

**Indoor Sports Facilities for the Future**  
An Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy for the London Borough of  
Tower Hamlets  
2017-2027

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## READING GUIDE

Section 1 is an executive summary of the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy, 2017-2027.

Section 2 outlines the purpose and scope of the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy for 2017-2027 and summarises the achievements of the previous strategy.

Section 3 sets out a strategic focus for indoor sports facilities in Tower Hamlets for the next 10 years. It includes:

- An overview of an ideal indoor sports facilities network for Tower Hamlets
- Three strategic objectives to help move towards the ideal network. For each objective there are suggested options for exploring potential developments to the existing council-owned network of facilities.

Section 4 is an assessment of indoor sports facilities in Tower Hamlets. It includes:

- Analysis of current and future need for sports halls;
- Analysis of current and future need for swimming pools;
- Analysis of current and future need for fitness stations;
- Assessment of existing council-owned facilities in Tower Hamlets, including an external assessment of the condition of existing facilities.

Section 5 provides an overview of the policy and strategic context for indoor sports facilities focusing on national, regional and local priorities for sport and leisure.

Section 6 provides key data and information from the borough profile, which informs the strategic objectives and options set out. It includes data about adult and children participation in sports and physical activity.

Section 7 summarises findings from recent consultations carried out in Tower Hamlets related to sports and leisure, which have informed the objectives and options set out in this strategy.

# SECTION ONE: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1.1 Introduction

This is the executive summary of the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2017 – 2027 for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The strategy is based on the findings of a comprehensive assessment of the borough's current and projected indoor sports facility needs, an externally commissioned survey of the condition and suitability of the council-owned network and market research to establish the views of Tower Hamlet's residents.

This strategy provides an overall decision making framework for optimising indoor sports facilities in the borough and considers potential investment over the coming decade in council-owned facilities. It supports the council's Strategic Plan and forms essential evidence for the new Local Plan, by providing a clear analysis of supply and demand following a nationally recognised model for indoor sports facilities.

## 1.2 Scope

Residents in Tower Hamlets have access to a range of indoor sports facilities operated by public, private and voluntary organisations. In some cases facilities are offered as part of a wider service offer to residents, for example, within a community centre or school.

This strategy assesses supply and demand for all indoor sports facilities (including dual-use facilities and commercial facilities) in the borough regardless of ownership and sets out specific strategic options for the seven council-owned indoor sports facilities (referred to as council-owned facilities); however, it takes into account the supply of.

The seven council-owned facilities are:

- John Orwell Sports Centre
- St George's Pool
- Whitechapel Sports Centre
- York Hall
- Mile End Park Stadium and Leisure Centre
- Poplar Baths
- Tiller Leisure Centre

The strategy relates to the provision of indoor sports facilities within the boundaries of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. However, it recognises facilities that are within a 1,200 metre (15 minute walk) buffer-zone from the borough boundary, which may be the nearest facility for many Tower Hamlets residents, and these facilities are given due consideration in this strategy's evidence base and strategic options.

### **1.3 Policy context**

The Tower Hamlets Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy is consistent with national, regional and local policy on leisure provision which has been reviewed in the development of this strategy (see Section 5). The current ambitions for physical activity and sport at the national, regional and local level are that;

- More people take up regular physical activity as a habit;
- Sporting clubs and institutions have the right supply and mix of facilities to further develop their respective disciplines;
- Resources allocated to indoor sports facilities provision are used in a more targeted, efficient and effective way;
- Communities have facilities that enable their members to come together in a more inclusive way;
- Access to facilities is improved for groups with historically low participation.

### **1.4 Needs assessment**

Sport England recommends that local authorities complete a needs assessment prior to strategy development. The needs assessment that supports this strategy includes supply and demand modelling based on a nationally recognised facilities planning calculator, externally commissioned condition surveys of the council-owned facilities and representative market research into the views of over 700 residents.

The headline findings from the needs assessment are that:

- Population growth in Tower Hamlets over the coming decades will result in increased demand for indoor sports facilities in the borough
- Some council-owned facilities are nearing the end of their asset life
- Tower Hamlet's residents value council-owned facilities, with the majority of regular users reporting their overall experience of the borough's centres as being either good or very good
- There are some areas of the borough currently without a sports hall or swimming pool within a 15-minute walk.

There is further explanation of these findings in Section 4 of the strategy.

### **1.5 An ideal indoor sports facilities network for Tower Hamlets**

Based on the research and evidence outlined above (and detailed in Section 4), three key strategic objectives have been identified for the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2017-2027. The objectives are informed by an understanding of the key

characteristics of an ideal network (taking into account national, regional and local 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 and optimised indoor sports facilities network for Tower Hamlets should:

- Offer state of the art indoor sports facilities that are fully accessible to all residents, taking into account cultural, religious and physical inclusion needs
- Have facilities located in locations where people will use them most and where they will support the ambitions set out in the Local Plan
- Use available capital to reconfigure and consolidate facilities with a view to revenue saving without loss of capacity
- Address gaps in provision now and in the future, in particular for swimming pools and sports halls
- Provide dry (gym/sports hall) 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 through the development management process
- Ensure indoor sports facilities are designed to be operationally efficient e.g. by enhancing energy efficiency.

The following table identifies three strategic objectives and options for meeting these objectives. Pursuing these objectives will enable the council to progress towards an ideal indoor sports facilities network.

**Figure 1: Table of strategic objectives and strategic options for the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2017-2027**

<b>Strategic Option</b>	<b>Strategic Objective:</b>
1. Investigate any opportunities for adding indoor sports provision as part of the Bishopsgate Goods Yard development, potentially as a joint venture with partners, including neighbouring councils.	Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets
2. Investigate any opportunities to develop indoor sports provision as a joint venture with partners, including neighbouring councils.	Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets

<p>3. Explore provision of Whitechapel Sports Centre with an enhanced facilities mix (pitch and sports hall, plus possibly a pool) on the existing or an alternative site as part of the wider re-development of the Whitechapel area.</p>	<p>Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets</p> <p>Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance</p> <p>Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities</p>
<p>4. Investigate options for increasing community access to sports halls on school sites and other dual-use facilities.</p>	<p>Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets</p>
<p>5. Investigate options for a lido in the borough to provide additional swimming pool capacity in line with the Mayor's pledge.</p>	<p>Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets</p>
<p>6. At York Hall, the council should explore either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Refurbishment of York Hall with the existing facilities mix (excluding Mayfield House), or;</li> <li>○ Re-development of the site including Mayfield House and retention of the historic York Hall building, with pool provision and potentially enhanced facilities mix and housing development, or;</li> <li>○ Re-development of the site including Mayfield House and retention of the historic York Hall building and the event function / boxing hall, with housing development, but with pool provided elsewhere.</li> </ul>	<p>Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets</p> <p>Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance</p> <p>Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities</p>
<p>7. The council should investigate either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The retention/refurbishment of the St George's Pool, with the addition of a sports hall, with an option for housing development on the site, or;</li> <li>● The addition of new facilities at John Orwell Leisure Centre, including a swimming pool, of high design quality, to replace any lost provision at St George's and new facilities such as 5-a-side playing pitches. St George's could then be redeveloped</li> </ul>	<p>Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets</p> <p>Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance</p> <p>Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities</p>

to help fund the new facilities.	
<p>8. The council should explore options to improve the facility mix of the Tiller Leisure Centre by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigating if the adjacent proposed school sports facilities could be brought into the footprint of the leisure centre. This could include the redevelopment of Tiller Leisure Centre to create a more financially viable and attractive provision in a high growth area.</li> <li>Investigating the inclusion of alternative site allocations for the Isle of Dogs in the Local Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets</p> <p>Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance</p> <p>Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities</p>
9. Continue to support the implementation of the council's Carbon Management Plan, Climate Change Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan	Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities
10. Work with the council's equalities forums to evaluate the accessibility and suitability of the council's indoor sports facilities for people of all protected characteristics	Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance

## 1.6 Next steps

This strategy establishes evidence and guidance for future decisions and strategic options. This could lead to a suite of feasibility studies, and a programme of work for the council's network of indoor sports facilities. When individual investigations, decisions and capital works are undertaken, individual papers will be provided to the Executive for decision-making. These projects will be considered within the council's existing governance structures for asset management, Capital Strategy, and infrastructure planning.

The strategy does not make recommendations about the management of council-owned facilities. The current leisure management contract runs until 2019 (with an option to extend) and any future management arrangements will need to consider how the strategic options can best be delivered through contractual arrangements. A review of management options is expected to commence in 2018 (unless the contract is extended).

Implementation of the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy will be monitored by the relevant Directorate Management and key actions arising will be included in the

council's strategic plan. The action plan contains a number of preparatory actions for the first two years which need to be completed prior to any decision is taken to implement specific strategic options. As and when relevant implementation decisions are taken, the action plan will be updated to reflect actions associated with project implementation.

## **SECTION TWO: INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 Purpose**

The council's vision is to make Tower Hamlets a great place to live with healthy and supportive communities. It is a vision 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 indoor sports facilities in the borough will contribute to the achievement of this vision, by supporting Tower Hamlets residents to live healthier lives in more cohesive and integrated communities.

In the coming decade Tower Hamlets is projected to see some of the most intense and sustained population growth in London. This challenges the council to consider options to address the need for additional social and community infrastructure – including publicly accessible leisure centres. This strategy supports an evidence-based approach to managing the impact of population growth.

The strategy provides an overall framework for decision making in relation to the council's indoor sports facilities and wider leisure provision in the borough over the next ten years. It is consistent with best practice guidance issued by the Mayor of London, the Department for Communities and Local Government and Sport England. The strategy will make a significant contribution to the development of spatial planning policy in Tower Hamlets by providing an evidence base that clearly articulates the indoor sports facilities needed to support the growing and changing population. It provides a clear analysis of supply and demand that follows a nationally recognised model for indoor sports facilities. In doing so it supports the council's Strategic Plan, forms an essential part of the evidence base for the emerging Tower Hamlets Local Plan and will inform the Capital Strategy.

The strategy is not an investment programme. Rather than make investment recommendations it will inform the council's corporate decision making processes for infrastructure planning and capital investment, as described above.

To deliver this decision making framework and spatial plan for indoor sports facilities in the borough, this strategy:

1. Examines the current supply of indoor sports facilities in the borough (taking into account public, commercial and dual-use facilities);
2. Compares supply to the on-going demand for indoor sports facilities. (based on the latest population projections and nationally recognised modelling tool);
3. Identifies gaps in current and future provision; and
4. Assesses the quality, suitability and efficiency of existing indoor sports facilities, with particular reference to residents' different cultural, religious and physical inclusion needs

## **2.2 Scope**

The Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy is part of a number of sport and open space related strategy documents that are being developed in parallel to address separate but interrelated issues. This strategy focuses on ensuring that the network of indoor sports facilities in the borough will be of sufficient quantity, quality, accessibility and suitability. It sits alongside the Open Space Strategy which focuses on ensuring that the network of open spaces and playing fields in the borough will be of sufficient quantity, quality, accessibility and suitability. Both strategies are predominately concerned with physical assets.

The Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, which will be informed by the strategies mentioned above, will set out a vision for sports and physical activity in the borough including the outcomes that we want to improve on, including participation and sports development.

The Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy cannot set the agenda for every sports facility within the borough as many are commercially or privately owned and operated and are not in the council's sphere of direct influence. For this reason, although the supply and demand modelling covers commercial and private facilities, the strategic solutions that are proposed mainly relate to facilities in which the council has an ownership interest.

It addresses the following questions:

- How might the council aim to meet future demand?
- How should the council prioritise its objectives in pursuit of a more ideal network?
- What is the current state of publicly accessible indoor sports facilities (supply and condition)?

The council's major leisure management contract is currently with Greenwich Leisure Limited. This contract covers service delivery and operations at the council's leisure centres. Service development and improvement will be driven through ongoing contract monitoring and partnership working with the contractor.

## **2.3 Achievements of the previous Leisure Facilities Strategy**

The Leisure Facilities Strategy 2009 - 2018 set ambitious aims for the council to address the leisure needs of the borough over the decade to 2018. Significant achievements include;

- Re-opening of the historic Poplar Baths in 2016 addressing deficiency in the area, specifically with the addition of:
  - o A 25meter swimming pool
  - o A teaching pool
  - o 4x Badminton courts, equivalent to 1 sports hall
  - o And a gym/fitness studio

- Improvement to the energy and economic efficiency of the network by adding pool covers
- Significant capital works have been completed at the John Orwell Sports Centre, including;
  - o Replacement of floodlights
  - o Installation of spectator seating
  - o Refurbishment of indoor changing rooms and gym
- At the Tiller Leisure Centre, the council completed a refurbishment of all poolside changing facilities as well as the front desk area.
- At Mile End Park Leisure Centre the council extended the female 'dry-side' changing room and the fitness centre. The council also invested in the creation of a dedicated function area in response to customer demand. The new layout eliminated an identified set of 'customer flow' issues. In addition, continued investment has been made in the programmable gym which caters for Women's Only Sessions. This has led to increased patronage of those programmes, which supports the objective of increasing participation among women.
- At York Hall the council has invested in new 'dry side' changing facilities and refurbished the existing gym facilities.
- Public access has been secured as part of the planning approval process for a number of sports hall under development in new primary and secondary schools. These include:
  - o Wood Wharf
  - o London Dock (formerly New International)
  - o Westferry Printworks

## **SECTION THREE: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

Based on the research and evidence presented below, three key strategic objectives have been identified for the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy 2017-2027.

These objectives are informed by an understanding of the key characteristics of an ideal network (taking into account national, regional and local drivers and best practice guidance) and an assessment of the extent to which the existing network is consistent with this ideal model.

### **3.1 An ideal indoor sports facilities network**

Broadly speaking, an ideal and optimised indoor sports facilities network for Tower Hamlets should:

- Offer state of the art indoor sports facilities that are fully accessible to all residents, taking into account cultural, religious and physical inclusion needs
- Have facilities located in locations where people will use them most and where they will support the ambitions set out in the Local Plan
- Use available capital to reconfigure and consolidate facilities with a view to revenue saving without loss of capacity
- Address gaps in provision now and in the future, in particular for swimming pools and sports halls
- Provide dry (gym/sports hall) 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 supply and demand analysis, and adequate community access can be secured through the development management process
- Ensure indoor sports facilities are designed to be operationally efficient e.g. by enhancing energy efficiency.

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.

### 3.2 Strategic Objectives

The following (interrelated) strategic objectives are designed to be pursued concurrently by the council. A more detailed action plan setting out borough-wide and site specific strategic options as well as associated milestones is provided at the end of this document.

#### ***Objective One: Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets***

In the next decade the population of Tower Hamlets is forecast to expand at rates unseen in the post-war era. As referenced throughout this strategy, a significantly increased population will increase demand for community infrastructure.

National best practice guidance sets standards for the ideal distribution of indoor sports facilities relative to the population. Based on this guidance, the borough is set to have a shortfall of indoor sports facilities provision relative to the population.

