Sporting Places
A Leisure Facilities Strategy for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This document outlines the Leisure Facilities Strategy for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The Strategy provides the overall framework for investment in the Council’s leisure facilities over the coming ten years.

The Strategy is informed by and consistent with national, regional and local strategic drivers and best practice guidance. It will make a significant contribution to the development of spatial planning policy in Tower Hamlets by providing a robust evidence base that outlines the leisure facilities needed to serve the growing and changing population. This will be used to inform the Borough’s emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Corporate Asset Strategy and help give effect to the Community Plan and Local Area Agreement.

To deliver this clear spatial vision for leisure facilities in the Borough, the Strategy

- examines the current supply of leisure facilities in the Borough (taking into account public, commercial and dual use facilities);
- compares this to the on-going demand for facilities (based on the latest population projections and a nationally recognised modelling tool);
- identifies gaps in current and future provision; and
- assesses the quality, suitability and efficiency of existing leisure facilities, with particular reference to residents’ different gender, cultural, religious and physical needs.

The Strategy focuses primarily on questions of infrastructure capacity and the current and future need for leisure facilities, and does not make any recommendations in relation to other issues such as service operations, pricing policies or engagement. It is however recognised that these issues may impact on the accessibility of facilities and other avenues are in place to ensure they are adequately addressed.

It is important to note that the Strategy is not an investment programme. The Strategy has been created to provide the overall decision making framework for potential future investment in the Council’s leisure facilities over the coming ten years. As a long term strategy it would not be desirable or practical to pre-determine Council spend or funding channels at year one and it does not seek to do this. It supports the Community Plan and forms an essential support to the Local Development Framework by providing a clear analysis of supply and demand that follows a nationally recognised model for leisure facilities.

Model leisure facilities network scenario
Based on the research and evidence collected, three key strategic objectives have been identified that form the basis of the Leisure Facilities Strategy over the next ten years. These objectives are informed by an understanding of the key characteristics of an ideal leisure facilities network (taking into account national, regional and local strategic drivers and best practice guidance) and an assessment of the extent to which the existing network is consistent with this ideal model.

It will not necessarily be possible to achieve the full implementation of such a network given spatial and financial constraints. However, the model serves as a benchmark against which individual solutions can be assessed. Broadly speaking, an ideal leisure facility network for Tower Hamlets should:

- address gaps in provision now and in the future, in particular for swimming pools and sports halls
- locate new facilities where people will use them most and where they will support the Local Development Framework (e.g. in town centres and transport hubs)
- provide dry facilities alongside all swimming pools in order to reduce the subsidy requirement
- focus additional sports hall capacity on school sites to maximise value for money, providing this is supported by the analysis and adequate community access can be secured
- offer state of the art facilities that are fully accessible to all residents, taking into account cultural, religious and physical needs
- ensure facilities are designed to be operationally efficient
- comprise facilities that are energy efficient and carbon reducing.

Strategic objectives

The Leisure Facilities Strategy has identified the following three strategic objectives, which in turn inform the strategic outline solutions identified in Figure 1.

**Strategic Objective One: Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation**

A key objective of the Leisure Facilities Strategy is to help address gaps in the provision of swimming pools, sports halls and health and fitness stations now and in the future in order to satisfy demand from residents.

A supply, demand and quality analysis has demonstrated that in broad terms, the following additional facilities will be required by 2018:

- 1 to 2 additional swimming pools – needed primarily in the east and north east of the Borough
- Additional four-court sports halls – needed primarily in the centre of the Borough and the Isle of Dogs. Initial planning should consider 3 to 4 additional sports halls.
- Re-provision or upgrade of existing facilities to ensure they are fully accessible to all residents, taking into account different cultural, religious and physical needs.
The Strategy proposes a range of strategic solutions that, should they prove viable, increase the capacity of the leisure facilities network.

**Strategic Objective Two: Generate energy and economic efficiencies**

The Government and the Council have set ambitious targets for the reduction of carbon emissions over the next ten years. Leisure facilities have high energy needs and therefore the potential to contribute significantly to supporting the achievement of these objectives. For this reason the Leisure Facilities Strategy proposes strategic solutions to make the leisure facilities more energy efficient.

In the current financial and economic climate of more constrained funding for local government alongside ever-growing demands from residents for a more personalised, innovative and high quality service, the Leisure Facilities Strategy will also look for opportunities to generate economic efficiencies that will reduce the subsidy requirement for its leisure facilities and make best use of the Council’s wider asset portfolio to deliver value for money for residents – including capitalising on opportunities to ensure leisure facilities reflect the most economical design model, and leveraging off the Building Schools for the Future investment programme to increase community sports hall capacity at lowest cost to the Council.

**Strategic Objective Three: Improve the quality and suitability of leisure facilities**

The Council has invested significantly in the development and improvement of its leisure facilities in recent years. The latest annual resident survey results demonstrate that residents feel these developments have improved their experience of leisure and sports facilities in the Borough, with a consistent year on year increase in resident satisfaction and ratings that outperform the London average.

In order to maintain this positive trend it is essential that leisure facilities continue to be of a high quality. The Leisure Facilities Strategy proposes strategic solutions to ensure that the Council actively anticipates and plans for future investments in existing facilities, and continues to make improvements that increase the quality and suitability of facilities for all residents.
Summary of key strategic solutions

In order to deliver on these strategic objectives the Leisure Facilities Strategy proposes eight possible strategic outline solutions over the next ten years.

**Figure 1: Summary of strategic outline solutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strategic Objectives</th>
<th>Implementation Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1  | Work towards providing additional sports halls                       | Work with the Building Schools for the Future investment programme to ensure dual use sports halls can be provided in strategic areas of deficiency and be opened up for community or club use, particularly in the centre of the Borough and on the Isle of Dogs. Some new sports hall provision may also be provided as part of leisure centre re-provision. Initial planning should be for 3 – 4 additional sports halls. | • Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation  
• Generate economic efficiencies                                                                 | Year 1 – 3 |
| 2  | Improve the accessibility of dual use leisure facilities             | Work with schools to ensure information about and access to existing dual use facilities is improved.                                                                                                          | • Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation  
• Generate economic efficiencies                                                                 | Year 1 – 3 |
| 3  | Work towards providing a new swimming pool in the east of the Borough | Develop detailed options for reopening Poplar Baths to address the shortage of water space in the east of the Borough. The re-opened centre should consist of both wet and dry facilities in order to reduce the subsidy requirement, offer greater choice to people and provide enhanced facilities. | • Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation  
• Generate economic efficiencies  
• Improve the quality and suitability of leisure facilities                                                                 | Year 1 – 3 |
| 4  | Introduce a leisure centre Carbon Reduction Programme                | Develop and implement a programme of improvements to existing leisure facilities to reduce carbon emissions and contribute to meeting the Council’s targets on reducing its environmental impact. | • Generate energy efficiencies                                                                                                           | Year 1 - 3 |
| 5  | Explore improvements to St George’s Pool and John Orwell Leisure Centre | Undertake a detailed investigation of solutions to improve St George’s Pool and John Orwell Leisure Centre.                                                                                                     | • Generate economic efficiencies  
• Improve the quality and suitability of leisure facilities                                                                                       | Year 1 – 3 |
| 6  | Work towards providing a new                                        | Develop detailed options for the provision                                                                                                                                                                 | • Address gaps in provision and provide                                                                                                    | Year 4 – 6 |

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10
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strategic Objectives</th>
<th>Implementation Phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|   | swimming pool in the north-east of the Borough                       | of a swimming pool to address the shortage of water space in the north-east of the Borough (including investigating the option of re-instating Victoria Park Lido). Such a facility should consist of both wet and dry facilities in order to reduce the subsidy requirement, offer greater choice to people and provide enhanced facilities. | facilities in areas of low participation  
- Generate economic efficiencies |                     |
| 7  | Explore the option of a new town centre leisure centre on the Isle of Dogs | Work in collaboration with Development and Renewal to investigate options to provide a leisure centre in a new town centre location which allows for the provision of a facility combining a swimming pool and a sports hall. |  
- Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation  
- Generate economic efficiencies | Year 7 – 10          |
| 8  | Assess York Hall facilities                                         | York Hall was upgraded recently and improvements are expected to provide an additional 15 years of life to the main facilities. A further assessment and review of facilities at York Hall will need to be carried out in 2014/15 to determine an appropriate way forward. |  
- Improve the quality and suitability of leisure facilities  
- Generate economic efficiencies | Year 7 – 10          |
Next steps

Given the complex and dynamic nature of the proposed solutions the Leisure Facilities Strategy serves as an overarching document outlining the Council’s strategic ambitions. It will enable the Council to develop investment proposals with partners within a clear strategic framework and understanding of residents’ needs. This is vital for informing the Borough’s spatial planning processes and preparations for the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy, and for securing funding from external sources.

Individual solutions proposed in the Strategy will need to undergo further detailed assessments that take into account the full technical and financial implications of each proposal, as well as emerging strategic developments in the Council’s wider corporate property portfolio. The key deliverables and milestones needed to take these solutions forward are outlined in the Action Plan outlined later in this Strategy. This will be reviewed and reported on to the Asset Management Board every six months. All infrastructure proposals will be subject to full Member scrutiny and Cabinet approval before they can be taken forward to implementation stage.
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The Council’s vision is to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets. It is a vision that is shared by all partners in the Tower Hamlets Partnership, which comprises the Council and other public service providers, businesses, faith communities and the voluntary and community sector.

The provision of high quality, accessible leisure facilities in the Borough will contribute significantly to the achievement of this vision, notably by supporting improvements in outcomes relating to health, community cohesion, economic and social wellbeing.

Tower Hamlets is at the heart of London’s aspirations for the future. It has experienced rapid population growth over the ten years and this growth is forecast to continue over the next two decades. Although the current economic climate may slow the rate of growth to some extent there will continue to be a need for additional social and community infrastructure – including publicly accessible leisure facilities – to satisfy the current and future needs of residents.

This document outlines the Leisure Facilities Strategy for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The Strategy provides the overall framework for investment in the Council’s leisure facilities over the coming ten years.

This document constitutes the Leisure Facilities Strategy for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. Consistent with best practice guidance issued by the Mayor of London, the Department for Communities and Local Government and Sport England, it will make a significant contribution to the development of spatial planning policy in Tower Hamlets by providing an evidence base that clearly articulates the leisure facilities needed to service the growing and changing population. This will in turn inform the emerging Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework and Corporate Asset Strategy.

It is important to note that the strategy is not an investment programme. The Strategy has been created to provide the overall decision making framework for potential future investment in the Council’s leisure facilities over the coming ten years. As a long term strategy it would not be desirable or practical to pre-determine Council spend or funding channels at year one and it does not seek to do this. It supports the Community Plan and forms an essential support to the Local Development Framework by providing a clear analysis of supply and demand that follows a nationally recognised model for leisure facilities.

To deliver this clear spatial vision for leisure facilities in the Borough, the Strategy

- examines the current supply of leisure facilities in the Borough (taking into account public, commercial and dual use facilities);
• compares this to the on-going demand for facilities (based on the latest population projections and a nationally recognised modelling tool);
• identifies gaps in current and future provision; and
• assesses the quality, suitability and efficiency of existing leisure facilities, with particular reference to residents’ different gender, cultural, religious and physical needs.

This information is used to paint a picture of an ‘ideal’ leisure facilities network for the Borough and to inform an assessment of the extent to which the existing network is consistent with this model. Based on this research the Strategy proposes a range of strategic infrastructure solutions that will increase capacity, improve service quality, and generate economic and energy efficiency gains.

1.2 Scope

The Strategy focuses primarily on questions of infrastructure capacity and the current and future need for leisure facilities. It is not within the scope of this Strategy to make recommendations in relation to other sports development issues such as leisure facility service delivery, pricing policies or sports participation. It is recognised however that these issues may impact on the accessibility of facilities, so other avenues are in place to ensure they are adequately addressed.

In the case of service delivery the Council let a major leisure management contract with Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) in 2004 which guides service operations at its leisure facilities. Service improvements and developments will be driven through ongoing contract monitoring and partnership working with the contractor. Similarly, sports development issues relating to growing and sustaining participation (especially for under-represented groups), and analysing and optimising affordability, are taken forward through the Tower Hamlets Sports Strategy and the Tower Hamlets Olympic and Paralympic Strategy and Programme.

The Leisure Facilities Strategy focuses on ensuring that the network of leisure facilities in the Borough will be of sufficient quantity, quality, accessibility and suitability to support the delivery of these other sports development issues once they are in place.

Similarly, the Leisure Facilities Strategy cannot set the agenda for every leisure facility within the Borough as many of these are commercially or privately owned and operated and are not in the Council’s sphere of influence. For this reason, although the supply and demand modelling exercise that informs the Strategy incorporates most of these commercial and private leisure facilities, the strategic solutions proposed relate to facilities in which the Council has an ownership interest. The Strategy will enable the Council and its partners to establish clear priorities for sport and leisure facilities as the basis for future decision-making, service development and strategic planning across a range of interlinked agendas.
Given the complex and dynamic nature of the proposed solutions, the Leisure Facilities Strategy can only serve as an overarching document outlining the Council’s ambitions. It will enable the Council to develop investment proposals with partners within a clear strategic framework and understanding of residents’ needs. This is vital for informing the Borough’s spatial planning processes and preparations for the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy, and for securing funding from external sources. Individual projects will need to undergo a detailed assessment that takes into account the full set of technical and financial implications as well as strategic developments in the Council’s wider corporate property portfolio. The range of actions needed to enable Members to take clear and informed investment decisions at a later stage are outlined in the Action Plan within this Strategy. The Action Plan will be reviewed and reported on to the Asset Management Board every six months.

1.3 Guiding principles for leisure facilities in Tower Hamlets

Whilst the Community Plan sets out the broad vision the Council and its partners have for Tower Hamlets, it is useful to provide a more specific vision for leisure facilities within the context of this Strategy. The following guiding principles reflect the context in which the Leisure Facilities Strategy has been developed:

- Leisure facilities need to be designed to cater for the needs of the population of Tower Hamlets – particularly in relation to culturally sensitive and fully accessible building design.

- The location of future facilities should be aligned with the key principles of the emerging Local Development Framework and Town Centre Strategy and make best use of existing capital investment programmes – notably the Building Schools for the Future programme – where this would provide long-term gains.

- All future facilities should be designed to reduce the subsidy requirement for the authority. This may result in the co-location of facility types such as swimming pools, sports halls and gym facilities.

There may be cases where these principles need to be weighed against other considerations, particularly where specialist facilities or historic buildings are to be developed. In firming up any investment proposals, the full set of parameters will need to be considered.
SECTION 2: BENEFITS OF ENGAGING IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Leisure facilities play an important role in enabling the residents of Tower Hamlets to take part in sport and physical activity by providing an accessible and welcoming environment for people of all ages, ethnicities, religious beliefs and backgrounds. Sustaining and growing participation in sport and physical activity is an important objective on the Government’s agenda, owing to the contribution of physical activity to a number of priority social outcomes including health, community cohesion and safety, meeting the needs of children and young people, and economic prosperity. A summary of the evidence in these areas is outlined below.

2.1 **Sport, physical activity and health**

The contribution of physical activity to positive physical and mental health and well-being outcomes is widely acknowledged – most notably in the Chief Medical Officer’s 2004 report *At Least Five a Week: Evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health.* Increasing the physical activity levels of the population is a key preventative initiative in many of the Government’s health strategies.

Sport England have summarised the research relating to the health impacts of sport and found that overall, regular participation in sport and physical activity can:
- reduce the risk of both physical health issues such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and some types of cancer; and mental health issues such as depression and anxiety
- help to address obesity by supporting good weight management
- help people to recover from an illness or injury and prevent the subsequent reoccurrence of the problem.

There are some specific health benefits from physical activity that accrue to different age groups. For young people, regular participation in sport and physical activity supports healthy growth (for example, of the musculoskeletal and cardio respiratory systems), reduces health risks such as high blood pressure, and supports weight management. Physical activity also encourages young people to adopt a healthy lifestyle by providing them with knowledge and skills that help to reduce the risk of some health issues such as substance misuse or teenage pregnancy. Laying the foundations for a healthy and active lifestyle in adolescence also increases the likelihood that this will continue into adulthood.

For older people, regular participation in sport and physical activity improves fitness, strength and mobility. This can make it easier for them to perform daily tasks and reduces the incidence of falls – both of which can enable older people to live more independent lives.

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2.2 **Sport, physical activity and community cohesion**

Community cohesion is described by the Community Cohesion Unit within the Home Office as communities ‘where there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities; where the diversity of people’s different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued; where those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, and where there are strong relationships between people from different backgrounds’³.

