



ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

INDOOR & BUILT SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY FINAL REPORT

APRIL 2020

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Rossendale Indoor & Built Facilities Strategy (IBF) for the period 2020 – 2034. Recommendations are drawn from the Needs Assessment Report 2020, researched and prepared between January – March 2020 by specialist sport and leisure consultancy, Knight Kavanagh and Page Ltd (KKP). The Assessment Report and Strategy have been prepared in accordance with Sport England’s ANOG (Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance - for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities) and in consultation with Rossendale Borough Council (RBC), Sport England, national governing bodies of sport (NGBs), local sports clubs and key stakeholders.

1.1 Purpose

The overall aim of the indoor sports strategy is for RBC to make informed decisions to ensure sports and physical activity facilities are located in the right places to ensure that the maximum number of local people take part in regular, meaningful physical activity. RBC has an aspiration and need to consider its facilities planning, particularly in the context of its growing population and the changing economic (post Covid-19 pandemic) and demographic profile (rise in older population) of the area.

The focus of this Strategy is to provide clear direction to all partners so that together they can plan and develop the more modern, efficient and sustainable range of community-based leisure, physical activity and sport facilities that Rossendale residents require.

It provides a concise, robust, comprehensive and up-to-date evidence base in line with the emerging Local Plan and sets out a strategic, action plan-based approach to the enhancement of existing, and creation of new, sporting provision.

This will ensure that residents have the option to be physically active and healthier, and where appropriate develop their physical, sporting, health and wellbeing ambitions within their local community. This report is one component of a wider suite which includes a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy and an Open Spaces assessment.

1.2 National strategic context

Sporting Future: A new strategy for an active nation (December 2015)

The Government’s strategy for sport confirms its recognition and understanding that sport makes a positive difference and states its intention that the sector will deliver five simple but fundamental outcomes: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development.

Sport England: Towards an Active Nation (2016)

In Sport England’s strategic response to the Government it states that it will invest in:

- ◀ Tackling inactivity.
- ◀ Children and young people.
- ◀ Volunteering – a dual benefit.
- ◀ Taking sport and activity into the mass market
- ◀ Supporting sport’s core market.
- ◀ Local delivery.
- ◀ Facilities.

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Increasing participation in sport and physical activity and the health and wellbeing benefits delivered are key drivers for Sport England. It (and partners) place particular emphasis on getting the inactive active and targeting interventions at under-represented groups.

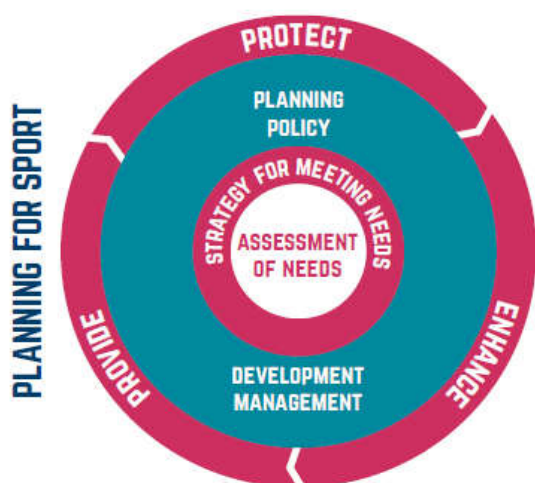
Sport England's planning aim

Sport England's aim in working with the planning system is to 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. This is supported by the planning objectives of Protect, Enhance, Provide:

Table 1.1: Sport England Planning objectives

Protect	Enhance	Provide
To protect the right opportunities in the right places.	To enhance opportunities through better use of existing provision	To provide new opportunities to meet the needs of current and future generations.
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.	The use of existing provision should be optimised, for example, through quality, access and management improvements supported by appropriate ancillary facilities.	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.

Figure 1.1: The Sport England Planning for Sport Model



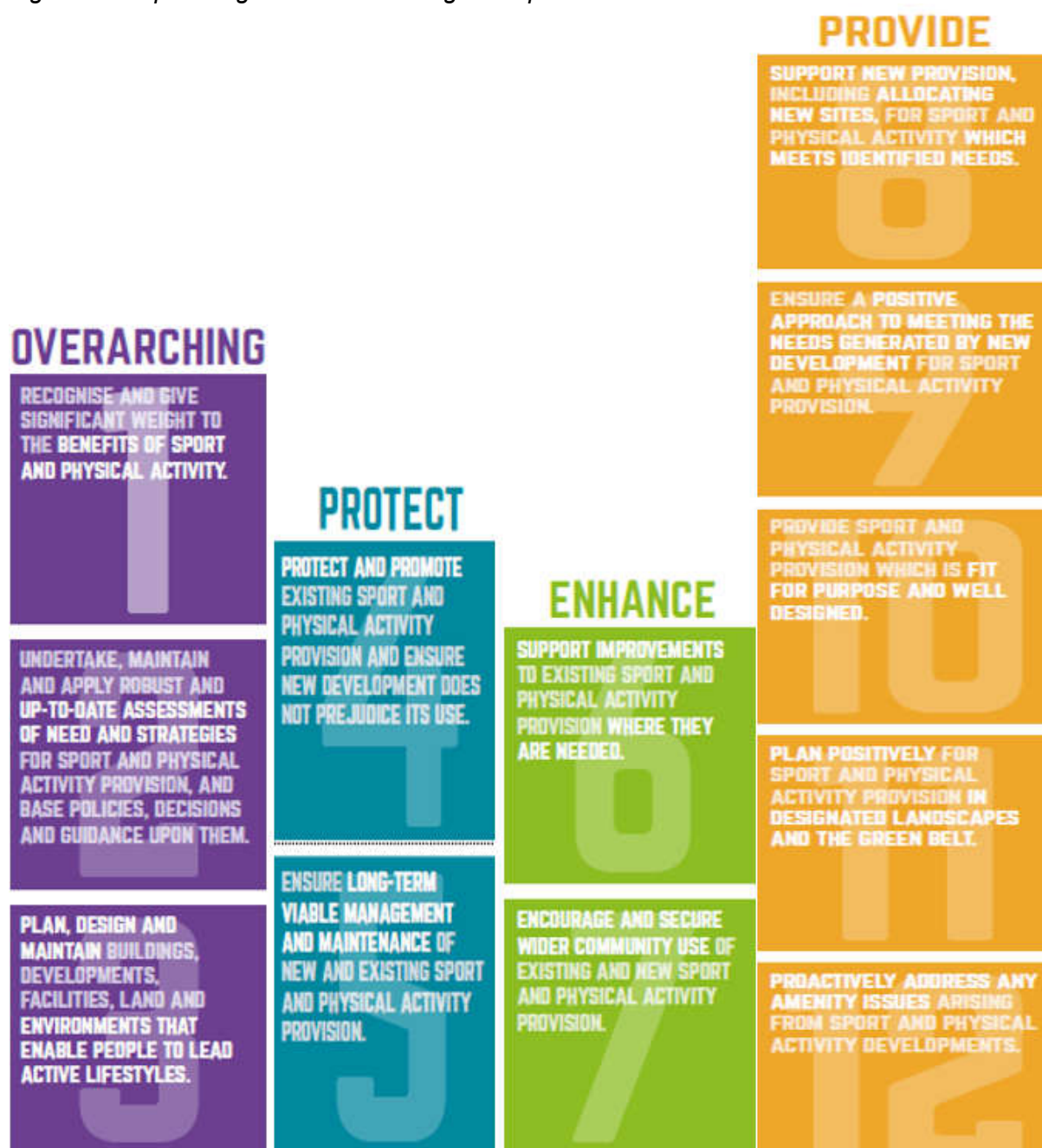
It is supported by 12 planning-for-sport principles. They are geared to helping the planning system contribute to sustainable development by fulfilling the key role the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights that it must play - in creating strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

Applying them will ensure that the planning system plans positively to enable and support healthy lifestyles, delivers community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs, and provides opportunities for all to experience the benefits that taking part in sport and physical activity brings.

These principles are applicable to all areas of the planning system at all levels, for example strategic, local authority and neighbourhood planning levels. As such they are of relevance to all involved in, or looking to engage with, the planning system.

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Figure 1.2: Sport England's 12 Planning Principles



PART 2: LOCAL AREA CONTEXT

2.1 Local strategic context

RBC is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of its residents and understands the relationship between physical activity and health and wellbeing. It underpins this commitment in its Corporate and Local plans. It also recognises the importance of working in partnership with other agencies to deliver opportunity given the geographic and access issues encountered across the borough.