The council will therefore work to increase the provision of indoor sports facilities, where feasible. This will include, subject to viability, the expansion of provision on existing sites, as well as a search for new sites for leisure development, as provided for in the emerging Local Plan. This will also mean working to preserve existing provision where facilities are nearing the end of their asset life and ensuring, through the emerging Local Plan, that facilities are protected.

In pursuit of this objective the council will;

- Identify potential sites for new indoor sports facilities through the site allocations contained in the Local Plan, with a particular emphasis on areas of spatial deficiency.
- Investigate any opportunities to develop indoor sports provisions as a joint venture with neighbouring councils.
- Review all council-owned leisure centres and explore whether further facilities to meet demand can be located at existing sites.
- Seek to ensure that planned and existing school sports facilities are publicly accessible outside school hours.
- Investigate options for a lido in the borough to provide additional swimming pool capacity and complement indoors sports facilities provision, in line with the Mayor's pledge.

#### ***Objective Two: Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance***

Recent condition surveys have identified that several of the borough's leisure centres are in need of considerable investment.

Furthermore, some of the facilities do not meet the needs of sections of the community and there is limited capacity to improve accessibility (both physical and culturally) within the existing buildings. The council has a legal duty to ensure it:

- Removes or minimises disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- Takes steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.

In addition to its legal duty to ensure access to facilities, the council is also required by law to ensure best value in the delivery of its services. Facilities that do not meet the needs of customers from all sections of the community will limit the customer base and as a consequence facilities are not operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.

This strategy, therefore, has the objective of adapting or re-providing ageing facilities, where feasible, to improve and increase the existing provision in ways that are consistent with best practice design guidance and the principles of inclusive design.

In pursuit of this objective, the council will:

- Review all council-owned leisure centres and explore whether access to sites for all sections of the community could be improved within the existing buildings.
- Carry out detailed feasibility work for all sites, with the exception of Poplar Baths and Mile End Park Leisure Centre, to understand the best long term options for providing indoor sports facilities in specific locations, parts of the borough and across the borough as a whole.

### ***Objective Three: Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities***

In a difficult financial climate, Tower Hamlets council is searching for opportunities to find savings. A more economically efficient network of leisure centres will assist the council to provide indoor sports facilities in the future whilst budgets are reducing. The need to deliver the right facilities mix in the right place, at the right time to support growth, ensures that facilities are as attractive as possible to customers within the catchment area and as a consequence provide a more sustainable revenue position for the council in the long term.

As leisure centres are high energy users, more energy efficient leisure centres will help the council to honour its commitments to climate change legislation by reducing emissions. In turn, reducing emissions will help limit costs. High standards of environmental sustainability can deliver improvements in air quality and carbon emissions. The council will exploit all design opportunities to reduce carbon emissions from existing and new facilities. Therefore, the strategy has the objective of using available capital to make its leisure centres more economically and energy efficient in the coming decade.

In pursuit of this objective, the council will;

- Review the facilities mix at all sites to ensure that the offer is attractive to customers and operates as efficiently as possible.
- Continue to implement carbon reduction measures at council-owned leisure centres.
- Commission a review of its leisure centres stock in advance of letting any future contract to manage the council's centres to determine the most suitable contracting approach.

## SECTION FOUR: SUPPLY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Introduction

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

A detailed audit of indoor sports facilities in the borough was carried out in late 2016. In line with Sport England guidance, the audit included:

- Sports halls – measured in terms of the number of badminton courts provided
- Swimming pools – measured in terms of the water surface area available
- Health and fitness gyms – measured in terms of the number of health and fitness stations available.

It is recognised that there are other indoor sports facilities, such as small boxing gyms or indoor five-a-side football pitches centres, in the borough. However, while these facilities contribute to the overall offer, Sport England guidance recommends that modelling relates to the facilities outlined above. Indoor pitch facilities will be considered in the context of a playing pitch assessment carried out in parallel to this strategy.

The audit identified four different types of facilities operating types:

- Publicly operated facilities – these are public leisure centres, largely run by or on behalf of the council, that offer public access within standard operating hours;
- Dual use facilities – these are often those located within schools and only offer public access to facilities at prescribed times, normally outside of school hours or in school holidays;
- 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 sites will combine more than one facility type, for example, a swimming pool with an adjacent sports hall.

### 4.2 Data sources

The original information on the supply of indoor sports facilities was obtained through the Sport England *Active Places Power* database. *Active Places Power* has been developed by Sport England to provide a planning tool for sports facilities.

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, and web research, to determine the extent to which the operating model

had been recorded accurately. This is particularly important as not all business operating models are taken into account when applying demand modelling tools.

The following data sources have been used to forecast the likely future demand for indoor sports facilities in Tower Hamlets:

- Population projections were produced in November 2016 using the Local Plan development trajectory and the GLA's online projection model, Witan;
- Sport England *Facilities Planning Calculator*, which generates a demand-factor relative to forecast population that can be compared to the existing levels of provision.

In addition to identifying the supply of indoor sports facilities, a mapping exercise has also been undertaken which plots a 1,200m walking distance accessibility catchment areas for each facility type in order to identify any areas of the borough that fall outside of the catchment of current facilities. The maximum walking distance of 1,200m has been derived from recent market research in which the majority of respondents stated they would be prepared to walk 15 to 20 minutes to access indoor sports facilities.

#### 4.3 Results

This section sets out the detailed results of supply and projected demand modelling for the key facilities types identified.

The key findings are summarised below.

##### *Sports halls*

- Current supply is equivalent to 16 sports halls, taking into account facilities which meet Sport England requirements.
- Projected demand is unlikely to be fully met due to financial constraints and very limited available land.
- Provision of stand-alone sports halls is not financially sustainable.
- Alternative options, such as access to new school facilities and improving facilities mix at existing leisure sites should be investigated.
- Dual use access to an additional 3 sports halls (not included in modelling) should become available once new schools have been built.

##### *Swimming pools*

- Current supply is equivalent to five pools, taking into account facilities which meet Sport England requirements.
- The market is unlikely to deliver full sized pools and the council is unlikely to be able to fully meet projected demand due to financial and land availability constraints.
- Although outside of the borough, the Aquatics Centre in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park now provides substantial supply to the northeast of Tower Hamlets, where connections into the area are also expected to improve.
- There are opportunities to explore development of outdoor pool facilities, with the benefit that they can be developed in a variety of locations.

## *Health & fitness gyms*

- Current supply – 2,228 fitness stations, taking into account facilities which meet Sport England requirements.
- Resident only gyms on private estates cannot be included in the results but have been increasing in recent years and will contribute to meeting some level of future demand.
- Provision of gym equipment in council-operated leisure centres is vital to their financial viability and allows for cross subsidy of swimming pools and other facilities.
- The market is likely to keep providing gym facilities but including gym space in any reconfigured council-owned leisure centre provides the most financially viable facilities mix.

### **4.3.1 Current and future need for sports halls**

The geographical distribution of public, dual use and commercial sports halls in and around the borough is illustrated in the map below. For supply modelling purposes only publicly accessible sports halls (e.g. publicly operated, dual use and commercial facilities accessible to non-members) 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 2: Map of existing sports hall locations in Tower Hamlets, 2017**

**See Map A in Appendix Four**

In total, the audit identified 34 sports hall sites, of which 25 are located within the borough and nine are in the buffer zone outside of the borough boundary. Of the 25 sites within the borough, 24 meet the criteria for being included in the supply calculation – comprising four fully public sites, 18 dual use or club use sites that are open to the public, and two commercially operated sites which are bookable on a pay and play basis. Three of the sites outside the borough are publicly-operated and the remaining six are dual use. A full list of sites identified in the audit is provided at the end of this document.

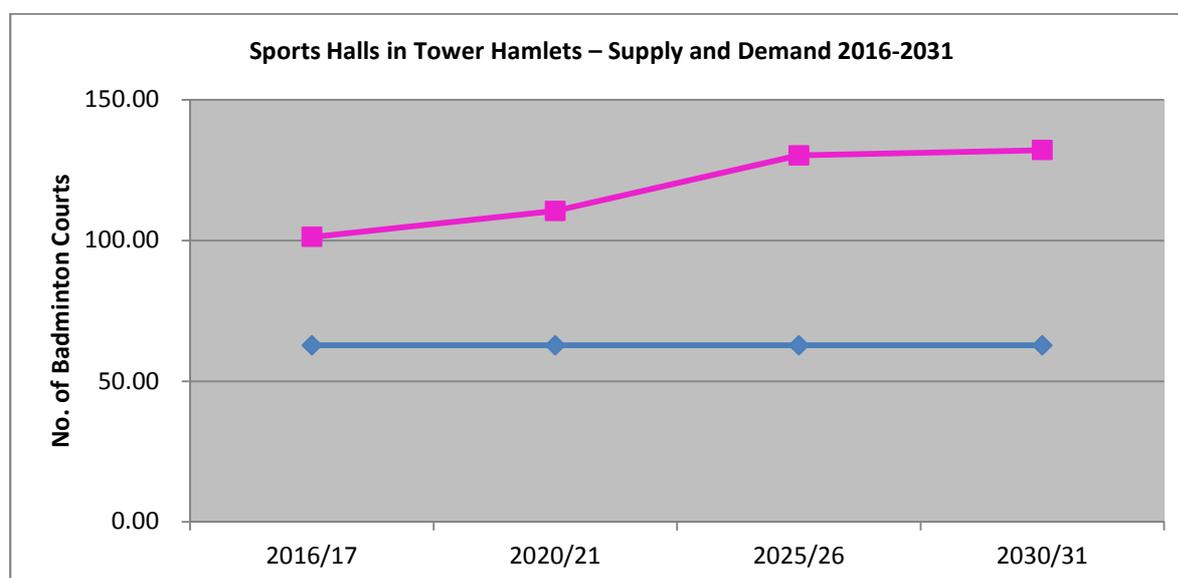
Applying the assumptions outlined above, the current supply of sports halls in the borough equates to 62.75 courts which is the equivalent of 16 sports halls. The results of the demand modelling process are summarised in the table below.

**Figure 3: Table showing supply and demand projections for sports halls in Tower Hamlets for 2016, 2026 and 2031 –**

Facilities	2016			2026		2031	
	Supply	Demand	Over or (under) supply	Demand	Over or (under) supply	Demand	Over or (under) supply
<b>Sports halls (badminton courts)</b>	62.75 badminton courts	99.08 badminton courts	(36.33) badminton courts	130.24 badminton courts	(67.49) badminton courts	132.14 badminton courts	(69.39) badminton courts
	Equivalent to 16 sports halls	Equivalent to 25 sports halls	Equivalent to 9 sports halls	Equivalent to 33 sports halls	Equivalent to 17 sports halls	Equivalent to 33 sports halls	Equivalent to 17) sports halls

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

**Figure 4: Chart projecting supply and demand for sports halls (badminton courts) in Tower Hamlets from 2015/6 to -2030/1**



**Figure 5: Map of existing sports halls with catchment areas for Tower Hamlets, 2017**

See Map B in Appendix Four

According to Sport England’s modelling tools, there is currently an under-provision of nine sports halls, rising to seventeen by 2031. However, financial constraints,

together with very limited availability of land in the borough, mean it is unlikely that this projected demand can be fully met.

Geographical distribution of public and dual use sports halls across the borough is relatively good, with only small areas of the borough outside the catchment distance of 1,200 metres. One such area is in the north of the borough and broadly covers the northern parts of Bethnal Green, Bow West and Bow East wards. Another broadly covers Canary Wharf and Blackwall & Cubitt Town wards. Coverage has improved since the Leisure Facilities Strategy 2009, particularly due to the re-opening of Polar Baths and the legacy conversion of the former Olympics handball arena (now the Copper Box) in the Olympic Park.

Access to public sports halls, which provide more flexible access than dual use sites is more limited. Areas north of the railway line into Liverpool Street station, the eastern part of Bromley North and Bromley South wards, the entire Isle of Dogs, as well as much of St Dunstan's and Limehouse wards are outside catchment areas.

The provision of stand-alone sports halls is not financially sustainable in the current climate and as such, alternative options (such as securing access to new school facilities and improving the facilities mix at existing leisure sites) should be investigated. Furthermore, it should be noted that the Copper Box has significant sports hall capacity and lies just beyond the borough boundary, with transport links and bridge connections set to improve over the life of the strategy and as a consequence improving accessibility and catchment areas.

At present, dual use access to three new sports halls planned as part of new schools has been secured through the development management process. This would add an additional nine badminton courts to publicly accessible provision; however, the modelling does not currently take these into account as they have yet to be built. Two of these proposed sports halls would be located on the Isle of Dogs, an area of particular shortage and high projected population growth. As further proposals for new schools are brought forward, public access to their sports halls should be secured through the use of planning obligations.

At the same time, any investigations into optimisation of the existing council leisure centre network should take into account the addition of sports halls capacity, where feasible, to achieve a more attractive and financially sustainable facilities mix.

### 4.3.2 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 (e.g. teaching pools) and leisure water are excluded, as are main swimming pools with less than 100m<sup>2</sup> of water space since these are not considered suitable for public lane swimming.

**Figure 6: Map of existing swimming pool locations in Tower Hamlets 2017**

**See Map C in Appendix Four**

52 swimming pools were identified through the audit process. Of these, 16 are located within the borough – comprising 5 main public pools, 4 public teaching pools, and 6 commercially operated pools and 1 private use pool in a school. Of the 36 pools within the buffer zone outside the borough boundary, 8 are public main pools, 3 are public teaching pools, 1 is a public diving pool, 3 are dual use, 18 are commercially operated and 3 are private use. A full list of facilities identified in the audit (including private use and training pool sites) is provided in appendix two.

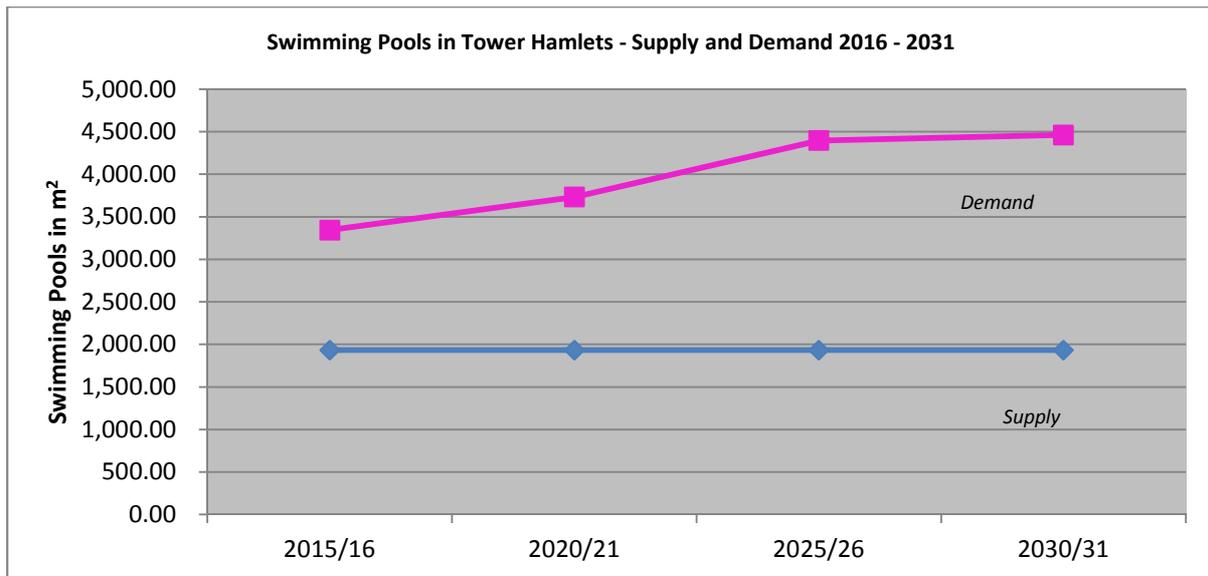
On the basis of the supply assumptions outlined above, the current supply of water surface in the borough is 1,932m<sup>2</sup>. The results of the demand modelling process are summarised in the table below.