Sport and physical activity play a role in building community cohesion by creating opportunities for social engagement that bring people from different backgrounds, including ‘hard to reach’ groups, together. This can help to create a greater shared understanding of different ways of life, thereby breaking down barriers that exist in the wider community and fostering stronger social networks. Sports facilities themselves can help to improve people’s sense of well being in the place they live.⁴

2.3 **Sport, physical activity and children & young people**

Meeting the needs of children and young people is one the Government’s key priorities – and is reflected in its shared priorities with local government. *Every Child Matters* is the national framework that sets out five key outcomes for the well-being of children and young people in England. Sport England found that ‘research evidence demonstrates the contribution that sport can make to meeting the *Every Child Matters* national framework outcomes:

- **Being healthy** – sport reduces the risk of illness and ill health for young people, can help to prevent or tackle obesity and contributes to maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
- **Staying safe** – sport can promote community cohesion and decrease the likelihood of young people being the victims of youth crime or anti-social behaviour, bullying or discrimination. It can also help to reduce some accidents among young people.
- **Enjoying and achieving** – sport assists young people to learn and attain educational standards, contributes to their personal and social development and to their enjoyment of leisure time.
- **Making a positive contribution** – sport engages young people in community activity, reduces the likelihood of them being involved in youth crime or antisocial behaviour; develops their self confidence and encourages positive behaviour and relationships.
- **Achieving economic well-being** – sport helps young people to become economically active through providing training and employment opportunities both directly and indirectly.⁵

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2.4  Sport, physical activity and community safety

Research has found that appropriately designed sports activities can reduce the likelihood of a young person participating in crime or anti-social behaviour. It does so by addressing some of the factors that increase the risk of youth offending, and by strengthening some of the protective factors that reduce the likelihood of youth crime – for example by providing structured activities that increase skills and offering positive group activities with alternative peer groups and role models that support healthy life choices.

By creating opportunities to connect with marginalised young people, sport can also provide an avenue for addressing a wider range of health issues such as substance misuse, as well as providing young people with information on education, employment and other social issues. Further, the provision of local sporting opportunities and facilities provide alternative activities for young people and a place for them to congregate. Taking young people away from the streets can help to improve perceptions of community safety.6

2.5  Sport, physical activity and economic growth

Creating prosperous communities is one of the Government’s key priorities. Many factors contribute to this and sport too has a part to play. Research by Sport England shows that:

- sport provides direct employment and contributes to economic activity through sports-related business such as retail, sports manufacturing, spectator events and services such as coaching and training.
- new sport and recreational facilities offering sporting activities can contribute to the regeneration of an area and create attractive places that people want to visit or live in, which can help to attract new residents or businesses to an area.
- sport can provide opportunities for people (particularly those who are detached from the labour market) to acquire new skills and qualifications outside of mainstream education, which can support them into the workforce.
- using participation in sport as a mechanism to improve the physical and mental health of employees can also help to reduce workforce absenteeism and the associated economic costs of this in terms of lost productivity. Improving the health

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of the population through greater physical activity can also reduce health care costs and lost economic output due to premature death arising from inactivity.⁷

SECTION 3: POLICY AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

There are three broad types of policies that provide the context for the development of a Leisure Facilities Strategy for Tower Hamlets:

- Policies relating to the delivery of sport (which sports, for whom, and how they are delivered)
- Policies relating to spatial planning and building design (the facilities in which sports are played)
- Policies relating to the wider economic, social and cultural agenda (that incorporate elements relating to the delivery of sport and sports facilities.)

This section outlines the key national, regional and local policy documents pertaining to these three areas and analyses their implications for this Strategy.

3.1 Policies relating to the delivery of sport

3.1.1 Overarching Government and Council strategic priorities

Following the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review the Government established four national priority outcomes for local authorities encompassing a range of performance indicators and cross-government strategic objectives where the Government is looking to achieve better outcomes. Those relating most directly to sport and physical activity are outlined in the table below.

Figure 2: Contribution of the Leisure Facilities Strategy to the National Indicator Set

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>National Indicators for Local Government</th>
<th>Public Service Agreements (PSA) &amp; Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSO) pertaining to the National Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stronger and Safer Communities</td>
<td>N1 8 – adult participation in sport and active recreation</td>
<td>PSA 21 – build more cohesive, empowered and active communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DCSM DSO 1 – encourage more widespread enjoyment of culture, media and sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children and Young People</td>
<td>NI 57 – children and young people’s participation in high quality PE and sport</td>
<td>DCSM DSO 4 / PSA 22 – deliver a successful Olympic Games and Paralympics Games with a sustainable legacy, and get more children and young people taking part in high quality PE and sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NI 110 – young people’s participation in positive activities</td>
<td>DCSF SO / PSA 12 – improve the health and well-being of children and young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PSA 14 – increase the number of children and young people on the path to success</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These national priorities have been translated into tangible outcomes, deliverables and performance indicators specific to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets – as set out in the Tower Hamlets 2020 Community Plan, The Tower Hamlets Children and Young People’s
Strategic Plan 2009-2012, The Tower Hamlets Local Area Agreement 2008-2011, the Council's annual Strategic Plan and relevant Directorate Business Plans. The Leisure Facilities Strategy contributes to many of the outcomes in these strategic planning documents — the most significant areas of contribution are outlined in the following table.
**Figure 3: Contribution of the Leisure Facilities Strategy to the Community Plan, the Local Area Agreement and the Children and Young People’s Strategic Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>A Great Place to Live (Housing, leisure and culture, transport &amp; waste)</th>
<th>A Prosperous Community (learning, worklessness &amp; enterprise)</th>
<th>A Safe and Supportive Community (support for vulnerable residents &amp; community safety issues)</th>
<th>A Healthy Community (public health, access to primary care &amp; mental health)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Community Plan** | **Priority 2.1:** Strengthen and connect communities  
**Key objectives:** Planning new neighbourhoods with supportive services like primary schools, healthcare facilities and local parks | **Priority 3.1:** Support lifelong learning opportunities for all.  
**Key objectives:** Providing continuous learning opportunities so everyone can learn basic and new skills at any age | **Priority 4.1:** Empower older and vulnerable people and support families  
**Key objectives:** Providing responsive and appropriate services for adults which promote independence, choice, security and community | **Priority 5.1:** Reduce differences in people’s health and promote healthy lifestyles  
**Key objectives:** Reduce rates of diabetes, high blood pressure and cholesterol  
Slow down the increase in obesity |
| | **Priority 2.2:** Strengthen and connect communities  
**Key objectives:** Bring together communities to foster mutual understanding a collective sense of wellbeing and avoid people being isolated;  
Ensure communities have good access to a full range of facilities – including health services, schools and leisure | | | |
| | **Priority 2.3:** Support vibrant town centres and a clearer, safer public realm  
**Key objectives:** Providing first class and well-managed centres where people come together for business, shopping, leisure and recreation | | | |
| **Local Area Agreement 2008-11** | **Priority 2.2:** Strengthen and connect communities  
Indicators: NI 1: % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area  
**Priority 2.3:** Support vibrant town centres and a clearer, safer public realm  
Indicators: NI 5: Overall / general | **Priority 3.1:** Support lifelong learning opportunities for all  
Indicators: NI 110: Young people’s participation in positive activities | **Priority 4.2:** Tackle and Prevent Crime  
Indicators:  
NI 21: Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local Council and Police  
NI 15: Serious violent crime rate  
NI 16: Serious acquisitive crime rate | **Priority 5.1:** Reduce differences in people’s health and promote healthy lifestyles  
Indicators:  
NI 56: Obesity among primary school age children in year 6  
NI 120: All-age all-cause mortality rate |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>A Great Place to Live (Housing, leisure and culture, transport &amp; waste)</th>
<th>A Prosperous Community (learning, worklessness &amp; enterprise)</th>
<th>A Safe and Supportive Community (support for vulnerable residents &amp; community safety issues)</th>
<th>A Healthy Community (public health, access to primary care &amp; mental health)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>satisfaction with the local area</td>
<td>Priority 3.5: Enjoy and achieve: Provide a learning, play and cultural offer for families Key objectives: Develop an enriched Tower Hamlets family offer through Find Your Talent</td>
<td>Priority 2.1: Stay Safe: Ensure that children and young people are protected from harm and feel safe and confident in their area and beyond Key objectives: Extend the choice and opportunity online (COO-L) card and free Oyster card scheme, encouraging young people to travel about the Borough in order to foster a sense of independence and challenging perceptions about ‘unsafe’ areas.</td>
<td>Priority 1.1: Be Healthy: Slow down and reverse the long-term rise in obesity amongst children and young people. Key objectives: Provide increased opportunities for regular physical activity (including walking, cycling, active play, leisure, sport and dance) through Healthy Schools and community initiatives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1.2 National sports development policies

Sport England is the government agency responsible for the community sports sector. The *Sport England Strategy 2008-2011* outlines its overarching goal to ‘maximise English sporting success in all its forms’ through the development of a world-leading community sports system organised around the three key outcomes:

- **Grow** – increase the number of adults who regularly participate in sport by one million by 2012/13
- **Sustain** – sustain current participation in sport by ensuring that people have a high quality experience, and reduce the drop-off in sports participation by 16-18 year-olds by 25 per cent by 2012/13
- **Excel** – improve talent development systems in at least 25 sports, resulting in more talented sports people moving on to elite programmes and success.8

Underlying these outcomes are a range of sport-specific targets and associated funding overseen by the National Governing Bodies for sport, as well as specific government policies such as the introduction of free swimming for the over 60s and 16s and under from 2009.

In all of these initiatives, local authorities are a key delivery partner – not least through the provision of high quality and accessible sports facilities. Council-owned leisure facilities such as swimming pools, gyms and sports halls provide a considerable amount of the overall infrastructure needed to deliver on these sports development objectives.

3.1.3 Tower Hamlets sports policies

*Seizing the Moment: A Sports Strategy for Tower Hamlets 1999-2025* is the sports strategy for the Borough.9 Although it is primarily a sports development strategy it makes a number of recommendations relating to sport and leisure facilities in the Borough. Notably, it recommends that the Council:

- develops a four-tier facility infrastructure consisting of (1) ‘anchor facilities’ in community areas10 comprising high-street sited, fully accessible wet and dry sports opportunities; (2) localised community sports facilities such as schools acting as community hubs; (3) casual facilities offering informal casual access opportunities, and (4) Borough-wide facilities
- makes these facilities accessible to everyone with a focus on increasing participation by target groups such as disabled people, the Bangladeshi and Somali communities, women and girls, and those on low incomes
- addresses areas of geographical deficiency in the centre, south and north east of the Borough.

Since the adoption of this Strategy in 1999 a number of changes have taken place. The Council has invested heavily in its leisure facilities, including the development of the Mile End Park Leisure Centre and the upgrade of York Hall. More generally, facilities planning models have become more sophisticated allowing more accurate predictions of future need, and the government’s priorities for sports development and sports facilities have

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10 Community areas are defined in the strategy as Bethnal Green, Stepney / Wapping, Isle of Dogs and Poplar / Bow
continued to evolve. The Leisure Facilities Strategy takes this changed picture into account and effectively refreshes the infrastructure elements of the Sports Strategy.

3.2 Policies relating to spatial planning

3.2.1 National and regional planning policies and guidelines

There are two key planning policy documents of particular relevance to the Leisure Facilities Strategy – Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation (PPG17) and The London Plan.

- **PPG17** outlines the Government’s expectations with regards to nationwide planning for open space, sport and recreation. It strongly recommends that local authorities carry out a needs assessment and audit of existing facilities to understand how well they are meeting current and future community needs and to consequently inform decisions about new facilities and upgrades to existing provision. PPG17 also recommends that local authorities:
  - ensure that recreational facilities are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, and can be easily accessed by people with disabilities
  - locate more user-intensive facilities in town centres, and
  - enhance the range and quality of existing facilities.11

- **The London Plan** is the Mayor’s 20-year spatial development strategy for London and local authorities are required to comply with the spatial policies set out within it. The key policies relating to sport and leisure facilities12 echo the expectations set out in PPG17.13 Although the new Mayor of London proposes to make some changes to the London Plan to better reflect his priorities, in the case of leisure facilities these would largely serve to further reinforce existing policies and further highlight the importance of providing good facilities for play, sport and recreation.14

By explicitly examining the supply of leisure facilities in the Borough, comparing this to the on-going demand for facilities in order to identify gaps in current and future provision, and assessing the quality, suitability and efficiency of existing leisure facilities, the Leisure Facilities Strategy gives effect to this best practice guidance.

3.2.2 Regional infrastructure development

The Council’s own leisure facilities are part of a wider regional infrastructure development programme that needs to be taken into account when assessing the need for additional leisure faculties in the Borough.

Of particular significance are the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games which will result in the development of a wide range of legacy sports facilities just outside the Borough that will be regional in nature and therefore open to Tower Hamlets residents. Key developments include:

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12 Policy 3A.18, Policy 3D.6 and Policy 3D.1
• the Aquatic Centre and the Olympic Stadium in Newham\textsuperscript{15}
• a multi-purpose indoor arena and VeloPark in Hackney
• a tennis and hockey complex in Waltham Forest
• a possible upgrade of Mile End Stadium for use as a practice venue for athletes.\textsuperscript{16}

Alongside the Olympics, the *Thames Gateway Delivery Plan* includes a range of investment programmes intended to deliver enhanced economic development and better quality of life for residents in the region. It includes developments that are likely to have an impact on the provision of leisure facilities in or around Tower Hamlets, including:

• the construction of the Olympic Park in Stratford and the associated redevelopment of Stratford City, which will include accompanying social and community infrastructure
• continued growth in Canary Wharf supported by Crossrail
• new housing and associated community infrastructure, including in the Lower Lea Valley
• the redevelopment of priority town centres including Bromley by Bow.\textsuperscript{17}

The supply and demand analysis of leisure facilities in the Borough outlined in the Strategy takes these regional infrastructure developments into account.

### 3.2.3 Local infrastructure planning, delivery and funding

The emerging *Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework* (LDF) is the collection of planning documents that deliver the Borough’s spatial planning strategy and therefore help give effect to its Community Plan.

Tower Hamlets is at the heart of London’s growth aspirations. In line with the London Plan, the emerging Tower Hamlets LDF seeks to facilitate:

• an increase of 31,500 new homes from 2007 to 2016, especially in the east of the Borough and on the Isle of Dogs;
• an increase in the provision of affordable housing;
• an increase in the provision of family-sized accommodation;
• the appropriate provision of social and physical infrastructure required to support the growth in housing (including schools, health care facilities, public transport and utilities), focused on town centre locations where appropriate.\textsuperscript{18}

The spatial strategy set out in the LDF prioritises the provision of high quality, modern infrastructure to support population growth and benefit existing residents. Consequently, it takes a proactive management approach to designating sites for new facilities in response to forecast future demand.

Delivery of the above competing objectives and requirements is challenging in a compact inner city environment. The Borough already has a deficiency of publicly accessible open space for leisure and recreation purposes in some areas (as identified in the *Open Space Strategy*) as well as an acute need for housing provision (as identified in the *Housing Needs Survey*). It is important that indoor leisure facilities

\textsuperscript{15} A proposal to convert part of the Aquatics Centre into leisure water (alongside lane swimming and elite facilities) is currently under consideration.


\textsuperscript{17} Department for Communities and Local Government (2007) *The Thames Gateway Delivery Plan*. London: Department for Communities and Local Government

are addressed as part of a balanced approach to urban spatial management and place shaping.

The emerging Tower Hamlets LDF will be the central document that sets out how the Council and its partners will deliver accessible community and social infrastructure alongside housing and commercial developments to meet the needs of residents. The Leisure Facilities Strategy will be a key contributor to the evidence base that will inform infrastructure planning within the LDF and help to translate the high level policies into tangible infrastructure development.

Related to this, the Government is introducing a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to support local authorities to better deliver community infrastructure. CIL represents a new tariff-based funding stream that can be used to finance a broad range of social infrastructure including recreational facilities that are needed to support housing or commercial developments. The Leisure Facilities Strategy will feed to the infrastructure levy design and allow Tower Hamlets to secure contributions for leisure purposes.19

### 3.2.4 Climate change and energy efficiency

The Government has introduced legislation setting clear carbon emissions reduction targets and is looking to local authorities to take a lead on tackling climate change. Carbon reduction is embedded in the new national indicator set and Tower Hamlets Council has included NI 186 – reducing per capita CO₂ emissions from business, public sector, domestic housing and road transport in the local area – as a committed target in its Local Area Agreement, with the aim of reducing per capita CO₂ emissions by ten percent by 2010/11. The Council has also set aspirational targets to reduce CO₂ emissions from its own operations by sixty percent by 2020.20

From a planning perspective, The London Plan and emerging Tower Hamlets LDF emphasise that dealing with climate change should be a core consideration in any infrastructure development. New projects including those relating to leisure facilities are expected to meet the highest standards of sustainable and energy efficient design. Leisure facilities have high energy needs and therefore could potentially contribute significantly to reducing carbon emissions levels in the local area, therefore diminishing carbon emissions from existing and new facilities needs to be a key element of the Leisure Facilities Strategy.

### 3.2.5 Economic efficiency

We are entering a period where funding for local government will be tighter than in previous years and both capital and revenue resources will be under pressure. The overall budget for the Tower Hamlets will be more constrained in future years as the Council strives to simultaneously meet savings targets and satisfy ever-growing demands from residents for a more personalised, innovative and high quality service. Capital funding is also constrained as opportunities to generate new capital receipts from the disposal of existing assets have diminished and section106 contributions may become more constrained given the current economic downturn. These financial constraints have been taken into account in the overall approach to developing investment proposals for the Borough’s leisure facilities network.

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The Leisure Facilities Strategy has been carried out alongside an efficiency review of the Council’s current leisure management contract with Greenwich Leisure Limited. This has informed the assessment of possible infrastructure solutions in terms of their potential to achieve economic efficiencies.

3.2.6 Tower Hamlets corporate asset management

The Council is in the process of developing an asset strategy which will map current and future demand for assets for itself and key partners. The Leisure Facilities Strategy will form part of this work and activities identified in the Action Plan consider the scope for the co-location of services and facilities.