Rossendale Borough Council Corporate Strategy (2017-2021)

This pulls together wider Council plans and strategies to ensure that everyone is working to a common vision and priorities that will benefit individuals and Rossendale as a whole. It underlines a commitment to gain investment and ensure sustainable growth in Rossendale, as well as maintaining high quality, value for money services. The stated vision is: 'Rossendale, a place where people want to live, visit, work and invest'. The key priorities are:

- ◀ A clean and green Rossendale.
- ◀ A connected and successful Rossendale that welcomes sustainable growth.
- ◀ A proud, healthy and vibrant Rossendale.

The Rossendale Council Core Strategy Development Plan (2011-2026)

This was adopted in November 2011 and sets out its policies on development and land use. It commits to ensuring that the Borough is a healthy, vibrant place to live and visit and notes that to achieve this it will need to work with partners to improve the health and wellbeing of its residents, particularly through sport, leisure within its stock of parks and open spaces.

The Emerging Rossendale Local Plan 2019-2034 is currently at Examination (as of April 2020); once adopted, it will replace the 2011 Core Strategy. It contains policies seeking to protect existing playing pitches, open space and sport and recreation facilities, as well as setting out requirements for new open space and sport provision.

The Rossendale 2019 Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) update

This was produced in to support the emerging Local Plan and provides an update to the 2018 IDP. The purpose is to provide an up-to-date evidence base document to demonstrate that the necessary infrastructure is either in place or is planned to support delivery of Local Plan growth proposals, including those related to education and health.

Town Centre, Retail Leisure and Tourism Study 2017

A key purpose of this Study is to provide an assessment of retail, leisure and tourism needs and capacity in the period to 2034, and to review the current performance of Rawtenstall town centre, Bacup and Haslingden district centres plus six further local and neighbourhood centres across the Borough.

The key findings for indoor sports or health and fitness are that the Borough's sports offer is extensive and appropriately distributed in its key settlements (reflecting consumer demand).

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The report determines that from a quantitative and qualitative perspective it can be said that Rossendale is relatively well provided for in terms of indoor health and fitness facilities.

Whilst there does not appear to be a pressing need to allocate additional land for such leisure uses, it is considered that proposals for new indoor sports, health and fitness provision should be considered positively, provided that they are in accordance with the provisions of the development plan and national planning policy.

Economic Development Strategy for Rossendale 2018-2033

This has been prepared to deliver the economic elements of the three corporate priorities and specifically the priority for 'A connected and successful Rossendale that welcomes sustainable growth.' The vision is that, by 2033, the Rossendale economy will show strong and sustainable growth, with improved connectivity as a 'bridge' into Lancashire from Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire. The *Invest in Rossendale* brand will be firmly established within the business community, attracting growth sector businesses to employment sites with access to a skilled labour supply, creating well paid jobs for local residents.

Rossendale will be known in the sub-region and beyond for its Adrenaline Valley offer and cultural experiences. Residents will have improved life chances and achieve greater economic success via provision of enhanced employment, skills and educational opportunities. Rawtenstall, Bacup and Haslingden will be renowned regionally for their unique offers and be strong destinations for shoppers and visitors.

Other key strategy documents include:

- ◀ Lancashire Ecological Network Approach and Analysis (2015).
- ◀ Open Space Review for Rossendale: Revision B - June 2006 (currently being updated).
- ◀ Open Space Strategy for Rossendale: Revision C - July 2008 (currently being updated).
- ◀ Open Space and Play Equipment Contributions SPD (2008)
- ◀ Playing Pitch Strategy 2016 (currently being updated).
- ◀ Rossendale Borough Environmental Network Study (2017)
- ◀ Rossendale Local Football Facility Plan (2019)

Active Lancashire

Active partnerships are locally based strategic organisations which recognise that activity levels are affected by a complex system of influences and no single organisation or programme creates sustainable change at scale. Via adoption of a collaborative whole system approach, they seek to make active lifestyles the social norm for everyone and address levels of inactivity in society. Active Lancashire's three areas of focus are to:

- ◀ Engage in sport – facilitate projects which allow for all Lancashire residents from a variety of backgrounds to have access to sport and physical activities.
- ◀ Improve health – create opportunities for people to take responsibility for their own health, achieve their full potential and via being physically active, enjoy economically active lives.
- ◀ Inspire Communities – encourage and support people to develop and sustain more cohesive and inclusive communities.

Active Lives and Healthy Weight Service for The Lancashire Pathway

The Active Lives and Healthy Weight Service, funded by Lancashire County Council until 31 March 2020, comprised obesity prevention, opportunities for physical activity and weight management, focusing on dietary change and behavioural components. It provided a coordinated information, assessment and support programme to the people of Lancashire who meet the eligibility criteria as outlined in the Active Lives and Healthy Weight Service for Lancashire Pathway Overview. This service is currently being redesigned with funding support from Sport England for a further year (2020-2021) via the Local Delivery Pilot (Together an Active Future).

Provision of leisure facilities in Rossendale

Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT) operates the main sports facilities in the Borough on behalf of RBC, It also collaborates with the Community Leisure Association Whitworth (CLAW) to deliver services in in Whitworth. Its aspiration is to promote an active and healthy community within Rossendale. RLT's stated vision is that everyone deserves *health, fun and happiness* and it is committed to offering this at/via its three main leisure facilities which are:

- ◀ *Adrenaline Centre, Haslingden*, which provides family activities including Grip & Go, Laser Tag, Roller Skating, Gym as well as health and wellbeing facilities such as a ladies' only work out area, indoor and outdoor sports facilities and group exercise studios.
- ◀ *Marl Pits Leisure Centre, Rawtenstall*, which includes a fitness gym, studios, swimming pool and learner/teaching pool as well as outdoor sports facilities.
- ◀ *Pioneer Community Health Studio, Bacup*, which has a fitness gym with an indoor running track, group exercise studio and dedicated spin studio.

RLT also delivers a programme which includes school-based sport and activity provision, as well as delivering 100+ primary school sports competitions and outreach sessions within the community. Reportedly, it attracts more than 500,000 customer visits a year to its facilities plus another 500,000 through its in-school, community outreach and coaching programmes. In addition, it supports CLAW to operate Whitworth Leisure Centre.

Community Leisure Association Whitworth (CLAW)

CLAW's principal objective is provision of sustainable leisure facilities for the community in and around Whitworth. It manages Whitworth Leisure Centre and Whitworth Riverside. Recent financial pressures and ongoing austerity measures led to CLAW trustees approaching RLT to set up a formal partnership, combining the skills and expertise of each organisation, in order to make the sporting offer more financially viable. This partnership commenced in March 2019.

Summary of local context

The key messages emerging from local policies are primarily focused on improving the quality lives of residents through healthy, vibrant, clean, green, sustainable places. Residents' health and wellbeing is influenced positively by increases in physical activity and sport. There is a strong emphasis on healthy active residents using both built facilities and the natural environment. There is a recognition that partnership work is key to delivering wellbeing outcomes and creating a well-connected vibrant place to live. This sits alongside the strong desire to achieve greater economic success via provision of enhanced employment, skills and educational opportunities across the Borough.

