different groups in the community?

Group	What are you already doing to benefit this group	What are you doing that might disadvantage this group	What could you do differently to benefit this group	No impact on this group
<b>People belonging to race, cultural and ethnic groups</b>	No specific benefits identified for this group	No specific disadvantages identified for this group	Nothing identified	No specific impact identified
<b>People who are male or female, non-binary or other</b>	No specific benefits identified for this group	No specific disadvantages identified for this group	Nothing identified	No specific impact identified
<b>People who intend or plan to undergo or who are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment</b>	No specific benefits identified for this group	No specific disadvantages identified for this group	Nothing identified	No specific impact identified
<b>People of different ages, including children and older people</b>	The policy may provide support to people who are care leavers or those that are older	No specific disadvantages identified for this group	Nothing identified	No specific impact identified
<b>People with disabilities and/or mental health conditions</b>	The policy may provide support to people with disabilities, mental health conditions or long term health challenges	No specific disadvantages identified for this group	Nothing identified	No specific impact identified
<b>People who have a religion or belief, or who do not</b>	No specific benefits identified for this group	No specific disadvantages identified for this group	Nothing identified	No specific impact identified
<b>People who are who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual</b>	No specific benefits identified for this group	No specific disadvantages identified for this group	Nothing identified	No specific impact identified
<b>People who are married or in a Civil Partnership</b>	No specific benefits identified for this group	No specific disadvantages identified for this group	Nothing identified	No specific impact identified
<b>People who are pregnant or subject to maternity arrangements</b>	No specific benefits identified for this group	No specific disadvantages identified for this group	Nothing identified	No specific impact identified

<b>Other groups or communities</b>	The policy may provide support to people on low incomes, domestic violence victims and refugees	No specific disadvantages to these groups or communities	The policy allows for a DHP to be paid to people of these groups where specific criteria is met	No specific impact identified
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## Step 4 - what are the differences

<p><b>Are any groups affected in different ways to others as a result of the service / policy / project?</b></p>	<p>The policy allows for certain groups, who fit specified criteria, to have awards made to them. The policy is advantageous to the priority groups listed below. This includes the elderly, people with disabilities and those applicants who are fleeing domestic violence.</p>
<p><b>Does your service / policy / project either directly or indirectly discriminate?</b></p>	<p>No.</p>
<p><b>If yes, what can be done to improve this?</b></p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p><b>Are there any other ways in which the service / project can help support priority communities in Cheltenham?</b></p>	<p>Yes. The proposed draft scheme has been designed to protect where possible and provide greater financial assistance to priority communities. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting people who out of necessity are temporarily occupying accommodation which is unaffordable from their benefits, such as foster carers between fostering placements</li> <li>• supporting young people and care leavers as they transition to adult life</li> <li>• supporting people who are in unaffordable tenancies but cannot move to more affordable accommodation due to particular reasons such as health, disability or child protection</li> <li>• supporting domestic violence victims who need to move to a place of safety</li> <li>• helping applicants through personal crisis and challenging life events</li> <li>• supporting applicants or their partners who are due to reach State Pension age which means they will no longer be subject to an under-occupation reduction</li> <li>• assisting working age customers in receipt of UC where a dual liability for rent is unavoidable, including those who have fled their main home because they are a victim of domestic abuse</li> <li>• supporting people who are refugees who need to maintain stability in their financial and housing circumstances</li> <li>• supporting disabled people who receive informal care and support in their current neighbourhood from family and friends, which would not be available in a new area. In this respect, also consider families who have a child with an impairment who rely heavily on local support networks</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting the elderly or frail who have lived in the area for a long time and would find it difficult to establish support networks in a new area</li> <li>• supporting people with health or medical problems, either physical or mental, who need access to local medical services or support that might not be available elsewhere</li> <li>• supporting families with a social services intervention, for example highly dependent adults, children at risk or involvement in a family intervention project</li> <li>• supporting disabled people who need, or have had, significant adaptations made to their property, or where they are living in a property particularly suited to their needs. This includes properties which have been adapted for other members of the household, such as disabled children or non-dependants</li> <li>• supporting people with shared care arrangements; the person who does not receive the Child Benefit will not receive calculations for the children in their housing entitlement</li> </ul>
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### Step 5 – taking things forward

<b>What are the key actions to be carried out and how will they be resourced and monitored?</b>	<p>Discretionary Housing Payments have been in existence since 2001. The current policy is being updated to reflect the needs of residents. Dedicated staff within the Revenues and Benefits Team will administer the applications, deal with disputes and make payments where awards have been agreed.</p> <p>Since April 2013, DWP has monitored how DHPs are being used to support claimants affected by the Welfare Reforms. This monitoring information continues to improve the department's understanding of how DHPs are being used. The department requests information on DHPs at specific times during the financial year, including expenditure and number of awards. Some of this information, such as the financial forecast and actual expenditure at mid-year and end of year, is mandatory. Other information is voluntary.</p>
<b>Who will play a role in the decision-making process?</b>	<p>Nominated Benefits Service team members; Deputy Revenues and Benefits Manager Head of Revenues and Benefits Section 151 Officer</p>
<b>What are your / the project's learning and development needs?</b>	<p>Full training will be provided to Revenues and Benefits staff, responsible for the administration of the DHP Policy.</p>

**How will you capture these actions in your service / project planning?**

The proposed changes will to be introduced from 1 April 2024. The activities required to implement the changes to the policy will not impact on service delivery. The implementation of the changes will be overseen by the Head of Revenues and Benefits and the Deputy Revenues and Benefits Manager.

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## Cheltenham Borough Council

### Cabinet 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024

## Employee and Councillor Domestic Abuse Policy

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**Accountable member:**

Councillor Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member Communities and Safety

**Accountable officer:**

Tracy Brown, Safeguarding and Partnerships Manager

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

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**Key Decision:** Yes

**Executive summary:**

The Council does not have a specific policy that covers employees and elected members who are affected by domestic abuse.

An employee domestic abuse policy has therefore been developed to ensure that the Council is following current best practice in this area. This will help the Council provide support for its employees and elected members and ensure a safe working environment for all.

**Recommendations: That Cabinet:**

1. **adopts the Employee and Councillor Domestic Abuse policy.**
- 

### 1. Implications

#### 1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications

The recommendations have no direct finance, property or asset implications. Training mentioned in point 3.5 will be provided free of charge by Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults board.

**Signed off by:** Ela Jankowska – Finance Business Partner



## 1.2 Legal implications

There are a number of legislative requirements in the Council both as a local authority and employer to meet various safeguarding obligations. This policy and its implementation will assist the Council in approaching its safeguarding obligations towards its employee in relation to domestic violence.

**Signed off by:** One Legal – [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

## 1.3 Environmental and climate change implications

None arising directly as a result of this report.

Signed off by: Louise Forey, Programme and Engagement Officer, Climate team  
[Louise.forey@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:Louise.forey@cheltenham.gov.uk)

## 1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Being a more modern, efficient, and financially sustainable council

## 1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

The Council's Employee and Councillor Domestic Abuse Policy and training associated with it follows local good practice guidance. This training and guidance addresses issues including race, culture, disability, sexuality, gender, and age ensuring the Council applies the policy without prejudice or discrimination. By its nature the policy supports the Council in its public sector equalities duty by ensuring the Council addresses an issue that has a bigger impact on some groups in society than others and creates a safe working environment for all.

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## 2 Background

2.1 Domestic abuse is an issue that is prevalent throughout our society with an estimated one in four women and one in six men victims of it in their lifetimes. It impacts both the physical and emotional safety of adults and children. According to the Charity Refuge on average two women a week are killed at the hands of an existing or previous partner as well as an estimated three women a week committing suicide due to domestic abuse.

2.2 In addition to the devastating human impact, it also has a significant economic impact with an estimated £1.3 billion being spent on dealing with it. It is acknowledged that workplaces have a significant role to play in tackling domestic abuse as they offer a place where people are outside of the home environment and have the opportunity to gain support and advice. And as with other risks to employee safety, employers have statutory duties to mitigate risks posed by domestic abuse and put controls in place so that employees can carry out their role safely.



2.3 Although domestic abuse is addressed in the Council's Safeguarding policy, this covers situations in which employees or elected members might receive disclosures or witness concerns within the community. The Council does not currently have a policy that specifically covers the issue of when employees or elected members are affected by domestic abuse as either victims or perpetrators.

2.4 It was therefore agreed when the Council's revised Safeguarding policy was adopted that a separate domestic abuse policy which supported employees and elected members to promote a workplace safe from domestic abuse was developed.

### **3 Policy Content**

3.1 The policy sets out the definitions of domestic abuse and the principles within which the Council will operate. It goes on to detail how the Council will mitigate the impact of domestic abuse in the following key ways.

3.2 The policy sets out possible signs of domestic abuse and how to respond. It stresses that confidentiality is vital to ensure everyone's safety. It is also noted that apart from in a very small number of specific circumstances consent must be obtained from the victim to share information.

3.3 Support for staff or elected members who are victims is outlined including emotional support, referral to external agencies and reasonable adjustments. The importance and process of safety planning is detailed to ensure the victim and their colleagues are kept safe.

3.4 As well as victims of abuse it is likely that some employees will be perpetrators. The policy outlines the action the council will take in this situation as well as the support an employee could receive to hopefully stop their abusive behaviour such as referral to external agencies.

3.5 The policy requires specific domestic abuse training to be available to employees and elected members. Once the policy has been approved, a pathway of training for employees will be launched that includes the Council's requirement around both safeguarding and domestic abuse so that they complement each other. The training pathway will have different levels and types of training depending on the needs of the employee's and members' job role and position.

3.6 Due to the inter-related nature of domestic abuse and safeguarding, it is proposed that the senior officers, elected member advocates, designated officer and HR leads, who are nominated to support the safeguarding policy also support the domestic abuse policy. This is reflected in the responsibilities section which mirrors the responsibilities in the Council's Safeguarding policy. This will allow a joined-up approach to the issues to be taken and increase the knowledge and capacity of key employees within the organisation.

### **4 Reasons for recommendations**

4.1 It is recommended that the policy is adopted at this time to ensure that the Council has a comprehensive response to domestic abuse and fulfils its statutory duties. It will also support the Council to create as safe a working environment for its employees and elected members as possible.

## **5 Alternative options considered**

5.1 It was considered if it would be possible to incorporate the guidance and protocols within the Employee and Councillor Domestic Abuse Policy into the Council's Safeguarding policy. It was decided to keep them separate so to make the guidance and protocols in the policies easier to enact.

## **6 Consultation and feedback**

6.1 Consultation on the policy has taken place with the Council's human resources team, other Gloucestershire district councils and the Leadership team and their feedback has been incorporated.

## **7 Key risks**

7.1 Creating a safe working environment for employees is a statutory duty of Cheltenham Borough Council failure to have an employee and councillors domestic abuse policy could mean that the Council was not fulfilling its statutory duties. If the policy is not fully implemented across the Council it could also put employees and elected members at greater risk of harm.

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### **Report author:**

Tracy Brown Safeguarding and Partnerships Manager

### **Appendices:**

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Employee and Councillor Domestic Abuse Policy

### **Background information:**

N/A

### Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	If the Council fails to engage fully with the domestic abuse agenda the council may not meet its statutory duties.	Tracey Birkinshaw	4	2	8	Reduce	Adoption and roll out of employee domestic abuse policy to complement existing provision in the safeguarding policy	Tracy Brown	April 2024
	If service areas fail to engage with the domestic abuse agenda fully there may be a failure to safeguard an employee or elected member while at work	Tracey Birkinshaw	4	2	8	Reduce	Roll out of training to all employees and elected members, deputy designated officers identified and trained. Communications plan	Tracy Brown	September 2024

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**Cheltenham Borough Council  
Draft Employee and Councillor  
Domestic Abuse Policy  
Version 1 February 2024**

DRAFT

## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose and scope

- (a) Domestic abuse can affect anyone. Home and work issues are often inter-linked. Abusive and violent behaviour does not only take place in the home. It can frequently cross over into the workplace, where victims can experience stalking, threats, harassment and worse.
- (b) Equally, work can be a lifeline to the independence and survival of victims of domestic abuse as they can maintain a sense of independence from their perpetrator.
- (c) The Council recognises that it's employees will be amongst those affected by domestic abuse; for example, as a survivor of domestic abuse, an individual who is currently living with domestic abuse, someone who has been impacted upon domestic abuse, or as an individual who perpetrates domestic abuse.
- (d) By developing an effective Domestic Abuse Policy and working to reduce the risks related to domestic abuse, we will create a safer workplace and we will also send a strong message that domestic abuse is unacceptable.
- (e) Domestic abuse can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:
  - [Coercive control](#)
  - Psychological and/or emotional abuse
  - Physical or sexual abuse
  - [Financial or economic abuse](#)
  - Harassment and [stalking](#)
  - [Online or digital abuse](#).
- (f) This policy also covers the approach the Council will take where there are concerns that an employee may be the perpetrator of domestic abuse.
- (g) This policy applies to employees across all sites, agency and contract employees, and elected members.
- (h) The policy helps the Council comply with the statutory guidance that is issued as part of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

### Terms and definitions

In this Domestic Abuse Policy:

**Domestic abuse** refers to any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

**Coercive control** means a pattern of intimidation, degradation, isolation and control with the use or threat of physical or sexual violence.

**Controlling behaviour** is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

**Honour-based abuse or violence** is used to refer to a collection of practices used predominantly to control the behaviour of people within families or other social groups in order to protect supposed cultural and religious beliefs, values and social norms in the name of 'honour'. This term can include forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM).

### PRINCIPLES

- The Council has zero tolerance to any form of abuse and recognises that responsibility for domestic abuse lies with the perpetrator.
- The Council is committed to ensuring that any employee who is the victim of domestic abuse has the right to raise the issue with their employer in the knowledge that they will receive appropriate support and guidance.
- The Council recognises that domestic abuse is an equalities issue and undertakes not to discriminate against anyone who has been subjected to domestic abuse in terms of current employment or future development.
- This policy is part of the Council's commitment to ensuring that employees work in a safe environment and one which is supportive and cares for the wellbeing of all employees.

### IDENTIFICATION OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

Whilst it is for the individual themselves to recognise, they are a victim of domestic abuse, there are signs which may indicate an employee may be a victim. These may include:

- The member of employees may confide in their colleagues or manager.
- Employees may inform their manager that a colleague is suffering from domestic abuse.
- There may be obvious effects of physical abuse (it is important not to make assumptions).
- It may come to light because of a drop in performance or a significant change in behaviour.
- It may reveal itself as the background to poor attendance.

It is essential to understand that any of the above may arise from a range of circumstances, of which domestic abuse may be one. Managers and supervisors who support employees with such matters should address the issue positively and sympathetically, ensuring that the employee is aware that support and assistance can be provided.

The Council respects employees' right to privacy. Whilst the Council strongly encourages victims of domestic abuse to disclose domestic abuse for the safety of themselves and others, it does not force them to share this information if they do not want to.

The Council encourages all employees to report if they suspect a colleague is experiencing or perpetrating abuse. Employees should speak to their line manager or HR about their concerns, this will be treated in confidence. In dealing with a disclosure from a colleague, employers should ensure that the person with concerns is made aware of the existence of this policy.

### **Disclosure of abuse**

Employees experiencing domestic abuse may choose to disclose, report to, or seek support from a line manager, a colleague or HR. Line managers or HR will not counsel victims, but offer information about workplace support, and signpost to other organisations.

The Council will respond sympathetically, confidentially, and effectively to any employee who discloses that they are suffering from domestic abuse. HR can provide guidance and support for line managers who are approached by employees who are being abused.

### **Confidentiality and right to privacy**

Employees who disclose experiencing abuse can be assured that the information they provide is confidential and will not ordinarily be shared with other employees without their permission.

There are, however, some circumstances in which confidentiality cannot be assured. These occur when there are safeguarding concerns about children or vulnerable adults or where the employer needs to act to protect the safety of employees.

In circumstances where the Council may need to breach confidentiality it will seek specialist advice before doing so. If it decides to breach confidentiality, after having taken advice, it will discuss with the employee why it is doing so, and it will seek the employee's agreement where possible. As far as possible, information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

All records concerning domestic abuse will be kept strictly confidential. No local records will be kept of absences related to domestic abuse and there will be no adverse impact on the employment records of victims of domestic abuse.

Improper disclosure of information e.g., breaches of confidentiality by any employees, will be taken seriously and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Where domestic abuse in a same sex relationship is disclosed, due regard will be paid to the double disclosure of confidential information particularly where the individual's may not be out at work.

## **SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS**

The Council recognises that developing a life free from abuse is a long-term process, and the Council will provide ongoing support for employees who disclose abuse, as listed below:

- The Council will work cooperatively with external partners to support and help employees experiencing domestic abuse.



- The Council will respond sympathetically, confidentially, and effectively to any employees who discloses that they are experiencing domestic abuse.
- Where domestic abuse has been reported line managers will treat unplanned absences and temporary changes to timekeeping sympathetically.
- The Council may offer employees experiencing domestic abuse a broad range of support. This may include, but is not limited to:
  - Special paid leave for relevant appointments, including with support agencies, solicitors, to rearrange housing or childcare, and for court appointments.
  - Temporary or permanent changes to working times and patterns.
  - Changes to specific duties, for example to avoid potential contact with an abuser in a customer facing role.
  - Redeployment.
  - Measures to ensure a safe working environment, for example changing a telephone number to avoid harassing phone calls.
  - Using other existing policies, including the Flexible Working Hours Scheme.
  - Access to counselling and/or support services.
  - Access to resources and support programmes. The Council will respect the right of employees to make their decisions on the course of action at every stage.
  - Access to external agencies who can offer support around an employee's dependants.

Other existing provisions will also be signposted to employees as a means of support, such as occupational health and counselling services.

### **Safety planning**

The Council will prioritise the safety of employees if they make it known that they are experiencing domestic abuse.

When an employee discloses domestic abuse, with the employee's consent the Council will signpost to Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) who can undertake a Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) risk assessment.

The Council will work with the employee and relevant specialist agencies to identify what actions can be taken to increase their personal safety at work and at home as well as address any risks there may be to colleagues.

### **If the victim and the perpetrator work in the same organisation**

In cases where both the victim and the perpetrator of domestic abuse work in the organisation, the Council will take appropriate action.

In addition to considering disciplinary action against the employee who is perpetrating the abuse, action may need to be taken to ensure that the victim and perpetrator do not come into contact in the workplace.

Action may also need to be taken to minimise the potential for the perpetrator to use their position or work resources to find out details about the whereabouts of the victim. This may include a change of duties for one or both employees or withdrawing the perpetrators access to certain offices or computer programmes.

### **PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE**

Domestic abuse perpetrated by employees will not be condoned under any circumstances nor will it be treated as a purely private matter. The Council recognises that it has a role in encouraging and supporting employees to address violent and abusive behaviour of all kinds. Employees should report if they suspect a colleague is a perpetrator of abuse.

If an employee approaches the Council about their abusive behaviour, the Council will provide information about the services and support available to them.

The Council will treat any allegation, disclosure, or conviction of a domestic abuse-related offence on a case-by-case basis, with the aim of reducing risk and supporting change.

The Council views the use of violence and abusive behaviour by an employee, wherever this occurs, as a breach of the organisation's Code of Conduct and would be addressed under the Council's disciplinary policy and procedure. The Council's Code of Conduct sets out standards of conduct expected from all employees, irrespective of grade. Employees are expected at all times to present high standards of personal integrity and conduct that will not reflect adversely on the Council and its reputation.

In some circumstances it may be deemed inappropriate for the individual to continue in their current role(s).

This can be applicable in cases where an employee has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or threatened their partner;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against their partner;
- Had an allegation of domestic abuse made against them; and/or
- Presented concerns about their behaviour within an intimate relationship.

The Council is committed to ensuring that:

- Allegations will be dealt with fairly and in a way that provides support for the person who is the subject of the allegation or disclosure.
- All employees will receive guidance and support.
- Confidentiality will be maintained, and information restricted only to those who have a need-to-know.
- Investigations will be thorough and independent.
- All cases will be dealt with quickly avoiding unnecessary delays.
- All efforts will be made to resolve the matter as quickly as possible, although some cases will take longer because of their nature or complexity.

**NOTE:** This process is intended to be safety-focussed and supportive rather than punitive.

The alleged perpetrator will be:

- Treated fairly and honestly;
- Helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved;
- Kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary process;
- Advised to contact their union representative; and
- Supported throughout the process to ensure employee wellbeing is considered and supported

There are five potential strands in the consideration of an allegation:

1. A police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
2. Disciplinary action by the employer.
3. Providing specialist, safety-focused counselling.
4. Identifying risk.
5. Safeguarding.

Any employee who is responsible for giving advice, or who comes into contact with or supports those vulnerable people or children experiencing domestic abuse, needs to be particularly aware of the potential consequences if they are found to be perpetrators.

If a colleague is found to be assisting an abuser in perpetrating the abuse, for example, by giving them access to facilities such as telephones, email, or computer programmes then they may be seen as having committed a disciplinary offence.

### **TRAINING**

The Council is committed to ensuring all line managers are aware of domestic abuse and its implications in the workplace. Information, briefings, or awareness raising sessions will ensure that all managers are able to:

- Identify if an employee is experiencing difficulties because of domestic abuse;
- Respond to disclosure in a sensitive and non-judgemental manner;
- Provide initial support – be clear about available workplace support;
- Support employees to work with HR and the Designated Safeguarding and domestic abuse officer or deputy to make a referral to external agencies for support including safety planning;
- Understand that they are not counsellors.

Employees identified as part of this policy as having specific enhanced responsibilities regarding domestic abuse such as the designated safeguarding and domestic abuse officer, designated deputy safeguarding and domestic abuse officers and employees within HR will be offered additional training. These employees will be listed on the intranet and in the domestic abuse resources available as contacts who can provide support and signposting for victims of domestic abuse.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All employees and elected members must ensure that they are aware of the domestic abuse and related safeguarding procedures in place within the authority and those employees and members who have a specific responsibility for safeguarding and domestic abuse. All employees and elected members will receive safeguarding and domestic abuse information at induction.

## **Designated Senior Leaders**

Cheltenham Borough Council has two Senior Leaders (one officer and one cabinet member) responsible for safeguarding and domestic abuse.

They are overall responsible for ensuring that the Council fulfils its safeguarding and domestic abuse responsibilities:

*Senior Officer Lead – Tracey Birkinshaw, Director of Communities & Economic Development*  
*Cabinet Member Lead – Councillor Flo Clucas Member for Communities and safety*

## **Designated Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Officer**

Their role is to support employees & elected members and provide guidance and advice to aid implementation of this policy and the related safeguarding policy and in making a referral or safety plan. They will also support the Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Advocates and Leadership team to fulfil their roles.

*Designated Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Officer – Tracy Brown, Safeguarding and Partnerships Manager*

*Deputy Designated Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Officer – Shona Corbett, HR Business Partner*

## **Elected Member Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Advocates**

Elected member safeguarding and domestic abuse advocates are responsible for championing the importance safeguarding, tackling domestic abuse and promoting the welfare of children, young people, vulnerable adults and victims of domestic abuse. They are nominated by full council and are normally cross-party.

*Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse Advocates – Councillor Chelin and Councillor Harman*

## **Leadership Team**

Cheltenham Borough Council's Leadership Team will ensure that:

1. The Council meets its legal obligations.
2. Where applicable, domestic abuse and its prevention are considered in strategies, plans and services.
3. The best practices in domestic abuse are embedded and maintained across all services to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with national and local policies.
4. Matters relating to domestic abuse are expedited in a timely manner and treated seriously.
5. Support employees and members on all aspects of domestic abuse and ensure procedures are adhered to.
6. Appropriate training is facilitated, in particular for frontline employees

## **Service Managers**

Cheltenham Borough Council's service managers will ensure that:

1. The domestic abuse policy is adhered to across the organisation.

2. They and their employees complete and implement the appropriate domestic abuse training and that this is reinforced through team meetings 121s etc.
3. Employees handling domestic abuse issues are fully supported.
4. They take responsibility for the quality of the response to domestic abuse in their service area.
5. Report any concerns as per the policy.

### **Human Resources**

Human Resources will ensure that:

1. The relevant policies are in place e.g., Special Leave and Disciplinary Procedures
2. Managers are supported in the use of these policies directly and indirectly associated with domestic abuse
3. Provide employees involved in domestic abuse support as outlined in the policy including workplace safety planning.
4. Provide support with the pre-employment checks as appropriate.
5. All employees are issued with domestic abuse information at induction and support ongoing domestic abuse training for all employees.
6. When the domestic abuse policy is updated, ensure this is communicated to all employees

### **Employees**

Cheltenham Borough Council's employees will:

1. Treat all domestic abuse matters seriously.
2. Report any concerns as per the policy.
3. Be aware of and adhere to the domestic abuse policy and related policies
4. Complete domestic abuse policy training relevant to their role covering children, adults and domestic abuse

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATION**

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- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992)
- Flexible Working Hours Scheme
- Safeguarding Policy
- The Council's Disciplinary Policy
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and its statutory guidance (2022)

### **APPENDICES**

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- A. Domestic Abuse Resources

**Appendix A. Domestic Abuse Resources**

Police Emergency Contact Number: 999

Police Non-Emergency Contact Number: 101

Website: [www.gloucestershire.police.uk](http://www.gloucestershire.police.uk)

**DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINES**

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<b>Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service</b> <a href="https://www.gdass.org.uk/">https://www.gdass.org.uk/</a>	<b>01452 726570</b>
<b>National 24-hour Domestic Violence Helpline</b> <a href="http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk">http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk</a>	<b>0808 2000247</b>
<b>Childline</b> <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">http://www.childline.org.uk</a>	<b>0800 1111</b>
<b>Men's Advice Line (for male victims)</b> <a href="http://www.mensadviceline.org.uk">www.mensadviceline.org.uk</a>	<b>0808 8010327</b>
<b>National Domestic Violence Helpline (Women's Aid)</b> <a href="http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk">http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk</a>	<b>0808 2000247</b>
<b>National Victim Support</b> <a href="http://www.victimsupport.org.uk">http://www.victimsupport.org.uk</a>	<b>0808 1689111</b>
<b>Fear Less</b> <a href="https://www.fear-less.org.uk/">https://www.fear-less.org.uk/</a>	<b>01452 529866</b>
<b>For Help TEXT "NCDV"</b>	<b>60777</b>
<b>Samaritans</b>	<b>116 123</b>
<b>Crime Stoppers</b>	<b>0800 555111</b>
<b>National Drugs Helpline</b>	<b>0800 5404120</b>
<b>National Help Line for LGBT</b>	<b>0800 9995428</b>
<b>Debtline</b>	<b>0808 8084000</b>
<b>NHS Direct</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>Stalking Helpline</b>	<b>0808 802 0300</b>

## Cheltenham Borough Council

### Cabinet - 02 April 2024

## Physical activity and sport strategy for Cheltenham – Phase 2 – built facilities and playing pitch assessments

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**Accountable member:**

Councillor Max Wilkinson - Cabinet Member Economic Development, Culture, Tourism and Wellbeing

**Accountable officer:**

Richard Gibson - Head of Communities, wellbeing & partnerships

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

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**Key Decision:** No**Executive summary:**

In the council's corporate plan 2023-2027, we set out our commitment to work with partner organisations to develop a sports strategy for Cheltenham in the expectation that this will improve sports provision and help improve health and wellbeing opportunities for local people.

The strategy is needed to help the council address some of the following challenges:

- Determining the longer-term future of Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales Stadium;
- Addressing long-term health inequalities within some of our communities; and
- Addressing inequalities in access to community-based physical activity opportunities.

But also needed to harness some significant opportunities:

- How we support communities to meet their own ambitions to be physically active and help secure investment into improving local facilities;
- How we use sport and physical activity to support the longer-term growth ambitions of Cheltenham by ensuring people lead healthy, fulfilling and productive lives.

In July, Cabinet agreed a draft vision and outcomes for physical activity and sports which was the result of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. Cabinet also committed

to updating its playing pitch and built facilities assessments. These assessments are needed to provide a picture of our current infrastructure and how well it will meet the future needs in our communities, along with an investment plan for how we secure funding to improve provision.

This second phase of work was the subject of a procurement exercise and Max Associates was appointed to carry out both the playing pitch and built sports facilities assessments.

Work on the assessments commenced in July 2023 with work on the Built Facilities assessment concluding in January 2024 and the Playing Pitch assessment reaching stage C by March 2024.

The two assessments are presented to Cabinet and agreement sought to move to the third phase which will see the final Playing Pitch Strategy, along with the over-arching physical activity and sports strategy and accompanying action plan required to support future investment into our sporting facilities and also to guide the Council's future work.

Alongside the playing pitch and built facilities assessments, the Council has also undertaken a physical activity survey to understand how we keep people being active but also understand the barriers that might be preventing people from being active in the first place. The results of the survey, which closed on 21 March are set out in section 7.

**Recommendations: That Cabinet:**

- 1. notes the findings and recommendations from the Max Associates' Built Leisure and Sports Facilities Report as set out in section 4 and attached as appendix 2.**
- 2. notes the provisional findings and indicative recommendations from stage C of the Playing Pitch Assessment as set out in section 5.**
- 3. notes the initial findings from the Physical Activity Survey as set out in section 7.**
- 4. notes that a reports will be brought back to Cabinet to agree and finalise the playing pitch strategy, along with the over-arching physical activity and sports strategy and accompanying action plan that will deliver the Council's vision and outcomes for physical activity and sports as set out in section 3.**
- 5. commissions consultants to undertake an options appraisal of the future provision of Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales stadium to include indicative capital costs.**

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## **1. Implications**

### **1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications**

The budget to undertake the options appraisal for Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales Stadium was agreed as part of the 2024/25 budget.



Whilst there are no direct financial implications from the other recommendations set out above, there may well be financial costs for the Council associated with the implementation of the action plan.

These costs, be they capital or revenue, will be fully understood and approval sought in line with the Council’s financial regulations.

[gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk).

**Signed off by:** [finance officer, post, email]

### 1.2 Legal implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The Council has discretionary powers under various legislative provisions to provide sport and leisure facilities and also provide financial assistance to others to do so.

**Signed off by:** One Legal [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

### 1.3 Environmental and climate change implications

The completed dashboard and summary report are attached as **appendix 3**. The strategy is generally positive in its contribution to environmental and social outcomes

**Physical Activity & Sports Strategy**



**Signed off by:** Climate Team, [climate@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:climate@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### 1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

The Physical Activity and Sports Strategy will contribute to the following Corporate Plan

## Priorities

Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity

### 1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

**1.6** The completed community impact assessment is attached as **appendix 4**. We will monitor responses to the physical activity survey and carry out further engagement as appropriate if numbers are not proportionate

### 1.7 Performance management – monitoring and review

Once the built facilities and playing pitch assessments are signed off, work will commence on an action plan that will set out how the Council and its partners can deliver against the strategy in order that we can demonstrate that it is making progress towards the achieving the vision.

The action plan, which will be refreshed on an annual basis, will set out what actions will be taken under each of the objectives and shared commitments. The actions will be identified for those to be taken in the next year, in the medium-term and in the longer-term.

The plan will also identify which person or organisation is responsible for the action and a timescale.

Progress against the action plan will be monitored via meetings at which those that are accountable for actions will be asked to supply updates.

Consideration will also be given to placing the strategy on the forward plan for the council's overview and scrutiny committee

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## 2. Background

**2.1** In the council's corporate plan 2023-2027, we set out our commitment to work with partner organisations to develop a sports strategy for Cheltenham in the expectation that this will improve sports provision and help improve health and wellbeing opportunities for local people.

**2.2** The strategy is needed to help the council address some of the following challenges:

- We need to determine the longer-term future of Council physical activity facilities, particularly Leisure at Cheltenham and Prince of Wales Stadium. Due to their age, both facilities require significant investment.
- When looking at health data, it is clear that some of our geographic communities face long-term health inequalities; local partners have assessed data relating to a range of health conditions including obesity, depression and heart disease. The data paints a picture that low income communities have worse health outcomes than more affluent communities.
- We are also aware that some of our low income communities do not have the same access to physical activity opportunities as more affluent communities. For

instance, we are aware that there are no youth football teams serving West Cheltenham in the whole Cheltenham Youth League.

**2.3** But the strategy is also needed to harness some significant opportunities:

- Our communities are ambitious and are coming forward with plans to deliver improved activity and sports facilities; both Cheltenham Saracens FC and Belmont School have developed multi-million pound sporting schemes. A new strategy can help create the framework by which these communities can access external investment.
- Creating opportunities to be more physically active and to enjoy sports is going to be central to creating sustainable and healthy communities in our growth areas – Elms Park and Golden Valley. A new strategy will set out how we use physical activity and sports to support the longer-term growth ambitions of Cheltenham.

### **3. Summary of the vision and outcomes for physical activity and sports**

**3.1** Cabinet in July 2023 agreed the following draft vision:

**3.2** *Cheltenham is a place where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from physical activity and sports, creating active, healthy and happy communities*

**3.3** The three outcomes are as follows:

- **Cheltenham is a place where all our communities enjoy and benefit from physical activity;**
- **Our physical and community infrastructure is accessible and affordable but also high-quality and sustainable; and**
- **We will collaborate to create active and inclusive communities.**

**3.4** The vision and outcomes for physical activity and sport created a framework for the second phase of the strategy – which is the assessment of the physical infrastructure that underpins sports and physical activity in Cheltenham, split into both an assessment of our playing pitches and an assessment of our built sporting facilities.

**3.5** To achieve the vision agreed with partners, the strategy and updated assessments should deliver against the following objectives:

- Cheltenham has the physical sporting infrastructure (playing pitches and built facilities) needed to ensure everyone has the opportunity to enjoy sports and physical activity.
- Cheltenham has the community sporting infrastructure (clubs, teams, and groups) needed to ensure everyone has the opportunity to enjoy sports and physical activity.
- That this physical and community infrastructure is of appropriate quality, is in the right place to meet current and projected future demand, meets up-to-date standards of accessibility and is sustainable over the longer-term.

- We create active communities where everyone has the chance to be active and thrive.

**3.6** The assessments provide a technical evidence base to shape future investments within the context of:

- An up-to-date picture of our population;
- An up-to-date picture of current provision;
- An up-to-date assessment of future needs in respects of sports and recreation facilities, clearly identifying any under/over provision up to 2041.

**3.7** The final strategy will set out how the planning system, changes in policy and potential funding bids can deliver improvements to the physical infrastructure that underpins sports and physical activity.

**3.8** The council went out to procurement via Sport England's Active Environments Framework and after a thorough analysis, Max Associates was appointed to carry out both the playing pitch and built sports facilities assessments.

**4. The Built Facilities assessment**

**4.1** The Built Facilities report looks at the following sports and leisure provision:

Athletics tracks
Bowls (indoor and outdoor)
Cycling facilities
Gym and fitness facilities
Gymnastics
Indoor cricket
Indoor football and futsal
Indoor Lacrosse
Indoor swimming pools (minimum size 160sqm)
Netball (indoor and outdoor)
Outdoor education type facilities
Sports halls 3+ courts size (badminton, basketball and volleyball)
Squash
Tennis (indoor and dedicated outdoor), plus padel and pickleball
Village halls/community halls and their role in providing sport and physical activity opportunities
Wheeled sports (ramps and facilities for BMX, skateboard, scooters)

**4.2** Consultation was undertaken with national governing bodies, sports clubs, schools and parish councils and the assessment uses Sport England Tools such as Active Places Power and Active Lives data.

**4.3** In addition, Sport England Facility Planning Models (FPM) were completed for sports halls and swimming pools in October-November 2023, the key findings of these are set out below. These studies are a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access.

**4.4 Sports Halls**

**4.5** The total supply of sports halls in 2023 is 20 halls across 11 sites, the equivalent of 80.7 badminton courts, of which 62.2 are available for community use in the weekly peak period.

**4.6** By 2041 the average age of the sites will be 48 years, and Leisure at Cheltenham will be 70 years old. There is an increasing need for modernisation of sports halls as the stock ages.

**4.7** Unmet demand is low; 4% of demand in 2023 and 2041. This equates to 1.3 courts in 2023 and 1.4 courts in 2041. All unmet demand is from residents who live too far from a sports hall.

**4.8** Subject to negotiations with education providers, there is scope to increase the hours available at peak times.

**4.9** The majority of sports halls are based within educational sites. It is, therefore, also worth considering community spaces where physical activities that do not require a high sports hall ceiling can take place e.g. yoga, Pilates and martial arts. This would free up space for activities that require larger and higher ceiling sports courts e.g. basketball, netball, volleyball and badminton.

**4.10 Sports Halls Recommendations:**

<p><b>Sports Halls recommendations from Max Associates</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future consideration of options for the future of Leisure at Cheltenham due to its importance as the only public facility in the borough, its extensive off-peak availability and its proximity to some of more deprived areas. The size of any new sports hall facilities at Leisure at Cheltenham should take into account the new provision being proposed as part of the strategic allocations at north west and west Cheltenham, as the assessment has shown that there is currently a sufficient supply of sports hall courts across the borough.</li> <li>• Whilst CBC have a responsibility for Leisure at Cheltenham, modernisation of education based sports halls will be the responsibility of the schools. CBC should continue to work in partnership with schools and encourage investment/modernisation where community access is given. The Council could also provide support with regards to applying for funding and supporting any planning applications.</li> <li>• New housing developments to the north and west of the borough will create additional demand on nearby sports halls. Consider securing developer contributions toward modernisation of these facilities, as well as securing continued community access, is key.</li> <li>• The Council should work with education providers to increase community access to sports halls, with increased secured community access provided through formal community use agreements.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Considerations / issues</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of school facilities are independent and there is a reliance on these schools for community access. Maintaining good relationships with these schools and collaborating with them to support the implementation of the sport and physical activity strategy will be important to maintain community access at these sites.</li> <li>• If new sports halls are provided as part of the community facilities linked to the housing developments, this could enable a reduction in sports hall requirements at Leisure at</li> <li>• Many users of Cheltenham facilities come from Tewkesbury Borough. It will be important to understand their future plans with regards to facility strategies.</li> </ul>

**4.11 Swimming Pools**

**4.12** Swimming pool supply is nine pools across seven sites (including Sandford Parks Lido) – though 38% of water space (788 sqm) is unavailable during the weekly peak period due to usage by the schools.

**4.13** Cheltenham has an extensive supply in terms of water space, much higher than surrounding local authority areas, resulting in high levels of imported demand, particularly from Tewkesbury Borough

**4.14** The average age of swimming pools is 46 years in 2023 and 64 years in 2041. Most sites have been modernised but refurbishments tended to be 15-20 years ago. Therefore there is an increasing need for modernisation and/or replacement as less attractive to residents by 2041.

**4.15** Unmet demand is low (only 3% in both 2023 and 2041), 32 sqm of water in 2023 and 36 sqm in 2041. All unmet demand is due to residents being too far from a swimming pool.

<p><b>Swimming Pool recommendations from Max Associates</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need analysis and evidence points to the need to retain and invest in the pool sites.</li> <li>• Large existing supply of water space in Cheltenham relative to demand but the existing swimming pool stock is ageing.</li> <li>• Scope to increase hours for community use at school pools to reduce proportion of used capacity of the pool at peak times. However, this will be dependent on schools being willing to increase access for community use.</li> <li>• Leisure at Cheltenham is major swimming site in borough, both in terms of range of facilities it offers and scale - provides over third of borough’s total peak time supply. The facility is currently 52 years old; maintenance and other operating costs will continue to increase with time.</li> <li>• Start to explore options for Leisure at Cheltenham to ensure the future water space meets the demand of the local population and maximises flexibility in programme deliver, this could mean a different pool configuration to the current offer.</li> <li>• Sandford Parks Lido provides an important facility in the borough. It needs to be recognised that the FPM modelling is based on national parameters for indoor pools, and these may not apply to outdoor heated lidos.</li> <li>• Given number of educational facilities that provide swimming pools in the borough, good communications, partnership working and community use agreements with schools is important to continue and seek to put community agreements in place if they don’t already exist. It should be noted that community use is reliant on schools wanting to increase or provide community access the Council has no direct control to enforce community use agreements.</li> <li>• Discuss findings of the report with Tewkesbury Borough Council.</li> <li>• Unmet demand is low &amp; insufficient to justify new swimming pool.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Considerations / issues</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community use is reliant on schools wanting to increase or provide community access. The Council has no power to enforce community use agreements.</li> </ul>

**4.16 Summary of key findings and recommendations for each sector:**

Sector	Overview	Max Associates’ Recommendations
<p><b>Health and fitness</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health &amp; fitness is not just provided by the council, the private and education sectors also have a role to play in provision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider investment into gym facilities at Leisure to meet potential growth in fitness members. Any future changes to Council fitness provision should be subject to a business case to test financial viability</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is potential to increase fitness membership at Leisure at if investment is made</li> </ul>	
<b>Studios</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studios are an important part of the wider health and fitness offer</li> <li>• They provide flexible spaces that can be used for a variety of activities</li> <li>• These additional spaces ensure sports hall activities are not occupied by fitness classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studios should be considered within new builds or refurbishments to ensure sports hall activities are not occupied by fitness classes.</li> <li>• Any future development of investment at Leisure at Cheltenham could consider additional studio provision</li> </ul>
<b>Athletics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prince of Wales Athletics Stadium, which is owned by the Council and managed by the Cheltenham Trust, is identified by England Athletics as a venue of strategic importance in the Southwest with three affiliated athletics clubs based there.</li> <li>• However usage and income from athletics activities is relatively low</li> <li>• The track at Prince of Wales Stadium is in need of re-surfacing and does not meet England Athletics standards for competitions.</li> <li>• England Athletics/UK Athletics do not have a specific capital programme for facility development</li> <li>• CBC is subsidising a regional facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council and Cheltenham Harriers to explore fundraising opportunities (including crowd-funding) to support investment into athletic facilities at the Prince of Wales Stadium.</li> <li>• The Council to explore longer-term options for the Prince of Wales Stadium working in partnership with interested parties.</li> <li>• The council to work with the Cheltenham Trust to explore how best to increase levels of activity within the stadium.</li> <li>• Include disability access in any track or facility upgrades.</li> <li>• Recognising the regional facility at the Prince of Wales Stadium, explore wider Community Infrastructure Levy contributions from across Gloucestershire and beyond could be of value in building the business case for investment.</li> </ul>
<b>Bowling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no purpose built indoor bowling facilities in Cheltenham and no requirements from England Indoor Bowling Association to provide any as sufficient supply in neighbouring areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure ongoing maintenance of greens to sustain quality.</li> <li>• Protecting existing bowls greens through the Local Plan will be key to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility or create improvements to be able to increase capacity at nearby bowls greens.</li> </ul>
<b>Gymnastics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• British Gymnastics identified the main issue for gymnastic development is having access to sufficient dedicated space so that clubs are able to grow and extend their programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council could explore the potential of facilitating club-led development of additional gymnastics facilities. For example, this could be providing support through any planning applications.</li> </ul>
<b>Squash</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 courts in the borough</li> <li>• England Squash recommend ratio of one court per 10,000 population. The population of 123,373 in 2041 would require 12 squash courts in total. Cheltenham currently has double the amount of courts per 10,000 population than the recommended level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is recommended that squash facilities should meet the needs of future population, if the number of courts is reduced there would still be higher than average number of courts for the local population.</li> </ul>
<b>Tennis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheltenham has been identified by the LTA as a target location for a new indoor tennis venue. However, there is an indoor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheltenham Borough Council to continue to work in partnership with the LTA to increase usage, financial sustainability and</li> </ul>

	<p>facility in Gloucester approximately 20 minutes' drive time from Cheltenham town centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LTA priority for the future is that indoor court provision is realised and new outdoor floodlit tennis provision is included in new housing developments.</li> <li>• It is not the Council's responsibility to provide additional indoor tennis facilities, however if the LTA and local club(s) identify a viable opportunity then the Council could support the process, such as via the planning system.</li> </ul>	<p>to identify if there are any possible tennis club-led opportunities for a community indoor tennis facility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain park tennis courts which are important in providing affordable, engaging, and accessible opportunities for more female players and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.</li> <li>• Protect tennis facilities in the Local Plan</li> <li>• Encourage clubs to improve their facilities where appropriate</li> </ul>
<b>Cycling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• British Cycling is keen to develop the grassroots of cycling in a safe and control environment such as at Community cycling hubs, which include pump tracks and learn to ride areas. Consider community cycling hubs in future developments.</li> <li>• There is no requirement to provide indoor velodrome facilities.</li> <li>• There are five indoor cycling spin studios within Cheltenham which should be protected. Indoor cycling studios are a key activity/facility that support the wider fitness offer within leisure centres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycle infrastructure should be considered at planning stage if a new build at Leisure at Cheltenham e.g. cycle network to connect the leisure centre and safe cycle storage.</li> <li>• For outdoor cycling, British Cycling recommends Council engaging with cycle clubs to discuss future facility needs so club can continue to expand</li> </ul>
<b>Indoor Cricket</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The most well equipped facilities for indoor cricket are generally the public-school sites but their availability for community use and hire is limited.</li> <li>• Leisure at Cheltenham provides an important facility for indoor nets and winter indoor cricket for both club training and indoor 6s competition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any new provision of sports halls should consider facilities for indoor cricket</li> <li>• Consideration should be given to working with Gloucestershire County Cricket to find and provide suitable accommodation for current cricket clubs to access indoor cricket facilities and to accommodate future identified growth in the game.</li> <li>• Future provision of indoor cricket at Leisure at Cheltenham should be considered as part of any future feasibility study for the centre.</li> </ul>
<b>Table Tennis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential to include outdoor tables in new housing developments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council to start a dialogue with Table Tennis England about future provision of outdoor table tennis tables in schools and public places such as parks.</li> </ul>
<b>Wheeled Sports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no indoor skate or indoor scooter parks in Cheltenham.</li> <li>• There are three outdoor skateparks in Cheltenham; Montpellier Gardens, Pittville Park and the newest Oakley Skatepark, which opened in 2020, featuring the first concrete facility in Cheltenham.</li> <li>• There is one BMX pump track at Burrows park and a cyclo-cross circuit at Pittville Park.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider building a new skatepark as part of an outdoor play area at North West Cheltenham Strategic Allocation, as the other outdoor skateparks are located within the centre or east of Cheltenham</li> </ul>

**4.17** The report also sets out specific recommendations in relation to the following supporting elements that will contribute to improving the town's physical sporting infrastructure.



<p><b>Community / Village Halls</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the majority of sports halls based within educational sites, community spaces (particularly in areas of greatest unmet demand) are an important local asset where physical activities, that don't require a high sports hall ceiling, can take place e.g. yoga, Pilates and martial arts. This would free up space for activities that require larger and higher ceiling sports courts e.g. basketball, netball, volleyball and badminton.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Use Agreements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheltenham Borough Council needs to continue to work in partnership with schools where sports facilities are provided for community or club use.</li> <li>• Formal community use agreements could be negotiated, if possible, at existing educational establishments with sports facilities and new future educational establishments. For older facilities opportunities for a formal community use agreement may arise through the need for additional funding to update facilities or improve playing fields. For new facilities, a community use agreement can be provided as part of planning obligations through the planning process. This should help to secure and safeguard well-managed and safe community use by detailing how the arrangements are intended to operate, and typically should cover things like hours of availability, management arrangements and pricing policy.</li> <li>• This is needed to ensure continued community / sports club use of these sites. However, it should be noted the Council has no direct control to enforce community use at schools. If existing community use agreements are lost then there will be additional pressure for provision of sports halls for community use in the Cheltenham Borough Council area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan (SLP)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect built leisure and sports facilities that are required to meet the need and demand of Cheltenham's population within the SLP. This is to ensure against the loss of strategically valuable sports facilities that are available for community use or could contribute to meeting future community needs, unless replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Developer Contributions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where appropriate, Cheltenham Borough Council and its partners should seek to secure developer contributions from strategic developments that could contribute towards the development of strategic facilities, additional and safe walking, running and cycling routes, and, where possible, to open up other informal, multipurpose places and spaces where people can be active.</li> <li>• The Council should develop a detailed approach to securing developer contributions to support the emerging SLP e.g. through a Planning Obligations SPD.</li> <li>• The use of Sport England's Sports Facility Calculator should specifically be referenced with assisting to identify demand for and financial contributions towards halls and pools.</li> <li>• The Council should look beyond its administrative boundaries in considering the scope of Community Infrastructure Levy and planning obligations, this is particularly relevant in respect of Prince of Wales Stadium which plays a regional role.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Feasibility Studies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any Council investment for future facility development should be subject to a feasibility study to ensure it is financially viable</li> </ul>

**5. Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment**

**5.1** The Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) assessment looks at the following outdoor pitch sports:

- Football;
- Rugby Union;
- Rugby League;
- Lacrosse;

- Hockey;
- Cricket: and
- Other Sports (American Football).

**5.2** Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) relevant to the sports noted above were also captured, as will any ancillary provision that accompanies any pitches included with the agreed scope.

**5.3** The PPS has been developed in line with Sport England’s ‘Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy’, which was published in October 2013.

**5.4** The guidance references a 10 step, 5 stage approach:

- Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach (Step 1);
- Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision (Steps 2 & 3);
- Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views (Steps 4, 5 & 6);
- Stage D: Develop the strategy (Steps 7 & 8);
- Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date (Steps 9 & 10).

**5.5** The Playing Pitch assessment covers stages A – C of the approach. Following feedback from Sport England and the national governing bodies, work will now move to stage D – development of the playing pitch strategy.

**5.6** The table below sets out indicative key findings for each sport along with some provisional areas for consideration that still need to be robustly tested before inclusion within the final playing pitch strategy.

Sector	Overview	Areas to consider
Football	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are currently 44 sites in Cheltenham Borough that provide grass football pitches, this equates to 95 pitches in total. There are 54 pitches that are available for community use across 21 sites;</li> <li>• 41% (39) of pitches assessed as good, 39% (37) of pitches were assessed as standard and 20% (19) of pitches were assessed as poor</li> <li>• All poor quality pitches that are available for community use (12), are located on Council sites</li> <li>• There are currently 167 male teams playing in Cheltenham Borough and 15 female teams</li> <li>• If future demand forecast by clubs who took part in the consultation was realised, an additional 34 football teams would be created in the Borough</li> <li>• The greatest amount of demand generated would be for youth boys' football, this would account for 44% of all new teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider a plan for the improvement of the quality of pitches where the quality of pitches is poor</li> <li>• Seek to improve the security of tenure of football club usage at school sites</li> <li>• Consider a plan to improve the ancillary facilities at pitches were these are classed as being poor.</li> </ul>

<p>3G AGP's</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is currently one full size 3G AGP in Cheltenham Borough that is located at All Saints Academy, there is also a full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch located just outside the Borough at Cheltenham Tigers Rugby Club</li> <li>• There is also a smaller sized 3G AGP at Civil Service Sports Ground which is also located just outside of the Borough</li> <li>• 50 teams currently train on sand based pitches or 3G AGPs outside of the Borough due to a lack of provision</li> <li>• Could also be demand from rugby league and lacrosse to access 3G AGPs in Cheltenham</li> <li>• Shortfall of 4 full size 3G AGPs in Cheltenham</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with sport national governing bodies about possible 3G pitch provision at the following council sites with the potential to be suitable for multi-sports, subject to further testing and feasibility studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Petersfield Park</li> <li>○ Leisure at Cheltenham/Prince of Wales Stadium;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Consider 3G pitch provision at other sites assuming community use agreements in place</li> </ul>
<p>Rugby Union</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are currently 43 rugby union pitches identified within Cheltenham Borough across 15 sites, 28 pitches are on education sites</li> <li>• There are three community rugby union clubs located in the Borough and four just outside of it</li> <li>• All grass rugby union pitches in the Borough have been assessed as being basic quality</li> <li>• If demand forecast by community rugby union clubs was realised, there could be up to 24 new teams created</li> <li>• There are two pitches with spare capacity to accommodate rugby union on a Sunday.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider a plan for the improvement of the quality of pitches through increased maintenance</li> <li>• Seek to improve the security of tenure of rugby clubs</li> <li>• Consider improvements to pavilions at pitches where rugby is played</li> <li>• Consider opportunities to improve senior rugby union pitches with sports lighting to help alleviate some of the demand from midweek training.</li> </ul>
<p>Hockey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are currently five hockey clubs based in Cheltenham Borough who between them have 25 teams</li> <li>• There are seven Hockey AGPs available for community use</li> <li>• There are 12 teams exported outside of the Borough as they are unable to access hockey AGPs for midweek training. This is partially due to them being used by football clubs</li> <li>• There is spare capacity of 8.5 hours per for midweek training on hockey AGPs in the Borough and 14.5 hours of spare capacity at weekends. This spare capacity identified is on sites where tenure is deemed unsecured and is therefore discounted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to improve the security of tenure on sites where hockey clubs are currently playing</li> <li>• Create additional capacity for hockey clubs on existing AGP when 3G pitches are developed by encouraging the relocation of football training demand</li> <li>• Explore opportunities to provide a hockey AGP as part of the North West Cheltenham development</li> </ul>
<p>Cricket</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are currently 12 sites in Cheltenham Borough that provide grass cricket pitches, this equates to 22 grass cricket pitches in total. Seventeen of these pitches are currently available for community use</li> <li>• There are currently two cricket clubs playing in Cheltenham Borough and three who are just outside the boundary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the improvement of facilities at local cricket clubs including increasing pitch capacity on CBC owned playing pitches</li> <li>• Identify a club who can take on management of Swindon Village pitch and potentially develop a new pavilion</li> <li>• Secure use of the new cricket pitches provided as part of the North West Cheltenham development</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were 20 cricket pitches assessed as good in Cheltenham Borough, one as standard and one as poor</li> <li>• If future demand identified by clubs was realised, there would be seven additional cricket teams created</li> <li>• There are current and future shortfalls identified on cricket pitches in Cheltenham across all three of the peak periods, Saturday, Sunday and midweek</li> </ul>	
Rugby League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheltenham Phoenix play and train outside the Borough at Cheltenham Tigers RFC</li> <li>• Cheltenham Phoenix reported that they are looking to grow two new girls' teams for the 2024 season at under 14's and under 16's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore options for a site within the Borough that could provide facilities for the club ensuring that there is a formalised agreement in place that secures their use and provides the opportunity for the club to expand and meet any demand.</li> <li>• This could be provided as part of the North West Cheltenham development</li> </ul>
Lacrosse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is one lacrosse club from Cheltenham Borough, which is Cheltenham Lacrosse club. They play at Civil Service Sports Ground.</li> <li>• Cheltenham Lacrosse Club highlighted some issues accessing 3G pitch provision for training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities for Cheltenham Lacrosse Club to access any new 3G AGPs that are developed</li> </ul>

**6. Cross-cutting priorities**

**6.1** Based on the key recommendations for each sport it is recommended that priority is placed on the following.

- Carry out a feasibility study into options for the future of Leisure at Cheltenham, given the age and condition of the existing building, known demand for facilities set out in the assessments and significant housing growth and provision of facilities as part of these developments. This will present the Council with an understanding of the capital cost and ongoing revenue impact of any new leisure provision.
- Discussions with UK Athletics on the future of the Prince of Wales Stadium should form part of any feasibility linked to Leisure at Cheltenham. As a regional facility, responsibility should not fall solely on Cheltenham Borough Council to fund the facility, both from an investment and revenue perspective. Financial viability needs to be tested through a feasibility study along with considering other options for the future delivery of athletics, which could include looking at alternative site options.
- Ongoing partnership development with local schools, particularly independent schools that currently provide community access across a wide range of sports, with the aim of securing community use for future years. It is recognised that these schools have no obligation to provide community use but access to their facilities plays a critical role in the availability and accessibility of sports facilities for Cheltenham residents.
- Closer working with Sport England, national governing bodies and local clubs to secure investment into sporting facilities
- Closer partnership working with Tewkesbury Borough Council. Given the extent of imported demand from the Tewkesbury council area, plus the shared interest in the strategic development sites at North West Cheltenham and West Cheltenham, ensure

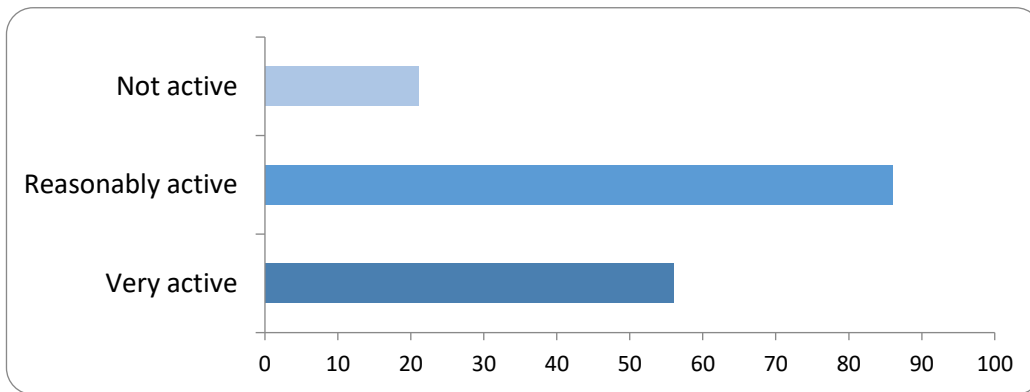
that the Council understands TBC’s plans for its facilities as any additional provision in Tewkesbury could reduce the demand on facilities in Cheltenham.