The Council’s Corporate Asset Management Plan also sets a requirement for all Council assets to be reviewed periodically. Such reviews need to take into account strategic need, utilisation, suitability, sufficiency, financial and political implications. By recognising the specialist nature of leisure facilities, the Leisure Facilities Strategy provides the necessary information to make a strategic assessment of the Council’s leisure centre portfolio against these criteria.

Infrastructure proposals outlined in this Strategy have been developed within the Communities, Localities and Culture property portfolio and are based on existing knowledge of emerging opportunity sites. However, further work has been identified to co-ordinate strategic decision-making across the wider corporate property portfolio, including a wider search for opportunity sites.

3.3 Policies relating to the wider economic, social and cultural agenda

3.3.1 Health

Choosing Health: Making Health Choices Easier is the Government’s White Paper for Health. It sets out the key principles for providing people with the information and support they need to make better and more informed choices about their health and outlines the range of actions the Government will take to achieve this.21

Choosing Health includes a particular focus on increasing participation in physical activity and supporting people to maintain a healthy weight, and a number of national action plans have been developed to put this into effect. Of particular relevance is Choosing Activity: A Physical Activity Action Plan, which sets out the implementation agenda for the Government’s physical activity initiatives. The Leisure Facilities Strategy will contribute to contribute to two of the key areas of focus within this action plan:

- encouraging activity in early years, schools and further education, and extending further the use of education facilities as a community resource for sport and physical activity, beyond the school day
- maintaining a wide range of opportunities for activity through sport, including through the provision of leisure and sports facilities.22

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Tower Hamlets has developed its own weight management strategy – *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives in Tower Hamlets (2008-2012)* – which details the development of a multi-agency approach to preventing people from becoming overweight or obese and supporting them to maintain a healthy body weight. It also highlights the need for a wide variety of accessible leisure and sports facilities that are designed to encourage physical activity.\(^{23}\)

### 3.3.2 Strong, sustainable and cohesive communities

Sustainable communities are defined as ‘a place where people want to live and work now and in the future’.\(^{24}\) The importance of creating sustainable communities is emphasised across the Government’s planning and social development policies, and in turn these policies consistently acknowledge the contribution of social and cultural infrastructure such as leisure facilities to achieving this objective.

Of particular note is the cross-government *Living Places* initiative. This aims to ensure that all communities, particularly those experiencing housing-led growth and regeneration, can benefit from cultural and sporting opportunities by ensuring that sport and culture are embedded in the spatial development of towns and cities.\(^{25}\) Similarly, *Our Shared Future*, the report from the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, acknowledges the role that sport and leisure facilities play in bringing people from different backgrounds together. It identifies sports, culture and leisure as one of the four areas where a stronger focus on growing interaction between different groups would help to build integration and community cohesion, and argues that culture and sport should move from being seen as an ‘optional extra’ to being integral to the lives of individuals and the well-being of communities.\(^{26}\)

### 3.4 Summary

Sustaining and growing participation in sport and physical activity through the provision of high quality, accessible leisure facilities is an important objective on the Government’s agenda, owing to the contribution of sport and sports facilities to a number of priority social and community outcomes. These shared national priorities and their implications for sport are reflected in the Council’s strategic documents including the *Community Plan*, the *Local Area Agreement* and the *Children and Young People’s Strategic Plan*.

Sport and physical activity are vital levers for addressing the rising tide of obesity and negative health outcomes such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The provision of high quality leisure facilities can play an important role in enabling people to become more active, and in the case of children and young people, can increase the chances that they will continue to lead a healthy and active lifestyle in adulthood.

Leisure facilities are also an essential component of the wider social and community infrastructure because of their contribution to building strong, sustainable and cohesive communities – another of the Government’s key priorities. They bring people from different backgrounds together and help to break down barriers and foster stronger social

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\(^{25}\) Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (2007) *Living Places: stronger communities through culture*, London: Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

networks. They also provide opportunities for people to participate in positive social activities and contribute to the creation of safer communities.

The emerging *Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework* reflects national and regional planning, housing and regeneration policies, all of which acknowledge that leisure facilities are essential in the development of new and existing places. Indeed, these planning policies provide the context for the development of the Leisure Facilities Strategy as they require local authorities to undertake a community needs analysis and audit of existing facilities for sport and recreation to understand how well they are meeting current and future needs – the results of which form the basis of the recommendations in this Strategy. They also set the broad parameters for the ongoing maintenance and upgrades of existing facilities – namely that they be open and accessible to all groups, located in town centres and aligned with national and local climate change and energy efficiency policy agendas.

The development of leisure facilities in Tower Hamlets is taking place in the unique backdrop of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Thames Gateway Development. Both of these infrastructure projects will impact on the network of leisure facilities that is accessible to Tower Hamlets residents and are taken into account in planning the evolution of the current network.

The key national, regional and local policy objectives relating to sport and leisure facilities outlined in this section have informed the development of the strategic objectives and proposed solutions discussed later in this Strategy.
SECTION 4: TOWER HAMLETS BOROUGH PROFILE

4.1 Key population statistics

4.1.1 Population and age structure

Based on current estimates the 2008 population of Tower Hamlets is 232,042. 180,884 residents fall into the 6-55 age bracket, which is deemed to be the most physically active population by Sport England. This reflects the fact that Tower Hamlets has a relatively young population, with just under 50% of all residents aged 30 or under. The numbers of children and young people resident in Tower Hamlets are above the England and Wales national average whilst the numbers of residents aged 40 years of age and older are below the national average. 27

4.1.2 Ethnicity

Tower Hamlets is one of the most diverse Boroughs in London. Bangladeshi residents form the largest group after White residents. Together these two groups account for just under 85% of the population. Current estimates do not provide breakdowns by ethnicity and the most up to date source is the 2001 Census. This data can serve as a proxy for estimating the ethnic make up of the current and future population.

The detailed ethnic composition of Tower Hamlets is as follows:

- White: 51.4%
- Bangladeshi: 33.4%
- Black African: 3.4%
- Other Asian: 3.2%
- Black Caribbean: 2.7%
- Mixed: 2.5%
- Chinese: 1.8%
- Other: 1.2%
- Other Black: 0.5%

4.1.3 Religion

The 2001 Census provides information on residents’ faith and religious beliefs. The two major religions in the Borough are Christianity (38.6%) and Islam (36.4%). 14.2% of the population stated that they have no religion. Religious and cultural needs must be taken into account in the provision of leisure facilities.

4.1.4 Indices of deprivation

Tower Hamlets is one of the most deprived boroughs in London with levels of unemployment, overcrowding, and a lack of educational qualifications significantly higher than the national average (although the latter is rapidly improving.)

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27 Source: GLA 2007 Round PLP Projections (low scenario)
The most recent national study of deprivation undertaken in 2004 reached the following conclusions about social deprivation in the Borough:

- it is one of the most deprived areas in the country
- deprivation is spread across the Borough, with pockets of severe deprivation in all wards
- the Borough, and London generally, has relatively lower levels of employment deprivation and (to a lesser extent) income deprivation than deprived areas in other parts of the country.

A map illustrating multiple deprivation levels in the Borough is shown in below. The most deprived areas (bottom 5% nationally) are in yellow, and the least deprived areas (outside the bottom 20% nationally) are in red. The map is split into Lower Level Super Output Areas (SOAs) to show a higher level of detail than on a ward-by-ward level.

**Figure 4: Map of Super Output Areas by Index of Multiple Deprivation Rank**

The map illustrates that while there are areas of deprivation right across the Borough there are particular areas where extreme deprivation is predominant. These SOAs are shown to cluster towards the north and east of the Borough, in the wards of Bow East, Bromley-by-Bow and East India & Lansbury. East India & Lansbury contains four of the eight most deprived SOAs across the entire Borough. To the west, Lansbury and Spitalfields & Banglatown also show a significant proportion of particularly deprived communities.

The south of the Borough is shown to be the least deprived area, with St Katherine’s & Wapping, Millwall and Blackwall & Cubitt Town all largely with SOAs showing levels of deprivation outside of the bottom 20% nationally.
4.1.5 Health

The people of Tower Hamlets face exceptional challenges to their health and well-being and obesity has been identified as one of the most pressing public health challenges. Levels of obesity are linked to premature deaths resulting particularly from circulatory disease.

For the period 2004-2006, life expectancy in Tower Hamlets was 75.2 years for men, and 80.2 years for women. This means Tower Hamlets had amongst the worst life expectancy for men in the whole country. In contrast, the best life expectancy was 82.2 years for men and 86.2 for women (Kensington and Chelsea).28

Results from the national child measurement programme (academic year 2006/07) show that levels of childhood obesity in Tower Hamlets are higher than average for London and England. The prevalence of obesity in children measured in reception was the 3rd highest in the country and the 2nd highest in London. The prevalence of obesity in children measured in year six was the 13th highest in the country and the 9th highest in London. The proportion of children found to be overweight (but not obese) in Tower Hamlets was found to be lower in reception compared to England, but in year six the differences were not significant.29

There is currently no reliable local data available on the prevalence of obesity in adults. However, based on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the population the Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust estimates that about 20 per cent of adults in Tower Hamlets are likely to be obese.30

Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) includes angina (chest pain on exertion), heart attacks and heart failure. Physically inactive people have approximately double the risk of CHD compared to those taking regular exercise. In 2006 there were 207 deaths from CHD in Tower Hamlets residents, of which 95 were in people under the age of 75. CHD accounted for almost a quarter of premature deaths in men and 14% of premature deaths in women. Overall, the age-standardised mortality rate for premature CHD death in Tower Hamlets is 81.6 per 100,000 European Standard population – considerably higher than the rest of the country. The mortality rate for men is particularly high. Across the Borough the death rate was highest in East India and Lansbury, Bethnal Green South, Bromley by Bow and Spitalfields & Banglatown.31

4.1.6 Projected changes in population 2008 to 2018

The population of Tower Hamlets is set to increase dramatically over the ten years from 2008 to 2018. This section sets out some of the main projections and headline figures. 32

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30 ibid.
32 GLA 2007 Round PLP Projections (low scenario)
At Borough level

- By 2018 the total population is set to rise by 48,011 to 280,053.
- At the same time the number of 6 to 55 year olds (which is deemed to be the most physically active population by Sport England) is rising by 38,990 to 219,874.

At LAP level

- Each LAP area will experience an increase density by 2018.
- The highest number of residents in 2008 was in LAPs 1 and 8 (both have a population of more than 37,000).
- By 2018 the highest number of residents will be living in LAPs 1, 6, 7 and 8.
- The lowest increases in overall population will be in LAPs 4 and 5.
- There will be a marked increase in the population in the eastern LAP areas of the Borough and on the Isle of Dogs, resulting in the majority of residents living in this part of the Borough.

The overall projections for each LAP are shown in the table below:

Figure 5: Population projections by LAP area for all residents – 2008 and 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LAP</th>
<th>2008 All residents</th>
<th>2018 All residents</th>
<th>Percentage change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>39,374</td>
<td>42,649</td>
<td>8.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>24,602</td>
<td>28,614</td>
<td>16.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>27,923</td>
<td>31,549</td>
<td>12.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>25,047</td>
<td>25,654</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>21,554</td>
<td>22,562</td>
<td>4.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>27,812</td>
<td>38,326</td>
<td>37.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>27,975</td>
<td>35,540</td>
<td>27.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>37,756</td>
<td>55,157</td>
<td>46.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>232,042</td>
<td>280,053</td>
<td>20.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: © GLA 2007 Round Ward Population Projections (low)

4.2 Adult participation in sports

The Active People Survey (Active People) is conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Sport England and represents the largest ever survey of sport and active recreation to be undertaken in Europe. It provides reliable statistics on participation in sport and active recreation for all 354 local authorities in England at a local level. The first telephone survey of 363,724 adults in England aged 16 and over – which equates to around 1,000 interviews per local authority – took place between October 2005 and October 2006. The survey was repeated again between October 2007 and October 2008 and 191,000 adults were surveyed. This resulted in a smaller average sample size of around 500 interviews per local authority, however, Tower Hamlets elected to boost its survey sample size to 1,000 interviews to receive more detailed data.

The Active People Survey looks at a range of indicators relating to people’s participation in sport and active recreation and enables us to compare the Borough’s performance to
that of neighbouring local authorities as well as to the London and national averages. It also allows us to understand differences in participation relating to different demographic groups and different sports. The key findings of relevance to this Strategy are detailed below.

4.2.1 Headline findings

Active People provides data on six Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). A comparison of the Borough’s profile against the regional and national average for 2005/06 and 2007/08 is shown in the table below. The data here may vary slightly from other reports where Active People data has been reported. For some reporting, government requires data to be adjusted according to local deprivation indices. However, for the purpose of facilities planning it is more appropriate to draw on unadjusted data. It should also be noted that due to the relatively small sample size used for the survey, changes between 2005/06 and 2007/08 should only be viewed as a direction of travel rather than absolute values. Statistically, only a change of approximately 6 percentage points or more means that a change to the indicator has definitely occurred.

Figure 6: Active People Surveys 2005/06 and 2007/08: key performance indicators
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KPI</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>2005/06</th>
<th>2007/08</th>
<th>Increase / (decrease)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Participation at least three days a week at moderate intensity for 30 minutes</td>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>19.70%</td>
<td>17.70%</td>
<td>-2.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>London average</td>
<td>21.30%</td>
<td>20.20%</td>
<td>-1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National average</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>21.30%</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>At least one hour a week volunteering to support sport</td>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
<td>-1.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>London average</td>
<td>3.50%</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National average</td>
<td>4.70%</td>
<td>4.90%</td>
<td>0.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Member of sports club</td>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>21.50%</td>
<td>22.20%</td>
<td>0.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>London average</td>
<td>26.20%</td>
<td>25.30%</td>
<td>-0.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National average</td>
<td>25.10%</td>
<td>24.70%</td>
<td>-0.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Received tuition from instructor or coach in past 12 months</td>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>17.30%</td>
<td>19.00%</td>
<td>1.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>London average</td>
<td>19.20%</td>
<td>19.70%</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National average</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18.10%</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Taken part in organised competitive sport in past 12 months</td>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>12.80%</td>
<td>11.20%</td>
<td>-1.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>London average</td>
<td>13.10%</td>
<td>12.40%</td>
<td>-0.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National average</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14.60%</td>
<td>-0.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Satisfaction with local sports provision</td>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>61.70%</td>
<td>65.50%</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>London average</td>
<td>66.10%</td>
<td>61.80%</td>
<td>-4.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>National average</td>
<td>69.50%</td>
<td>66.60%</td>
<td>-2.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Borough is shown to be slightly lower than the London average on all KPIs except for overall satisfaction with local sports provision (KPI 6) where it performs significantly better than both the London and national averages. It should be noted however that there are some differences between the London regional profile and the national picture.

Compared to 2005/06, Tower Hamlets has improved its performance in three of the six KPIs. Membership of sports clubs (KPI 3) has increased by 0.7 percentage points, and the difference between the Borough and the London average has fallen. The proportion of people who have received sports tuition (KPI 4) has increased by 1.7 percentage points and the difference between the Borough and the London average has fallen. Of particular note is satisfaction with local sports provision (KPI 6) which has improved by 3.8 percentage points to 65.5 per cent in 2007/08. LBTH is now considerably higher than both the London and the national averages which fell considerably between 2005/06 and 2007/08.

In the three other areas, Tower Hamlets’ performance has worsened over the period. Participation in sport has fallen by 2 percentage points and is now further behind the London average than in 2005/06. However, key local socio-economic factors such as unemployment, rate of home ownership, or ethnic minority population are known to be linked to rates of participation. Active People enables these factors to be taken into
consideration with calculation of an expected participation rate for each local authority. The expected participation rate for the Borough is 19.1 per cent, meaning that the estimated participation rate for 2007/08 falls short of what could be expected. Of particular note is the proportionately large reduction of 1.2 percentage points in volunteering to support sport over the period, placing us significantly below the London average. Participation in organised competitive sport has also fallen by 1.6 percentage points, which has increased our lag behind the London average.

4.2.2 Participation by demographic group

Government is still undertaking detailed analysis of 2007/08 Active People data for specific demographic groups at local authority level. Given the importance of population characteristics in planning for fully accessible leisure facilities, the Strategy draws on the 2005/06 data. A comparison of Borough figures against the London average and the national picture is shown in the table below with areas of notable difference highlighted in red (lower) or green (higher).

Figure 7: Active People Survey 2005/06: participation rates by population group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>London average</th>
<th>National average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-34</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-54</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 years +</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non white</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limiting disability</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No limiting disability</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Economic Group A</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Economic Group B</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Economic Group C1</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Economic Group C2DE</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above figures indicate that, in line with national trends, rates of participation in the Borough are generally lower amongst:

- women
- older people
- black and minority ethnic (BME) groups
- those from C2, D and E social groups (National Statistics Socio Economic Classification 5,6,7, 8)

Key issues relating to these groups can be summarised as follows:

- participation rates among women in the Borough (17.0%) are lower than the London (18.9%) and the national (18.5%) average
- participation among non-white groups is lower than the regional average with only 15.8% taking part in 30 minutes of exercise three times a week compared with 18% in London as a whole
- only 23% of 16-34 year olds take part in 30 minutes of exercise three times a week, which is almost 5% lower than in London as a whole and 7% lower than the national average. This is particularly significant given the very high percentage of young people in the Borough and might imply that alternative approaches to the delivery of leisure provision may need to be explored.
- with participation rates for the A and B social groups being higher than the London and National averages and those for the C1 and C2DE being significantly lower, differences in participation by socio-economic group are further accentuated in the Borough – it is a picture of extremes.