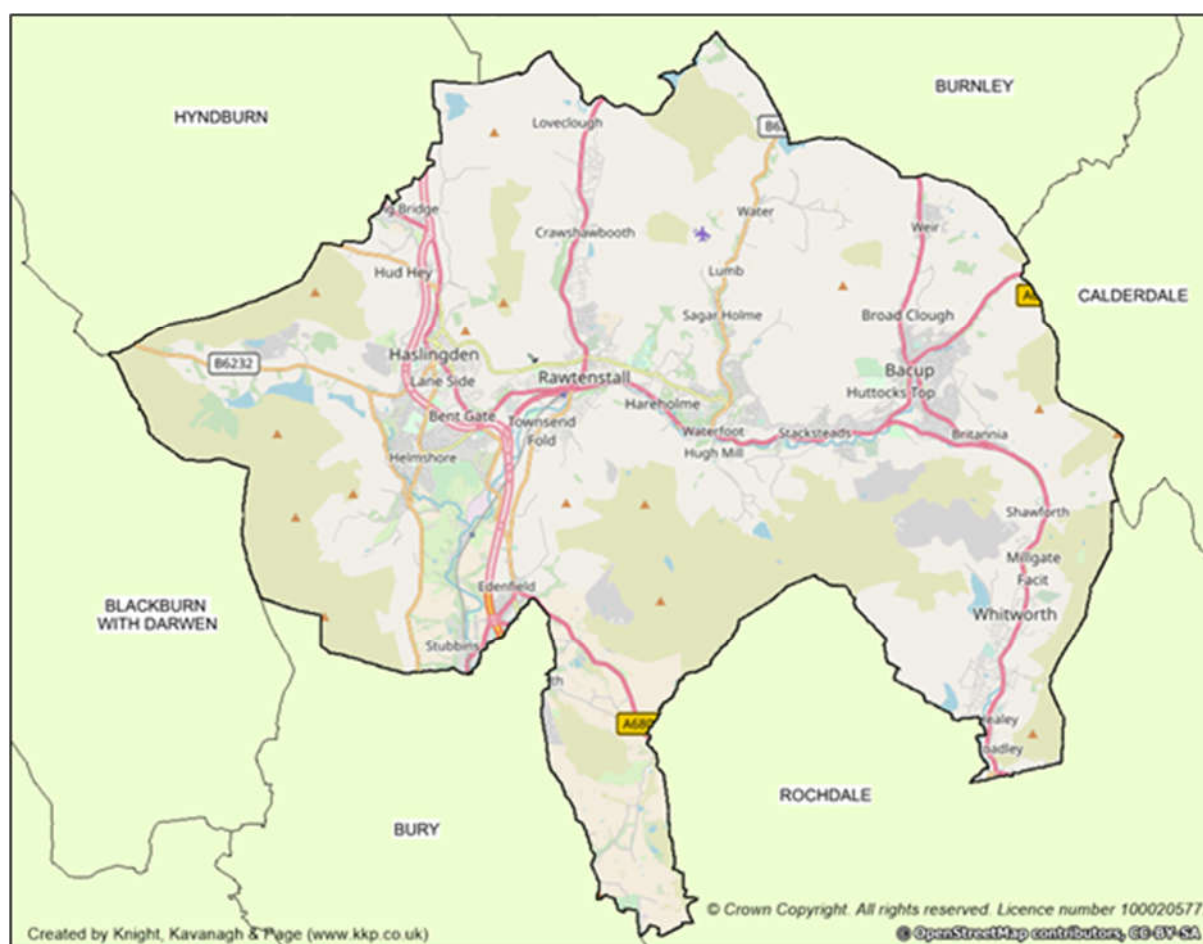
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2.2 About Rossendale

Rossendale is a district with borough status in the county of Lancashire. It incorporates a number of smaller mill towns centred on the valley of the River Irwell combining modest size urban development with rural villages. It is located south of the districts of Burnley and Hyndburn, east of Blackburn with Darwen, west of Calderdale and north of Bury. Its population is distributed across the larger towns of Bacup, Haslingden, Rawtenstall and Whitworth and the smaller settlements of Crawshawbooth, Edenfield, Helmshore, and Waterfoot amongst others.

The borough is linked by the motorway network to Manchester, Burnley and Blackburn via the A56/M65 and M66 motorways as identified below.

Figure 1.1 Map of Rossendale with main roads



Population and distribution (Mid-Year Estimates – ONS 2018). The total population of Rossendale Borough is 70,895 of which 34,934 are males and 35,961 are females. It has a lower proportion of 20-34-year olds (17.0%) than the North West (19.8%). There are, however, more people aged 40-74 (45.5% compared to 42.0% in the North West). The age and make-up of the population is a key factor to consider when developing and implementing the sports and physical activity offer.

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Deprivation (Data source: 2019 indices of deprivation, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government) - relative to other parts of the country Rossendale experiences high levels of deprivation with 43.0% of the Borough's population living within areas covered by the country's three most deprived cohorts (multiple deprivation) compared to a national average of c.30.0%. Conversely, 17.3% live in the three least deprived groupings; compared to a 'norm' of c.30.0%. A similar pattern, to that seen for multiple deprivation, is seen in relation to health. Almost half of Rossendale's population (49.2%) falls within the areas covered by the three most health deprived cohorts, this compares while just 11.3% live in the three least deprived groupings.

Health data (Data sources: ONS births and deaths, NCMP¹ and NOO²) - in keeping with patterns seen alongside higher levels of health deprivation, life expectancy in Rossendale is lower than the national figure; the male rate is currently 77.7 compared to 79.6 for England, and the female equivalent is 82.4 compared to 83.2 nationally.³

Weight and obesity - Obesity is widely recognised to be associated with health problems such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer. At a national level, the resulting NHS costs attributable to overweight and obesity⁴ are projected to reach £9.7 billion by 2050, with wider costs to society estimated to reach £49.9 billion per year. These factors combine to make the prevention of obesity a major public health challenge.

Adult obesity rates in Rossendale are above national and regional averages. Conversely, child rates are lower than the regional and national rates.

	Adult	Child
Rossendale	67.6%	34.7%
North west	63.3%	40%
England	61.3%	38.6%

Active Lives Survey (ALS) 2017/2018 - The latest ALS data is based on 16+ year olds taking part in walking, cycling, fitness, dance and other sporting activity (excluding gardening). It indicates that in Rossendale a higher percentage of the population is inactive than is the case in England and the North West and a similar percentage is active.

Population projections

Strategic planning: Change over 16 years (2018 to 2034⁵)

The most recent ONS projections indicate a rise of 13.2% in Rossendale's population (+2,847) over the 16 years from 2018 to 2034. Over this extended timeframe there are fluctuations across the majority of age groups. Several key points for Rossendale are outlined below:

- ◀ There is a predicted decline in the number of 45-54-year olds by 9.9% (1,067) up to 2034.

¹ National Child Measurement Program

² National Obesity Observatory

³ Office of National Statistics: Life Expectancy at Birth by local areas in the United Kingdom, 2013.

⁴ Adult Weight Data was released in June 2015 for 2012-2014. The child data is for the period 2015-2016

⁵ Office for National Statistics 2016-based population projections (data released May 2018)

- ◀ There is a continuous increase in the numbers of persons aged 65+. This represents an increase of 39.4% (+4,948) between 2018 and 2034. While this age group represented 18.6% of Rossendale's population in 2018 it is projected to be 24.6% of the total by 2034.

2.3: House building

5 Year Housing Land Supply Report (2018/2019-2022/2023).

The Core Strategy is to be replaced by the Emerging Local Plan which sets out a housing requirement of 212 dwellings per annum (dpa) or 3,180 over the 15-year Plan period (2019-2034). This figure reflects the proposed standard methodology available at the time when the draft Plan was prepared. However, as it has not yet been through the Examination, it cannot be confirmed as the housing requirement to be used to assess the five-year supply.

Summary of the demographic profile

The projected rise in the Rossendale population is, in itself, unlikely to lead to major increases in the number of people wishing to take part in sport and physical activity (potential customers of leisure facilities). Housing growth in Rossendale is predicted to be modest in scale and will not significantly increase current demand. The main issue is the ageing population and how it chooses to use its leisure time; this may lead to changes in the levels of demand for different activities, and the times of day at which they wish to access facilities.

The importance of ensuring that the proportion of the population which is currently active remains active and that those that are currently inactive becomes active (sustaining and improving the general health of the local population) will become increasingly relevant. Indoor and built facilities, and programmes of activity therein, need to change to be capable of adapting to any changing demands and needs associated with any demographic change.

2.4 Planning policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

The National Planning Policy Framework (Feb 2019) (NPPF) sets out the planning policies for England. It details how these are expected to be applied to the planning system and provides a framework to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (paragraphs 7-9). It establishes that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

Paragraph 96 of the NPPF establishes that access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for health and well-being. It states that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative and qualitative deficiencies and surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite paragraph 97 of the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation sites, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- ◀ An assessment has been undertaken, which has clearly shown the site to be surplus to requirements; or
- ◀ The loss resulting from the proposed development 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 needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

It is, essential that RBC, as the local planning authority, retains oversight of all potential facility developments. This includes policies and potential supplementary planning documents setting out the approach to securing sport and recreational facilities through new housing development. It also includes the Council's approach to ensuring that community use of new facilities is agreed at the outset to ensure that they contribute to its wider sport and physical activity aspirations and those of its partners. The approach taken to this is pivotal to strategy delivery over coming years.

National Planning Practice Guidance (MHCLG)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and adds further context to the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF). It is intended that the two documents should be read together.

When considering how local planning authorities and developers assess the needs for sports and recreation facilities the guidance states that authorities and developers may refer to Sport England guidance.