**7. Initial findings from the Cheltenham Physical Activity Survey**

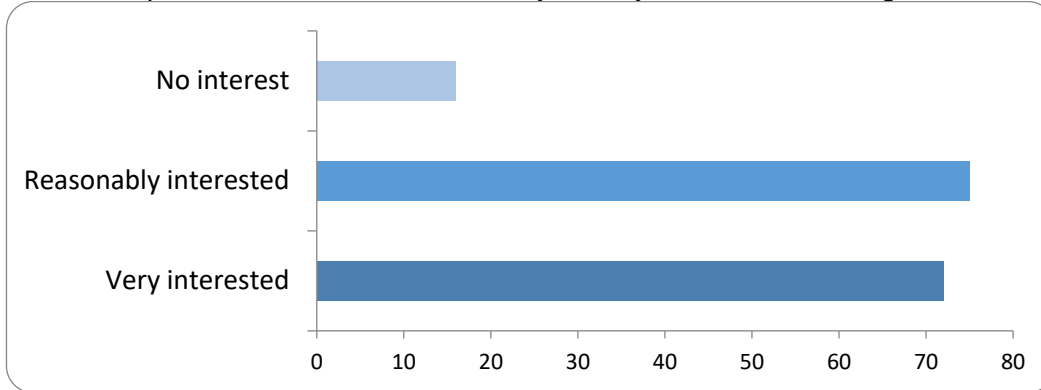
**7.1** Alongside the playing pitch and built facilities assessments, the Council has also undertaken a physical activity survey to understand how we keep people being active but also understand the barriers that might be preventing people from being active in the first place. The survey was shared online via a media release, plus additional face to face sessions were held to encourage a wider range of participants to take part in the survey.

**7.2** The survey opened on 31 January 2024 and is due to close on 21 March 2024. As at 19 March, there have been 163 responses.

**7.3** 87% of respondents feel either reasonably or very active



90% of respondents are either reasonably or very interested in being more active



**7.4** Over 60% of respondents enjoy being active either around their neighbourhood, in local parks or in the countryside

**7.5** Favoured ways of keeping active are as follows:

Option	Total	Percent
1. Walking	104	63.80%
2. Cycling	45	27.61%
3. Running	44	26.99%
4. Pilates / yoga	44	26.99%
5. Indoor swimming	38	23.31%
6. Going to a class	35	21.47%

7. Strength and conditioning	34	20.86%
8. Going to the gym	30	18.40%
9. Outdoor swimming	23	14.11%
10. Dancing	23	14.11%

7.6 The main barriers that are stopping people from being active are as follows:

Option	Total	Percent
1. Costs of taking part	68	41.72%
2. Lack of time	53	32.52%
3. Having to book in advance, or be a member	38	23.31%
4. Feeling nervous to start a new activity or go to a new place	34	20.86%
5. Getting to places to be active	29	17.79%
6. Not knowing what is available	28	17.18%
7. Feeling spaces are not welcoming	26	15.95%
8. Not feeling safe when being active	26	15.95%
9. Not feeling that that I will fit in due to age, ability, gender or any other reason	26	15.95%
10. Lack of skills and confidence	24	14.72%

7.7 When asked who is best placed to motivate you to become more physically active, the majority of respondents replied either friends or the wider community or themselves.

Option	Total	Percent
Yourself without any help	68	41.72%
Friends or your wider community	66	40.49%
People running activity clubs and organisations	57	34.97%
Health professionals	21	12.88%
Leisure centre staff / personal trainers	20	12.27%
Social media and online resources	20	12.27%
Not Answered	14	8.59%
Role models	11	6.75%
Other	6	3.68%

7.8 The results of the survey will be updated once the survey has closed on 21 March.

**8. Related physical activity and sports projects**

8.1 Feed Cheltenham Concession pass scheme – The scheme was originally launched in May 2023 as a means of supporting people’s physical and mental wellbeing during cost of living crisis. The pass is supported by the NHS and run by the Borough Council, Feed Cheltenham Network and Cheltenham Trust. It gives access to 12 free activities including swim, gym and soft play, in addition to a year of discounted access to pay as you go activities. It also offered holders 20% off Cheltenham Trust events.

8.2 The card has been successful with 150 active uses. As a result, in February this year, the scheme was extended and the active users offered a further 12 free activities and an additional 300 passes made available to food bank and pantry users.

- 8.3** The results from the physical activity survey show that the most significant barrier to people becoming more active is the costs of taking part. The concession pass scheme is actively addressing this barrier.
- 8.4** Health and Wellbeing grants 2023 – From funding allocated to Cheltenham Borough Council from the Gloucestershire NHS Integrated Care Board, it was agreed that a pot of funding worth approx £100k be created that community-based projects could bid into. Through working with the Cheltenham Integrated Locality Partnership, the following priorities were agreed for the grants:
- Connecting - support people to feel more connected to the communities they live in or identify with.
  - Being active – support people to lead active lifestyles
  - Healthy eating - support people to have access to a healthy, balanced diet
  - Culturally engaged – support people to have access to cultural and creative opportunities.
  - Inclusive - support the health and wellbeing of our diverse communities, particularly those that we know are facing health inequalities
- 8.5** Following an assessment process, 17 projects to the value of £112k were approved. Out of these, seven physical activity projects to the value of £60k were supported.
- 8.6** School holiday activity programme – No Child Left Behind is the lead body in Cheltenham for the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme which is funded by the Department of Education for children who receive benefits-related free school meals. The scheme provides a range of opportunities to be physically active.
- 8.7** The Spring HAF programme will run between 25th March and 5th April 2024 and will feature 14 activities that include football camps provided by Cheltenham Town FC community Trust, Holiday camps provided by Move More and gymnastics camps provided by Cheltenham and Gloucester Gymnastics Club.
- 8.8** No Child Left Behind is also planning a party in the park event to take place in August 2024. To link in with the Olympics, and the council's sports and physical activity strategy, the event will include a range of sports taster activities provided by the Cheltenham Trust, local clubs and organisations.
- 9. Consultation and feedback**
- 9.1** Both the built facilities and playing pitch assessments have been prepared on the basis of extensive consultation with Sport England, the national governing bodies, local sporting clubs and associations, plus community organisations.
- 9.2** The council has also undertaken consultation with individuals through the Cheltenham Physical Activity Survey as set out above.
- 9.3** A summary of the findings from the Built Facilities and Playing Pitch assessments was shared with the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 March. A verbal summary of the committee's feedback will be provided at the meeting.
- 10. Key risks**
- 10.1** The key risk is that without a robust strategy, the council will be unable to develop a long-

term vision and investment plan for Leisure at Cheltenham and the Prince of Wales Stadium.

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**Appendices:**

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Built Facilities Assessment
- iii. Climate Change Impact Assessment
- iv. Equality Impact Assessment

**Background information:**

[Report to Cabinet 25 July 2023 - Physical activity and sport strategy for Cheltenham – Part 1 - our draft vision and outcomes for physical activity and sport in Cheltenham](#)



## Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
385	If the council does not have a long term vision and investment plan in place for its sports and leisure venues then significant unplanned maintenance, repairs and investment may be required to keep the venues running and it may undermine the ability of the Trust (or any future provider) to run leisure services	Richard Gibson	4	4	16	Reduce	<p>source external consultancy support to deliver sports assessment and recommendations for investment</p> <p>Develop long term investment plan and specific options appraisal of leisure venues</p>	Richard Gibson	
	If the council is not able to set out a robust assessment of current sporting and physical activity provision and a strategy for how to meet demand, there is a risk that provision will not meet demand	Tracey Birkinshaw	3	2	6	Reduce	<p>Undertake phase 2 work – playing pitch strategy and built facilities assessment.</p> <p>Once complete incorporate assessments with the review of the statutory development plan for Cheltenham</p>	Richard Gibson	

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**CHELTENHAM**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

***'Built Leisure and Sports Facilities Report  
2024-2041***

Cabinet 2 April 2024

**2024**



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<b>Accessibility</b>	The FPM uses a distance decay function where the further a user is from a facility, the less likely they will travel. On average, a 20-minute travel time accounts for approximately 90% of journeys to pools. See travel time definition below.
<b>ATE</b>	Active Travel England
<b>Active Design</b>	Active Design <a href="#">Active Design   Sport England</a> was produced in partnership with Public Health England and is a guide to help implement an active environment. It is a combination of 10 principles that promote activity, health and stronger communities through the way we design and build our towns and cities. The 10 principles have been developed to inspire and inform the layout of cities, towns, villages, neighbourhoods, buildings, streets and open spaces, to promote sport and active lifestyles.
<b>Active Environment</b>	Active Environments <a href="#">Active environments   Sport England</a> is about the places and spaces that we move through in our daily lives that can have a bearing on if and how we move more. We know that the physical environment, through the spaces we live and work in, impact on people being physically active. It's about ensuring our built and natural environments and the connections in-between them are designed or adapted around people, creating the opportunities to increase physical activity levels.
<b>Active Lives</b>	The Active Lives Survey <a href="#">Active Lives   Sport England</a> comprises both an adult and a children and young people element. The survey is carried out on behalf of Sport England by the leading social research company Ipsos MORI. Active Lives measures the number of people taking part in sport and physical activity across England and their attitudes associated with this. It provides the most comprehensive and authoritative picture of sports participation in England and is central to Sport England's measurement of its own strategy.
<b>Active Places Power</b>	<a href="#">Active Places Power</a> Active Places Power is a website to help those involved in providing sport provision with a series of tools to guide investment decisions and develop sport provision strategies. Primarily for local authorities and national governing bodies of sport it can help to build an evidence base when identifying and planning where to target interventions for facilities, clubs or other activities.
<b>Active Travel / Active Transport</b>	'Active travel' (or active transportation or mobility) means walking or cycling as an alternative to motorised transport (notably cars, motorbikes/mopeds etc.) for the purpose of making every day journeys. <sup>1</sup>
<b>ANOG</b>	Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance <a href="#">Planning for sport   Sport England</a> is a guide to help carry out comprehensive assessment of the needs for a range of indoor and outdoor sports facilities. The guide focuses on the practicalities of producing a clear and robust assessment to help develop and apply local planning policy. As a result, the guide will be able to assist local authorities with meeting the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 98).
<b>Assessment of Needs</b>	An assessment within a given geographical area of the current and future needs for a type of sports facility which takes into account the quantity, quality, accessibility and availability of facilities.
<b>BMA</b>	British Medical Association
<b>CMO</b>	Chief Medical Officer
<b>CIL</b>	Community Infrastructure Levy
<b>DCMS</b>	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
<b>Demand</b>	Who wants to use facilities?
<b>Cheltenham Council area</b>	Also referred to as Cheltenham or the Borough
<b>Facility (ies)</b>	The areas available within a centre such as sports hall, pool, tennis courts, changing rooms etc.
<b>FPM</b>	Sport England Facilities Planning Model <a href="#">Facilities Planning Model   Sport England</a> is a computer model that helps assess the strategic provision of community sports facilities. It looks to assess whether the capacity of existing facilities are capable of meeting local demand for a particular sport. It covers sports halls, swimming pools and artificial grass pitches, and has also been used for indoor bowls centres.
<b>Leisure Activity</b>	Activities people do to relax or enjoy themselves outside of work and other duties.
<b>Local Share</b>	Which areas have better or worse provision, considering number of people who want to use them? It considers the size, availability, and quality of facilities, as well as travel modes. Local share is useful for looking at 'equity' of provision. Local share is the available capacity

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

Glossary	
	that people want to visit in an area, divided by the demand for that capacity in the area (considering deprivation). Local share decreases as facilities age.
<b>LSDG</b>	Leisure Services Delivery Guidance <a href="#">Strategic outcomes planning and leisure services delivery   Sport England</a> supports understanding of appropriate facility management models to deliver strategic outcomes through public leisure facilities.
<b>LTA</b>	Lawn Tennis Association
<b>Members</b>	Current leisure centre known users
<b>Moving Communities</b>	Moving Communities is a service that helps local authorities, leisure providers and policymakers to understand the performance of their leisure centres
<b>NGBs</b>	National Governing Bodies
<b>NPPF</b>	The National Planning Policy Framework <a href="#">National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework guiding the preparation of development plan documents, associated evidence base and supplementary planning documents (Planning Policy). It is also a material consideration which should be taken into account when determining applications for planning permission (Development Management)
<b>OHID</b>	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities
<b>Peak Period</b>	Weekday: 09:00 to 10:00, 12:00 to 13:00, 15:30 to 21:00 Weekend: 08:00 to 15:30
<b>PHE</b>	Public Health England
<b>Physical Activity</b>	Active living, recreational activity, sport, exercise, play and dance
<b>Planning Obligations</b>	Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), commonly known as S106 agreements, are a mechanism which make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation of the impact of development. S106 agreements are often referred to as 'developer contributions' along with highway contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy.
<b>PPS</b>	Playing Pitch Strategy sets out recommendations and prioritised actions to ensure the current and future needs of the population in given geographical area can be met
<b>Satisfied Demand</b>	This represents the proportion of total demand that is met by the capacity at the sites (pools, sports halls) from Cheltenham residents who live within the driving, walking or public transport travel time of a pool/sports hall. This includes pools/sports halls located both within and outside Cheltenham
<b>SE</b>	Sport England
<b>SFC</b>	The Sports Facility Calculator <a href="#">Sports Facility Calculator   Sport England</a> uses the parameters of the FPM and is designed to estimate the demand for sports facilities created by a new community as part of a residential development. The SFC is hosted and accessed through Active Place Power
<b>Site Capacity</b>	Visits per week in the peak period
<b>SLP</b>	Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury strategic and local Plan
<b>SOPG</b>	The Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance <a href="#">Strategic outcomes planning and leisure services delivery   Sport England</a> is designed to help create a focus and vision on local outcomes informed by customer insight. This will deliver interventions that affect behavioural change in target audience, ultimately delivering the desired results for that local authority
<b>Sport</b>	“All forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competitions at all levels.” (Council of Europe, 2001)
<b>Supply</b>	How many facilities are there and what is their capacity
<b>Travel Time</b>	The fpm uses travel time to define facility coverage in terms of driving and walking. The model includes three different modes of travel – car, public transport, and walking. Car access is also considered. The model includes a distance decay function, where the further a user is from a facility, the less likely they will travel. Survey data shows that almost 90% of all visits, both by car and on foot, are made within 20 minutes. Hence, 20 minutes is often used as a rule of thumb for the catchments for sports halls and swimming pools
<b>Unmet Demand</b>	Who is unable to use facilities and why? Is there insufficient capacity or are people too far away from facilities?
<b>Used Capacity</b>	How full are the facilities and where are people coming from (inside and outside the authority)? This is a measure of usage at pools/sports halls and estimates how well used or full facilities are. The FPM is designed to include a ‘comfort factor’, beyond which the



Glossary	
	venues are too full/too crowded to participate comfortably. In the model Sport England assumes that usage of more than 70% of capacity is busy and that the pool/sports hall is operating at an uncomfortable level above that percentage.
<b>Weekly peak period</b>	This is when the majority of visits take place and when users have most flexibility to visit.
<b>VPWPP</b>	Visits per week in peak period.

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## 1. Introduction

1.1. Cheltenham Borough Council requires an updated Sports and Physical Activity Strategy for Cheltenham. This is based on an update of Cheltenham's existing Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan and its Built Leisure and Sports Facilities Strategy that were completed in 2017.

1.2. The Council Sport and Physical Activity Strategy is in development. In line with Sport England's Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance (SOPG), the Council has completed its first phase agreeing its ambition and collective [vision for sports and physical activity and high-level shared outcomes](#). As part of the first phase, the Council held key stakeholder workshops – a key theme from which was the desire to understand provision of sporting facilities across Cheltenham and to work collectively to unlock the potential in these assets. Where there is a demonstrable gap in provision, stakeholders want to support investment into meeting gaps in supply, together with developing a shared vision for sport and physical activity to 2041.

*Cheltenham is a place where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from physical activity and sports, creating active, healthy and happy communities via an accessible, high quality and sustainable network of sporting infrastructure and through creating active and inclusive communities where everyone has the chance to thrive and contribute to Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity.*

1.3. To achieve the vision agreed with partners, the strategy and updated assessments should deliver against the following objectives:

- Cheltenham has the physical sporting infrastructure (playing pitches and built facilities) needed to ensure everyone has the opportunity to enjoy sports and physical activity.
- Cheltenham has the community sporting infrastructure (clubs, teams, and groups) needed to ensure everyone has the opportunity to enjoy sports and physical activity.
- That this physical and community infrastructure is of appropriate quality, is in the right place to meet current and projected future demand, meets up-to-date standards of accessibility and is sustainable over the longer-term.
- We create active communities where everyone has the chance to be active and thrive.

1.4. One of the aims of this Built Leisure and Sports Facilities Strategy is to provide the updated evidence base to support investment into the provision to meet the sport and recreation needs of Cheltenham now and into the future.

1.5. Cheltenham has embarked in the preparation of the Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan (SLP). This strategy will form part of the evidence base for the SLP. Tewkesbury are currently commissioning reassessment of their area, but to ensure a bridge between the two reports, this strategy and updated assessments will take into consideration two strategic allocation sites (West Cheltenham and North West Cheltenham) which straddle Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Council's boundaries and are currently live planning applications. The findings of this work is being used to inform the detailed Section 106 negotiations across these sites.

1.6. The strategy will inform and review leisure provision to determine future investment priorities and provide a technical base to inform delivery via current and future planning applications, future policy and funding bids set within the context of:

- An up to date picture of the population.
- An up to date picture of current provision.
- An up to date assessment of future needs in respect of sports and recreation facilities, clearly identifying any under/over provision up to 2041.
- The role of Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 obligations in meeting needs.

1.7. The Council needs to understand whether it has the right facilities in the right place to meet the current and future needs of its residents.

1.8. Local authorities are under great pressure in terms of budgets, changing demographics and increasing demands on health services, meaning sport, physical activity and health, including mental health are increasingly being seen as co-producers of local outcomes.

- 1.9. This Built Leisure and Sports Facilities Strategy will cover the following sports and leisure provision:

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

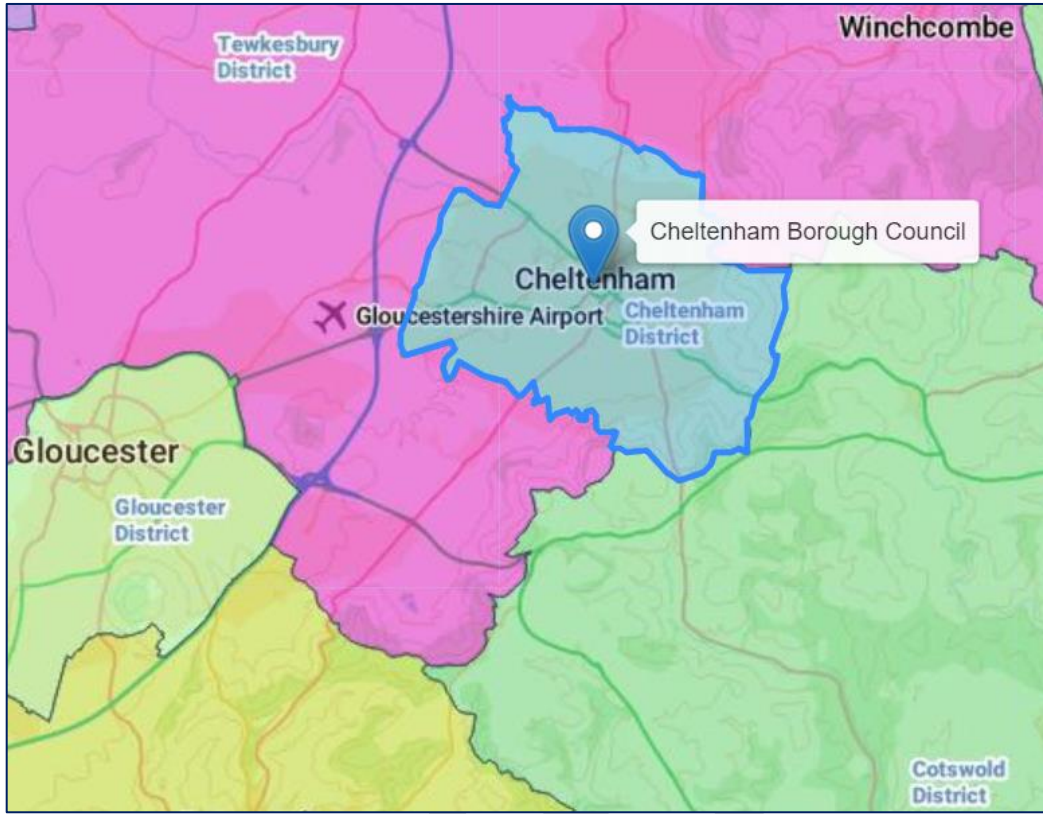
Built Leisure & Sports Facilities
Athletics tracks
Bowls (indoor and outdoor)
Cycling facilities
Gym and fitness facilities
Gymnastics
Indoor cricket
Indoor football and futsal
Indoor Lacrosse
Indoor swimming pools (minimum size 160sqm)
Netball (indoor and outdoor)
Outdoor education type facilities
Sports halls 3+ courts size (badminton, basketball and volleyball)
Squash
Tennis (indoor and dedicated outdoor), plus padel and pickleball
Village halls/community halls and their role in providing sport and physical activity opportunities
Wheeled sports (ramps and facilities for BMX, skateboard, scooters)

- 1.10. Consultation has been undertaken with national governing bodies, sports clubs, schools and town/parish councils and the assessment uses Sport England Tools such as Active Places Power and Active Lives data.
- 1.11. A Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) has been developed at the same time and there is some crossover where indoor and outdoor facilities are provided in the same location. Taken together the PPS and Built Leisure and Sports Facilities Strategy provides the overarching context, vision and priority outcomes which will collectively form the up to date evidence to inform the SLP and future negotiations in respect of development proposals and the councils approach to management of its own sites.

**2. Background**

- 2.1. Situated in the county of Gloucestershire, Cheltenham Borough is surrounded on all sides by Cotswolds National landscape and designated Green Belt. Cheltenham is a spa town and often described as "a town within a park". Its, context, within the National Landscape, its parks and gardens together with its architectural heritage and festival environment attracts visitors from countries all over the world. Cheltenham has a strong and vibrant retail centre and a strong economy, being home to GCHQ and reinventing itself as cyber capital of the UK supported through the investment and delivery of [Golden Valley Development](#).
- 2.2. Cheltenham is adjacent to the M5 motorway providing excellent links to Bristol and Birmingham and connected by the A417 to Swindon and A40 towards Oxford and London. The borough has good rail connections with Birmingham, Bristol and London. It is made up of 20 electoral wards.
- 2.3. The map below shows the Cheltenham Borough Council area and surrounding local authorities. Relevant to this strategy is Tewkesbury Borough Council, due to the cross boundary development impacts. The siting of neighbouring local authority indoor sports facilities, particularly sports halls and swimming pools, is important. The most attractive facility for some Cheltenham residents may be outside the borough (known as exported demand). For residents of neighbouring local authorities, their most attractive leisure facility maybe inside Cheltenham (known as imported demand). A customer’s choice of leisure facilities does not respect local authority boundaries. Given the relevance of Tewkesbury Borough, they are identified as a key partner and have been fully engaged in the preparation of this strategy.

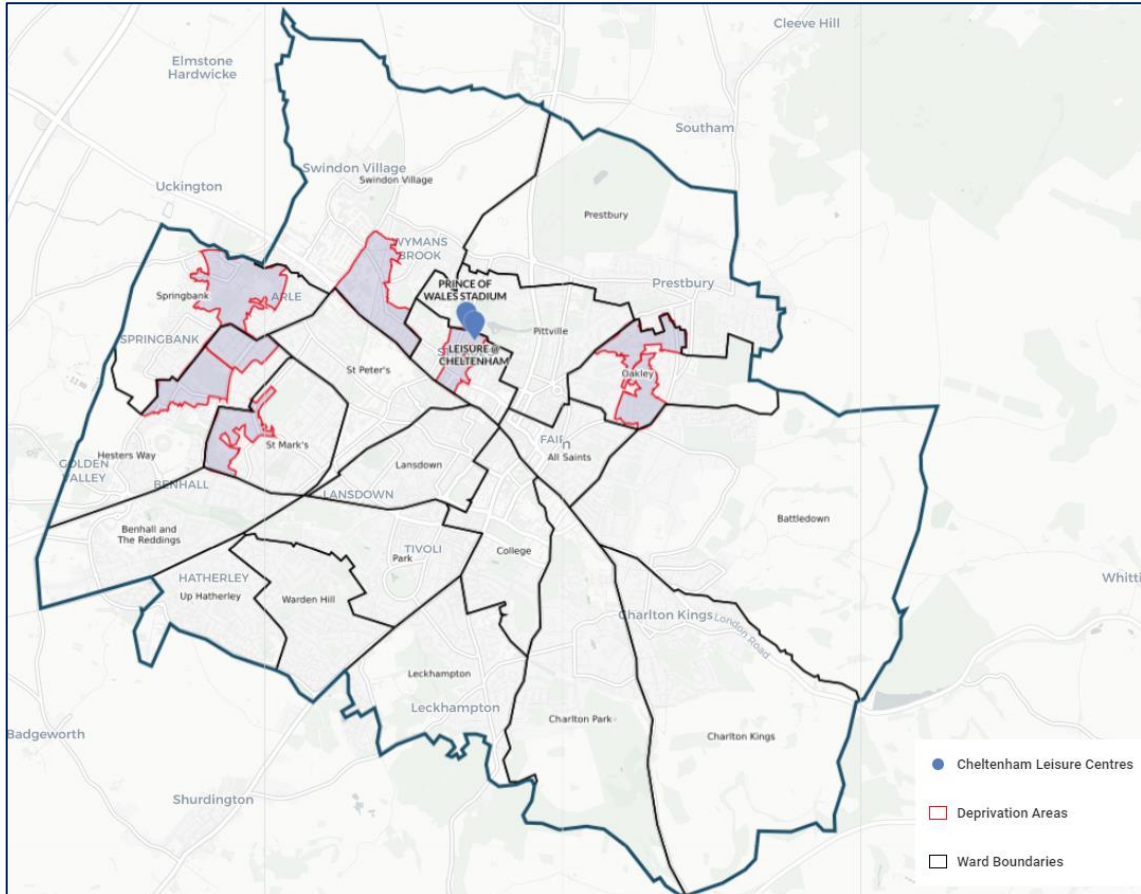
Map 1 – Map and Location of Cheltenham Borough



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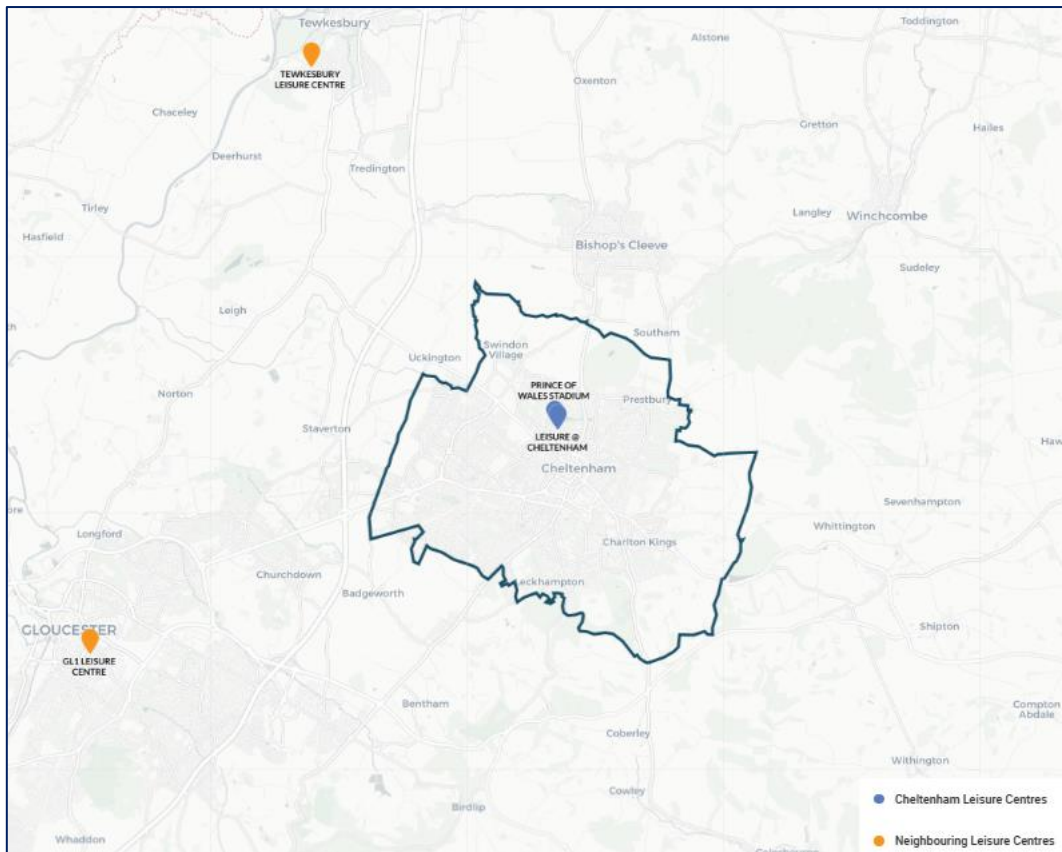
- 2.4. The borough is mainly an affluent area but there are pockets of deprivation as shown in the map below. From the 2019 Indices of Deprivation, there are two areas in the 10% most deprived in England where an estimated 3,014 people live, and a further six areas in the 10%-20% most deprived where a further 9,169 people live.

**Map 2 – Cheltenham areas in 20% most deprived in England and ward boundaries**



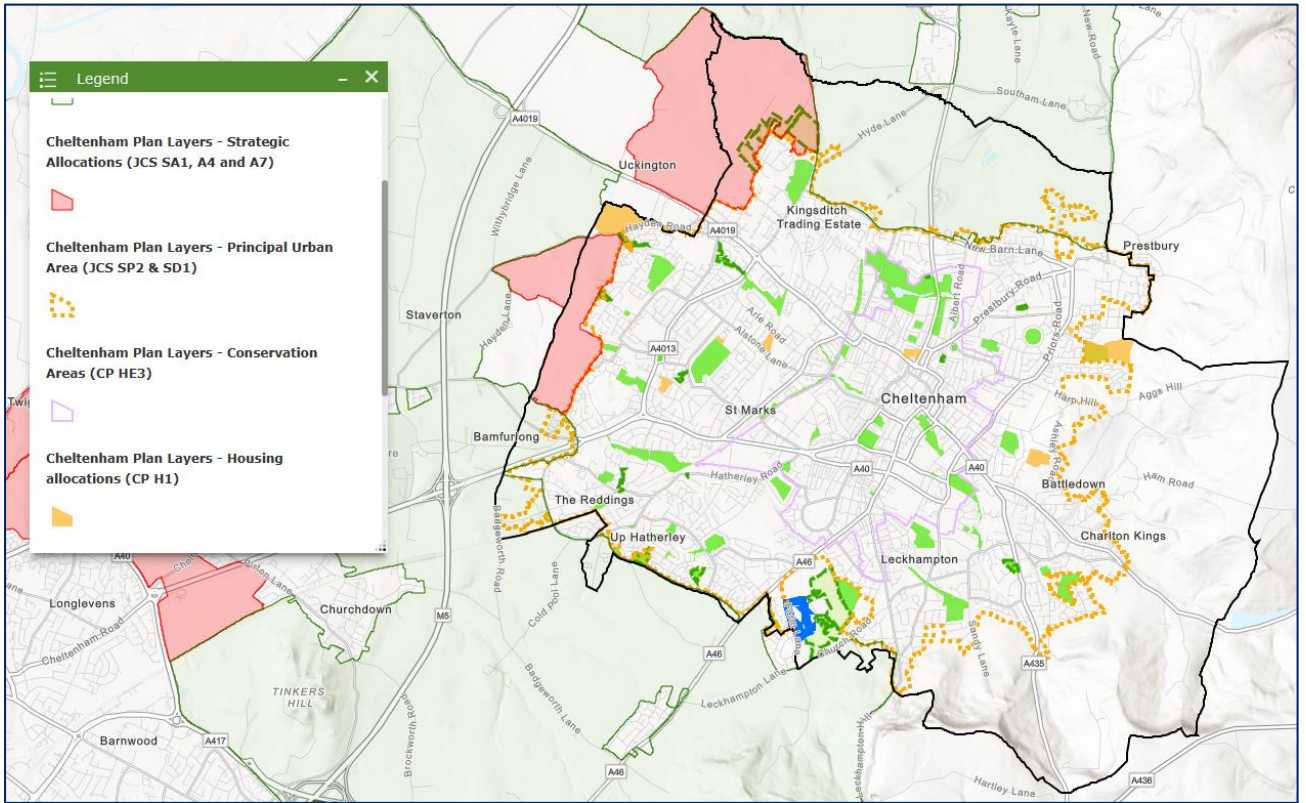
- 2.5. The Council owns, and is responsible for, one leisure centre called Leisure At Cheltenham which operates across two co-located sites, which includes a gym, sports halls, squash courts, indoor cricket, studios and swimming pool, and The Prince of Wales Stadium, which includes an athletics track and grass pitches. These two facilities are managed by the Cheltenham Trust – an independent charity that was set up in 2014 as the result of a commissioning review into how best the Council can deliver its leisure and cultural services.
- 2.6. The map below sets out Cheltenham Council and neighbouring local authority indoor leisure centres.

Map 3 – Location of Cheltenham Council and Neighbouring Border Leisure Facilities



- 2.7. As well as the influence of neighbouring leisure centres, future needs and population growth in the borough should be considered.
- 2.8. The map below shows the planned housing growth as part of the strategic allocations at West Cheltenham ( 2,500 homes) and North West Cheltenham (4,285homes).
- 2.9. West Cheltenham, also known as the Golden Valley, is being planned as a Garden Community across 3 separate developers working on a collaborative masterplan. Overall, this £1bn development will bring forward around 184,000 sqm of commercial office space with a focus on the cyber, science and technology sectors. Additionally, there will be around 2,500 low carbon homes with green spaces, community areas and, potentially, leisure facilities. Planning applications covering most of the Allocation are live and will likely be determined during 2024 to help bring this strategic allocation forward.
- 2.10. The land owned by the council and their partner HBD will deliver around 92,900sqm of commercial office space, including the new National Cyber Innovation Centre, and around 1000 new homes.
- 2.11. North West Cheltenham is largely being brought forward by the Elms Park Development, planning for a sustainable neighbourhood including 4,115 new homes, a 10-hectare business park, three new schools (one secondary and two primary), cycling routes and transport links to Cheltenham and Tewkesbury and a green infrastructure. The outline proposals also include a sports hub with new sports pitches. Planning applications are live and will likely be determined during 2024.

Map 4 – Strategic Development Location Map<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> [CHELTENHAM PLAN \(argis.com\)](https://www.argis.com)

### **3. Strategic Policy and Context**

#### **3.1. National Context**

- 3.1.1 There are a number of key national and local strategies, policies and guidance which inform and influence the development of indoor sports facilities need assessments. The main documents are summarised below. These national policies inform the approach to current and future provision of sports facilities, linked to health improvement, increased participation, and the appropriate levels of provision of facilities to meet local needs.

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Figure 1 – Key National Policies, Guidance and Strategies for Indoor Sports Facilities Needs Assessments

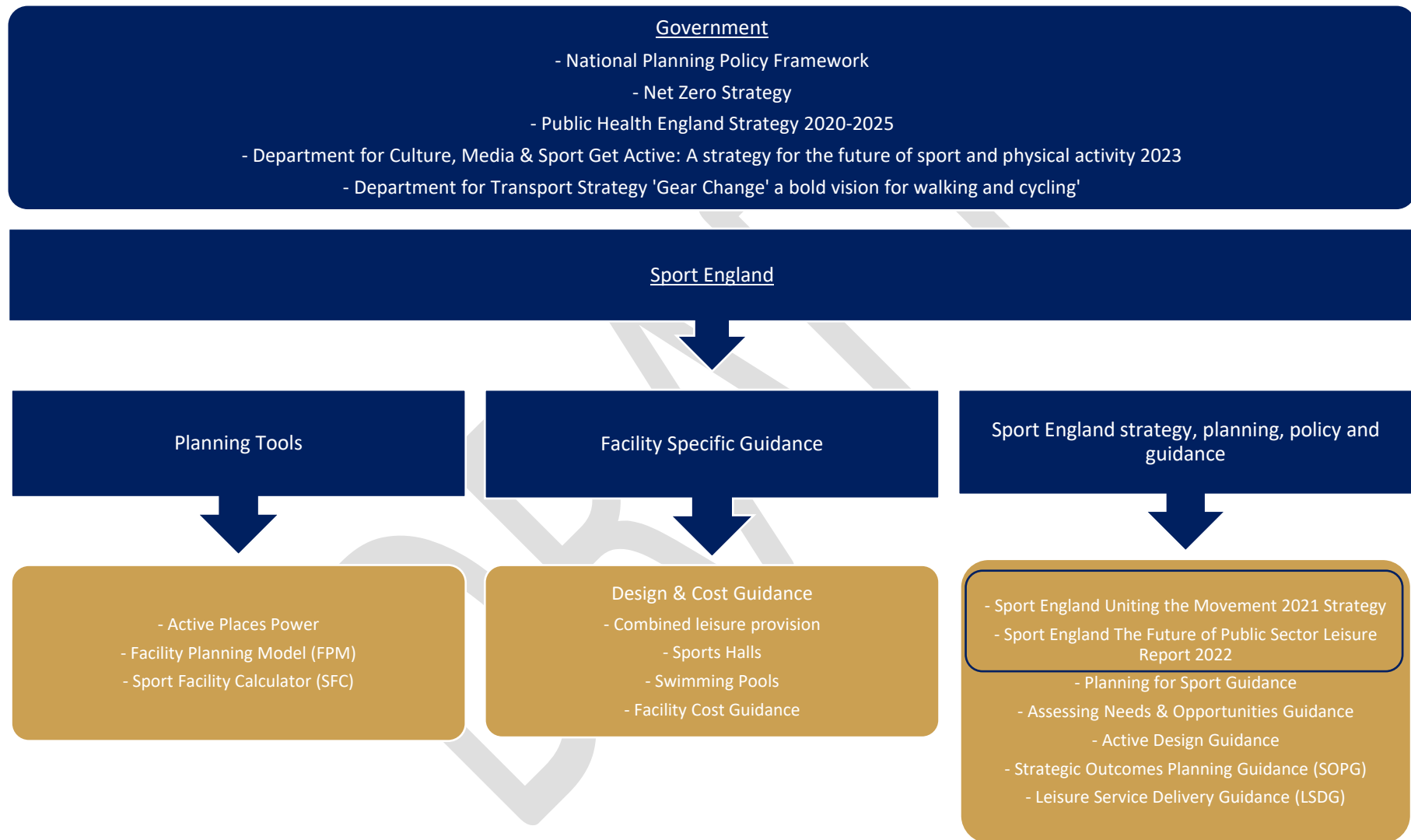


Table 2 – National Key Strategic Context

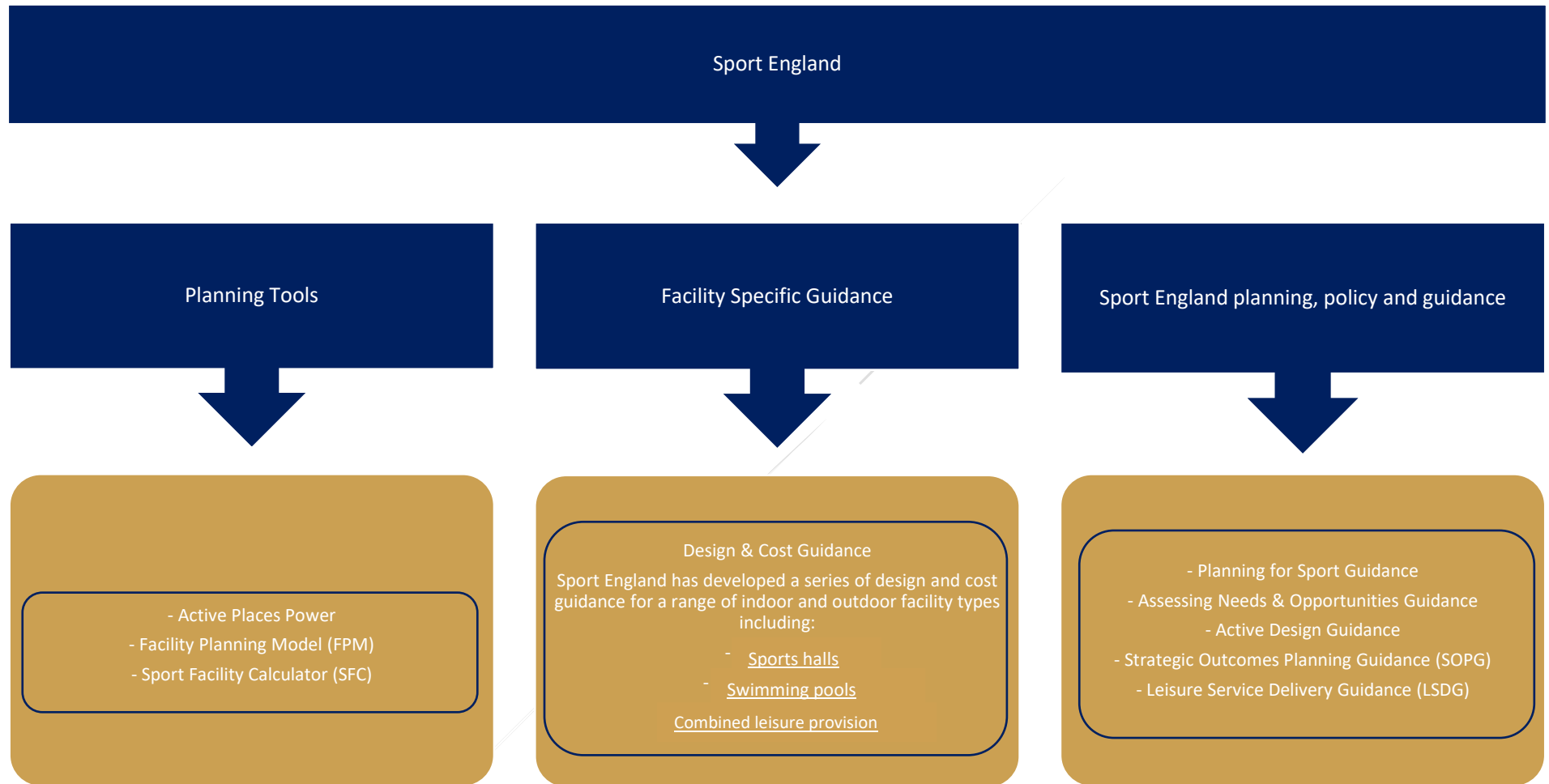
 <p>Department for Culture Media &amp; Sport</p> <p>Get Active: A strategy for the future of sport and physical activity 2023</p> <p><a href="#">Get Active: a strategy for the future of sport and physical activity - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>	 <p>Uniting the Movement 2021-2031</p> <p><a href="#">Uniting the Movement   Sport England</a></p> <p>Sport England Future of Public Sector Leisure Report 2022</p> <p><a href="#">Future of public leisure   Sport England</a></p>	 <p>Public Health England</p> <p>PHE Strategy 2020-2025</p> <p><a href="#">PHE Strategy 2020 to 2025 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>	 <p>BMA Get A Move On Report 2019</p> <p><a href="#">bma-physical-activity-briefing-get-move-on-oct-19-v2.pdf</a></p>	 <p>Ministry of Housing, Communities &amp; Local Government</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework December 2023</p> <p><a href="#">National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>	 <p>Department for Transport</p> <p>Gear Change “A bold vision for cycling and walking” 2020</p> <p><a href="#">Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking (publishing.service.gov.uk)</a></p>
Active Community Related Priorities					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More investment in the sector is targeted at inactive groups, and a more strategic approach to facilities to ensure communities have access to the facilities they need.</li> <li>• Making sport and physical activity more inclusive and welcoming for all so that everyone can have confidence that there is a place for them in sport.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting Communities - Focusing on sport and physical activity’s ability to make better places to live and bring people together.</li> <li>• Positive experiences for children and young people.</li> <li>• Connecting with health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Transitioning from traditional leisure services into an active wellbeing service.</li> <li>• Provision is place-based (ensuring health &amp; wellbeing services are at the heart of local communities &amp; aligned to needs of people in the communities).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote good mental health and contribute to the prevention of mental illness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisure (access to open spaces and recreation facilities).</li> <li>• School (physical education recognised and protected as an essential part of the school curriculum).</li> </ul>	<p>Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities - Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote social interaction</li> <li>• Are safe and accessible</li> <li>• Enable and support healthy lifestyles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community growth.</li> </ul>

- 3.1.2 Whilst the delivery of sport and physical activity is not a statutory service for local councils, there are some statutory requirements on the wider public sector which have implications for the delivery of sports, swimming and physical activity facilities and opportunities. These are;
- Integrated Care Systems (improve outcomes in population health and healthcare and tackle inequalities),
  - The Health and Social Care Act (duties on local authorities to improve public health) and,
  - The Department of Education national curriculum for physical education with all schools to provide swimming instruction either in key stage 1 or key stage 2.

3.2. **National Guidance**

- 3.2.1 Sport England is a statutory consultee on all planning applications that affect sports facilities. Sport England aims to improve the quality, access and management of sports facilities as well as investing in new facilities to meet unmet demand. Sport England requires local authorities to have an up-to date assessment of sports facility needs and an associated strategy including a recommendation that the evidence base is reviewed every five years. This strategy contributes to that requirement.
- 3.2.2 Sport England provides several best practice tools and guidance which are shown overleaf for Planning for Sport and developing a needs assessment.
- 3.2.3 Sport England have been engaged and an active partner in the preparation of this strategy.

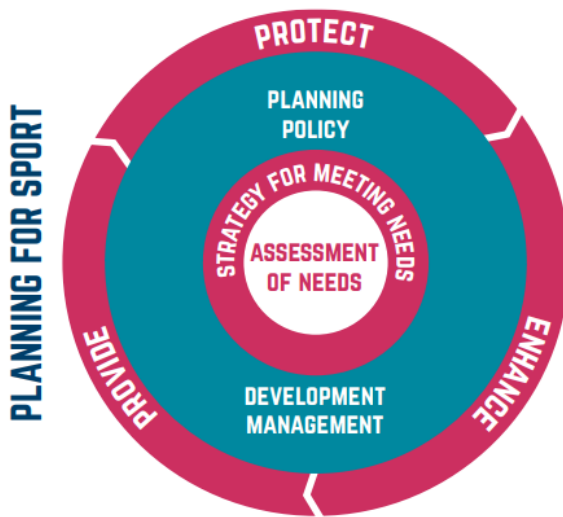
Figure 2 – Sport England Guidance



2.3. Sport England Planning for Sport Guidance

- 2.3.1. Sport England sets out guidance on how the planning system can help to provide opportunities for all to take part in sport and be physically active.
- 2.3.2. Sport England’s planning aim in working with the planning system is to:
- 2.3.3. *“Help provide active environments that maximise opportunities for sport and physical activity for all, enabling the already active to be more so and the inactive to become active.”*
- 2.3.4. This aim is supported by three objectives:

Figure 3 – Sport England Planning Objectives



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

- 2.3.5. Sport England’s planning aim and objectives are supported by 12 planning-for-sport principles included within the Planning for Sport guidance [planning-for-sport-guidance.pdf \(sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com\)](https://www.sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/planning-for-sport-guidance.pdf) which are split into four categories: **overarching, protect, enhance and provide** and shown overleaf.

Figure 4 – Sport England Planning for Sport Guidance 12 Principles



2.3.6. **National Planning Policy Framework** [Paragraph 102 2023 version]: 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.

2.3.7. Understanding people’s needs for sport and physical activity is fundamental to providing the facilities and land required to meet their needs, enabling them to engage in such activity and helping to create healthy and sustainable communities. The Government is clear that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities. Sport England’s guidance sets out a staged approach to assessing needs and developing and delivering a strategy to meet the needs which focuses on four key elements – the quantity, quality, accessibility and availability of provision.

2.4. **Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance**

2.4.1. Sport England sets out, through the Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance mentioned above [20140722-anog-published.pdf](https://www.sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/20140722-anog-published.pdf) ([sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com](https://www.sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/20140722-anog-published.pdf)), a framework for the production of the strategy.

2.4.2. **Sport England Active Design Guidance**



2.4.3. National Planning Policy Framework [paragraph 96]: Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs – for example, through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

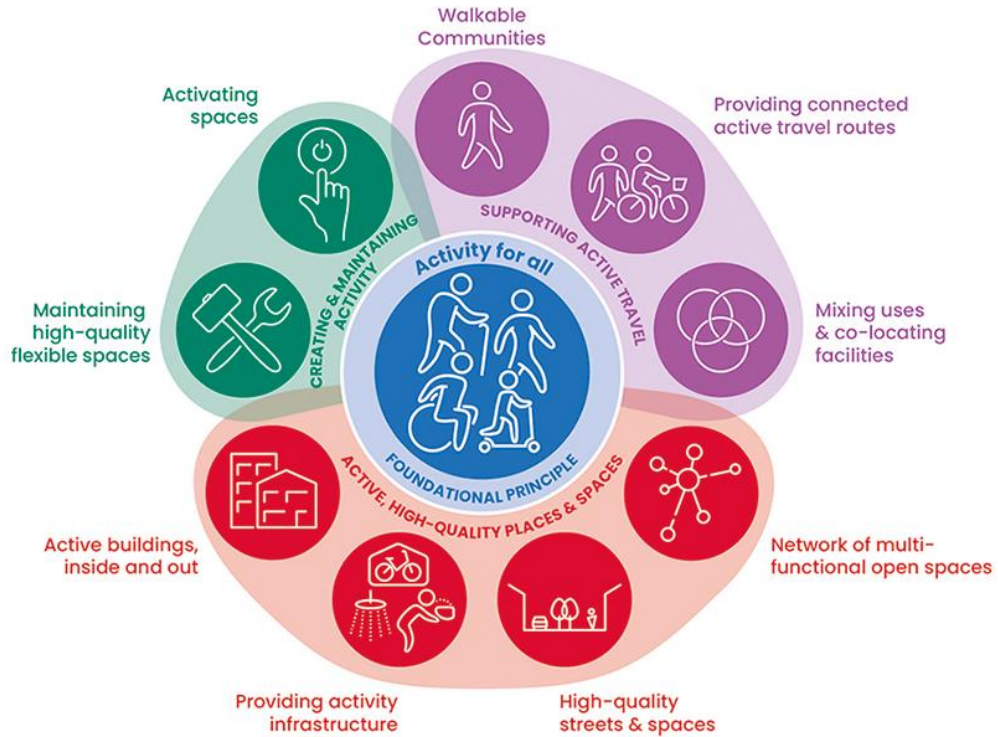
2.4.4. Active Design and active environment guidelines feed into the Sport England’s Planning for Sport guidance. The update Active Design guidance [Active Design | Sport England](#) provides ten principles which, when applied to built and natural environments, can create active environment that encourage people to be active through their everyday lives.

