



WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL: PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

STAGE B SUMMER SPORT SUMMARY

OCTOBER 2019

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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INTRODUCTION

This report identifies the information for the Watford Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) Stage B (Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision) which seeks to identify all supply (including quantity/quality of provision) and demand information identified to date.

It presents non-technical audit scores, on a sport by sport basis, based on inspections of provision, which were undertaken by KKP in August 2019. It also highlights key issues identified by clubs, based on consultation with KKP during August and September 2019.

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Cricket - Non tech site audit scores

The non tech audit scores for cricket squares in Watford identifies that there are four poor quality cricket squares provided across three sites. All these squares are managed and maintained by Veolia. There is one good quality square in the authority located at West Herts Sports Club.

Table 1.1: Cricket non technical audit scoring

Site	Non tech audit score	Pitch size
Cassiobury Park	Poor	12 wickets
King George Playing Fields	Poor	9 wickets
	Poor	9 wickets
	Good	14 wickets
Woodside Playing Field	Standard	17 wickets and 1 x non turf wicket
	Standard	12 wickets
	Poor	12 wickets
Watford Grammar School For Boys (New Field)	Standard	8 wickets and 1 x non turf wicket

Key issues

- ▶ Three clubs state that quality of Council owned cricket pitches are poor quality and potentially dangerous for competitive play.
- ▶ A technical report was undertaken by the IOG in 2017 on the cricket squares located at Woodside Playing Field. Clubs report that little actions have been undertaken to implement the reports recommendations.
- ▶ Ancillary provision located at King George Playing Fields is reportedly closed at 18.30 on weekends, and thus considered to be unusable for cricket clubs when summer matches can finish at around 20:00.
- ▶ West Herts Sports Club aspires to sell a 20 x 30 m plot of land on its site to a private developer in order to utilise the capital receipt to reinvest into its ancillary offering on site. The land is allocated as open space in the Watford Local Plan.
- ▶ Watford Town CC aspires to manage the future ancillary provision at Woodside Playing Fields as part of the sites redevelopment.
- ▶ Old Fullarians CC, Watford Haidery CC and Batchworth CC are clubs which are unresponsive to consultation requests.

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Tennis - Non tech site audit scores

Tennis court provision servicing affiliated tennis clubs in Watford are either good or standard quality. Poor quality courts are not alligned to any tennis club and these courts generally service recreational and informal tennis activity.

Table 1.2: Tennis non technical audit scoring

Site	Non tech audit score	No of courts	Court surface	Floodlit?
Cassiobury Tennis Club	Good	6	Macadam	Yes
West Herts Sports Club	Good	4	Macadam	Yes
		3	Macadam	No
		3	Grass	No
Orchard Park	Poor	3	Macadam	No
Lea Farm Recreation Ground	Poor	2	Macadam	No
Cassiobury Park	Standard	4	Grass	No
	Good	2	Macadam	No

Key issues

- ◀ There are poor tennis quality courts located at North Watford Playing Field and Lea Farm Recreation Ground.
- ◀ Grosvenor Lawn Tennis Club aspires to develop a new clubhouse facility in Cassiobury Park, it has made a formal grant application to Sport England for funding. The club also highlights aspirations to develop additional 'all weather' floodlit courts on site.
- ◀ Cassiobury TC and David Lloyd Bushey TC are clubs which are unresponsive to consultation requests.
- ◀ West Herts TC states it does not want to be part of the PPS study.

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Bowls - Non tech site audit scores

All bowling greens in Watford are identified as being good quality, with all surfaces well maintained.

Table 1.3: Bowling Green non technical audit scoring

Site	Non tech audit score	Green type
Herts Bowling Club	Good	Flat
North Watford Bowls Club	Good	Flat
Garston Bowling Club	Good	Flat
Cassiobury Park	Good	Flat

Key issues

- North Watford Bowls Club highlight that its clubhouse needs a new heating system to enable all round year sport. The Club is looking to secure external grant funding to achieve this.
- North Watford Bowls Club highlight recent issues with vandalism.
- Garston Bowls Club and Watford Bowls Club & Cassiobury Ladies are clubs which are unresponsive to consultation attempts.

Netball

- There are no identified outdoor netball courts in Watford, which are not located at education sites.
- An audit of education sites will be undertaken in late October/early November.
- There are no identified netball leagues or clubs in Watford.
- There is a Back To Netball session (ran by England Netball) at Westfield Community Centre but this is indoors.
- Watford Premier Netball Club are based at Thomas Parmiter School in Three Rivers.

Athletics

- Woodside Athletic Stadium Track is good quality. The site is considered to be a key facility regionally for athletic competition.
- TrackMark¹ is a UK athletics quality assurance scheme for outdoor track & field facilities. Accreditation of a facility can demonstrate to hirers, athletes, clubs etc, that a facility is well managed, well maintained and accessible to all potential users. The Woodside Track currently has a 'working towards' status to accreditation. Of the six units, it has passed two, has two pending accreditation and is working toward another two (see footnote for details of TrackMark units).
- The key site user Watford Harriers Athletics Club is currently unresponsive to consultation attempts.

Croquet

- Croquet lawns in Cassiobury Park are good quality.
- Watford Croquet Club is currently unresponsive to consultation attempts.

¹ <https://www.uka.org.uk/governance/facilities/>

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NEXT STEPS

The Watford Assessment Report for summer sports is due to be submitted to the steering group by Friday 15th November. This report will also include information gathered through the audit of education sites.

The report will focus on reporting the findings of the extensive research, consultation, site assessment, data analysis and GIS mapping work to deliver:

- ◀ An analysis of qualitative site visits.
- ◀ A summary of consultation with a variety of stakeholders, including officers, governing bodies, league secretaries, clubs and schools.
- ◀ Supply and demand analysis using the new methodology in accordance with Sport England's Guidance 'Developing a Playing Pitch Strategy'.

Each sport by sport section will provide a quantitative summary of provision and a map showing the distribution of facilities. It will also provide information about the availability of facilities for the local community, and the details of governing body regional strategic plans (where they exist).

It is important to note that the Assessment Report will not, at this stage, incorporate site-specific recommendations (in relation to meeting deficiencies and dealing with surpluses). Once the facts outlined (including site information, number of teams etc.) have been agreed by the steering group, a strategy and action plan will be developed.

The winter sport Stage B update is due to for submission by Friday 29th November with the subsequent Assessment Report to be delivered for 20th December. A subsequent steering group will be arranged in early January to discuss the Assessment Report and to outline key steps into producing the PPS Strategy & Action Plan for Watford.