PART 3: NEEDS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

3.1 General findings

Rossendale recognises the importance of its leisure facility stock to physical activity, health and wellbeing and is committed to its retention via the presumption (in Planning Policy) against any net loss of active sport and leisure facilities in the Borough. There is also recognition that the Council will be operating within a climate of financial constraints (probably increasingly so, following the Covid-19 lockdown).

As noted above, there is a modest projected increase in the size of the population in the Borough of 13.2% by 2034. Further, there is a predicted continuous rise in the number of persons aged 65+. This group will represent one quarter (24.6%) of the population by 2034. The key issue is, therefore, likely to be how an increasingly ageing population chooses to use its leisure time, which may lead to changes in demand for different activities.

The importance of ensuring that the proportion of the population which is currently active remains so and that more of the currently inactive become active (sustaining and improving the general health of the local population) will become increasingly relevant. Indoor and built facilities, and programmes of activity therein, need to be capable of adapting to changing demand and need associated with demographic change.

The principal opportunity/challenge for Rossendale Borough is to ensure that its stock of facilities continues to be fit for the future and viable. There is a need to balance the requirements of the core market of people already taking part in sport and physical activity, whilst ensuring that the growth of existing or new activities meets the needs of a more diverse and ageing population. It is also important to ensure that residents in the more rural areas and the east of the Borough are able to access sports facilities.

The facility stock is generally found to be in need of investment and is not meeting the current demands of residents. There is a need for a review of water space and sports hall access and quality across the Borough.

3.2: What do we know about facilities and activities in Rossendale

Village and community halls

Rossendale has 20 village halls, community centres and church halls which offer physical activity to the community. They are mainly located in settlements of higher population density with a few in more rural areas. Large areas in the south and the west of the borough do not have access to a village/community hall facility.

Activities tend to reflect local community needs. Research undertaken for the audit suggests that demand for village hall and community centre space is high. This highlights their importance in ensuring that a good range of local sport and physical activity is provided for residents. They also play an important role ensuring that people/older people in more rural areas have access to facilities and can contribute to getting the inactive active or retaining those already involved. Further analysis is required to gauge whether, and the extent to which, activities in these facilities can further meet the needs of what is an ageing local population.

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Sports halls

In total, there are 20 sports halls providing 35 badminton courts across Rossendale. This, however, reduces to seven which have 3+ badminton courts. These are the main focus of this report. Those with two or fewer courts are limited as to the range and scale of recreational and sporting activity that larger sports halls can enable. Bacup, in the east of the Borough, is the only main population settlement not presently serviced by a 3+ court sports hall facility.

The seven sports halls are all 4-court halls. Three are in above average condition (Adrenaline Centre, All Saints Catholic High School and Whitworth Community High School), two are below average (Alder Grange School and Haslingden High School) one is poor quality (Valley Leadership Academy). One (Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School) was not assessed.

Six of the seven are located at schools or academies. The Adrenaline Centre is the exception and provides daytime availability with no restrictions on community use. It is the only sports hall in the Borough where casual use is permitted, however, it is full to capacity, so this is very limited. Community availability on education sites varies significantly on a site by site basis. Consultation suggests that increasing community availability is unlikely on these sites, due to them being comfortable with existing arrangements and a lack of financial resources to support additional use.

Badminton, basketball and netball are popular sports in Rossendale, consultation with NGBs and clubs indicates that there is potential for each of them to grow and expand. However, they are all restricted by the lack of availability of appropriate facilities – at appropriate times.

Swimming pools

There are four swimming pools at two sites in Rossendale. These include Marl Pits, located centrally and Whitworth in the east of the authority. There is no provision in Bacup, or Haslingden. Both sites have a 4-lane 25m main swimming pool and a learner/teaching pool. They were built in the early 1970s and are nearing the end of their effective life. They are less energy and cost-efficient than new facilities and incur high maintenance costs.

Both pool venues are of below average quality and the standard of the changing rooms at Whitworth Leisure Centre is commensurate with that of the pool. Changing facilities at Marl Pits Leisure Centre are in above average condition. The key finding is that borough residents have access to below average swimming facilities. The learner pool at Marl Pits is a freeform pool and is, thus, not the most effective shape for teaching lessons; this has an impact upon the number of lessons delivered and the potential to increase revenue generation.

Investment is planned in the plant room at Whitworth Leisure Centre, following recent failures in equipment. This will enable the facility to remain operational, however, it will not improve the general quality or appearance of the facility.

Consultation indicates the swimming pools are full to capacity and current demand cannot be met within the existing facilities.

Sport England's Facilities Planning Model (FPM) identifies an undersupply of water space in Rossendale, which is equivalent to a 6 lane 25m pool. A larger swimming pool and rectangular teaching pool is required to enable a full programme to be delivered. Altering current programmes will not accommodate current and projected demand for swimming. This situation

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will worsen slightly based upon projected population increases. This is discussed in further detail in section 4.1.

Health and fitness suites

There are 13 health and fitness suites in Rossendale with 494 stations. 12 gyms are available to the community (one is a private use gym at Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School). They are distributed across the borough in its more densely populated areas. Seven of these facilities are rated above average in quality, four below average and one (Metcon Fitness) is unassessed.

There is strong competition from health and fitness venues in neighbouring authorities; 16 are located within two miles of the Authority. Seven of these have 100+ stations and are considered likely to be attracting use from further afield including, in particular, from the south of the borough.

Membership is required to access health and fitness facilities across the whole borough. RLT suggests that it offers pay and play availability at its four facilities across Rossendale but, in reality, this method of availability is neither promoted nor advertised and is available via an online provider only.

There are plans to invest in the changing facilities fitness gym at Whitworth Leisure Centre. There are also aspirations to extend the fitness room at Marl Pits. It currently has double the number of active members of the Adrenaline Centre with half the number of stations.

Consultation suggests that specific facilities, Marl Pitts in particular, are very busy at specific peak times. So, whilst modelling suggests that sufficient facilities are available in Rossendale to meet overall demand, there is an identified need to expand this local offer.

The audit found 13 studios, 11 of which were subject to a non-technical assessment. Dance studios, generally, are in above average condition. Approximately half are available via pay and play.

Ski facilities

Rossendale Ski Centre is local authority owned and commercially operated. It has three floodlit slopes, an advanced (180m slope) an intermediate slope (75m) and a nursery slope (55m). There is also a freestyle slope and fun park. In 2016, significant investment (c. £640,000) was made in it. Beginner and intermediate slopes were re-laid and improved. In 2018 phase two investment was made into indoor facilities with a new lift, changing areas, café and function space and improving accessibility to the facility generally.

The centre is home to four ski clubs plus its own ski club with over 100 participants every week alongside a linked ladies social club. Management is keen to further enhance the facility and develop its summer offer to ensure financial viability.

Gymnastics

There is no dedicated gymnastics venue in Rossendale, however, Fearn's Trampoline Club is located at The Valley Leadership Academy. There is also no recreational/leisure centre

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provision in the borough. The whole of Rossendale is within 20 minutes' drive time of a dedicated gymnastics facility in a neighbouring authority. This is not to suggest that Rossendale could not have such a facility as there appears to be a 'gymnastics gap' in the centre of the authority which could present a potential opportunity.

British Gymnastics and consultation reports there is a demand for gymnastics provision in the area, however, in addition to determining a suitable venue, there will be a need to develop a coaching and volunteer workforce to develop the sport leading to increased participation.

Indoor bowls

There is no indoor bowls centre in Rossendale. The audit did not find sufficient latent demand for an indoor bowls facility. Other formats of the game are being played at the Adrenaline Centre sports hall and in small community/village halls. The projected increase in population and housebuilding is also unlikely to generate sufficient demand for a purpose-built facility.

Squash courts

There are two squash courts in Rossendale, located at the Adrenaline Centre. They are in above average condition and are available on a pay and play basis. The north and east of the authority is not serviced by a squash court. Haslingden Squash Club, based at the Adrenaline Centre, is a thriving club and is increasing its membership. It is suggested that the facilities are full to capacity at various times. It has a strong volunteer and coach workforce and reports demand for additional courts.

Martial arts

Martial arts is relatively well catered for in Rossendale with sessions taking place throughout the borough (including the more rural areas) in a range of facilities settings. A wide range of martial arts clubs operate in the borough delivering a range of disciplines. The majority hire facilities. The quality of facilities varies. Clubs with dedicated facilities report investment being required to improve quality (e.g. for those located in converted mills). All clubs responding to consultation indicate having capacity to accommodate an increase in demand.