Further analysis of the data provides an estimated participation rate for different parts of the Borough, which reinforces this final point. The data presented in the map below suggests that there are pockets of higher participation, mainly towards the south of the Borough, in the wards of St Katherine’s & Wapping, Shadwell, Millwall and Blackwall & Cubitt Town. Although this data is based on estimates rather than actual figures, the results suggest there are clear areas of extremely low participation around the centre and east of the Borough, particularly in Bromley-by-Bow, Poplar, Mile End and Stepney Green. This suggests that the Borough has populations with varying needs and with significantly different current participation habits.

Figure 8: Active People Survey 2005/06: estimated participation by Middle Super Output Area
4.2.3 Popularity and engagement

The data from Active People also demonstrates which activities are most popular with certain groups in Tower Hamlets. Whilst the vast number of smaller sports and responses means that taking a sport-by-sport approach is not statistically robust for the purposes of analysis at a local level, we have clustered the types of activity into four analysis groups to broadly reflect the sports which require use of the core indoor facilities the Strategy focuses on:

- aquatic sports (includes aqua aerobics, swimming, diving, scuba diving)
- keep fit and gymnastics (includes gym, pilates, yoga, weight training)
- racquet sports (includes squash and badminton)
- team games (includes football, basketball, volleyball, netball and cricket).

This data has been compared against five other local authorities – Hackney, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham and Newham – which are taken from the Institute of Public Finance (IPF) Nearest Neighbours grouping, to illustrate where particular trends in participation may lie which will have implications for the future facility mix and location of facilities in the Borough. Although not geographically adjacent these Boroughs are deemed comparable in socio-economic terms. This breakdown can be used to build up a picture of the types of activities that are taking place within the Borough and cross-tabulation of this data by gender gives a further indication of how future investment might be channelled.

The table in Appendix One provides the full data – the key findings are summarised below.

- Aquatic sports
Participation levels in aquatic activities are extremely variable. In males, the young adults (16-24 years) rate, at 5.9%, is the second lowest of the selected comparator group, above only Hackney (which has experienced well documented problems with the provision of swimming pools). However, participation rates amongst males in the 25-34 and 35-54 years age groups are at or towards the upper end.

In females, the opposite trend is evident. The younger age group has a high participation rate, of 17.1%. However, participation levels then fall in contrast with the trend shown by other authorities and, with a participation rate of 4% among females aged over 55, the Borough is the lowest ranked.

- **Keep fit/gymnastic activity**

In keep fit/gymnastic activity, there is a clearer correlation with age than gender. While the younger ages in both sexes are broadly comparable with other selected local authorities, among adults over 55 years, participation levels in the Borough are by far the lowest, with 3.2% among males against an average of 8.8% and 5.4% among females against an average of 12.2%.

- **Racquet sports**

Racquet sports are generally more popular among males than females in the Borough. While the participation rates among men are all broadly comparable with other authorities, in women, the rates are mainly towards the bottom end. In women aged 16-24 years the participation rate of 0.7% is the lowest of all the authorities and the 2.3% rate among women aged 25-34 years is the second lowest.

- **Team games**

Despite having by far the highest participation rate among men aged 16-24 years (63.4%), participation then falls dramatically and levels among men aged 25-34 years become the lowest of all the authorities (14.2%). This factor has been highlighted by consultation with officers, noting that football and cricket are particularly popular and that increases in participation have been achieved. Among women, the participation rate in team games is broadly in line with other authorities.

### 4.3 Children and young people’s participation in sports and physical activity

There is comparatively less data available relating to children and young people’s participation in sport in the Borough. The School Sport Survey was carried out annually between 2003/04 and 2007/08 and collected information on the levels of participation by 5-16 year olds in at least two hours physical education and out of hours school sport in a typical week. Findings from the surveys were used to measure progress towards a Public Service Agreement target which aims to enhance the take up of sporting opportunities by children and young people.

The results for Tower Hamlets Local Authority between 2005/06 and 2007/08 are outlined in the graph below and show a steady increase in participation over the period.

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33 The survey involves schools that are in the School Sport Partnership Programme. By the end of 2007 all maintained schools (21,727) in England were in School Sport Partnerships, of which there are 450.
The table below compares Tower Hamlets’ performance to other local authority groupings (noting that comparative data is only available at the local authority level for 2006/07 and 2007/08).

**Figure 10: Percentage of 5-16 year olds who participated in at least two hours of PE and school sport in a typical week – analysis by Local Authority**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>2006/07</th>
<th>2007/08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner London Local Authority Average</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Local Authority Average</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All 150 Local Authorities Average</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: School Sport Survey 2007/08 and School Sport Survey 2006/07

In 2007/08, 87% of 5-16 year olds attending partnership schools in Tower Hamlets Local Authority participated in at least two hours of high quality physical education and out of hours school sport in a typical week. This is one percentage point lower than the Inner London average of 88%, a London average of 89% and a national average across all Local Authorities of 90%.3435

The *TellUs3 Survey* of children and young people in Years 6, 8 and 10 across England also provides us with some information about young people’s views and experiences across a wide range of government services and the *Every Child Matters* outcomes, including sport and physical activity. The survey was most recently carried out between March and June 2008. 148,988 children and young people from 145 of the 150 local authorities in England took part in this survey. In Tower Hamlets, a total of 1,029 pupils and 38 schools took part.36 The responses for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets were collated, weighted and compared against the national average and statistically

36 The 2007 survey took place during a shorter timeframe between April and June 2007 and included 111, 385 pupils from all local authorities across England, and 1,274 pupils from 30 schools in Tower Hamlets.
significant differences in responses were highlighted, including whether the difference was a positive or negative outcome for the Borough.

One of the survey questions asked children and young people about their participation in sports and other physical activity. The findings are outlined in the graph below:

**Figure 11: Children's participation in sport according to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets TellUs3 Survey Report 2008**

30% of respondents in Tower Hamlets spent at least 30 minutes on 1-2 days doing sports and other active things compared to the national average of 21%. This represents an increase of 3 percentage points from 2007. Only 27% of respondents were active on 6-7 days compared to 36% nationally, and 8% weren’t active on any days compared to only 4% nationally. These are statistically significant negative outcomes as they indicate that children and young people in Tower Hamlets are participating less frequently in sport and other active things than the national average.

When asked to identify which out of a list of activities they had been to in the last four weeks (not including activities done as part of school lessons):

- 33% responded that they had been to the swimming pool, compared to 46% nationally – this is a statistically significant difference indicating a negative outcome as it means that children and young people in the Borough have below average rates of swimming pool usage outside of school lessons. Participation rates have fallen from 40% in 2007, compared to the national average which increased from 45% in 2007
- 57% responded that they participated in sport at a sports club or class, compared to 58% nationally – this has increased considerably from 43% in 2007, compared to the national average which grew from 48% in 2007
- 45% responded that they had been to the gym, compared to 27% nationally – this is a statistically significant difference indicating a positive outcome as it means that children and young people in the Borough have considerably above average
rates of gym usage. It also represents a large increase in usage from 27% in 2007, compared to the national average which has increased from 22% in 2007.\textsuperscript{39}

4.4 Summary of key findings

The demographic make up of the population as well as residents’ sport and physical activity participation patterns have an impact on the nature of future leisure facilities provision in Tower Hamlets.

- The Borough has large minority ethnic and faith communities which have particular cultural needs and requirements. The Council will need to provide leisure facilities which are inclusive and cater for the needs of all residents.
- The population is set to grow rapidly over the coming decade. This will place increasing pressure on existing facilities and additional capacity will need to be provided. Detailed demand modelling has been carried out and the results are outlined in Section 8 of this document.
- There are some pockets of significant social and economic deprivation within the Borough, particularly in the east and north east. These overlap with areas of low participation in sport and physical activity identified by Sport England. Locating facilities in these areas may impact positively on participation rates as ease of access is a key consideration in participation.
- 17.7% of the population take part in 30 minutes of exercise three or more times a week, behind the London average of 20.2%. Participation rates in the Borough are comparatively low among:
  - women
  - younger adults and 55+ age group
  - ethnic minority groups
  - lower socio-economic groups.
- Targeted activities are being developed by the Primary Care Trust and the Council to increase levels of physical activity, focusing on groups with particularly low participation rates. These activities are likely to have some impact on participation rates. However, for modelling purposes the lower than average participation rates should be taken into account.
- Adult levels of participation in aquatic sports, health and fitness and team sports are broadly in line with comparator authorities. Team sports are particularly popular with young men.
- In 2007/08, 87% of 5-16 year olds attending partnership schools in Tower Hamlets Local Authority participated in at least two hours of high quality physical education and out of hours school sport in a typical week. This is comparable to the Inner London average of 88%, the London average of 89% and the national average across all Local Authorities of 90%.
- More broadly, children and young people surveyed in the TellUs 3 Survey participated considerably less frequently in sport and other active things than children in the rest of the country.
- They also had statistically significantly lower levels of swimming pool usage compared the national average, but significantly higher levels of gym usage. It is likely that swimming pool usage is set to increase due to the government’s introduction of the free swimming initiative in the run-up to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
SECTION 5: COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The Leisure Facilities Strategy makes proposals at a high level and aims to support future growth in the Borough. Options are largely demand-driven based on population growth modelling. In addition, the Strategy draws on a significant amount of consultation already undertaken in the Borough to support the development of its overarching strategic documents such as the Community Plan, the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and the Children and Young People’s Strategic Plan, as well as relevant national surveys pertaining to sport and the findings of the 2008 scrutiny report on young people’s participation in sport in Tower Hamlets. The key findings of these consultations that relate to leisure facilities are outlined below.

In addition, the solutions proposed within this Strategy will form part of the emerging LDF Core Strategy through identification of areas of search and residents will be able to comment on high level proposals as part of the final Core Strategy consultation in the second half of 2009. Further option-specific consultations will take place as individual projects come forward for approval.

This feedback from consultations with Tower Hamlets residents has been supplemented by a summary of the findings from a large number of other nation-wide quantitative and qualitative studies of people’s experiences of sport and their reasons for participation and non-participation.

5.1 Consultation and engagement with Tower Hamlets residents

5.1.1 Adults

Community Plan Consultation: August 2007 – January 2008

To inform the development of the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 a consultation exercise was undertaken with residents to identify what they see as the priorities for the Borough over the next 10-15 years. Feedback was gathered through Borough-wide workshops and consultations and an online survey.

Some of the feedback relates directly to the Leisure Facilities Strategy. In particular:

- there is some support for more leisure centres although this was not a unanimous view, with some residents questioning the value for money of leisure centres
- there should be more dedicated leisure centre facilities and activities for women and girls, and facilities that are more culturally sensitive in general.

More broadly, the consultation identified a widely shared view about the need to provide more leisure and recreational facilities for children and young people as a way of tackling anti-social behaviour, as well as more amenities aimed at older people.

Local Development Framework Core Strategy Consultation: July – September 2008

To inform the development of the Tower Hamlets Local Development Framework Core Strategy a consultation exercise was undertaken with the public, private and community
sectors as well as residents between July and September 2008 seeking their feedback on the options and alternatives relating to different spatial policies.\footnote{London Borough of Tower Hamlets (2008) Local Development Framework Core Strategy: Options and Alternatives Consultation Summary Report. London: London Borough of Tower Hamlets.}

Among other things it asked people to express a preference for one of two overarching strategic options for the development of infrastructure across the Borough. Option A proposed to concentrate development in well-connected and strategically-located town centres, whereas Option B proposed more organic growth in which new places emerge from individual development sites as opportunities allow. The results of the consultation indicated that concentrating develop in town centres marginally greater support (28%) than organic growth, (22%) however there were also many requests to combine elements from both options (38%).

This strategic direction is reflected in the strategic options contained within the Leisure Facilities Strategy. The future development of detailed options will be aligned with the detailed policies set out in the final LDF Core Strategy, which is due to be completed by late 2009.

5.1.2 Children and young people

Tower Hamlets Children and Young People’s Strategic Plan

The Tower Hamlets Children and Young People’s Strategic Plan 2006-2009 was refreshed in 2008 and took into account previous consultations that had been undertaken by the Tower Hamlets Youth Service, including those that canvassed young people’s feedback on sports. Amongst the findings, many young people said they were interested in taking part in sporting activities but face a number of barriers to doing so, including poor accessibility. Young people prefer to participate in sport in their local areas but there is a lack of local facilities available to them. To improve access to sporting activities young people want to see improvements to, and on-going maintenance of existing sports facilities, more indoor sports centres, and more local gyms for use at lower prices.

TellUs3 Survey: March – June 2008

The 2008 TellUs3 Survey of children and young people in Years 6, 8 and 10 across England asked their views about their local area, including questions covering the five Every Child Matters outcomes.\footnote{Ofsted (2008) Tellus3 Local Authority Report: Tower Hamlets, September 2008.} The responses for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets were collated, weighted and compared against the national average and statistically significant differences in responses were highlighted, including whether the difference was a positive or negative outcome for the Borough.

The following findings have relevance to the Leisure Facility Strategy:

- When asked to identify which out of a list of activities they would like to go to that they don’t at the moment:
  - 38% of those surveyed said that they would like to go to the swimming pool (outside of school lessons), compared to 29% nationally (statistically significant difference)
  - 30% said that they would like to go to a sports club or class, compared to 20% nationally (statistically significant difference)
  - 36% said that they would like to go to the gym, compared to 38% nationally (statistically significant difference)
When asked to identify which out of a list of activities would do the most to make their area a better place to live, 50% identified better sports clubs or centres, compared to 44% nationally – this is a statistically significant difference indicating a negative outcome, as it suggests that children and young people in Tower Hamlets feel that the quality of existing sports clubs and centres is more of an issue than their counterparts in the rest of the country.

Ensuring the participation of young people in the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics: January – March 2008

As part of the Learning, Achievement and Leisure Scrutiny Lead Member’s work programme for 2007/08 a working group was established to examine what the Council is doing to ensure that young people, particularly young disabled people, can participate in sports leading up the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. A survey of 300 young people was undertaken as part of this work stream. Of relevance to the Leisure Facilities Strategy are findings that:

- 34.8% of young people feel they do not know where to go to play sports in the Borough
- 22% feel they do not know enough about which sports are offered.\(^{42}\)

5.1.3 Summary of findings from consultations with local residents

Across these different consultations a number of themes were consistently raised that are relevant to the Leisure Facilities Strategy:

- Some support for increasing the number of leisure and sports facilities
- Support for locating sport and leisure facilities in town centres, in line with the emerging LDF Core Strategy
- Support for improving the quality and accessibility of facilities so that they cater to the needs of the wider community – especially children and young people, women and girls, and the Asian community.

The consultations also identified a range of other issues that are not directly relevant to the Leisure Facilities Strategy but which would need to be taken into account in the forthcoming sports development strategy for the Borough. In particular:

- Residents of all ages identify affordability as a major barrier to accessing leisure centres, gyms and other sporting facilities – they perceive these facilities as being expensive to access
- Similarly, they want to see a wider range of activities offered by leisure centres, particularly for children and young people, women and girls, and the Asian community, as well as better public information on what is on offer to support informed decision-making.

5.2 Key findings from national studies on barriers to participating in sport and physical activity

There are a wide range of factors that influence people’s decisions to take part in sport and physical activity. In developing the Leisure Facilities Strategy it is important to understand the role that leisure facilities play in enabling and encouraging participation in sport and physical activity, and to ensure that any barriers to participation arising from

physical issues relating to the accessibility of sports facilities are factored into its recommendations. A summary of the research in this area is outlined below.

5.2.1 Adults

A large number of quantitative and qualitative research projects and surveys have been carried out in recent years which have included questions on the reasons underlying adult participation and non-participation in sport and physical activity in the UK.

It is clear from the research that physical issues relating to the accessibility of sports facilities act as a barrier to participating in sport and physical activity. Common reasons given for not participating in sport include difficulty in accessing facilities due to distance or travel; a lack of facilities; the poor condition of facilities; or the cost of using facilities.\(^{43}\) The accessibility and quality of leisure facilities are important drivers of the strategic options outlined in this Strategy.

That said, many of the barriers identified relate to how adults perceive sport and physical activity and their own propensity or need to participate, as well as constraints and preferences for how they spend their time. The most commonly cited reason given for not participating in physical activity is a ‘lack of time’ (once other key responsibilities at work or home are taken care of). Not being ‘the sporty type’ is the second most common barrier and is more of an issue for women than men. Being ‘too tired’ to do physical activity or ‘preferring to rest and relax’ and concerns arising from showing an unfit body or appearing incompetent at core skills, were also identified as barriers.\(^{44}\) Other research commissioned by Sport England has shown that the majority of adults think they are active enough and hence do not feel they need to take part in additional physical activity. People often have limited and conflicting information on healthy lifestyle choices and have difficulty understanding and interpreting the consequences of their actions for their health.\(^{45}\)

5.2.2 Children, young people and older people

Young people’s barriers to participating in sport are very different from those identified by adults. Of greatest importance are practical issues relating to doing physical activity – such as not liking being hit, kicked or falling over during sport, and (for adolescent girls) being self-conscious about looks.\(^{46}\) That said, concerns about the accessibility of sports facilities – including difficulty getting to appropriate facilities, parents’ perceptions of safety, and a lack of a safe means of travel – are also important.\(^{47}\)

There is less available research on barriers to older people participating in sport and physical activity, however known barriers include a perception that sport and leisure centres are for the young and fit, and difficulty accessing facilities due to lack of transport options or concerns about safety.\(^{48}\)

\(^{43}\) Ibid
5.2.3 People with a disability

People with disabilities face specific barriers to participating in sport and physical activity. Most barriers relate to difficulties in accessing sporting opportunities, due to:

- physical barriers – such as a lack of accessible facilities such as gyms and buildings, and limited accessible transportation
- a lack of services – arising from a lack of understanding and awareness of how to include people with a disability in sport, and limited opportunities and programmes for participation, training and competition.49

A lack of time and a lack of money are also identified as barriers.50

5.2.4 Summary of national studies on barriers to participating in sport and physical activity

It is clear from the research that physical issues relating to the accessibility of sports facilities act as a barrier to participating in sport and physical activity. Strategic solutions put forward in the Leisure Facilities Strategy should aim to ensure that adequate numbers of facilities are available, in geographical locations that are easily and safely accessible by public transport, particularly for children and young people and disabled people, and that the condition of these facilities is maintained to a high standard.