Figure 5 – Active Design



2.4.5. The ten principles are shown in the diagram overleaf, further detail can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

Figure 6 – Sport England’s Active Design Guidance Ten Principles



2.5. Sport

**England Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance**

- 2.5.1. Sport England recognises that partners will require support to achieve their vision. The “Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance” provides a robust and consistent approach in establishing local need and achieving the best return on the use of resources. The SOPG model is shown in [Appendix 2](#).
- 2.5.2. This guidance is a forerunner to Sport England’s Leisure Services Delivery Guidance document (formerly Sport England’s Procurement Toolkit) which supports a local authority looking to implement its strategic approach [Strategic outcomes planning and leisure services delivery | Sport England](#).

2.6. Summary

- 2.6.1. From a planning perspective, the national agenda makes the link between national planning policy, a local plan and population growth at local level, and the need to plan for increased demands for infrastructure and provision, linked to Sport England’s ‘protect, enhance and provide’.

2.7. Local Strategies

- 2.7.1. The figure overleaf outlines the key strategic documents and plans within the borough and surrounding area which the physical activity and sport services have a responsibility to contribute towards.



Figure 7 – Cheltenham Local Strategies



2.7.2. In the **Corporate Plan 2023-2027** it states that Cheltenham’s Council’s vision is;

“We believe that building a better future means leaving a legacy of sustainability for future generations. This is the foundation of our ambitions to reduce Cheltenham’s carbon emissions to net zero, but also encompasses building affordable carbon neutral homes across Cheltenham, conserving and enhancing our green spaces, and securing financial and economic sustainability through the Golden Valley Development. We want our residents and communities to thrive, not just survive, and this means continuing investments in partnerships and services that will augment the long-term financial stability of Cheltenham.”

2.7.3. In the corporate plan, we set out our commitment to work with partner organisations to develop a sports strategy for Cheltenham in the expectation that this will improve sports provision and help improve health and wellbeing opportunities for local people. This supports our partner role on the [Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board](#).

Figure 8 – Cheltenham Council Priorities <sup>3</sup>

**Key Priority 1 - enhance Cheltenham as the Cyber Capital of the UK**



Cheltenham is the cyber capital of the UK and home to GCHQ. We will build on our reputation for cyber excellence by delivering a new Garden Community which will create jobs, provide more new homes and encourage business growth. At its heart will be the National Cyber Innovation Centre - a brand new home for the cyber security industry.

**Key Priority 2 - Work with others to help make Cheltenham net zero by 2030**



Our planet is precious but it's under threat. We must work together to reduce carbon emissions. We will take action, offer advice and share ideas. Our net zero action plan and new Climate Impact Assessment Tool will ensure we deliver a cleaner and greener environment for all and help make Cheltenham and the Council Net Zero by 2030.

**Key Priority 3 - Increase the number of affordable homes in Cheltenham through our £180m housing investment plan**



Working with Cheltenham Borough Homes and others, we plan to increase the number of affordable homes. £180m will be spent on building new houses and on supporting tenants and existing communities. We will also continue to work in partnership with others to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping.

**Key Priority 4 - Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from our future growth**



There will be a great deal of money invested in Cheltenham in the future. This will result in more jobs, skills and housing. We will work with local groups and partners to make sure local residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's growth.

**Key Priority 5 - Being a more modern, efficient and financially stable council**

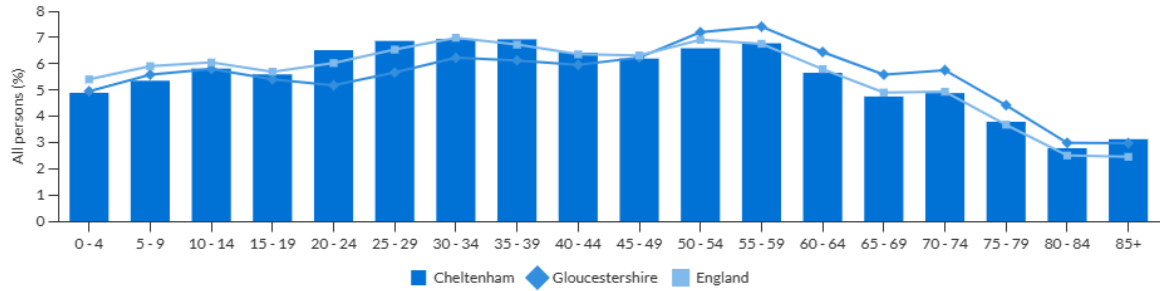


We will continue to work hard to keep our costs down and increase our income. This will help with the funding for key services. We want everyone to be able to contact the Council 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. So we will introduce new ways to make this possible. Above all, we want to avoid wasting the taxpayer's money and make better use of our resources.

- 2.7.4. The Council is committed to delivering a cleaner and greener environment for all and to help make Cheltenham and the Council Net Zero by 2030 as identified in the Corporate Plan 2023-2027 and the Climate Emergency Action Plan 2030.
- 2.7.5. Sport England has produced an Environmental Sustainability guide for sport and physical activity facilities. This checklist highlights key environmental sustainability principles to consider for environmental sustainability and net zero carbon. In some cases these may determine whether to refurbish an existing building with its carbon already embodied or to build anew. This checklist can be found in [Appendix 3](#).
- 2.8. **Demographic Profile**
  - 2.8.1. The 2021 census shows that Cheltenham's population size has increased by around 3,100 (or 2.7%) to 118,800 in 2021, while the population in England increased by 6.6%.
  - 2.8.2. The 2021 Census population per age group in Cheltenham is shown in the diagram below:

Figure 9 – Cheltenham Age Profile

<sup>3</sup> Corporate Plan 2023-2027



- 2.8.3. The borough currently has lower numbers of children aged 1-15 compared to the national average but higher than national average numbers of people aged over 85. The population split is 51.1% female, 48.9% male.
- 2.8.4. The Council area has a low proportion of residents from ethnic minority groups, 91.4% of residents class themselves as white, higher than the England average of 81% - though this has reduced from 94.3% in 2011 indicating that the town is becoming more diverse.
- 2.8.5. When looking at deprivation, 56.2% of households are not deprived in any dimension, higher than the England average of 48.4%.<sup>4</sup> 10.7% of households are within the 20% of the most deprived areas, lower than the national average of 19.9%.
- 2.8.6. The number of children living in absolute low-income families is also lower than the national average.
- 2.8.7. Based on ONS 2018 data, the population is predicted to increase by 4,573 from 118,800 in 2021 to 123,373 in 2041, with the largest age rise in 75-79 years. The 20-24 age group is predicted to be the largest age group by 2041.
- 2.8.8. Using population data provided for the FPM runs the **population is predicted to increase by 5,539 residents from 117,834 in 2023 to 123,373 residents in 2041**, it should be noted that this is a snapshot and the preparation of the SLP will fully test the population demands over the plan period to 2041. However, for this basis of this strategy, the above data has been used to determine future leisure facility and service requirements.<sup>5</sup>
- 2.8.9. As per the council’s vision that Cheltenham is a place where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from physical activity and sports, ensuring indoor leisure facilities within the borough are suitable and accessible for these population groups across the borough now and in the future will be key to enabling them to be physically and mentally active.

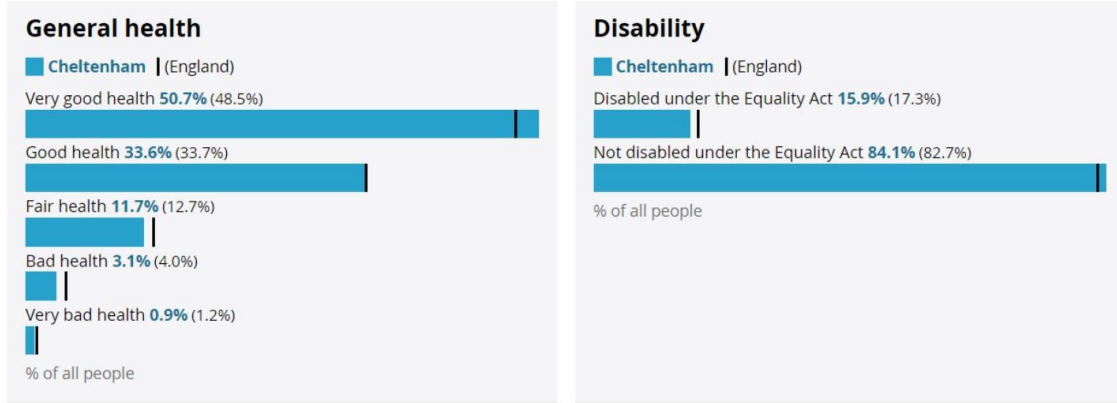
<sup>4</sup> ONS Custom Profiles 2021

<sup>5</sup> Source for FPM population - The total population for Cheltenham in 2041 was the ONS 2018-based subnational population projection because that is what Gloucestershire use. Therefore, both years are ONS 2018-based subnational population projection, but 2041 has the population re-distributed geographically to take account of the locations of North West Cheltenham (Elms Park) and West Cheltenham (Golden Valley).

2.9. Health Profile

# Health Profile

## Cheltenham



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

**55.6%** of adults aged 18+ are classified as<sup>1</sup> overweight or obese which is **lower** than the England average of 63.8%

**32.1%** of Year 6 children are classified as overweight (including obesity) which is **lower** than the England average of 37.8%



per 100,000 people 31.5 is the rate for under 75 mortality from liver disease which is **higher** than the England average of 21.2



776 is the hospital admission rate for episodes for alcohol-specific conditions in all<sup>5</sup> persons which is **higher** than the England average of 639

Life expectancy is 79.8 for males, lower than the national average and 84.3 for females, higher than the national average.

Life expectancy is 9 years lower for men and 8.4 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of the borough than in the least deprived areas.

**↑** Hip fractures in people aged 65 and over is 633.7 per 100,000 people which is **higher** than the England average of 551.2<sup>7</sup>



Emergency hospital admissions for intentional self harm is 187.2 per 100,000 people, **higher** than the England average of 163.9

**72.8%**

The estimated dementia diagnosis<sup>8</sup> rate in those 65 and over, **higher** than the England average of 63%

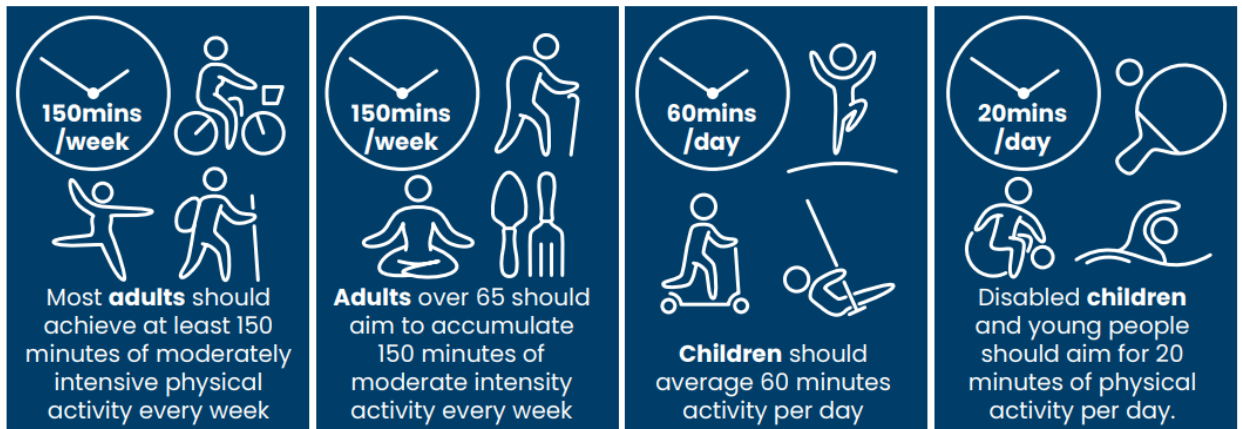
SOURCE: 1,2,5 – SPORT ENGLAND AREA REPORTS (2020/21/22) / 3,4,6,7,8 – PHE OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK 2018-23

- 2.9.1. Overall, the health profile of residents is good, with lower-than-average levels of adults and children as overweight or obese, a higher proportion of residents having very good health and a lower level of residents being classified as ‘disabled’.
- 2.9.2. However, there are higher than the national average levels for hip fractures in the over 65s, under mortality rate from liver disease, self-harm emergency hospital emissions and estimated dementia diagnosis rates.
- 2.9.3. In the Heads Up Cheltenham<sup>6</sup> ‘Cheltenham Unmuted’ survey 2021 , 37% of respondents said they felt happy, 46% neutral and 17% sad. Pre-Covid more people (65%) stated they were happy. When asked what made them sad in the last week the most common responses were; worrying about the future, feeling stressed or worried or stuck doing the same thing. When asked what made them happy the top four replies were; friends/family/colleagues, getting out and about, connecting with nature then keeping active.

**2.10. Benefits of Physical Activity**

- 2.10.1. The importance of being active is well documented, there are many mental and physical benefits of being physically active as shown in more detail in [Appendix 4](#). This makes improving physical activity levels important across the borough, but especially among deprived communities where inactivity and obesity may be more prevalent.
- 2.10.2. The UK Chief Medical Officers’ (CMO) physical activity guidelines that adults and children need to achieve to gain these mental and physical benefits mentioned above.

Figure 10 – CMO Guidelines for Physical Activity

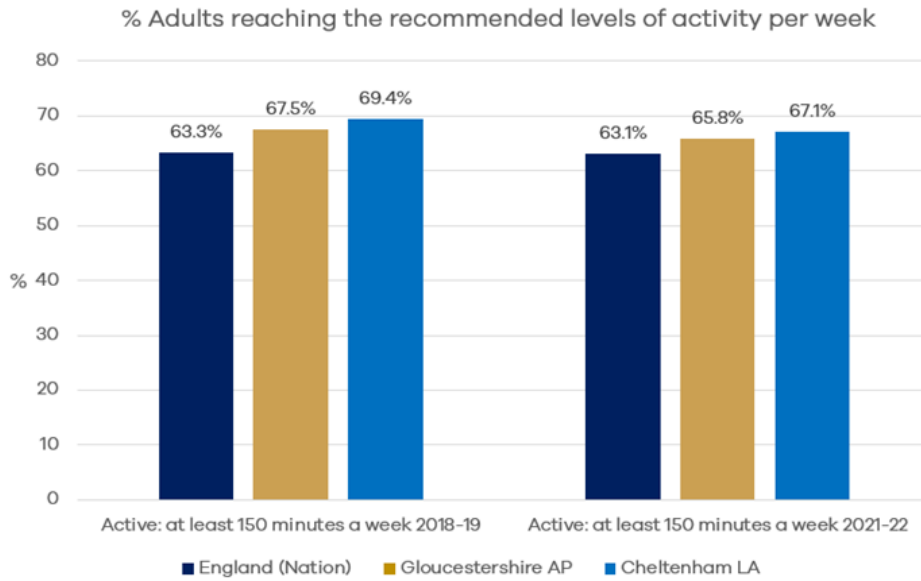


**2.11. Current Levels of Activity**

- 2.11.1. It is important to understand the Council’s current activity levels, and whether levels of activity are impacted by socio-economic and demographic factors.
- 2.11.2. In 2021/22 67.1% of adults reached the required levels of physical activity in Cheltenham, higher than regional and national average. But this still means that 22.9% did not meet required physical activity levels

Figure 11 – Cheltenham Adults Physical Activity Profile

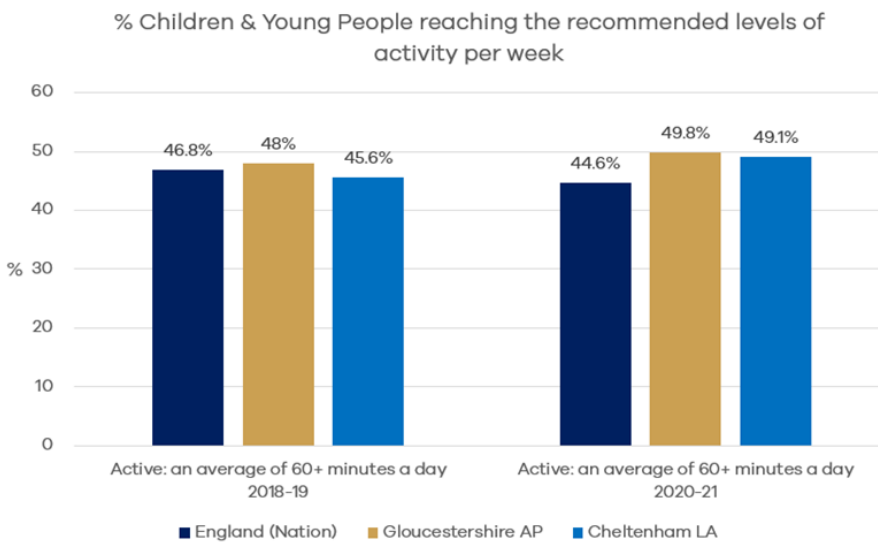
<sup>6</sup> Heads Up Cheltenham exists to encourage good mental health and wellbeing across Cheltenham [Cheltenham Unmuted 2021 survey results summary](#) | [Cheltenham Unmuted survey results](#) | [Community advice and engagement](#) | [Cheltenham Borough Council](#)



2.11.3. However, the Covid-19 pandemic impacted activity rates and adults classed as active within the borough and regionally have not returned to pre-Covid levels which is different to the national picture where the rate of people classed as active is comparable to pre-Covid. However, Cheltenham activity levels are still better than the national average. Cheltenham is comparable to the Gloucestershire position with both circa 2% lower than 2018/19 levels.

2.11.4. The borough has higher levels of adults classed as active, which could be linked to lower levels of deprivation. Those living in most deprived deciles typically see rates of inactivity circa 10% higher than the population as a whole.

**Figure 12 –Cheltenham Children and Young People Physical Activity Profile**



2.11.5. 49.1% of children and young people in the borough are meeting the CMO guidelines for activity, 3.5% higher in 2020/21 compared to 2018-19.

2.11.6. Gloucestershire, as a whole, has also achieved higher levels of activity rates but the increase is slightly lower at circa 2%.

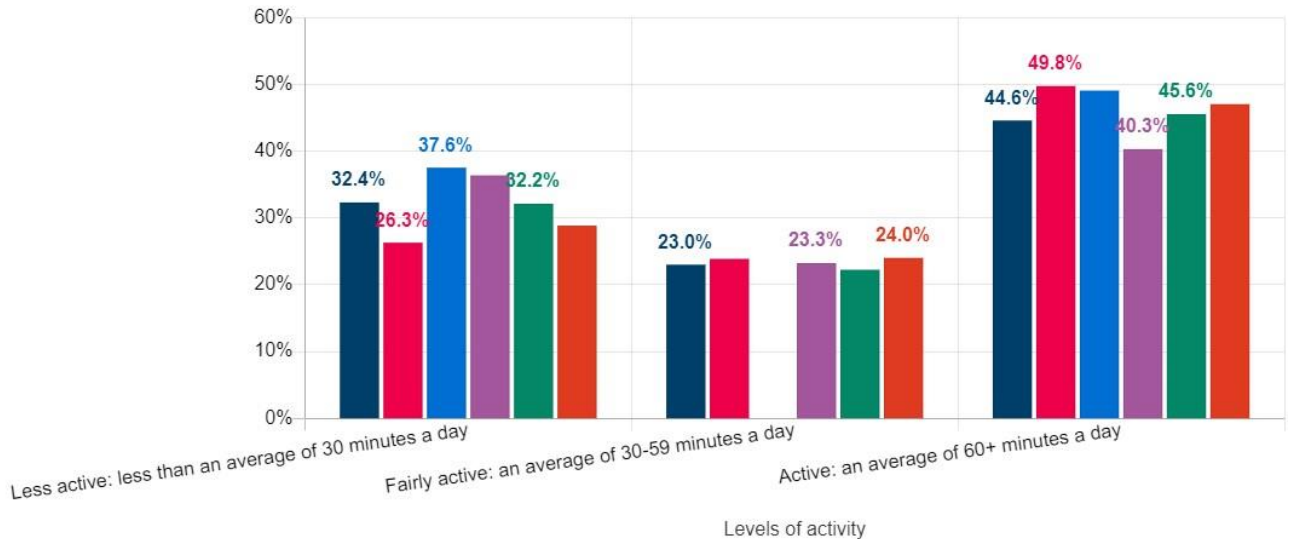
2.11.7. For the academic year 21-22, activity levels have returned to pre-Covid nationally (47%) and for Gloucestershire (50%). There is no Cheltenham data for academic year 21-22 to compare.

2.11.8. Children and young people living in lower income neighbourhoods are at risk of lower activity levels. The graph below shows how the most deprived (using the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index - IDACI) areas (in purple) nationally have higher levels of inactivity (less active) children and young people. A link to the academic 2018-2019 graph and data is in the footnote below.<sup>7</sup>

Figure 13 – Children and Young People Physical Activity Profile in comparison to low income areas

Levels of activity

Academic Year 20-21



% Levels of activity by Where:

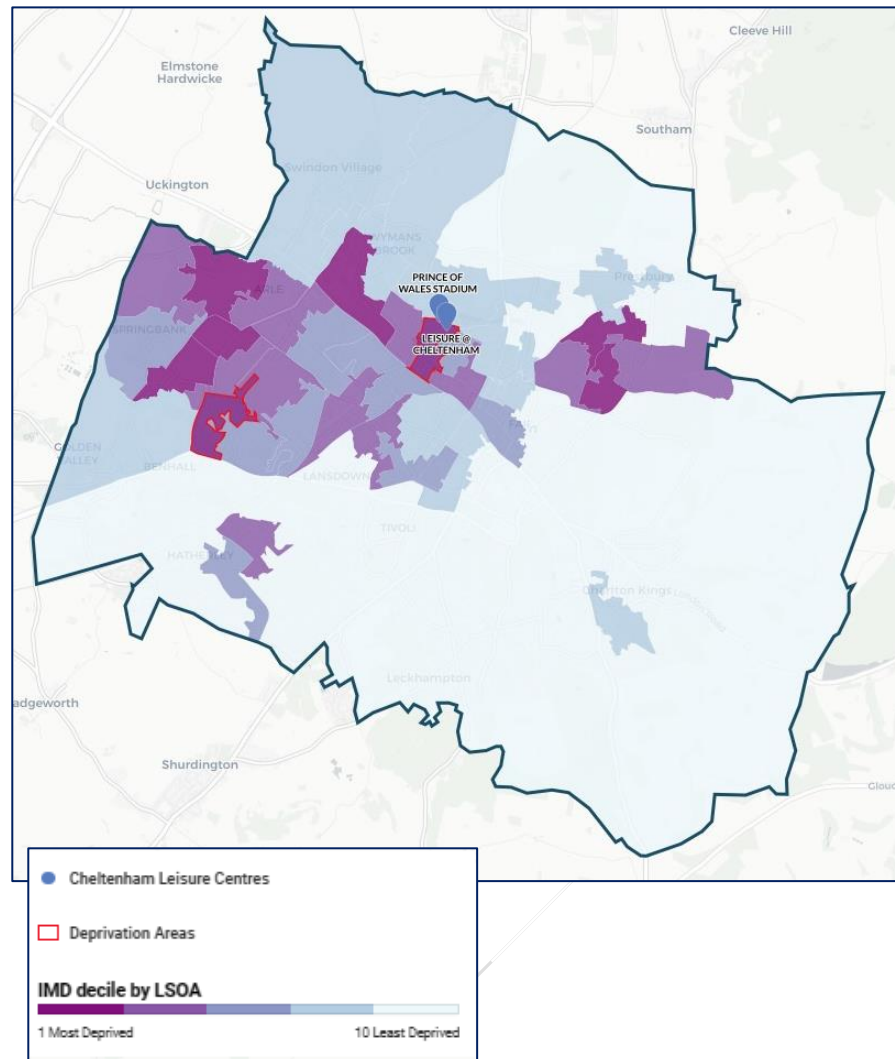
- England (Nation)
- Gloucestershire AP
- Cheltenham LA
- Most deprived places (IDACI 1-3)
- Mid-deprivation places (IDACI 4-7)
- Least deprived places (IDACI 8-10)

2.11.9. There are several areas of high deprivation in the borough. The map overleaf shows areas of deprivation in Cheltenham, with several areas (outlined in red) in the top 10% most deprived wards in the country. However, these areas of deprivation are all within a 20-minute drive and some within a 20-minute walk time of Leisure At Cheltenham and Prince of Wales Stadium. Leisure At Cheltenham is also accessible by public transport with three bus stops close by.

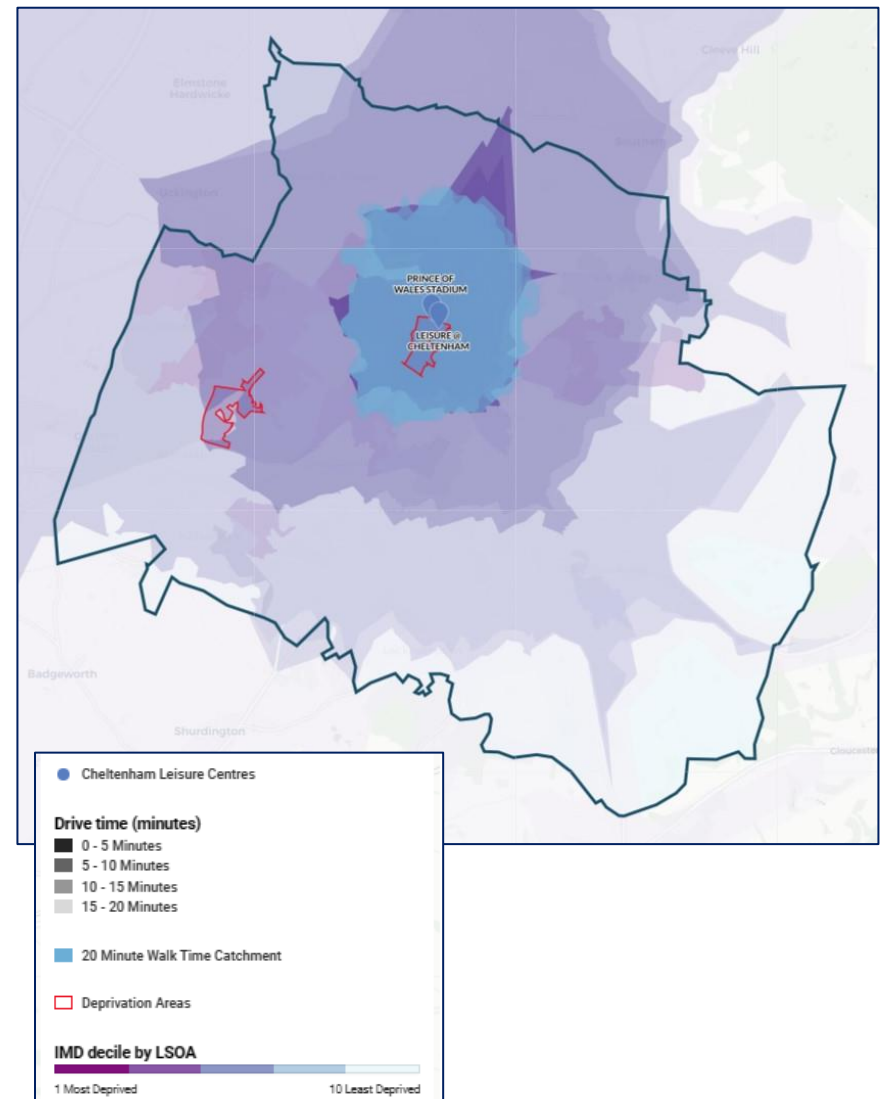
2.11.10. The map overleaf also highlights that the majority of the borough is within a 20-minute drive of Leisure At Cheltenham, apart from the southeast corner around Charlton Kings, Charlton Park and Battledown wards.

<sup>7</sup> [Active Lives | Results \(sportengland.org\)](https://www.sportengland.org/active-lives/results) Academic Year 2018-19 graph

Map 5 – Cheltenham Deprivation Map



Map 6 – Leisure At Cheltenham 20-Minute Drive and Walk Time Map





**2.12. Summary of Demographic Differences**

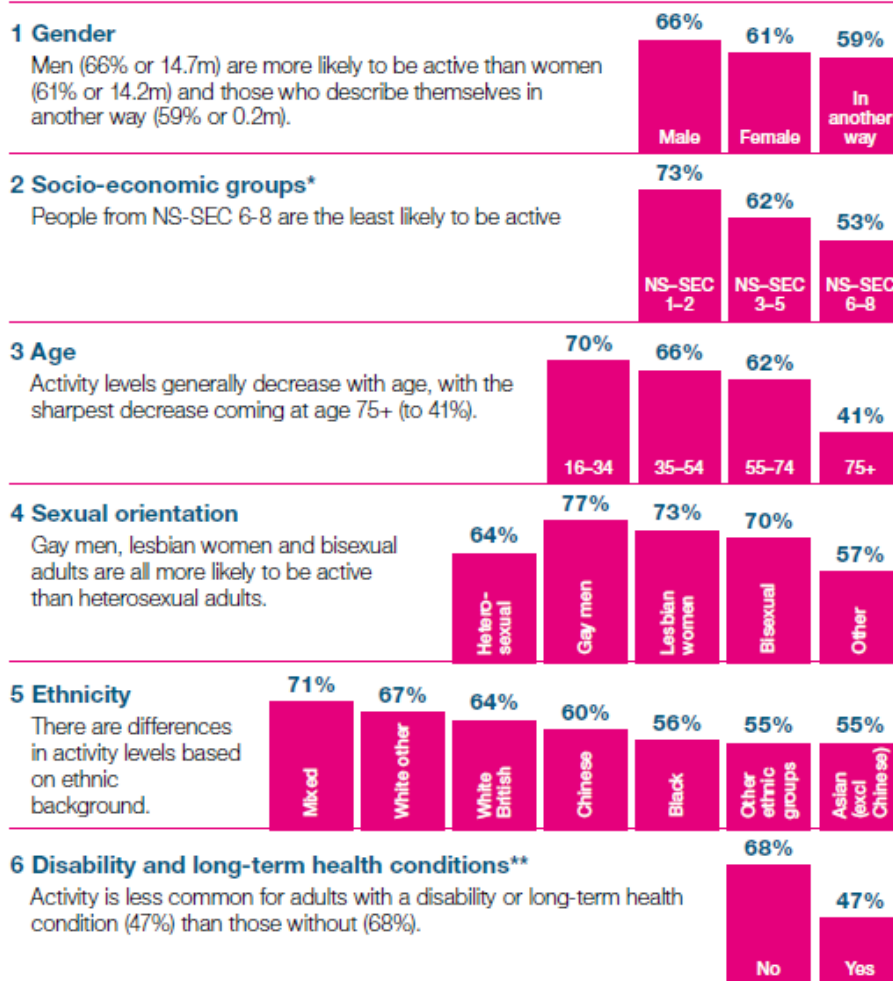
2.12.1. As well as differences in activity levels by people living in more deprived places, there are also differences in other demographic groups, including gender, age, ethnicity, and people who have disabilities and long-term conditions.

2.12.2. Data is available at regional and national levels and demonstrates that levels of inactivity are directly affected by differing demographic groups.

2.12.3. On average, England’s adult activity rate is 63.1%, the infographic overleaf highlights lower average rates for; women, older age groups, people with long-term health conditions and disabilities, people from lower socio-economic groups and people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

**Figure 14 – Levels of Activity Demographic Differences <sup>8,9</sup>**

**Active Lives Survey (2021–2022)**



<sup>8</sup> \* socio-economic groups. Credit: Active Lives survey 2021-22. NS-SEC group definitions  
 - Most affluent (NS-SEC 1-2): Managerial, administrative and professional occupations  
 - Mid affluent (NS-SEC 3-5): Intermediate, lower supervisory and technical occupations, self-employed and small employers  
 - Least affluent (NS-SEC 6-8): Routine occupations, long term unemployment or never worked

<sup>9</sup> \*\* Limiting disability and long-term health conditions is defined as an individual reporting they have physical or mental health condition or illness that’s lasted, or is expected to last, 12 months or more, and that this has a substantial effect on their ability to do normal daily activities

2.12.4. **Cheltenham Inactivity Inequalities**

- 2.12.5. We know that 21% of Cheltenham’s population is considered inactive and although this compares with 23% inactive for the county and 26% nationally, there are areas of Cheltenham and groups of people where inactivity levels are far higher.
- 2.12.6. **Age** - given Cheltenham has a high proportion of 75+ residents, activity levels are likely lower for these cohorts
- 2.12.7. **Low income** - people living in our lower income neighbourhoods are at risk of lower activity levels. Twice as many people are classed as inactive in our most deprived communities (38%) when compared to our least deprived communities (19%). We also know that obesity in women affects 39.5% of those living in most deprived areas compared with 22.4% from least deprived areas.
- 2.12.8. **Disabled people** - we know that 36% of people who class themselves as disabled are inactive compared to only 17% who class themselves as non-disabled – a participation gap of c.20% .
- 2.12.9. **Ethnicity** - Nationally, 37% of people from the Asian ethnic group are classed as inactive, compared to 24.5% of people from white British origin. In the Asian and white British ethnic groups, women are more likely to be inactive than men.
- 2.12.10. **Younger women** - whilst similar rates of adult women are classed as active when compared to men, school data from the Gloucestershire online pupil survey shows that whilst 60% of boys do the recommended level of activity, only 48% of girls achieve this. In addition, 46% of girls don’t exercise because they find it embarrassing compared with only 21% of boys.
- 2.12.11. A summary of the national, local strategic and demographic context, and what it means for Cheltenham leisure provision, is found overleaf.

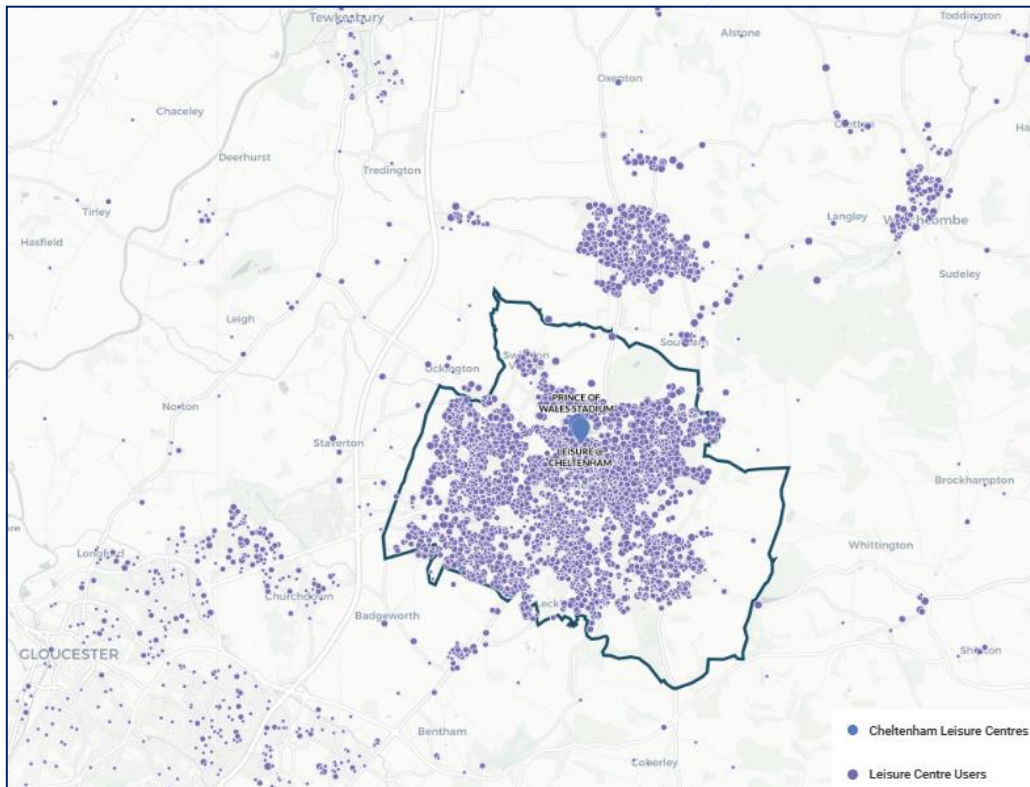
**Strategic Policy & Context - What does this mean for leisure provision in Cheltenham?**

- There are opportunities for the facilities and services to help meet the following national outcomes and objectives:
  - Improving the active infrastructure and by changing the use of any underutilised space;
  - Developing physical confidence and competence from the earliest age by providing opportunities for children of all ages to be active through play;
  - Encourage and enable the inactive to be more active, by introducing new activities aimed at fun and recreation rather than just traditional sport; and,
  - Supporting wellbeing and resilience in communities through physical activity and sport – increasing participation in physical activity will contribute to improved health and wellbeing.
- At the heart of the Council’s ambitions is to make sure people living in Cheltenham can live healthy, fulfilling and productive lives.
- The wider value of participation in physical activity, active recreation, and sport is recognised across a range of local strategic policy areas, including health, green/climate, economy, culture and education.
- Having appropriate cycling and pedestrian facilities will also encourage participation in active travel via walking and cycling which increases the opportunities for people to be more active.
- Strategic alignment with the national and local strategies will help to further engage partners and secure support for development opportunities and the sustainability of the overall sport and physical activity facility stock and programmes in the future.
- The overall improvement to sport and physical activity facilities and programmes for Cheltenham Borough has potential to support the wide range of health and community development work currently being developed in Cheltenham. This can assist directly in bringing about a sustained increase in sport and physical activity participation leading to long term improved health and wellbeing of Cheltenham local communities.
- Leisure facilities need to meet the demands of its growing population.
- 20-24 years will be the largest age group by 2041 and 75-79 year age group is projected to grow the most, highlighting the importance of having leisure facilities that are attractive to all age groups (ONS 2018 population predictions).
- There are some local health issues that increased participation in physical activity could positively contribute towards, such as mental health, hip fractures and levels of overweight and obese adults and children.
- Rates of participation in physical activity in adults is higher than the national average however they are lower than pre-Covid figures, therefore there is an opportunity to increase rates of participation through improved leisure facility provision.
- But there is recognition that there are areas of Cheltenham and groups of people where inactivity levels are far higher including people on low incomes, disabled people, women and girls and people from ethnically diverse communities.
- The boroughs physical activity and sports offer (encompassing the commercial, public and community sectors) needs to attract those that have either always been inactive or have stopped being active since the Covid pandemic.

### 3. Catchment Analysis

- 4.1 Whilst the section above considers the socio demographic profile of the borough that leisure services need to understand for the future, the Council also needs to consider how well its own leisure facilities are currently meeting the needs of the community.
- 4.2 Consequently, a catchment analysis of current leisure centre users was completed to understand where existing members live to which groups are currently over or underrepresented. This will help the Council consider how well Leisure At Cheltenham is meeting the needs of the community in terms of accessibility and attracting all members of the community.
- 4.3 The link to this mapping detail is; <https://datahubmaps.com/Cheltenham-Leisure-Facilities/>
- 4.4 The member dot map below shows existing members of Leisure At Cheltenham. The larger dots representing more people from that postcode.
- 4.5 23.5% of total current users live within the Cheltenham local authority boundary.
- 4.6 The average drive time to Leisure At Cheltenham was 10.2 minutes.
- 4.7 As can be seen, a high percentage of members live outside the area mainly in Bishop’s Cleeve in the north, Winchcombe, northeast and southwest of Cheltenham borough towards Gloucester.

Map 7 – Leisure At Cheltenham Member Dot Map

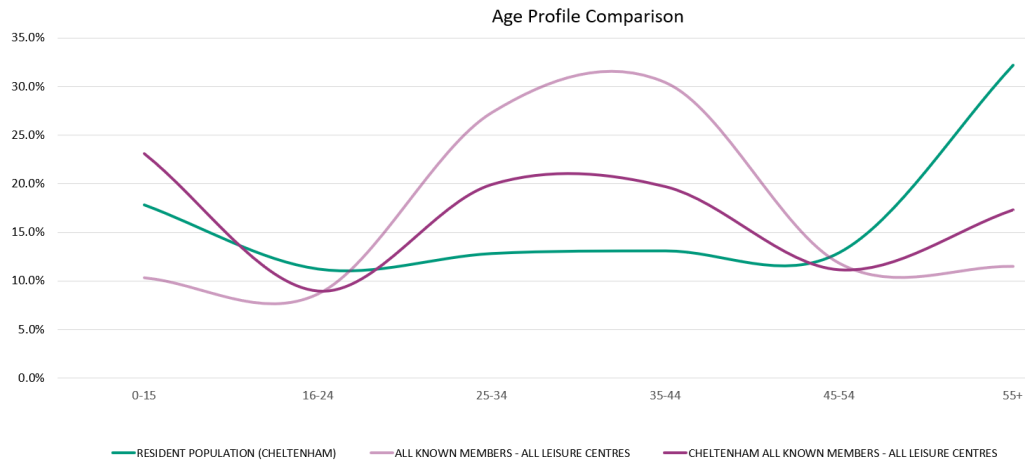


#### 4.8 Mosaic Profile of Leisure Centre Users

- 4.8.1 Using Mosaic, a detailed segmentation system, Leisure At Cheltenham’s user postcodes were assigned a Mosaic code. To ensure like for like comparison, Leisure At Cheltenham users are compared to the total population in the same area. This gives us a demographic profile of leisure users and the local population showing how well the Council managed facility is penetrating the market.
- 4.8.2 Public leisure centres provide a different offer to the commercial fitness sector. The range of facilities available in public leisure centres, a personalised approach and customer support and interaction are areas where Leisure At can differentiate from the commercial sector.
- 4.8.3 This analysis<sup>10</sup> shows the most under-represented mosaic groups at Leisure At Cheltenham are:
- Group 0 – Rental Hubs - young people enjoying city lifestyles in accessible locations. Usually aged in their twenties and thirties, they moved to their current addresses relatively recently. Many live alone and others share with housemates or partners, but few are thinking about children yet.
  - Group E - Senior Security - retired homeowners with good pension incomes who live in pleasant suburbs. Aged in their late sixties, seventies and eighties, some are married but many more now live alone. They have been settled in their current homes for many years.
  - Group B – Prestige Positions - affluent families who live in spacious homes within sought after neighbourhoods. Most householders are married couples some are older and no longer have dependants, others have children or young adults to support. Many have lived in their high-status homes for many years.
- 4.8.4 Looking at deprived communities, the most deprived decile is over-represented which is encouraging as are deciles 4,6, and 8.
- 4.8.5 Men are under-represented at Leisure At Cheltenham compared to the local population and women are over-represented.
- 4.8.6 As can be seen in the age profile comparison diagram, Leisure At Cheltenham users have a higher penetration than resident population for 0-15 years then dips for 16-24 years but rises again for 25-44. This then dips again for 55+ who are under-represented, which needs to be considered as older people tend to be less active.

Figure 15 – Leisure At Cheltenham User Age Profile

<sup>10</sup> [https://max-associates.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Cheltenham-leisure-centres\\_user-profiles\\_241023\\_4GLOBAL-updated.xlsx](https://max-associates.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Cheltenham-leisure-centres_user-profiles_241023_4GLOBAL-updated.xlsx)



#### 4. Assessment Of Current and Future Supply Cheltenham Council Indoor Sports Facilities

4.1. As part of the Built Leisure and Sports Needs Assessment engagement with National Governing Bodies (NGBs), sports clubs, schools and town/parish councils took place to obtain their local knowledge and overview of supply and demand, the current and future needs along with their priorities for the local area.

#### 4.2. National Governing Body Consultation

5.2.1 The Assessing Needs and Opportunity Guidance recommends consulting with the NGBs. Engagement with NGBs is important to understand each sports’ strategic direction and evidence of national demand. Further, it provides an understanding of regional and local priorities and access to funding for facility improvements and development.

5.2.2 Consultation responses from the NGBs included swimming, tennis, gymnastics, athletics, cycling, table tennis and indoor bowling, most of which have established clubs in Cheltenham. Their responses and comments to consultation are provided in the table overleaf. Further detail can be found in the NGB report in [Appendix 5](#).

Table 3 – National Governing Bodies Feedback

British Cycling	British Gymnastics	England Athletics	English Indoor Bowling Association
<p>British Cycling keen to develop grassroots cycling in safe controlled environment e.g. community cycling hubs, with pump tracks &amp; learn to ride areas</p>	<p>Support increased capacity within gymnastics through clubs and leisure providers</p>	<p>2 main clubs</p>	<p>No indoor bowling facilities in Cheltenham</p>
<p>1 affiliated club - Cheltenham Town Wheelers</p>	<p>4 affiliated clubs</p>	<p>Prince of Wales Stadium is identified as a venue of strategic importance in the South West region</p>	<p>No affiliated clubs. Two indoor sites in adjoining local authority areas</p>
<p>This club also runs accredited Go-Ride club a national programme for young people large junior section and volunteers in Cheltenham</p>	<p>Help with securing dedicated facility</p>	<p>EA/UKA will support local authority, operator and stakeholders in leveraging capital investment to resurface track surface &amp; protect long term future</p>	<p>Two sites in adjoining local authority areas can cater for participants for foreseeable future</p>
<p>Dialogue with Cheltenham Town Wheelers, other cycle clubs and council to discuss future facility needs so club can continue to expand</p>	<p>Barriers – lack of facilities One club has waiting list (The Gym Centre)</p>	<p>Barriers – facilities in need of investment</p>	
<p>Barriers – none</p>			

### Gloucestershire Cricket Foundation

Cricket can be played in many sites, some are well equipped for cricket, but none meet ECB standards across every aspect of measurable criteria

Sites that are well equipped are generally public-school sites so availability for community use and hire is severely limited

Cheltenham is a well-stocked area, but when it comes down to availability, more provision is needed especially when in competition with other sports. There are a finite number of cricket clubs in Cheltenham indoor provision also services clubs in surrounding rural areas as well

### Gloucestershire Football Association

There are no plans to develop Futsal in the short term

Other Football FA feedback and considerations will be included in the Playing Pitch Strategy

### Lawn Tennis Association

Priorities - Retain and maximise all tennis provision within area included clubs, parks and schools

Barriers - no indoor courts and limited floodlit courts

Priority - develop new outdoor floodlit tennis court provision in line with new housing developments across Cheltenham including Golden Valley & Elm Park

4 affiliated clubs

LTA Quick Access Loan Scheme for tennis facilities (lta.org.uk)

### Swim England

More pool time for the clubs in existing facilities

2 affiliated clubs

Cheltenham Phoenix Aquatics Club would like to expand

Barriers – pool time & availability. Not been able to gain pool time at Leisure At Cheltenham or Sandford Lido

Future priority need - build another pool to support expansion of residential development in area

### Table Tennis England

2 affiliated clubs

Clubs share facilities with a bowls club and YMCA sports centre. No issues with these facilities

Priorities;  
 - U9s

- working with schools, more tables in schools & training for staff

- growth of Ping & outdoor tables, increasing social spaces to play

- women and girls' participation  
 - most deprived communities

Barriers - lack of outdoor and community tables for public access and competition spaces



4.3. Sports Club Consultation

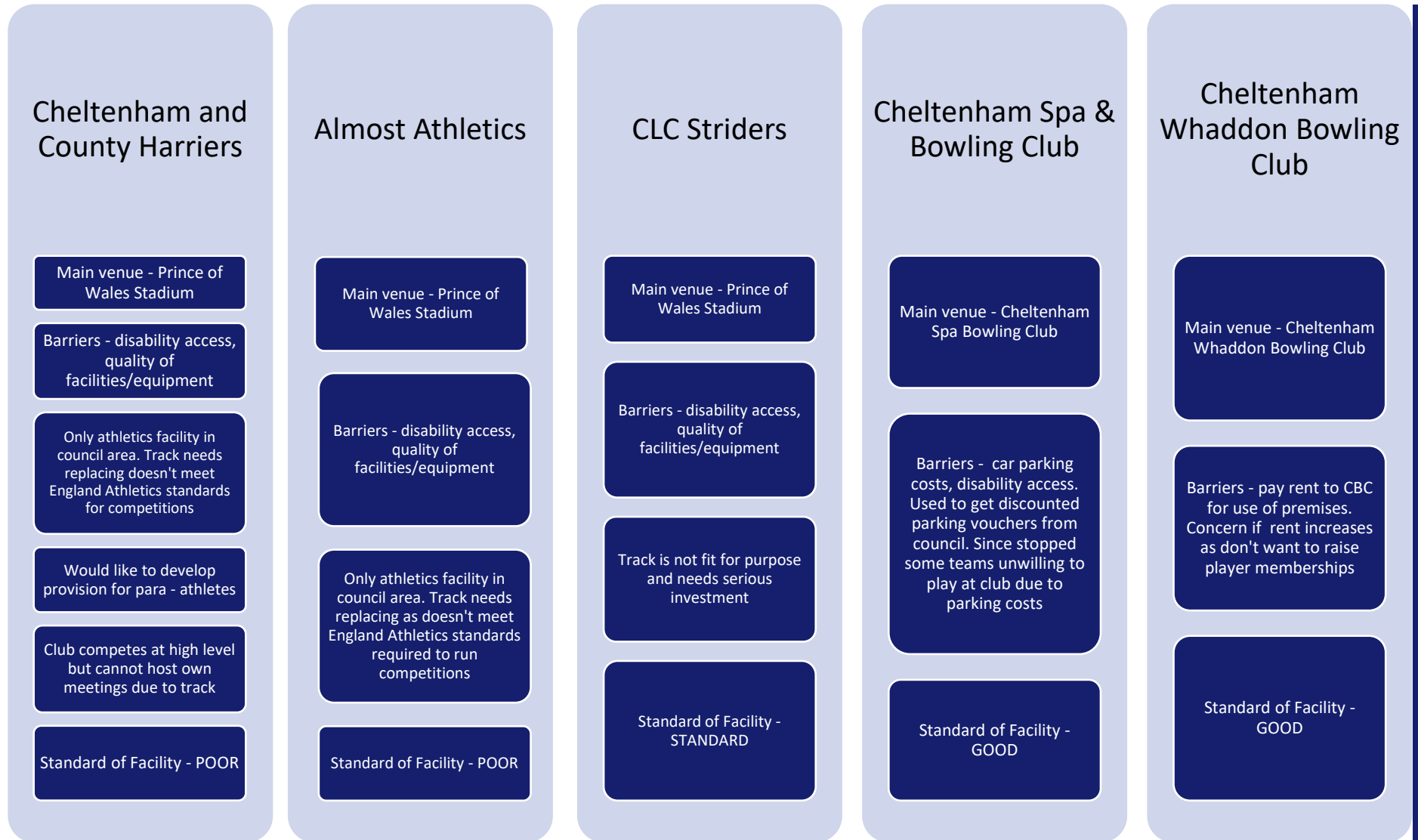
5.3.3 16 sports clubs across a variety of sports responded to the consultation – those in gold are relevant to both the Built Leisure and Playing Pitch Strategies.

Table 4 – Sports Club Consultation

Built Leisure & Sports Facilities	Playing Pitches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheltenham and County Harriers</li> <li>• Almost Athletics</li> <li>• CLC Striders</li> <li>• Cheltenham Spa &amp; Bowling Club</li> <li>• Cheltenham Whaddon Bowling Club</li> <li>• Cheltenham Bowling Club</li> <li>• The Gym Centre Gymnastics Club</li> <li>• Cheltenham Martial Arts &amp; Fitness Kickboxing</li> <li>• Cheltenham Swimming &amp; Water Polo Club (Swimming, Water Polo and Artistic Swimming)</li> <li>• Cheltenham Artistic Swimming Club</li> <li>• Cheltenham Swimming and Water Polo Club (Swim section)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charlton Cricket Club</li> <li>• Cheltenham Lacrosse Club</li> <li>• Cheltenham Football Association</li> <li>• Cheltenham Civil Service Sharks (Rugby)</li> <li>• Cheltenham Tigers Rugby Club</li> </ul>

5.3.4 The table overleaf has key findings and direct comments from the sports clubs for those sports being considered in the Built Leisure and Sports Facility Strategy. The other sports club consultation will be detailed in the Playing Pitch Strategy. Further detail can be found in the sports club survey report [Appendix 6](#).