**Figure 7: Table showing supply and demand projections for swimming pools in Tower Hamlets for 2016, 2026 and 2031**

Facility Type	2016			2026		2031	
	Supply	Demand	Over / (under) supply	Demand	Over/ (under) supply	Demand	Over/ (under) supply
<b>Swimming Pools</b>	1,932m <sup>2</sup>	3,345m <sup>2</sup>	(1,413)m <sup>2</sup>	4,398m <sup>2</sup>	(2,466)m <sup>2</sup>	4,462m <sup>2</sup>	(2,530)m <sup>2</sup>
	Equivalent to 5 pools	Equivalent to 10 pools	Equivalent to (5) pools	Equivalent to 13 pools	Equivalent to (8) pools	Equivalent to 13 pools	Equivalent to (8) pools

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

**Figure 8: Chart projecting supply and demand for swimming pools in Tower Hamlets between 2015/6 to 2030/1**



**Figure 9: Map of existing swimming pool catchment areas for Tower Hamlets 2017**

See Map D in Appendix Four

According to Sport England’s demand model, there is a deficit of swimming pool provision in Tower Hamlets. However, the market is unlikely to deliver full size swimming pools as part of private leisure development, and financial constraints together with high demand for land in Tower Hamlets make it unlikely that the council will be in a position to improve the supply side significantly.

While the broad distribution of public swimming pools across the borough is relatively even, with little or no overlap in catchment areas, there are areas of the borough outside the catchment distance of 1,200 metres. These are:

- the eastern half of the Isle of Dogs;
- Weavers and Spitalfields & Banglatown wards in the north-west;
- most of Bow West and Bow East wards in the north-east;
- the eastern parts of Bromley North and Bromley South wards;
- most of Limehouse, St Dunstan’s and Stepney Green wards in the centre of the borough.

Unlike sports halls, new swimming pools are highly unlikely to come forward as part of future school developments

It should be noted that the Aquatics Centre in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park has been converted to its legacy design and has re-opened as a community pool and elite training facility. The centre has two 50m pools, which are available for public swimming sessions. This provides the equivalent of 2,300 sqm on the borough’s boundary – equivalent to almost the entire projected shortfall over the life of the plan. While the facility is regional in nature, much of its community swimming programme

is targeted at a more local market and will provide for some of the shortfall in Tower Hamlets. The Centre is located immediately to the northeast of the borough boundary and connections into the area are expected to improve significantly over the coming years. Therefore, whilst in-borough supply falls short of expected demand, substantial supply can be accessed easily just outside and will, as a sub-regional facility, cater for exported demand from Tower Hamlets.

Furthermore, there are opportunities to explore the development of outdoor swimming pool facilities, with ancillary income generating activity to provide a sustainable business model. The advantage over indoor facilities is that the open nature of outdoor pools would allow their development in a variety of locations, including as part of open spaces or existing areas of water.

### 4.3.3 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 for this type of facility. Private use facilities are excluded.

The supply of gym facilities is measured in terms of the number of fitness stations in each facility, in accordance with Sport England guidance.

**Figure 10: Map of gym locations in Tower Hamlets, 2017**

See Map E in Appendix Four

In total, the audit identified 104 sites providing health and fitness provision in and around the borough. Of those, 42 are within the borough. This includes eight public facilities, four dual use facilities, and 19 commercially operated clubs. The remaining 11 sites are private use and therefore excluded from the modelling. A further 62 facilities are located in the buffer zone outside the borough boundary. This includes 10 public facilities, six dual use facilities, and 46 commercially operated clubs. A full list of facilities identified in the audit (including private use) is provided in appendix two.

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 estimated as currently being 83,500 based on a combination of data sources from the GLA and the Census 2011.

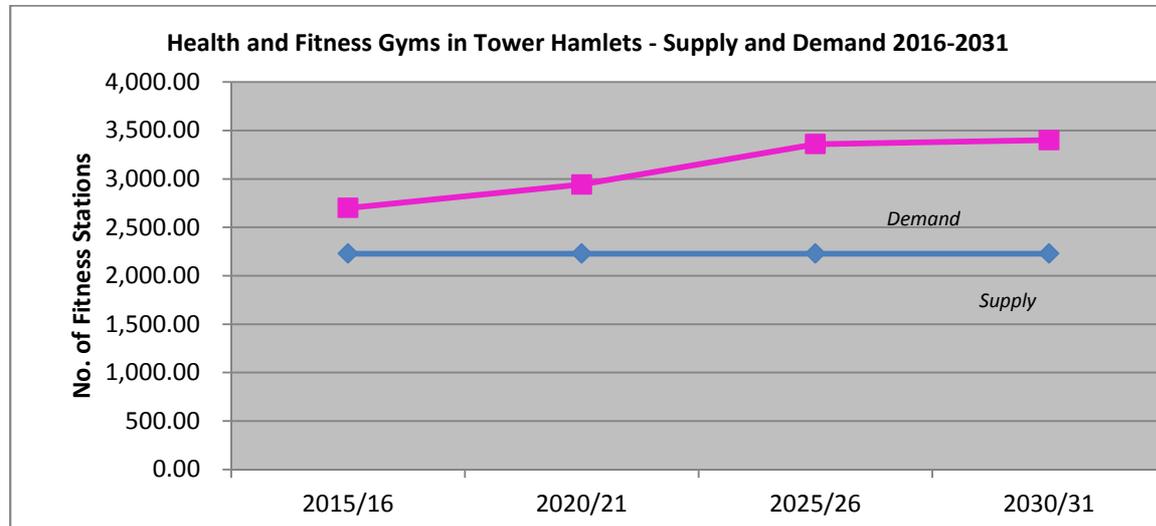
On the basis of these assumptions, the current supply of health and fitness equipment in the borough is 2,228. The results of the demand modelling process are summarised in the table below.

**Figure 11: Table showing supply and demand projections for health and fitness gyms in Tower Hamlets for –2016, 2026 and 2031 (based on daytime population)**

Facility Type	2016	2016		2026		2031	
	Supply	Demand	Over/ (under) supply	Demand	Over/ (under) supply	Demand	Over/ (under) supply
<b>Health and Fitness Gyms</b>	2,228 fitness stations	2,699 fitness stations	(471) fitness stations	3,360 fitness stations	(1,132) fitness stations	3,400 fitness stations	(1,172) fitness stations

The projected growth in demand for health and fitness equipment and corresponding static supply is reflected in the following graph.

**Figure 12: Chart projected supply and demand for health and fitness stations in Tower Hamlets from 2015/6 to 2030/1**



**Figure 13: Map of existing gym catchment areas Tower Hamlets 2017**

See Map F in Appendix Four

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 and the markets elsewhere. Especially in recent years, the number of on-site gyms within residential developments has steadily increased and this pattern is likely to continue.

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 users allow for the cross subsidy of swimming pools and other facilities, not generally offered by the private sector. As a consequence, while the market is likely to keep providing gym facilities, consideration should be given to the inclusion of gym space within any reconfigured leisure centre in order to provide the most financially viable facilities mix.

Geographical distribution is comprehensive with only small areas around Bromley-by-Bow and the south-east of the Isle of Dogs being out of the catchment distance of 1,200 metres. Both of these areas are within the vicinity of proposed enhanced town centres. As town centre development comes forward in these locations, the market is likely to provide additional commercial gym capacity.

#### 4.4 The council's facility network

While this strategy considers all relevant facility types regardless of ownership, the council's own network of indoor sport facilities plays an important role in the local provision, especially for those facility types not generally provided by commercial or dual use operators. This section therefore considers the suitability, condition, facility mix, and site constraints of the council's indoor sports facilities network. Strategic options set out in Section 3 and in the action plan seek to address the challenges and opportunities identified below.

The table and graphs below provide a summary snapshot of each council-owned facility. More detailed information on each centre can be found in Appendix One.

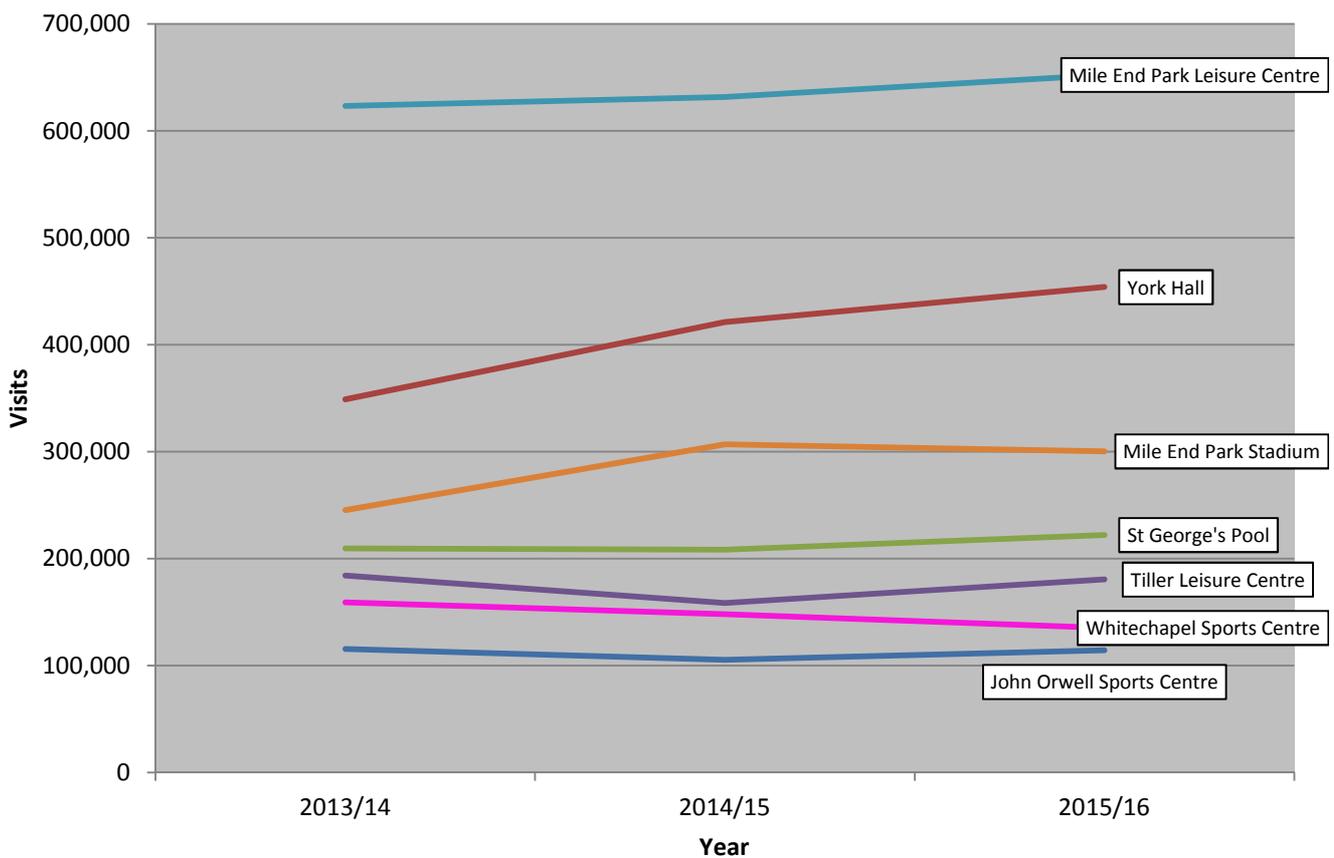
**Figure 14: Table of council-owned facilities in Tower Hamlets and their condition, suitability and site constraints**

Centre	Type	Suitability / restrictions / condition and life span	Visits 2015/16
Tiller Leisure Centre	Wet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Located in residential area with limited footfall</li> <li>- Some capacity for expansion</li> <li>- Located highest projected population growth area in the borough</li> <li>- Average condition rating is fair/satisfactory with a higher than average maintenance risk</li> </ul>	180,536
Whitechapel Sports Centre	Dry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Located in commercial/residential area with high footfall, to increase with opening of adjacent Whitechapel Crossrail Station</li> <li>- Modern facilities</li> <li>- Limited scope for expansion due to location in high density area</li> </ul>	135,272
Mile End Park Leisure Centre	Wet/ Dry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Modern, purpose built facility</li> <li>- Best practice for co-location</li> <li>- Caters for uses of different ethnic and religious backgrounds</li> </ul>	652,397
John Orwell Sports Centre	Dry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dry facility only</li> <li>- Located in mainly residential area</li> <li>- Surrounded by public open space</li> <li>- Adjacent to pitch managed by centre</li> </ul>	114,288
St George's Pool	Wet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Located in conservation area adjacent to main road with high footfall and passing traffic</li> <li>- Site restricted by surrounding park and conservation area status</li> <li>- Site has limited capacity in current form</li> <li>- Likely to have significant investment need in future due to concrete construction method</li> </ul>	222,132
Poplar Baths	Wet / Dry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Historic building re-opened in 2016</li> <li>- Co-located wet-dry facility with roof top playing pitch</li> <li>- Located in town centre with high footfall</li> <li>- Provides capacity in area of high forecast population growth</li> </ul>	N/A
York Hall	Wet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has significant forecast maintenance and investment required to keep open due to</li> </ul>	453,956

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- age and being listed</li> <li>- Located in town centre with high footfall</li> <li>- Historically significant to borough residents. High amenity value</li> <li>- Due to historic nature and construction methods likely to have significant energy loss</li> </ul>	
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Visitor figures for each site between 2013/14 and 2015/16 are outlined in the graph below:

**Figure 15: Visits to Tower Hamlets Leisure Centres from 2013/14 to 2015/16**



**Figure 16: Map of council-owned indoor sports facilities including catchment areas**

See Map G in Appendix Four

**Figure 17: Map of council owned indoor sports facilities with public transport accessibility**

See Map H in Appendix Four

The maps above show council-owned indoor sports facilities with their respective catchment areas and within the context of public transport accessibility levels. Facilities outside the borough boundary are owned by neighbouring local authorities or (in the case of facilities in the Olympic Park) the London Legacy Development Corporation.

The maps distinguish between catchment areas for sites that provide (a) dry leisure facilities only (sports halls with ancillary use), (b) wet leisure facilities only (swimming pools with ancillary use), and (c) both wet and dry facilities on one site.