Other non-facility related barriers – relating to how people perceive or experience sport and physical activity, their individual preferences and views on their propensity or need to participate, and difficulties relating to their physical experience of sport – are also significant and will need to be addressed through other avenues including the Leisure Management Contract with Greenwich Leisure Limited, the Tower Hamlets Sports Strategy and the Tower Hamlets Olympic and Paralympic Strategy and Programme.

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SECTION 6: SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS

The core driver of the recommendations in the Leisure Facilities Strategy is a supply and demand modelling exercise. A sophisticated, nationally-recognised model has been used to determine future facility demand for swimming pools, sports halls and health and fitness gyms based on the latest population projections and compare this against existing provision taking into account public, commercial and dual use (school sites) facilities, and identifies gaps in current and future provision as well as geographical areas of deficiency. The methodology and findings are outlined below. The table in Appendix Two sets out the detailed supply and demand assumptions that have been applied.

6.1 Classification and methodology

6.1.1 Modelling demand

The demand modelling tool used – Mapping the Future – is based on the model developed by Sport England but provides greater detail. The model calculates theoretical demand in a defined catchment area for three facility types: swimming pools, sports halls and health and fitness gyms. It does so by applying national sports participation rates recognised by Sport England to the local demographic profile, based on the GLA 2007 mid-year estimates and projections (low). Forecast population growth in Tower Hamlets between 2008 and 2028 is outlined in the graph below.

Figure 12: 2007 Round Population Projections (Low SYA North East Sub Region) © GLA

Theoretical demand for facilities is calculated through establishing the total number of peak visitors and applying this figure to the maximum capacities for each facility type. All modelling is based on static sports participation rates – this is because although the Government has set targets for annual increases in participation in sport and physical
activity, the modelling tools currently available are not capable of factoring in such increases.

The national sports participation rates by age and gender are drawn from:

- *Swimming Pools and Sports Halls* – National Benchmarking Survey data (NBS) which looks at current participation rates, subdivided into male and female by age groups. This survey was first run in 2001 and was rerun in February 2008, using over 65,000 records.

- *Health & Fitness Gyms* – Sport and Leisure Potential from the Continental Research’s Million Plus Panel. This panel comprises a pool of over 2 million UK residents and holds over 3,000 lifestyle, demographic and purchasing details. This panel is a representative sample of the Experian Ltd (ICD) Lifestyle database, which has in excess of 12 million records. The Panel is updated biannually and therefore represents a comprehensive and up-to-date data source.

In order to reflect local participation trends, the Sport England Active People KPI 1 indicator for Tower Hamlets (which measures participation in 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity at least three times per week) is compared to the national average figure and an increase or reduction is applied to all standard participation rates. Tower Hamlets’ 3 x 30 participation level was 92.5% of the national average.

The local context and other more subjective factors are not considered at this stage. As a result, conclusions generated from the demand models should not be taken in isolation and must be used in conjunction with an analysis of the local context.

For any modelling exercise, as the time period is extended it becomes increasingly difficult to predict with accuracy what the demand for facilities will be. For this reason the estimates for 2028 are more provisional than those for 2018, however they do provide a general ‘direction of travel’ for demand that is useful for informing more medium-term decision-making.

6.1.2 Modelling supply

Residents in Tower Hamlets have access to a range of leisure facilities operated by a number of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors. In some cases leisure facilities are offered as part of a wider service offer to residents, for example, within a community centre or linked to places of worship.

A detailed audit of leisure facilities in the Borough was carried out. In line with Sport England guidance, the audit included

- swimming pools – measured in terms of the water surface area available
- health and fitness gyms – measured in terms of numbers of health and fitness stations available
- sports halls – measured in terms of the number of badminton courts provided.

The audit identifies four different types of facilities which are used to inform the supply model:

- publicly operated facilities – these are public leisure centres, largely run by or on behalf of the Council, that offer unrestricted public access
- dual use facilities – these are often those located within schools and only offer public access to facilities at certain times, normally outside of school hours or in
school holidays. The operating model for dual use facilities can vary. In some cases they are managed by schools directly through private contractors, and in others they are managed through the Council’s leisure management contractor, Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL), which is a social enterprise

- commercially operated facilities – these offer restricted public access, generally on a registered membership basis and occasionally on a pay and play basis
- private use facilities – these are often located within schools or higher education institutions and do not allow any public access.

In many cases facilities will combine more than one facility type, for example, a swimming pool with an adjacent sports hall.

The original information on the supply of leisure facilities was obtained through the Sport England Active Places Power website. Active Places Power has been developed by Sport England to provide a planning tool for sports facilities. It has a single database that holds information on sports facilities throughout England and includes publicly operated, commercial, private use (closed to the public), and dual use (school) facilities. Local authorities, national governing bodies of sport, government departments and lottery distributors are also able to use the information to help guide sports facility investment and strategies.

As the supply of leisure facilities is dynamic rather than static, a validation exercise was carried out which involved spot-checking the Sport England data via phone calls to providers such as schools and commercial operators, web research, and accessing databases on public and dual leisure facilities that are maintained by the Council, including the Corporate Asset and Property Management System.

In addition to identifying the supply of leisure facilities, a mapping exercise has also been undertaken which plots a 960m straight line accessibility catchment for each facility type in order to identify any areas of the Borough that fall outside of the catchment of current leisure facilities. This accessibility catchment is in line with national guidelines produced by the National Playing Fields Association (now called Fields in Trust), which assumes an average walk speed of 3mph but factors in a 40% reduction to account for the fact that direct access following a straight line route is rarely achievable.

6.2 Results

6.2.1 Current and future need for sports halls

The geographical distribution of public, dual and commercial sports halls in and around the Borough is illustrated in the map below. For supply modelling purposes only publicly accessible sports halls (eg publicly operated and dual use facilities) within the Borough are taken into account, in line with Sport England guidance. Commercially operated and private use facilities are excluded. In addition, as dual use facilities are only open outside of school hours the model assumes a 25% reduction in the level of accessible sports hall space. Sports halls are measured in terms of the number of badminton courts they provide, with a standard size sports hall comprising four courts.
Figure 13: Locations of existing sports halls in and around Tower Hamlets
In total, 29 sports hall sites were identified through the audit process, of which 28 are located within the Borough and one is in the buffer zone outside of the Borough boundary. Of the 28 sites within the Borough, 20 meet the criteria for being included in the supply calculation – comprising three full public facilities, and 17 dual use or club use facilities that are open to the public. Of the remaining eight sites within the Borough, one is commercially operated and the remaining seven are mainly dual use facilities that are only accessible privately. The additional facility outside the Borough is publicly-operated. A full list of facilities identified in the audit (including private use) is provided in Appendix Three.

Applying the assumptions outlined above, the current supply of sports halls in the Borough equates to 47.25 courts. The results of the demand modelling process show that demand for sports halls in the Borough equates to 71.2 courts, leaving a shortfall of around 24 courts or six sports halls. Demand is projected to rise to 82.7 courts in 2018, leaving a projected shortfall of 35.5 courts or nine sports halls. Demand will rise further by 2028 (albeit at a slower rate) to 89.4 courts, leaving a projected shortfall of 42.15 courts or 11 sports halls in 2028.

**Figure 14: Sports halls in Tower Hamlets – summary of supply and demand 2008 to 2028**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2028</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supply</td>
<td>Demand</td>
<td>Over or (under) supply</td>
<td>Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Halls</td>
<td>47.25 courts</td>
<td>71.2 courts</td>
<td>(23.95) courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equivalent to 12 sports halls</td>
<td>Equivalent to 18 sports halls</td>
<td>Equivalent to (6) sports halls</td>
<td>Equivalent to 21 sports halls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The projected growth in demand for sports halls and corresponding static supply is reflected in the following graph.

**Figure 15: Sports halls in Tower Hamlets – supply and demand 2008 to 2028**
Whist there is currently an under-provision of six sports halls, rising to nine by 2018, initial planning should concentrate on 3 – 4 additional sites only. Once more robust population data is available and the legacy impact of the new multi court sports arena on the western edge of the Olympic Park can be assessed, the model should be rerun to validate requirements.

The majority of sports halls are provided as dual use facilities in schools. For this reason, focusing on the Building Schools for the Future programme as a way to address areas of deficiency may provide the best solution, especially as sports hall activity are often based around organised team sports offered by clubs and therefore do not require a significant customer reception area.

In terms of the geographical accessibility of these facilities, the results of the catchment mapping are outlined in the map below.
Figure 16: Sports hall provision and catchment areas in and around Tower Hamlets
There is a good spread of publicly accessible sports halls across the Borough although there are isolated pockets that fall outside of existing catchment areas.

**North deficiency**

There is an area to the north of the Borough, across the wards of Bow East and Bow West, which is outside the accessibility catchments of existing sports hall facilities. Although this area of geographical deficiency is smaller than was evident for swimming pool provision, since sports halls are considered to have a more localised catchment it is considered significant, particularly as the closest site – the Central Foundation School for Girls – is a dual use facility, which may not necessarily have extensive community access.

**South deficiency**

There is only one publicly accessible sports hall facility on the Isle of Dogs, which is the dual-use facility at the George Green’s School. Some areas of the Blackwall & Cubitt Town and Millwall wards fall outside the accessibility catchments of existing provision although The Workhouse serves the north of these wards and there is a commercial facility at the Reebok Sports Club.

### 6.2.2 Current and future need for swimming pools

The geographical distribution of public and commercially operated swimming pools in and around the Borough is illustrated in the map below. For supply and demand modelling purposes only publicly accessible water space within the Borough, that is provided by publicly operated or dual use facilities and which is suitable for lane swimming, is taken into account. This is in line with standards set by Sport England. Commercially operated and private use facilities are excluded. All learner water (eg teaching pools) and leisure water are excluded, as are main swimming pools with less than 100m² of water space since these are not considered suitable for public lane swimming.
Figure 17: Locations of existing swimming pools in and around Tower Hamlets
Thirteen swimming pool sites (excluding private use and training pool sites) were identified through the audit process. Of these, nine are located within the Borough – comprising four public pools and five commercially operated pools. Of the four pools within the buffer zone outside the Borough boundary, two are public and two are commercially operated. A full list of facilities identified in the audit (including private use and training pool sites) is provided in Appendix Three.

On the basis of the supply assumptions outlined above, the current supply of water space in the Borough is 1,620m². The results of the demand modelling process shows that current demand for swimming pool space in the Borough is 2,439m², leaving a shortfall of 819m², which broadly equates to two additional swimming pools. This projected shortfall rises to 1,290m² or three swimming pools in 2018 and 1,541m² or four swimming pools in 2028.

**Figure 18: Swimming pools in Tower Hamlets – summary of supply and demand 2008 to 2028**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2028</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supply</td>
<td>Demand</td>
<td>Over / (under) supply</td>
<td>Demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming Pools</td>
<td>1,620m²</td>
<td>2,439m²</td>
<td>(819)m²</td>
<td>2,910m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equivalent to 4 pools</td>
<td>Equivalent to 6 pools</td>
<td>Equivalent to 2 pools</td>
<td>Equivalent to 7 pools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The projected growth in demand for swimming pools and corresponding static supply is reflected in the following graph:

**Figure 19: Swimming pools in Tower Hamlets – supply and demand 2008 to 2028**

Some caveats apply to this data. Firstly, modelling assumptions for swimming pools are entirely based on lane swimming (rather than leisure water) and therefore provide fairly generous space allocations per user. In addition, the Olympic Aquatics Centre, which will be constructed on the edge of the Borough will provide a significant amount of water and is likely to take some of the lane swimming activity, especially of those users who are swimming at more intense levels.
Whilst the final facility mix of the Aquatics Centre is yet to be confirmed by the London Development Agency (who have responsibility for legacy mode of facilities) the prime provision is expected to include:

- 1 x 50m x 10-lane international competition pool (1,250m² water)
- 1 x 50m x 8-lane training pool (1,000m² water)
- 1 x 25m x 25m diving pool (625m² water)

These are estimated to provide around 2,875m² of water provision from approximately 2013/14. It is assumed there would be some public and club access to these facilities. Furthermore, at least half of the water is anticipated to have moving floor providing variable water provision, particularly important for swimming lesions and elite performance.

Theoretically, this additional water provision would on its own outweigh the shortfall of swimming pools in Tower Hamlets. Although the Olympic Aquatics Centre may provide some capacity of Tower Hamlets residents, it should be noted that community use elements (such as a leisure pool) appear to have been scaled back from original proposals. This means that the Aquatic Centre will primarily be a competition and elite training venue with lower water temperatures and possibly relatively low accessibility to local residents. As such it would not fully address the shortage identified within the Borough.

Based on these factors, it is considered that the shortfall is more likely to be in the region of one to two pools by 2018 and further modelling should be undertaken once accessibility of the Aquatics Centre after the 2012 Games has been clarified.

In terms of the geographical accessibility of these facilities, the results of the catchment mapping are outlined in the map below.
Figure 20: Swimming pool provision and catchment areas in Tower Hamlets
There is a good spread of public swimming pool provision across the Borough with little overlap in their respective catchments however there are still significant areas that fall outside of the accessibility catchment areas of these facilities. A more detailed analysis is provided below.

**North deficiency**

The north-eastern tip of the Borough, mainly comprising the wards of Bow East and Bow West, is currently outside of the catchment area of both York Hall and the Mile End Park Leisure Centre.

However, it is important to highlight that Victoria Park extends across a large part of the north of Bow East Ward. As such, although this appears to be a significant area of geographical deficiency the actual number of Borough residents unable to access swimming provision will be proportionately less at current population levels. As Fish Island and other areas along the River Lea are being developed, the number of residents outside the catchment area of a public facility is likely to grow significantly.

**East deficiency**

Much of the far east of the Borough is also outside the catchment areas of publicly accessible swimming pools, extending into the wards of Bromley-by-Bow and much of East India & Lansbury, although the latter is well served by private water space.

The optimum location for a new facility to address the lack of access to public swimming provision in this area would be further to the south, possibly in the south east corner of the East India & Lansbury ward. Significant future population growth is projected in the wards towards the south and east of the Borough, which would further support the need for new provision.

**West deficiency**

An area to the far west of the Borough, mainly in the wards of Weavers and Spitalfields & Banglatown, falls between the catchment areas of York Hall and St George’s Swimming Pool. Since residents in this area only sit marginally outside of the accessibility catchments of these two facilities it is not considered to be a significant area of deficiency. The catchment of a new facility in this area would overlap significantly with those of existing facilities.

### 6.2.3 Current and future need for health and fitness gyms

The geographical distribution of dual use, public and commercial health and fitness gyms in and around the Borough is illustrated in the map below. For health and fitness provision all registered publicly operated, dual use and commercially operated facilities within the Borough that are open to the public are included, in recognition of the importance of the commercial sector provision. Private use facilities are excluded. No reductions are factored into this model.

The supply of gym facilities is measured in terms of the number of fitness stations in each facility, in accordance with Sport England guidance. The supply audit has shown the number of fitness stations fluctuates on a regular basis.
Figure 21: Location of existing health and fitness gyms in and around Tower Hamlets
In total, 25 facilities providing health and fitness provision within the Borough (excluding private use sites) were identified through the audit process. This includes seven public facilities, six dual use facilities, and 12 commercially operated clubs. A further four facilities (two public and two commercial) are located in the buffer zone outside the Borough boundary. A full list of facilities identified in the audit (including private use) is provided in Appendix Three.

Demand modelling for gym equipment is based on the Borough’s adult daytime population to take into account the high influx of office workers compared to other local authority areas. The net influx into the Borough was assessed as being 83,224 at the time of the 2001 Census. No further data is available and this figure has been applied to the 2008, 2018 and 2028 population figures. Given the amount of office development since 2001, it is likely that in actual fact this figure is higher. A large number of gym facilities in the Borough are primarily targeted at this market and account for 900 stations alone.

On the basis of these assumptions, the current supply of health and fitness equipment in the Borough is between 1,359 and 1,467 (reflecting the fluctuating nature of fitness stations). The results of the demand modelling process shows that demand for fitness equipment in the Borough is 1,889 stations, leaving a shortfall of between 422 and 530 stations. This projected shortfall rises to between 697 and 805 stations in 2018, and 891 to 999 stations in 2028. However, if the net influx of the adult population is removed from the model this would result in an oversupply of equipment in relation to the resident population only.