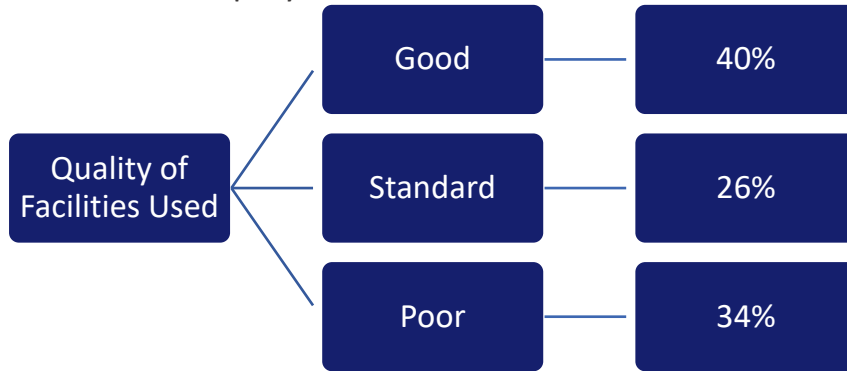
Figure 16 – Cheltenham Sports Club Considerations



Cheltenham Bowling Club	The Gym Centre Gymnastics Club	Cheltenham Martial Arts & Fitness Kickboxing	Cheltenham Swimming & Water Polo Club	Cheltenham Artistic Swimming Club	Cheltenham Swimming and Water Polo Club
Main venue - Cheltenham Bowling Club	Main venue - Bournside Sports Centre (also use Tewkesbury Sport Centre & GL1)	Main venue - Cheltenham Martial Arts	Main venue - Leisure At Cheltenham	Main venue - Leisure At Cheltenham	Main venue - Leisure At Cheltenham
Plans - considering increasing storage space and increasing capacity of the premises for our members	Barriers - Car parking, quality of facilities/equipment, Availability of facility space - limited	Barriers - Disability access. Travel. Car parking	Barriers - meeting competition standards & availability of facility space	Barriers - Availability of facility space. We need more water time available to us. Growing successful Club but struggling to fit members in space we have	Barriers - Availability of facility space. Club uses variety of venues across Cheltenham & Gloucester. One of issues is pool time only accessible early morning or late evening. This can have negative impact on teenage athletes not getting adequate sleep
160 members which has increased in last 5 years	70 children on waiting list	Keen to work with council to provide for under privileged families and in the community	Future requirements to expand membership need more pool space	Another deep pool	Club looking to grow & develop but currently at our ceiling due to amount of pool time we have
Standard of facility - GOOD	Standard of Facility - POOR	Standard of Facility - GOOD	Standard of Facility - GOOD	Standard of Facility - STANDARD	Standard of Facility - GOOD

5.3.5 Clubs were asked to rate the quality of the facilities they used the most, encouragingly over 40% rated the standard of facilities as ‘good’.

Figure 17 – Sports Clubs Consultation quality of facilities used



5.3.6 Despite the majority of facilities used being rated as standard or good, quality of facilities was still highlighted as a barrier along with availability of space. A high proportion of clubs have been able to access funding in recent years and nearly half have increased their membership in the last 5 years.

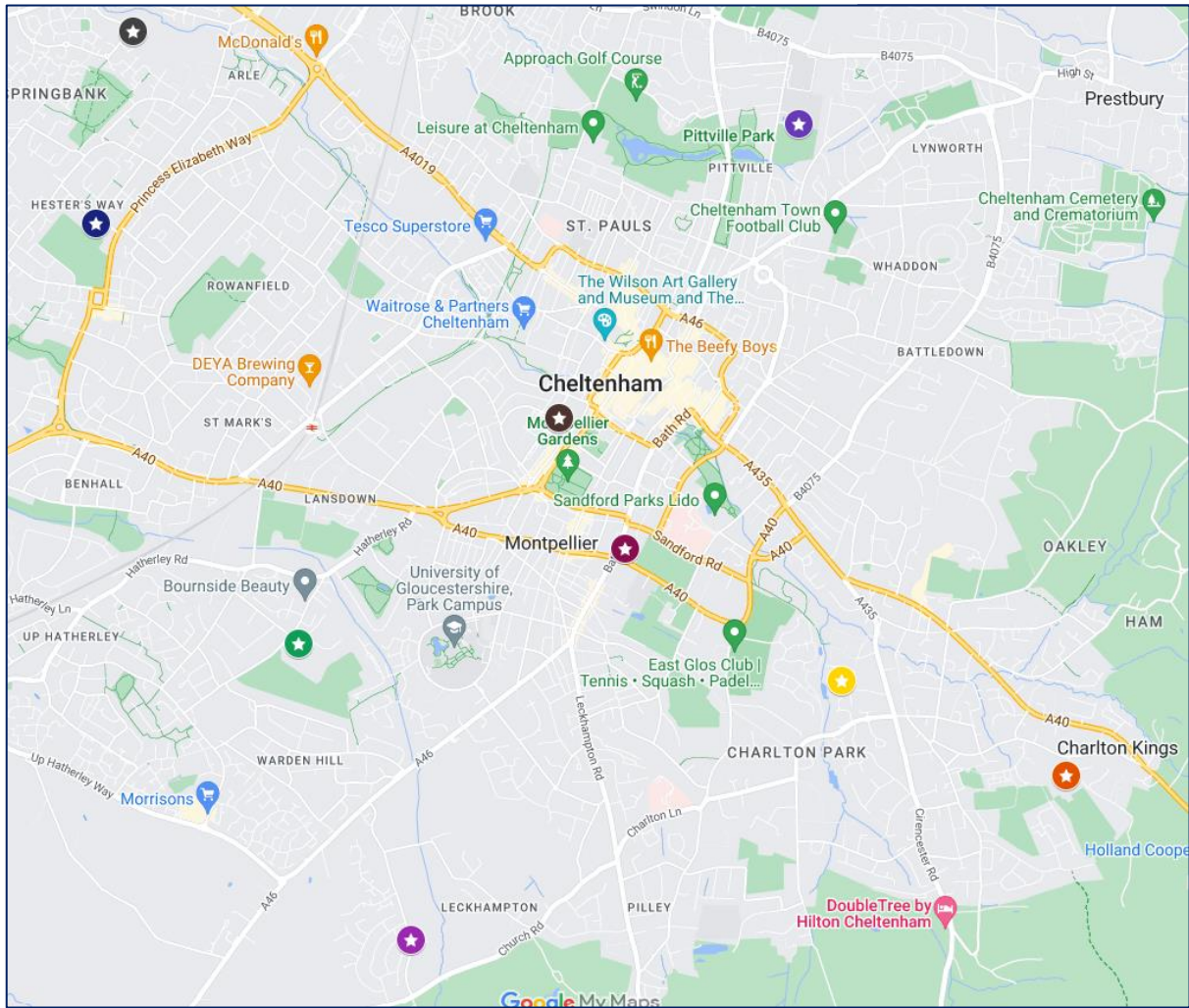
Figure 18 – Sports Clubs Consultation barriers, funding, membership



#### 4.4. Schools Consultation

5.4.1 Nine schools (out of eleven) responded from a mix of state and private. A map of the schools that responded is shown below.

Map 8 – Cheltenham School Survey Respondents



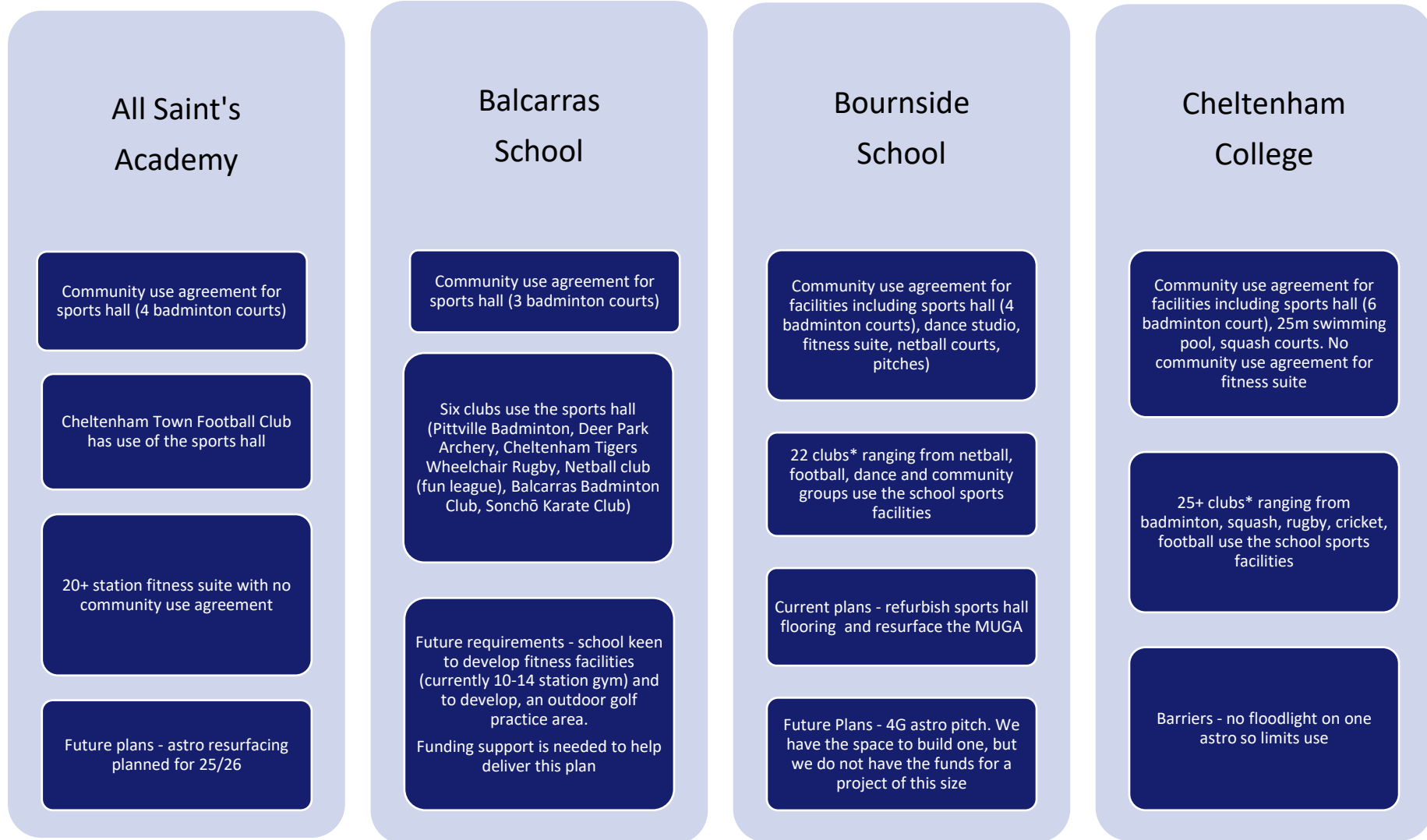
5.4.2 The key findings of the school consultation are shown below. Further detail can be found in [Appendix 7](#).

5.4.3 From the consultation it is clear that schools play a significant role in providing facilities in the borough for a wide variety of clubs to use. For example Bournside School facilities<sup>11</sup> and Cheltenham College<sup>12</sup> are used by 20+ clubs. This highlights the importance of securing community use agreements at education sites.

<sup>11</sup> **Bournside School** facilities used by; Lansdown hockey club, Falcons badminton club, Leckhampton football club, Southside football club, Cheltenham town community trust, Old pats rugby club, rugbytots, Cheltenham gymnastics club, Momentum Pole and Aerial theatre stars, Cirque du Dance, Syren Alternative Belly Dancers, Paresh Taekwondo, Netball Fun League, Nomads Netball Club, Cheltenham & Gloucester Volleyball Club, Cheltenham Ladies Netball Club, Cheltenham Archers, Old Chelts Netball, Kick-a-Bout GKR Karate, Gloucestershire Music, Southfield Women’s Institute

<sup>12</sup> **Cheltenham College** facilities used by; Hucclecote NC, Old Chelts NC, NFL, GCNA Phoenix SC, CSWPC, Cheltenham Artistic SC, Glos Masters SC, Glos County SC, Lakeside FC, HCR, Zurich FC, Leckhampton FC, Charlton Rovers FC, Coach House FC, Uni of Glos HC, CHC, CJHC, Hockey Fever, Badgers HC, Old Pats RC, CKCC Ultimate frisbee, GCCC, Glos County badminton, Move More/Heidis Heroes School swimming - RPS, Hesters Way, St Johns, Naunton Park

Figure 19 – Schools Consultation



### Cheltenham Ladies' College

Community use agreement for facilities including sports hall (6 badminton court), swimming pool (6 lane, 25m)

Swimming pool used by; Cheltenham Swimming & Waterpolo Club Cheltenham Phoenix Swimming Club

5 squash courts but no community use, 2 dance studios used by Janet Marshall Dance

Barriers to community use; planning restraints limiting usage hours & demographic (age)

Plans - refurbishment of gym areas (Christmas 23), resurfacing of tennis/netball (date TBC), resurfacing of older astro (date TBC), installation of solar panels (date TBC). No funding required

### Pate's Grammar School

Community use agreement for facilities including sports hall (4 badminton court)

2 clubs use the sports hall - Pittville badminton club, Netball club (Fun league)

The fitness suite does not have community use access

Barriers to community use is staffing of lettings after school and at weekend

Money is huge barrier. Astro turf needs replacing in next 5 years. Tennis courts and sports hall need resurfacing now. Fitness suite needs upgrading

### Pittville School

School has a small 1 badminton court activity hall. The other 2 court badminton court hall is closed

School has secured DFE section 77 approval to dispose of some land at the school site to raise a capital receipt to build and replace new sports hall

We have plans for a new sports hall, an all weather pitch and resurfacing of the current tennis courts

Barriers - we do not have sufficient capacity to support extensive community use and the facilities are in need of updating

### St Edward's Senior School

School has sports hall (3 badminton court) unsure if community use agreement in place

School has a 22m swimming pool that has community use and used by Aquazone swim school

Plans - indoor sports hall planned to be updated and refurbished

### The High School, Leckhampton

School has a sports hall (4 badminton court) with community use agreement and used by; Pittville Badminton Club, Hucclecote Netball and Gloucestershire Netball

The school also has a dance studio Cheltenham Harriers and My Stage school

Staffing is a barrier to opening up or increasing the facilities community use

#### 4.5. Parish & Town Council Consultation

5.5.1 Two parish councils responded to the consultation key findings are outlined below.

5.5.2 Prestbury **Parish Council** (6,995 residents in parish) is located to the east of Leisure At Cheltenham.

- ‘Yes’ residents can easily travel to places to be physically active, exercise or play sports.
- The parish owns; adult football pitches, youth 11v11 football pitches, mini soccer 7v7 pitches, MUGA, netball courts, running track (third of a mile), outdoor gym equipment, outdoor table tennis tables.
- Plans to improve existing facilities (such as tennis courts) and funding has been confirmed.
- Concerns around anti-social behaviour which impacts on the facilities. Feel there is little that can be done about it. The Parish Council has reported it to the police with little impact.

5.5.3 **Up Hatherley Parish Council** (5,590 residents) is located south west of Cheltenham towards Warden Hill and Bournside School.

- ‘Yes’ residents can easily travel to places to be physically active, exercise or play sports.
- The parish owns outdoor gym equipment.
- Public swimming pools are hard to access unless residents have the use of a car.
- No direct bus routes to local facilities.

5.5.4 These responses show that there are outdoor facilities that provide residents with the opportunity to be active locally. However, concerns on safety and anti-social behaviour can act as a barrier to using them.

5.5.5 Further detail can be found in [Appendix 8](#).

#### 4.6. Facility Audit

4.6.1. The consultation work above helps to inform which leisure facilities are available, who is using them and any feedback on improvements that can be made to encourage more residents to participate in physical activity.

4.6.2. Continuing to look at leisure provision in the borough, a facility quality audit of the main leisure facilities was undertaken which is shown overleaf. Those facilities considered poor are likely to require investment to improve them.



Table 5 – Main Leisure Facility Quality Audit

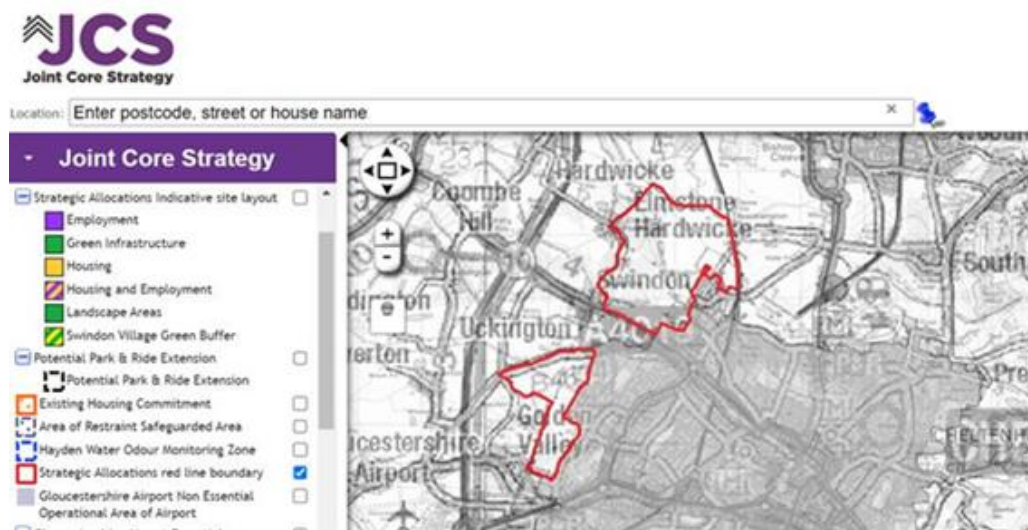
Site	Facility	Year Built	Quality	Considerations
All Saint's Academy	4 court Activity x2	2011	Average	Only rent sports hall out to Cheltenham Town FC. Sports hall used 21 weeks of year for exams. Indoor cricket nets, outdoor netball, outdoor tennis courts, basketball, indoor football, floor of sports hall needs replacing.
Balcarras Sports Halls (Balcarras School)	4 court Activity	1985 (refurb 2007)	Average	Indoor cricket nets, basketball, indoor football, netball. Outdoor cricket nets, netball and tennis courts.
Bournside Sports Centre (Bournside School)	4 courts 3 court, activity	1999	Average	Badminton, basketball, indoor football, netball, indoor and outdoor cricket nets. Outdoor tennis courts x 6. Outdoor netball courts x 5. Plans to refurbish sports hall flooring (4 court).
Cheltenham College	8 court 3 court 6 lane pool	1996 (refurb 2015) 1996	Good	Double sports hall. Indoor cricket nets, netball, basketball, indoor football, indoor hockey. Changing rooms recently refurbished.
CLC sports Centre (Cheltenham Ladies' College)	6 court 6 court 6 lane pool	2018 1994	Good	Only sports hall uncomfortably full - 91% used capacity. Plans for refurbishment of gym areas (Christmas 23), resurfacing of tennis/netball courts (date TBC), resurfacing of older astro (date TBC), installation of solar panels (date TBC).
Dean Close School	5 court 4 lane pool	2006 1971 (2004 refurb)	Average	Sports hall, 5 badminton courts in total. Indoor hockey, netball, cricket nets, basketball. Outdoor tennis courts, netball courts double as car park, outdoor climbing wall. Squash courts not in use as being used for storage.
Leisure At Cheltenham	7 court 4 court 6 lane pool, teaching & diving pool	1971 (refurb 2008 and 2018 )	Average	Certain facilities within the centre would be classed as good (gym, studios, sports hall, splash pad, pools and health suite). Squash court average, cricket hall poor. Overall the site has been given an average rating given the ongoing maintenance issues and age of the building.
Pate's Grammar School	4 court Activity	1985 (refurb 2008)	Poor (currently – though plans to improve quality)	Sports hall has indoor climbing wall. Badminton, netball. Second hall not fit for purpose and only used by school. Outdoor tennis & netball courts. Plans imminent to improve quality via resurfacing of the 4 court sports hall
Sandford Parks Lido	50-x27 lido	1935 (refurb 2006)	Good	The Heritage Lottery Fund contributed £382,500 in 2006 towards refurbishment of main pool.

Site	Facility	Year Built	Quality	Considerations
St Edwards School Cheltenham	3 court 4 lane pool	1960 (refurb 2000) 1965 (refurb 2005)	Average	Main sports hall - netball, cricket nets. Sports hall 2 is in need of refurbishment. Outdoor netball and tennis courts.
YMCA Sports Centre	4 court	2006	Good	4 badminton courts, indoor football, netball, basketball, volleyball.

## 5. Supply and Demand for Sports Halls and Swimming Pools

- 5.1. There are two main tools used to inform the assessment of supply and demand, as well as the current facility audit, and the demand information gathered through the consultation. The tools are Sport England’s Facility Planning Model (FPM) for Sports Halls and Swimming Pools and secondly the Sport England Facility Calculator is used to estimate future need of facilities from population growth.
- 5.2. The map below shows the planned housing growth as part of the strategic allocations at West Cheltenham (2,371 homes) and North West Cheltenham (4,285 homes).
- 5.3. It is, therefore, important to consider future leisure provision up to 2041 to take into account population increases. As previously mentioned, the projected population prediction for 2041 used to inform this strategy is 123,373 residents, this will be further tested through the preparation of the SLP.

Map 9 – Cheltenham Joint Core Strategy – Strategic Allocations Map



- 5.4. Given the nature of being surrounded by other boroughs, there is an ease of access to many facilities in nearby local authorities, so the geographical location of provision is important to consider.
- 5.5. To inform the Indoor Sports Facilities Needs Assessment, Sport England Facility Planning Models (FPM) were completed for sports halls and swimming pools in October-November 2023, the key findings of these are set out below. These studies are a quantitative, accessibility and spatial assessment of the supply, demand and access.
- 5.6. The limitations and reason for use are identified below.

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

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

### Use of FPM

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

- assessing requirements for different types of community sports facilities on a local, regional or national scale.
- helping local authorities to determine an adequate level of sports facility provision to meet their local needs.
- helping to identify strategic gaps in the provision of sports facilities; and,
- comparing alternative options for planned provision, taking account of changes in demand and supply. This includes testing the impact of opening, relocating, and closing facilities, and the likely impact of population changes on the needs for sports facilities.

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

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

The full Sport England Facility Planning Model Report for Sports Halls is provided at [Appendix 9](#). The Sports Hall FPM only captures 3 badminton court sports halls and above and the Sport England Facility Planning Model Report for Swimming pools is provided at [Appendix 10](#).

### 5.7. Supply and Demand of Sports Halls

6.7.1 The supply of sports halls across the Cheltenham Borough Council area is provided in the table below:

Table 6 – Supply of Sports Halls Cheltenham Council area (3 courts and over) used in FPM

Site	Operation	Facility Type	Dimensions (m)	Area (sqm)	Year Built	Year Refurb	Peak Hours	Total Hours	Capacity (visits in weekly peak period)
All Saints Academy	Edu. (in-house)	4-court	35 x 20	690	2011		37	37	2,572
		Activity	18 x 10	180			37	37	
		Activity	18 x 10	180			37	37	
Balcarras Sports Centre	Edu. (in-house)	4-court	33 x 18	594	1985	2007	36.5	38.5	1,852
		Activity	18 x 10	180			36.5	38.5	
Bournside Sports Centre	Edu. (in-house)	4-court	34 x 18	612	1999		40	46.5	3,290
		3-court	27 x 18	486			40	46.5	
		Activity	21 x 12	252			40	46.5	
Cheltenham College	Edu. (in-house)	8-court	45 x 32	1,440	1996	2015	27	37	2,376
		3-court	27 x 18	486			27	37	
CLC Sports Centre	Edu. (3 <sup>rd</sup> party)	6-court	35 x 27	932	2018		45.5	101	4,368
		6-court	35 x 27	932			45.5	101	
Dean Close School	Edu. (in-house)	5-court	40 x 20	800	2006		17.5	17.5	700
Leisure at Cheltenham	Public	7-court	34 x 30	1,020	1971	2008	45	99	3,960
		4-court	33 x 18	594			45	99	
Pate's Grammar School	Edu. (in-house)	4-court	35 x 20	690	1985	2008	23	25	1,167
		Activity	18 x 10	180			23	25	
St Edward's Preparatory School	Edu. (in-house)	3-court	27 x 18	486	1982	1995	34	46.5	816
St Edward's School	Edu. (in-house)	3-court	27 x 18	486	1960	2000	29	41.5	696
YMCA Cheltenham Sports Centre	Community	4-court	35 x 20	690	2006		34	69	1,088

6.7.2 There are 20 sports halls across 11 sites in Cheltenham in both 2023 and 2041 available for community use in the weekly peak period. Only one of the sites (Leisure At Cheltenham) is a public leisure centre.

There is one community site (YMCA) and the remaining nine are educational sites. Of the educational sites, eight are managed in-house and one is proactively managed by a third party.

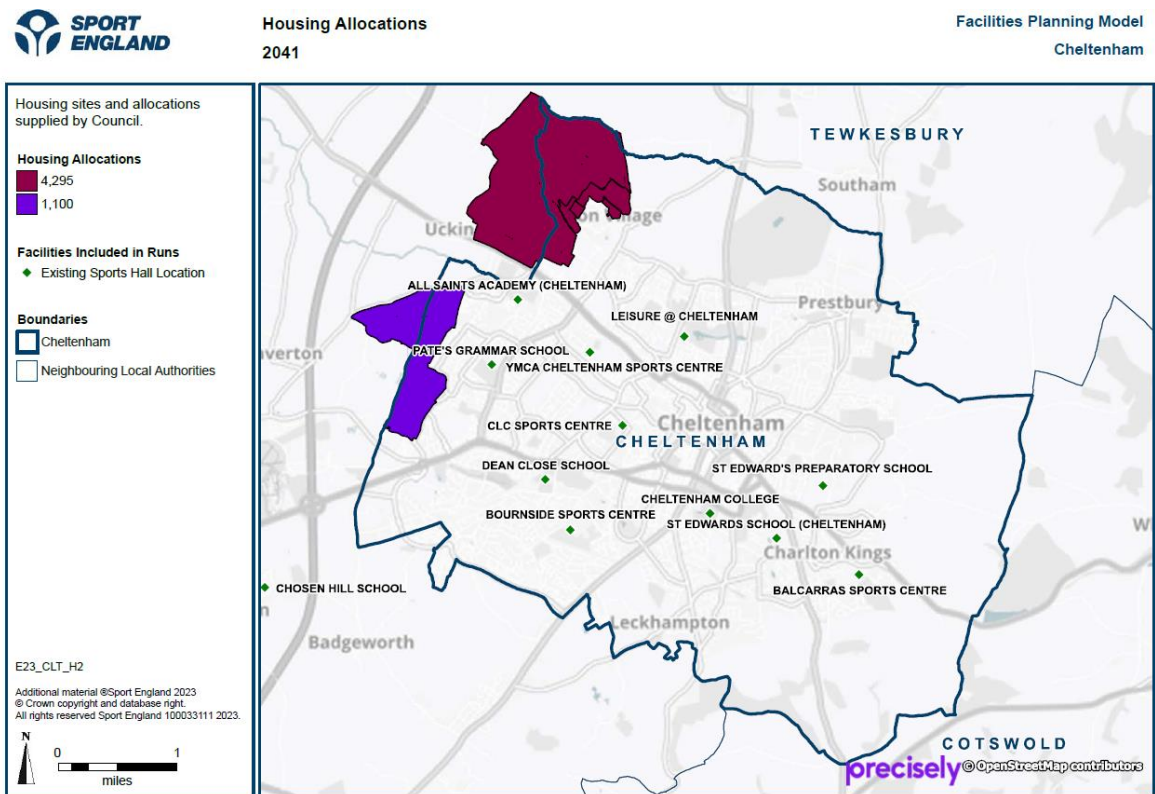
6.7.3 The table below shows that the total supply of sports halls in 2023 and 2041 is the equivalent of 80.7 badminton courts, of which 62.2 are available for community use in the weekly peak period. The unavailable courts represent 23% of the total supply.

Table 7 – Supply of Sports Halls in Cheltenham by Run

Total Supply	Run 1	Run 2
Cheltenham	2023	2041
Number of sports halls	20	20
Number of sports hall sites	11	11
Supply in badminton court equivalents	80.7	80.7
Supply in courts scaled with hours available in peak period	62.2	62.2
Supply in visits per week in peak period	22,885	22,885
Average age of sites	30	48
Average age of public sites	52	70

6.7.4 The sports hall locations are shown in the map below.

Map 10 – Location of Sport Halls Sites Allocated in FPM in relation to Planned Housing Growth



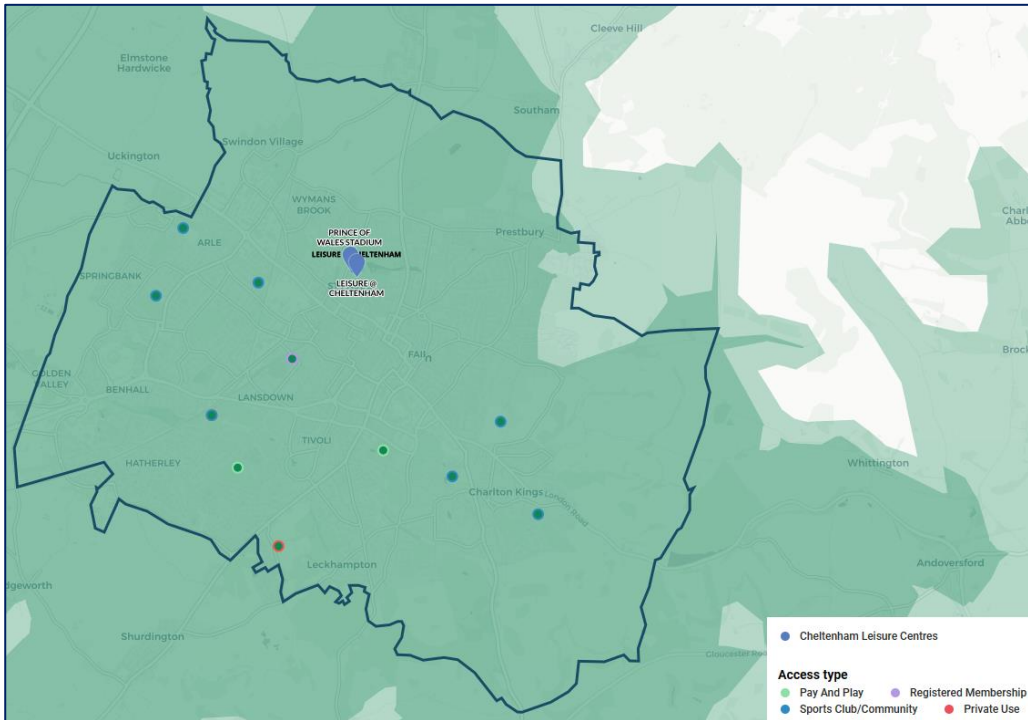
6.7.5 The quality and range of the offer (together with the age and condition of a sports hall) are considered. These features are of increasing importance to customers and impact on participation levels. Desirable features include a modern sports hall with a sprung timber floor, good quality lighting, modern changing rooms, and other facilities on site such as a studio and/or a gym. Residents may travel further to use a sports hall with this all-round offer rather than participate at the sports hall closest to where they live. The findings for each individual sports hall site vary from the Cheltenham average for all these inter-related reasons.

- 6.7.6 The average ages of the sports hall sites in Cheltenham are:
- All sports hall sites – 30 years
  - Public leisure centre – Leisure At Cheltenham was opened in 1971, which significantly older than the average age of 30 years for all the sites
- 6.7.7 The most recent sports hall site to open is CLC Sports Centre which was built in 2018. The oldest sports hall is St Edward’s School which was built in 1960.
- 6.7.8 Of the seven sites that opened before 2000, only four have been modernised in the last 20 years. The remaining four sports hall sites opened between 2006 and 2018 but have not been modernised as yet. By 2041, the average age of the sites will be 48 years, and Leisure At Cheltenham will be 70 years old. Therefore, there is an increasing need for modernisation of the sports halls.
- 6.7.9 Modernisation is defined as one or more of the following:
- Upgrade of the sports hall floor to a sprung timber floor.
  - Upgrade of the lighting in the sports hall.
  - Modernisation of the changing accommodation.
- 6.7.10 The schools consultation identified that several schools are planning modernisation work or replacement of their sports hall. These are listed below;
- St Edwards School – There are plans for the indoor sports hall (3 court) to be updated and refurbished.
  - Pittville School – plans for a new sports hall (currently one activity hall and their other hall is closed). Pittville School was excluded from the FPM run as hall deemed too small. However, it is worth noting that the school do not currently have community use of their existing facilities therefore future access is not guaranteed.
  - Pate’s Grammar – resurfacing of sports hall (4 court).
  - Bournside – plan to refurbish sports hall flooring (4 court).
- 6.7.11 Where community access is secured, the modernisation presents an opportunity for additional/improved sports hall provision.

## 5.8. Access to Sports Halls

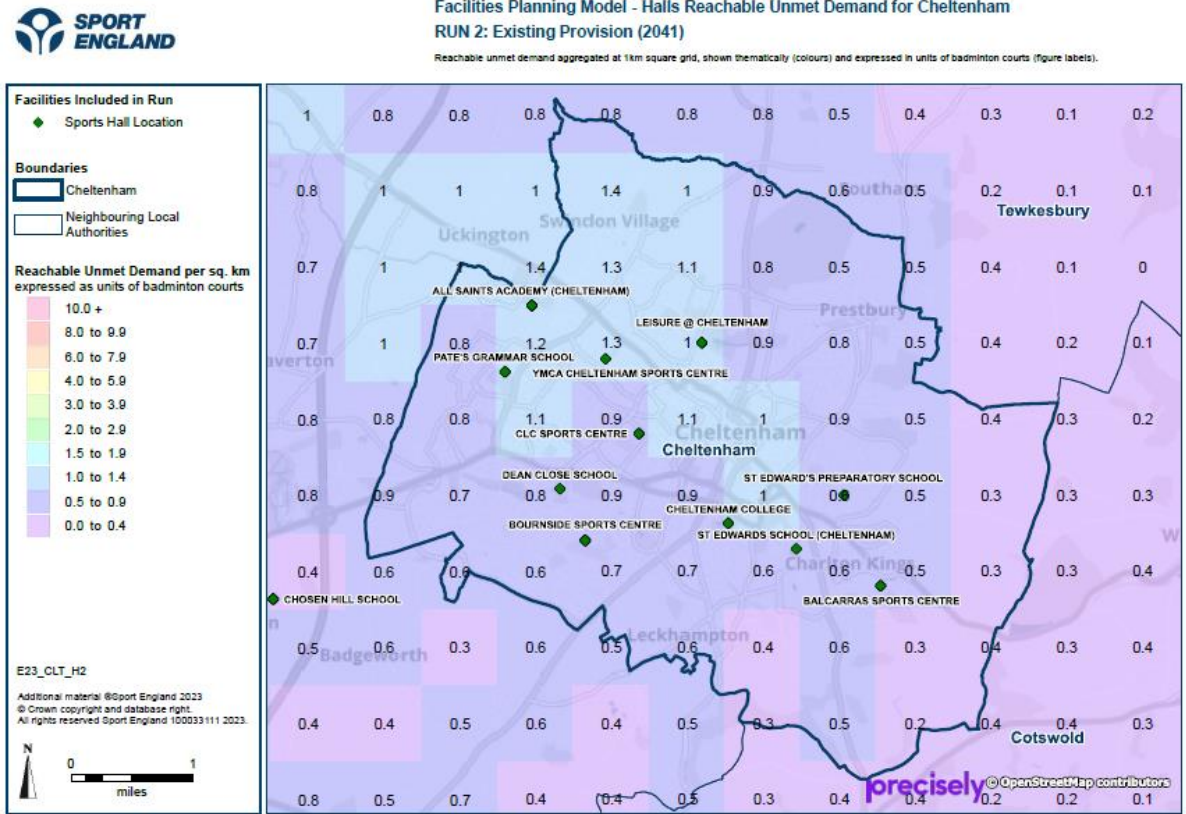
- 6.8.1 The map below shows the geographic distribution of the strategic main sports halls across Cheltenham Borough Council, with a catchment area for each of 20-minutes’ drive time (20-minute drive time private car). The 20-minute drive time catchment area of the existing sports halls covers all the Cheltenham Borough Council area and beyond into neighbouring local authority areas.

Map 11 – Sport Halls (20-Minute Drive ~Time)



- 6.8.2 In Cheltenham 19% of the population do not have access to a car. **A large proportion (69%) of Cheltenham’s residents are within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall. 90% of the borough’s 10% most deprived population is also within a 20-minute walk of a sports hall, so there is a good level of access to sports halls.**
- 6.8.3 It is estimated that 16% of all journeys to sports halls are on foot. Not all residents in these areas will walk to a sports hall and some will travel further.
- 6.8.4 The percentage of the population without access to a car influences travel patterns to halls. For residents without access to a car, travel to sports halls by public transport and on foot become the choices of travel mode. It is estimated that 75% of journeys to sports halls by Cheltenham residents are by car and 9% by public transport in both years.
- 6.8.5 Except for St Edward’s Preparatory School, all the sports hall sites are within a five-minute walk of a bus stop. Two sites (Dean Close School and CLC Sports Centre) are also within a 15-minute walk of a railway station.
- 6.8.6 In 2023 and 2041, all residents have access to at least ten sports hall sites within a 20-minute drive. Access to the greatest number of sports halls is in the southwest of the borough, where residents can access more than 20 sites within a 20-minute drive.
- 6.8.7 The map below shows the unmet demand in the area up to 2041.
- 6.8.8 **Unmet demand is low; 4% of demand in 2023 and 2041. This equates to 1.3 courts in 2023 and 1.4 courts in 2041.**
- 6.8.9 All unmet demand is from residents who live too far from a sports hall. In 2041 two **locations** (Swindon Village and Uckington) are where most unmet demand can be met, at 1.4 courts. However, **this level of reachable unmet demand is not sufficient to justify new sports hall provision.** However, the sports provision currently being negotiated as part of the Elms Park development, includes community use of the proposed new school facilities.

Map 12 – Unmet Demand in the Area up to 2041



6.8.10 Following the analysis of quality and the FPM the main findings are below:



### 6.8.11 Sports Halls – Main FPM Findings

#### Facilities Planning Model - What does this mean for leisure provision in Cheltenham?

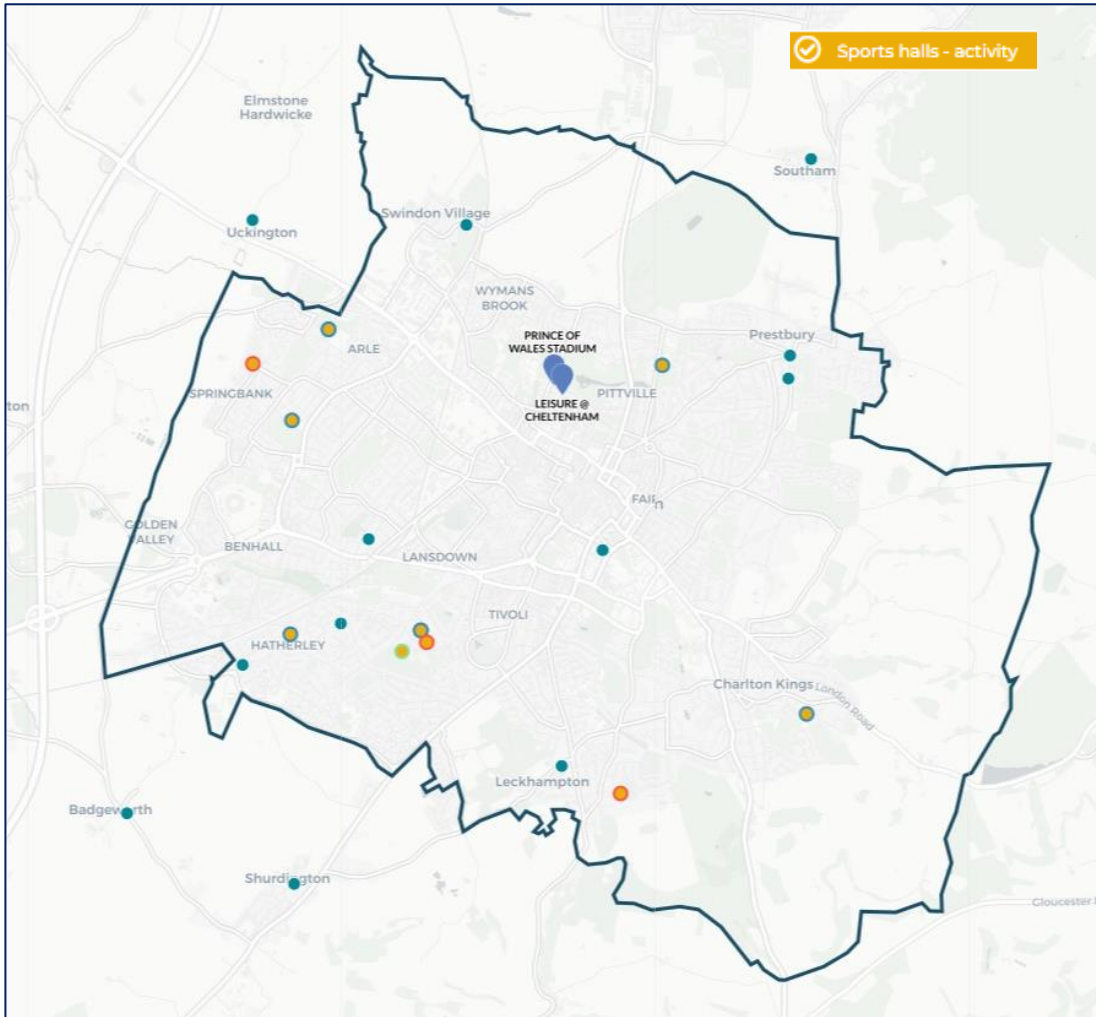
- The total supply of sports halls in 2023 is 20 halls across 11 sites, the equivalent of 80.7 badminton courts, of which 62.2 are available for community use in the weekly peak period. The **unavailable courts represent 23% of the total supply**.
- Only three sites (CLC Sports Centre, Leisure At Cheltenham and YMCA Cheltenham Sports Centre) offer extensive off-peak time availability.
- Subject to negotiations with education providers, there is scope to increase the hours available at peak times. For context only, a total of 137.5 hours per week could be made available across the Cheltenham sites, with 124.5 of these hours being at the educational sites.
- The sports halls are in the right locations - over 90% of residents in 10% most deprived areas can access a sports hall within a 20-minute walk.
- By 2041 the average age of the sites will be 48 years, and Leisure At Cheltenham will be 70 years old. There is an increasing need for modernisation of sports halls sports halls as the stock ages.
- Unmet demand is low; 4% of demand in 2023 and 2041. This equates to 1.3 courts in 2023 and 1.4 courts in 2041. All unmet demand is from residents who live too far from a sports hall.
- In 2041 there are two locations where most unmet demand can be met, at 1.4 courts, and these are Swindon Village and Uckington. However, this level of reachable unmet demand is not sufficient to justify new sports hall provision and is forming part of the negotiations in respect of current planning applications.
- In 2023, 96% of Cheltenham demand for sports halls is met; in 2041 95%.
- Imported demand from neighbouring local authority areas is high at 22% of the used capacity of the borough's sports halls in 2023, increasing to 26% in 2041.

6.8.12 With the majority of sports halls based within educational sites it is also worth looking at community spaces where physical activities that don't require a high sports hall ceiling can take place e.g. yoga, Pilates and martial arts. This would free up space for activities that require larger and higher ceiling sports courts e.g. basketball, netball, volleyball and badminton.

6.8.13 The following map highlights that there is a wide range of community spaces that could be utilised.

6.8.14 There are also proposals for a new Petersfield Community & Sports Hub at Chelt Walk park which alongside the football facilities will provide indoor spaces for community & social activities. This is a community led project which is currently working on funding options for the scheme.

Map 13 – Cheltenham Community Spaces / Village Halls

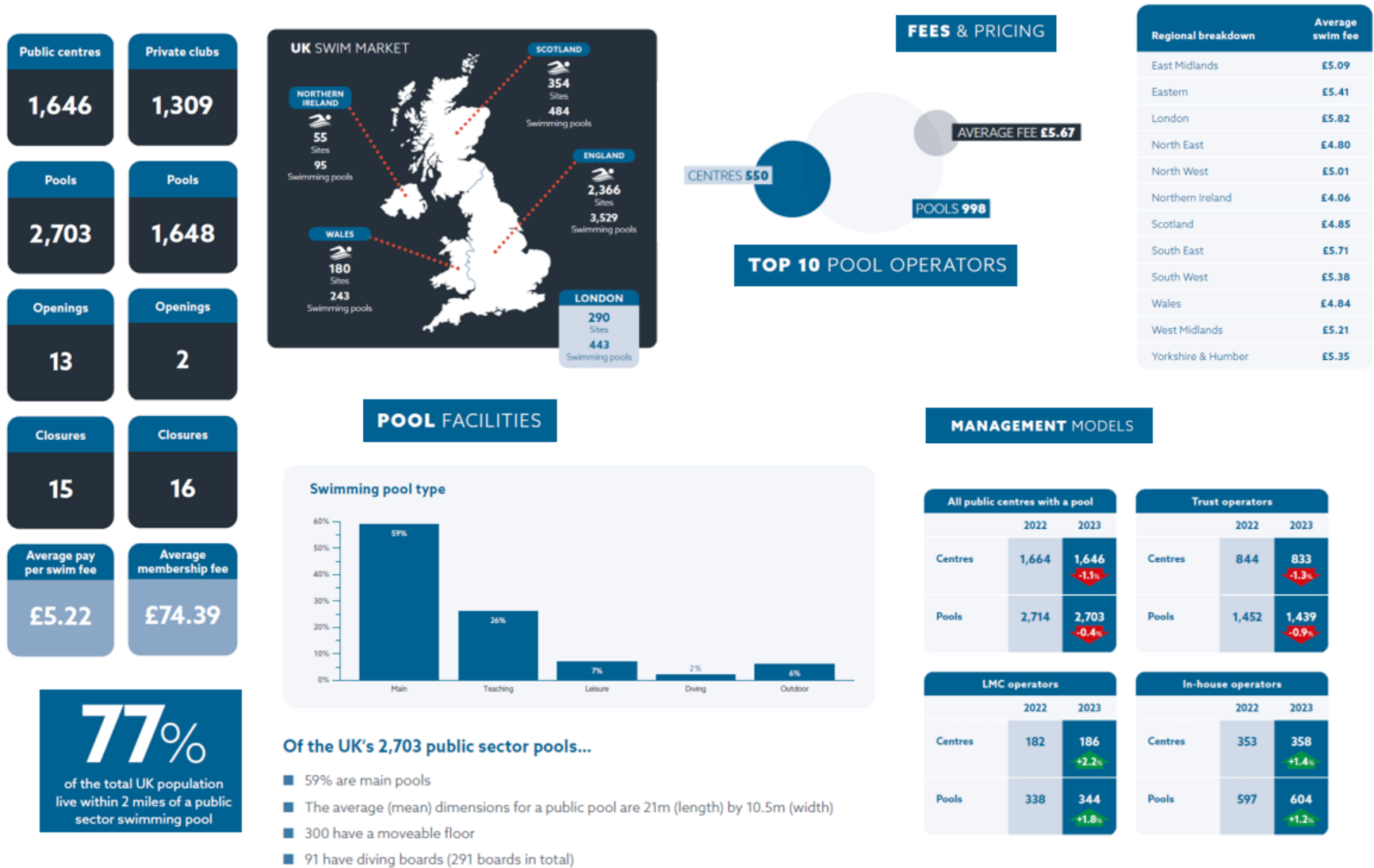


6.9 Swimming Pool Assessment

6.9.1 State of the UK Swimming Industry Report 2023 - The most recent state of the UK Swimming Industry Report key findings are below;

- The average public swim is now over £5 (£5.22) for the first time and marks the largest percentage increase since 2012 (5.9%).
- The top 10 pool operators have 33% of the market share and have a slightly higher average fee of £5.67 (8.6% higher than the UK wide average).
- This year’s net loss in swimming pools of two compares to a net loss of four in 2022 and a net loss of six in 2021, indicating pool closures are slowing down.
- 77% of the total UK population live within two miles of a public sector swimming pool.
- Operators are focusing on price, programming, and participation. Operators had to adapt during Covid to manage pool space and users allowing for more meaningful data to drive a more profitable pool programme.

Figure 20 – State of the UK Swimming Industry Report 2023



## 6.10 Supply and Demand Swimming Pools

6.10.1 The overall aims of this FPM modelling work are to assess:

- How the existing supply of swimming pools is meeting demand in 2023.
- The impact that changes to population and new housing developments in the borough up to 2041 have on the demand for swimming pools and its distribution.
- The impact that options to changes in the swimming pool supply have on the demand for swimming pools and its distribution.

6.10.2 The swimming pools that meet the Sport England size requirements for the FPM and are indoor are shown in the table below. The FPM does not include swimming pools less than 20m in length.

**Table 8 – Supply of Swimming Pools in Cheltenham Council Area**

Site	Operation	Facility Type	Dimensions (m)	Area (sqm)	Year Built	Year Refurb	Peak Hours	Total Hours	Capacity (visits in weekly peak period)
Cheltenham College	Educational	6-lane	25 x 13	325	1996		21.5	37	1,165
CLC Sports Centre	Educational	6-lane	25 x 13.7	343	1994		52.5	101	3,001
Dean Close School	Educational	4-lane	25 x 10	250	1971	2004	12.5	17.5	521
Everlast Fitness Club	Commercial	4-lane	20 x 10	200	2006	2010	52.5	98.5	1,750
Leisure at Cheltenham	Public	6-lane	33 x 12.8	422	1971	2008	51	100.5	6,200
		Teaching	23.8 x 9.7	230			42.5	56.5	
		Diving	12.8 x 12.8	164			36	50	
Sandford Parks Lido*	Public	Lido	50 x 27	1,350	1935	2006	36.5	71.5	4,106
St Edward's School	Educational	4-lane	25 x 10	250	1965	2005	33	49	1,375

\* Modelled as 675 sqm to reflect seasonality of opening hours

6.10.3 In both 2023 and 2041 there are nine individual swimming pools across seven sites (one at the public leisure centres Leisure At Cheltenham and Sandford Parks Lido, four at educational and one commercial site) in Cheltenham available for community use. These are shown in the map overleaf.

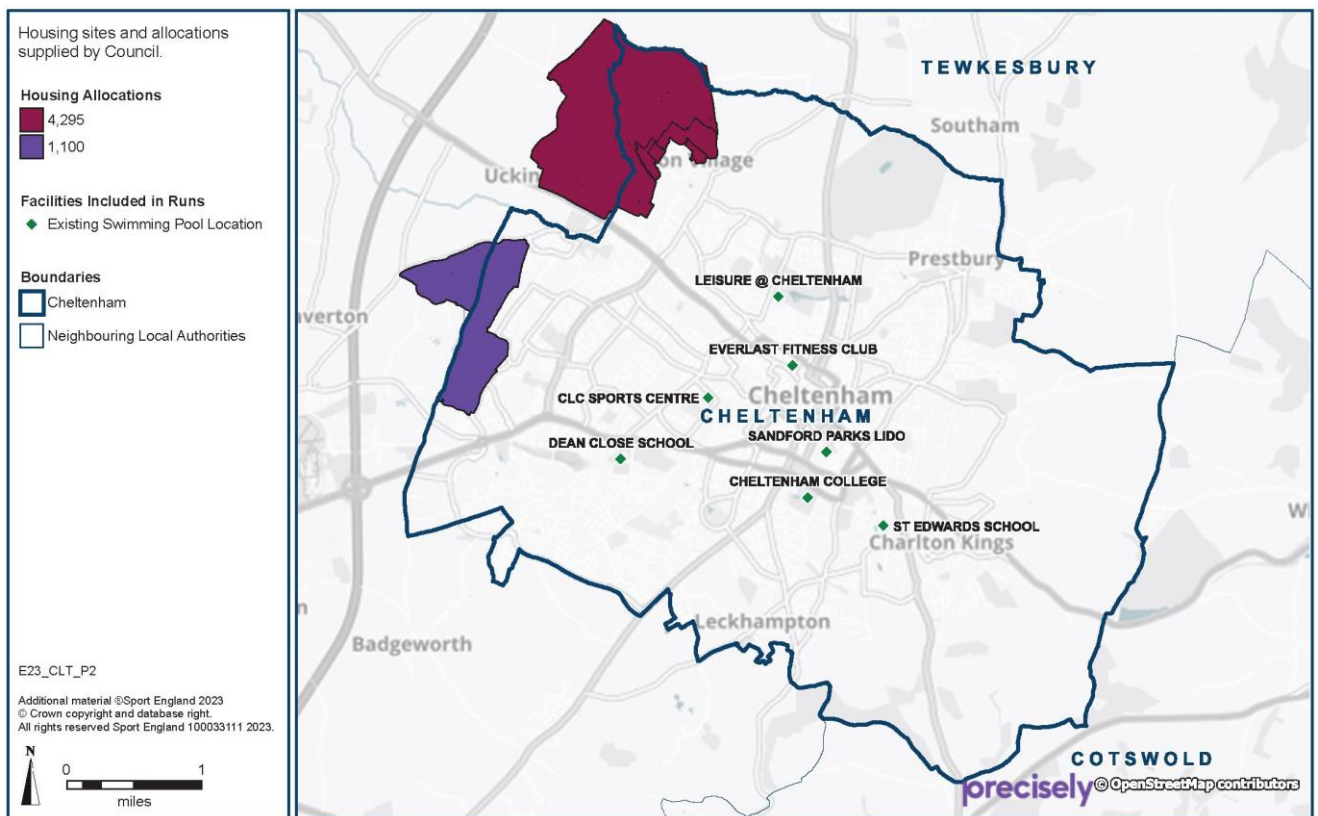
6.10.4 The total water space in the borough is 2,859 sqm of water. This reduces to 2,071 sqm when scaled with the hours available in the weekly peak period and equates to a supply of 18,118 visits per week in the peak period.