The east of the borough, with the exception of the Bromley-by-Bow area and Bow East and Bow West wards, is well served by modern, combined wet and dry facilities (Mile End Leisure Centre and Poplar Baths) with very little overlap in catchment areas. Both Mile End Leisure Centre and Poplar Baths are in locations with good public transport accessibility. While there is limited access in the northeast of the borough, there is significant public provision of wet and dry facilities just across the borough boundary in the Olympic Park. Planned public transport and connectivity improvements, including new foot, cycle and road bridges, will overcome lines of severance and extend the catchment areas of the Copper Box and Aquatics Centre further into Tower Hamlets.

Access to council-owned leisure facilities on the Isle of Dogs is limited to wet facilities (Tiller Leisure Centre). Much of the south of the Isle of Dogs (Island Gardens ward) is not within the catchment area of the existing centre due to the severance caused by the historic docks. As access to sports halls in this area of high growth is generally limited, there is scope to consider options for an improved combined wet and dry facility to serve the Isle of Dogs more effectively.

Four of the council's indoors sports facility sites are in the west of the borough. Neither of these facilities combines the full wet and dry facilities mix and there is significant overlap between catchment areas. There is scope to consider options for all sites in this part of the borough in conjunction to achieve an improved facilities mix at individual sites and provide a better customer offer, while ensuring that catchment areas are optimised. Strategic options identified in relation to York Hall, Whitechapel Leisure Centre, St George's Pool and John Orwell Leisure Centre will need to be considered together.

## SECTION FIVE: POLICY AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

National, regional and local strategy and policy relating to sport and leisure facilities has shaped and informed the development of this strategy, and the resulting strategic objectives and options outlined in section three.

Sustaining and growing participation in sport and physical activity through the provision of high quality, accessible indoor sports facilities is an important objective for the Government, Greater London Authority and the council's own agenda. This is owing to the contribution of sport and sports facilities to social and community outcomes especially around health, integration and sustainability.

National planning policies and guidance are a key driver for the development of the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy as they require local authorities to undertake a 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 recommendations made in this strategy. They also set the broad parameters for ongoing maintenance and upgrades of existing facilities which Tower Hamlets have articulated in the ideal indoor sports facilities network – for example, that they should be open and accessible to all groups, located in town centres and aligned with national and local climate change and energy efficiency policy agendas.

Ensuring that there is an adequate supply of suitable facilities to meet local need is a requirement of the planning system. In line with national policy recommendations, this strategy makes an assessment and recommendations for how Tower Hamlets can deliver a network of indoor sports facilities to meet present and future need.

Regional planning guidance also gives priority to preserving and improving the provision of community infrastructure, which includes leisure centres.

The emerging Tower Hamlets Local Plan also acknowledges that indoor sports facilities are essential in the development of new and existing places.

Below is an outline of the key strategies and policies that inform the council's Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy.

### 5.1 Government Priorities

#### 5.1.1 Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation

In December 2015 the Government launched *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*.

While previous strategies were focused on numbers of active participants in sport, *Sporting Future* focuses on what people can get out of participating in sport and physical activity, and what more can be done to make a physically active life more transformative. It directs funding decisions to be made on a basis of the social good that the sport and physical activity can deliver, not simply on numbers of participants.

The new approach includes a transformation of how the Government measures success; replacing the 'Active People Survey' with 'Active Lives'. This is intended to measure how active people are overall, rather than how often they take part in any particular sport. Subsequent to that, a new set of key performance indicators were introduced to test progress towards the five key outcomes (below).

- Physical well-being
- Mental well-being
- Individual development
- Social and community development
- Economic development

The Government notes in the *Sporting Future Strategy* that local government has an important leadership role to play in achieving the goal of a more active nation.

### **5.1.2 Sport England's Towards an Active Nation**

The Government relies on the non-departmental public body Sport England to implement its agenda for sport and physical activity. This includes the advice and guidelines that Sport England provide to local authorities for the delivery of sport and physical activity.

The overarching Sport England strategy was refreshed in 2016 taking its lead from the Government's *Sporting Future Strategy*. The updated version of Sport England's: *Towards an Active Nation 2016-2021* outlines how Sport England will drive the delivery of the selected outcomes set out by Government.

The headline changes set out by Government that cascade through to the revised Sport England strategy are;

- Focusing more money and resources on tackling inactivity because this is where the gains for individual and for society are greatest.
- Investing more in children and young people from age five to build positive attitudes to sport and activity as the foundations of an active life.
- Helping those who are active now to carry on, but at a lower cost to public purse over time. Sport England will work with those parts of the sector that serve the core market to help them identify ways in which they can become more sustainable and self-sufficient.
- Putting customers at the heart of what Sport England does, responding to how they organise their lives and helping the sector to be more welcoming and inclusive, especially of those groups currently under-represented in sport.
- Helping sport to keep pace with the digital expectations of customers.

- Working nationally where it makes sense to do so (for example on infrastructure and workforce) but encouraging stronger local collaboration to deliver a more joined-up experience of sport and activity for customers.
- Working with a wider range of partners, including the private sector, using our expertise as well as our investment to help others align their resources.
- Working with the sector to encourage innovation and share best practice particularly through applying the principles and practical learning of behaviour change.

In support of this contribution, Sport England, reference seven new investment programmes in response to the Government's *Sporting Future Strategy*. They are focused on;

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

The new investment programme relating to 'Facilities' emphasises that the places where people play sport have a big impact on their experience and the likelihood they will participate regularly. Sport England note that they will continue to invest in all types of facilities, with a strong presumption in favour of multi-sport for major strategic investments.

This presents Tower Hamlets with an opportunity to leverage the strategic direction of the nation's top sporting body, and for the borough to realise its ambitions for an improved network of leisure infrastructure.

In the 'Facilities' chapter of the *Towards an Active Nation Strategy*, Sport England notes that;

*"...building the right things in the right places makes taking part in sport and physical activity a realistic option for many more people and leads to a better experience for those who are already engaged."*<sup>1</sup>

Sport England note their intention to prioritise co-located facilities integrated with other community services so that the needs of local people are better served at a lower cost. Sport England also notes their intention to favour multi-sport solutions unless they offer poor value for money or there is no demand.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/486622/Sporting\\_Future\\_ACCESSIBLE.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486622/Sporting_Future_ACCESSIBLE.pdf)

### **5.1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The NPPF outlines the Government's expectations with regards to nationwide planning for open space, sport and recreation. It recommends that local authorities carry out a needs assessment and audit of existing leisure centres to understand how well they are meeting current and future community needs and to consequently inform decisions about new centres and upgrades to existing provision. The NPPF also recommends that local authorities:

- Plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community centres (such as local shops, meeting places sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments
- Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued centres and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs
- Ensure that established shops, leisure centres, and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community
- Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community centres and services

The NPPF also requires that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields should not be built on unless;

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location
- The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the need for which clearly outweigh the loss

### **5.1.4 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

Accompanying the NPPF is the Government's Planning Policy Guidance. The guidance includes a section relating to 'Open space, Sport and Recreation Facilities, Public Rights of Way and Local Green Space'.

The guidance to local authorities with regard to indoor sports facilities includes:

- A recommendation for authorities and developers to refer to Sport England guidance on assessing need for sports and recreation facilities
- A direction relating to cases where development would affect existing open space, sports and recreation facilities – for local authorities to consult Sport England in the certain cases where development affects the use of land as playing fields.

Where the requirement to consult is not triggered local authorities are advised to consult Sport England in cases where development might lead to;

- Loss of, or loss of use for sport, of any major sports facility
- Proposals which lead to the loss of use for sport of a major body of water
- Creation of a major sports facility
- Creation of a site for one or more playing pitches
- Development which creates opportunities for sport (such as the creation of a body of water bigger than two hectares following sand and gravel extraction)
- Artificial lighting if a major outdoor sports facility
- A residential development of 300 dwellings or more

#### **5.1.5 Sport England's Active Design**

Sport England's *Active Design* guidance is made up of 'Ten Principles' to guide plan making bodies on how to use urban design to increase physical activity in the population. The principles relevant to this strategy are outlined below;

- Activity for all – Neighbourhoods, facilities, and open spaces should be accessible by all users and should support sport and physical activity across all ages
- Walkable communities – Homes, schools, shops, community facilities, workplaces, open spaces and sports centres should be within easy reach of each other
- Co-location of community facilities – The co-location and concentration of retail, community, and associated uses to supported linked trips should be promoted. A mix of land uses and activities should be promoted to avoid the uniform zoning of large areas to single uses
- Network of multifunctional open space – A network of multifunctional open space should be created across all communities to support a range of activities including sport, recreation and play plus other landscape features. Centres for sport, recreation and play should be of an appropriate scale and positioned in prominent locations.
- Appropriate infrastructure – supporting infrastructure to enable sport and physical activity to take place should be provided across all contexts including workplaces, public facilities and public space, to facilitate all forms of activity
- Active buildings – The internal/external layout design and use of buildings should promote opportunities for physical activity
- Management, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation – the management, long term maintenance and viability of sports facilities should be considered in their design. Monitoring and evaluation should be used to assess the success of

Active Design initiatives and to inform future directions to maximise activity outcomes from design interventions

- Activity promotion and local champions – promoting the importance of participation in sport and physical activity as a means of health and well-being should be supported. Health promotion measures and local champions should be supported to inspire participation in sport and physical activity across neighbourhoods, workplaces and facilities.

#### **5.1.6 Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance**

This guidance was developed by Sport England to help local authorities provide the right facilities in the right place for the purpose of enabling people to play sport and maintain and grow their participation. It assists local authorities to complete an assessment of need in order to provide a clear understanding of what is required in an area, and provide a sound basis on which to develop policy, and to make informed decisions for sports development and investment in facilities.

This guide and approach is based on a number of key principles that Sport England set out to help local authorities prepare robust and up to date assessments of need for indoor and outdoor sports provision. More specifically the guidance was developed to:

- Provide a recommended step by step approach which can be followed for a wide range of indoor and outdoor sports facilities and for different geographical levels
- Cover formal (non-playing pitch) sporting facilities rather than widen the guidance to cover other provision such as informal open space
- Ensure an approach which can be tailored to reflect the particular nature of a study area and how different facilities are used and sports are played
- Provide an approach that can be used to undertake assessments for a variety of purposes
- Ensure the user can tailor the approach so that the work to undertake an assessment is proportionate to its purpose
- Provide a clear message that the more detail covered under each assessment area the more robust the assessment and its findings will be
- Enable the results of an assessment to be used in and applied to a variety of different situations and scenarios, specifically to support the development of a sports facility strategy

This Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy follows the approach set out in this guidance by evaluating the wider policy and strategic context, assessing the need for indoor sports facilities (using tools and guidance provided by Sport England), and then making strategic recommendations based on that set of evidence.

## **5.2 Regional Policies**

### **5.2.1 The London Plan 2011**

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 that relate to sport and indoor sports facilities are consistent with the expectations set out in the NPPF and associated guidance, such as the directions from Sport England. While the 2011 London Plan remains operative, it is currently subject to a full review. By explicitly examining the supply of indoor sports facilities in the borough, comparing this to the on-going demand for centres in order to identify gaps in current and future provision, and assessing the quality, suitability and efficiency of existing leisure centres; the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy gives effect to provisions of the London Plan.

### **5.2.2 The London Plan Supplementary Guidance (SPG) – Social Infrastructure 2015**

The London Plan SPG 2015 on Social Infrastructure prescribes that:

- Development proposals that increase or enhance the provision of sports and recreation facilities will be supported.
- Proposals that result in a net loss of sports and recreation facilities, including playing fields should be resisted.
- Temporary facilities may provide the means of mitigating any loss as part of proposals for permanent re-provision.
- Wherever possible, multi-use public facilities for sport and recreational activity should be encouraged. The provision of sports lighting should be supported in areas where there is an identified need for sports facilities to increase sports participation opportunities, unless the sports lighting gives rise to demonstrable harm to local community or biodiversity
- Where sports facility developments are proposed on existing open space, they will need to be considered carefully in light of policies on Green Belt and protecting open space, as well as the borough's own assessment of needs and opportunities for both sports facilities and for green multifunctional open space

## **5.3 Local Policies**

### **5.3.1 Tower Hamlets Community Plan (2015) and Strategic Plan (2016)**

In 2016 London Borough of Tower Hamlets launched its *Strategic Plan* (2016-2017) to achieve the *Community Plan's* (2015) goal of a borough that is;

- A great place to live
- A prosperous community
- A safe and cohesive community
- A healthy and supportive community

- One Tower Hamlets – a more equal and cohesive borough with strong community leadership

As the *Community Plan* identifies, there are also some long term and emerging challenges within the borough:

- Low levels of health and life expectancy
- Growth and development impacting on local infrastructure and services
- A further programme of austerity and public sector cuts arising from the Spending Review and a consequent Medium Term Financial Strategy savings target of £59 million over the next three years.

The council is accelerating its work with its partners to tackle these challenges, and has set itself a number of Priority Outcomes, including;

- Creating and maintaining a vibrant, successful place
- More young people realising their potential
- More people living more healthily and independently, for longer

The strategic objectives that flow from the priority outcomes include making the best use of council resources by exploiting the value and use of assets, improving and enhancing the environmental sustainability of the borough and reducing carbon emissions. There is also a focus on increasing visits to leisure centres, improving participation in sport and other health promoting activities at a community level, and tackling obesity.

To achieve these outcomes at a time of reducing resources the council recognises it will need to transform its approach to delivering its traditional services – this includes its approach to the provision of indoor sports facilities. The *Strategic Plan* notes that meeting local priorities with significantly less money requires a transformational approach. The council has therefore agreed some key transformational principles to ensure that it:

- Targets its resources at the right people at the right time;
- Empowers its communities and design services around them

In addition to this, as the borough moves into 2016/17, the Strategic Plan notes that the council look to renew and strengthen its culture in a range of ways to build on its Best Value Plan and deliver outcomes around:

- Effective procurement
- Maximising the value and use of assets
- Appropriately supporting the voluntary and community sector to deliver priority outcomes
- Communicating and engaging with local people

This direction of travel has implications for indoor sports facilities provision, and specific implications are noted throughout the strategy.

### **5.3.2 Mayoral Priorities**

The Strategic Plan (noted in 3.1.1) contains a number of Mayoral Priorities and associated activities for the council. These priorities and activities span the range of council services; those that relate to indoor sports facilities provision are noted below.

In pursuit of the priority of creating and maintaining a vibrant and successful place the Mayor recognises the need to manage development pressure through the preparation of a new Local Plan, and provide effective local infrastructure services and facilities. This Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy supports this work by providing evidence and recommendations that both feed into the Local Plan, and work to ensure future demand for facilities is met.

Further to this activity, the Mayor prioritises the need to increase participation in Tower Hamlet's core cultural specific Idea Stores and leisure centres. This strategy supports that ambition by setting out the characteristics of a more ideal network of indoor sports facilities that will be more attractive and accessible to users, and therefore increase participation.