Sailing and watersports

There is one sailing centre, Rossendale Valley Sailing Centre and one Waterski centre, Whitworth Waterski Academy. Both the sailing and waterski centres offer development and learning programmes which are progressive. Both facilities are well maintained and meet the needs of their users.

Summary and strategic recommendations

The Borough's population is distributed across the larger towns of Bacup, Haslingden, Rawtenstall and Whitworth and the smaller settlements of Crawshawbooth, Edenfield, Helmshore and Waterfoot amongst others. None of the key settlements is sufficiently large enough or central enough to be a suitable location to develop leisure facilities designed to service the whole borough.

As a consequence, there is a need to determine where facilities will make the greatest contribution to most residents. The Borough is short of water space equating to a 6 lane 25m pool and a 4-court sports hall (even if schools open up for additional community use).

PART 4: VISION AND STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS ACTION PLAN

This is Rossendale's vision for sport and leisure provision in the area for the period 2020 - 2034. It builds upon the conclusions identified in the Built Facilities Needs Assessment Report. There is a clear requirement for investment in indoor and built sports facilities in Rossendale to ensure that they are fit for purpose for the 21st Century (e.g. modern, welcoming, clean, attractive, flexible, enable a wide programme offer, ability to offer a good quality learn to swim programme and cost-effective to operate). This should lead to increased participation and a more active borough. Rossendale's vision is:

"To create and maintain high quality, sustainable leisure and sports facilities which meet community need, increase participation, help tackle health and age issues and provide accessible, inclusive activities for Rossendale residents as part of an active lifestyle."

4.1 General strategic objectives

There is an overarching requirement for RBC to determine its long-term approach to the replacement of facilities. The majority are currently operating beyond their realistic life expectancy, are inefficient (albeit well used and in high demand) and require investment to remain operational. Despite the best efforts of RLT (and CLAW) the Authority is faced with the operational challenges that appertain to the management and programming of older facilities.

A clear direction of travel for the future with careful planning could result in modern facilities designed to meet the expectations of 21st century users as well as being more efficient and environmentally friendly to operate. Given developments in modern leisure facilities it is highly likely that new facilities will be more viable and sustainable. Key strategic determinants are thus identified as:

Short term: Whitworth Leisure Centre has recently received investment but is beyond its economic life cycle. There is a need to replace the pool with something of equivalent size in the east of the Borough. There is a requirement to undertake a feasibility study to consider the best location for this and to consider adding other sporting provision, such as a sports hall, health and fitness facilities and potentially squash courts. Key locations to consider are Whitworth or Bacup. In the first instance, there is a need to understand if land is available in Bacup; if so, this option should be considered. If, however, there are no suitable sites, Whitworth should undergo significant refurbishment with expansion of the fitness offer considered.

Medium term: The swimming pool at Marl Pits is in better condition than Whitworth Leisure Centre so has a longer life expectancy. The two options to be considered are whether to extend/increase the scale of swimming facilities at Marl Pits (as it is a popular destination with a sports village feel) or to develop a new swimming facility in Haslingden and leave Marl Pits the same size. Concurrent consideration of the ancillary facilities needed in Haslingden will also be needed.

Longer term: The Adrenaline Centre, located in Haslingden, has been adapted and refurbished over the years. It offers a range of indoor and outdoor sport and leisure amenities. It is, however, full to capacity and requires significant investment due to the fact that it is in below average condition. It is unable to meet the demands of borough residents which is inhibiting the growth of participation in sport and physical activity.

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Depending upon the outcomes of the short and medium actions identified above, consideration should be given to developing an additional sports hall at a venue which could also incorporate a swimming pool (depending upon the findings of the proposed feasibility studies).

In addition to the above, RBC needs to:

- ◀ Increase community availability of sports hall provision in the current educational stock.
- ◀ Address the under-provision of introductory/recreational gymnastics opportunity.
- ◀ Ensure that settlement sports facilities/community and village halls are, and remain, accessible to those living in rural communities and older people.
- ◀ Consider how greater impact can be made on the health and wellbeing of those living in areas of higher deprivation via better collection and analysis of user/membership insight to ascertain who is/is not using facilities. (Currently available evidence would suggest that residents of Rossendale's more deprived areas are substantively under-represented in the context of usage of Borough sport/leisure facilities).
- ◀ In addressing the above, take full account of the need to make sport and leisure facilities and opportunity available during the day to meet the needs of the growing over 65 population. This may need to be accompanied by new and redesigned activity programmes to drive and cater for increases in participation among older people.
- ◀ Gear its planning processes to support other developments (via planning, developer contributions and officer expertise) to improve sport and physical activity facility provision in the wider community.
- ◀ Address how programming and pricing of facilities (in particular, the ability to access venues on a casual basis) can be made more available *per se* and with a particular focus on those living in areas of higher deprivation and the Borough's more rural areas.
- ◀ Look at how it and its key providers can work effectively together to drive increases in participation (challenging themselves to innovate) via the delivery of high quality, varied activity programmes.

4.2 Specific strategic objectives

4.2.1 Commission a feasibility study to assess the potential to replace Whitworth Leisure Centre with a new leisure and wellness centre in the East of the Borough.

Consider the best location (taking into account land availability) at which to invest in a modern fit for purpose environmentally and economically viable venue, with integrated services providing economies of scale and enabling cross fertilisation of activities and events - to service the needs of the local community. Taking account of the lack of water and sports hall space in the east of the Authority and overall, this study should inform the required facility mix. Based on the audit findings to date it should include/consider the following mix of facilities:

- ◀ (Minimum) 4 lane 25m swimming pool.
- ◀ Teaching /learner pool.
- ◀ 4 court sports hall.
- ◀ Fitness gym (c.45 stations).
- ◀ Studio(s).
- ◀ Squash courts.
- ◀ Wet and dry changing provision.
- ◀ Walking, running and cycling routes emanating from the centre.
- ◀ Car parking plus appropriate cycle parking provision.
- ◀ Changing place and disability access provision.

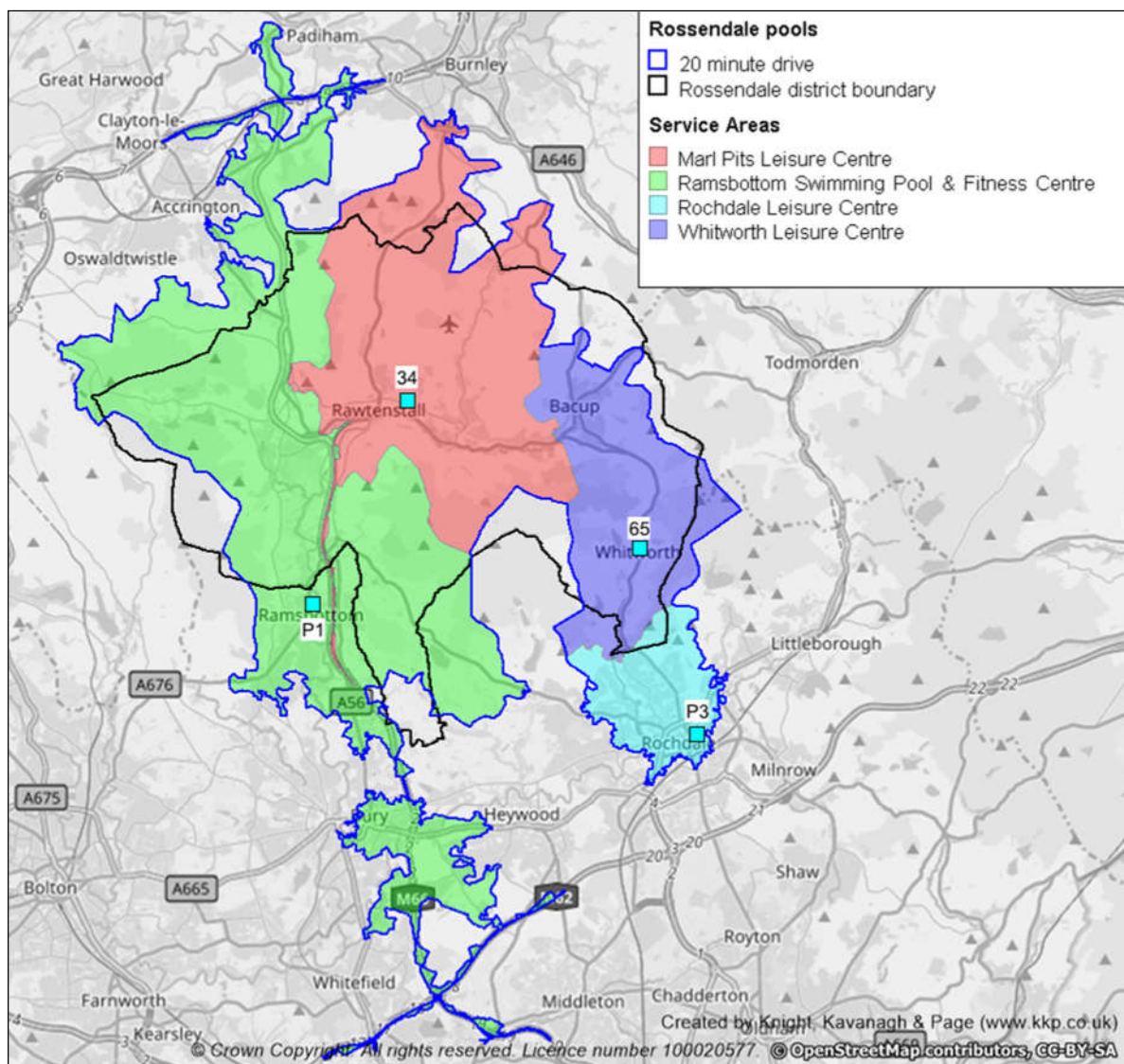
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Service area mapping