6.10.5 When compared to other local authorities, Cheltenham has a higher proportion of water space in sqm per 1,000 population than regional and national levels.

Table 9 – Comparison of water space per population to other local authorities

Water Space in sqm per 1,000 Population	Run 1	Run 2
Area	2023	2041
Cheltenham	24	23
Cotswold	16	14
Gloucester	14	13
Tewkesbury	11	9
South West Region	13	12
England	12	11

Map 14 – Location of Swimming Pool Sites Allocated in FPM in relation to Planned Housing Growth Areas in 2041



6.10.6 Swimming pools in Cheltenham are relatively old, with an average age of 46 years in 2023, rising to 64 years in 2041.

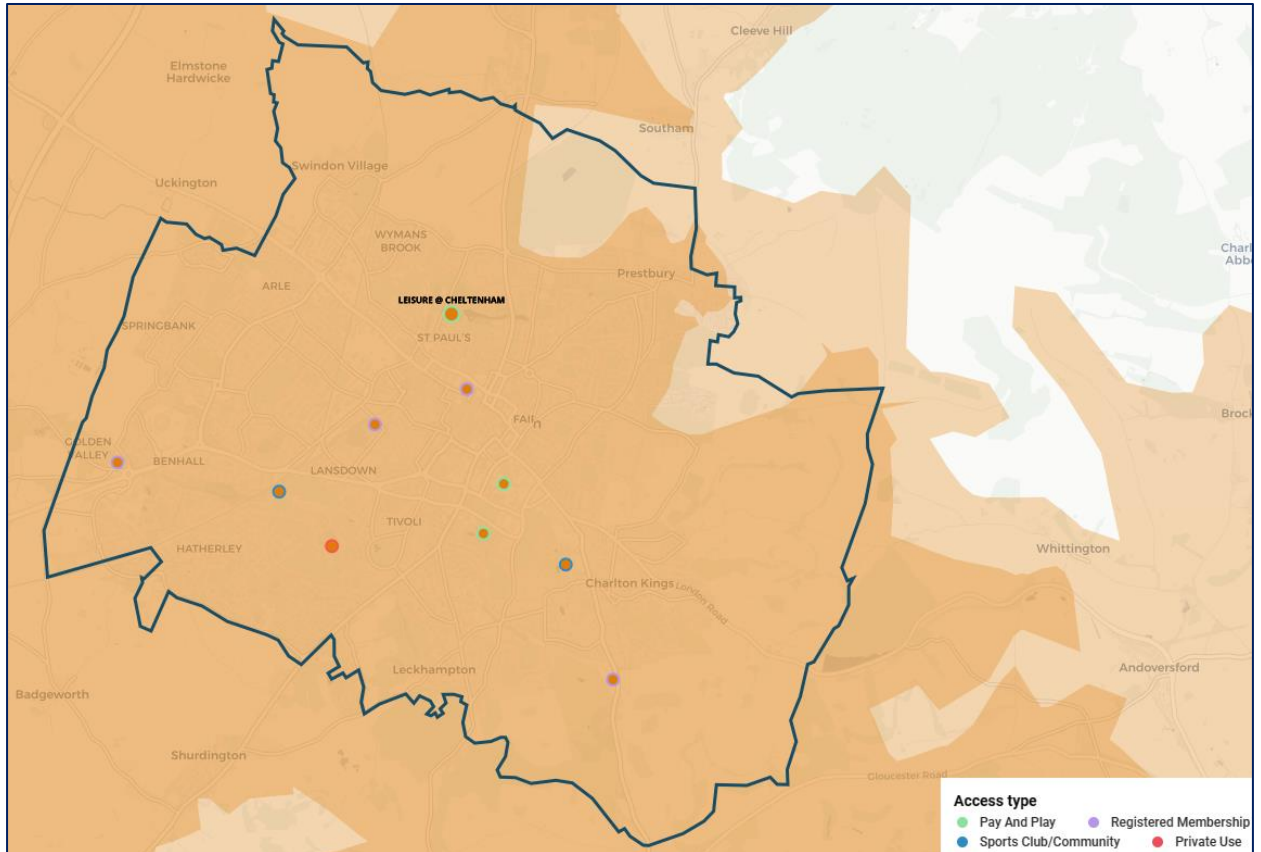
6.10.7 The two public sites have an average age of 70 years in 2023 and 88 years in 2041. Sandford Parks Lido was built in 1935 and refurbished in 2006. It is a unique site, with heritage being a key feature of its attractiveness. Leisure At Cheltenham was built in 1971 and was extensively refurbished in 2008 and again in 2018. As this was some time ago, its attractiveness is reduced in 2023.

- 6.10.8 Everlast Fitness Club is the newest swimming pool in the borough, built in 2006, and also the most recent to be refurbished in 2010, and is therefore the most attractive site. The next newest swimming pool sites are Cheltenham College, built in 1996, and CLC Sports Centre, built in 1994.
- 6.10.9 St Edwards School (built in 1965 and refurbished in 2005) and Dean Close School (built in 1971 and refurbished in 2004) are considered the least attractive facilities as their refurbishments were nearly 20 years ago.

6.11 Access to Swimming Pools

6.11.1 The map below shows the geographic distribution of the strategic main swimming pools across Cheltenham Council, with a catchment area for each of 20-minutes’ drive time (20-minute drive time private car). The 20-minute drive time catchment area of the existing swimming pools covers the Cheltenham Council area and beyond into neighbouring local authority areas.

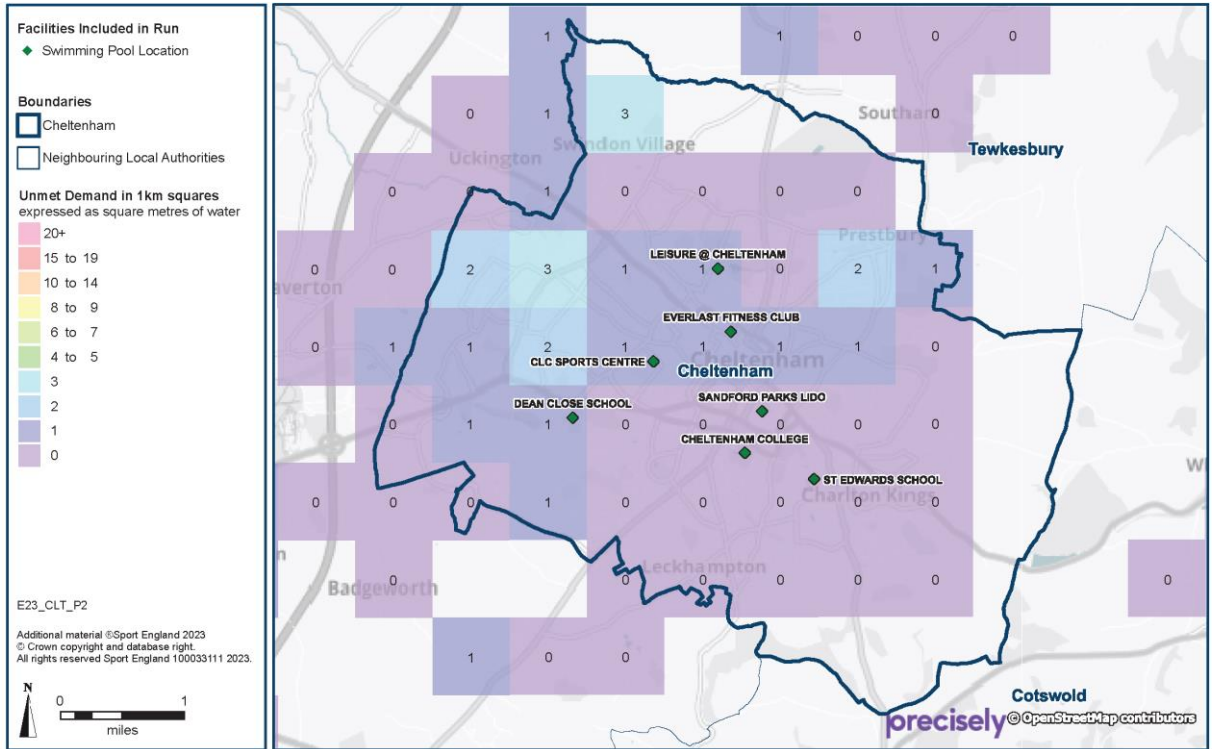
Map 15 – Swimming Pools (20-minute Drive Time)



- 6.11.2 In Cheltenham 19% of the population do not have access to a car. This is lower than the national average of 23% and higher than the regional average of 16% and reflects the more urban nature of the borough.
- 6.11.3 For these residents, a network of accessible swimming pools is important in order to encourage swimming participation.
- 6.11.4 **56% of the borough’s residents are within a 20-minute walk of a swimming pool in 2023, reducing to 53% in 2041.**
- 6.11.5 For the 10% most deprived population, 53% are within a 20-minute walk of a swimming pool in both 2023 and 2041.
- 6.11.6 The swimming pool sites are within a five-minute walk of a bus stop. Dean Close School and CLC Sports Centre are within a 15-minute walk of a railway station, with CLC being accessible by the off road Honeyborne cycle route.
- 6.11.7 Travel to all swimming pools by bus should be possible, and to some sites by rail. In 2023, 9% of journeys to swimming pools are estimated to be by public transport, increasing to 10% in 2041.

- 6.11.8 Residents in the eastern part of the borough have the least access and are within a 20-minute drive of between five and nine swimming pool sites.
- 6.11.9 In 2023 and 2041, 69% of all journeys to swimming pools are estimated to be by car.
- 6.11.10 Only a very small proportion of residents do not have their demand for swimming pools met. The reason for this unmet demand is residents who live too far from a pool.

Map 16 – Cheltenham Unmet Demand for Swimming in 2041





6.12 Swimming Pools – Main FPM Findings

**Facilities Planning Model - What does this mean for leisure provision in Cheltenham?**

**Swimming Pools**

- Swimming pool supply is nine pools across seven sites (including Sandford Parks Lido) – of which 38% of water space 788 sqm is unavailable during the weekly peak period.
- Cheltenham has an extensive supply in terms of water space, much higher than surrounding local authority areas, resulting in high levels of imported demand, particularly from Tewkesbury Borough
- Average age of swimming pools is 46 years in 2023 and 64 years in 2041. Most sites have been modernised but refurbishments 15-20 years ago. **Increasing need for modernisation and/or replacement as less attractive to residents by 2041.**
- Cheltenham’s population is projected to increase by 5,539 between 2023 (117,834) and 2041 (123,3730), overall demand barely changes due to changing profile of residents resulting in lower participation levels. Demand increases in northwest of the borough where new housing is located.
- Of the borough’s residents, 56% are within a 20-minute walk of a swimming pool in 2023, reducing to 53% in 2041. 10% most deprived population 53% are within a 20-minute walk of a swimming pool in both 2023 and 2041.
- Unmet demand is low (only 3% in both 2023 and 2041), 32 sqm of water in 2023 and 36 sqm in 2041.** All unmet demand is due to residents being too far from a swimming pool.
- In 2023, the location where most unmet demand can be met is in Arle, at 33 sqm of water. In 2041, with new housing developments in northwest of the borough and increases in demand in the other local authorities, reachable unmet demand is highest near Uckington, in Tewkesbury Borough and Swindon Village, at 58 sqm of water. **This is insufficient to justify new swimming pool provision.**
- In 2023 and 2041, **97%** of Cheltenham’s demand for swimming is met. This is very high level of demand and greater

% of Total Demand Satisfied	Run 1	Run 2
Area	2023	2041
Cheltenham	97%	97%
Cotswold	89%	89%
Gloucester	94%	93%
Tewkesbury	92%	92%
South West Region	90%	90%
England	91%	90%

than other nearby local authorities & nationally.

- 95% of Cheltenham’s satisfied demand is met at swimming pools within the borough. In 2023 and 2041 only 5% is met at pools in other local authority areas.
- Consultation with Swim England and swimming clubs suggested more pool time for the clubs is required

**6.13 Health & Fitness Facilities**

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

**6.13.2 State of the UK Fitness Industry Report 2023**

6.13.3 The key findings from the Leisure Database 2023 report for public gyms are set out below and shown in the infographic overleaf.

6.13.4 Overall, the UK health and fitness industry continues to bounce back following the impact of Covid-19. Despite the number of gyms falling slightly, there are now more members than in 2022, while market value has reached an all-time high.



# UK PUBLIC GYMS

Private Clubs  
**4,460**

Public Gyms  
**2,538**

Members  
**6.98 m**

Members  
**3.30 m**

Market Value  
**£4.04 bn**

Market Value  
**£1.35 bn**

Average Fee  
**£44.92**

Average Fee  
**£31.07**

Penetration Rate  
**10.2%**

Penetration Rate  
**4.9%**

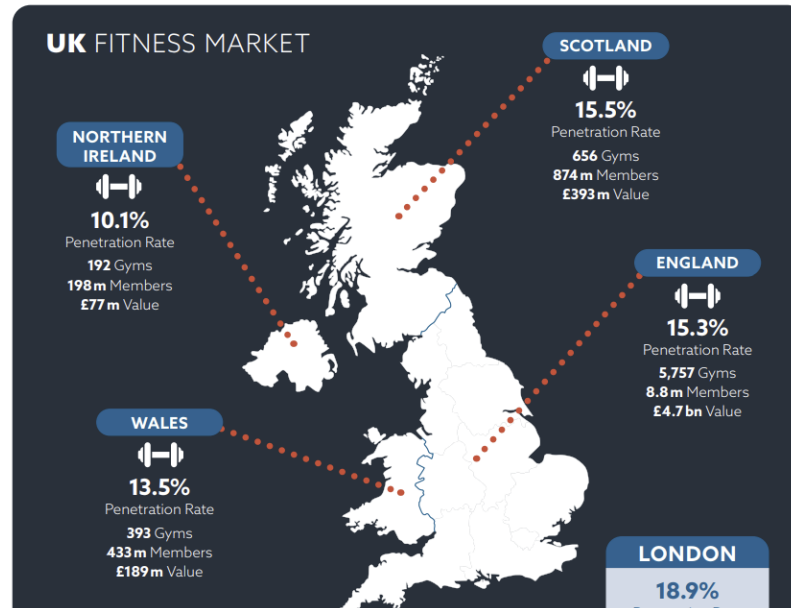
## UK Average Membership = 1,301

It ranges from:  
**908**  
in Wales (30% below UK average) to  
**1,857**  
in London (43% above UK average)

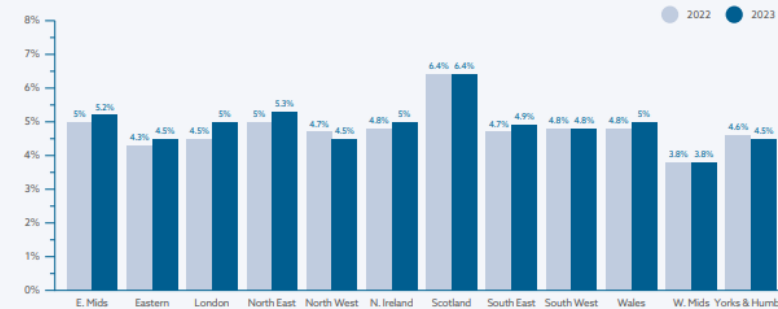
## UK Average Fee = £31.07

It ranges from:  
**£26.99**  
in Northern Ireland (13% below UK average) to  
**£35.50**  
in London (14% above UK average)

The last 12 months have seen the number of public sector gyms fall by 2.6%, but member numbers are up 3% and market value 3.5%.



## Regional Penetration Rate: 2022 / 2023



### LONDON INSIGHT 2022

- 10% of gyms
- 13% of members
- 14% of market value

Over **400,000** members

**4.5%** penetration rate

**1 in 22 people** in London is a member of a public gym

### LONDON INSIGHT 2023

- 10% of gyms
- 14% of members
- 15% of market value

Over **450,000** members

**5%** penetration rate

**1 in 20 people** in London is a member of a public gym

TOP 10 OPERATORS		
	2022	2023
Gyms	744	747 <span>0.4%</span>
Members	1.08 m	1.21 m <span>12.2%</span>
Market Value	£454 m	£528 m <span>16.4%</span>

TRUST OPERATORS		
	2022	2023
Gyms	1,191	1,167 <span>2.0%</span>
Members	1.58 m	1.57 m <span>0.7%</span>
Market Value	£676 m	£688 m <span>1.8%</span>

LMC OPERATORS		
	2022	2023
Gyms	231	233 <span>0.9%</span>
Members	399 k	512 k <span>28.3%</span>
Market Value	£154 m	£204 m <span>32.8%</span>

IN-HOUSE OPERATORS		
	2022	2023
Gyms	485	484 <span>0.2%</span>
Members	620 k	613 k <span>1.1%</span>
Market Value	£229 m	£227 m <span>1.2%</span>

### Since April 2022

	Gyms	Members	Market Value
Openings	24	44 k	£19 m
Closures	37	31 k	£11 m

**Net loss of 13 gyms**

### CLOSED GYM CHARACTERISTICS

- 30% Top 10 Operator
- 62% Dry
- 38% Wet

6.13.5 The supply analysis taken from Sport England Active Power database of fitness facilities identifies that, overall, there are 1,194 fitness stations or more out of a total of 19 health and fitness facilities identified in the audit. Of these; three facilities are pay & play (60 stations), 10 registered members (959 stations) and five private (80 stations). Leisure At Cheltenham is pay and play and membership (c.95 stations).

6.13.6 All fitness suite facilities require some form of payment/membership payment before use and an induction is required.

6.13.7 The supply of health and fitness facilities across Cheltenham Council and providing pay and play or registered membership are shown in the table below.

**Table 10 – Supply of Health and Fitness Facilities Offering Fitness Stations with Community Access – Cheltenham Council Area**

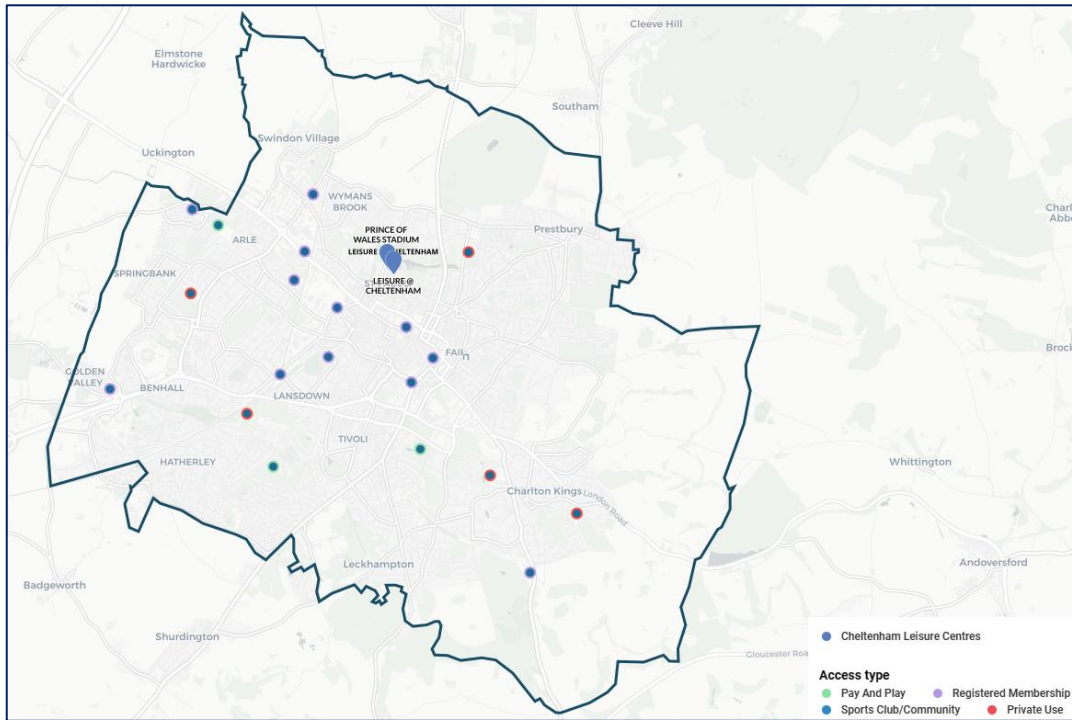
Facility	Nos. of fitness stations
<b>Pay and play</b>	
ALL SAINTS ACADEMY (CHELTENHAM)	25
BOURNSIDE SPORTS CENTRE	14
CHELTENHAM COLLEGE	21
<b>Registered membership</b>	
CLC SPORTS CENTRE	80
ENERGIE FITNESS (CHELTENHAM)	100
EVERLAST GYMS (CHELTENHAM)	118
JUVENATE (CHELTENHAM)	21
JD GYM	250
RESET GYM & THERAPY ROOMS	14
SIMPLY GYM (CHELTENHAM)	205
THE CLUB AND SPA AT THE CHELTENHAM PARK HOTEL	36
THE GYM GROUP (CHELTENHAM)	120
YMCA CHELTENHAM SPORTS CENTRE	15
<b>Pay &amp; Play / Membership</b>	
LEISURE AT CHELTENHAM	95
<b>Total fitness stations</b>	<b>1,114</b>

6.13.8 One facility is owned by Cheltenham Council – Leisure At Cheltenham.

6.13.9 The private sector and education sector plays a significant role in providing gym and fitness facilities in the borough with nine gyms on education sites (five of which are private), eight commercial sites and one community organisation (YMCA).

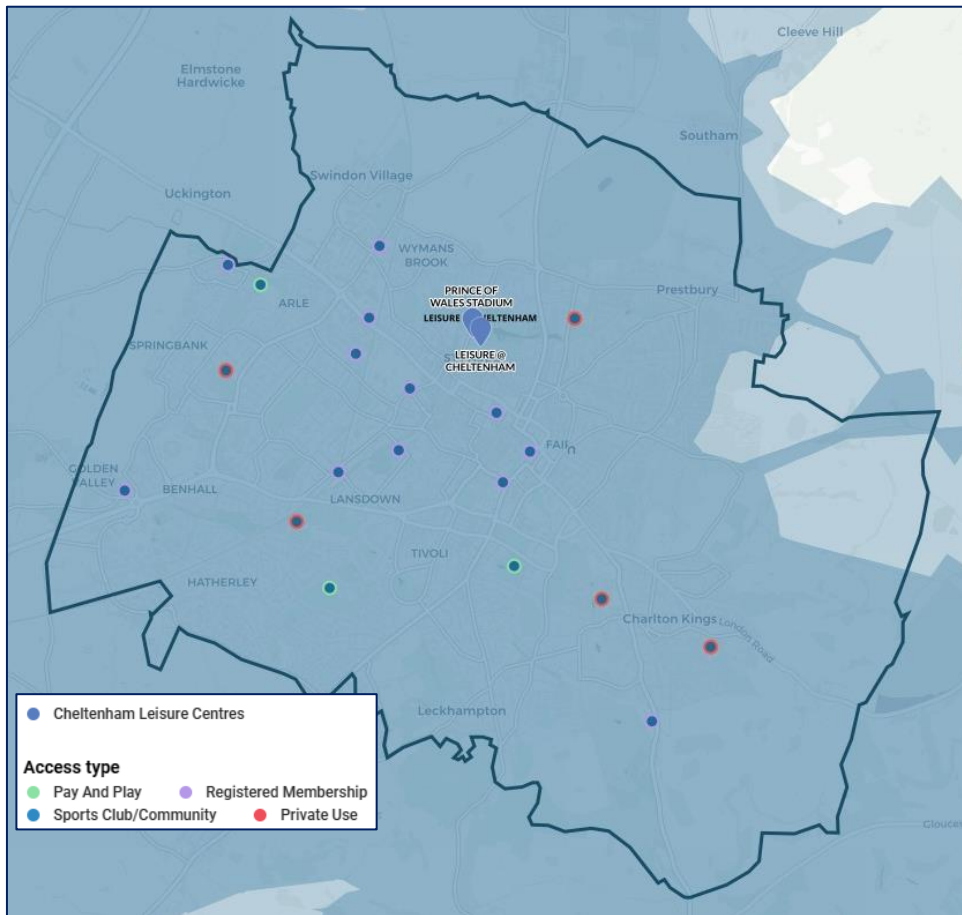
6.13.10 Cheltenham health and fitness facility locations are provided in map below.

Map 17 – Cheltenham Health and Fitness Facilities



6.13.11 All the borough can reach a fitness facility within a 20 minute drive time.

Map 18 – Cheltenham Health and Fitness Facilities 20-minute Drive Time



6.14 Latent Demand for Fitness Memberships

- 6.14.1 A latent demand report for fitness was commissioned from The Leisure Database Company for Leisure At Cheltenham. As the only Council owned leisure centre, this will help inform CBC of the potential growth in membership and future investment opportunities.
- 6.14.2 Knowing the membership demand will help to gauge increased levels of fitness stations required in the future. Any new proposed fitness facility should also subject to a business case to ensure financial viability.
- 6.14.3 The latent demand was based on the assumption that there will be investment into the site either as a refurb or major investment.
- 6.14.4 Just over 34k people live within a mile of the site and this rises to almost 94k in two miles. Of the 94k people in this two mile radius, 78,976 are adults aged 15+
- 6.14.5 The estimated overall demand for fitness at Leisure At Cheltenham is 3,107. This includes allowance for 30% of the total to travel from outside the catchment area and some negative consideration for the competition in the area (including the new JD Gyms which opened in Aug 2023).
- 6.14.6 Based on current 2,200 adult (15 yrs+) fitness members the report highlights a potential increase of **907 members**.
- 6.14.7 The table below shows the total demand against the current number of fitness stations and the benchmark of members per station. Across the industry a benchmark of circa 25 - 30 members per station is considered optimal, a higher figure would suggest there could be capacity issues at peak times.

Table 11 – Projected Total Demand for Fitness – Members per Station

Leisure Facility	Projected Total Demand for Fitness	Current Number Stations	Members per station if total demand achieved
Leisure At Cheltenham	3,107	95	33

- 6.14.8 This table suggests that there is insufficient capacity within the gym to accommodate the projected total demand. Whilst it is possible to manage a gym facility at these levels, it will be important to ensure that programming supports peak usage times and that there is a strong group exercise programme to reduce the demand on the gym.
- 6.14.9 The full latent demand report can be found in [Appendix 11](#)

**Latent Demand Modelling - What does this mean for leisure provision in Cheltenham?**

- There is the potential for growth in the fitness membership base of 907 members at Leisure At Cheltenham.
- The existing gym facilities are insufficient to support the total demand projected.
- Consequently, increasing the size of the gym facilities at Leisure At Cheltenham could be considered to reach the potential growth in fitness members.

6.15 Athletics Tracks

- 6.15.1 England Athletics is the membership and development body for grass roots athletics and running clubs in England.

6.15.2 In May 2021, following extensive consultation with a multitude of stakeholders across the sport, they launched a strategic plan for **2021-2042: Athletes and runners at the heart – creating opportunities, enhancing experiences, and powering potential.**

6.15.3 This strategy ensures a robust and clearly defined future direction for our sport which places athletes and runners at the heart of everything we will do over the 12-year period to 2042.

6.15.4 **The purpose** - to inspire more athletes and runners of all abilities and backgrounds to fulfil their potential and to have a lifelong love for the sport.

6.15.5 **The vision** - for athletics and running to become an inclusive sport where everyone belongs and can flourish.

6.15.6 **Key focus areas** - at the heart of this plan, and the focal point for everything that England Athletics do, are the people and communities involved in athletics across the following five key areas:

- Clubs, Club Leaders, and facilities.
- Competition
- Coaches and Officials
- Participation: young people and running
- Talented athletes

6.15.7 The above five key focus areas from England Athletics Strategy 2021 – 2032 are identified in the England Athletics infographic below.

Figure 21 – England Athletics Strategy 2021 – 2032 Key focus areas

ENGLAND ATHLETICS STRATEGY 2021-2032



## Key focus areas

At the heart of our strategic plan, and the focal point for everything we do, are the people and communities involved in our sport across five key areas:



6.15.8 England Athletics has adopted UK Athletics’ (UKA) hierarchy of facilities:

Figure 22 – UK Athletics facilities hierarchy

Participant/Athlete Level	Venue Level	Competition Permit	Track Certification Level
National representative/ funded athletes	INTERNATIONAL VENUE	Level 5	IAAF
Country / Regional representative Athlete	NATIONAL VENUE	Level 2,3,4	UKA Competition Certificate OR IAAF Class 1 or 2
Club Athlete	COMPETITION VENUE	Level 2,3	UKA Competition Certificate
	CLUB TRAINING VENUE	Level 1	Not required
Novice Recreational	COMPACT ATHLETICS FACILITY	No permit required	Not required



- 6.15.9 UKA hierarchy of facilities supports participant/athlete pathways and aligns with the UKA Athlete development model.
- 6.15.10 Full details of facilities expected for different levels of competitions can be found in [Appendix 12](#). These are summarised in the table below:

**Table 12 – Athletic Facility Types**

Athletic Facility		Description
<b>Compact</b>		A new generation of affordable and sustainable satellite athletics facilities that provide a stepping stone into club venues
<b>Club Venues</b>		Track and field facilities that have a strong anchor club membership and can provide appropriate training and competition opportunities
<b>Regional Venues</b>	<b>Competition</b>	UKA certified competition facilities with a strong anchor performance club, capable of hosting a high level of competition
<b>National Venues</b>	<b>Competition</b>	UKA/IAAF certified competition facilities capable of hosting the highest level of domestic competitions
<b>International Venues</b>	<b>Competition</b>	UKA/IAAF certified competition facilities capable of hosting world class competitions

- 6.15.11 All licensed competitions must take place in a venue which is fully TrackMark accredited [Trackmark | UK Athletics](#)
- 6.15.12 TrackMark was introduced in 2018 and is a UKA quality assurance scheme for track and field athletics facilities. TrackMark is split into six units that can be completed for the units relevant for each facility. They are:

- **Unit 1 - Track:** track layout, track surface condition
- **Unit 2 - Field:** throws and jumps facilities, field layout, safety equipment, disability provision
- **Unit 3 - Ancillary:** changing rooms, toilets, car parking, storage, clubroom/social areas, multi-purpose rooms, disability access
- **Unit 4 - Operations:** Staff/volunteer training, maintenance/inspection regimes
- **Unit 5 – Floodlighting:** track and/or field lighting plan and lux levels
- **Unit 6 - Competition:** spectator seating, PA system, competition equipment, warm up areas, photo finish

- 6.15.13 The difference between the competition level licensing is:

- Level 1 – majority of competitions in England are level 1 licence. They don't require TrackMark unit 6 (competition facilities) as does level 2.
- Level 2 – enhanced level of licence linked with World Athletics permit so that athletes can qualify for national selection so facilities that can record performances required. This means that a facility must have a UKA approved track and field measurement and levels survey.

- 6.15.14 England Athletics Facilities Strategy 2018-2025 facility development priorities are;

- 6.15.15 **Key Facilities Priority 1** - Ensure that the allocation of resources to new and existing track and field facilities is prioritised to those that have the greatest potential to impact positively on general participation, club membership growth and retention, and improved personal performance. To support this priority England Athletics will:

- Encourage all tracks to seek accreditation through TrackMark
- Help venues to identify the level in the Hierarchy of Facilities that is most appropriate for them and support clubs and operators seeking to raise funding to maintain facilities at that level

- Prioritise new track and field facilities within multi-sport hubs
- Seek to be actively involved in the development of local planning policies wherever possible
- Support new 200m indoor tracks and indoor athletics training facilities where there is a proven demand and a clear geographical gap in supply

6.15.16 **Key Facilities Priority 2** - Actively encourage athletics and running facilities to be used to their fullest possible extent by the sport and by all sections of the community in order to maximise viability. To support this priority England Athletics will:

- Support athletics clubs in discussions with facility operators and local authorities over the use of the track infield for other pitch sports and collate examples of good practice and design guidance
- Support clubs and groups to ensure the facilities they use for athletics activity are accessible to all
- Help clubs to develop a strong partnership with facility owners/operators and will share examples of good practice
- Provide advice and guidance to clubs actively pursuing an asset transfer
- Help athletics and running clubs to become more professional and sustainable in how they operate
- Encourage new partnerships between athletics clubs and schools that have available indoor facilities

6.15.17 **Key Facilities Priority 3** - Encourage innovative approaches to the location and design of facilities for individual components of the sport in order to increase reach and create sustainability and viability. To support this priority England Athletics will:

- Expect all new and refurbished floodlight schemes to deliver a minimum of 100lux across the whole of the track and the infield
- Support clubs in exploring options for improved environmental sustainability and will share examples of good practice
- Support the development of MiniTracks / Compact athletics facilities where there is a viable business case based
- Consider supporting facility innovations involving non-standard track shapes, designs and uses providing they are backed by a sound business case
- Continue to lobby bodies with an influence over urban design, to ensure that the needs of runners are considered alongside those of cyclists and pedestrians
- Continue to lobby for the free use of public parks and open spaces by runners and voluntary running groups
- Assist road running clubs that are looking for somewhere to meet, by introducing them to sports clubs in their area that have suitable facilities

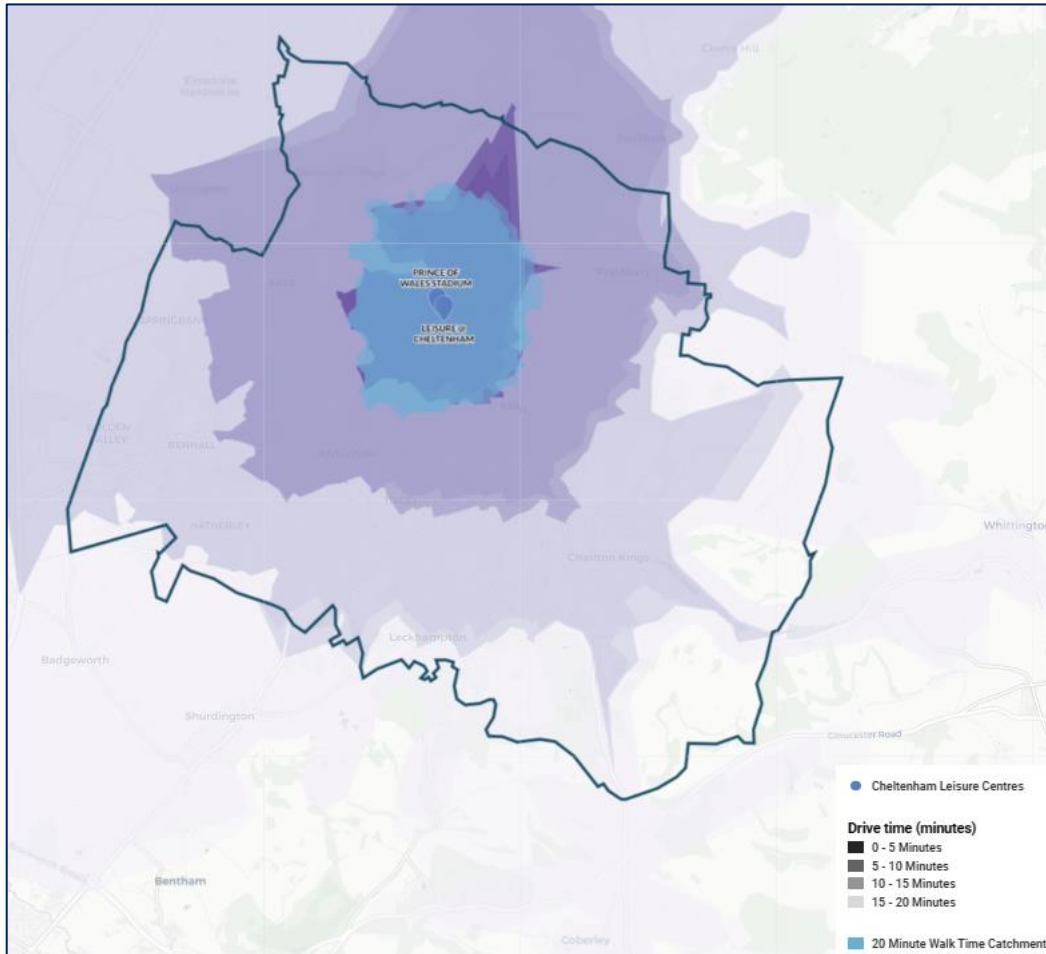
#### 6.15.18 **Supply**

6.15.19 There is one main public athletics facility in Cheltenham based at Prince of Wales Stadium which is owned by the Council. The six oval lane, eight straight lane synthetic track was built in 1979 and refurbished in 2012 (changing rooms refurbished in 2007). The site is floodlight and used all year round with spectator seating and parking. It is situated next to rugby pitches and co-located across the road from leisure At Cheltenham. It has been used to host level 2 licenced competitions.

6.15.20 The 20-minute drive catchment for the stadium covers most of Cheltenham apart from the south east and southern corners. People are likely to travel further than 20 minutes to take part in athletic competitions.



Map 19 – Cheltenham Athletics Track – 20-Minute Drive & Walk Time Catchment

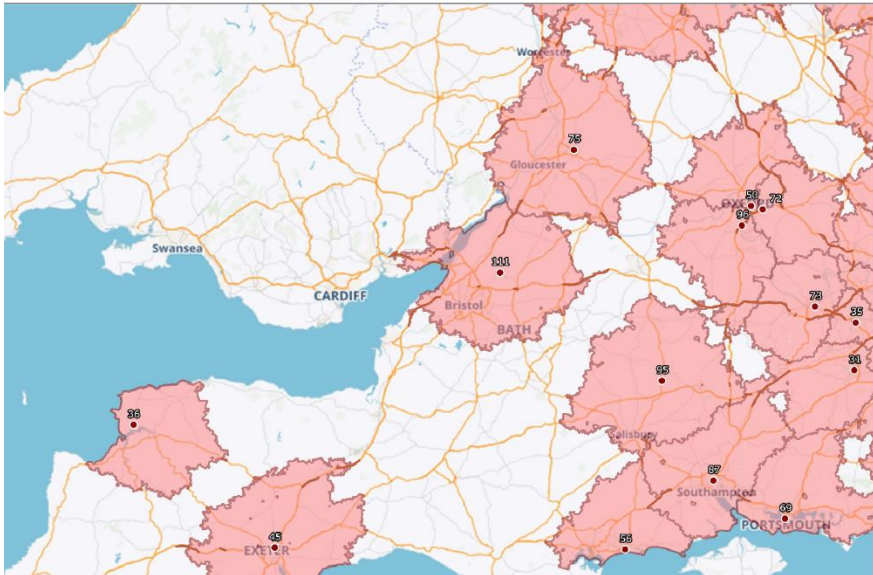


- 6.15.21 There is also a compact outdoor six lane track at All Saints Academy, but this is for private use.
- 6.15.22 The only other outdoor athletics track in Gloucestershire open for community use is the Blackbridge Jubilee Athletics Track, Gloucester. Built in 1993 (refurbished in 2012) this is a six oval lane, eight straight lane synthetic track. The track is floodlit and available for sports club / community association use Monday – Friday 17:00-20:00. It is home to Gloucester Athletic Club and is approximately 11 miles (28 minutes’ drive) from the Prince of Wales Stadium.
- 6.15.23 **Demand**
- 6.15.24 Consultation with athletics clubs in Cheltenham, as well as England Athletics has informed the demand for athletics in the Borough.
- 6.15.25 Prince of Wales Stadium athletics track is used by three clubs; Cheltenham and County Harriers, Almost Athletics and CLC Striders. All the clubs commented that the track needs replacing as it does not meet England Athletics standards required to run competitions. TrackMark status is fail overall due to the track requiring a full resurface, however the cage, field, floodlights and competition facilities meet the required standards. Improved disability access was also highlighted particularly by Cheltenham and County Harriers who would like to develop their provision for para- athletes.
- 6.15.26 Cheltenham and County Harriers and Almost Athletes both have in excess of 300 members.

- 6.15.27 Consultation with England Athletics confirmed that their main focus for Cheltenham is to “support the local authority and operator (Leisure At Cheltenham) to leverage funding to resurface the track at the Prince of Wales Athletics Stadium and secure the long term future of this important site.”
- 6.15.28 England Athletics identified The Prince of Wales Stadium as a key training and competition venue both locally and regionally and has, in the past hosted up to 8 licensed events per year (a typical competition facility in England averages 4 events a year).
- 6.15.29 England Athletics/UK Athletics confirmed they do not have a specific capital programme for facility development. However, the Prince of Wales Stadium is identified as a venue of strategic importance in the Southwest region and as such EA/UKA will support the local authority, operator and stakeholders in leveraging capital investment to resurface the track surface and protect its long term future.
- 6.15.30 The map below shows outdoor level 2 licenced competition facilities within a 40 minute drive time catchment and the catchment of Prince of Wales Stadium (nos.75).

**Map 20 – England Athletics Level 2 Licences Competition facilities – 40 minute drive time**

**Outdoor Level 2 Competition Facilities - 40-Minute Drive Time Coverage**  
South West



- Key:**
- 36 Braunton North Devon Track
  - 45 Exeter Arena
  - 56 Kings Park Athletic Track
  - 75 Prince Of Wales Stadium
  - 95 Tidworth Oval
  - 111 Yate Outdoor Sports Complex

## 6.16 Bowls (Indoor & Outdoor)

### 6.16.1 Indoor Bowls

6.16.2 An indoor bowls facility comprises several indoor rinks (usually a minimum of three rinks). Indoor bowls is a more specialist sport and tends to be used by bowlers who play outside in the summer, to practise and compete during the winter months.

6.16.3 There are no purpose-built indoor bowls sites within the Cheltenham Council area.

6.16.4 Following consultation with the NGB, England Indoor Bowls Association, they stated that there are two indoor bowls sites in adjoining local authority areas within recommended drive-time of 30 Minutes - GL1 Leisure Centre (Gloucester) & Mid Glos Indoor Bowls Club (Brockworth). These two named sites can cater for participants from Cheltenham for the foreseeable future so no additional indoor bowling facility is required in Cheltenham.

6.16.5 The England Indoor Bowls Association guidance for indoor bowls facilities is:

- Assume most users will live locally and not travel more than 20 minutes.
- Assume 90% of users will travel by car, with the remainder on foot.
- Demand is calculated as one rink per 14,000-17,000 of total population. A six-rink green, therefore, is required for a population of 85,000-100,000.
- The number of rinks required can be related to the estimated number of members: assume 80-100 members per rink.

### 6.17 Outdoor Bowls

6.17.1 Bowls England is responsible for governance administration and promotion of Flat Green Lawn Bowls in England. It was formed in 2008 following a unification of the English Bowling Association (EBA) and English Women's Bowling Association (EWBA).

6.17.2 The 2021-26 England Bowls Strategy 'Fit for the Future' frames a new and exciting course for the sport. England Bowls believe it will:

- Unite the sport behind a compelling vision, creating a sense of belonging and source of inspiration for its volunteers.
- Guide the staff team's activity allowing it to better allocate resources to the areas that matter most.
- Help put issues and problems into a broader context, engendering a can-do, optimistic culture.
- Build confidence and enthusiasm amongst current partners and act as a catalyst to forge new relationships.
- Enable it to articulate with one voice why those outside its sport should care.

6.17.3 The five-year plan, launched in August 2021, is designed with the goal of getting more people playing and enjoying bowls.

6.17.4 It sets out our vision for the sport, how it plans to achieve its objectives and what success looks like in 2026. The priorities that will get England Bowls to its target of One Million Bowls Experiences by 2026 are:

- Building the brand of bowls by increasing focus on international & top domestic bowls and utilising opportunities such as Birmingham 2022 to achieve larger media coverage.
- Ensuring the sport is truly accessible to all by offering different formats of the game which suit all time constraints, as well as driving more people to clubs in new ways.
- Creating positive playing experiences for everyone who steps on the green, both for casual and competitive players, as well as growing our events calendar and introducing a Performance Pathway

- Putting volunteers first, as the lifeblood of our sport, by increasing our support for clubs in order to empower them to thrive.
- Leading the sport with purpose by developing our Governance structures, diversifying our revenue streams, and work collaboratively with all the sport’s key stakeholders.

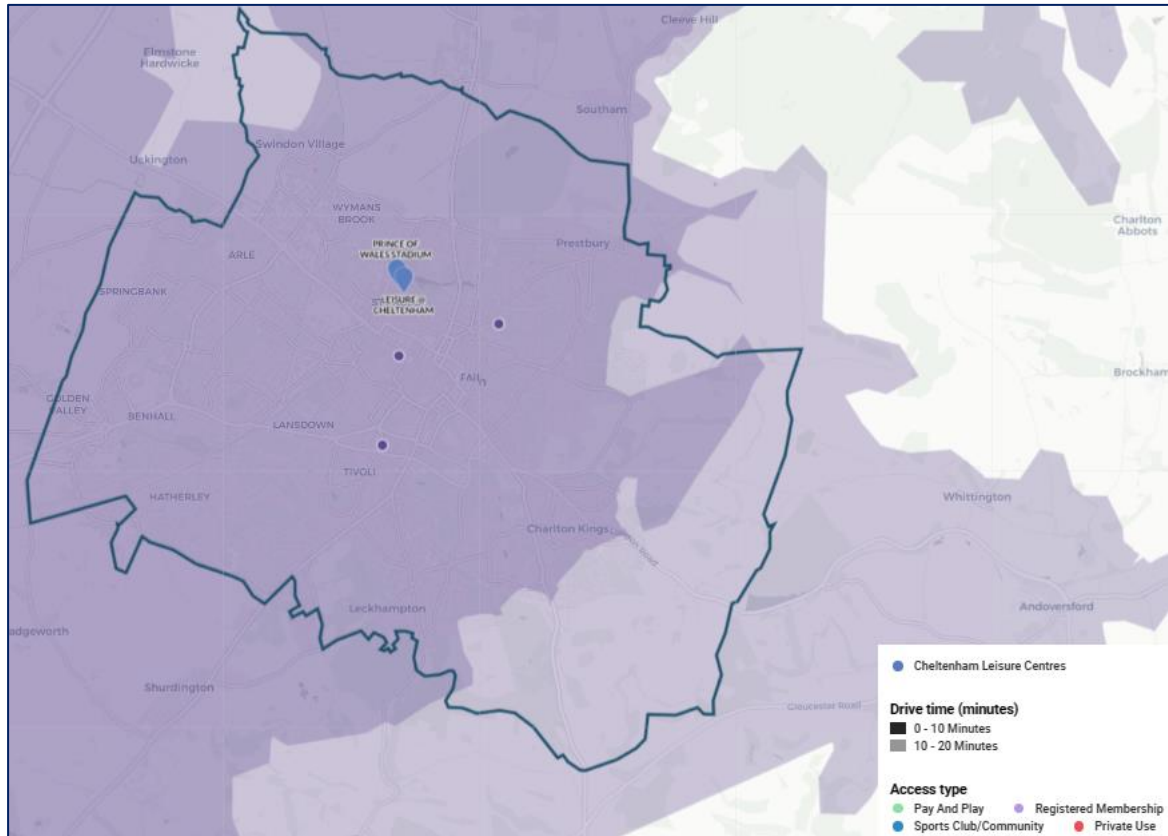
6.17.5 There are three outdoor bowling sites and clubs within the Cheltenham Council area;

**Table 13 – Outdoor Bowling Clubs**

Bowling Club	Members	Competition level	Quality of Facility	Bowling Greens	Other Facilities
Cheltenham Whaddon Bowling Club The Pavillion, Whaddon Road  Founded 1927 (Affiliated 12020)	70-80 members which has increased in last 5 years through regular open days and tester sessions and reduced subscription in first year for people new to bowling	Mostly interclub matches and competitions, occasional use by the County teams (Men & Women) for their matches  Club for County to use club for final rounds of County competitions. No development needs, as our club would be too small to host any higher level bowls events	<b>Good</b>	1 green	Clubhouse Skittle alley  Used funding to install disabled toilet and an outdoor shelter for spectators and players
Cheltenham Spa Bowling Club The Green, St.George’s Square  Founded 1924 (Affiliated 12019)	81 members which has stayed about same in last five years	Men’s Ladies, mixed club, county and national competitions	<b>Good</b>	1 green	Club plays internal competitions and external fixtures both friendly and league. There are also some intercounty fixtures played at the club each year
Cheltenham Bowling Club Ashburne Bowling Green, Suffolk Square  Founded 1883 (Affiliated 12018)	160 full members, men & women which has increased in the last five years	Members play in Club, County and National competitions	<b>Good</b>  Club considering increasing storage space and increasing capacity of premises for our members	2 greens	Pavilion with bar, kitchen, meeting rooms, short mat and snooker tables
<b>Total greens</b>				<b>4</b>	

6.17.6 The map below shows that all the outdoor bowling facilities are within a 20-minute drive time.

**Map 21 – Location of Outdoor Bowling and 20-minute Drive Time Catchments – Cheltenham Council Area**



6.17.7 In summary

- There are four bowling greens in Cheltenham provided across three sites
- All greens in Cheltenham are good quality
- There are three clubs in Cheltenham accessing four greens
- Membership across these clubs is approximately 310 playing members

6.17.8 Although Bowls England has noted a decline in membership rates since its inception in 2008, Clubs in Cheltenham Borough are generally healthy, with memberships reported to be steady but aging in many cases.

6.17.9 There are no sites or club changes since the 2017 PPS.

6.17.10 Future demand patterns are likely to be like current levels, based on participation trends. Sport England Active Lives survey suggests 1% of the population participated in flat green bowls activities in 2021/2022.

6.17.11 The Census 2021 identifies the Cheltenham borough population to be 118,800. 1% of the population equates to 1,188 persons participating in flat green bowls. This is 878 higher than the 310 membership identified in the study. This could be down to casual players participating in come and try sessions etc.

6.17.12 Higher population projections (5,539 population increased by 2041) will create a requirement for 1% additional capacity by 2041. This equates to approximately 55 additional bowls players. Spare capacity at the existing bowls facilities will be able to accommodate all additional future demand. Based on the 3 clubs across Cheltenham Borough this equates to 18 new members each by 2041.

6.17.13 There will be a need to ensure that bowls clubhouses can accommodate the additional demand.



6.17.14 It is also recommended that Bowls England work with Clubs to encourage improved awareness of facilities and that Clubs are well linked to participation programmes and support with marketing.

#### 6.18 Cycle Facilities

6.18.1 There are no indoor velodromes in Cheltenham.

6.18.2 There are five indoor cycle spin studios with Cheltenham at;

- Everlast Gyms (Cheltenham)
- Simply Gym
- Energie Fitness Cheltenham
- Welcome Gym Cheltenham
- Leisure At Cheltenham

6.18.3 There is no specific methodology for assessing the current and future need for cycle studios.

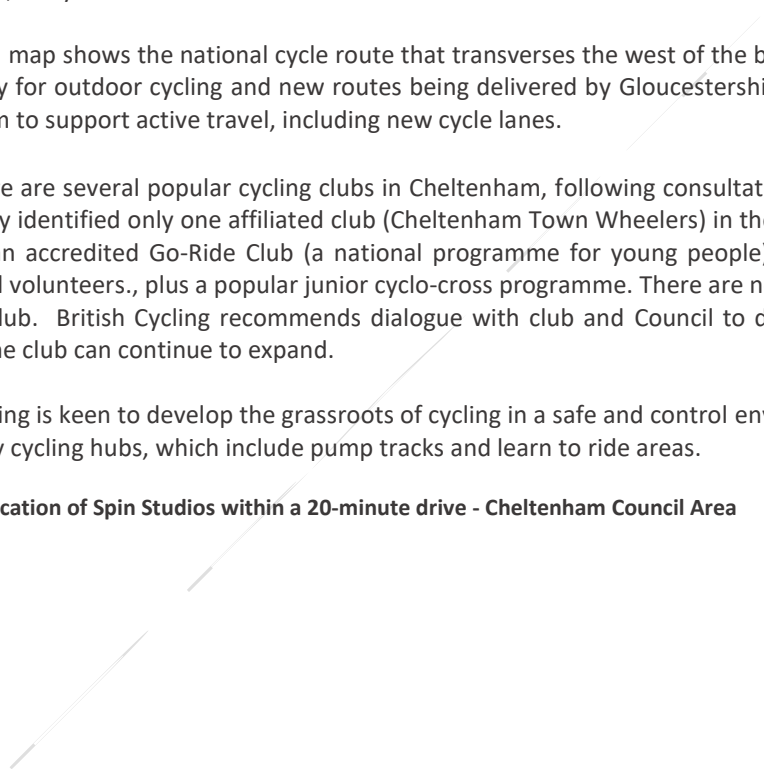
6.18.4 The location of spin studios and the 20-minute drive time catchments is shown in the map overleaf. As can be seen, all cycle studios in Cheltenham are within a 20-minute drive time.