Figure 22: Health and fitness gyms in Tower Hamlets – summary of supply and demand 2008 to 2028 (based on daytime population)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2028</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supply</td>
<td>Demand</td>
<td>Over/under supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Fitness Gyms</td>
<td>1,359 – 1,467 fitness stations</td>
<td>1,889 fitness stations</td>
<td>(422) to (530) fitness stations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(inc Canary Wharf)</td>
<td>(inc. daytime population)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(inc. daytime population)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The projected growth in demand for health and fitness equipment and corresponding static supply is reflected in the following graph (this assumes the lower end of the supply band).
Some caveats apply to these results. While there is apparently a shortfall of gym equipment to serve the combined resident and daytime population the model does not include resident only gyms on private estates. These are effectively invisible to existing mapping tools but are likely to have an impact on the sustainability of facilities elsewhere.

The provision of equipment in Council-operated leisure centres remains vital to their financial viability. The combination of facilities offered in public leisure centres makes them attractive to customers. The membership fees generated from gym equipment allow for the cross subsidy of swimming pools.

As more commercial and private residential gyms are developed in the Borough it is essential that the Council takes a corporate view on the provision of gym facilities. It must be clear about who it is targeting and why. The Building Schools for the Future programme provides a significant opportunity to deliver capital investment in community leisure facilities however provision must take place within a strategic framework that ensures the needs of the population are being properly met by that investment. There also needs to be a robust examination of the revenue implications in relation to School business planning, existing facilities provided by the Council directly and future strategic facilities. This latter point is of particular importance in relation to future swimming pool facilities. Demand modelling has demonstrated a need for such facilities but financial modelling shows they are only viable if combined with a dry side.

In terms of the geographical accessibility of these facilities, the results of the catchment mapping are outlined in the map below.
Figure 24: Health and fitness provision and catchment areas in Tower Hamlets
There is predominantly good geographical coverage and access to the mix of public, dual use and commercial health and fitness provision across the Borough. Given that supply and demand modelling does not differentiate between commercial clubs, dual use facilities and public centres, distinct commercial sector catchments in this context are not considered to be an area of deficiency.

Two minor gaps in provision in the centre and south of the Borough are examined in more detail below.

**Central deficiency**

There is a small area of deficiency in the centre of the Borough between the Whitechapel Sports Centre and Mile End Park Leisure Centre, in the St Dunstan’s & Stepney ward. However, with this area being relatively small it is suggested that all residents would be able to access a choice of provision with a marginally increased travel distance.

**Southern deficiency**

Although there is an area to the south east of the Isle of Dogs that does not fall within the accessibility catchment of an existing health and fitness facility, given the socio demographic profile of this area, it could be served by the adjacent cluster of four large commercial clubs as well as the Tiller Leisure Centre.

### 6.3 Developing Leisure Facility Standards

#### 6.3.1 Planning for Population Growth and Change Model

The supply and demand analysis models facility requirements for specific static points in time, namely 2008, 2018 and 2028. In order to plan effectively and monitor the impact of housing development and associated population growth on an ongoing basis, the findings from the Leisure Facilities Strategy feed into the Planning for Population Growth and Change Model for Tower Hamlets. The model has been developed to be a live modelling tool to aid the implementation of the Local Development Framework.

The Planning for Population Growth and Change Model operates on the basis of capacity standards for different types of community and social infrastructure. It applies these standards to planning applications for new development to determine the individual and cumulative impact of development.
6.3.2 The Tower Hamlets Leisure Facility Standard

On the basis of the supply and demand analysis and the assumed future population figures, it is possible to determine leisure facilities standards for Tower Hamlets. The table below sets out these standards and compares them to the standards applied by Sport England in their Sports Facility Calculator (where applicable), which calculates demand resulting from individual residential developments and generates proposed planning contribution figures to mitigate the impact of such developments.

Figure 25: Tower Hamlets and Sport England Leisure Facility Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Assumed Population</th>
<th>Assumed Daytime Population</th>
<th>Swimming Pool Demand (sqm)</th>
<th>Swimming Pool Standard (sqm/1,000 residents)</th>
<th>Sports Hall Demand (no. of badminton courts)</th>
<th>Sports Hall Standard (no. of badminton courts/ 1,000 residents)</th>
<th>Gym Equipment Demand (no. of gym stations)</th>
<th>Gym Equipment Standard (no. of gym stations/1,000 residents)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>232,042</td>
<td>315,266</td>
<td>2,439</td>
<td>10.51</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>1,889</td>
<td>5.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>280,053</td>
<td>363,277</td>
<td>2,910</td>
<td>10.39</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>2,164</td>
<td>5.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2028</td>
<td>311,961</td>
<td>395,185</td>
<td>3,161</td>
<td>10.13</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>2,358</td>
<td>5.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.34</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport England Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.23</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from the comparison above, the standards calculated for Tower Hamlets using the Mapping the Future model are very closely aligned with those generated by the Sport England Sports Facility Calculator. It is therefore recommended that for the purpose of calculating planning contributions, the Sport England Sports Facility Calculator and the standards contained within the calculator be applied to new development in Tower Hamlets.
6.4 Assessment of existing public facilities

While residents in Tower Hamlets have access to a range of leisure facilities operated in a number of ways, the Council only has direct control over those facilities which are provided by and managed through the Council’s Sport and Physical Activity Service. The degree to which the Council controls existing dual use facilities is limited if these are managed by schools or their private contractors. The Council’s control over commercial sector facilities is limited to the spatial planning process.

At the same time the different types of facilities provide different access arrangements and pricing structures, with public facilities offering the widest possible access to local residents. Public facilities are therefore a central plank in planning for leisure facilities.

6.4.1 Facility condition, suitability and site constraints

A full assessment of each site, including building history and key facilities, levels of use, suitability, building condition and investment needed, is outlined in Appendix Four. The tables below provide an overview of the key issues relating to each site.

Figure 26: Public leisure facility condition, suitability and site constraints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Suitability / restrictions / condition and lifespan</th>
<th>Visits 2007/08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tiller Leisure Centre</td>
<td>Wet</td>
<td>- Located in residential area with limited footfall</td>
<td>119,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- No ability to expand dry provision due to site constraints</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Site has limited capacity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitechapel Leisure Centre</td>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>- Good location off Whitechapel Market with future Crossrail station outside</td>
<td>181,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Modern facilities but with limited scope for expansion due to site constraints</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mile End Park Leisure Centre</td>
<td>Wet / Dry</td>
<td>- Modern purpose built facility specifically designed to cater for users from different ethnic and religious backgrounds</td>
<td>402,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Orwell Leisure Centre</td>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>- Dry side only facility located in a largely residential area with limited footfall</td>
<td>161,342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Surrounded by public open space making expansion of the facility difficult</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Adjacent pitch managed by centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langdon Park Leisure Centre</td>
<td>Dry</td>
<td>- Modern dual use facility located at Langdon Park School</td>
<td>51,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Located in residential area with limited footfall and public use restricted to evening and weekend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- School part of BSF programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York Hall</td>
<td>Wet/ Dry</td>
<td>- Recently underwent major refurbishment to upgrade facilities and bring redundant areas into use providing additional lifespan to approximately 2019</td>
<td>344,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Located in town centre with high footfall</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Centre | Type | Suitability / restrictions / condition and lifespan | Visits 2007/08
--- | --- | --- | ---
--- | --- | --- | ---
| St George’s Pool | Wet | - Located in conservation area adjacent to main road with high footfall and passing traffic  
- Site restricted by surrounding park and conservation area status  
- Site has limited capacity in its current form  
- Likely to have significant investment need in the future due to concrete construction method | 129,173

Visitor figures for each site between 2005/06 and 2007/08 are outlined in the graph below:

**Figure 27: Visitor figures for Tower Hamlets public leisure facilities 2005/06 – 2007/08**

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**6.4.2 Efficiency assessment**

In 2004 the Council let a 15-year management contract for its leisure centres to Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL). GLL is a social enterprise that manages leisure centres for a large number of London local authorities. The contract with GLL will continue to operate throughout the period covered by this Strategy. For this reason, the Strategy has been developed through discussions with GLL in order to ensure operational limitations are considered at an early stage when proposing Strategic Outline Solutions. The leisure centre management contract allows for removal existing or addition of new facilities to the contract.
However, it should be noted that the Council has the option to find alternative ways of managing any new provision and is not obliged to incorporate these into the existing contract.

The Leisure Facilities Strategy has been developed alongside an economic efficiency review that assessed the financial and non-financial performance of existing facilities within the leisure management contract agreement with GLL in order to form a view on whether they will continue to meet the growing needs of residents and provide best value in terms of efficient service delivery. The review looked at three different facility types, using standard assumptions about what each type of facility would comprise:

- Wet only facility – 25m swimming pool, teaching pool, changing facilities, small multi-use room, small fitness equipment room, ancillary space
- Dry only facility – dance studio / multi-use space, fitness equipment room, programmable fitness equipment room, four court sports hall, changing, crèche, ancillary space
- Wet and dry facility – all of the above.

The table below shows the ranges of revenue surplus or deficit expected for the annual operating costs of each generic facility type over the facility lifetime (noting that the specific revenue costs would depend on the specific design and location of a particular facility). The ranges are based on advice from GLL.

**Figure 28: Expected revenue surplus or deficits for different facility types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility type</th>
<th>Revenue surplus/ (deficit)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wet only</td>
<td>(£250k) minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry only</td>
<td>£150k to £300k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wet and dry</td>
<td>£100k to (£150k)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This overview clearly points to the need to co-locate wet and dry facilities where wet facilities exist or are required in order to minimise the operating costs for the Council. Any changes to the leisure centre network should seek to provide dry facilities alongside all swimming pools in order to reduce the subsidy requirement, and generally ensure that new facilities are designed to be operationally efficient.

In addition, the supply and demand analysis identified a reasonably large number of school sites with high quality sports hall and gym facilities that are not open to the public. Further, there is an ambitious schools investment programme underway which has the potential to significantly change the shape of the school sector’s leisure facility infrastructure. Given the potential value for money gains of making more of these facilities open to the public for a longer period throughout the day, the Strategy should focus on working with the Building Schools for the Future investment programme to identify opportunities to increase the number of school sports halls that are accessible to the community, particularly in areas of geographical deficiency. Efforts should also be made to ensure that residents are fully aware of the dual facilities available to them and can more easily access information on their use.

### 6.4.3 Satisfaction with existing facilities

In addition to letting a 15-year management contract for its leisure centres in 2004, the Council has invested significantly in the development and improvement of sports centres in
recent years. In 2005, Mile End Park Leisure Centre opened and in 2007 the York Hall refurbishment was completed, providing modern spa facilities, additional gym space and improved changing facilities. At the same time five of our facilities have achieved QUEST accreditation.

The latest annual resident survey results demonstrate that residents feel these developments have improved their experience of leisure facilities in the Borough. As outlined in the graph below, in 2007/08 46% of all residents (users and non-users) rated leisure and sports facilities as good, very good or excellent. This is an increase of three percentage points from 2006/07 and is consistent with the improving trend over the past decade. Satisfaction levels with leisure and sports facilities in the Borough are also five percentage points higher than the London average of 41%.

Figure 29: Percentage of residents (users and non-users) who rate leisure and sports facilities in the Borough as good, very good or excellent

Not surprisingly, satisfaction ratings amongst residents who actually use the leisure and sports facilities are considerably higher. Of those residents surveyed, 44% used local leisure and sports facilities in 2007/08, up from 36% in 2006/07. 61% of these users rated local leisure and sports facilities as good, very good or excellent – an increase of one percentage points from the previous year. This is nine percentage points higher than the London average of 52%.

6.4.4 Transport access to Council leisure facilities

Good public transport access is a key factor in increasing participation and footfall in leisure facilities. The current network of Council-owned facilities is characterised by mixed levels of accessibility as measured by the Public Transport Access Level (PTAL) ratings. PTAL ratings take a range of factors into account, including the type of transport mode, frequency, walking distance to the nearest stop, to produce a rating score for each location in the Borough. It should be noted that PTAL ratings (as provided by the Greater London Authority) do not take into account proposed transport developments and the ratings applied for mapping purposes were last updated in 2007.

The map below shows all Council-owned leisure facilities in relation to PTAL ratings. According to the ratings, the most accessible centres are York Hall, Whitechapel Sports Centre, Mile End Park Leisure Centre. St George’s Swimming Pool also has a relatively
high rating. Langdon Park Leisure Centre has a medium access rating, with John Orwell and Tiller Leisure Centre considered to be the least accessible in terms of public transport.
Figure 30: Public Transport Accessibility Levels for Council-owned leisure facilities

Note:
The Public Transport Accessibility Levels are calculated by assessing mode of transport, walking distances, walking time, frequency of service, average wait times, access times, etc.
6.4.5 Accessibility of dual use facilities

Dual use facilities are those leisure centres located within schools and at the moment are only open to the public outside school hours. For the purpose of demand modelling and in line with Sport England guidance a reduction has been made to the actual capacity to reflect the limited opening hours. We are liaising with the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme to determine the extent to which new facilities could be designed to open throughout the day and we will re-run the model as necessary.

While limited opening hours in themselves reduce the accessibility of dual use centres and may exclude certain groups, the way these facilities are managed can also impact on their accessibility. A research exercise was carried out to (a) validate supply side data obtained from Sport England and (b) determine how easy it is to find out pricing and facility information about dual use centres. The table below sets out the findings of the accessibility audit element of the exercise.

**Figure 31: Findings of the accessibility audit of dual use facilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Information obtained?</th>
<th>Number of calls</th>
<th>Quality comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>St Paul’s Way Community School</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Initial contact passed call on to school site manager. School site manager referred enquiry to Poplar HARCA website. Poplar HARCA does not manage the school's facilities and referred enquiry back to the Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bethnal Green Centre for Sports &amp; Performance Arts</strong></td>
<td>No  Partial</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Answer phone during the day advising to phone after 6pm or leave message. Message suggests facility is open from 6pm. Repeatedly called after 6pm but no reply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swanlea School Sports Hall</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Initial call to school. Advised to phone bursar. Bursar referred back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility</td>
<td>Information obtained?</td>
<td>Number of calls</td>
<td>Quality comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pricing</td>
<td>Opening hours</td>
<td>Sport activities available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Foundation Girls School</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dual use facilities can provide an excellent service to the wider community provided that information on their use is readily and consistently available. The research exercise indicates that such information is currently not always available and this may impact on the degree to which these dual use facilities are used by residents. The findings from this research exercise are supported by the experience of residents as highlighted in the recent Scrutiny Review of Young People’s Participation in Sport. The Leisure Facilities Strategy will address this issue by recommending the establishment up of appropriate joint improvement projects between the Children’s Services and Communities, Localities and Culture Directorates. It also recommends that accessibility be considered at the outset of developing any new dual use facilities as part of the BSF programme.

### 6.4.6 School facilities currently closed to the public

The facility audit has revealed that there are five school sports halls, which are currently not accessible for use outside school hours. For modelling purposes, these sites have been excluded from the supply assumptions. Geographically, three of the school sites fall within the identified area of deficiency in the north/centre of the Borough. Two of those schools form part of the BSF programme.

The map below demonstrates the locations of the dual use sports halls currently closed to the public. Opening up these sites or investigating their potential for enhancement through the BSF programme may provide more cost effective options than providing stand alone facilities elsewhere.
Figure 32: Private use sports halls within schools in and around Tower Hamlets
SECTION 7: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

7.1 An ideal leisure facility network

Based on the research and evidence outlined to date, three key strategic objectives have been identified that will form the basis of the Leisure Facilities Strategy over the next ten years. These objectives are informed by an understanding of the key characteristics of an ideal leisure centre network (taking into account national, regional and local strategic drivers and best practice guidance) and an assessment of the extent to which the existing network is consistent with this ideal model. Broadly speaking, an ideal leisure facility network for Tower Hamlets should:

- address gaps in provision now and in the future, in particular for swimming pools and sports halls
- locate new facilities where people will use them most and where they will support the Local Development Framework (e.g. in town centres)
- provide dry facilities alongside all swimming pools in order to reduce the subsidy requirement
- focus additional sports hall capacity on school sites to maximise value for money, providing this is supported by the analysis and adequate community access can be secured
- offer state of the art facilities that are fully accessible to all residents, taking into account cultural, religious and physical needs
- ensure facilities are designed to be operationally efficient
- comprise facilities that are energy efficient and carbon reducing.

It will not necessarily be possible to achieve the full implementation of such a network given spatial and financial constraints. However, the model serves as a benchmark against which individual solutions can be assessed.

7.2 Objective One: Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation

A key objective of the Leisure Facilities Strategy is to address gaps in the provision of swimming pools, sports halls and health and fitness gyms now and in the future in order to meet the demand of the growing and changing population.

Policy guidance set out in PPG17, the London Plan, and the Councils’ own Local Development Framework emphasises the need for local authorities to provide adequate social and community infrastructure including sports facilities to keep pace with housing and commercial developments. Facilities should be located in town centre locations that are accessible by walking, cycling or public transport. Ensuring an adequate and accessible supply of leisure facilities also contributes to the delivery of national and local sport and health agendas relating to increasing participation in sport and physical activity, as well as fostering greater community cohesion and supporting a wide range of positive outcomes for children and young people.

A supply, demand and quality analysis has demonstrated that in broad terms by 2018, the following additional facilities will be required:
• 1 to 2 additional swimming pools, needed primarily in the east and north east of the Borough
• Additional four-court sports halls, particularly in the centre of the Borough and the Isle of Dogs. Initial planning should consider 3 to 4 additional sports halls.
• Re-provision or upgrade of existing facilities to ensure they are fully accessible to all residents, taking into account different cultural, religious and physical needs.