One of many tools available, service area mapping is a starting point from which further detailed data and analysis is required. It shows the likely place people will travel to based on the current road network.

Within the 20-minute drive time (industry standard) of Whitworth Leisure Centre and Marl Pits i.e. the current supply of water in Rossendale, there are two swimming pools: Ramsbottom Swimming and Fitness Centre (P1) and Rochdale Leisure Centre (P3). Self-evidently the catchment areas of all sites shown overlap. Figure 4.1 identifies the facility to which people are more likely to travel, taking account of road networks and all other things being equal.

Figure 4.1: Pay & play pools within 20 minutes' drive time pools in Rossendale



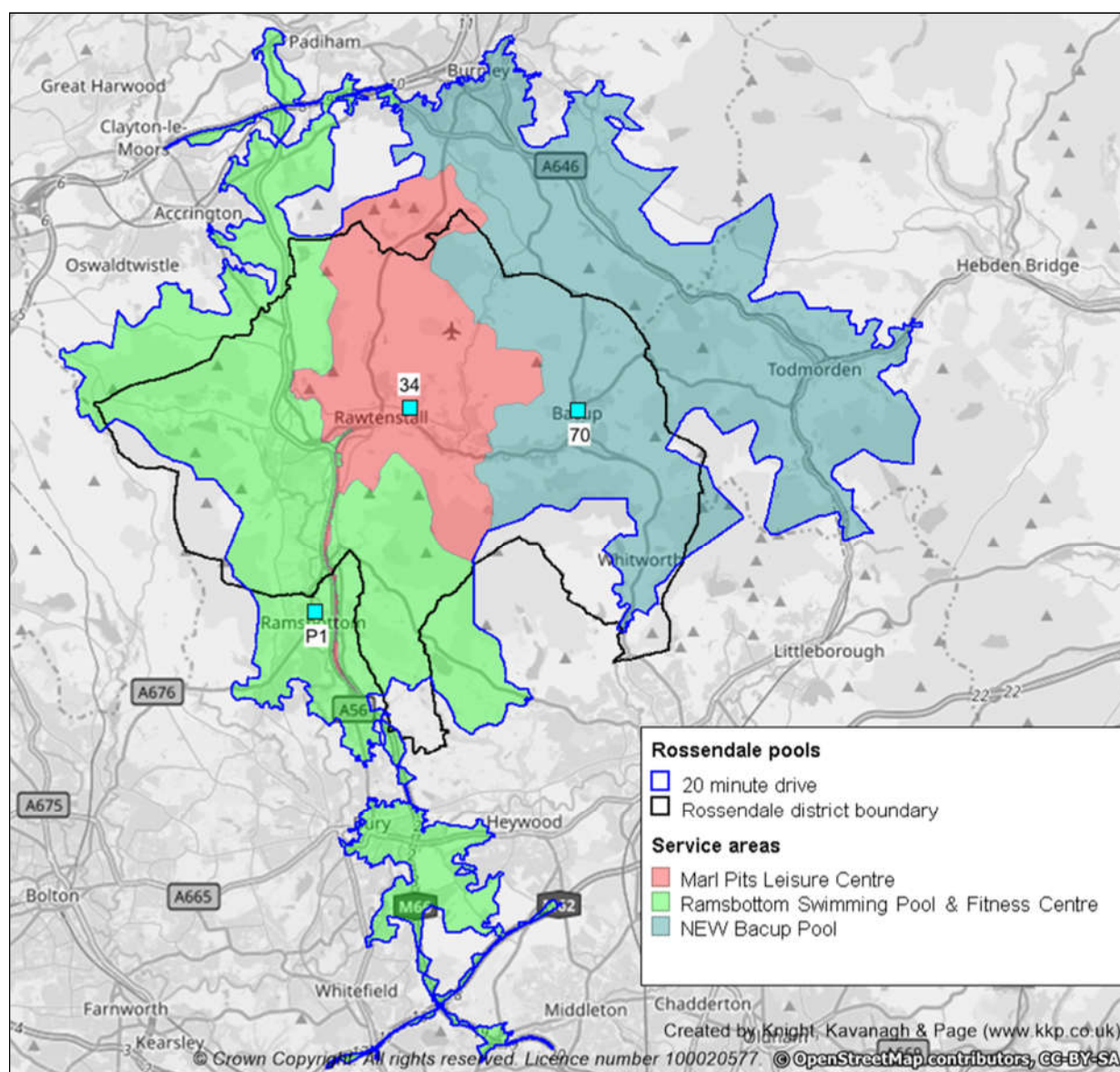
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Table 4.1: Pay & play pools within 20 minutes' drive time of swimming pools in Rosendale

Map ID	Site	Population (MYE 2018)
34	Marl Pits Leisure Centre	29,114
65	Whitworth Leisure Centre	16,358
P1	Ramsbottom Swimming Pool & Fitness Centre	52,163
P3	Rochdale Leisure Centre	36,115

Using the same 20 minutes' drive time catchment mapping and assuming that Whitworth Leisure Centre closes and a new pool is located in Bacup, Figure 4.2 and Table 4.2 assess where people will travel to, using the same criteria as used above i.e. key travel routes.

Figure 4.2: Pay & play pools within 20 minutes' drive time of swimming pools in Rosendale



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Table 4.2 Service area map with a pool in Bacup as opposed to Whitworth

Map ID	Site	MYE 2018 population
34	Marl Pits Leisure Centre	23,777
P1	Ramsbottom Swimming Pool & Fitness Centre	52,241
70	NEW Bacup Pool	47,592

This modelling would suggest that providing a new swimming pool in Bacup (presuming the closure of Whitworth) will lead to reduction in the number of people identifying Marl Pits as their primary swimming pool. Given that it is operating near capacity, this would be of value. The key difference between locating in Whitworth and Bacup is that, at 47,592, the number of people within 20 minutes' drive is significantly higher in Bacup than Whitworth which has 16,358 people within its service area. This is a generalised overview and provides the starting point from which further, more detailed analysis is required. This confirms that a feasibility which addresses the issue of location is warranted.

4.2.2 Commission a study to assess the feasibility of either extending/refurbishing existing swimming provision at Marl Pits Leisure Centre or locating a new swimming pool at the Adrenaline Centre.

Assuming that the replacement for Whitworth Swimming Pool (whether located in Whitworth or Bacup), is a like for like development, there will still be an undersupply of water-space in the Authority equivalent to a 6-lane swimming pool. There is, thus, still a need to consider and assess the demand to create an additional swimming pool in Haslingden relative to the benefits of extending swimming provision and programmes at Marl Pits. Any investigation will need to determine the impact that a new facility in Haslingden will have on Marl Pits (i.e., the potential displacement of swimmers) which is likely to affect its overall performance.

Service area mapping

This service area mapping considers the potential markets for developing a new facility in Haslingden or extending the facility at Marl Pits. Again, 20-minutes' drive time catchments are applied (industry standard) and facilities within this catchment are taken into account.

The inclusion of a swimming pool at Haslingden increases the 20 minutes' drive time catchment population coverage significantly as seen in Table 3 below and Figure 4.3 overleaf.