### **5.3.3 Tower Hamlets Sport Policies**

The development of this Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy forms part of a wider programme of work to refresh the borough's overall sport and physical activity policies. Taking a lead from the Government's *Sporting Futures* and Sport England's *Towards an Active Nation*, Tower Hamlets is preparing to launch a suite of sport and physical activity related strategies in the short to medium term.

This includes a:

- *Physical Activity and Sports Strategy*
- *Open Spaces Strategy (including a Playing Pitch Needs Assessment)*

The Physical Activity and Sports Strategy sets out a vision for physical activities and sports in the borough, including shared priorities and outcomes for improving rates of participation and working more effectively to deliver physical activity and sport across the Tower Hamlets partnership.

The Open Space Strategy assesses all open space in Tower Hamlets and identifies need for improvements and sets out an approach for prioritising investment. It includes a Playing Pitch Needs Assessment which assesses the borough's outdoor sporting facilities, reports on engagement with interested sport governing bodies, and organisations, and forms a set of evidence for the strategic recommendations of the Open Space Strategy.

### **5.3.4 Emerging Tower Hamlets Local Plan**

The emerging *Tower Hamlets Local Plan* is the collection of planning documents that deliver the borough's spatial planning strategy, and therefore give effect to its *Community Plan*.

The emerging *Local Plan* recognises that Tower Hamlets is at the heart of London's growth aspirations. In line with the London Plan, the emerging Tower Hamlets Local Plan seeks to facilitate:

- An increase of 54,241 new homes by 2031<sup>2</sup>
- 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
- The creation of socially balanced communities and of spaces which promote social interaction and inclusion.

The evidence arising from this strategy will be used to inform the relevant sections and policies of the *Local Plan*.

### **5.3.5 Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2017**

The aim of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is to make a difference to the physical and mental health of everyone who lives and works in the borough. The strategy sets out five priorities, including 'Creating a healthier place' and 'Children's weight and nutrition'.

The 'Creating a healthier place' priority highlights how, in a borough that has high levels of new development and lower levels of open space, the environment, including local infrastructure that supports physical activity and the promotion of active travel, have an impact on residents' health and wellbeing.

The range of programmes which promote healthy weight, good nutrition and physical activity for children are referenced under the priority 'Children's weight and nutrition' and measures for the first 12 months include promoting the 'Healthy Mile' in schools.

The strategy outlines the changes that the council and its partners want to see, the ways in which it can be assessed if the approach is working, and how the Health and Wellbeing Board will work in partnership to make a difference.

### **5.3.6 Smarter Together Programme**

The *Strategic Plan* (2016) recognises the financial position of the council in the context of funding cuts by central government. This is reflected in the requirement to achieve savings of £59 million over three years from 2016. This means the Tower Hamlets overall budget will be more constrained during the life of this strategy, as the council strives to simultaneously meet savings targets while satisfying increasing demands from residents for services. Capital funding will also be constrained as opportunities to generate new capital receipts from the disposal of existing assets have diminished.

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<sup>2</sup> Cumulative Housing Development, Tower Hamlets Infrastructure Delivery Plan

In response to these challenges the council has launched its efficiency and business transformation programme 'Smarter Together'. Smarter Together is an opportunity to rethink and create the right service models, skills and tools to get the best outcomes for the borough's residents.

The Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy supports the Smarter Together Programme by focussing on efficiency of the council's network of facilities with an emphasis on reducing the need for ongoing revenue support by ensuring the right facilities are located in the right places, offering the most customer focused mix of services and facilities on offer.

### **5.3.7 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 Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy will form part of this work and activities identified in section seven of this strategy 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, and suitability, as well as financial and political implications. By recognising the specialist nature of indoor sports facilities, the Indoor Sports 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 council's property portfolio and are based on existing knowledge of emerging property 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.

The 2015 *Corporate Asset Strategy* directs the council to;

- Own and occupy few buildings
- Reduce the running costs of our buildings
- Maximise overall returns from income producing properties
- Increase the occupancy levels of our buildings and maximise opportunities for co-location of services (including partners)
- Challenge the business case for retaining properties and sell surplus properties in a timely and efficient manner

## SECTION SIX: TOWER HAMLETS BOROUGH PROFILE

The demographic make-up of the Tower Hamlets population and its sport and physical activity participation patterns have an impact on the nature of future indoor sports facilities provision in Tower Hamlets.

This section sets out information about the borough population and results from surveys and consultation, related to sports and physical activity. These findings are identified to provide a fuller picture of challenges and strengths that need to be taken into account when considering future need.

### Key findings

- Tower Hamlets has a relatively young population with a significant proportion in the age range that Sport England identify as the most physically active.
- The anticipated increased pressure on facilities and growth in demand is highlighted by population findings, such as:
  - o Tower Hamlets is expected to be the fastest growing borough in London over the next ten years.
  - o Population projections suggest an increase in the number of residents of approximately a quarter by 2027
- The Active People and Active Lives surveys show encouraging rates of participation in sport and physical activity in the borough in recent years, which provision of accessible and sustainable facilities may help sustain. However, it must also be noted that the improved rate of physical activity may be linked to demographic groups with higher levels of activity being predominant in newer residents.
- National data indicates that older people tend to be less active. However, more than half of Tower Hamlets people between 45-54 years of age are active at least once a week. It is important to ensure that indoor sports facilities are accessible and in other ways support this group to can sustain their active life styles into older age.
- Women tend to participate less frequently than men. Some indoor sports facilities provide dedicated activities and spaces for women. These tend to show higher usage by women. Designing and operating facilities in a manner that is culturally and physically inclusive can support participation.
- There is a slightly higher rate of severe disability in the working age population in the borough, compared to London and England averages – this underlines the importance of accessibility and has implications for how we optimise existing facilities and plan new facilities.

- Primary pupils are more active than secondary students during all periods except lesson times, when they appear to be equally active.
- Like elsewhere in the country, ethnic minority groups have lower participation rates than white British. The results of the Culture, Leisure and Open Spaces survey 2016 show that the proportion of respondents agreeing that they would recommend a council-owned leisure centre to family or friends was broadly high across different ethnic groups, with some notable differences. The proportion of respondents identifying as 'Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi' who said they would recommend council-run leisure centres to a friend or family member was significantly above the average. The proportion of respondents identifying as 'White' who said they would recommend council-run leisure centres was significantly lower than the average.
- Tower Hamlets is home to considerable numbers of residents classified in socio-economic groups NS-SEC 3-8. National data indicates that these groups tend to be less physically active than those in higher socio-economic groups. This pattern is reflected locally in lower participation patterns in areas of the borough with higher levels of deprivation.
- 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.

## 6.1 Key Population Statistics

### 6.1.1 Current Population and Age Structure

Based on the population projections produced using the Local Plan development trajectory and the GLA's online projection model, Witan, the 2016 population of Tower Hamlets is 297,800. According to the Greater London Authority it is estimated to be 296,300.<sup>3</sup>

Using GLA estimates, 240,200 Tower Hamlets are between the age of 5 and 54, deemed to be the most physically active population by Sport England. This reflects the fact that Tower Hamlets has a relatively young population, with a higher proportion of people in twenties and thirties than both London and England.<sup>4</sup>

The age structure is expected to change slightly during the life of this strategy, with the population of young adults growing more slowly than that of older adults. However, Tower Hamlets is still projected to have a higher proportion of young adults than the London average in 2026.

<sup>3</sup> ONS Mid-year Estimates 2011-2015 via NOMIS; GLA 2015 Round Population Projections (SHLAA, capped household size)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough\\_statistics/Population/Population\\_Projections\\_for\\_Tower\\_Hamlets\\_January\\_2016.pdf](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough_statistics/Population/Population_Projections_for_Tower_Hamlets_January_2016.pdf)

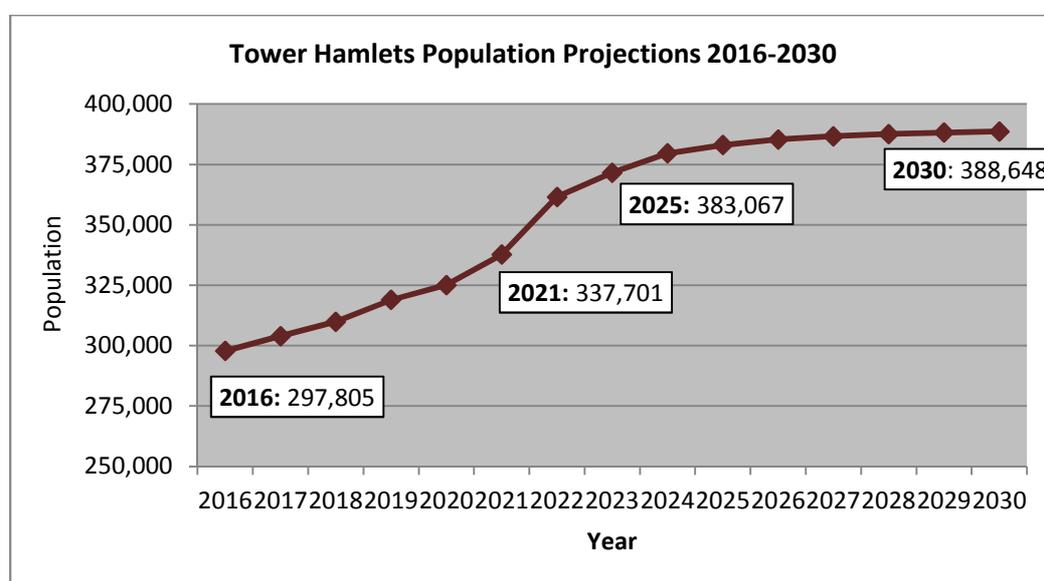
### 6.1.2 Projected Changes in Population 2016-26

Tower Hamlets is expected to be the fastest growing borough in London and one of the fastest growing boroughs in England over the next ten years. According to Greater London Authority Projections, the population will rise from 296,300 in 2016 to 374,000 in 2026, a 26% increase.<sup>5</sup>

In the following ten years, from 2026 to 2036, population growth is projected to slow down. By 2031, the borough's population is expected to grow at a slower rate than London as a whole.

Blackwall and Cubitt Town is projected to be the fastest growing ward in the borough over the next ten years. Bow West and St Dunstan's are projected to be the wards with the least population growth over the next decade, seeing a 2 percent and 4 percent rise in population, respectively.<sup>6</sup>

Figure 18: Chart showing Tower Hamlets Population Projections from 2016 to 2031<sup>7</sup>



### 6.1.3 Ethnicity and Religion

Tower Hamlets is one of the most diverse boroughs in London. According to the 2011 census, the borough's three largest ethnic groups are the Bangladeshi, White British and 'Other White' populations. Residents from these three ethnic groups make up around three-quarters of the Tower Hamlets population.<sup>8</sup>

White British residents make up 31% of the borough's population, far lower than the percentage nationally (80%). Tower Hamlets has the fifth lowest proportion of White British residents in England. Newham and Brent had the lowest rates (17% and 18% respectively).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> ONS Mid-year Estimates 2011-2015 viaNOMIS; GLA 2015 Round Population Projections (SHLAA, capped household size)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough\\_statistics/Ward\\_profiles/Census-2011/RB-Census2011-Ethnicity-2013-01.pdf](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough_statistics/Ward_profiles/Census-2011/RB-Census2011-Ethnicity-2013-01.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough\\_statistics/Ward\\_profiles/Census-2011/RB-Census2011-Ethnicity-2013-01.pdf](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough_statistics/Ward_profiles/Census-2011/RB-Census2011-Ethnicity-2013-01.pdf)

Tower Hamlets has the highest percentage of Muslim residents in England and Wales -38% compared with a national average of 5%. Conversely, the borough has the lowest proportion of Christian residents nationally: 30% compared with a national average of 59%.

#### 6.1.4 Indices of Deprivation

Deprivation is widespread in Tower Hamlets: more than half (58%) of the borough's 144 Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are in the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England, according to the *Index of Multiple Deprivation*. One quarter (24%) of Tower Hamlets LSOAs are in the most deprived 10% of LSOAs in England.<sup>10</sup>

Deprivation is higher than the England average and about 37.9% (19,800) children live in poverty<sup>11</sup>.

Within the borough, the most highly deprived areas – which fall into the 5% most deprived LSOAs nationally - are mainly clustered in the east of the borough in the Lansbury and Mile End area. The least deprived areas of the borough are in the riverside areas of St Katharine's Dock, Wapping, and the Isle of Dogs.

To complement the 'official' data, at LSOA level, the Local Government Association has produced Index of Multiple Deprivation estimates for wards. The four wards in the east of the borough – Lansbury, Bromley South, Mile End and Bromley North – are the most deprived wards within the borough on the IMD. Two thirds of the borough's wards (13 out of 20) are in the most deprived ten per cent of wards in England.<sup>12</sup> This is illustrated below.

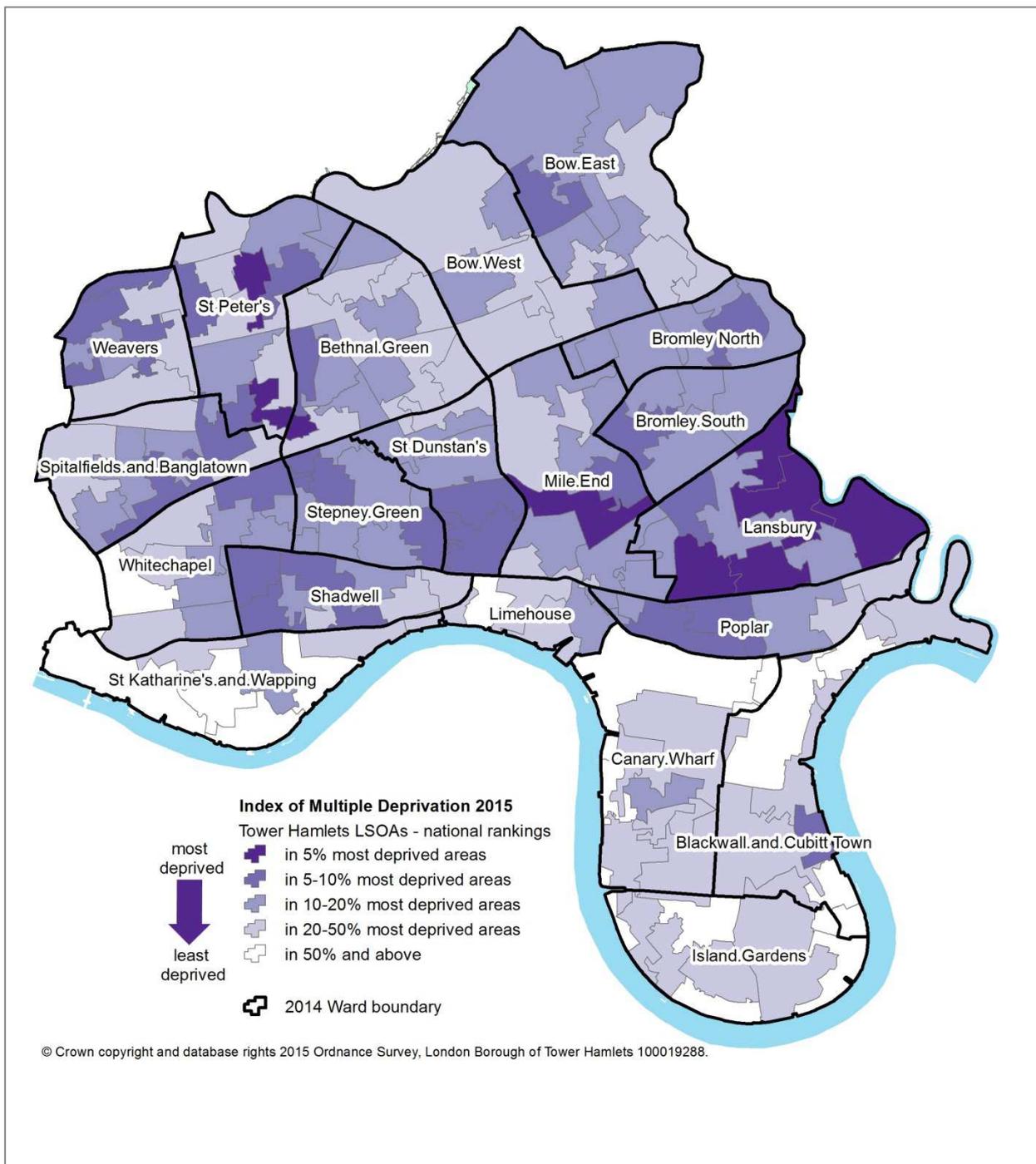
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<sup>10</sup> [http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough\\_statistics/Income\\_poverty\\_and\\_welfare/Indices\\_of\\_Deprivation\\_Low\\_resolution.pdf](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough_statistics/Income_poverty_and_welfare/Indices_of_Deprivation_Low_resolution.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.apho.org.uk/resource/view.aspx?RID=50215&REGION=50156&LA=50146&SPEAR=%20>