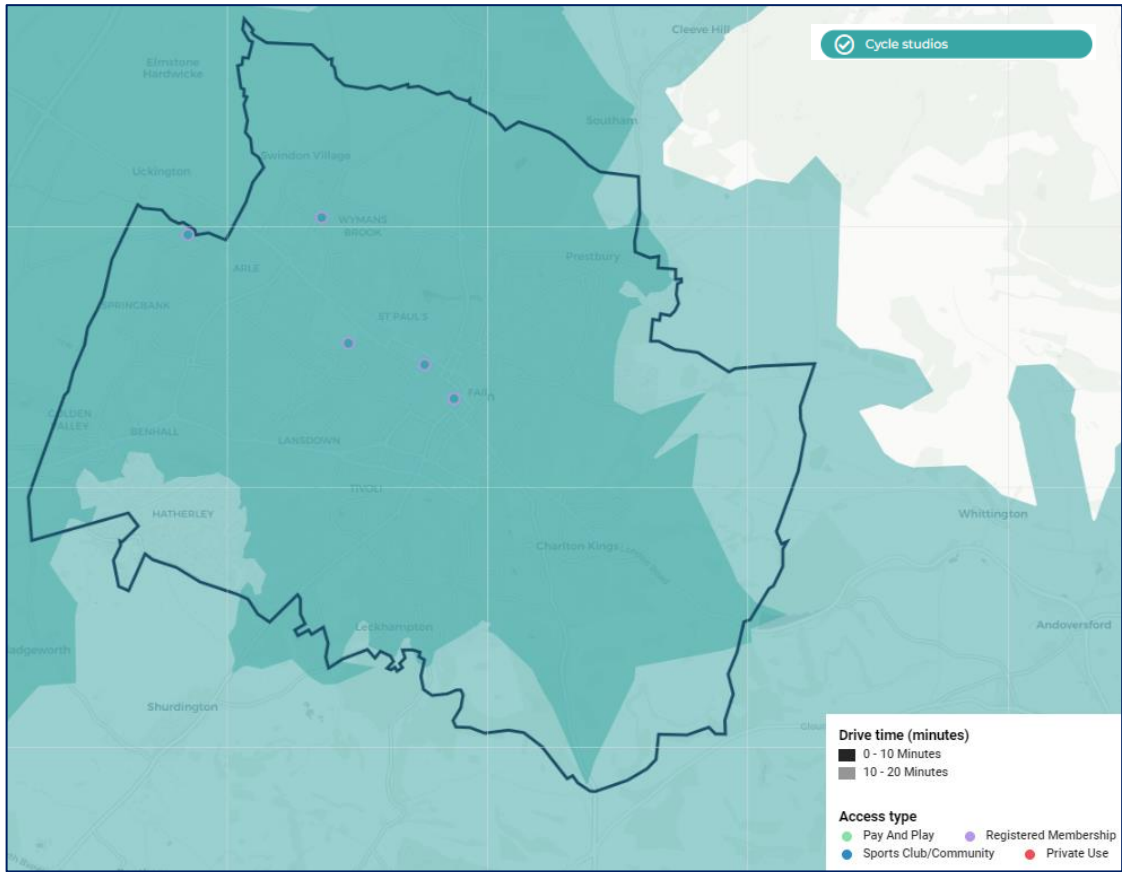
6.18.5 The second map shows the national cycle route that transverses the west of the borough providing an opportunity for outdoor cycling and new routes being delivered by Gloucestershire County Council in Cheltenham to support active travel, including new cycle lanes.

6.18.6 Whilst there are several popular cycling clubs in Cheltenham, following consultation with NGB **British Cycling** they identified only one affiliated club (Cheltenham Town Wheelers) in the Council area which also runs an accredited Go-Ride Club (a national programme for young people) with a large junior section and volunteers., plus a popular junior cyclo-cross programme. There are no barriers that affect this local club. British Cycling recommends dialogue with club and Council to discuss future facility needs so the club can continue to expand.

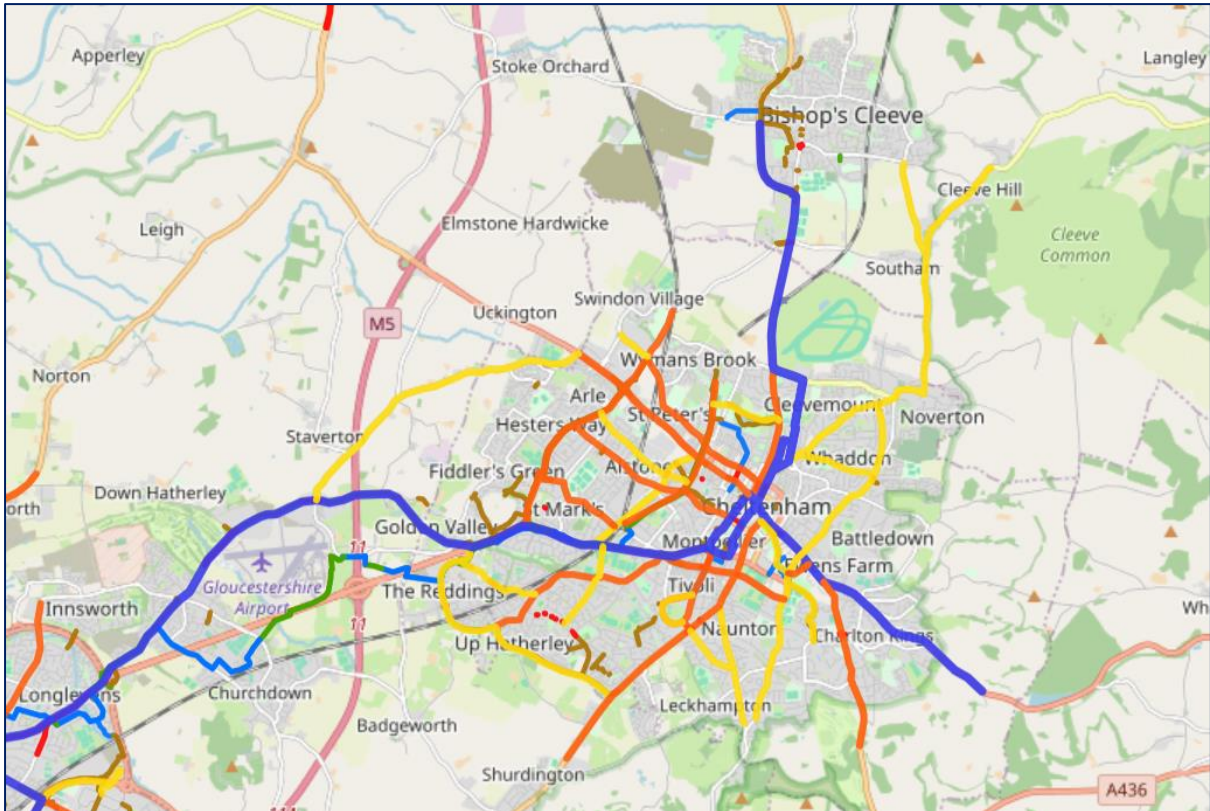
6.18.7 British Cycling is keen to develop the grassroots of cycling in a safe and control environment such as at Community cycling hubs, which include pump tracks and learn to ride areas.

#### Map 22 – Location of Spin Studios within a 20-minute drive - Cheltenham Council Area





Map 23 – Location of new cycle routes being delivered by GCC



- 6.18.8 The Council is committed to promoting active travel and to significantly increase cycling (target to double cycle trips) as shared in the Connecting Cheltenham strategy.
- 6.18.9 To significantly increase cycling it will need to appeal to people of all ages and abilities from door to door. To achieve this, there will need to be a transformation in ease of movement and perceived (and real) safety for all cyclists including the least confident and most vulnerable.
- 6.18.10 There are already cycle routes [Cheltenham cycle map](#) and proposed improvements to the cycle network (Cycle Cheltways) such as making all streets cycleable through the living streets programme. In addition, the **Strategic Bishop's Cleeve / Chelt / Gloucester Cycleway** aims to provide a high quality cycle link from Bishop's Cleeve through Cheltenham to Gloucester - £5 to £20 million. The map overleaf shows some of the existing and proposed cycle routes.
- 6.18.11 In summary, there is a wide range of opportunities to participate in some form of cycling activity whether through indoor cycling studio provision, active travel or through a cycling club. British Cycling has not identified Cheltenham as an area for indoor velodrome facilities.

6.19 **Gymnastics**

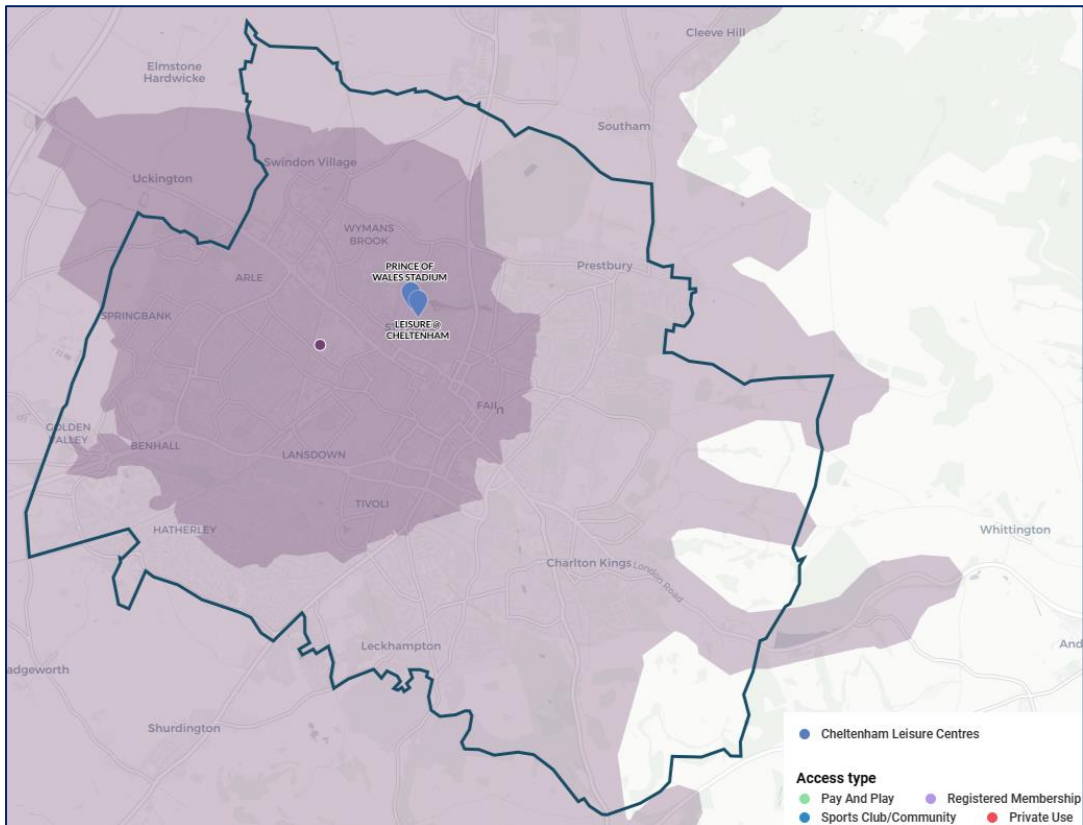
- 6.19.1 British Gymnastics identified the main issue for gymnastic development is having access to sufficient dedicated space so that clubs are able to grow and extend their programmes.
- 6.19.2 British Gymnastics recognised four affiliated gymnastic clubs in the area (The Gym Centre, Rowan Gymnastics Club, Astrea Gymnastics Club and Cheltenham Academy of Acrobatic Gymnastics).
- 6.19.3 Rowan Gymnastics Club is the only club with a dedicated gymnastics venue as shown on the map below. Most of the borough is within a 20-minute drive time of a dedicated facility apart from the south east.
- 6.19.4 The Gym Centre Gymnastics Club responded to the sports club consultation. Based mainly at Bournside Sports Centre (they also use Tewkesbury Sport Centre & GL1) their membership has decreased overall

but over 70 children are on the waiting list. They rated the facility they mainly use (Bournside) as poor and are looking for a separate dedicated venue.

6.19.5 British Gymnastics mentions that there is a lack of facilities, and a waiting list is in place for The Gym Centre. British Gymnastics would like to support gymnastics clubs to have a dedicated facility in the area.

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

**Map 24 – Location Of Gymnastic Dedicated Space within a 20-Minute Drive Time**



**6.20 Indoor Cricket**

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

**Table 14 – Indoor Cricket Facilities**

Facility	Cricket Club	Nos of Nets
All Saints Academy		2
Bournside Sports Centre		2
Cheltenham College		8
Cheltenham Ladies College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cheltenham Cricket Club – (ladies &amp; girls' squads)</li> </ul>	4
Dean Close School		4
Leisure At Cheltenham Cheltenham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charlton Kings Cricket Club</li> <li>Cheltenham Cricket Club (men's squads)</li> <li>Cheltenham Civil Service Cricket Club</li> </ul>	5
Pate's Grammar School		2
St Edward's Preparatory School		2
YMCA Cheltenham Sports Centre		2
High School, Leckhampton		2
<b>Total nets</b>		<b>33</b>

6.20.2 Leisure At Cheltenham also run an indoor 6's competition Monday to Friday from October to March.

6.20.3 Gloucestershire Cricket Foundation provided a breakdown and audit of sites (see table below) and facilities in Cheltenham used to inform a recent facilities strategy.

6.20.4 This audit follows England Cricket Board standards across the following measurable criteria:

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

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

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

6.20.7 ECB Indoor Sports Halls with Cricket Provision requires:

- Net Lane Width of 3.6m per lane.
- ECB Indoor Sports Halls with Cricket Provision requires Height of Horizontal top net to be 5m (a clear minimum).
- ECB Indoor Sports Halls with Cricket Provision requires Blinkers to be 7.72m from the back netting and 5m in front of popping crease
- ECB Indoor Sports Halls with Cricket Provision requires 1.5m of space behind stumps.
- A safety margin of at least 1m surrounding the nets
- ECB's recommended optimum length is 33.62m. If the length of the sports hall is less than 33.62m, ECB will accept any shortened length down to a minimum of 31.2m.

6.20.8 Facilities shown in green represent a good standard of facility and provision overall, amber for average and red for poor.

Table 15 – Gloucestershire Cricket Foundation Breakdown and Audit of Sites

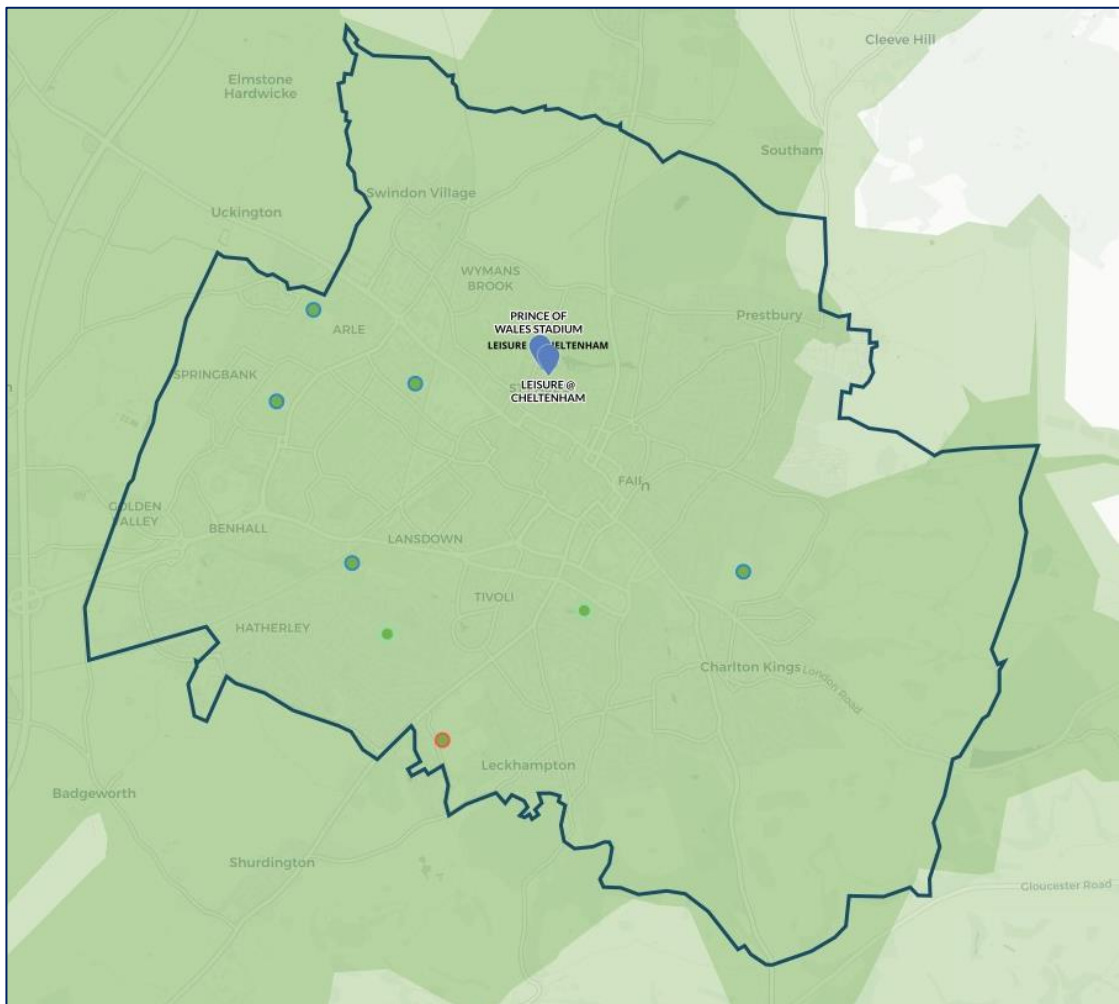
Site name	Sport hall surface type?	Roll-out matts used?	Quality bounce of cricket ball?	LUX Light Meter	Lighting	Cricket nets?	Nos of batting lanes	Net lane width	Net Height	Net blinkers at batting end?	Space behind stumps at batters end?	Safety margin of at least 1m surrounding nets?	Dividing nets to split sports hall	Total length of Sports Hall?	Hall available for community hire?	What is likelihood of booking the facility?	Will facility provider allow hard ball cricket to be played?
ALL SAINTS ACADEMY (CHELTENHAM)	Wooden sprung	Yes	Poor	0-749		Yes	2							34			
BALCARRAS SPORTS CENTRE	Polymer		Average	0-749		No	0							32			
Bournside School	Polyurethane	Yes but they do not meet ECB guidance	Average	0-749	24 strip lights	Yes	2	2.6m	4.6m	Yes but they do not meet ECB guidance	1m	Yes	Yes	33	Available providing enough notice is given	Limited availability	Yes, but restricted to net practice only
CHELTENHAM COLLEGE	Wooden sprung	Yes	Poor	0-749		Yes	8							50			
Cleeve School	Multi Use		Poor	0-749	n/a	No	0						No	32	Available	Limited availability	No
Dean Close	Vinyl	Yes - they meet / exceed ECB guidance	Good	0-749	Seemed brighter but only 500 across	Yes	5	3.3	8	Yes - they meet / exceed ECB guidance	2m	Yes	Yes	40	Available providing enough notice is given	Limited availability	Yes - all versions (indoor net, etc.)
LEISURE AT CHELTENHAM	Polymer	No	Good	0-749		Yes	5							34			
Pates	Polyurethane	Yes but they do not meet ECB guidance	Good	0-749	1500+ in centre of hall due to natural light. 500 in batting areas. 22/24 work led lights.	Yes	2	2.7m	5.2m	Yes but they do not meet ECB guidance	1m	Yes	Yes	29	Available providing enough notice is given	Limited availability	Yes, but restricted to net practice only
PITTVILLE SCHOOL	N/A		Poor	0-749		No	0							0			
St Edwards School	Carpet	Yes but they do not meet ECB guidance	Average	0-749	425 covered	Yes	2	3.6	4.5	Yes but they do not meet ECB guidance	1m	Yes	No	25	Available providing enough notice is given	Limited availability	Yes, but restricted to net practice only
YMCA Cheltenham	Polyurethane	No	Good	0-749	250. 35 strip lights. All working	No	0						Yes	33	Available	Limited availability	No
Cheltenham Ladies College	Vinyl	Yes - they meet / exceed ECB guidance	Good	750-999	28 LED boxes. 26/28 working	Yes	4	2.9m	5.4m	Yes - they meet / exceed ECB guidance	1.5m	Yes	Yes	39	Available providing enough notice is given	Limited availability	Yes, but restricted to net practice only

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Dean Close Indoor/Outdoor	Carpet mat	Yes but they do not meet ECB guidance	Average	750-999	Very good natural light during daytime, 750 in evening	Yes	4	3.3	5.5	Yes - they meet / exceed ECB guidance	Less than 1	Yes	No	29	Available providing enough notice is given	Limited availability	Yes, but restricted to net practice only
Leckhampton	Polyutherane	Yes - they meet / exceed ECB guidance	Good	750-999	Brand new facility, covers on lighting	Yes	2	3.6	8	Yes - they meet / exceed ECB guidance	2m	Yes	Yes	33	Available	Limited availability	Yes, but restricted to net practice only

- 6.20.9 The audit shows that whilst cricket can be played in many of the sites, and that some are well equipped for cricket, none meet the ECB standards across every aspect of the measurable criteria.
- 6.20.10 In addition, those that are well equipped are generally the public-school sites, and their availability for community use and hire is severely limited.
- 6.20.11 The interpretation can be that it is a well-stocked area, however the NGB suggests that when it comes down to availability, more provision is needed especially when in competition with other sports. However, usage and the financial viability need to be considered if replacement or additional indoor cricket provision is being proposed as part of any development.
- 6.20.12 While there are a finite number of cricket clubs in Cheltenham, the indoor provision services clubs in the surrounding rural areas as well.
- 6.20.13 It can be seen that all indoor cricket facilities are within a 20-minute drive time.

**Map 25 – Location of Indoor Cricket Space within a 20-Minute Drive Time**





6.21 Indoor Football and Futsal

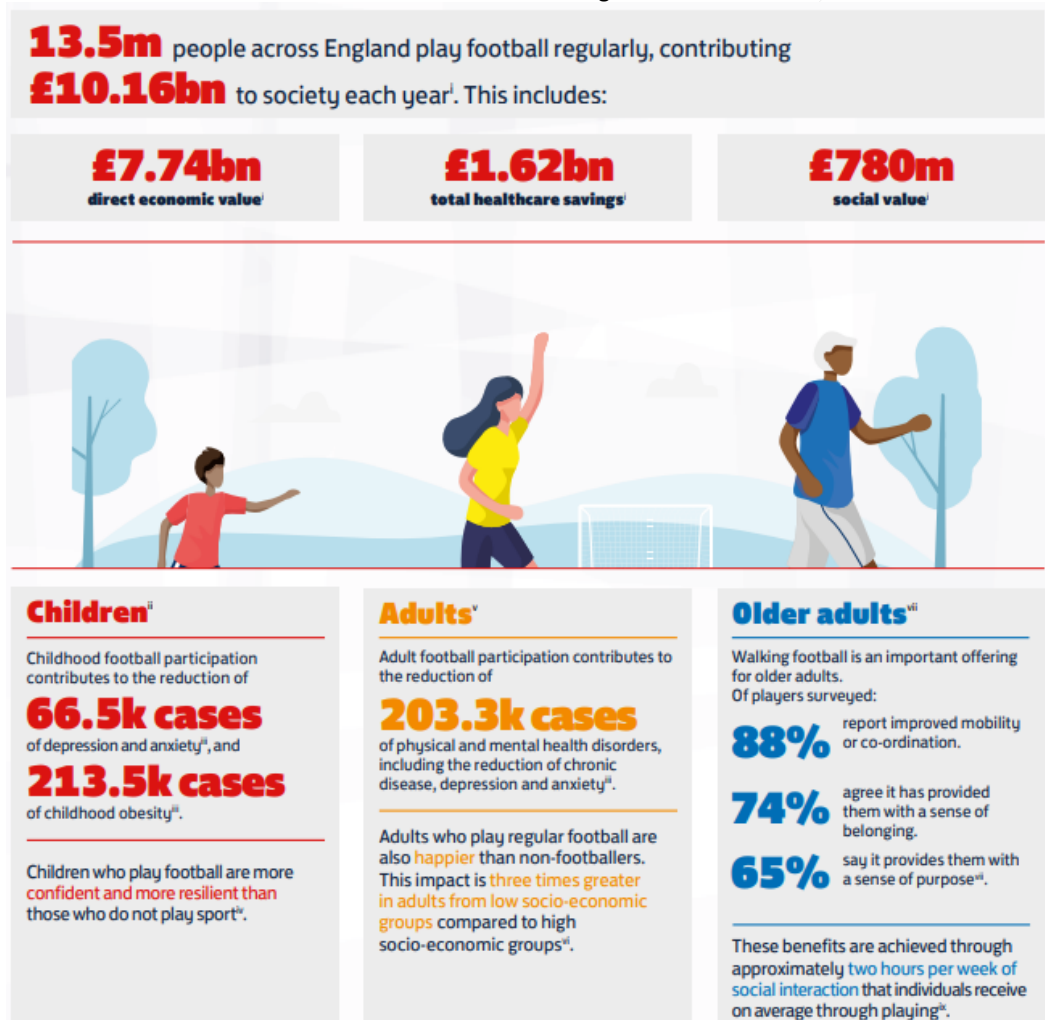
6.21.1 The Football Association (FA) is the governing body of football in England and is responsible for promoting and developing every aspect of the game from grassroots to professional.

6.21.2 The FA’s strategy **Time For Change 2020-2024** has a vision to ‘**unite the game, inspire the nation**’ and has the priority objectives of:

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

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

Figure 23 – Football Association – social and economic value of grassroots football



6.21.4 the FA’s aim is to sustainably support walking football’s continued growth, ensuring it is safe and enjoyable for everyone, now and long into the future.

6.21.5 In 2021 the FA, Age UK and Sport England launched a walking football programme<sup>13</sup>, with the goal of reaching more than 1,000 people in communities in England. This programme hasn't been set up in Cheltenham yet but with the borough's ageing population might be worth considering.

6.21.6 Walking football is a growing sport in the UK. It started as a sport to be played by over 50s men and over 40s in women and now has thousands of players including people in their 70s and 80s playing on a regular basis. It offers a good way to stay fit and healthy for older people and focuses on the social benefits as well. It can take place outdoors or indoors.

6.21.7 In Cheltenham the YMCA Cheltenham offers walking football sessions.

6.21.8 Indoor football activity includes small-sided teams & leagues which are organised and competitive activities; typically with players registered to clubs and affiliated to leagues and their County FAs. Examples include Futsal and local small-sided leagues running at venues such as sports halls, 3G FTPs or small-sided 3G centres.

6.21.9 The Cheltenham Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP) 2018 identified the key local indoor football providers as Cheltenham YMCA and All Saints Academy.

6.21.10 Since this plan was undertaken there are two sites that provide indoor football within their sports hall facility;

- YMCA Sports Centre – Walking football (Thursday 12.30pm – 1.30pm)
- Leisure At Cheltenham - Power Play 5-a-side (Monday 8.00pm – 10.00pm and Tuesdays 7.00pm – 10.00pm)

6.21.11 There are no bespoke indoor football venues (small sided 3G centres) in Cheltenham.

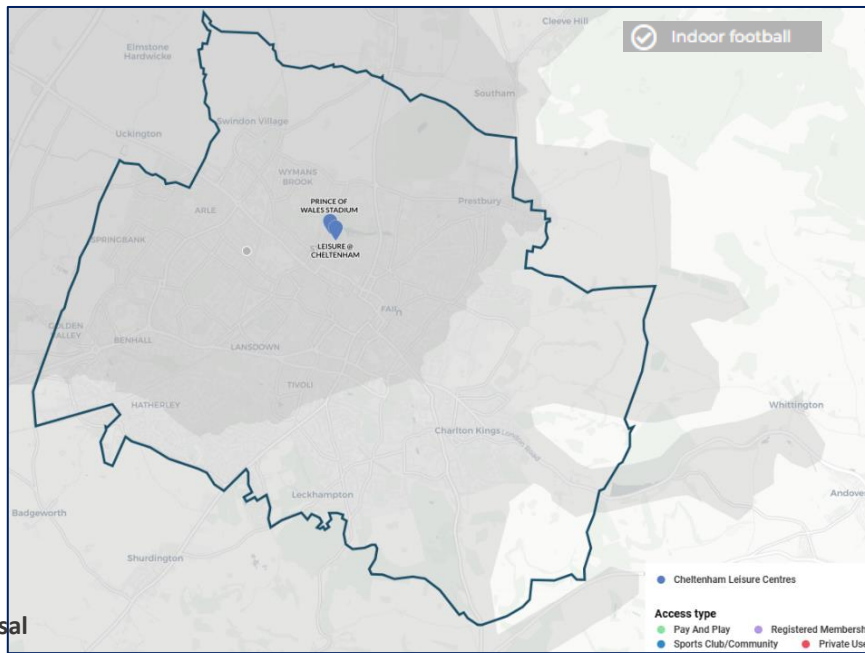
6.21.12 The Powerplay indoor 5-a-side men's league based at Leisure At Cheltenham runs weekly games over a 8-12 week period.

6.21.13 These indoor football sites are mostly within a 20-minute drive time of the whole borough apart from the south east corner, so offer sufficient supply to Cheltenham residents.

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<sup>13</sup> [New walking football programme launched with Age UK and Sport England \(thefa.com\)](#)

Map 26 – Location of Indoor Football Provision within a 20-Minute Drive Time



6.21.14 **Futsal**

6.21.15 Futsal is an exciting, fast-paced, small sided, team game that is widely played across the world. Typically, it’s played on an indoor surface with hockey-sized goals and a size four football with reduced ball bounce. It is the FA’s aim to ensure Futsal is available across the country.

6.21.16 There are currently no Futsal teams in Cheltenham. Gloucestershire FA’s response was that Futsal is not anything they are looking to develop in the short term.

6.22 **Indoor Lacrosse**

6.22.1 There are no sites that play indoor Lacrosse in the borough.

6.22.2 Cheltenham Lacrosse Club responded to the sports club consultation which is included as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy.

### 6.23 Netball (Indoor and Outdoor)

6.23.1 In November 2021, England Netball launched a 10-year 'Adventure Strategy' for the game with a new brand identity for the organisation.

6.23.2 England Netball's 'Adventure Strategy' outlines the intention to:-

- accelerate the development and growth of the game at every level, from grassroots to the elite,
- elevate the visibility of the sport, and
- lead a movement to impact lives on and beyond the court.

#### 6.23.3 Netball Facility Development

6.23.4 The facility development aspirations stated within the Strategy are to:-

- Take a fresh look at the spaces required to support the sport, creating accessible places in every community to allow netball to be incorporated into how and where women and girls live their lives;
- Protect, enhance, and extend the network of homes that house the sport at a local and regional level;
- Develop an elite domestic professional competition that supports full time athletes underpinned by a world class infrastructure and environments.
- For England Netball to achieve its ambitions to make the game accessible to wider audiences and in every community, it encourages Local Authorities to adopt policies within Playing Pitch Strategies and Built Facilities Strategies that:
  - Facilitates informal netball activity within neighbourhood multi use games areas for example by installing combined outdoor basketball and netball goals and art courts in Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs).
  - Incorporates the cultural and health needs of women and girls within any designs for improved or new facilities.
  - Protects and enhances netball facilities within all Primary and Secondary School environments so they offer a positive first experience of the sport for students and the wider community during out of school hours.
  - Supports the installation of floodlights on outdoor courts to increase all year-round use.
  - Facilitates the development of netball growth programmes, club training and competition within public leisure centres.
  - Where appropriate, supports the development of netball homes and performance environments that enable local women and girls to pursue a career in netball as an elite athlete, official, coach or administrator.

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

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

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

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

6.23.7 Mixed Netball (all versions listed above) – England Netball welcomes Mixed Netball as a growing form of the game and recognises Mixed Netball.

6.23.8 **Netball Provision in Cheltenham**

6.23.9 There are 14 indoor netball courts across 11 sites in Cheltenham Council area.

6.23.10 The netball court at Leisure At Cheltenham is the oldest built in 1971.

6.23.11 The High School Leckhampton has the newest netball court built in 2022 but it is not accessible to the public.

**Table 16 – Indoor Netball Facilities**

Indoor Netball Facility	Nos. of courts
<b>Pay and play</b>	
BOURNSIDE SPORTS CENTRE	2
CHELTENHAM COLLEGE	3
<b>Registered membership</b>	
CLC SPORTS CENTRE	1
<b>Sports Club / Community Use</b>	
ALL SAINTS ACADEMY (CHELTENHAM)	1
BALCARRAS SPORTS CENTRE	1
DEAN CLOSE SCHOOL	1
LEISURE AT CHELTENHAM	1
PATE'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL	1
ST EDWARD'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL	1
YMCA CHELTENHAM SPORTS CENTRE	1
<b>Private</b>	
THE HIGH SCHOOL LECKHAMPTON	1
<b>Total number of courts</b>	<b>14</b>

6.23.12 There are 46 outdoor courts across seven sites. These are mainly tennis courts with netball court markings, 10 of which are floodlit for evening use.

**Table 17 – Outdoor Netball Facilities**

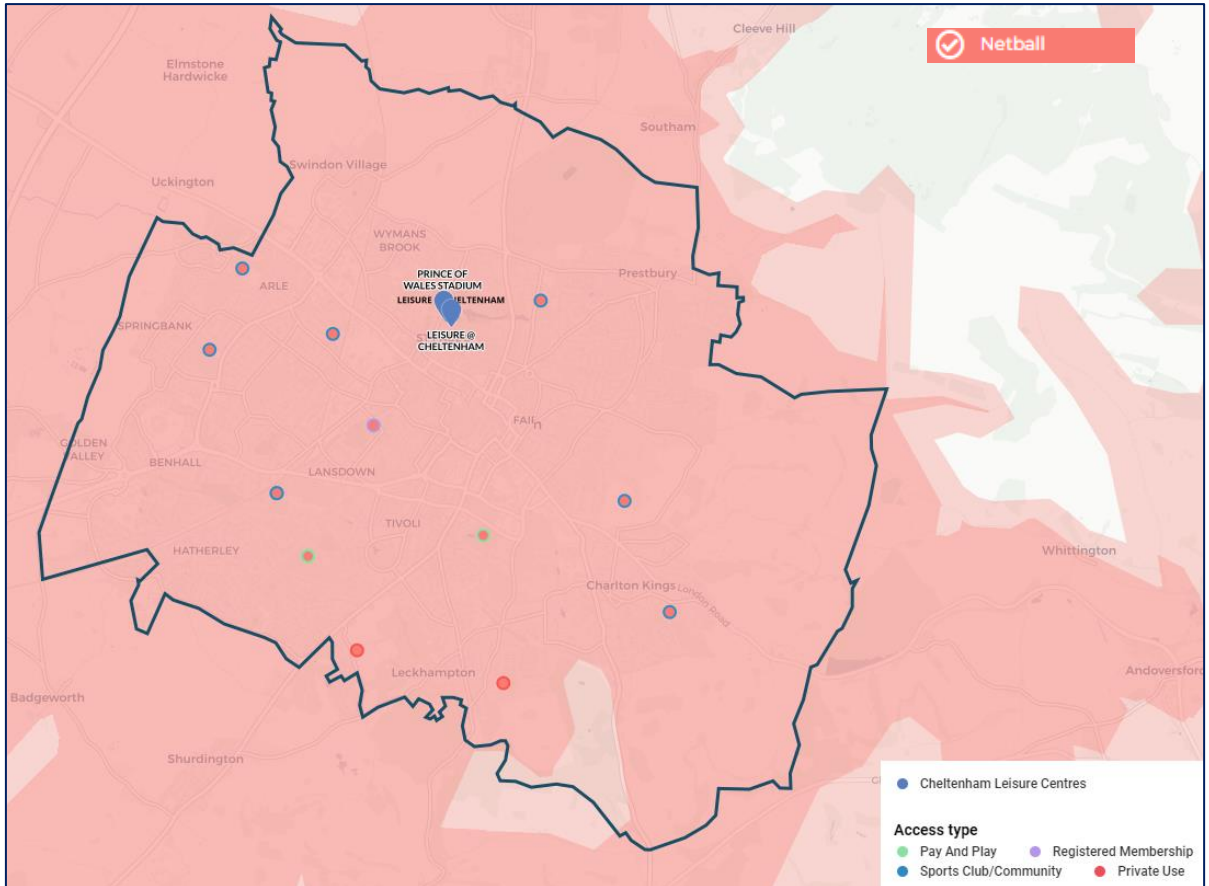
Outdoor Netball Facility	Nos. of courts
<b>Pay and play</b>	
ALL SAINTS ACADEMY (CHELTENHAM)	4 floodlit
<b>Sports Club / Community Use</b>	
BALCARRAS SPORTS CENTRE	7 (4 floodlit)

Outdoor Netball Facility	Nos. of courts
BOURNSIDE SPORTS CENTRE	8
PITTVILLE SCHOOL	6 floodlit
<b>Private</b>	
CHELTENHAM LADIES' COLLEGE (CLC)	9
DEAN CLOSE SCHOOL	10
THE RICHARD PATE SCHOOL	2
<b>Total number of courts</b>	<b>46</b>

6.23.13 Dean Close and Pittville Schools have the oldest courts (built in 1970) so likely to need resurfacing or higher maintenance. Balcarras Sports Centre has the newest outdoor courts (built in 2019).

6.23.14 All areas of the borough are within a 20 minute drive time of a netball court.

Map 27 – Location Of Netball Courts within a 20-Minute Drive Time



6.23.15 **Netball Clubs**

6.23.16 There are five netball clubs within Cheltenham which are as follows;

- **Hucclecote Netball Club** – national premier league team playing at Cheltenham Ladies College, three regional teams, two who play at Cheltenham College, four county teams that play at Leisure At Cheltenham and 10 junior teams some who play in Cheltenham others in Tewkesbury
- **Old Chelts Netball Club** – Senior training takes place at Cheltenham College. Junior training takes place across several venues; Bournside Sports Centre, YMCA, CLC Sports Centre, Brockworth Sports Centre and Cheltenham College. Some training unable to take place in Sports Hall 1 at Bournside during exam periods.
- **Nomads Netball Club** – small club with around 25 members, train at Bournside Sports Centre
- **United Ladies** are part of the Gloucestershire County Netball league (Hawks in Div 4 and Eagles Div 1) and train at Dean Close Old Gym, Cheltenham
- **National Steelers Club** – Bournside School and Leisure At Cheltenham

6.23.17 Walking netball takes places at Leisure At Cheltenham and Dean Close School.

**6.24 Outdoor Education Type Facilities**

6.24.1 There are no outdoor education facility within Cheltenham.

6.24.2 There are emerging opportunities being considered to expand the offering e.g. information panels at Leckhampton Hill linked to funding derived to manage impact on the Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation, to encourage enhanced participation in outdoor activities.

**6.25 Squash Courts**

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

6.25.2 There are 25 squash courts in Cheltenham across seven sites.

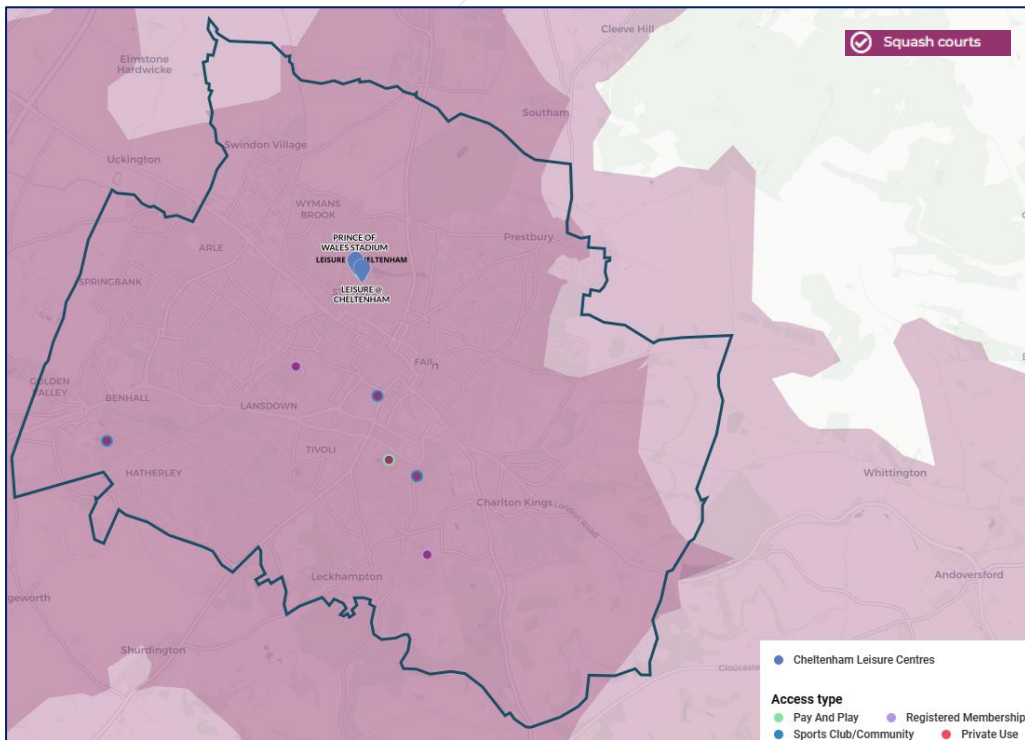


Table 18 – Squash Courts

Facility	Nos. of courts
<b>Pay and play</b>	
CHELTENHAM COLLEGE	6
LEISURE AT CHELTENHAM	5
<b>Registered membership</b>	
CLC SPORTS CENTRE	Glass backed - 5
OLD PATESIANS SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB LTD	2
<b>Sports Club / Community Association</b>	
EAST GLOUCESTERSHIRE CLUB	2
EAST GLOUCESTERSHIRE CLUB	Glass backed - 2
THE PAVILION - CHELTENHAM	1
YMCA Cheltenham	2
<b>Total number of courts</b>	<b>25</b>

- 6.25.3 England Squash recommend a ratio of one court per 10,000 population. The population of 123,373 in 2041 would require 12 squash courts in total, therefore at 25 courts the borough has double the recommended number of courts per 10,000 population. Consequently, there is no demand for additional demand and a reduction in the number of courts would still meet NGB guidelines.
- 6.25.4 Future squash provision should continue to meet the demand of the local population. When considering refurbishment or replacement squash courts, England Squash recommend the ASB Movable Side Wall. With this innovation, a squash court becomes a flexible, multiuse area providing an answer to challenges around off-peak usage.

Map 28 – Location of Squash Courts and 20-Minute Drive Time Catchments – Cheltenham Council Area



6.26 **Indoor and Outdoor Tennis (including padel and pickleball)**

6.26.1 The Lawn Tennis Association’s (LTA) vision for tennis which has recently been introduced following a major consultative process, is ‘Tennis Opened Up’ and the mission is to grow tennis by making it more relevant, accessible, welcoming, and enjoyable. Strategic initiatives at county and national level aim to support this’.

6.26.2 The LTA’s mission is to grow tennis and padel by making them accessible, welcoming, and enjoyable. Ensuring local communities have access to quality facilities is critical to attracting and retaining more players. As such, the LTA’s Quick Access Loan Scheme aims to provide interest-free loans to support venues investment in facilities, prioritising the installation and construction of covered courts.

6.26.3 The objectives of the fund are to:

- Provide covered or sports-lit playing facilities to encourage community accessible play all year.
- Retain and increase the number of participants at the venue.
- Offer and increase both non-members pay and play usage and coaching opportunities.
- Grow the numbers of adults and juniors on the coaching programme.
- Provide seamless booking of tennis courts and lessons through an [online booking system](#)

6.26.4 **Parks investment project** - The recent joint LTA and UK Government Parks Tennis Project investment (£30 million) is designed to open tennis to people of all backgrounds, improve access to tennis across the nation, and provide greater opportunities for children and adults to be active. Park tennis courts are particularly important in providing affordable, engaging, and accessible opportunities for more female players and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as being the most popular venue for women to play after they have left education.

6.26.5 The LTA wants to work with local networks, to promote a joined up, transformational improvement to existing facilities, largely through increasing the number of courts that are floodlit and covered but also courts that can be booked online. Cheltenham Borough Council are engaged with the LTA and are working in partnership to increase usage and financial sustainability.

6.26.6 All LTA registered venues and accredited coaches can use ClubSpark free of charge. ClubSpark is a flexible and simple venue management platform with multiple products and applications to help venues, local authorities and coaches manage their sport. It is a tool that is offered for free as part of LTA venue registration and allows administrators to manage all functions at their venue(s).

6.26.7 Before the LTA Parks Projects initiative came about the Council received a grant from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), to refurbish the tennis courts at Pittville and Montpellier Gardens. The courts have been improved with new fencing, surfacing, tennis nets, and a state-of-the-art automated booking system. The project is part of the LTA’s aim to increase tennis participation across the country, by making public tennis courts better and easier to use.

6.26.8 Prestbury Playing Fields are run by Prestbury Parish Council and have two tennis courts which are pay and play. There are plans to resurface the courts and refurbish the pavilion.

6.26.9 LTA data on national tennis playing demand patterns is instructive for describing activity patterns in Cheltenham.

6.26.10 **Location of play:** The importance of parks courts is emphasised by the following data on where people play tennis. Parks are the highest where people play 31%. This highlights the importance of protecting Cheltenham’s Park facilities and maintaining them.

Table 19 – National Survey – Location of Play 2018 (Source: Statistica)

Location	% Players
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Parks	31%
Education sites	22%
Tennis clubs	19%
Other (i.e., Leisure centres)	28%

6.26.11 **Organised play:** Parks players are less reliant on organised tennis activity but easily reliant on using parks for social tennis with friends and family:

Table 20 – National Survey Organised Play

Type of Tennis	% Parks Players	% Club Players
Social tennis with friends/family	90%	74%
Informal tennis	15%	18%
Individual tennis competition	2%	17%
Group coaching/lessons	2%	15%
Team tennis competition	1%	13%
Private lessons	1%	11%
Cardio tennis	3%	8%

6.26.12 **Satisfaction levels with courts:** The % of players of each type who are ‘very satisfied’ are as follows:

Table 21 – National Survey – Satisfaction Levels with Courts

Aspects of courts	% Parks players	% Club players
Safety of courts	28%	49%
Proximity to home	31%	45%
Condition of courts	13%	39%
Ease of booking	16%	35%
Cost of courts	36%	31%
Availability of courts	19%	30%
Number of courts	13%	30%
Customer service	10%	27%
Ancillary facilities	5%	26%

6.26.13 **Awareness of local tennis courts:** The importance of publicising court availability is emphasised by the following findings.

Table 22 – National Survey – Awareness of Local Tennis Courts

Type of court	% People aware
Parks courts	31%
Tennis club courts	28%
Leisure centres	27%
Education courts	15%
Indoor tennis centres	10%

6.26.14 **Cheltenham Tennis Provision**

6.26.15 There are currently no indoor tennis courts in Cheltenham. However, there are indoor tennis courts at Oxstalls Sports Park in Gloucester, a c.20 minute drive from Cheltenham town centre.

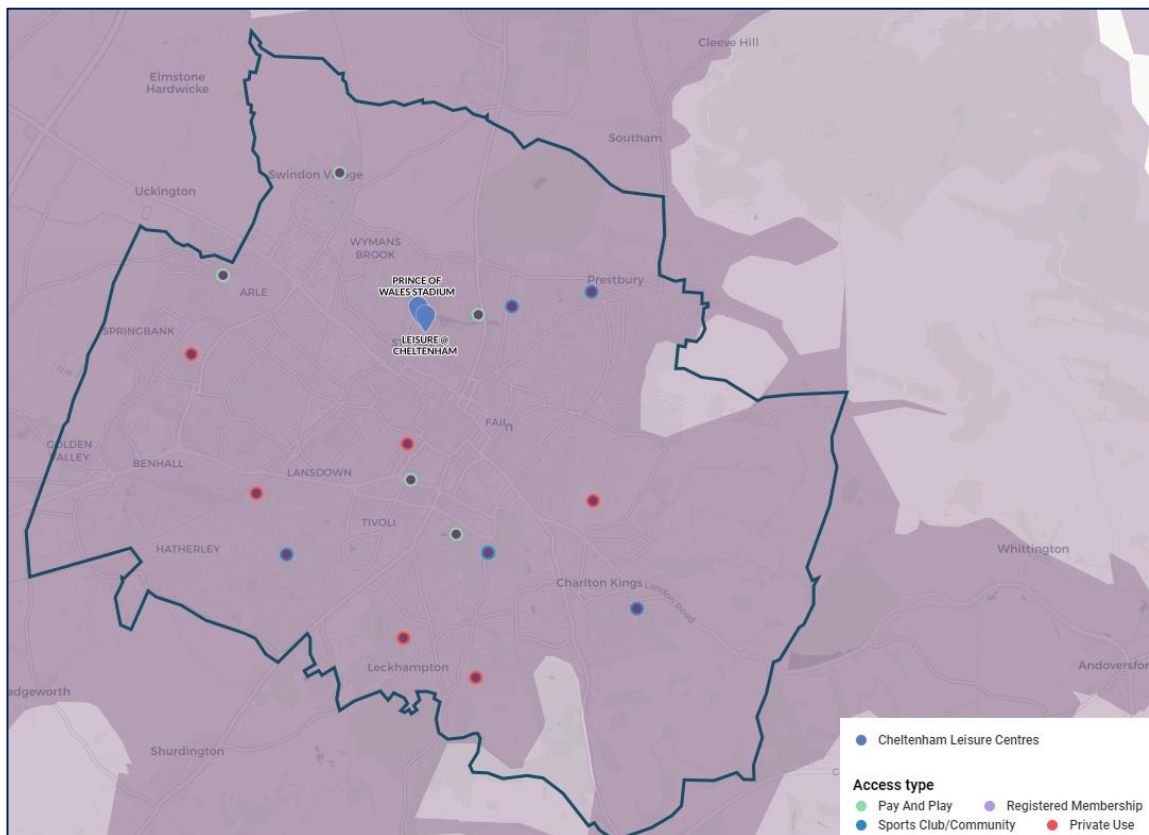
6.26.16 In Cheltenham, there are 140 outdoor tennis courts across 15 sites. 83 of these are accessible for public use.

Table 23 – Outdoor Tennis Facilities

Facility	Nos. of courts	Year Built	Quality	Ownership
<b>Pay and play</b>				
ALL SAINTS ACADEMY (CHELTENHAM)	4 Floodlit – netball marking	2011	Standard	Education
CHELTENHAM COLLEGE	4 hard courts 16 based on astros	1996 refurbished 2015	Good	Education
MONTPELLIER GARDENS	6	2000 refurbished in 2016	Good	Local Authority
PITTVILLE PARK	3	1950 refurbished in 2016	Good	Local Authority
<b>Sports Club / Community Association</b>				
BALCARRAS SPORTS CENTRE	3 – netball marking 4 floodlit – netball /basketball	2007 2019	Standard Good	Education
BOURNSIDE SPORTS CENTRE	8 – netball marking	1999 refurbished in 2017	Standard	Education
EAST GLOUCESTERSHIRE CLUB	9 floodlit (5 artificial grass) 8 floodlit (clay) 10 grass	2000 4 courts refurbished in 2019	Good	Sports Club
PITTVILLE SCHOOL	6 floodlit – netball markings	1970	Poor	Education
PRESTBURY PLAYING FIELDS	2	1948 refurbished in 2003	Standard	Local Authority
<b>Private</b>				
CHELTENHAM LADIES COLLEGE	17			
DEAN CLOSE SCHOOL	7 – netball markings (5 originally, two now parking) other 4 hard courts 12 marked out on astro	1970	4 hard courts good quality 3 standard	Education
LECKHAMPTON LAWN TENNIS CLUB COURTS	2 grass	n/a	Standard	Sports Club
PATE’S GRAMMAR SCHOOL	6	n/a	Standard	Education
ST EDWARD’S PREPARATORY SCHOOL	7	1999 refurbished in 2012		Education
THE RICHARD PATE SCHOOL	2 – netball marking 4 marked out on astro	2006 refurbished in 2022	Good	Education
<b>Total number of courts</b>	<b>140</b>			

- 6.26.17 In addition to the audit above there are 2 hard court tennis courts at the Seasons Business and Leisure Complex, Quat Goose Lane, Swindon Village, GL51 9RX. These courts are run down and do not appear to be used regularly. It is understood that this area is proposed for development so accessible provision within this area needs to be reviewed if these courts are removed. They are also close to Elms Park development which may compensate for the loss of courts if new tennis courts are provided as part of the development..
- 6.26.18 Prestbury Playing Fields tennis courts are the oldest built in 1948, followed by Pittville Park built in 1950 (refurbished in 2017).
- 6.26.19 Pittville School has an extant planning application for a new indoor sports centre, artificial turf pitch, **tennis courts**, floodlighting, associated parking and landscaping. This would improve the quality of the Pittville tennis court provision. Pittville School stated in the consultation that they do not have sufficient capacity to support extensive community use and the facilities are in need of updating. There is a community use agreement 2018 for the tennis courts (see [Appendix 12](#)).
- 6.26.20 All of the outdoor tennis facilities have changing rooms apart from those at park sites.
- 6.26.21 LTA research shows that once park players become regular, they look at further year-round offerings or additional tennis offerings in the form of floodlit or specifically indoor/covered facilities.
- 6.26.22 The newest outdoor tennis courts are the four floodlit courts at Balcarras Sports Centre.
- 6.26.23 All areas of the borough can reach a tennis court within a 20 minute drive time.

**Map 29 – Location of Outdoor Tennis and 20-Minute Drive Time Catchments – Cheltenham Council Area**



- 6.26.24 Consultation with The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) highlighted that there are three affiliated clubs within the CBC area. These are;

- East Gloucestershire Club, Old Bath Road, Cheltenham, GL53 7DF (approx.. 1800 members)
- Leckhampton Lawn Tennis Club, Moorend Grove, GL53 0EZ (approx. 20 members)
- Charlton Kings Tennis Place, Balcarras School Sports Centre, GL53 8QF (approx. 120 members)

6.26.25 There are multiple levels of competitions happening across the area.

6.26.26 Dean Close School, Balcarras School, Cheltenham Ladies' College, Bourneside School, Pates Grammar School and St.Edwards School all participate in the Gloucestershire LTA Schools Championships.

#### 6.26.27 Indoor Tennis

6.26.28 The LTA has stated that there is not sufficient supply of facilities for year-round play as there are no indoor courts and limited floodlight courts. However, they have not mentioned Oxstalls Sports Park in any of their analysis, which is within a reasonable catchment for a large proportion of the borough, particularly the west of the town centre. Additionally, the LTA has suggested there is not a sufficient supply of community courts when the population increase is realised with the new housing growth.