Table 4.3 Service area projections which includes a swimming facility in Haslingden

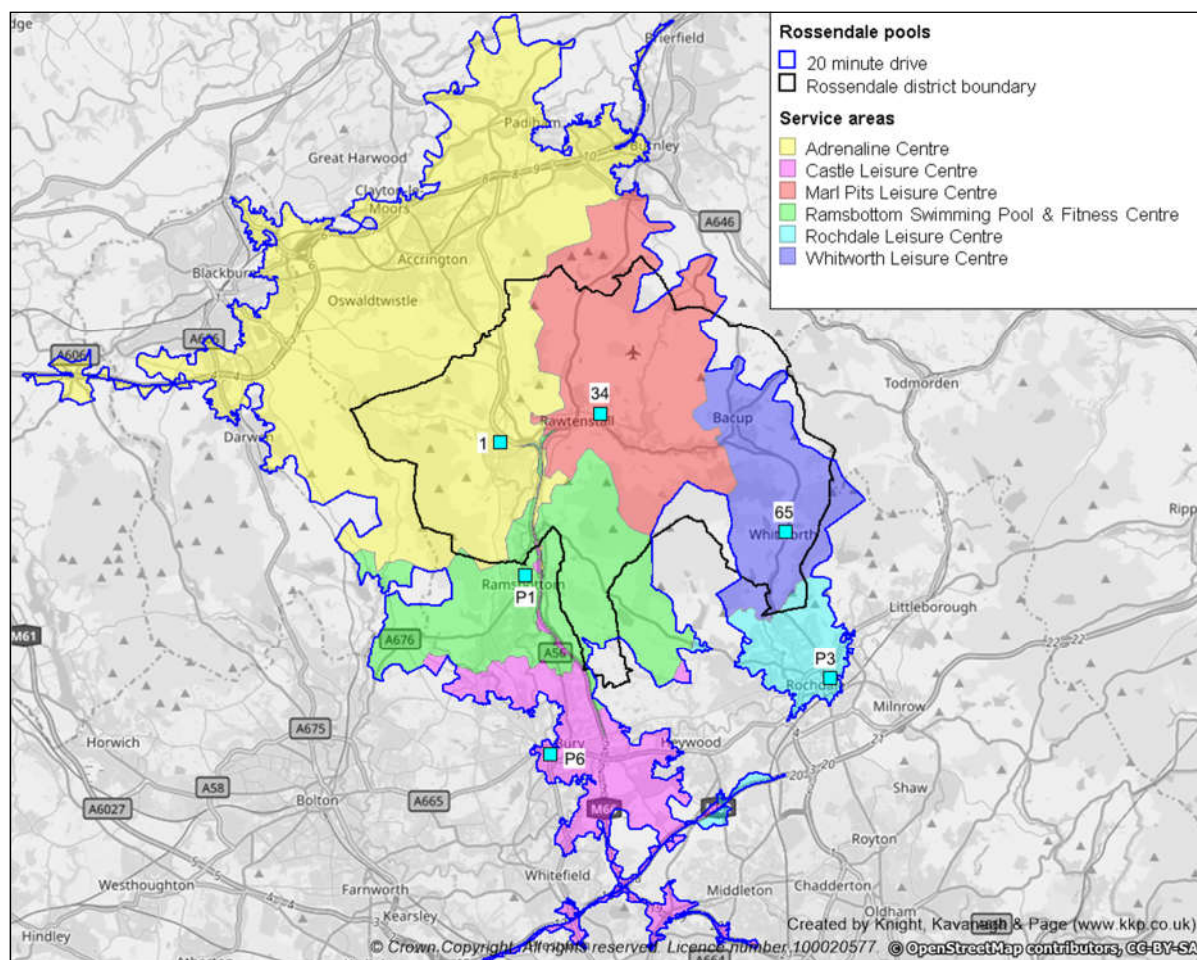
Map ID	Site	Population (MYE 2018)
1	Adrenaline Centre	130,912
34	Marl Pits Leisure Centre	26,369
65	Whitworth Leisure Centre	16,360
P1	Ramsbottom Swimming Pool & Fitness Centre	20,699
P3	Rochdale Leisure Centre	36,443
P6	Castle Leisure Centre	40,317

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The service area for a swimming pool in Haslingden will extend beyond the local authority boundary and could possibly draw in swimmers from near Blackburn. There would be a small impact on Marl Pits reducing its service area from c. 29,000 to c.26,300 which, as mentioned above might simply ease some of the programming pressures it faces.

Based on the initial high-level analysis (further detailed analysis is required), the data suggests the better option will be to have an additional swimming pool in Haslingden rather than extend the swimming pool at Marl Pits. It should be noted however, that more detailed analysis will be required.

Figure 4.2: Service area projections which includes a swimming facility in Haslingden



It is, therefore, recommended that a full feasibility is completed on this option. This will need to take account of the future of the Adrenaline Centre (built in 1974). Although it has been adapted and refurbished over the years, it is inefficient, requires significant investment, restricting the development of certain sports to grow and limiting opportunity for casual participation. The feasibility study should take account of the existing range of amenities offered and include a new (additional) sports hall. The needs assessment findings suggest the following mix of facilities should be considered as a starting point for the study:

- ◀ 4 lane 25m swimming pool.
- ◀ Teaching /learner pool.

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- ◀ 4 court sports hall (possibly an air hall/frame and fabric facility).
- ◀ Fitness gym (c.100 stations).
- ◀ 3 studios (one permanent matted for combat sports and two health and fitness).
- ◀ Squash courts (consider increase from 2 to 4 – also contingent on Bacup/Whitworth)
- ◀ Clip n Climb
- ◀ Café area and party rooms
- ◀ Laser Tag
- ◀ Wet and dry changing provision.
- ◀ Walking, running and cycling routes emanating from the centre.
- ◀ Car parking plus appropriate cycle parking provision.
- ◀ Changing place and disability access provision.

Feasibility and master planning

It is recognised that in order to deliver any of the above developments the Council will need to undertake a borough master planning exercise (a borough-wide feasibility) to ensure that all its strategic objectives are met. RBC and partners will not start with a blank canvas and this needs to be taken into account within each development. Each will need to encompass a review of:

- ◀ Changing local and strategic need.
- ◀ Current community infrastructure within the area.
- ◀ Anticipated changes in demographics and population growth.
- ◀ Opportunity and site suitability for co-location.
- ◀ The ability to link indoor and outdoor active places.
- ◀ The capital cost of developments.
- ◀ The revenue implications of the proposed infrastructure.
- ◀ RBC's financial challenges: in effect utilising capital investment to reduce/eliminate revenue subsidy and build in capacity to cater for the hard to reach and inactive.
- ◀ The potential to secure external funding.
- ◀ The affordability and business case for the development.

Both require extensive review and input from a range of partners in order to determine the most appropriate solution. However, the key driver for the Strategy is to ensure that the Council does not just consider re-provision of leisure facilities in isolation and the potential to include a wider range of community amenities is considered. Paramount are links between physical activity and health and assessing how these two key community services could potentially co-locate to improve services and interventions for priority groups within the community.

4.2.3 Work with selected schools to increase the availability of their indoor sports facilities for community sport and physical activity use.

Leisure management, RLT, Lancashire County Council and Active Lancashire (with other partners) should continue to work in partnership to maintain (and in a limited number of cases) increase the availability and community use of key schools which do not provide as much access to their sports facilities as could be made available.

The key institutions identified in this context include All Saints Catholic High School which currently offers some community use; and Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School which presently does not appear to offer any community use of its indoor sports facilities.

4.2.4 Increase participation in sport and physical activity from people living in areas of higher deprivation

RBC working closely with RLT should review its discretionary pricing system specifically considering the needs of and how to better target and cater for harder to reach groups – enabling their access to all available provision options; instructed classes (including swimming lessons, in particular). There is also a need to improve the availability of pay and play access to all venues in particular health and fitness facilities. Some form of budgetary allocation is needed to underpin/encourage/require the Council and RLT to adopt a wider focus on health inequalities and both broaden and increase levels of use made of Borough public facilities.