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough\\_statistics/Income\\_poverty\\_and\\_welfare/Indices\\_of\\_Deprivation\\_Low\\_resolution.pdf](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Borough_statistics/Income_poverty_and_welfare/Indices_of_Deprivation_Low_resolution.pdf)

**Figure 19: Map of: LSOAs in Tower Hamlets by national percentile (taken from Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 data)**



### 6.1.5 Health

The health of people in Tower Hamlets is varied compared to the England average. Life expectancy for men is lower than the England average.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.apho.org.uk/resource/view.aspx?RID=50215&REGION=50156&LA=50146&SPEAR=%20>

There is also variation within the borough. Life expectancy is 8.8 years lower for men and 3.9 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Tower Hamlets than in the least deprived areas.<sup>14</sup>

The headline findings of the *Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – Life and Health in Tower Hamlets* (July 2015)<sup>15</sup> note that;

- 25.3% of 10-11 year olds in Tower Hamlets are obese (9<sup>th</sup> highest in the country) although levels have plateaued over the past three years
- 13.6% of adults are classified as obese, better than the average for England.
- The 2011 census data indicated that Tower Hamlets has a slightly higher rate of severe disability in its working age population (4.1%) compared to the average in London (3.4%) and England (3.6%)
- 68% of the adult population do not do the recommended level of physical activity of 30 minutes of moderate activity at least five days a week (similar to national averages).<sup>16</sup>

The slightly higher levels of severe disability has implication for optimisation of existing indoor sport facilities and planning of new facilities, as it underlines the importance of accessibility. The large segment of the adult population that do not engage in the recommended level of exercise underscores the importance of encouraging residents to have an active life style.

## 6.2 Adult Participation in Sports

The *Active People Survey* measures the number of adults taking part in sport across England. It is carried out on behalf of Sport England by social research company TNS BMRB and provides a comprehensive picture of sports participation in England. The *Active People Survey* is central to Sport England's measurement of its own strategy and the performance of key partners.

In 2016 the survey was replaced by an updated *Active Lives* survey. The new approach includes a transformation of how good performance is measured, as the survey is designed to measure how active people are overall rather than merely how often they take part in any particular sport<sup>17</sup>.

The *Active People Survey* surveys 165,000 adults (age 14 and over) each year. The time series data arising from the survey dates back to 2005/6 when it was first introduced. APS provides estimates of the number of adults taking part in sport, tracks how often people take part in sport and what sports they do, tracks variations between different geographical areas, allows analysis by demographic factors such as gender, social class, ethnicity, age and disability. It also tracks regular sport volunteering, club membership, involvement in competition and levels of tuition or coaching. This allows the APS to provide data for important measures of public health and active travel on behalf of Public Health England and the Department for Transport.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.apho.org.uk/resource/view.aspx?RID=50215&REGION=50156&LA=50146&SPEAR=%20>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Public-Health/JSNA-Summary-2015.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Public-Health/JSNA-Summary-2015.pdf>

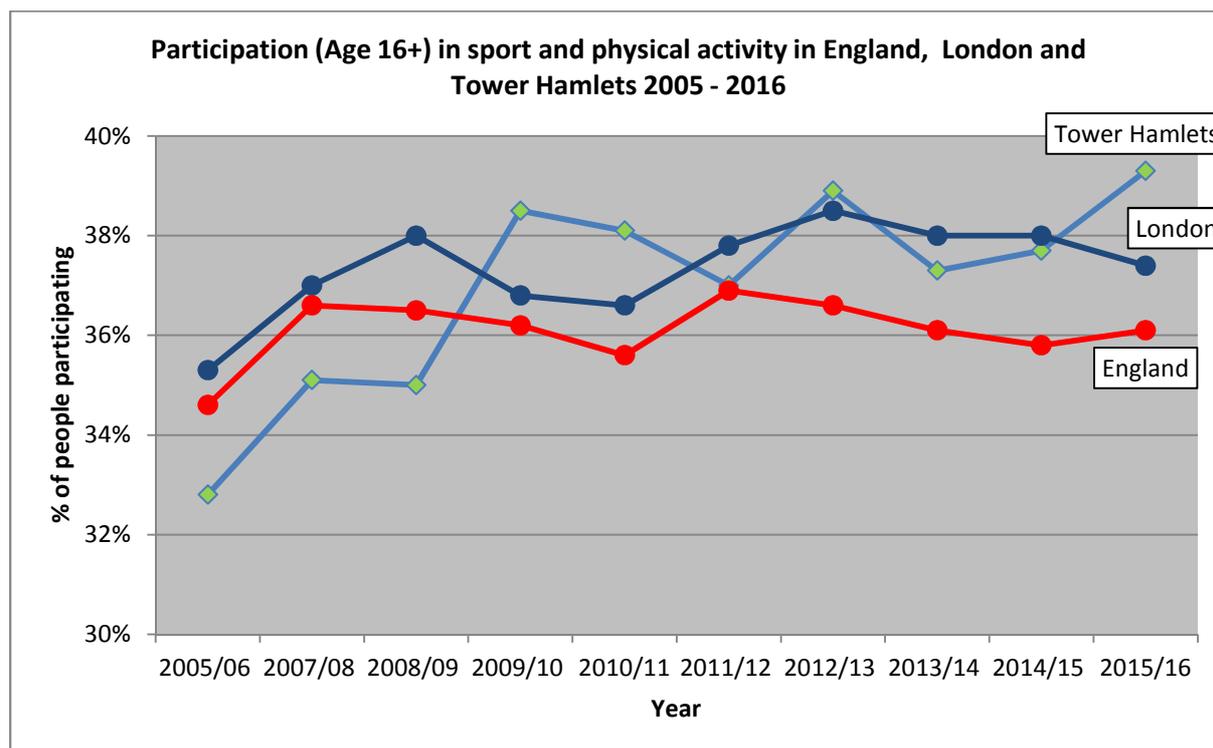
<sup>17</sup> Cabinet Office (2015) *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation*, London, pp 11- 12

The *Active People Survey* enables local authorities to compare their performance against their neighbours as well as regional and national averages. It also allows local authorities to understand differences in participation relating to different demographic groups and different sports. The key findings of relevance to this strategy are detailed below.

### 6.2.1 Headline Findings

The *Active People Survey* provides data on rates of participation in sport and physical activity. A comparison of participation in sport and physical activity (at least once per week for 30 minutes) against the regional and national average from 2005/06 to 2015/16 is shown in the graph below.

**Figure 20: Chart showing participation rates (age 16+) in sport and physical activity for England, London and Tower Hamlets from 2005/06 to 2015/16**



The information above illustrates that participation in sport and physical activity in Tower Hamlets was historically lower than the rates for both London and England. However, since 2010 rates in participation have been consistently, yet marginally (c. 2%) higher than those for England, and consistent with the rates of participation in Greater London.

The encouraging trend of improved participation in sport and physical activity in Tower Hamlets has implications for future indoor sports facilities provision, because accessible and suitable facilities may help to sustain the trend.

### 6.2.2 Participation by Demographic Group

A comparison of borough figures against the London average and the national picture is shown in the table below with areas of notable difference<sup>18</sup> highlighted in red (lower) or green (higher).

<sup>18</sup> Sports England advises that the margin of error for a sample size of 1000 is 2,6 %. Notable differences are therefore determined to be above (or below) that level.

**Figure 21: Table showing participation rates by population group (data taken from Active People Survey 2015/16, APS10Q2) <sup>19</sup>**

Category	Borough	London average	National average
Overall	<b>39.3%</b>	37.4%	36.1%
Male	<b>48.0%</b>	42.5%	40.7%
Female	<b>29.0%</b>	32.3%	31.7%
16-25	*	52.1%	55.8%
26-34	<b>47.1%</b>	43.1%	45.3%
35-44	<b>34.7%</b>	39.4%	41.6%
45-54	<b>52.6%</b>	35.9%	36.0%
55-64	*	29.7%	27.3%
65+	*	18.3%	17.7%
White British	<b>45.5%</b>	39.8%	36.1%
Black/Minority Ethnic **	37.0%	35.3%	36.7%
Disabled	*	18.0%	17.0%
Not Disabled	41.2%	40.2%	39.9%
NS-SEC 1-4***	<b>44.5%</b>	41.1%	43.3%
NS-SEC 5-8	*	25.9%	26.4%

\*Data withheld due to insignificant sample size

\*\* There is insufficient data for all sub-categories, but it should be noted that this includes all groups other than 'White British'.

\*\*\* NS-SEC refers to National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification

Key highlights can be summarised as follows:

- Overall participation rates are slightly above the national average, but over half of all residents spend less than 30 min a week on sports and physical activity
- Participation rates for men (all age groups) are significantly above London and national averages
- Residents between the ages of 26-34 are more active than the London and national average: residents between the ages 45-54 are significantly more active than the London and national average
- Participation rates for residents who self-identify as white British are significantly higher than participation rates for the white British group, nationally.

A number of challenges can be deduced from the data:

- Participation rates for women are lower than the national averages and significantly lower than the participation rate for men.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/research/who-plays-sport/active-people-interactive/>

- Due to an insignificant sample size there is no data on residents above the age of 55, however national trends suggest that participation rates amongst older residents are traditionally low.
- The participation rate for the group that self-identify as 'black-minority ethnic' is in line with regional and national averages for this group, and is lower than that for 'white British' residents.
- Due to an insignificant sample size there is no data on residents in the lower half of the socio-economic classification, however national trends suggests that there is an important relationship between household income and the level of routine physical activity people engage in. This is supported by regional and national data (45.7% among NS-SEC 1 and 2 in London, 25.9% among NS-SEC 5-8).

### 6.2.3 Participation by Area

Differing levels of participation amongst different demographic groups is reflected in variations in participation levels across the borough. There are pockets of higher participation, mainly towards the south of the borough, in the wards of St Katharine's and Wapping, Shadwell, Millwall and Blackwall and 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.

**Figure 22: Map of participation rates in Tower Hamlets by ward with publicly accessible facilities overlaid 2015/16**<sup>20</sup>

**See Map I in Appendix Four**

### 6.3 Children and Young People's Participation in Sports and Physical Activity

There is comparatively less national data available relating to children and young people's participation in sport in the borough. The last available School PE and Sport Survey (2009/10) showed that children in Tower Hamlets take part in less formal activity than the England average, and the proportion of primary school children walking to school (whilst high) has fallen year-on-year, with levels of cycling to primary school remaining significantly lower than the national average.<sup>21</sup>

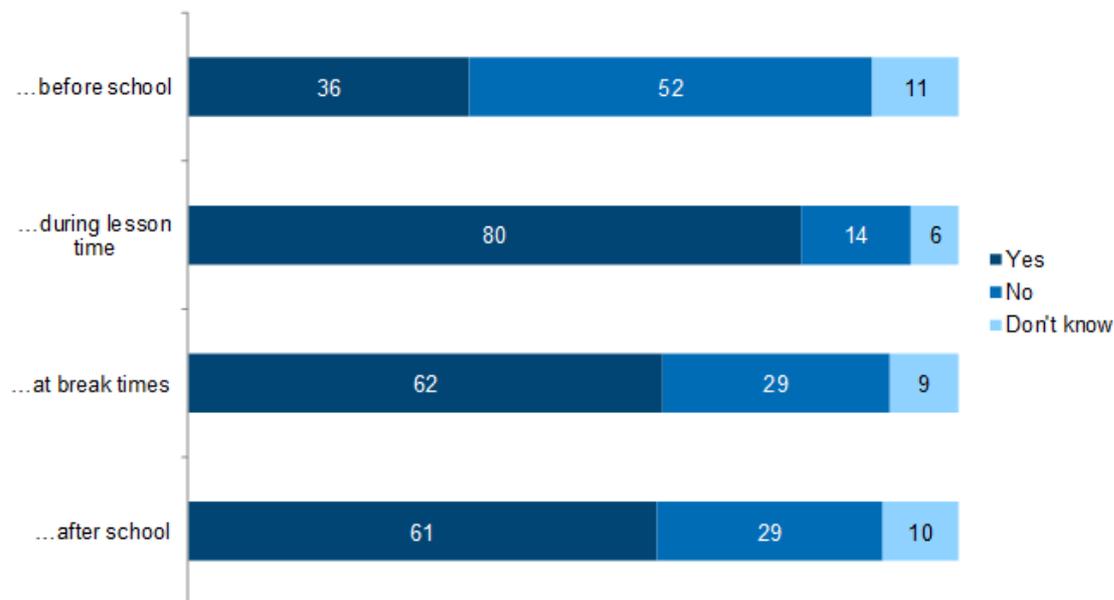
#### *Tower Hamlets Pupil Attitude Survey 2015*

As part of the Tower Hamlets Pupil Attitude Survey (2015), children and young people were asked how active they were in the previous week. This could include walking to school as well as running around, riding a bike, playing sports, dancing and swimming. Overall, 91 per cent of pupils reported doing something active at some point during the previous week.

<sup>20</sup> Data taken from Active People Survey 2015/16. Participation levels are estimated using Small Area Estimates.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/Documents/Children-and-families-services/Children-and-Families-Plan-2012-15-FINAL.pdf>

**Figure 23: Chart showing proportion (%) of pupils who report doing something active (e.g. dancing, playing sports) in the previous week**



Source: Tower Hamlets Pupil Attitude Survey 2015  
 Sample size (n in): 2,646

There are statistically significant differences in the reported levels of physical activity between primary and secondary pupils and between genders. Primary pupils are significantly more active than secondary students before school, during break times, and after school. Primary school pupils are twice as active during break times than secondary pupils (85 vs. 43 per cent). Lesson time was the only period when primary and secondary pupils said they were equally active.