6.26.29 The LTA priorities for Cheltenham are;

- **Retaining and maximising all tennis provision within the area included clubs, parks and schools.**
- **Indoor tennis court provision as there is a gap in provision, with no indoor courts in Cheltenham – target Areas For Indoor Community Tennis Projects (lta.org.uk)**  
<https://www.lta.org.uk/roles-and-venues/venues/tennis-padel-facility-funding-advice/indoor-community-tennis-projects/>
- **Develop new outdoor floodlit tennis court provision in line with new housing developments across Cheltenham including Golden Valley & Elm Park.**

6.26.30 Indoor tennis courts are considered because they are a completely different facility from outdoor tennis courts, which, unless club courts, tend to be used for recreational tennis. Indoor courts are significantly more expensive to use and therefore tend to provide for those who are already tennis participants or who wish to learn to play tennis and can afford private or group coaching.

6.26.31 The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) has modelled data from existing successful Community Indoor Tennis Centres. This has helped to identify the demographic type, volume, and catchment size of a successful Community Indoor Tennis Centre. This modelling was applied across England, Scotland, and Wales to establish the areas of potential demand.

6.26.32 The key metrics established are:

- A target location must demonstrate a minimum threshold population of 70,000 within a 20-minute drive time of a target location. Of this population, at least 12,500 must identify as having an interest in playing tennis. Please note this drive time extends to 30 minutes for rural areas.
- Filtered for competition within the catchment in order to prioritise the addressing of indoor tennis provision gaps.

6.26.33 Using this methodology the Lawn Tennis Association has identified 72 target locations for new indoor tennis venues in England. **Cheltenham has been identified as a target location for a new indoor tennis venue.**

6.26.34 Whilst this has been identified by the initial LTA's modelling, it is suggested that any club/organisation that was looking to provide indoor tennis facilities would need to complete further demand analysis and a financial feasibility assessment given existing facilities in Gloucester and within the private sector.

#### 6.26.35 Padel Tennis

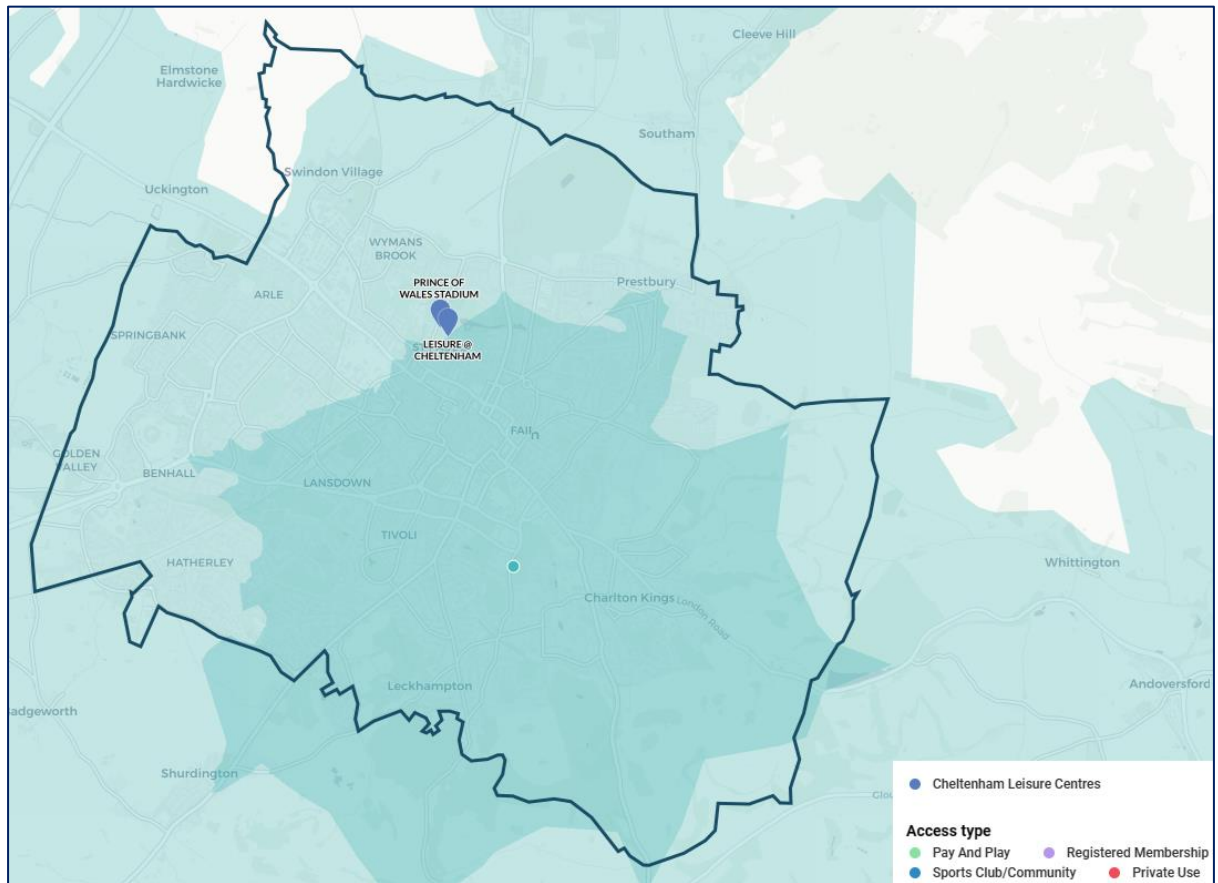
6.26.36 The LTA is the National Governing body for Padel. Padel tennis is relatively new to Great Britain and is growing in popularity, particularly since its recognition as a sport and integration within the LTA. It is

played mainly in a doubles format on an enclosed court about a third of the size of a tennis court and can be played in groups of mixed ages and abilities. The rules are broadly the same as tennis, although you serve under-arm, and the walls are used as part of the game with the ball allowed to bounce off them.

- 6.26.37 To grow the sport, the LTA is focused on improving the national infrastructure and the coach education pathway. At the end of 2020, there were 87 padel courts, whereas there are now 275, with a projected growth to 450 in 2023. It is therefore envisaged that the infrastructure and participation in padel will increase significantly in the next five years.
- 6.26.38 There is one padel site in the borough located at The East Gloucestershire Club which has three padel courts and is within a 20-minute drive time apart from the north west area of the borough.
- 6.26.39 Consultation with LTA has outlined that their data suggests two Padel courts at Elms Park can support this gap in provision, on this side of Cheltenham.
- 6.26.40 In addition, the LTA data suggests there is potential to add two Padel courts at Golden Valley. However, the LTA are aware of possible courts coming in Gloucester and have those at East Gloucestershire Club and possibly at Elms Park so potential demand is met.
- 6.26.41 The LTA states that padel court development at leisure centre sites can be particularly beneficial as provision can be tied into other sports facilities and profit from an already established operating model. Furthermore, it identifies that they can benefit clubs and particularly those that may be otherwise struggling due to the additional revenue that they can provide.
- 6.26.42 Notwithstanding the above, the LTA also states that it is not encouraging clubs to convert existing tennis courts to padel courts, unless it can be shown that they have the capacity to support this. This is to ensure that the provision of tennis courts remains sufficient.



Map 30 – Location of Padel Courts within a 20-Minute Drive Time Catchment



6.26.43 There are **no pickleball facilities** within Cheltenham the nearest being The Cotswolds Picklers at Winchcombe Sports Hall seven miles north east from the centre of Cheltenham.

6.27 **Table Tennis**

6.27.1 Table Tennis England responded as part of the NGB consultation identifying two affiliated clubs (Cheltenham Table Tennis Club and Suffolk Square Table Tennis Club) that share facilities with a bowls club and YMCA sports centre.

6.27.2 They stated there are no issues with these facilities, but Cheltenham Table Tennis Club is a premier club so would be target club for growth in the future.

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

6.27.4 In addition, growth in women and girls' participation and working in 30% most deprived communities are priority areas.

6.27.5 Table Tennis England highlighted that future priority needs are the growth of U9 participation in clubs and mentioned barriers to participation are lack of outdoor and community tables for public access and competition spaces for local competition.

6.27.6 Outdoor table tennis facilities are at the following locations:

- Grange Field
- Sandford Park
- Prestbury Playing fields
- Salisbury Avenue play area, Caernarvon Park

**6.28 Wheeled Sports**

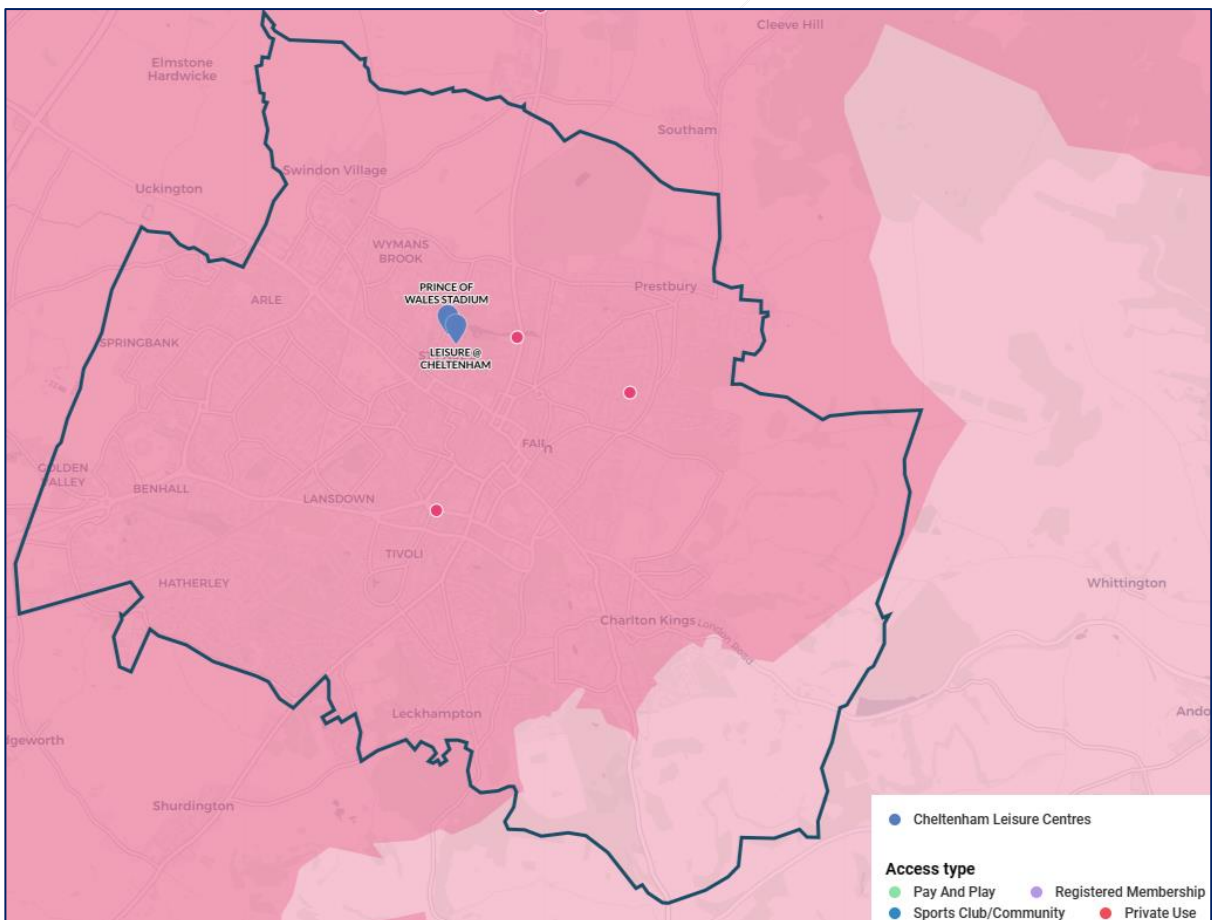
6.28.1 There are no indoor skate or indoor scooter parks in Cheltenham.

6.28.2 There are three outdoor skateparks in Cheltenham; Montpellier Gardens, Pittville Park and the newest Oakley Skatepark, which opened in 2020, featuring the first concrete facility in Cheltenham.

6.28.3 There is one BMX pump track at Burrows park and a cyclo-cross circuit at Pittville Park.

6.28.4 All of the outdoor skate parks are within a 20-minute drive within the borough as shown in the map below.

**Map 31 – Location of Outdoor Skate Parks within a 20-Minute Drive Time**



## 6. Recommendations

6.1. Key recommendations from the report are provided in the tables below.

### Recommendation 1 – Sports Halls

- Future consideration of options for the future of Leisure At Cheltenham is a key intervention given its importance as only public facility in the borough, its extensive off-peak availability and its proximity to some of more deprived areas. The size of any new sports hall facilities at Leisure At Cheltenham should take into account the new provision being proposed as part of the strategic allocations at north west and west Cheltenham, as the assessment has shown that there is currently a sufficient supply of sports hall courts across the borough.
- Whilst CBC have a responsibility for Leisure-at, modernisation of education based sports halls will be the responsibility of the schools. CBC should continue to work in partnership with schools and encourage investment/modernisation where community access is given. The Council could also provide support with regards to applying for funding and supporting any planning applications.
- New housing developments to the north and west of the borough will create additional demand on nearby sports halls - All Saints Academy, Pate's Grammar School and YMCA Cheltenham Sports Centre. Consider securing developer contributions toward modernisation of these facilities, as well as securing continued community access, is key.
- Given dependence on educational sector in providing sports halls, a communication strategy to keep various sites informed and to discuss changes in levels of availability would be advisable.
- Discuss findings of the report with Tewkesbury Borough Council and encourage them to undertake their FPM and Built Facilities Strategy.
- Look to secure a community use agreement for new Pittville School indoor sports centre including 4 court sports hall if the development goes ahead ([see Appendix 13](#)).
- The Council should work with education providers to increase community access to sports halls, with increased secured community access provided through formal community use agreements.

### PROTECT, PROVIDE AND ENHANCE

**Recommendation 2 – Community / Village Halls**

- With the majority of sports halls based within educational sites, community spaces (particularly in areas of greatest unmet demand) are an important local asset where physical activities, that don't require a high sports hall ceiling, can take place e.g. yoga, Pilates and martial arts. This would free up space for activities that require larger and higher ceiling sports courts e.g. basketball, netball, volleyball and badminton.

**PROTECT, PROVIDE AND ENHANCE**

### Recommendation 3 – Swimming Pools

- The need analysis and evidence points to the need to retain and invest in the pool sites.
- Large existing supply of water space in Cheltenham relative to demand but existing swimming pool stock is ageing.
- Scope to increase hours for community use at Cheltenham College to reduce proportion of used capacity of the pool at peak times. However, this is dependent on the college's willingness to increase access for community use.
- Leisure At Cheltenham is major swimming site in borough, both in terms of range of facilities it offers and scale - provides over third of borough's total peak time supply. Facility is currently 52 years old, maintenance and other operating costs will continue to increase with time, making pool less attractive.
- Replacement for Leisure At Cheltenham to ensure the future water space meets the demand of the local population and maximises flexibility in programme deliver, this could mean a different pool configuration to the current offer.
- Sandford Parks Lido provides an important facility in the borough. It needs to be recognised that the FPM modelling is based on national parameters for indoor pools, and these may not apply to outdoor heated lidos.
- Given number of educational facilities that provide swimming pools in the borough, good communication partnership and community use agreements with schools is important to continue and seek to put community agreements in place if they don't already exist. It should be noted that community use is reliant on schools wanting to increase or provide community access the Council has no direct control to enforce community use agreements.
- Discuss findings of the report with Tewkesbury Borough Council.
- Unmet demand is low & insufficient to justify new swimming pool.

**PROTECT, PROVIDE AND ENHANCE**

#### Recommendation 4 – Gym & Fitness

- Health & fitness is not just provided by the council, the private and education sectors also have a role to play in provision.
- Industry modelling identified potential growth in the fitness membership base at Leisure At Cheltenham of 907 members based on some investment and improvements being made.
- The existing gym facilities are not large enough to support the total demand projected.
- Consequently, changes to the gym facilities will need to be considered to reach the potential growth in fitness members.
- However, the provision of additional fitness facilities in the future there should be subject to a business case to test financial viability.

**PROVIDE AND PROTECT**

#### Recommendation 5 – Studios

- There is demand for health and fitness classes and therefore studios. Studios should be considered within new builds or refurbishments to ensure sports hall activities are not occupied by fitness classes.

**PROVIDE AND PROTECT**

### Recommendation 6 – Athletics

- Prince of Wales Athletics Stadium is identified by England Athletics as a venue of strategic importance in the Southwest with three affiliated athletics clubs based there.
- England Athletics/UK Athletics does not have a specific capital programme for facility development. However, the Prince of Wales Stadium is identified as a venue of strategic importance in the Southwest region and as such EA/UKA will support the local authority, operator and stakeholders in leveraging capital investment to resurface the track surface and protect its long-term future
- The Council could support investment into athletic facilities at present Prince of Wales Stadium location or at another site subject to financial resource.
- As a regional facility that is serving populations from outside the borough, future provision should be considered in partnership with neighbouring local authorities and England Athletics. Cheltenham Borough Council's contribution to athletics facilities (capital and revenue cost) should be focused on the needs of the Cheltenham communities.
- Recognising the regional facility, seeking wider contributions for Community Infrastructure Levy from across Gloucestershire and beyond would be of value in building the business case for investment.
- Include disability access in any track or facility upgrades.

### PROTECT, PROVIDE AND ENHANCE

### Recommendation 7 – Bowling

- There are no purpose built indoor bowling facilities in Cheltenham and no requirements from England Indoor Bowling Association to provide any as sufficient supply in neighbouring areas.
- Cheltenham Spa Bowling Club requires improvements to meet disability access requirements.
- Ensure ongoing maintenance of greens to sustain quality.
- Protecting existing bowls greens through the Local Plan will be key both to securing local provision by ensuring that planning policy supports the retention of existing facilities, unless the loss of a facility would involve its replacement with a facility of at least the equivalent size, quality and accessibility or create improvements to be able to increase capacity at nearby bowls greens.

**PROTECT**

### Recommendation 8 – Cycling

- There is no requirement to provide indoor velodrome facilities.
- There are five indoor cycling spin studios within Cheltenham which should be protected. Indoor cycling studios are a key activity/facility that support the wider fitness offer within leisure centres.
- Cycle infrastructure should be considered at planning stage if a new build at Leisure At Cheltenham e.g. cycle network to connect the leisure centre and safe cycle storage.
- For outdoor cycling, British Cycling recommends Council engaging with cycle clubs to discuss future facility needs so club can continue to expand.
- British Cycling is keen to develop the grassroots of cycling in a safe and control environment such as at Community cycling hubs, which include pump tracks and learn to ride areas. Consider community cycling hubs in future developments.

**PROTECT, PROVIDE, ENHANCE**



#### Recommendation 9 – Gymnastics

- The Council could support The Gym Centre Gymnastics Club and British Gymnastics to further explore the potential of facilitating club-led development of additional gymnastics facilities. This could be for example providing support through any planning applications.

**PROVIDE**

#### Recommendation 10 – Indoor Cricket

- The most well equipped facilities for indoor cricket are generally the public-school sites but their availability for community use and hire is severely limited.
- Gloucestershire County Cricket said that Cheltenham is a well-stocked area for indoor cricket, but when it comes down to availability, more provision is needed, especially when in competition with other sports.
- Leisure At Cheltenham provides an important facility for indoor nets and winter indoor cricket for both club training and indoor 6s competition. Future provision of cricket nets at Leisure At Cheltenham should be considered as part of any future feasibility study for the centre.
- Any new provision of sports halls should consider facilities for indoor cricket. Indoor cricket facilities should meet the ECB guidance document (ECB TS3) that provides detailed information on the specific requirements on lighting, flooring, and netting that are required for indoor cricket.
- Consideration should be given to working with Gloucestershire County Cricket to find and provide suitable accommodation for current cricket clubs to access indoor cricket facilities and to accommodate future identified growth in the game.

**PROVIDE, PROTECT**

#### Recommendation 11 – Indoor Football

- Leisure At Cheltenham provides an important facility for indoor football powerplay league. Protect this provision and continue this programming if Leisure At Cheltenham is redeveloped.
- Consider linking with Age UK initiative and include walking football at Leisure At Cheltenham
- There is no identified need for specific indoor football venues in Cheltenham.
- Gloucestershire FA is not looking to develop any short term Futsal provision

**PROVIDE, PROTECT, ENHANCE**

#### Recommendation 12 – Netball

- Netball courts should continue to be provided at Leisure At Cheltenham
- The SLP should protect all netball courts across Cheltenham Borough Council for community use. Any courts proposed to be lost should be replaced with at least equivalent provision in terms of quantity and quality
- Cheltenham Borough Council and England Netball to work together to promote England Netball participation programmes in Cheltenham Borough including Back to Netball, Walking Netball, Netball now and Bee Netball
- When developing new Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) in the future, ensure that netball courts are marked on all MUGAs to promote expansion of the game
- Look to negotiate formal community use agreements as part of the planning process on education sites current and at new school developments to ensure use by the community of sports courts on education sites in the future

**PROVIDE, PROTECT**

**Recommendation 13 – Outdoor Education**

- Potential to develop outdoor education activities at Leckhampton Hill. Further analysis would be required to understand demand for activities and the type of activities to be offered.

**PROTECT**

**Recommendation 14 – Squash**

- 25 squash courts in Cheltenham across seven sites
- England Squash recommend ratio of one court per 10,000 population. The population of 123,373 in 2041 would require 12 squash courts in total. Cheltenham currently has double the amount of courts per 10,000 population than the recommended level.
- It is recommended that squash facilities should meet the needs of future population, if the number of courts is reduced there would still be higher than average number of courts for the local population.
- When considering refurbishment or replacement squash courts, England Squash recommend the ASB Movable Side Wall. With this innovation, a squash court becomes a flexible, multiuse area providing an answer to challenges around off-peak usage

**PROVIDE, PROTECT**

**Recommendation 15 – Tennis (outdoor, indoor and padel)**

- Cheltenham has been identified by the LTA as a target location for a new indoor tennis venue. However, there is an indoor facility in Gloucester c. 20 minutes' drive time from Cheltenham town centre.
- The LTA priority for the future is that indoor court provision is realised and new outdoor floodlit tennis provision is included in new housing developments.
- It is not the Council's responsibility to provide additional indoor tennis facilities, however if the LTA and local club(s) identify a viable opportunity then the Council should support the process, such as development and planning applications.

The LTA has calculated and recommends the following tennis court allocation for the new housing developments:

**North West Cheltenham (Elms Park Development):**

LTA data suggests there is demand for three courts, however with four courts you can expand the offer with coaching and further tennis activities. Additionally, a minimum of two of these courts being floodlit provide support for year-round participation.

LTA data suggests two Padel courts can support the gap in the provision on this side of Cheltenham, you could potentially consider leaving space for additional courts in the future.

**West Cheltenham (Golden Valley development):**

LTA data suggests there is demand for eight courts, however, four courts is recommended as we believe this is being skewed by its location on the border of Gloucester. Additionally, a minimum of two of these courts being floodlit provide support for year-round participation.

- The LTA wants to work with local networks, to promote a joined up, transformational improvement to existing facilities, largely through increasing number of floodlit and covered courts but also courts that can be booked online.
- Cheltenham Borough Council to continue dialogue with the LTA to work in partnership to increase usage, financial sustainability and to identify if there are any possible tennis club led opportunities for a community indoor tennis facility.
- Maintain park tennis courts which are important in providing affordable, engaging, and accessible opportunities for more female players and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

**Outdoor**

- Continue to liaise and support Prestbury Tennis Court resurfacing and pavilion refurbishment
- Protect Leckhampton Lawn Tennis Club facility in the Local Plan

**PROVIDE, PROTECT, ENHANCE**

**Recommendation 16 – Table Tennis**

- Council to start a dialogue with Table Tennis England about future provision of outdoor table tennis tables in schools and public places such as parks.
- Potential to include outdoor tables in new housing developments.

**PROVIDE, PROTECT**

**Recommendation 17 – Wheeled Sports**

- Consider building a new skatepark as part of an outdoor play area at North West Cheltenham Strategic Allocation, as the other outdoor skateparks are located within the centre or east of Cheltenham – the nearest to North West Cheltenham is Pittville skatepark or out of the borough at Bishop Cleeves in the north or Churchdown south west.

**PROVIDE, PROTECT**

**Recommendation 18 – Community Use Agreements**

- Cheltenham Borough Council needs to continue to work in partnership with schools where sports facilities are provided for community or club use.
- There is a requirement for formal community use agreements to be negotiated, if possible, at existing educational establishments with sports facilities and new future educational establishments. For older facilities opportunities for a formal community use agreement may arise through the need for additional funding to update facilities or improve playing fields. For new facilities, a community use agreement can be provided as part of planning obligations through the planning process. This should help to secure and safeguard well-managed and safe community use by detailing how the arrangements are intended to operate, and typically should cover things like hours of availability, management arrangements and pricing policy.
- This is needed to ensure continued community / sports club use of these sites. However, it should be noted the Council has no direct control to enforce community use at schools. If existing community use agreements are lost then there will be additional pressure for provision of sports halls for community use in the Cheltenham Borough Council area.
- Sport England guidance on producing formal community use agreements, can be found here [Community Use Agreements | Sport England](#)

**PROVIDE AND PROTECT**

**Recommendation 19 – Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan**

- Protect built leisure and sports facilities that are required to meet the need and demand of Cheltenham’s population within the SLP. This is to ensure against the loss of strategically valuable sports facilities that are available for community use or could contribute to meeting future community needs, unless replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.

**PROVIDE AND PROTECT**

#### Recommendation 20 – Developer Contributions

- Where appropriate, Cheltenham Borough Council and its partners seek to secure developer contributions from strategic developments that could contribute towards the development of strategic facilities, additional and safe walking, running and cycling routes, and, where possible, to open up other informal, multipurpose places and spaces where people can be active.
- The Council should develop a detailed approach to securing developer contributions to support the emerging SLP e.g. through a Planning Obligations SPD.
- Sport England’s CIL & Planning Obligations Advice Note (or the future Developer Contributions guidance that will supersede it) <https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/community-infrastructure-levy-and-planning-obligations-advice-note-nov-2018.pdf?PmR9OYIbVat6HfqmmvtKurJ6o1M3d4Z> provides a step by step guide to assist the Council to use the findings of the strategy to secure financial contribution from developers.
- The use of Sport England’s Sports Facility Calculator should specifically be referenced with assisting to identify demand for and financial contributions towards halls and pools.
- The Council should look beyond its administrative boundaries in considering the scope of community infrastructure Levy and planning obligations, this is particularly relevant in respect of Prince of Wales Stadium which plays a regional role.

#### PROVIDE AND PROTECT

#### Recommendation 21 – Feasibility Studies

- Any Council investment for future facility development should be subject to a feasibility study to ensure it is financially viable

APPENDIX 1 – Active Design

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

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

The ten principles of Active Design

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLE



**Principle 1 – Activity for all**

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

SUPPORTING ACTIVE TRAVEL



**Principle 2 – Walkable communities**

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



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

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



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

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

ACTIVE HIGH-QUALITY PLACES AND SPACES



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

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



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

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



**Principle 7 – Providing activity infrastructure**

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



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

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

CREATING AND MAINTAINING ACTIVITY



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

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



**Principle 10 – Activating spaces**

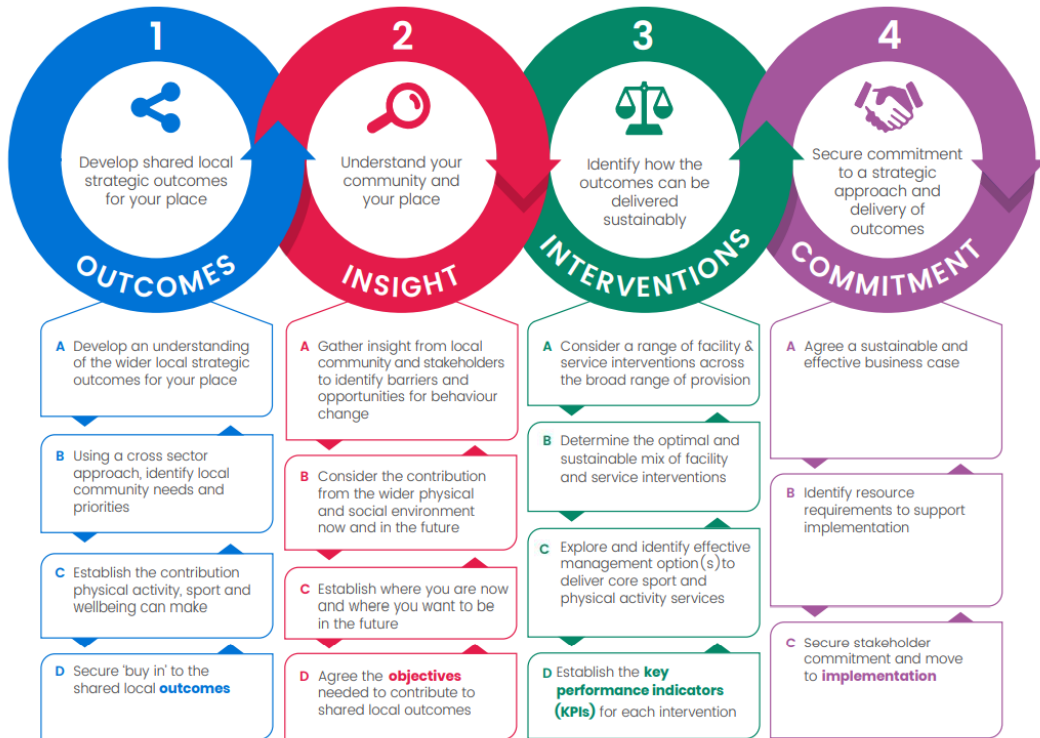
The provision of spaces and facilities which can help to improve physical activity should be supported by a commitment to activate them, encouraging people to be more physically active and increasing the awareness of activity opportunities within a community.



APPENDIX 2 – Sport England Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance

Having a clear, strategic and sustainable approach to sport and physical activity is essential to making effective investment into provision – both facilities and services. Creating a focus and vision on local outcomes, informed by customer insight and delivering interventions (capital and revenue) that affect behaviour change in the target audience, which will ultimately deliver local outcomes for a place.

Figure 25 – Sport England Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance Model

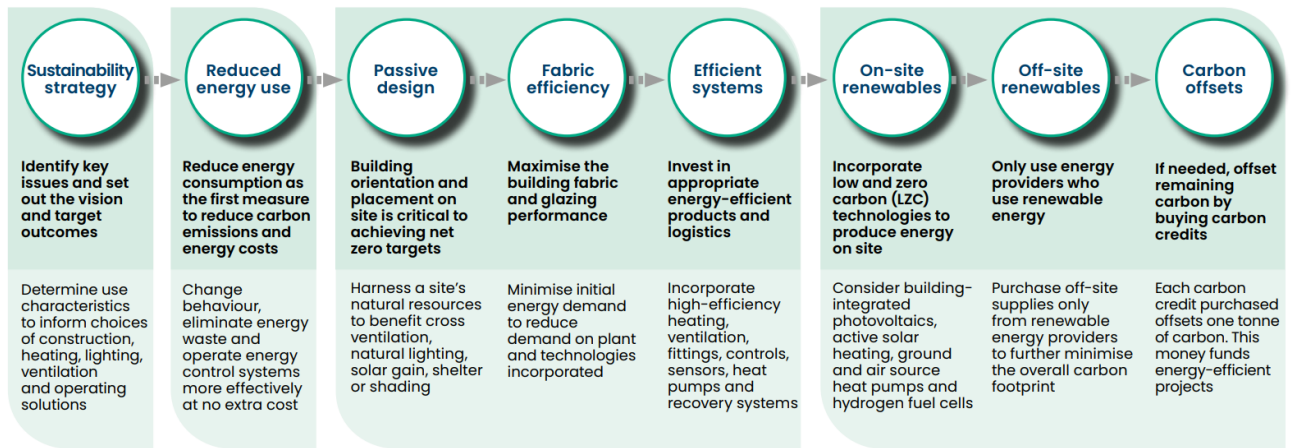


**APPENDIX 3 – Sport England Environmental Sustainability Checklist**

The diagram below indicates a possible framework for developing a robust strategy for any facility. It is based on a practical and cost-effective approach to achieving environmental sustainability and reducing carbon emissions. It includes:

- Establishing a sustainability strategy early on
- Reducing carbon/ energy consumption
- Improving carbon/ energy efficiency
- Using renewable energy technologies

**Figure 26 – Sport England Environmental Sustainability Checklist**

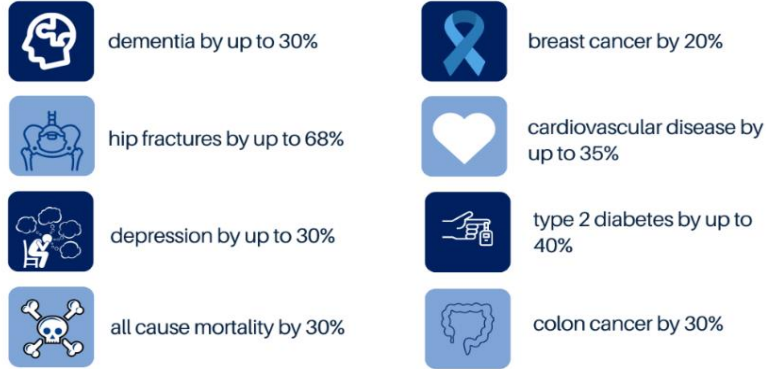


APPENDIX 4 – Benefits of Physical Activity

Figure 27 – Benefits of Physical Activity

## Benefits of Physical Activity

Data shows there is a strong correlation between regular physical activity and reducing the risk of a number of health conditions including;

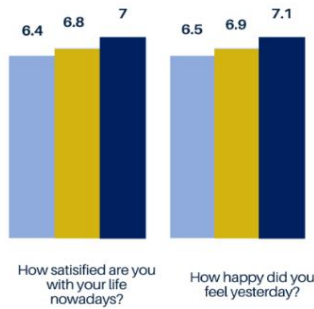


### Mental Wellbeing

**There's a positive association between activity levels and mental wellbeing - some activity is good, more is better**

Sport England's Active Lives survey has demonstrated the positive association between activity levels and mental wellbeing. In the latest survey findings, adults reaching the recommended levels of activity were more 'satisfied with their life' and 'happy' than less active people.

(mean score out of 10)

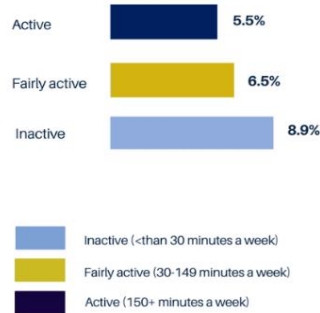


### Loneliness

**People who engage in sport and physical activity are less likely to feel lonely**

Those who are active are less likely to feel lonely than those who are fairly active, who in turn are less likely to feel lonely than those who are inactive. Many forms of sport and physical activity include a social element, so this is perhaps not surprising.

Often/always feel lonely



SOURCE: PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (2018)/SPORT ENGLAND ACTIVE LIVES ADULTS SURVEY NOVEMBER 20-21

**APPENDIX 5 – NGB Consultation Report**

<https://max-associates.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/CBC-NGB-Report-FINAL-December-2023.docx>

**APPENDIX 6 – Sports Club Consultation Report**

<https://max-associates.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Appendix-6-CBC-Sports-Club-Survey-Report-Final-December-2023.docx>

**APPENDIX 7 – Schools Consultation Report**

<https://max-associates.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Appendix-7-CBC-School-Management-Survey-Report-Final-December-2023.docx>

**APPENDIX 8 – Town / Parish Council Consultation Report**

<https://max-associates.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Appendix-8-CBC-Parish-Council-Report-Final-18.12.23.docx>

**APPENDIX 9 – Sport England FPMS Runs – Sports Halls**

A full detailed report was presented to the Council in November 2023

**APPENDIX 10 – Sport England FPMS Runs – Swimming Pools**

A full detailed report was presented to the Council in November 2023

**APPENDIX 11 – Latent Demand for Fitness Reports**

A full detailed report was presented to the Council in October 2023

<https://max-associates.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Appendix-11-Latent-demand-for-fitness-Cheltenham-Summary.pdf>

APPENDIX 12 – UKA Athletics Facilities Hierarchy  
[UKA-Facilities-Strategy-14-19-Web.pdf](#)

[EA-Facilities-Strategy-2018-25.pdf \(england-athletics-prod-assets-bucket.s3.amazonaws.com\)](#)

## COMPACT ATHLETICS FACILITIES



### Activity

- Multi-sport/multi activity sites
- Focused on FUNdamentals stage of the Athlete Development Model [Entry Level]: Run/Jump/Throw, multi activity, multi event, Fitness, Recreational participation.
- Facility permanently managed and available 7days a week all year round
- On site development club
- Appropriate number of coaches/teachers and volunteers to support facility activity
- Appropriate Facility Maintenance programme in place
- Sustainable venue Business Plan including equipment replacement fund and sinking fund
- Partnership work local schools
- Strong links with Club Venues
- Meeting place/venue for recreational running activity
- AthleFit, Athletics 365
- Junior Holiday schemes and beginners athletics courses
- Sportshall competitions
- Venue specific risk assessments in place



### Facilities

- Can be a standalone facility or a redesign/development of an existing sports space to accommodate athletics usage (e.g. indoor sports hall, artificial sports pitch, school playground)
- Facility designed for multi-sport and entry level T&F athletics
- Provides basic Run/Jump/Throw opportunities
- Kit of parts: No set, pre-determined layouts with facility options determined by potential users, space and budget
- Shelter provision included for outdoor facilities
- Co-located with other facilities
- Outdoor facilities floodlit to accommodate all year round community use
- Facility certification not required
- Meets minimum operating standards & safety requirements
- Secure, well managed site
- Equipment based upon participant needs
- Appropriate storage provision

## CV - CLUB VENUE



### Activity

- Mixed economy site encouraging multi-sport usage to create a sustainable business model
- Resident club(s) Clubmark accredited
- On site athletics club with a T&F membership of 100+
- Athletics activity focussed on Event Group progression stage of the Athlete Development model and continued track & field participation and recreational/fitness usage
- Low level local competitions and open meets only (Level 1)
- Facility permanently managed and available 7 days a week
- Programmed a minimum of 4 nights per week
- Appropriate number of coaches and volunteers to support club activity
- Appropriate Facility Maintenance programme in place
- Multi-sport sustainable venue Business Plan including equipment replacement fund and sinking fund
- HCAF approved Athletics development Plan in place
- Strong links with satellite Compact Athletics Facilities
- Meeting place/venue for recreational running activity
- Venue specific risk assessments in place



### Facilities

- Meets athlete/participant training needs
  - UKA approved outdoor/indoor surface
  - Co-located with other facilities
  - Facility designed/focused on flexible multi-sport usage
  - Secure, well managed site
  - Range of equipment based upon participant needs
  - Clubhouse/social provision to support club/facility development & sustainability
  - Facility certification optional
- Outdoor specific**
- Natural turf infield: For sustainable sites and/or clubs with a strong long throws section
  - Artificial infield: To support increased multi-sport usage and increased revenue generation (subject to local needs assessment and consultation with club and HCAF)
  - Floodlighting suitable for multi-sport training
- Indoor specific**
- Multipurpose Indoor facility suitable for athletics training
  - Laned, spike resistant surface (desirable)
  - Basic throws and jumps provision (desirable)

## ROCV - REGIONAL OUTDOOR COMPETITION VENUE



### Activity

- Athletics takes primacy at the site with significant year round athletics activity and/or venue subsidy that allow uncompromised access to high quality track and field competition and training facilities
- Athletics activity focused on the Event specialisation stage of the Athlete Development Model: Aspiring performance athletes
- Hosts a minimum of 5 permitted T&F competitions per year
- Anchor club(s) has active T&F Membership of 200+
- Facility permanently managed and available 7days a week
- Programmed a minimum of 4 night per week for athletics
- Appropriate number of volunteers to support club activity
- Appropriate coaching infrastructure to support athlete development programmes
- Appropriate Facility Maintenance programme in place
- Resident club(s) Clubmark accredited
- Strong links with feeder Club Venues
- Sustainable venue Business Plan including facility sinking fund and equipment replacement fund
- HCAF approved Athletics Development Plan in place
- Used for coach education and training squads
- Venue specific risk assessments in place



### Facilities

- Fully IAAF/UKA compliant (including measurement survey)
- 6-8 lane 400m track
- UKA Competition certified
- Solid, Prefabricated track surface (desirable)
- Independent track surface test every 5years (desirable)
- Capable of hosting UKA permitted competitions (Level 2-4)
- Full IAAF/UKA equipment provision (training & competition)
- Good local transport links
- Adequate Car/Coach parking
- Secure, well managed site
- Adequate ancillary areas: Registration, Officials Room etc
- PA system
- Infield suitable for all field events
- Floodlit to UKA specification
- Covered spectator seating available
- Indoor warm up area (desirable)

### APPENDIX 13 – Pittville School Community Use Agreement

<https://max-associates.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Appendix-12-Pittville-School-Community-Use-Agreement-915777.pdf>

**Disclaimer**

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

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



# Impact Assessment Tool - v.1

## Physical Activity & Sports Strategy

**Physical Activity & Sports Strategy**



<b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b>	<b>Scores</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
GHGs	4	No action required	The strategy has a specific objective about how best to invest in energy reduction and climate mitigation projects for our sporting infrastructure to support their resilience as part of our commitment to Cheltenham Zero	Accepted	
Air quality	0	No action required.	N/A		
Sustainable Transport	4	No action required	The strategy has a focus on encouraging more physical activity opportunities within local neighbourhoods	Accepted	
Biodiversity	0	No action required.	0		
Land use change	0	No action required.	0		
Soil and waterway health	0	No action required.	0		
Climate Change Adaptation	4	No action required	The strategy has a specific objective about how best to invest in energy reduction and climate mitigation projects for our sporting infrastructure to support their resilience as part of our commitment to Cheltenham Zero	Accepted	Furthermore, promotion of team sports and better embedding a sports hub for community meetings can improve climate resilience by ensuring people are supported in the face of a disaster.
Energy Use	1	No action required	The strategy has a specific objective about how best to invest in energy reduction and climate mitigation projects for our sporting infrastructure to support their resilience as part of our commitment to Cheltenham Zero	Accepted	
Waste	0	No action required.	0		
Sustainable Materials	0	No action required.	0		

<b>SOCIAL</b>	<b>Scores</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
Food	1	No action required	0		
Health	0	No action required.	The strategy has a vision to make sure that Cheltenham is a place where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from physical activity and sports, creating active, healthy and happy communities	Accepted	
Housing	1	No action required	0		
Education	1	No action required	0		
Community	0	No action required.	as part of the second phase, the council is commissioning a study of playing pitches throughout Cheltenham that will come forward with recommendations for how best to improve them	Accepted	
Culture	0	No action required.	The strategy recognises the link between sports and physical activity and associated social opportunities and wants to create more opportunities within local communities	Accepted	
Accessibility	0	No action required.	The strategy sets recognises that there are barriers to taking part in physical activity including cost, childcare, safety as well as demographic barriers - it sets out an outcome to address these barriers	Accepted	

Local Economy and Jobs	0	No action required.	The strategy sets out the link between sports and the local economy and commits to actions around linking improved physical activity opportunities with golden valley		
Safety	1	No action required	The strategy recognises that not feeling safe when exercising is a major barrier to people - the strategy sets out an outcome and an objective to improve feelings of safety	Accepted	
Democratic Voice	0	No action required.	One of the next steps with the strategy is to carry out more detailed engagement with the cohorts that are potentially facing inactivity inequalities.	Accepted	
Equity	0	No action required.	Recognising that there are specific inactivity inequalities, the strategy identifies certain communities where we need to do more to understand barriers to do more to encourage physical activity	Accepted	

# Community impact assessment – Physical activity & sports strategy – appendix 4

What is a community impact assessment? ..... 1

    Background ..... 1

    Step 1: About the service, policy or project ..... 2

    Step 2: What do you already know about your existing and potential customers? ..... 2

    Step 3: Assessing community impact..... 4

    Step 4: What are the differences?..... 6

    Step 5: Taking things forward..... 6

## What is a community impact assessment?

A community impact assessment is an important part of our commitment to delivering better services for our communities. The form will help us find out what impact or consequences our functions, policies, procedures and projects have on our communities, as well as employees and potential employees

By undertaking an impact assessment, we are able to:

1. Take into account the needs, experiences and circumstances of those groups of people who use (or don't / can't use) our services.
2. Identify any inequalities people may experience.
3. Think about the other ways in which we can deliver our services which will not lead to inequalities.
4. Develop better policy-making, procedures and services.

## Background

<b>Name of service / policy / project and date</b>	<b>Physical Activity &amp; Sports Strategy</b>
<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Richard Gibson</b>
<b>Other people involved in completing this form</b>	<b>None</b>

## Step 1: About the service, policy or project

<b>What is the aim of the service / policy / project and what outcomes is it contributing to</b>	To set out a collective vision and outcomes for physical activity and sport in Cheltenham - Cheltenham is a place where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy and benefit from sport and physical activity.
<b>Who are the primary customers of the service / policy / project and how do they / will they benefit</b>	Sporting and physical activity stakeholders, communities and residents of Cheltenham
<b>How and where is the service / policy / project implemented</b>	Across Cheltenham
<b>What potential barriers might already exist to achieving these outcomes</b>	<p>Stakeholders have identified the following barriers to achieving the vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost is a barrier for many people - only going to get worse with cost of living</li> <li>• Childcare can be a barrier</li> <li>• Perceptions of feeling safe when exercising</li> <li>• Unequal geographic distribution of facilities and opportunities- exacerbated by lack of bus services</li> </ul>

## Step 2: What do you already know about your existing and potential customers?

<b>What existing information and data do you have about your existing / potential customers e.g. Statistics, customer feedback, performance information</b>	<p>We have access to data from Sports England and other local data such as the online pupil survey:</p> <p>We know that 21% of our population is considered inactive and although this compares with 23% inactive for the county and 26% nationally, there are areas of Cheltenham and groups of people where inactivity levels are far higher.</p> <p>Low income - People living in our lower income neighbourhoods are at risk of lower activity levels. Twice as many people are classed as inactive in our most deprived communities (38%) when compared to our least deprived communities (19%). We also know that obesity in women affects 39.5% of those living in most deprived areas compared with 22.4% from least deprived areas</p> <p>Disabled people – we know that 36% of people who class themselves as disabled are inactive compared to only 17% who class themselves as non-disabled – a participation gap of c.20%</p> <p>Ethnicity –Nationally, 37% of people from the Asian ethnic group are classed as inactive, compared to 24.5% of people from white British origin. In the Asian and white British ethnic groups, women are more likely to be inactive than men</p>
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	<p>Younger women – Whilst similar rates of adult women are classed as active when compared to men, school data from the Gloucestershire online pupil survey shows that whilst 60% of boys do the recommended level of activity, only 48% of girls achieve this. In addition, 46% of girls don't exercise because they find it embarrassing compared with only 21% of boys.</p>
<p><b>What does it tell you about who uses your service / policy and those that don't?</b></p>	<p>It is clear from the data that some of our communities face inactivity inequalities, most notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People living in our lower income neighbourhoods</li> <li>• Disabled people</li> <li>• Younger women</li> <li>• People from ethnically diverse communities</li> </ul>
<p><b>What have you learnt about real barriers to your service from any consultation with customers and any stakeholder groups?</b></p>	<p>We are currently engaging with these communities to understand the barriers to physical activity</p>
<p><b>If not, who do you have plans to consult with about the service / policy / project?</b></p>	

### Step 3: Assessing community impact

How does your service, policy or project impact on different groups in the community? Please outline what you are already doing to benefit this group, what you are doing that might disadvantage this group, what you could do differently to benefit the group.

Group	What are you already doing to benefit this group	What are you doing that might disadvantage this group	What could you do differently to benefit this group	No impact on this group
<b>People belonging to race, cultural and ethnic groups</b>	One of the strategy's priorities is to explore how best to support communities increase their engagement in physical activity where we know inactivity inequalities are the greatest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People from ethnically diverse communities</li> </ul>	Nothing identified	Monitor responses to the physical activity survey by ethnicity and carry out further engagement as appropriate if numbers are not proportionate	
<b>People who are male or female</b>	One of the strategy's priorities is to explore how best to support communities increase their engagement in physical activity where we know inactivity inequalities are the greatest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and girls</li> </ul>	Nothing identified	Monitor responses to the physical activity survey by gender and carry out further engagement as appropriate if numbers are not proportionate	
<b>People who intend or plan to undergo or who are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment</b>	Nothing identified	Nothing identified	Nothing identified	
<b>People of different ages, including children and older people</b>	One of the strategy's priorities is to explore how best to support communities increase their engagement in physical activity where we know inactivity	Nothing identified	Monitor responses to the physical activity survey by age and carry out further engagement as appropriate if numbers are not proportionate	



	<p>inequalities are the greatest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and girls</li> </ul>			
<b>People with disabilities and/or mental health conditions</b>	<p>One of the strategy's priorities is to explore how best to support communities increase their engagement in physical activity where we know inactivity inequalities are the greatest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled people and people with long-term health conditions</li> </ul>	Nothing identified	Monitor responses to the physical activity survey by disability and carry out further engagement as appropriate if numbers are not proportionate	
<b>People who have a religion or belief, or who do not</b>	Nothing identified	Nothing identified	Nothing identified	
<b>People who are who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual</b>	Nothing identified	Nothing identified	Nothing identified	
<b>People who are married or in a Civil Partnership</b>	Nothing identified	Nothing identified	Nothing identified	
<b>People who are pregnant or subject to maternity arrangements</b>	Nothing identified	Nothing identified	Nothing identified	
<b>Other groups or communities</b>	<p>One of the strategy's priorities is to explore how best to support communities increase their engagement in physical activity where we know inactivity inequalities are the greatest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those on low incomes (including children living in poverty)</li> <li>• Others (older people, carers, refugees)</li> </ul>	Nothing identified	Monitor responses to the physical activity survey by low income and carry out further engagement as appropriate if numbers are not proportionate	

Step 4: What are the differences?

<b>Are any groups affected in different ways to others as a result of the service / policy / project?</b>	Nothing further identified
<b>Does your service / policy / project either directly or indirectly discriminate?</b>	The strategy puts in place measures to ensure that the delivery of physical activity is done in a non-discriminatory way, but also is used to drive a powerful message of equity and inclusion,
<b>If yes, what can be done to improve this?</b>	N/A
<b>Are there any other ways in which the service / project can help support priority communities in Cheltenham?</b>	

Step 5: Taking things forward

<b>What are the key actions to be carried out and how will they be resourced and monitored?</b>	We will monitor responses to the physical activity survey and carry out further engagement as appropriate if numbers are not proportionate
<b>Who will play a role in the decision-making process?</b>	CBC
<b>What are your / the project's learning and development needs?</b>	None identified
<b>How will you capture these actions in your service / project planning?</b>	Via the action plan

## Cheltenham Borough Council

### Cabinet – 2 April 2024

## Cotswold Beechwood Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Mitigation Strategy and emerging action plan

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**Accountable member:**

Cllr Martin Horwood, Cabinet Member for Customer & Regulatory Services

**Accountable officer:**

Tracey Birkinshaw, Director of Community & Economic Development

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

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**Key Decision:**

No

**Executive summary:**

The Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) straddles the boundaries of Cotswold, Stroud and Tewksbury Districts and totals some 590 hectares. Cheltenham Borough Council is legally obliged under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) to consider whether any project or proposal, including planning applications would affect the biodiversity and integrity of the SAC.

In recent years there has been a growing awareness of the threats to the Beechwoods from increased recreation use. Natural England's view is that new development means new people in the area and therefore there will be greater pressure on the SAC due to recreational activities. A visitor survey was commissioned by Tewkesbury Borough, Cotswold District, Stroud District, Cheltenham Borough and Gloucester City Councils. Visitors to the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC were surveyed during the summer of 2019. Postcode data from that visitor survey was used as a means to identify a zone of influence, within which development may result in an increase in recreation use. The zone of influence encompasses all of Cheltenham Borough.

Following on from the visitor survey, a mitigation strategy that was commissioned by the same Local Planning Authorities, was produced. The strategy, which is already being implemented, provides a robust and comprehensive consideration of avoidance and mitigation measures that will adequately prevent adverse effects on the European site in terms of recreation pressure. The strategy outlines what needs to be undertaken in terms of mitigation on the SAC and elsewhere in the County in terms of providing alternative provision known as Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) for visitors. The mitigation strategy was reviewed by the Planning & Liaison Member

Working Group on 30 November 2022 and forms part of the evidence base that supports the delivery of the adopted development plan policies in respect of Joint Core Strategy (JCS policy SD9: Biodiversity and Geodiversity) and Cheltenham Plan policy BG1: Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation Recreation Pressure.

### **Recommendations: That Cabinet:**

- 1. Adopts the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC Recreation Mitigation Strategy and**
  - 2. Commits to bringing forward a detailed action plan for Cheltenham borough that will look to utilise existing parks, gardens, public open spaces, accessible private green spaces and designated Local Green Spaces, including raising awareness of less well known spaces as well as considering new areas in each of these categories that may have the potential for enhanced public access and wherever possible deliver benefits for those communities most impacted by development and those with least access to nature in their neighbourhoods**
- 

## **1. Implications**

### **1.1. Financial, Property and Asset implications**

The strategies envisage developer contributions being used to deliver the mitigation and monitoring required, administered across each of the five local planning authorities within the zone of influence. Once the SANGS action plan is approved then provision will need to be made for feeding the SANGS contributions into the Council's capital programme on an annual basis in order to deliver the approved projects of the action plan. Projects should not commence until such time as sufficient SANGS contributions are in place to fully finance them

**Signed off by:** Director of Finance and Assets (Deputy Section 151 Officer)

[gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### **1.2. Legal implications**

Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 the Council as a "competent authority" is legally obliged before deciding to undertake or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for, a plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect on a European site alone or in combination with other plans or projects to must make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan or project for that European site in view of that site's conservation objectives.