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4.3 Indoor built facilities action plan

Taking into account the needs assessments related to specific facilities and sports, the demographic make-up, current vision of the Council and associated organisations, plus Sport England’s Planning for Sport guidance which encourages Protection, Enhancement and Provision of new facilities, RBC should take account of the following strategic recommendations. Actions relative to each of Rossendale’s key facilities are identified below:

4.3.1: Management and programming

Strategic objective	Recommendation	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Importance
Maintain/increase community use of education facilities (sport halls) Enhance	Market and promote the availability of the current stock of sports halls to more sections of the community.	Continue to work with schools which offer good levels of community use to ensure complementary programming across the Authority. Develop a site by site engagement action plan for schools with limited or no current community use.	Medium	Schools, RBC	High
Major facility investment Protect/Enhance Provide	See site by site recommendations below	See Feasibility options above	Short	RBC	High
Increase participation from hard to reach groups in line RBC’s Corporate Strategy	RLT to drive up participation from hard to reach groups. Actively support RBC to focus on health inequalities	Identify a budget to carry out the recommendation. Consider implementing discretionary pricing system specifically aimed at targeting harder to reach groups into instructed sessions.	Short	RBC	High
Incorporate village halls/ community centres into broader activity portfolio Protect/Enhance	Improve understanding of the role of community centres and village halls with regard to the physical activity offer.	Review village halls to see which have capacity to offer increased activity - considering scale, existing commitments, configuration and management. Consider their fit in the wider programming offer.	Medium	Various community groups, private facilities, RBC	Medium
Planning Protect/Enhance Provide	Recognise the importance of this study; ensure that recommendations are acted upon.	To adopt the Strategy as an Evidence Base document supporting the Local Plan and development management decisions.	Medium	Planning & Leisure Team	High

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Strategic objective	Recommendation	Action	Timescale	Responsibility	Importance
Monitor and review	Keep this Facilities Strategy relevant and up to date.	Complete a light touch annual strategy review. Deliver a complete review within 5 years of adoption.	Medium	RBC	High

4.3.1: Facility specific actions

Facility	Management	Overview	Action	Lead agency	Timescale (S/M/L)	Priority (H/M/L)
Adrenaline Centre	Rossendale Leisure Trust	It has a 4-court hall, 2 squash courts, 3 studios, a refurbished 60 station gym, laser tag, clip 'n' climb Above average quality sports hall at capacity (day/evening). Key activities: indoor bowls and tennis (winter). Badminton and netball at peak times. Squash is popular and one studio is used as a permanently matted area. More indoor hall space needed to cater for current demand, enhance programming and casual use	There is a requirement to improve the below average facilities and maintain the quality of the above average facilities. Explore feasibility of adding indoor sports hall space at the venue Strategy required to determine long-term future of the centre with a refurbishment/replacement plan.	RBC, RL Trust	Short Medium Long	Medium
Marl Pits Leisure Centre	Rossendale Leisure Trust	Built in 1974 and refurbished in 1999, this facility, main pool (25m x 4 lanes) and learner pool, are considered to be below average in quality. The learner pool is freeform shaped and not conducive for swimming lessons. The fitness gym (45 stations) and studio is above average quality and very popular.	Investment required in pool air handling units (AHU). Undertake feasibility to consider extending water space and increase the health and fitness to accommodate current and future demand.	RL Trust, RBC	Medium	High

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Facility	Management	Overview	Action	Lead agency	Timescale (S/M/L)	Priority (H/M/L)
Whitworth Leisure Centre	Rossendale Leisure Trust	Built in 1972 and refurbished in 2002, this is the oldest facility in the area. The main and learner pools are in below average condition. The 25-station gym is of below average quality. Recent investment is enabling the facility to remain operational, but it will not improve its general quality or appearance. There is a need to increase facility availability and accessibility in this part of the Authority.	Carry out planned investment at Whitworth LC as it is essential to the pool remaining operational in the short-medium term. Undertake a feasibility study to assess the volume of water required and where it should be located in the east of the Borough.	RBC, CLAW, RL Trust	Short	High
Pioneer Studio	Rossendale Leisure Trust	It had a 70-station gym and two studios, all above average in quality. This popular facility attracts residents living in areas of higher deprivation.	Maintain and improve the quality of the facility.	RLT, Owner	Long	Medium
Alder Grange School	School (in house)	This below average 4-court sports hall is a key facility for basketball. It is booked full to capacity. The 24-station gym is used privately by the school	Continue to invest in facilities to maintain/improve quality; re-line the sports hall to ensure the community can continue to use the facility.	Alder Grange School	Short	High
All Saints CHS	School (in house)	This 4-court sports hall and 1-court activity hall is average quality. Available to the community for 15.5 hours per week it is full to capacity.	Explore the potential to increase the number of weekly hours available to the community to accommodate demand.	All Saints CHS	Medium	Medium
Bacup & Rawtenstall GS	School (private use)	The 4-court sports hall is used privately by the school and is not available to the community.	Work with the School to identify times that could be used by the wider community	Bacup & Rawtenstall GS, RBC	Long	Low
Haslingden High School	Third party operator (SLS)	This has a 4-court hall, two activity halls and a studio. It below average in quality. The sports hall requires urgent maintenance to address structural issues. There is potential to increase the hours available to the community.	Requires urgent investment to tackle structural issues, re-seal the floor and re-line floor markings.	Haslingden High School	Short	High

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Facility	Management	Overview	Action	Lead agency	Timescale (S/M/L)	Priority (H/M/L)
The Valley Leadership Academy	Third party operator (SLS)	This has a 4-court hall, 2-court hall and a practice hall. The 4-court hall is poor quality and requires urgent maintenance. The 2-court hall is a key trampolining facility. The 26-station gym rates above average. Access to this requires a membership.	There is a need to improve the quality of the 4-court sports hall. This will improve the attractiveness of, and increase levels of demand for, this venue.	The Valley Leadership Academy	Short	High
Whitworth Community High School	Third party operator (SLS)	The sports hall (4 courts) is above average in quality. There are also two 1x court halls. The 25-station gym is rated above average and is available to the community via membership.	Continue to invest in the facilities to improve and maintain the quality	Whitworth Community High School	Long	Low
Ski Rossendale	Commercial (The Hill)	This has three slopes (advanced, intermediate and nursery). Recent investment has improved accessibility and facility quality. It can be accessed both on a pay and play and a membership basis. It is an important facility for a number of ski clubs and as a local tourist attraction.	Continued investment in the facility and in marketing and promotion will ensure that it remains high quality, attractive and financially viable. Drive participation from hard to reach groups as well as those that can currently afford to use the facility. When finance is available continue to invest in enhancing the offer.	The Hill, RBC	Medium	Medium
Other commercial fitness gyms	Commercial	There are a number of commercially operated facilities in the area.	Continue to monitor use and assess the extent to which these facilities complement each other and other activity in the borough. Ensure that facility developments complement and do not compete with RBC owned/managed venues.	RBC	Long	Low

PART 5: MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Strategy identifies the investment and actions required to deliver and maintain a high-quality built facilities infrastructure for Rossendale for the period up until 2034.

It is important that the Strategy is (and is treated as) a live document and is used in a practical manner to prioritise investment, develop key work programmes and partnerships, guide planning gain investment and ensure that built sports facilities are a vital component contributing to the quality of life of Rossendale residents.

Strategy production is just the start of the process and there is a requirement for all partners to engage in ongoing dialogue and review in order to ensure that a considered perspective and approach is maintained throughout its life.

It will be important for Rossendale and its partners to adopt a 3-5 year action plan based around the Strategy and for the delivery of this to be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis. It is recommended that an annual monitoring report be produced for the Indoor and Built Facilities, the Playing Pitch Strategy and the Open Spaces report as a holistic approach.

The process should not only review progress against the action plan, but identify actual/potential changes in supply and demand. This is on the basis that the Strategy is as much about how facilities are used as it is about ensuring that local infrastructure is of a good quality.

In particular the annual review process should include:

- ◀ Review of annual progress on recommendations made in the 3-5 year action plan; taking account of any changes required to the priority of each action (e.g. the relevance of some may increase/decrease following implementation of others).
- ◀ Learning and sharing lessons learnt throughout the period.
- ◀ Taking account of any other new facilities which come on stream (in or which will impact residents of the borough).
- ◀ Review of any specific changes in the use of key sites (e.g. sport specific specialisms, changes in number of community available hours, opening times etc.).
- ◀ Any specific changes in demand at particular facilities and/or from clubs in the area (e.g. reduction or increase in club numbers, reaction to new housing growth etc.).
- ◀ Giving consideration to new sports/activities and/or formats of traditional sports that may emerge.
- ◀ Any other new or emerging issues and opportunities.

The outcome of the review will be to develop a new annual and medium-term action plan for indoor and built sports facilities in and across the Borough.