Boys reported being significantly more active than girls before school, during break times and after school; however, both boys and girls were equally active during lesson time.

## **SECTION SEVEN: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The Tower Hamlets Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy is largely demand driven, focused on ensuring the scale, configuration and spatial distribution of existing and future leisure centres is consistent with best practice guidance.

The strategy draws upon the findings of a range of recent consultations undertaken by the council, as well as market research commissioned to directly support this strategy.

This section outlines findings from existing consultation work, and the findings of the targeted market research.

### **7.1 Community Plan Consultation 2014**

To inform the development of the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2015 a consultation exercise was undertaken with residents to identify their priorities for the borough over the next 10-15 years. Feedback was gathered through borough-wide workshops and consultations, market stalls, and an online survey.

Some of the feedback related directly to the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy. In particular:

- There was some support for improved leisure centres, however, during the Budget Consultation residents demonstrated comparatively less opposition to reduced spending on leisure centres relative to other council activities;
- Respondents were generally open to changes in the service delivery model for leisure facilities.

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.

### **7.2 Tower Hamlets Children and Family Plan 2016**

The *Tower Hamlets Children and Families Plan 2016 – 2019* sets out how local services will support children and families in Tower Hamlets over the next three years.

As part of producing that plan almost 100 children, young people, and adults were asked to tell the council their views on issues affecting children and families in Tower Hamlets, as did a large number of staff from a wide range of organisations. The key messages relevant to indoor sports facilities included;

- Active play and socialising is beneficial to children and families and should be protected and promoted
- Parents can need support in their parenting role, and should be encouraged to engage in activities that are relevant to their children's lives

- Mental and emotional wellbeing needs should be considered in all services<sup>22</sup>

### **7.3 Your Borough, Your Future Budget Consultation 2016**

In late 2016 the council undertook a community wide consultation on its budget outlook over the coming three years. The consultation exercise aimed to;

- Involve, inform and consult partners and the public about the financial pressures facing the council;
- Inform and involve people in the council's new approach in setting a longer term strategic budget based on outcomes for residents;
- Understand what is important to residents and stakeholders and how they can work together with the council to make the most of the money we have;
- Build a greater public knowledge of how the council works.

The consultation's objective was to draw out high level overall themes with regard to community priorities for spending, and therefore did not closely analyse community views on, for example, spending on indoor sports facilities provision. There were, however, a number of findings directly relevant to this strategy.

The consultation found that overwhelmingly, residents want the council to retain existing levels of service and instead find savings through efficiencies, and transferring some services to community organisations. This view is reflected in this strategy with its emphasis on working with schools to provide more dual-use sports halls and optimising the existing network of council facilities to support their financial sustainability. The desire of residents for the delivery of council services to become more efficient is also reflected in this strategy; especially with regard to the strategic objective of re-providing facilities so that they to become more operationally efficient and attractive to customers.

Nearly half (48%) of residents held the view that the council's provision of facilities for sport and swimming benefited their households. This strategy therefore recognises that maintaining and improving access to leisure centres will be recognised by residents as directly benefiting their lives.

### **7.4 Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017**

As part of the development of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017, substantial consultation was carried out. Notable feedback relating to the provision of indoor sports facilities included;

- Some respondents felt that there was limited access to the borough's leisure centres, particularly with regard to times that the facilities were available for public use;

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<sup>22</sup> [https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s86222/5.9b%20App1%20AI\\_2016-19%20Children%20Families%20Plan.pdf](https://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/documents/s86222/5.9b%20App1%20AI_2016-19%20Children%20Families%20Plan.pdf)

- Some respondents gave positive feedback about the availability and accessibility of Mile End Park Leisure Centre for swimming and gym exercise activities.

## 7.5 Culture, Sport and Learning Market Research 2016

In autumn 2016, Tower Hamlets' Culture, Leisure and Learning Service commissioned independent market research to better understand residents' perceptions of the borough's Idea Stores, parks and open spaces and indoor sports facilities. The method consisted of just over 700 telephone surveys with weighting applied to ensure the sample was representative of the borough profile.

On indoor sports facilities and sports participation, residents were asked a number of questions on frequency of use, barriers to participation and satisfaction with the existing service provision. The headline findings were as follows;

- A quarter of residents (25%) visit council-owned facilities either daily, more frequently than once a week, about once a week or more frequently than once a month and were classified as 'regular users'. In contrast, three quarters (75%) of residents visit council-owned facilities once a month or less often, almost never or never and were classified as 'non-users'.
- Respondents were asked what the maximum walking time is that they are prepared to walk to get to a council-run indoor sports facility. The most popular response was between 15 and 20 minutes with 43% of respondents choosing this response. A third (33%) said that they would be prepared to walk between 5 and 10 minutes. A fifth (20%) of respondents said that they would be prepared to walk 25 minutes or more to get to a council-run indoor sports facility. This suggests that 63% of residents would be prepared to walk for 15 or more to a council-owned facility.
- Respondents who reported having used council-owned facilities in the borough more frequently than once a month (regular users) were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with five statements. The findings suggest that the vast majority (95%) of regular users agree that the council-owned facilities are in easily accessible locations. More than four fifths of regular users agree that staff is helpful (86%) and that the activities, classes or programmes offered are suitable for people like them (86%). Around three quarters of regular users agree that the changing facilities are suitable for people like them (77%) and that the council-run indoor sports facilities are kept in a clean and tidy condition (74%).
- Non-daily users of council-owned facilities (including those who use them 'almost never') were asked which factors affect how often they use council-run indoor sports facilities. The findings were that for non-daily users cost (74%) is a factor affecting usage. Around three fifths of non-daily users agree that the activities, classes or programmes on offer (63%), the customer service (61%), the location (61%) and the state of the premises (59%) affect how often they use indoor sports facilities that are council-owned. More than half (52%) of non-daily users find that opening hours affect their usage.

- Respondents who never visit any of the council-run indoor sports facilities in Tower Hamlets were asked why this was the case. The findings suggest that the top reasons why non-users don't use council-owned facilities are because they are too busy/don't have the time (33%) and/or they use a private leisure facility/gym (22%).
- Around three quarters (74%) of residents agree that council-run indoor sports facilities help bring people of different backgrounds together. Just under a fifth (17%) neither agree nor disagree, whilst 9% disagree.
- Over 7 in 10 (72%) residents would be likely to recommend Tower Hamlets indoor sports facilities to a friend or family member. 15% would be unlikely to do so, whilst 13% would be neither likely nor unlikely to recommend.<sup>23</sup>

The findings of this market research inform the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy in the following ways;

- Most Tower Hamlets residents are prepared to walk for 15 minutes or more to access indoor sports facilities. 95% of regular users think that indoor sports facilities in Tower Hamlets are located in accessible locations. The ideal indoor sports facilities network and strategic objectives outlined in section 3 will guide future decisions on indoor sports facilities to ensure this level of access is achieved for as many Tower Hamlets residents as possible, where practicable.

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<sup>23</sup> London Borough of Tower Hamlets Culture, Leisure and Open Space Research 2016, Opinion Research Services, Swansea, United Kingdom

# APPENDICES

## Appendix One: council-owned facility assessment

### *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 Overground 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 (restricted to one sport at a time)
  - 1 Tennis Court
  - 1 Netball Court
- 5 a-side football
- Changing Rooms (Indoor/Outdoor)
- Office Facilities
- Car Park

#### *Opening Hours*

Mon-Fri: 7.00am – 10.00pm (Extension under consideration)

Sat: 9.00am – 6.00pm

Sun: 9.00am – 7.00pm

#### *Off Peak Hours*

Mon-Fri: 7.00am – 12.00pm and 2.30pm – 5pm

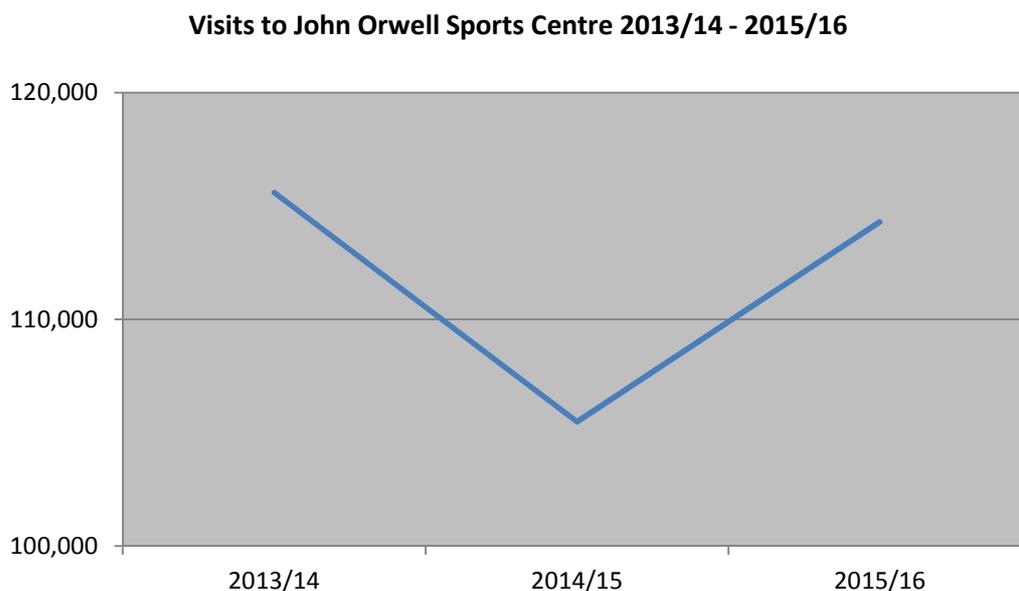
Sat: N/A

Sun: 2.30pm – 7.00pm

#### *Visits*

The graph below shows visitor figures for John Orwell Sports Centre for 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16

**Figure 24: Chart showing visits to John Orwell Sports Centre between 2013/14 to 2015/6**



#### *Suitability and Issues with Use*

- Some restricted access for users with disabilities
  - Difference in level with stairs only and no lift
- Lack of exclusive dance studio which can be segregated for single use

#### *Building Condition and Investment Needed*

John Orwell Leisure Centre was considered to be in satisfactory condition at the time of the latest full condition survey (2016). The survey highlighted that varying parts of the centre are of differing investment need. Internally, the surveyors noted that the sanitary and changing rooms were in an aged and poor condition as was the facilities' heating system. It was also noted that the facilities' electrical switch gear was in poor condition and in need of investment.

## ***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 A12.

The leisure centre has the following facilities:

- Fitness centre/gym (recently extended)
- Programmable gym
- Main Swimming pool (with viewing gallery)
- Teaching pool
- Studio
- Health Suite
- Men's, Women's and Family Changing Area for both dry and wet sides
- Sports Hall
- Crèche (Play and Learn)
- Meeting Room
- Car Park and Offices

The stadium comprises the following facilities:

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

### *Opening Hours*

Mon-Fri: 6.30am – 10.00pm

Sat-Sun: 9.00am – 5pm

Off peak hours:

Mon-Fri: 6.00am – 12.00pm and 2.00pm – 5.00pm

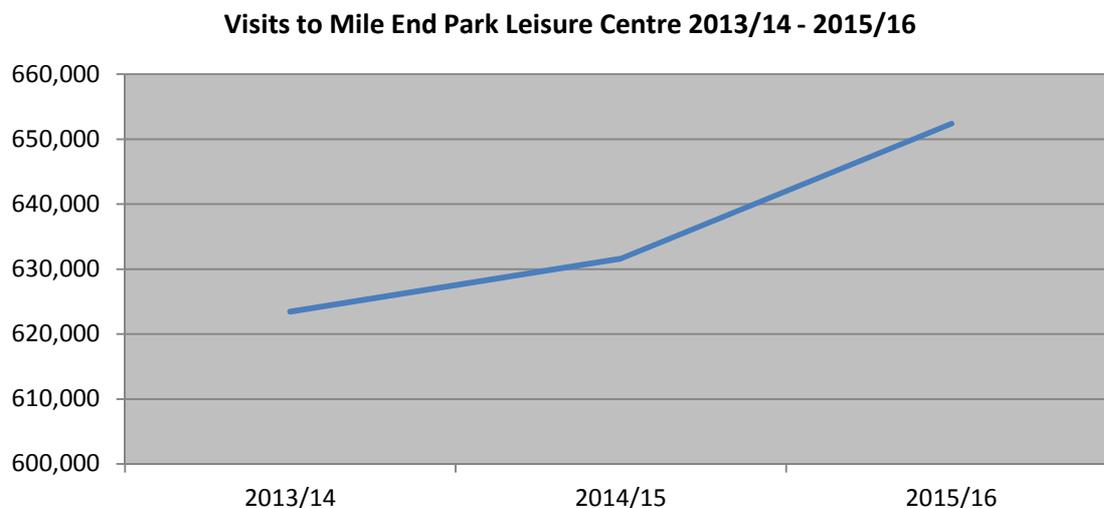
Saturday: All day

Sunday: 2.30pm – 5.00pm

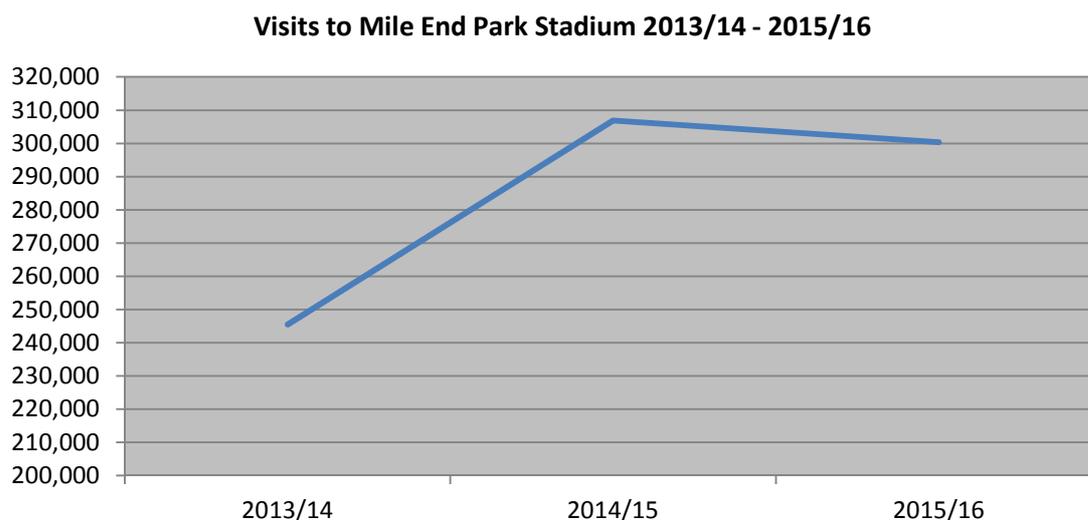
### *Visits*

The graph below shows visitor figures for Mile End Park Leisure Centre and Mile End Park Stadium

**Figure 25: Chart showing visits to Mile End Park Leisure Centre between 2013/14 and 2015/16**



**Figure 26: Chart showing visits to Mile End Park Stadium between 2013/14 and 2015/16**



### *Suitability and Issues with Use*

- Window to sport hall makes single sex use difficult
- Access to mini football pitches and control of users
- Separation of reception areas between leisure centre and stadium
- Conflict between football and athletics users of the grass pitch area (particular in relating 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 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 still a new facility and the latest condition survey identified no urgent maintenance risks, or areas of concern. This was reflected in the surveyors giving the facility an A-condition grading. The adjacent Stadium, however, was recognised in the conditions survey as requiring some immediate work. Notably; the grand-stand showed signs of concrete cracking and spalling and having general weather-tightness issues. Further to this the running track was identified as being at the end of its service life.