The Council must for the purposes of the assessment consult Natural England and have regard to any representations made by them. In the light of the conclusions of the appropriate assessment, the Council may only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site.

These assessment provisions apply both in respect of plan making and also the granting of planning permission (as well as in respect of permitted development under development orders which is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), must not be begun until the developer has received written notification of the approval of the local planning authority having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site).

Consequently, it is important that a robust mitigation strategy is in place for the SAC in respect of the SLP process and development management functions.

The recreation mitigation strategy provides an assessment of the pressures that development can place upon the SAC and outlines the mitigation measures that should be deployed to avoid harm to the sites.

The strategy provides a framework for the preparation of the Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) and also the consideration of planning applications

**Signed off by:** One Legal, [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)

### **1.3. Environmental and climate change implications**

As set out in the report, all plans and projects (including planning applications) require consideration of whether the plan or project is likely to have significant effects on habitats sites.

**Signed off by:** Climate Emergency Officer, [maizy.mccann@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:maizy.mccann@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### **1.4. Corporate Plan Priorities**

This report, through the facilitation of the development plan, supports delivery across the following corporate plan priorities:

1. Key priority 2 – Working with residents, communities and businesses to help make Cheltenham net zero by 2030
2. Key priority 4 – Ensuring residents, communities and businesses benefit from Cheltenham's future growth and prosperity
3. Key priority 5 – Being a more modern, efficient and financially sustainable council

### **1.5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications**

There are no specific equality implications associated with the recommendation set out in the report.

**Signed off by:** Head of communities, wellbeing & partnerships, [richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### **1.6. Performance management – monitoring and review**

The monies derived from the Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation will be monitored quarterly alongside our monitoring programme of Section 106, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). On an annual basis an updated action plan of interventions will be put in place and agreed with the Cabinet Member for Customer & Regulatory Services for implementation.

## 2. Background

- 2.1. The Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) straddles the boundaries of Cotswold, Stroud and Tewksbury Districts and totals some 590 hectares. Cheltenham Borough Council is legally obliged under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) to consider whether any project or proposal, including planning applications would affect the biodiversity and integrity of the SAC.
- 2.2. In recent years there has been a growing awareness of the threats to the Beechwoods from increased recreation use. Under the clear guidance from Natural England (NE) a visitor survey was undertaken (published in November 2019) by Footprint Ecology with members of the public who were visiting the woods. The survey was commissioned by Stroud District Council on behalf of local planning authorities in the vicinity of the Beechwoods: Cheltenham Borough Council, Cotswold District Council, Gloucester City Council, Stroud District Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council, as evidence to inform Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) and mitigation requirements in emerging respective Local Plan documents.
- 2.3. Postcode data from the survey was used as a means to identify a zone of influence, within which housing growth may result in an increase in recreation use. The zone is 15.4 kilometres, and it represents the 75th percentile distance for interviewees who had travelled directly from home. This approach has been used to protect other European sites in the UK, and is confirmed as best practice by NE.
- 2.4. A Mitigation strategy followed the completion of the visitor survey. The strategy provides a robust and comprehensive consideration of avoidance and mitigation measures that will adequately prevent adverse effects on the European site in terms of recreation pressure from housing growth across the five local planning authorities within the zone of influence. Estimated costs for measures proposed have been divided against the estimate of housing growth to provide a per dwelling figure. According to NE this strategy serves as a solution to the legislative duties placed on LPAs, and is an enabling strategy, unblocking potential Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) issues at the individual development project level where recreation pressure is difficult to mitigate for on a piecemeal basis because it relies on a suite of integrated activities. Over the long term, the strategy outlines what needs to be undertaken in terms of mitigation on the site and elsewhere in the County in terms of providing alternative provision for visitors. This is the evidence base that supports delivery of the adopted policies as outlined in the section below.

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## 3. Reasons for recommendations

### Policy Background

- 3.1. There are already policies in the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the Cheltenham Plan that relate to how development that will have a likely significant effect on an international site will be treated. **Policy SD9 Biodiversity and Geodiversity** in the JCS refers to developments that have the potential to have a likely significant effect on an international site needing to be subject to Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA).
- 3.2. As the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was prepared,

the context of the Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC was Policy SD9: Biodiversity and Geodiversity. At the time of drafting the JCS, the specific evidence relating to the Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC was not captured and as such this policy relates to the protection of the area as a SAC. This links directly into Cheltenham's approach through the development management process and the screening through HRA. Policy INF3: Green Infrastructure relates to policy SD9 as does Policy SA1: Strategic Allocations which recognises the need for flexibility *"in considering different approaches to achieving a comprehensive masterplan providing that proposals still take fully into account the development and infrastructure needs of the wider allocation and demonstrate that it would not prejudice the sustainable delivery of the entire allocation"*.

- 3.3. There was a clear understanding that the Gloucestershire authorities needed to work together to understand the impact of the SAC in policy terms and the progression of more detailed policies. This occurred through the preparation of local plans, informed by a visitor survey commissioned in 2019 by Stroud District Council in collaboration with Cotswolds district and the JCS councils. The Cheltenham Plan (2020) includes an interim policy as at the point of examination the evidence regarding the visitor survey and any subsequent reassessment was not advanced. This policy advanced through the Examination in Public and formed a main modification to the plan through that process. This led to a new policy and amended text to deal with the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC in order to avoid any adverse effects on the integrity of the SAC.
- 3.4. As set out in the Inspector's report relating to the Cheltenham Plan, the Council's position, through its appropriate assessment informing the preparation of the Cheltenham Plan (CP) concluded that significant effects on the Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC were unlikely since mitigation measures were in place. Natural England did not support the council's position, arguing that *"there was no strategic understanding of where visitors come from and how they use the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC, no established zone of influence for recreational pressure, and no mitigation plan. Without this information, NE considered that it was not possible to reach a conclusion of no likely significant effects in relation to potential changes in air quality and from increased recreational disturbance on the SAC from the CP – alone or in-combination with other plans and projects."*
- 3.5. Natural England's case was on two grounds, firstly recreational impact arising from new development and secondly concerns of the *"potential for increases in atmospheric pollution from vehicle emissions as a result of the proposals in the Cheltenham Plan either alone or in-combination with other development plan proposals"*. The outcome of the Inspectors report was the subsequent adoption of two new Cheltenham Plan policies:
  - (i) **Policy BG1: Cotswold Beechwoods SAC special area of conservation recreation pressure:** this policy links the council's commitment to ongoing collaborative work and culminating in a mitigation and implementation strategy and providing that development must contribute to mitigation specified in the mitigation and implementation strategy or provide information for a bespoke Habitats Regulations Assessment; and
  - (ii) **Policy BG2: Cotswold Beechwoods SAC special area of conservation air quality:** this policy relates specifically to the A46 and the potential impact.

Developments that the Mitigation Strategy applies to

- 3.6. The mitigation strategy applies to all planning applications (and prior approvals) for residential or holiday accommodation. This also includes:
- (i) Houses in Multiple Occupation (sui generis);
  - (ii) Residential institutions within the C2 Use Class where the residents are not severely restricted by illness or mobility;
  - (iii) Student accommodation;
  - (iv) Sites for gypsy, travellers and travelling showpeople; and
  - (v) Tourist accommodation, including self-catering, caravan and touring holiday accommodation.
- 3.7. This applies to all the above forms of development including those coming through the permitted development route (for example, employment to residential). The need to address Habitats Regulations issues for other types of development will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Different elements of contributions

- 3.8. The mitigation strategy refers to a number of different aspects of developer contributions:
- (i) £193 for Strategic Access Management Monitoring (SAMM). This would contribute to dedicated staff, signs and interpretation, education & awareness raising, measures to address contamination, parking and travel related measures and monitoring;
  - (ii) £480 for Strategic Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS); and
  - (iii) Administrative fee, the amount for which is not specified in the mitigation strategy but has been set at £125 where the applicant pays the contributions up front (by means of a Unilateral Undertaking). Alternatively, if payment of the contributions is deferred to a later date (for example commencement of development), there an administration fee of £310 for the S106 undertaking plus a monitoring fee of £200.
- 3.9. With regards to the above costs for SAMM and SANGS, Officers have undertaken some research in terms of the relative charges for SAMM and SANGS across the country, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report. As the evidence in Appendix 1 shows, the average cost for SAMM is £517 per dwelling and the average cost for SANGS is £2,894 per dwelling. For the Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the cost per SAMM is £193 and the cost for SANGS is £480. Therefore, the costs for the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC SAMM are approximately 37.4% of the average and for SANGS are 16.6% of the average. Whilst we have had a small number of developers raise concerns in respect of the costs now being levied, the benchmarking identifies that we are applying a value which is significantly lower than some other local authority areas.
- 3.10. An average cost of administrative fees has not been included as this information was not always available to enable a comparison. However, where information was available, the administrative fees ranged from £125 (Cheltenham Borough Council) through to £1,175 (Wokingham Borough Council).



- 3.11. Contribution levels for the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC will be raised annually with inflation (based on the Consumer Prices Index), with the baseline being May 2022.
- 3.12. The Mitigation Strategy at paragraph 5.3 under the ‘SAMM’ heading states *“There is scope for each authority to set the administration fee or vary the cost according to dwelling size (e.g. number of bedrooms) as relevant”*. With regard to SANGS/Infrastructure projects (away from the SAC), paragraph 5.6 states that *“Where a contribution is collected, this will be at a standard rate of £480 per dwelling (prior to any administration fee). Details of how this figure is calculated are set out in Appendix 4”*. Appendix 4 of the Mitigation Strategy explains how the cost has been calculated, which is the amount of SANGS per dwelling (based on 8 hectares per 1,000 people and assuming 2.4 people as the typical number of people per dwelling) multiplied by typical land prices per hectare. Appendix 4 states that *“The level of contribution can be refined further once an initial list of potential infrastructure projects has been established by the Delivery Officer”*. The mitigation strategy therefore does not preclude potentially altering the contributions, e.g. on a per bedroom basis, at a later date but it also needs to be borne in mind that the strategy covered five authorities. Therefore, if CBC wanted to deviate from the current approach at a later date, careful consideration would need to be given as to the assumptions that underpinned such an approach.
- 3.13. Within the context of the regulations, developers can deliver their own SANGS after Natural England approval or developers pay financial contributions towards enhancement of open space land which has SANGS status and long-term management. SANGS may be created from:
- (i) Existing open space of SANGS quality with no existing public access or limited public access, which for the purposes of mitigation could be made fully accessible to the public;
  - (ii) Existing open space which is already accessible, but which could be changed in character so that it is more attractive to the specific group of visitors who might otherwise visit Cotswold Beechwoods and;
  - (iii) Land in other uses which could be converted into SANGS.
- 3.14. Within this context there is broad flexibility, and the emphasis is upon creating quality in provision. Any SANGS proposal requires engagement with Natural England. There are three ways local authorities are tasked with meeting the regulations relating to SANGS:
- (i) Via Habitats Regulation Assessment – this occurs through development management and the screening required as part of the pre application/application process;
  - (ii) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); and
  - (iii) Putting in place a strategic approach to offset recreational pressure on protected sites. This is undertaken formally through the development plan process and includes the Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC zone of influence.

#### Implications of appeals

- 3.15. Up until 27th April 2023, Cheltenham Borough Council’s applied what we considered was a pragmatic response to the application of the policies relevant to the SAC. This focussed on strategic sites and their implications on the Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC. With larger applications, SANGS could be provided on site and therefore the SANGS charge would not

apply or may be adjusted. The position adopted by the Council is that where there is clear justification to not provide SANGS on-site, then alternative off site provision will be considered through engagement with Natural England.

- 3.16. Further to the recent appeal (APP/B1605/W/22/3310113, decision date 27 April 2023), relating to planning application 21/02755/FUL for a single dwelling, this established that **all developments** needed to address mitigation measures. This therefore required CBC to review in the context of a whole town approach. Previously for smaller sites the imposition of a condition requiring information packs provided for new homeowners had been deemed sufficient. However, in this appeal, the Inspector considered that *“the proposed development would result in likely significant effects on the SAC. An Appropriate Assessment is therefore necessary”*. The Inspector considered that there was no evidence to demonstrate that a homeowner pack would provide adequate mitigation *“against the adverse effects of recreational disturbance on the SAC”*. The appeal was dismissed.
- 3.17. In a more recent appeal decision (APP/B1605/W/23/3317851, dated 12 September 2023) at Leckhampton Farm Court, 21/02750/FUL, the Inspector considered that the likely impact on the SAC was significant. They considered that of the means of mitigation discussed, the on-site provision of green space would not fulfil the same recreational needs as the SAC, and even with the use of homeowner’s packs, would not provide sufficient mitigation. However, financial contributions secured through a submitted Unilateral Undertaking meant that the residential development would not conflict with Habitat Regulations or the NPPF. The appeal was allowed.
- 3.18. In light of the above appeals, it is recognised that it is important for Cheltenham Borough Council, as the Local Planning Authority, to progress policy guidance and have governance arrangements in place for the management of funds received and the implementation of interventions.

#### Next steps

- 3.19. The Council started collecting contributions towards SANGS and SAMM in August 2023. It is recognised that there is a need to ensure that robust governance arrangements are in place relating to the spending of monies. The Planning team is currently undertaking audit work around S106 and CIL and the governance of SANGS/SAMM is being drawn into the governance process that will be put in place in respect of this. Section 106 and CIL monies are required to be reported and monitored on at least annually through the Infrastructure Funding Statement.

#### **SANGS**

- 3.20. Lepus consulting (a Cheltenham based environmental consultancy) have recently been commissioned by the Council to undertake a desktop review of CBC-owned open space and land for Biodiversity Net Gain. They will also be identifying potential CBC-owned sites suitable for SANG provision.
- 3.21. There will be specific criteria for SANGS and these will need to be reviewed to see if any of the sites that come forward through the review of Council-owned land will be suitable as SANGS. CBC could draw on this report in respect of best practice which we may be able to apply across both CBC and non-CBC owned sites. This report does not pre-empt the work that will be delivered via the Lepus commission.
- 3.22. With regard to what a potential SANGS strategy may look like, this would need to take account of the latest guidelines from Natural England. However, some of the main aspects of such a strategy

would include:

- i. Types of sites which could be identified as SANGS; and
- ii. Measures which can be taken to enhance sites so that they may be used as SANGS.

3.23. SANGS may be created from:

- i. existing open space of SANGS quality with no existing public access or limited public access, which for the purposes of mitigation could be made fully accessible to the public;
- ii. existing open space, which is already accessible, but which could be changed in character so that it is more attractive to the specific group of visitors who might otherwise visit the SPA;
- iii. land in other uses which could be converted into SANGS.

3.24. The identification of SANGS should seek to avoid sites of high nature conservation value which are likely to be damaged by increased visitor numbers. They should also be funded for in perpetuity as is the current process.

3.25. With regard to guidelines for SANGS/Infrastructure projects, these are contained within Appendix 3 of the Cotswold Beechwoods Mitigation Strategy as well as within guidance from Natural England.

3.26. We are also very keen to explore further with Natural England the practical implementation of Natural England guidance and a bespoke approach to implementation of SANGS, the guidelines work well where there are large tracts of land, however, for Cheltenham we work within tight urban boundaries. The bigger solution is allocating sites for SANGS via the Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury Strategic and Local Plan, however this has a longer timeline journey to its future approval. As with all things 'one size' doesn't fit all, so finding the right solutions requires careful consideration. Officers have already reached out to Natural England to open this dialogue.

3.27. Once the work by Lepus is completed, which is currently estimated to be around August 2024, this will help inform the approach that will be taken to deliver reasonable alternative recreational spaces. There may potentially be a need to commission further external support in order to produce an action plan, subject to sufficient budget being available.

SANGS emerging action plan

3.28. As noted above, SAMM and SANGS are part of the strategy to mitigate the potential combination impacts of new housing development in the vicinity of the Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC. Because the zone of influence covers the entirety of the borough, the SAMM therefore includes all the local authority area within the mitigation approach. Careful consideration will need to be given to those communities who are less likely to have easy access to nature in their neighbourhoods and how this could be addressed. Officers are working across planning, green spaces and property to develop the first SANGS which will be brought to Cabinet for approval. This will form the basis of an annual action plan and will provide the basis for monitoring.

3.29. There are a range of potential measures which could be employed to mitigate negative impacts from recreational disturbance. These can include habitat interventions, access management, engagement with or enforcement action of on-site visitors and on and off-site measures. This

would direct investment both to the Cotswolds Beechwoods and to sites within Cheltenham Borough. The action plan will look to utilise existing parks, gardens, public open spaces, accessible private green spaces and designated Local Green Spaces including raising awareness of less well known spaces as well as considering new areas in each of these categories that may have the potential for enhanced public access. Whilst the Council cannot control areas in private ownership, the action plan should consider whether there are opportunities for third party, privately owned SANGS, e.g. publicly accessible land that is owned by organisations or individuals other than the Council. This would most likely require further discussion with Natural England as well as with the Council to ensure their criteria for SANGS are met. To provide Cabinet with some initial understanding of what the action plan may contain in advance of a future report, key potential actions are noted below.

3.30. The biggest impact on the Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC in respect of contamination as outlined in the mitigation strategy is dog walking and in respect of trampling damage: horses, vehicles and bikes, so thinking about the practical interventions that can offer alternatives to residents travelling to the Beechwoods for these activities will offer real alternatives and choice.

<b>Potential intervention</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
Investment in wardening service at Cotswolds Beechwoods	By investing collectively with neighbouring councils this may offer a cost-effective long-term investment in helping to manage the Cotswolds Beechwoods.  Focus on education of impact, in particular of dog walking and cycling.
Investment in wardening service and increased public access at Leckhampton Hill	By investing in Leckhampton Hill, this provides a more accessible location and alternative to the Cotswolds Beechwoods to the residents of Cheltenham
New/improved access points to existing, new and potential greenspaces	On site: management of access points  Off site: Deflection of visitors  Improvement of access provision on other sites in the area.
New/improved walkways	On site: Management of paths/walkways  Off site: Management / deflection of visitors off-site  Improvement of access provision on other sites in the area.
Habitat management & creation	On site:

	Off site; Offers variety in landscapes and greenspaces. Management / deflection of visitors off-site
Health and safety assessments	Ensuring that green spaces are as accessible and available to use by all user groups
Interpretation / signage	On site: To improve engagement with visitors and greater awareness of Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC and its importance.  Off site: Deflection of visitors  Improvement of access provision on other sites in the area.  Offers local interpretation of spaces/interest
Cycle/walking trails/maps	On site: encouraging cyclists/walkers to use waymarked routes.  Off site: Deflection of visitors  Improvement of access provision on other sites in the area.  Encouraging linked trips via bike/walking
Visitor engagement campaigns	Promotional materials to assist in engagement campaigns/social media activities
Investment in Friends Groups	Supporting increase in membership and activity across a wider number of green spaces
Visitor monitoring surveys	To ensure the mitigation strategy can be reviewed and updated accordingly
Through the preparation of the SLP look at opportunities for allocating SANGs and wider green spaces accessible to Cheltenham residents	Deflection of visitors  Creation of other sites in the area.

3.31. Once an action plan is agreed, this will be implemented, monitored and managed by the councils Green Space team. There may be a need to consider additional resourcing to facilitate this work.

3.32. Officers are engaging directly with Natural England to seek their support in the approach to the action plan, together with engaging with neighbouring councils.

#### 4. Alternative options considered

- 4.1. It is acknowledged that applicants could prepare their own 'shadow' HRA detailing the likely recreational impacts caused by the development and the mitigation that will be put in place to address those impacts. This is likely to be time-consuming and costly and will require the input of experienced ecologists and others. This information would be submitted with an application and will be subject to consultation with Natural England. Evidence from elsewhere indicates that this is unlikely to be an option that applicants will choose to take. For example, part of Cotswolds District is not only affected by the Zone of Influence relating to Cotswold Beechwoods SAC, but they also have the North Meadow (and Clattinger Farm) SAC. On Cotswold District Council's website (accessed on 6 February 2024), they mention that shadow HRAs are another option in terms of mitigating impacts but also state *"to date no shadow HRAs have been submitted that adequately address the impacts on the SAC"*.

#### 5. Consultation and feedback

- 5.1. There is no statutory requirement to consult on the Cotswold Beechwoods Mitigation Strategy itself. With development plan policies in place the Mitigation Strategy provides the evidence to support long term management.

#### 6. Key risks

- 6.1. As set out in Appendix 2, the risk set out can be avoided through having appropriate mechanisms in place to seek to address significant effects on habitat sites.

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#### Report authors:

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#### Appendices:

1. Research relating to comparative costs
2. Risk Assessment

#### Background information:

[Cheltenham Corporate Plan \(2023-2027\)](#)

[Cotswold Beechwoods Visitor Survey](#)

[Cotswolds Beechwoods Mitigation Strategy](#)

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## Appendix 1: Research relating to comparative costs of Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) mitigation costs

Average SAMM and SANGS Mitigation Costs			
Special Protection Area (SPA) / Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	Average SAMM cost	Average SANGS cost	Note
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	£905	£7,751	Figures from seven Local Planning Authorities <sup>1</sup>
Cotswold Beechwoods SAC	£193	£480	Figures from all five Local Planning Authorities
North Meadow and Clattering Farm SAC	£323	£480	Figures from all three Local Planning Authorities
Chiltern Beechwoods SAC	£871	£5,427	Figures from all two Local Planning Authorities
Cannock Chase SAC	£291	£330	Figures from all eight Local Planning Authorities
Total	£2,583	£14,468	
Average	<b>£517</b>	<b>£2,894</b>	

<sup>1</sup> For some of the Thames Basin Heath authorities, the SANGS and SAMM contributions vary according to the number of bedrooms and in one instance (Surrey Heath Borough Council), the SANGS contribution is based on a figure per square metre of residential floorspace. The number of bedrooms typical varies from 1 to 5 bedrooms. For the purposes of this research, the figures for a three-bedroom dwelling were therefore used. For Surrey Heath Borough Council, a figure of 94 square metre dwelling was used. This figure was based on the government published report (Size of English Homes Fact Sheet 2018-19). For some of the Thames Basin Heath authorities researched (Runnymede Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council), the payment also varies according to the distance from the SPA. In these instances, the figures for dwellings within the 5km of the zone were used rather than the 5km-7km zone.

**Appendix 2: Risk Assessment**

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	If the Council does not have an appropriate mitigation strategy, then it will not be performing part of its statutory duty and development may not be able to be granted.	Director of Communities & Economic Development	3	4	12	Avoid the risk	Close	This risk will be mitigated by the Cabinet decision.	2 April 2024



## Cheltenham Borough Council

### Cabinet – 2 April 2024

### Ubico business plan 2024/2025

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**Accountable member:**

Councillor Rowena Hay, Leader of the Council

**Accountable officer:**

Karen Watson, Environmental Partnerships Manager

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

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**Key Decision:** No**Executive summary:**

Ubico, the Council's environmental services provider, is a teckal company wholly owned by local authorities including Cheltenham Borough Council and is required to submit an annual business plan for approval by the shareholders. Whilst the Leader of the Council has authority, as shareholder representative, to approve the business plan it is being brought to cabinet for members to note and consider.

The proposals contained in the Ubico 2024/2025 business plan which delivers the fourth year of the 5 year vision are built around four key pillars (people; operations; climate; business development) and focus on the following themes: leveraging synergies and economies of scale; harnessing opportunities to deliver value back to partners; using technology to drive operational efficiency; understanding our communities' needs; inspiring our workforce to be committed to providing value for money and carbon neutral services. Ubico has seen significant growth since it started delivering services in 2012 and in 2024/25, Ubico will grow again, extending the services it delivers for the Forest of Dean to include waste, recycling and street cleaning services from August 2024 and the mobilisation and delivery of these services will be a key focus for Ubico in the first half of the year.

Ubico will submit individual business cases for approval by the Council, as appropriate, to support potential investment proposals within the 2024/2025 Business Plan to develop areas of the business that have been identified as having potential to deliver greater value for shareholders.

## **Recommendations:**

- 1. that Cabinet notes the Ubico 2024/2025 Business Plan**
  - 2. that the Leader of the Council, as shareholder representative, proposes to sign the written resolution to approve the Ubico 2024/2025 Business Plan in due course.**
- 

## **1. Implications**

### **1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications**

No financial implications as a direct result of this report. Ubico will submit individual business cases for approval by the Council, as appropriate, to support potential investment proposals within the 2024/2025 Business Plan.

**Signed off by:** gemma.bell@cheltenham.gov.uk

### **1.2 Legal implications**

Part 3 of the constitution provides that the Leader shall, 'Represent (or arrange for a Cabinet Member or Officer to represent) the Authority as shareholder or member in a company in which the Authority holds an interest'.

**Signed off by:** legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

### **1.3 Environmental and climate change implications**

Environmental and climate change priorities are integrally interwoven into the Council's key priorities, particularly key priority 2 - working with residents, communities and businesses to help make Cheltenham #netzero by 2030 and the Ubico business plan 2024/2025 and 5 year vision seeks to support the Council's priorities in this area. Individual business cases are required to take forward projects or initiatives and these will require completion of climate change assessments using the new tool available.

**Signed off by:** Debbie Baker, [Climate@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:Climate@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### **1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities**

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Working with residents, communities and businesses to help make Cheltenham #netzero by 2030

### **1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications**

Individual business cases are required to take forward projects or initiatives and these will require completion of climate change assessments using the new tool available as well as

Equality Impact Assessments.

### **1.6 Performance management – monitoring and review**

The Ubico board of directors, including Cheltenham Borough Council's shareholder representatives, will manage and monitor the delivery of the business plan. In addition the cabinet member, waste, recycling and street services, in conjunction with the lead commissioner, will monitor delivery of work streams and projects which deliver these outcomes as part of the client function within the Council.

An equality impact assessment will be carried out by Ubico or the Council as part of any work stream or project that is initiated as well as all risk assessments including any environmental impacts.

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## **2 Background**

2.1 Ubico, the Council's environmental services provider, is a teckal company wholly owned by local authorities including Cheltenham Borough Council and is required to submit an annual business plan for approval by the shareholders. Whilst the Leader of the Council has delegated authority, as shareholder representative, to approve the business plan it is being brought to cabinet for members to note and consider.

2.2 The proposals contained in the Ubico 2024/2025 business plan are built around four key pillars as set out below:

2.3 People – we will have a well- trained, supported and engaged workforce who live our values and are proud to work for Ubico.

2.4 Operations – we will deliver high quality services which remain safe and compliant, seeking continuous improvement in productivity, value and service excellence. We will harness innovation where appropriate and will explore synergies and opportunities for partnership and cross boundary working.

2.5 Climate – we will minimise our environmental impact and support our shareholders to meet their carbon neutral targets, integrating carbon reduction opportunities wherever reasonably possible in both our fleet and non-fleet activities.

2.6 Business development – we will build business development capability which enhances our partnerships and allow for effective identification, analysis and presentation to shareholders of potential new business opportunities. We will explore opportunities that aren't simply about profit, including those that would deliver greater value, help our communities or improve services.

2.7 The business plan 2024/2025 is part of a 5 year vision – to be recognised by our customers and employees as a quality provider of sustainable services for our local communities, delivery best value and reliability - focuses on the following themes: Leveraging synergies and economies of scale; Harnessing opportunities to deliver value back to partners; Using technology to drive operational efficiency; Understanding our communities' needs; Inspiring our workforce to be committed to providing value for money and carbon neutral services.

2.8 Ubico will submit individual business cases to the Council to support potential investment proposals within the 2024/2025 Business Plan to develop areas of the business that have been identified as having potential to deliver greater value for shareholders.

### **3 Reasons for recommendations**

Whilst the Leader of the Council has delegated authority, as shareholder representative, to approve the business plan it is being brought to cabinet for members to note and consider to support greater transparency and involvement in the future strategic direction of Ubico, the Council environmental services partner.

### **4 Alternative options considered**

4.1 The Leader of the Council, as shareholder representative, has delegated authority to approve the Ubico business plan (which forms part of the 5 year vision), and there is no need, other than to support transparency for a report to be considered and noted by cabinet.

### **5 Consultation and feedback**

During the consultation stage, Ubico has presented the business plan at a member briefing session, in addition to consulting with senior officers and relevant cabinet members.

### **6 Key risks**

6.1 Risks are set out in the business plan. Any work streams or projects initiated by Ubico themselves or in partnership with the Council will be subject to appropriate shareholder or member approval following consideration of a business case, PID/project plan and individual risk assessment.

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#### **Report author:**

Karen Watson, Environmental Partnerships Manager, karen.watson@cheltenham.gov.uk

#### **Appendices:**

- i. Risk Assessment - attached
- ii. Climate Change Impact Assessment N/A
- iii. Equality Impact Assessment N/A

#### **Background information:**

#### **Ubico Business Plan 2024/2025**

## Appendix 1: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	<p>If all potential risks that the council may be exposed to associated with taking forward any work stream or projects as a result of the Ubico Business Plan 2024/25 within the 5 year vision are not identified, mitigated and managed as part of the appropriate decision making process there may be a negative impact on the MTFS and the Council's reputation.</p>	Gareth Edmundson	4	2	8	Reduce	<p>All potential risks that the council may be exposed to associated with taking forward any work stream or projects as a result of the Ubico Business Plan 2024/25 within the 5 year vision will be subject to consideration of a full business case and risk assessment for approval as part of the decision making process by either the Ubico Board of Directors or CBC members/CBC lead commissioner in accordance with the Constitution.</p>	Karen Watson	Both annual review and ongoing review

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions

Guidance for officers **(delete all of the below once assessment is completed)**

**Risk reference**

If the risk is already on Clearview put in the reference; if not, leave blank until added to Clearview.

**Risk description**

Identify the event or trigger which may generate some new or increased risk to the council. Significant risks which are already identified are recorded on the Clearview and form part of the Corporate Risk Register. Please use *“If xx happens then xx will be the consequence” (cause and effect)*. For example *“If the council’s business continuity planning does not deliver effective responses to the predicted flu pandemic then council services will be significantly impacted.”*

**Risk owner**

Identifying the person who will take responsibility for the overall risk.

**Impact score**

Use the risk management policy scorecard to evaluate the severity of impact(s); enter the highest score you gave:

1 - Negligible

2 - Minor

3 - Moderate

4 - Major

5 – Critical

### **Likelihood**

Assign a score according to probability, timing or frequency; again enter the highest score you gave:

1 – Rare

2 - Unlikely

3 - Possible

4 - Likely

5 - Almost Certain

### **Raw risk score**

The initial risk score is the impact score multiplied by the likelihood score. This is called the raw risk score, without any controls in place to mitigate the risk.

### **Risk response**

For each risk identified, a risk response should be identified.

Reduce the risk

Accept the risk

Transfer the risk to a third party

Avoid the risk

Prepare a contingent plan

Share the risk

Enhance the risk

Exploit the risk

**Managing the risk: Control/mitigating action**

There are usually things the council can do to reduce either the likelihood or impact of a risky event. Mitigating controls can already be in place, such as budget monitoring. New controls or actions may also be possible, such as agreeing SLA's with partners, or obtaining additional funds.

**Ownership**

Identify the person who will manage/implement the risk controls/actions.

**Deadline**

Put in a deadline for the completion of each control or action





## **2024/25 Business Plan**

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## 1. Business Overview

### 1.1. Introduction













Ubico is a successful and well-respected local authority owned company operating across Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire. We deliver high quality environmental services including waste and recycling collections, grounds maintenance, street cleansing and household recycling centre management. Our purpose is to keep places clean and green for every resident, visitor, town, village and community. Our close relationships with our council shareholders see us working in partnership to deliver the best services possible for our local communities. Now operating across the whole of Gloucestershire and in West Oxfordshire, our growth, size and position places us in a strong position to leverage opportunities for greater efficiencies across a wider base, leading to cost-savings for our councils and their residents and the opportunity to explore new and exciting areas for growth and innovation.

We set out a new five-year vision for the company in 2021, and in 2024/25, the fourth year of this vision, we will build on the successes already achieved. Ubico has seen significant growth since we started delivering services in 2012 and in 2024/25, Ubico will grow again, extending the services we deliver for the Forest of Dean to include waste, recycling and street cleaning services from August 2024 and the mobilisation and delivery of these services will be a key focus in the first half of the year.

We are a significant local employer, particularly in Gloucestershire, where we are 72<sup>nd</sup> in the top 100 employers in the county (based on 2022 turnover). We employ over 800 staff, the backbone of our operations. We will continue to have a strong focus on our people this year and will continue to advance our work on climate initiatives, also working closely with our partners to support them in delivering their ambitious climate targets. Subject to shareholder approval and funding being in place, foundational work on cross-boundary and cross-partner initiatives commenced in prior years will move to delivery phase this year, with the project to centralise fleet ownership and deliver savings to partners in future years being the first on the roadmap. Other partnership-wide opportunities will continue to be explored and presented to shareholders for their consideration, as will any potential external growth opportunities that could deliver greater value to all partners.

### 1.2. Our services

**Our services**

 Refuse collections	 Food waste collections	 Garden waste collections	 Recycling collections	 Trade waste and recycling collections	 Recycling centre management
 Recycling and bulking transfer	 Street cleansing	 Building and public convenience cleaning	 Grounds maintenance	 Fleet management and maintenance	 MOT and taxi testing

### 1.3. Our shareholders

## **1.4. Quality and safety**

Ensuring high standards of health, safety and compliance is a key priority and underpins everything we do. This is demonstrated through our ongoing achievement of industry-recognised accreditations, including ISO 45001 and ISO 14001 for our Health and Safety Management and Environmental Management Systems respectively, which reflects our positive health and safety culture which we are committed to maintaining and improving. Our Safety, Health, Environment and Quality team drive our safety culture and practices, and health and safety performance is monitored at all levels of the business and reviewed by our board of directors at every board meeting. Our internal compliance team supports the company in maintaining high standards through a thorough programme of scrutiny involving both scheduled and risk-based assessments, checking compliance in key areas such as ISO standards, fleet compliance, Environment Agency permitting requirements and the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974. This is complemented by our annual internal audit plan which is drawn up in consultation with the chair of the Risk and Audit Committee and in partnership with our internal auditors.

In 2024/25 we will continue our commitment to seeking continuous improvement in our health and safety performance, with a focus on vehicle accidents and employee wellbeing. Our internal training team support us in delivering flexible, targeted training, including health and safety and compliance-related training which consistently receives high feedback scores for both content and delivery. We will continue to support them to deliver excellent, highly valued and effective training that meets the needs of our business.

## **1.5. Governance and risk management**

### **1.5.1. Governance**

Good corporate governance and the continued professional development of the board of directors and the senior management team is fundamental to the effective operations of the company. In 2024/25 we will continue to ensure appropriate competency standards and qualifying criteria are applied to all directors and follow the spirit of the UK Corporate Governance Code. At all times, the company will remain open, transparent and accountable. The board and its members will operate as a cohesive team, with its priority at all times to further the aims, goals and values of the company, whilst always having risk and risk management at the forefront of discussions.

Ubico's board of directors comprises three executive directors, four non-executive directors from local authority shareholders, and three independently appointed non-executive directors including an independent chair of the board. During 2024/25 two of the current local authority appointed non-executive directors will come to the end of their term and we will work with partners to ensure that the skills and experience of any new appointee will support and enhance the skills and knowledge of the board.

The board is supported by two sub-committees, a Risk and Audit Committee and a Governance and Nominations Committee. These committees support the board in key governance areas, for example, better understanding of business risk, and ensuring the processes to mitigate risk are effective and there is compliance.

As a company, we regularly review our policies, procedures and governance arrangements to ensure they are fit for purpose, represent good practice and meet all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, with key policies routinely scrutinised and signed off by the board of directors.

An internal audit programme is completed annually against a plan which is agreed by the board. The findings and the full audit reports are shared with the board of directors for review and oversight, and progress against action plans arising from the audits is monitored by the Risk and Audit Committee and reported to the board.

External audit of the company's accounts is determined by our shareholders at the Annual General Meeting.

### **1.5.2. Risk management**

Risk management is a core principle of effective corporate governance and is also a key contributor to a sound internal control environment. Ubico continues to seek and adopt recognised best practice in the identification, evaluation and cost-effective control of risks and opportunities to ensure that these are managed at acceptable levels.

Our strategic risk management objectives include board and senior management setting a 'tone from the top' on the level of risk we are prepared to accept - our risk appetite. We maintain a strategic approach to risk management in order to make better informed decisions and use risk management to enable consistent appraisal of options and improved flexibility/agility in delivering change. We are committed to ensuring leadership capacity and skills to ensure understanding of the risks facing the company and how we manage them,

and to integrate risk management into how we run Ubico business/services. Overall, we aim to develop a culture of balanced and informed risk taking throughout Ubico, including strategic, programme, partnership, project and operational risk.

## 1.6. Our values



## 1.7. 2023 Headline Performance

Pillar	Measure	2021 Goal	2021 Achievement	2022 Achievement	2023 Achievement	2026 Goal
People	Vacancy fill rate (advertisement to acceptance)	<1 month	84.08% fill rate Time to hire 2.4 months	85.02% fill rate Time to hire 1.9 months	Time to hire 2.3 months	<1 month
	Annual training budget utilisation	80% of annual training budget	80.08% (Apr to Dec)	100% (21/22)	108% (22/23)	100% of annual training budget
	Conformance to mandatory training to schedule	>90%	New starters >95%	New starters >95%	New starters >95%	>95%
	Staff turnover	<14% attrition	9.62% (20/21)	13.4% (21/22)	15.09%	<10% attrition
Operational Excellence	Service KPIs - Missed bins	<0.05 %	0.073% per 100,000 collections	0.0807% per 100,000 collections	0.071% per 100,000 properties	<0.075 % per 100,000 properties
	Fleet compliance	Fleet Audit Scores >90%	92.37% average	92.76% average	93.2% average	Fleet Audit Scores >95%
	RIDDOR occurrence	<12 per year	6	11	9	<9 per year
	Deliver to set budget	Within 5% set budget	-6.4% (20/21)	-3.1% (21/22)	+1.5% (22/23)	Within 3% set budget
Climate	Reduced carbon emissions	Benchmark in 2021/22	Carbon reduction strategy in place Baseline work in progress (consultant engaged to advise on methodology)	Emissions from activities from fuel consumption: CO <sub>2</sub> e 6,237t	Emissions from activities from fuel consumption April to Dec 23: CO <sub>2</sub> e 4.161t	Sophisticated measures in place across transport, buildings and key activities

## 1.8. Balanced Scorecard

A Balanced Scorecard will be introduced in 2024/25. This is a tool which will use meaningful key performance indicators and key results indicators to measure our performance against our strategy objectives, and will help to steer our future direction in relation to strategic goals and objectives.



## 2. Business Plan 2023/24

### 2.1. Our five-year vision (2021-2026)

*Recognised by our customers and employees as a quality provider of sustainable services for our local communities, delivering best value and reliability*

Through:

- Leveraging synergies and economies of scale
- Harnessing opportunities to deliver value back to our partners
- Using technology to drive operational efficiency
- Understanding our communities' needs
- Inspiring our workforce to be committed to providing value for money and carbon neutral services

### 2.2. Strategic Pillars

Four strategic pillars underpin delivery of our vision and our business plan is built around pillars:

People	Operational Excellence	Climate	Business Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will have a well-trained, supported and engaged workforce who live our values and are proud to work for Ubico.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will deliver high quality services which remain safe and compliant, seeking continuous improvement in productivity, value and service excellence. We will harness innovation where appropriate and will explore synergies and opportunities for partnership and cross boundary working.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will minimise our environmental impact and support our shareholders to meet their carbon neutral targets, integrating carbon reduction opportunities wherever reasonably possible in both our fleet and non-fleet activities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will build business development capability which enhances our partnerships and allows for effective identification, analysis and presentation to shareholders of potential new business opportunities. We will explore opportunities that aren't simply about profit, including those that would deliver greater value, help our communities or improve services.</li></ul>

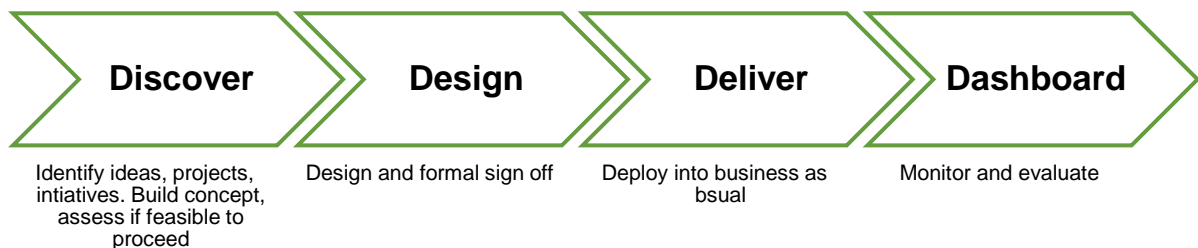
### 2.3. Strategy planning

Ubico's board routinely evaluate the validity of our 5-year vision and plan, and the roadmap for its delivery, ensuring it reflects the needs and desires of our shareholders and maintains the company as a sound proposition, whilst driving value. The process for drawing up the annual business plan incorporates feedback from key stakeholders, including the company's senior management team and the board. Shareholder engagement presentations take place with each shareholder council ahead of presentation of the final written business plan, which incorporates feedback received.

Our current five year strategy takes us to the end of the 2025/26 year, therefore in 2024/25 the board will begin work on the strategy for the next ten years for presentation to shareholders towards the end of the year.

### 2.4. Project lifecycle

We have adopted a project lifecycle with four phases; Discover, Design, Deliver and Dashboard, and these can be seen alongside the activities outlined in this business plan. This aids in identifying the stage of each project or initiative and assists with long term planning and mapping, and resource management.



All projects and programmes are managed through a stage gateway system and strategic projects are managed by the PMO and sponsored by a member of the executive leadership team. The project scope, objectives, goals, budget, and necessary stage documents are closely managed by the senior leadership team, and progress against delivery of strategic projects is routinely monitored by the board.

## 2.5. People Pillar

*We will have a well-trained, supported and engaged workforce who live our values and are proud to work for Ubico.*

Attract and retain

Recognise

Upskill

Satisfaction

### 2.5.1. 2024/25 Activity

In our people pillar we will continue our focus on attraction and retention, supporting and valuing our excellent staff. In order to continue to deliver safe, compliant and relevant services for its shareholders, Ubico must offer a package that is competitive and attractive in the marketplace, both to retain current, loyal employees, as well as to attract new ones when required. Starting last year, and working closely with our recognised trade unions, we began a review of our terms and conditions package to ensure that we are both competitive to retain our staff, and attractive in the employment market when we need to recruit. 2024/25 will see us complete this work and deliver any agreed changes arising from the review, staying within existing budgets unless separate business cases are approved by shareholders.

In 2024/25, Ubico will grow again, welcoming staff delivering waste, recycling and street cleaning services in the Forest of Dean, and proportionally increasing capacity requirements in a number of our support teams which will be recruited to throughout the year. A new role will also be introduced, Head of People, reflecting a specific need for greater leadership capacity in HR within the business.

Our Communications Strategy has a strong focus on our market presence and enhancing our reputation to support attraction and retention of staff. In 2024/25 we will continue to enter sector awards to promote the excellent work of the business and make best use of our social media channels and work with our shareholder communication teams to promote our reputation. We will continue to develop our employee engagement and communication programme, following up on actions identified in our employee engagement surveys to ensure continuous improvement in staff satisfaction.

We will also explore opportunities for new partnerships with external organisations to broaden our recruitment routes for new employees.

A pilot of a new skills assessment process for our supervisors proved very successful last year, and this year we will extend the pilot to include management roles with a view to extending this across all roles in future years. To ensure consistent ongoing management of this programme, a learning management system may prove beneficial. Stand-alone software has previously been considered; however, it was found the renewal of other systems due in the next few years may offer an opportunity to incorporate this functionality, reducing the total number of software programs needed and driving efficiency. This opportunity will be further assessed this year.

**2.5.2. People risks and mitigations**

Risk	Mitigation
Our employment offer is unattractive in the marketplace.	Terms and conditions review underway, any agreed changes to be implemented 2024/25. Monitor market conditions, interest in our vacancies, vacancy fill rate and attrition rate.
HR leadership capacity insufficient to meet growing size of the company.	Head of People role to be recruited in 2024.
Skills assessment process does not drive the desired benefits	Progress and success to be monitored throughout the year. Internal compliance function to be commissioned to undertake an audit during 24/25

## 2.6. Operational Excellence Pillar

*We will deliver high quality services which remain safe and compliant, seeking continuous improvement in productivity, value and service excellence. We will harness innovation where appropriate and will explore synergies and opportunities for partnership and cross boundary working.*

Performance

Quality

### 2.6.1. 2024/25 Activity

The activities identified in our operational excellence pillar support Ubico in providing high quality, safe and compliant services, harnessing continuous improvement and innovation wherever possible.

A large element of the work that we undertake in 2024/25 in the operational excellence pillar will be to support projects which sit in our business development pillar, particularly preparing for, and then delivering, the waste, recycling and street cleaning services for Forest of Dean, and supporting the project to deliver efficiencies for all shareholders through centralising vehicle ownership.

Our programme of digital transformation has seen significant achievements in the last few years, with the connected workforce ('in cab') technology system now in place across the company for waste and recycling, and work commencing in early 2024 to extend the system to include further services such as street cleaning and grounds maintenance. This programme of work will continue throughout this year, including expansion to bring the system into the Forest of Dean waste and recycling services. It will then move into benefits realisation and insight analysis towards the end of the year and into the next, to drive further efficiencies where possible. In addition, we will further digitise our fleet workshop processes, introducing tablets to record and manage workshop tasks, providing an interface with fleet back-office systems, and providing improved efficiency and improved management information.

Software will be needed to support project implementation for the centralised vehicle ownership, including fleet management software, and software which can help deliver unit

costings for each of our services. The discovery stage of the new fleet management software began last year and procurement or re-procurement of the system will take place in 2024/25.

We will continue to support our in-house training team to deliver excellent, highly valued and effective training that meets the needs of our business. In 2024 the team will be extending their services to include in-house Accredited Driver Continuing Professional Competence (Driver CPC) training. This is compulsory training for large goods vehicle drivers and bringing the training in house will allow us to offer content that is specifically relevant to the services we deliver, at a time that best suits our colleagues. We will support them to develop their offering further to support the business in meeting our operational needs.

We will also continue our work developing longer term strategic cost projections for each partner, aligning them across partners where possible. Last year we commenced a pilot with a limited number of partners developing longer term strategic cost projections to enable a better understanding of cost commitments when aligned to residency profiles, service level commitments and climate target aspirations. In 2024/25 we will complete these plans for all our partners, and combine them to create a company long-term strategic financial plan to better support our strategic aims.

2024/25 marks the final year of our current communications strategy, and work will be undertaken to develop a new one to commence the following year.

Our work to measure our progress against our strategic goals and develop sound business intelligence to be able to react and adapt to change has been proceeding well and will continue this year. The data this gives, combined with insights from the connected workforce ('in cab') software, will give us insights into quality and performance that we can use to strengthen the management of the business and inform future business decisions and strategy.

We are committed to fostering positive impacts on society and the environment and will continue to ensure that social responsibility is embedded into our policies, plans and business practices to the benefit our staff, the wider community, and the environment. In 2024/25 we will continue to use procurement opportunities to gain social, economic and environmental benefits for the communities we serve, sourcing local source goods and services wherever economical and practical. We will provide local employment opportunities

with good employment standards and practices and will provide apprenticeship and training opportunities, and support community initiatives and events.

**2.6.2. Operational excellence risks and mitigations**

Risk	Mitigation
Digitisation projects are not delivered to agreed timetable resulting in agreed project budget being insufficient	Partners are key decision makers on programme board Programme structure enables progress monitoring at appropriate levels, and clear and early presentation of risks and any potential costs to the programme board allows for informed decision making at all times
Benefits of digitisation projects are not recognised	Monitor capture and share benefits realised through digitalisation, including financial benefits, future financial pressures mitigated following realisation of efficiencies, and other areas of added value.
Budget pressures	Continue to seek early understanding of areas of cost pressure for partners and work together to determine mitigation plans where necessary. Continue to highlight potential areas of cost pressure as early as possible in both budget setting processes and monthly forecasting reports. Ensure partners are aware that Ubico do not hold contingency funding
Demonstrating value. current and predicted shareholder cost pressures	Monitor capture and share benefits realised through digitalisation, including financial benefits, future financial pressures mitigated following realisation of efficiencies, and other areas of added value direct and indirect. Results of benefits be published evidencing value

### 2.6.3. Procurement Activity 2024/25

In 2024/25 we will complete procurement activity to allow contract award as follows:

Further to procurement activity undertaken in 23/24, contracts will be awarded for the supply of:

- Vehicle maintenance in West Oxfordshire
- Agency staff
- Container refurbishment
- Liquid Fuel - Supply of HVO
- Bulking and haulage - material marketing
- Cleaning and grounds products
- Site fire and security contracts

Award contract extensions or undertake new procurement activity and award a contract for the supply of:

- CPC Driver training
- Fleet management system
- Connected workforce ('in-cab')
- PPE - Footwear and Gloves

Undertake new procurement activity and award a contract for the supply of:

- Absence management service
- Small plant and equipment – hire
- Small plant and equipment – purchase
- Weed control (Cheltenham and Cotswold)
- Tachograph audit services
- Mobile compactors service and maintenance
- Bins/bags and containers
- Interceptor waste
- External audit provider
- Internal audit provider



## 2.7. Climate Pillar

*We will minimise our environmental impact and support our shareholders to meet their carbon neutral targets, integrating carbon reduction opportunities wherever reasonably possible in both our fleet and non-fleet activities.*

Our environmental impact

Supporting partners with their impact

### 2.7.1. 2024/25 Activity

Ubico's carbon strategy recognises two strands of activity:

- Ubico owned carbon reduction activities that are within the gift of the company to deliver.
- Shareholder sponsored activity which requires approval and funding from our shareholders.

In 2024/25, we will continue to develop our work to understand our environmental impacts across the business and design a programme of activity which aims to reduce the main impact areas, including behaviour change programmes to reduce our energy consumption in buildings.

We will continue to work closely with our significant suppliers to encourage them to measure and report on their scope 1 and 2 emissions to support us in achieving more detailed scope 3 emissions data. We will ensure that climate implications are built into our project initiation processes so that climate impact is considered early and mitigating measures and initiatives can be built into project design and implementation wherever possible, and will seek further opportunities for recycling or reuse of our waste streams wherever possible.

We will work closely with our partners to identify and action joint carbon reduction schemes, including playing a key role in the waste sub-group for the Climate Leadership

Gloucestershire project. We will support them in evaluating alternative fuel options for fleet and reviewing infrastructure requirements they may bring. This could include the installation of refuelling and/or recharging infrastructure where necessary, and (as existing capacity in electrical supply within depots is likely to be insufficient as demand grows for battery electric vehicles), supporting partners with assessments of electricity supply requirements for any

battery electric fleet that may be purchased. We will also work closely in partnership with our shareholders on any projects to increase biodiversity and reduce carbon pollution from our joint land management and maintenance activities.

**2.7.2. Climate risks and mitigations**

Risk	Mitigation
Emissions from fleet remain high due to ageing fleet or fuels chosen.	Alternative fuel vehicle options identified on fleet replacement programmes; replacement strategy agreed with partners.
Ubico is not consulted on decisions which could impact carbon emissions, or the success of our carbon reduction initiatives.	Ubico invited to attend key meetings, both with individual partners and in wider partnership forums to ensure our input or impact on our activities is considered.

## 2.8. Business Development Pillar

*We will build business development capability which enhances our partnerships and allows for effective identification, analysis and presentation to shareholders of potential new business opportunities. We will explore opportunities that aren't simply about profit, including those that would deliver greater value, help our communities or improve services.*

Assess and evaluate

Create value

Build

### 2.8.1. 2024/25 Activity

Further to foundational work undertaken in 2023/24 exploring opportunities to further leverage partnership working across boundaries to drive value, subject to shareholder support and funding, we will commence mobilisation of the centralised fleet ownership project in 2024/25. In addition, we will evaluate further cross-boundary opportunities facilitated by owning the fleet and present business cases back to shareholders for their consideration.

A number of the current partner contracts will require renewal in 2027, offering an opportunity to make any adjustments required to reflect new partnership working arrangements. Work will begin in 2024/25 to scope this work and consider necessary elements for review or inclusion, and to design a timeline for commencement of the review process.

Another key piece of work will be the continuation of mobilisation work, leading to the commencement of delivery of the waste, recycling and street cleaning services for Forest of Dean District Council from August.

In addition, we will consider any approaches relating to growth which could create value for the partnership, presenting back business cases as appropriate for shareholder consideration and designing any growth projects which are approved.

We will also continue to work with individual councils on service design and innovation projects where required.

### 2.8.2. Business development risks and mitigations

Risk	Mitigation
Cross boundary or collaborative working proposals are not endorsed.	Proposals are not taken forward
Current company governance arrangements require review to be appropriate for greater level of cross boundary / collaborative working.	Review of contracts planned ahead of some 2027 expiry dates, to include review of overarching governance arrangements
Expectation of delivery beyond that which can be achieved with available capacity.	Assess methods to estimate capacity and resourcing requirements to support strategic programmes.
Leadership capacity to manage an expanding portfolio.	Focus on core environmental services where we are skilled and experienced. Include additional, appropriate, leadership capacity in any business cases for growth.