Major facilities should be situated in locations where people will use those most, and where they will help give effect to the overall LDF Core Strategy which emphasises developments in accessible town centres.

This shortfall in leisure facilities is expected to increase over the following 10 years to 2028, further emphasising the need to take decisive action now to address shorter term gaps in provision and avoid the need for more significant investment at a later stage. The rate of population growth is expected to slow in outyears, meaning that the additional supply needed will be less than that required between 2008 and 2018.

7.3 Objective Two: Generate economic and energy efficiencies

In addition to addressing gaps in the provision of leisure facilities in the Borough, the Leisure Facilities Strategy must also deliver economic and energy efficiency gains.

The Government and the Council have set ambitious targets for the reduction of carbon emissions over the next ten years. Leisure facilities have high energy needs and therefore have the potential to contribute significantly to supporting the achievement of these objectives. For this reason, the Leisure Facilities Strategy must seek to exploit all design opportunities to reduce carbon emissions from existing and new facilities.

In the current financial and economic climate of more constrained funding for local government alongside ever-growing demands from residents for a more personalised, innovative and high quality service, the Leisure Facilities Strategy must also look for opportunities to generate economic efficiencies that will reduce the council’s subsidy requirement through co-location and make best use of the Council’s wider asset portfolio to deliver value for money for residents.

7.4 Objective Three: Improve the quality and suitability of leisure facilities

The latest annual resident survey results demonstrate that Tower Hamlets residents are more satisfied with local leisure facilities than all Londoners. Satisfaction levels have risen consistently over recent years reflecting the significant investment the Council and its delivery partner GLL have made.

However, in order to maintain this positive trend, it is essential that facilities continue to be of a high quality to meet residents’ expectations and cater for a growing and changing population.

The recently completed condition surveys have identified numerous improvements and investments needed in the future to maintain the quality of existing facilities. The site by site assessment of the facilities has also demonstrated that some sites have limitations, which impact on the variety of services that can be provided and the experience our customers have when using these facilities.
The Strategy will need to anticipate and plan for major future investments in existing facilities to maintain the quality and value for money of the overall network.
A number of solutions have been identified that would enable us to deliver on the strategic objectives outlined above and work (as far as is feasible given spatial and operational constraints), towards achieving an ideal leisure facility network. The strategic solutions and associated actions are outlined in the table below. Responsibility for leading on these actions will lie with the Council’s Communities, Localities and Culture Directorate, but many of the deliverables will require joint working with the Children’s Services and Development and Renewal Directorates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strategic Objectives</th>
<th>Implementation Phase</th>
<th>Key deliverables and milestones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1  | Work towards providing additional sports halls     | Work with the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) investment programme to ensure dual use sports halls can be provided in strategic areas of deficiency and be opened up for community or club use, particularly in the centre of the Borough and on the Isle of Dogs. Some new sports hall provision may also be provided as part of leisure centre re-provision. Initial planning should be for 3 – 4 additional sports halls. | • Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation  
  • Generate economic efficiencies                                                                 | Year 1 – 3                                        | Work with the Children’s Services Directorate to introduce a gateway mechanism into BSF programme so that the community accessibility of new dual use facilities is explicitly considered at the outset – by November 2009.  
  Review the modelling for sports halls following initial planning for up to 4 sports halls only, based on new population data and legacy impact assessment of 2012 multi-sports arena – by July 2012.  
  Work with the Children’s Services Directorate to complete a review of the extent to which planned new BSF sports hall facilities could be designed to be opened-up throughout the day for community use – |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strategic Objectives</th>
<th>Implementation Phase</th>
<th>Key deliverables and milestones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Improve the accessibility of existing dual use leisure facilities</td>
<td>Work with schools to ensure information about and access to existing dual use facilities (including those that are currently closed to the public) is improved.</td>
<td>• Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation</td>
<td>Year 1 – 3</td>
<td>Work with the Children’s Services Directorate to complete a review of the potential to increase the accessibility of existing dual use sports halls (including those that are currently closed to the public), particularly in areas of geographical deficiency – by March 2010. Work with the Children’s Services Directorate to complete a review of the potential to enhance existing dual use facilities through the BSF programme to make them more publicly accessibly – ongoing review process aligned with BSF programming from November 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Work towards providing a new swimming pool in the east of the Borough</td>
<td>Develop detailed options for the re-opening of Poplar Baths to address the shortage of water space in the east of the Borough. The re-opened centre should consist of both wet and dry facilities in order to reduce the subsidy requirement, offer greater choice to people and provide enhanced facilities.</td>
<td>• Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation</td>
<td>Year 1 – 3</td>
<td>Complete options appraisals (including detailed financial modelling, business planning, risk assessments and the identification of funding sources and delivery mechanisms) – by December 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Strategic Objectives</td>
<td>Implementation Phase</td>
<td>Key deliverables and milestones</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Introduce a leisure centre Carbon Reduction Programme</td>
<td>Develop and implement a programme of improvements to existing leisure facilities to reduce carbon emissions and contribute to meeting the Council’s targets on reducing its environmental impact.</td>
<td>• Generate energy efficiencies</td>
<td>Year 1 - 3</td>
<td>Complete energy surveys for York Hall Leisure Centre, Tiller Leisure Centre, St George's Pools, Whitechapel Sports Centre, John Orwell Sports Centre, Mile End Stadium, Mile End Park Leisure Centre – by December 2009. Agree prioritised programme of improvements to address issues identified in the energy surveys – by February 2010. Complete installation of pool covers in selected swimming pools by March 2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Explore improvements to St George’s Pool and John Orwell Leisure Centre</td>
<td>Undertake a detailed investigation of solutions to improve St George’s Pool and John Orwell Leisure Centre.</td>
<td>• Generate economic efficiencies • Improve the quality and suitability of leisure facilities</td>
<td>Year 1 – 3</td>
<td>Complete site reviews (including condition surveys, detailed financial modelling, business planning, risk assessments) – by March 2010. Report to Members on way forward – by June 2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Work towards providing a new swimming pool in the north-east of the</td>
<td>Develop detailed options for the provision of a swimming pool to address the shortage of water</td>
<td>• Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation</td>
<td>Year 4 – 6</td>
<td>Complete options appraisals (including detailed financial modelling,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Strategic Objectives</td>
<td>Implementation Phase</td>
<td>Key deliverables and milestones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Borough</td>
<td>space in the north-east of the Borough (including investigating the option of re-instating Victoria Park Lido). Such a facility should consist of both wet and dry facilities in order to reduce the subsidy requirement, offer greater choice to people and provide enhanced facilities.</td>
<td>• Generate economic efficiencies</td>
<td></td>
<td>business planning, risk assessments and the identification of funding sources and delivery mechanisms – by March 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Explore the option of a new town centre leisure centre on the Isle of Dogs</td>
<td>Work in collaboration with Development and Renewal to investigate options to provide a leisure centre in a new town centre location which allows for the provision of a facility combining a swimming pool and a sports hall.</td>
<td>• Address gaps in provision and provide facilities in areas of low participation • Generate economic efficiencies</td>
<td>Year 7 – 10</td>
<td>Work with Development &amp; Renewal Directorate to ensure suitable town centre options are identified through the LDF process – by December 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Liaise with Development &amp; Renewal to identify potential delivery mechanisms by December 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete appraisals (including detailed financial modelling, business planning, risk assessments and the identification of funding sources) – determined by property market conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Report to Members on options – determined by property market conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Assess York Hall facilities</td>
<td>York Hall was upgraded recently and improvements are expected to provide an additional 15 years of facilities.</td>
<td>• Improve the quality and suitability of leisure facilities</td>
<td>Year 7 – 10</td>
<td>Complete condition survey – by October 2009.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition, the following overarching actions will be progressed.


- Work with Development & Renewal to feed the findings from the Leisure Facilities Strategy into the supply and demand analysis / development of an asset strategy across the Council’s wider corporate property portfolio – by December 2009 (contingent on development of Council wide asset strategy)

- Update remaining condition surveys at sites not already covered by the options above – for Whitechapel Sports Centre, Mile End Stadium and Mile End Park Leisure Centre – by October 2009

- Work with the Development and Renewal Department to:
  - Feed the findings from the Leisure Facilities Strategy into the Planning for Population Growth and Change Model for Tower Hamlets – by October 2009
  - Feed the findings of the Leisure Facilities Strategy into the development of LDF Core Strategy documents – October 2009
  - Apply the Sport England Sports Facility Calculator and the standards contained within it to new developments in Tower Hamlets in order to calculate planning contributions – from October 2009

- Review progress against this Action Plan and provide 6-monthly updates to the Asset Management Board – with the first report to be considered by March 2010, and every six months thereafter.
### APPENDICES

**Appendix One: Active People Survey detailed table**

Participation (once in past four weeks) by activity group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Male 16-24</th>
<th>Male 25-34</th>
<th>Male 35-54</th>
<th>Male 55+</th>
<th>Female 16-24</th>
<th>Female 25-34</th>
<th>Female 35-54</th>
<th>Female 55+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aquatic sports</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparator average</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackney</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
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<td>10.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>19.2</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>9.9</td>
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<td>19.4</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>16.6</td>
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<td>16.7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newham</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Keep fit/gymnastic activity</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparator average</td>
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<td>18.4</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>12.2</td>
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<td>23.1</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>12.1</td>
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<td>16.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>12.6</td>
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<td>19.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>21.7</td>
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<td><strong>Racquet sports</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hamlets</td>
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<td>8.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparator average</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackney</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>6.9</td>
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<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islington</td>
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<td>7.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
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<td>6.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambeth</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Male 16-24</td>
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<td>Male 35-54</td>
<td>Male 55+</td>
<td>Female 16-24</td>
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<td>8.8</td>
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<td>13.9</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<td>1.3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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</table>

Source: Active People Diagnostic
Appendix Two: Facilities model detailed methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demand: detailed assumptions</th>
<th>Supply: detailed assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swimming pools</strong></td>
<td>For supply modelling purposes, only publicly accessible water space suitable for lane swimming is taken into account. Private use / commercial pools are excluded. This is in line with standards set by Sport England. (Note that as a result of modelling assumptions being based entirely based on lane swimming they provide fairly generous space allocations per user.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order that all demand is catered for, the supply will need to be sufficient in size to cater for the maximum demand at any point in time. The at one time capacity has to be able therefore to cater for the maximum demand.

At one time capacity (the capacity in any peak session) is then used to calculate the necessary supply. This is based on a number of assumptions that have been researched by Sport England. These are as follows:

- Proportion of visits during peak times = 63%
- Average duration of visit = 64 minutes (tank), 68 minutes (leisure pool) (based on national surveying)
- Normal peak periods = 52 hours per week = 49 peak sessions (6.30-7.30 weekday mornings early bird swims and for club swimming, 12-2 lunchtime swims, 4-9pm weekdays club and leisure swimming, 10-4pm weekends for leisure use) – assumptions are pool specific but may include school sessions
- At one time capacity = allowance of 6m² of water space per person
- A one time capacity is defined as the supply/capacity of one m² of pool area at any one time e.g.
  - capacity per 212m² (1 pool unit) = 35 people (number of metres squared divided by the at one time capacity)
  - A pool unit is defined as an average four lane, 25 metre pool.

This calculates a total supply in metres squared that is necessary to meet the maximum demand. This figure is compared to the existing supply, which is calculated from a detailed competition analysis.

The model relies on other assumptions, namely:

- it is assumed that all pools within the catchment are equally accessible, irrespective of relative location within the catchment
- it assumes that the number of people residing just outside the catchment who will use pools within the catchment is equal to the number of people who reside within the catchment and use pools outside the catchment.

All learner water and leisure water is excluded, as are main swimming pools with less than 100m² of water space, since these are not considered suitable for public lane swimming. In addition, as dual use facilities are only open outside of school hours, the model assumes a 25% reduction in the level of accessible water space.

A full list of facilities in LBTH that are identified in the Sport England Active Places Power database, their type and whether they are included in the supply modelling is provided in Appendix Three.

[Note that for completeness, the model also identifies water space within the 960m accessible buffer around the boundary of the Borough. Of the sites identified, only the Olympic Aquatics Centre is considered to have a potential impact on the supply of water space in the Borough as it will provide a significant amount of water for lane swimming, although the extent to which it will be accessible / attractive to residents for community use is likely to be reasonably limited.]
### Demand: detailed assumptions

**Sports halls**

This model works on exactly the same principles as the swimming pool model, but with the relevant parameters.

Assumptions/Parameters used in Model:

- Proportion of visits during peak times = 60%
- Average duration of visit = 1 hour (usually casual or block bookings)
- Normal peak periods = 40.5 hours per week (accounts for weekday evenings including badminton, fitness classes and 5 a side football) 5-9.30pm weekdays and 12-9pm at weekends
- At one time capacity = 5 people per badminton court

Squash courts can also be analysed using the same methodology, but currently the only demand parameters published are those researched by Sport Scotland, which relate to badminton courts.

### Supply: detailed assumptions

Supply is calculated based on the number of badminton courts in each sports hall.

For supply modelling purposes only publicly accessible halls are taken into account, in line with Sport England guidance. Private use / commercial facilities are excluded.

In addition, as dual use facilities are only open outside of school hours the model assumes a 25% reduction in the level of accessible sports hall space.

A full list of facilities in LBTH that are identified in the Sport England Active Places Power database, their type and whether they are included in the supply modelling is provided in Appendix Three.

[Note that for completeness the model also identifies sports halls that fall within the buffer around the boundary of the Borough. One site was identified but as it is situated at the outer edge of the buffer zone it is not considered to have a material impact on supply.]

### Gym health and fitness equipment

There are few demand parameters for health and fitness. This is because:

- Sport England has completed little research in this sector
- it is a very financially and commercially sensitive sector, which results in any research completed being confidential
- there are so many different types of health and fitness facilities, from a small back room gym with free weights only to a 10,000 sqft fully equipped and air conditioned gym as part of an even larger multi sport club.

The demand model is based upon the estimated demand within a defined catchment area. Demand is assessed using two criteria – Total Adult Population and Sport and Leisure Potential.

By applying the Sport and Leisure Potential profile to the local population the propensity of this population to

The number of stations in a health and fitness facility is used to quantify the level of supply that is necessary to meet the maximum demand.

For health and fitness station provision, all registered sites – public, dual and commercial use – are fully included in recognition of the importance of the commercial sector provision.

No reductions are factored into this model for dual use facilities.

The audit focuses on fitness stations only and does not
**Demand: detailed assumptions**

participate in health and fitness is known and the potential demand for health and fitness can be estimated.

The supply that is needed to cater for this demand is then calculated. In order that all demand is catered for the supply will need to be sufficient in size to cater for the maximum demand at any point in time. The ‘at one time capacity’ has to therefore be able to cater for the maximum demand.

At one time capacity (the capacity in any peak session) is then used to calculate the necessary supply. This is based on a number of assumptions that are listed at the start of each model, and include:

- Average duration of visit = 1 hour
- Proportion of visits during peak times = 65%
- Normal peak periods = 36 hours per week (5-9pm Monday to Friday and 9am-5pm weekends)
- Frequency of participation by average user = 1.5 times per week or six times a month.

The model defines health and fitness users as all people participating in health and fitness, including private club members, users of local authority facilities, body builders and home users. Industry research supports a reduction of 10% in the assumed demand for stations to represent the proportion of health and fitness users who do not use gyms, for example ‘home’ users.

It is also assumed that the at one time capacity is calculated by the ratio of one person per station (a station is a piece of equipment – cardio vascular and resistance).

Equipment such as free weights, stretch mats and ab cradles are not included.

Furthermore, supply/capacity/demand is measured using stations (pieces of equipment) rather than membership or floor area, because it is the most accurate and accessible type of measurement.

*Membership numbers* are commercially sensitive and are problematic to establish. The official number of members for a club can also be different to the actual number. For example, membership numbers can be inflated to imply the club is more successful and larger than perhaps it might be.

*Floor area* is also difficult to assess. It is not a commonly known piece of information and the floor area can include circulation space and corridors, changing facilities, other facilities, etc. Therefore, it is difficult to obtain this information in the first place and once located, it is often unclear as to what the floor area actually covers.

Therefore, the number of stations in a health and fitness facility is used to quantify the level of supply that is necessary to meet the maximum demand. The demand figure is then compared to the existing supply which is calculated from a detailed competition analysis.

**Supply: detailed assumptions**

A full list of facilities in LBTH that are identified in the Sport England *Active Places Power* database, their type and whether they are included in the supply modelling is provided in Appendix Three.

Following spot checks with different facilities, it is clear that the amount of gym fitness equipment fluctuates on a regular basis. For this reason, a band (with our calculation at the upper end and the consultant’s data at the lower end) is provided.
## Appendix Three: facility audit data tables

### Sports halls in and around Tower Hamlets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Number of courts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JOHN ORWELL (WAPPING) SPORTS CENTRE</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITECHAPEL SPORTS CENTRE</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILE END PARK LEISURE CENTRE</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BETHnal GREEN CENTRE FOR SPORTS &amp; PERFORMING ARTS</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGDON PARK LEISURE CENTRE</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWANLEA SCHOOL SPORTS HALL</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEORGE GREEN'S SCHOOL &amp; SPORTS CENTRE</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTRAL FOUNDATION GIRLS SCHOOL</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MULBERRY SPORTS &amp; LEISURE CENTRE</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTLEE YOUTH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BISHOP CHALLONER CATHOLIC COLLEGIATE SCHOOL</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKHOUSE LEISURE CENTRE</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAKLANDS SECONDARY SCHOOL</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
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<tr>
<td>IAN MIKARDO HIGH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>STEPNEY GREEN MATHS &amp; COMPUTING COLLEGE</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIR JOHN CASS FOUNDATION AND REDCOAT SCHOOL</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHOENIX SCHOOL</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARBOUR YOUTH CENTRE</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENSIGN</td>
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<tr>
<td>ST PAULS WAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL</td>
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**Included in supply modelling**

**Excluded from supply modelling**

### Summary table: sports halls

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility type</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Number of courts</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Public</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dual Use</td>
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<td>35.25</td>
<td>This equates to 47 courts less 25% reduction for dual use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Use</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Borough</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total - excluded from supply modelling</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
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### Swimming pools in and around Tower Hamlets

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<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Facility type</th>
<th>Width (m)</th>
<th>Length (m)</th>
<th>Area (m²)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ST GEORGE’S SWIMMING POOLS</td>
<td>PUBLIC - MAIN POOL</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>466.2</td>
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<td>PUBLIC - MAIN POOL</td>
<td>12.5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>PUBLIC - TRAINING POOL</td>
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<td>YORK HALL LEISURE CENTRE</td>
<td>PUBLIC - TRAINING POOL</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPINDLES HEALTH &amp; LEISURE (DOCKLANDS)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>REEBOK SPORTS CLUB (LONDON)</td>
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<td>FITNESS FIRST HEALTH CLUB (THOMAS MORE SQUARE)</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>LA FITNESS (WEST INDIA QUAY)</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIR JOHN CASS FOUNDATION AND REDCOAT SCHOOL</td>
<td>PRIVATE USE</td>
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### Summary table: swimming pools

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<th>Facility type</th>
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<td>Public - teaching pool</td>
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<td><strong>Sub-total - excluded from supply modelling</strong></td>
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<td><strong>5021.25</strong></td>
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## Health and fitness equipment in and around Tower Hamlets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Number of fitness stations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABILITY CENTRE BOW</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN ORWELL (WAPPING) SPORTS CENTRE</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILE END PARK LEISURE CENTRE</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST GEORGE'S SWIMMING POOLS</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TILLER LEISURE CENTRE</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHITECHAPEL SPORTS CENTRE</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
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<td>YORK HALL LEISURE CENTRE</td>
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<tr>
<td>BODYLINES (LADIES ONLY)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAST RIVER SPA</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>FITNESS FIRST HEALTH CLUB (BOW WHARF)</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>FITNESS FIRST HEALTH CLUB (SPITALFIELDS)</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>FITNESS FIRST HEALTH CLUB (THOMAS MORE SQUARE)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA FITNESS (WEST INDIA QUAY)</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSCLE WORK GYM</td>
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</tr>
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<td>REEBOK SPORTS CLUB (LONDON)</td>
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<td>VIRGIN ACTIVE CLASSIC (CANARY RIVERSIDE)</td>
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<td>Q MOTION HEALTH &amp; FITNESS</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTRAL FOUNDATION GIRLS SCHOOL</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGDOON PARK LEISURE CENTRE</td>
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<td>36</td>
</tr>
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<td>MULBERRY SPORTS &amp; LEISURE CENTRE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST PAULS WAY COMMUNITY SCHOOL</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWANLEA SCHOOL SPORTS HALL</td>
<td>DUAL USE</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Excluded from supply modelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Number of fitness stations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOW SCHOOL</td>
<td>PRIVATE USE</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEORGE GREEN'S SCHOOL &amp; SPORTS CENTRE</td>
<td>PRIVATE USE</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY (LONDON CITY CAMPUS)</td>
<td>PRIVATE USE</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MORPETH SCHOOL</td>
<td>PRIVATE USE</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAKLANDS SECONDARY SCHOOL</td>
<td>PRIVATE USE</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIR JOHN CASS FOUNDATION AND REDCOAT SCHOOL</td>
<td>PRIVATE USE</td>
<td>15</td>
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### WITHIN BOROUGH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Number of fitness stations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BRITANNIA HEALTH AND FITNESS CENTRE</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQUATICS CENTRE</td>
<td>PUBLIC</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARKETS SPORTS HEALTH AND FITNESS</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIRGIN ACTIVE CLASSIC (TOWER BRIDGE)</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL</td>
<td>160</td>
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</table>

### Summary table: health and fitness equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility type</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Number of fitness stations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
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<td>919</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dual Use</td>
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<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total - included in supply modelling</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Use</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Borough</td>
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<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total - excluded from supply modelling</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix Four: public facility site analysis

John Orwell Sports Centre

Building History, Location and Key Facilities

John Orwell Sports Centre opened in 1980. It is a combination of a converted Victorian dockside workshop, new sports hall and adjacent in filled dock basin providing outdoor facilities.

The centre is located in the heart of Wapping’s residential area and is within a short walk of Wapping Underground Station and is served by a variety of local bus routes.

The centre has the following facilities:
- 4 court sports hall
- Gym/fitness area
- 1 artificial all weather football/hockey pitch-
  (sand fill, floodlit)
- Multi-court (tarmac) comprising:
  (usage restricted to one sport at any one time)
- 1 tennis court
- 1 netball court
- 5-a-side football
- changing accommodation (indoor and outdoor)
- office facilities
- car park

Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 7.00am - 10.00pm
Sat: 9.00am - 6.00pm
Sun: 9.00am - 7.00pm

Off Peak Hours
Mon-Fri: 7.00am -12.00pm & 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Sat: All Day
Sun: 2.30pm - 7.00pm

Visits

The graph below shows visitor figures for John Orwell Sports Centre.


Suitability and Issues with Use

- Some restricted access for users with disabilities
- Lack of storage space
- Internal areas do not provide ideal layout for customer circulation
- Lack of exclusive dance studio which can be segregated for single sex use
- Difference in level with stairs only and no lift
- Poor condition of outdoor changing

Building Condition and Investment Need

John Orwell Leisure Centre was considered to be in a fair condition at the time of the last full condition survey (2003). The survey highlighted that various parts of the centre are of differing investment need, with the more recent addition of the sports hall in better condition than some of the historic dock buildings. Internally the centre was showing wear and tear. Since the survey, the centre has been managed and maintained by GLL but no major upgrade or investment other than routine maintenance has been undertaken.
Mile End Park Leisure Centre and Stadium

Building History, Location and Key Facilities

The centre was opened in February 2006 and is located in the heart of the Borough in Mile End within walking distance of London Underground, British Rail and Docklands Light Railway stations. It is also served well by major road routes including the A13 and A11.

The leisure centre has the following facilities:

- Fitness centre/gym
- Programmable gym
- Main Swimming Pool (with viewing gallery)
- Teaching pool
- Studio
- Health Suite
- Women Only Changing
- Family changing wet side
- Dry side changing
- Sports hall
- Crèche Play & Learn
- Meeting Room
- Car park & Offices

The Stadium comprises the following facilities:

- 400m/8 lane athletics track (floodlit)
- 1 grass football pitch (floodlit)
- 10 mini football pitches 5 & 7 aside
- Changing accommodation

Opening hours

Mon – Fri: 6.30am – 10.00pm
Sat & Sun: 9.00am – 5.00pm

Off peak hours:
Mon – Fri: 9.00am – 12noon & 2.00pm – 5.00pm
Sat: All day
Sun: 2.30pm – 5.00pm
All Bank Holidays

Visits

The graph below shows visitor figures for Mile End Park Leisure Centre and Mile End Park Stadium.
Visits to Mile End Park Leisure Centre (opened Feb 06) - 2005/06 to 2007/08

Visits to Mile End Park Stadium - 2005/06 to 2007/08

Suitability and Issues with Use

- Inability to be able to programme pools separately
- Window to sport hall makes single sex use very difficult
- Access to football pitches and control of users
- Separation of reception areas between leisure centre and stadium
- Conflict between football and athletics uses of the grass pitch area (particularly in relation to throwing events)
- Design issue with rebound boards and vandalism on mini pitches

Good design features

- Programmable gym
- Individual private showers
- Pool hall able to be separated whilst still being able to be used by families when programme allows
- Separate dry / wet changing
- Changing village & women’s only section
Building Condition and Investment Need

Mile End Park Leisure Centre is a new facility and as such no condition survey is yet available. The centre is deemed to be in overall good condition and is being maintained by GLL in accordance with agreed maintenance regimes. The stadium structure will require some upgrade work to the track and spectator viewing stands to ensure it can continue to operate as competition venue for athletics.
St George’s Pool
Building History, Location and Key Facilities

The Centre opened in 1969. It has undergone extensive repair and refurbishment work to enhance facility provision. It is located on The Highway, the main road route between the City and Docklands, and is close to the DLR and East London Underground lines.

The Centre has the following facilities:

- Main Pool
- Main Pool changing accommodation
- Teaching Pool
- Teaching Pool changing accommodation
- 2 x gym/fitness room
- Disabled lift
- Viewing gallery for main pool
- Offices
- Car park

Opening Hours

Mon - Fri: 7.00am - 9.30pm
Sat & Sun: 8.00am - 6.30pm

Off Peak Hours:
Mon-Fri: 7.00am - 12.00pm & 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Sat: All Day
Sun: 2.30pm - 6.30pm

Visits

The graph below shows visitor figures for St George’s Pool.

![Visits to St George's Pools - 2005/06 to 2007/08](image)

Suitability and Issues with Use

- Separation of small and main pools requiring additional staffing throughout
• Lack of communal changing facilities
• Seen as old fashioned and unwelcoming
• Poor dry facilities which do not allow for a full programme to be developed
• No small area such as meeting room to allow programmes for older people
• No room for expansion to develop additional services
• No individual/personal showers
• Fitness area split into 2 areas
• Ability to segregate areas and screen off is difficult, making provision of single sex sessions difficult to delivers
• No other dry facilities (e.g. dance studio)
• Building is exhibiting some early signs of structural decay common to concrete construction of this type

Building Condition and Investment Need
St George’s Pool was considered to be in a structurally safe but generally poor condition at the time of the last full condition survey (2003) and significant investment needs were identified. The condition survey identified a number of works relating to improving customer and staff areas. In addition, the survey noted that the concrete structure of the building as well as the existing ventilation and windows did not meet best design requirements for humid environments such as a swimming pool. Rectifying the resulting problems would require redesign and replacement of all windows, redesign of external walls and the replacement of internal steel work. Since the survey Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) and the Council have invested in upgrading changing rooms, reception areas customer facilities. Structural surveys and regular investigation is taking place in relation to the concrete construction method.
**Tiller Leisure Centre**

*Building History, Location and Key Facilities*

The Tiller Centre was opened in 1966. The centre is located in the heart of London’s Docklands within walking distance of local bus routes and the Docklands Light Railway, enabling easy access from both the Canary Wharf estate and for Borough residents. However, it is located down a quite residential street and this has an impact on the footfall the centre can expect.

The centre has the following facilities:

- Main Pool with spectator area
- Gym/fitness room
- Boxing gym
- Under 7’s children’s ball play zone
- Studio 1 (upstairs)
- Studio 2 (downstairs)
- Beauty treatment room
- Changing accommodation (indoor)
- *Office space*

**Opening Hours**

Mon –Fri: 7.00am – 9.30pm  
Sat & Sun: 8.00am - 5.00pm

**Off Peak Hours:**

Mon-Fri: 7.00am -12.00pm & 2.00pm - 5.00pm  
Sat: All Day  
Sun: 2.30pm - 5.00pm

**Visits**

The graph below shows visitor figures for Tiller Leisure Centre.
Suitability and Issues with Use

- Some users find external view as unwelcoming
- Lack of communal changing facilities
- Dance studio not fit for purpose (block floor)
- Whilst accessible to people with disabilities, circulation through the centre is difficult
- No room for development of additional services due to site constraints
- No individual /personal showers

Building Condition and Investment Need

Tiller Leisure Centre was considered to be in a fair condition and structurally sound at the time of the last full condition survey. However, in order to meet present day requirements in relation to accessibility, energy efficiency and customer expectations, the building would require complete refurbishment of the building fabric and services. Apart from investment to bring the building up to date, the survey also identified works to the roof and the need to upgrade changing rooms. Since the survey, the following works have been carried out to ensure appropriate maintenance: A new roof covering was installed and changing rooms were refurbished to ensure they comply with disability access legislation. The pool hall has been repainted, a new reception area was installed and a boxing gym has been created in the basement area.
Whitechapel Sports Centre
Building History, Location and Key Facilities

The Centre opened in 1998 and is located adjacent to Whitechapel Underground station. A major principle of the development has been accessibility so as to attract traditionally non-sporting sections of the local community. In particular women, people with disabilities, young people and black and minority ethnic communities are target markets. The centre also provides a quality venue to assist in the development of excellence in basketball.

The centre has the following facilities:

- 4 court sports hall
- Outdoor training pitch (floodlit)
- 2 x general gym/fitness room
- 1 x women only gym/fitness room
- Aerobics studio
- Crèche
- Meeting room
- Changing accommodation (indoor and outdoor)
- 2 saunas (located within dry side changing rooms)
- Offices

Opening Hours

Mon - Fri: 7.00am - 9.00pm
Sat & Sun: 8.00am - 6.00pm

Off Peak Hours:
Mon - Fri: 8.30am -12.00pm & 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Sat: All Day
Sun: 2.30pm - 6.00pm

Visits

The graph below shows visitor figures for Whitechapel Sports Centre.
Suitability and Issues with Use

- Location of sauna’s within changing rooms are difficult to supervise
- Site is restricted in size with no scope to expand the facilities

Building Condition and Investment Need

Whitechapel Sports Centre was considered to be in a good condition throughout at the time of the last full condition survey (2003) and no major investment needs were identified. The condition survey recommended that routine maintenance should suffice to keep the building in good condition. Since then, the building has been managed and maintained in accordance with the survey by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL).
York Hall

Building History, Location and Key Facilities

York Hall opened in 1929 to provide public bathing facilities and a prestigious civic hall. It is particularly famous as a boxing venue for both amateurs and professionals. York Hall is located in the heart of the Borough in Bethnal Green and is accessible via various bus routes. Bethnal Green Underground Station is within five minutes' walk.

The centre has the following facilities:

- Main Pool with spectator area
- Teaching Pool
- Events/multi-purpose hall with stage area, seating up to 900 people, with balcony for additional 250 people
- Aerobics studio
- Gym/fitness room
- SPA London including:
  - 2 Steam rooms
  - 1 Sauna
  - 1 Plunge Pool
  - 3 Hot rooms
  - Relaxation area
  - Treatment rooms
- Changing accommodation (dry side)
- Changing accommodation (wet side)
- Refreshment Area
- Offices

Opening Hours

Mon - Fri: 7.00am - 9.30pm
Sat: 8.00am - 8.30pm
Sun: 8.00am - 7.30pm

Off Peak Hours:
Mon - Fri: 7.15am - 12.00pm & 2.00pm - 5.00pm
Sat: All Day
Sun: 2.30pm - 6.30pm

Visits

The graph below shows visitor figures for York Hall.
Visits to York Hall - 2005/06 to 2007/08

Suitability and Issues with Use

- Lack of communal changing facilities
- No individual /personal showers
- School rooms access from within single sex changing
- Small and main pools together mean cannot be programmed for separate community groups
- Access and inter-relationship with building /events is difficult, however within constraints as much as possible completed.

Building Condition and Investment Need

The last full condition survey of York Hall identified a number of internal and external issues to be addressed. Since then, the building has been managed and maintained in accordance with the survey by Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL). A major investment and upgrade programme has been carried out to ensure the building functions fully and meets customer expectations as far as possible within the building constraints. The work included improvements to the plant and mechanical elements (boiler, electrical/wiring) as well as improvements to customer-facing areas. A new reception area and crèche were created, the pool hall and adjacent changing rooms were fully refurbished, the main hall has been refurbished and supporting facilities for major events (toilets, kitchen, bar) were created, the gym was refurbished and expanded and new changing rooms were created for the gym. The basement space has been converted into a high quality day spa facility.
Langdon Park Sports Centre

Building History, Location and Key Facilities

Langdon Park Sports Centre opened in 2006 as part of the new PFI school development at Langdon Park School. The centre is essentially a dual use facility, primarily designed for school and education purpose. It is accessible to the wider community outside school hours.

The centre has the following facilities:

- SHOKK Gym (for young people)
- Studio
- Gymnasium
- 6 tennis courts (floodlight)
- Multi use area: 7-a-side & 5 a-side
- Full size football pitch
- 3 netball courts
- Meeting room
- 4 court sport hall
- Changing accommodation
- Running Track

Opening Hours

Mon – Fri: 6.00pm – 10.00pm
Sat & Sun: 10.00am – 6.00pm

Off Peak Hours
Sat: all day
Sun: 1.00pm – 4.00pm

Visits

The graph below shows visitor figures for Langdon Park Sports Centre.

![Visits to Langdon Park - 2005/06 to 2007/08](image.png)
Suitability and Issues with Use

- Limited times of access due to school use during the daytime
- No dedicated space for leisure management contractor staff on site
- Lack of purpose design means this centre cannot provide women only use of parts of the facility
- Inter-relationship between school, GLL and PFI management of the facility is complex

Building Condition and Investment Need

Given its recent construction date, no condition survey is required. The building is maintained by the school PFI contractor.