## ***St George's Pool***

### *Building History, Location, Key Facilities*

The Centre opened in 1969. It has received considerable investment during its life to enhance facility provision. This has included a recent extension and addition of studio space, with a separate entrance. It is located on The Highway, the main road route between the City of London and the Docklands, and is close to the DLR and the London Overground.

The Centre has the following facilities:

Main Pool

Teaching Pool

Changing Facilities (for both Main and Teaching Pools)

2x Gym and Fitness Rooms

Disabled Lift

Viewing gallery for main pool

Offices

Car Park

### *Opening Hours*

Mon-Fri: 7.00am – 9.30pm

Sat: 8.00am – 6.30pm

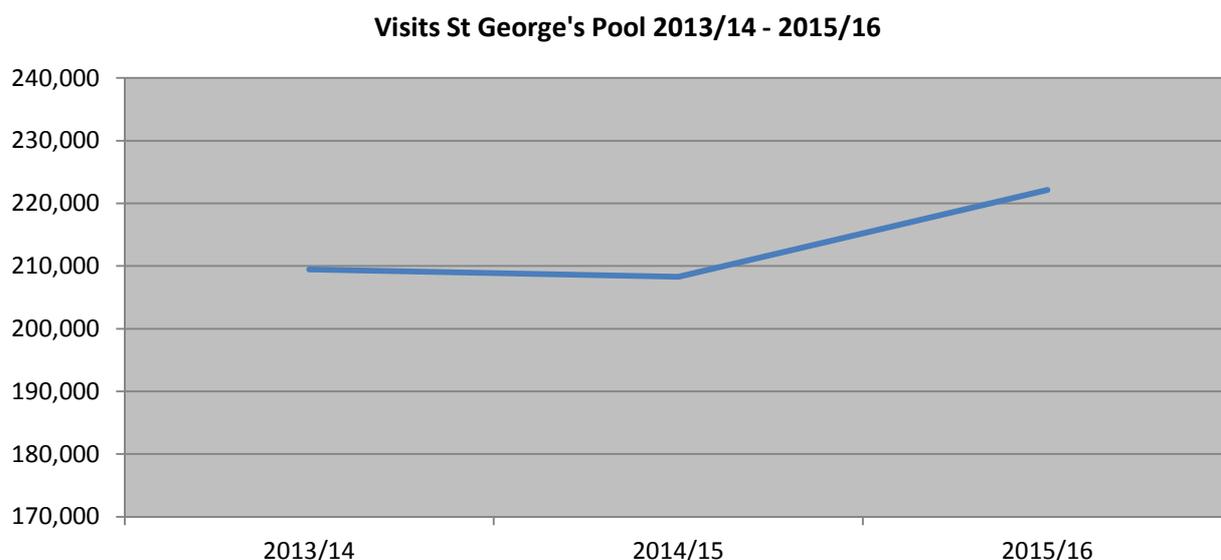
Sun: 8.00am – 6.30pm

Off Peak Hours:

### *Visits*

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

**Figure 27: Chart showing visits to St George's Pool between 2013/14 and 2015/16**



### *Suitability and Issues with Use*

- Limited 'dry' facilities which do not allow for a full programme to be developed
- Site constraints mean little room for future expansion
- Difficult to segregate for single-sex sessions
- Building age and concrete material considered to be at risk of structural decay

### *Building Constraints and Investment Needed*

In the latest condition survey of the site (2016) the surveyors noted the need for immediate repairs to the suspended roof grids, and the presence of weather-tightness issues (roof leaks). The survey company gave the facility an overall condition grading of B (Satisfactory). However, a further, more detailed, structural survey is required to understand the condition of elements of the building which cannot be assessed as part of a visual condition survey.

## ***Tiller Leisure Centre***

### *Building History, Location and Key Facilities*

The Tiller Leisure Centre was opened in 1966. The Centre is located in the heart of the heart of London's Isle of Dogs and is within walking distance of local bus routes and the Docklands Light Railway. This enables easy access from both the Canary Wharf estate and for Tower Hamlets residents. Despite this, it is located on a quiet residential street which impacts on the 'footfall' the Centre can reasonably 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 and Party Room
- 2x studios
- Beauty Treatment Room
- Changing Rooms
- 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 and 2.00pm – 5.00pm

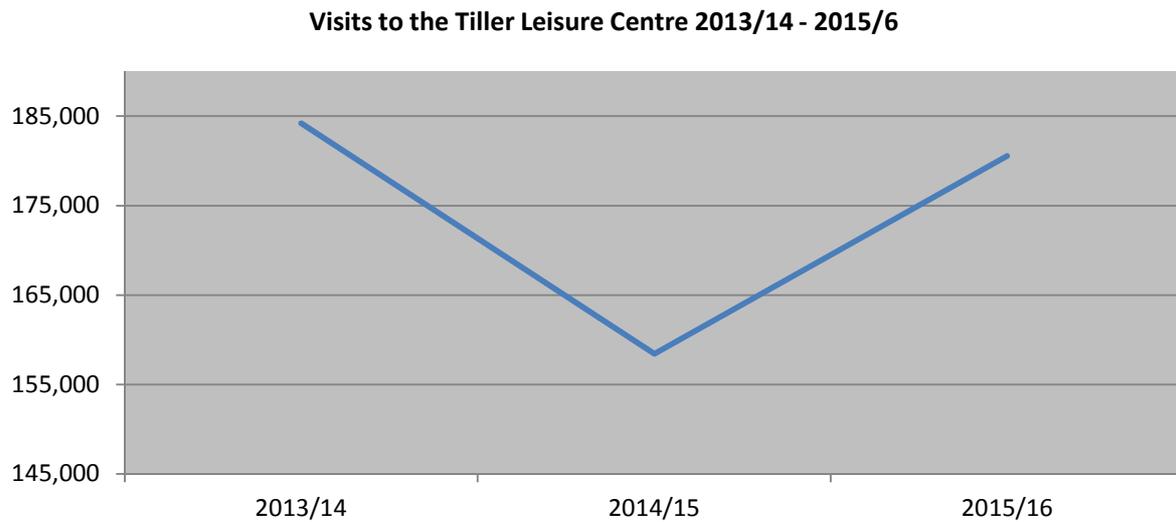
Sat: All day

Sun: 2.30pm – 5.00pm

### *Visits*

The graph below shows visitor figures for Tiller Leisure Centre.

**Figure 28: Chart showing visits to Tiller Leisure Centre between 2013/14 and 2015/16**



*Suitability and Issues with Use*

- Concrete block floor of fitness studio unfit for dance classes (used for free weights)
- No individual/private showers

*Building Constraints and Investment Needed*

Tiller Leisure Centre was considered to be in fair over all condition in its latest condition survey. Elements of its construction were identified to be nearing the end of their service life. Most notably the window systems, timber doors, internal pool side walls, pipework, air handling units and electrical switchboard were all recognised to be in poor condition and needing immediate investment.

## **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 a traditionally non-sporting section of the local community. In particular, women, people with disabilities, young people and black/minority ethnic communities are the target markets. The Centre also provides a quality venue to assist in the development of excellence in basketball.

The Centre has the following facilities:

- 4x badminton court Sports Hall
- Outdoor Training Pitch (currently out of commission due to Crossrail development)
- 2x general gym/fitness rooms
- 1x women only gym/fitness rooms
- Aerobics studio
- Crèche
- Meeting Room
- Changing accommodation
- 2x saunas
- Offices

### *Opening Hours*

Mon: 7.00am - 9.00pm

Tues-Fri: 7.00am - 10.00pm

Sat: 8.00am - 6.00pm

Sun: 8.00am - 4.00pm

Off Peak Hours:

Mon: 7.00am - 12.00pm and 2.00pm - 4.30pm

Tues: 8.00am -

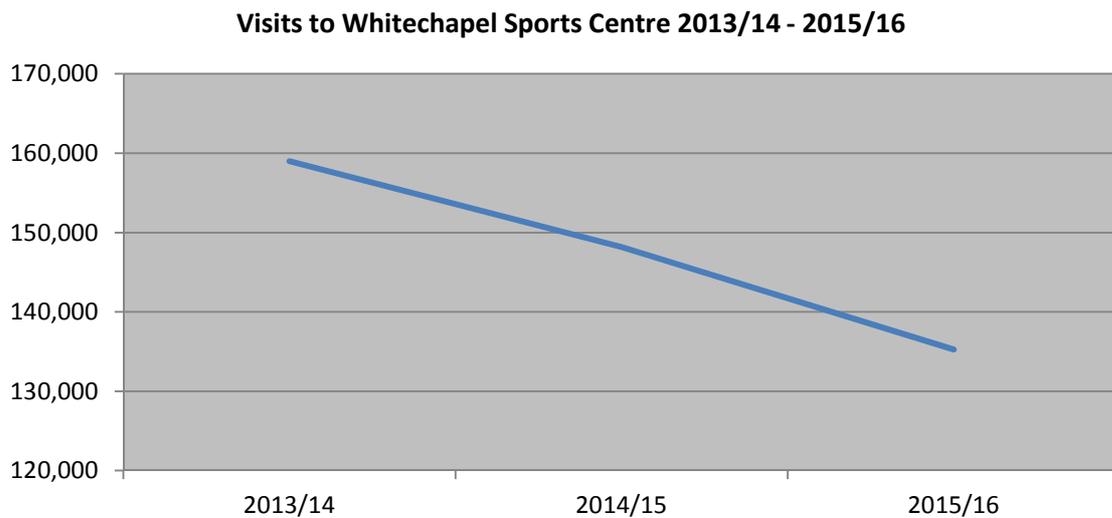
Sat: All day

Sun: 2.30pm – 4.00pm

### *Visits*

The graph below shows visitor figures for Whitechapel Sports Centre.

**Figure 29: Chart showing visits to Whitechapel Sports Centre between 2013/14 and 2015/16**



*Suitability and Issues with Use*

- Location of saunas within changing rooms are difficult to supervise
- Site location has limitations on any future expansion (unless vertical which may be more costly)

*Building Condition and Investment Needed*

Whitechapel Sports Centre was considered to be in a good condition in its latest condition survey, and no major investment needs were identified. The condition survey did identify the need for some non-urgent investment in the particle board covering of the ductwork in the floor, renewal of the sports hall floor and remediation/replacement of the Centre's boilers.

## **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 on a variety of bus routes. It is also within a short walk the London Underground Central Line Station at Bethnal Green.

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, which includes;
  - 2x steam rooms
  - 1x sauna
  - 1x plunge pool
  - 3x hot rooms
  - 1x relaxation area
  - Treatment rooms
- Changing accommodation (for both 'dry' and '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: 7.00am – 12.00pm and 2.00pm – 5.00pm

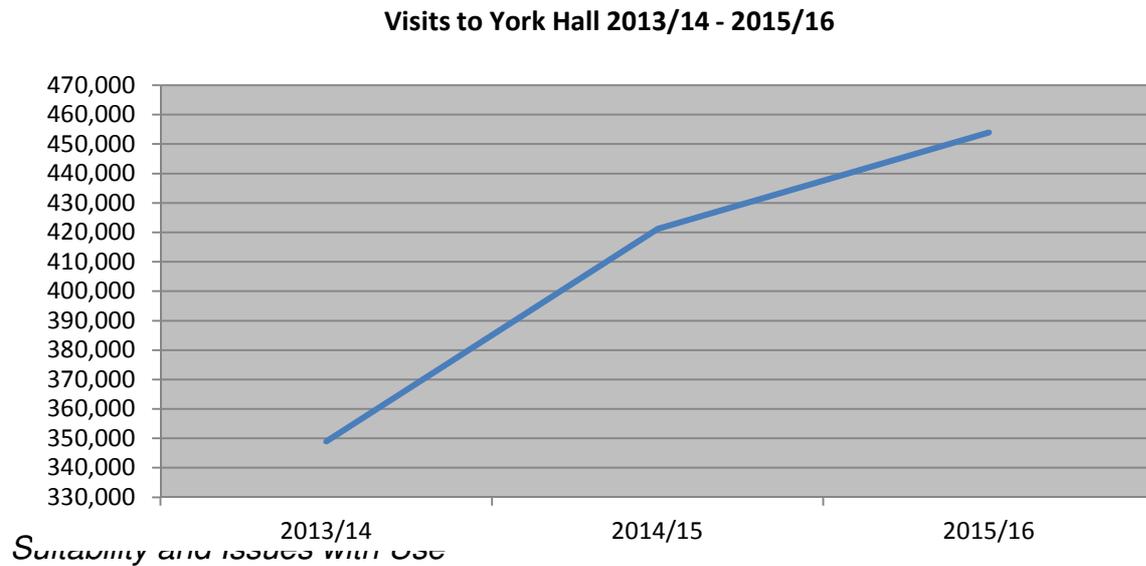
Sat: All day

Sun: 2.30pm – 7.30pm

### *Visits*

The graph below shows visitor figures for York Hall

**Figure 30: Chart showing visits to York Hall between 2013/14 and 2015/16**



- No individual/personal showers
- School rooms access from within single sex changing

*Building Condition and Investment Needed*

In its latest full condition survey, York Hall was recognized by the surveyors as being in overall satisfactory condition. Despite this, the surveyors forecast that, for the facility to retain its existing condition, it will require substantial investment over the next 15 years. This is due to the age and construction of the building, as well as it being a grade-II listed building. Of note, the surveyors identified that immediate repairs were required to the suspended grids in the roof. In addition, they recognized missing pipework insulation and that the facility's air handling unit was in acceptable but deteriorating condition. The condition survey also noted that the electrical switchgear was in poor condition.

## Appendix Two: facility audit data tables

Figure 31: Table of sports halls (badminton courts) in and around Tower Hamlets, 2016

Site Name	Facility Type	Courts
<b>Included in supply modelling</b>		
John Orwell Sports Centre	Public	4
Mile End Park Leisure Centre and Stadium	Public	4
Poplar Baths	Public	4
Whitechapel Sports Centre	Public	4
Arbour Youth Centre	Dual use	1
Attlee Youth and Community Centre	Dual use	1
Bethnal Green Academy	Dual use	6
Central Foundation Girls School	Dual use	4
Ensign	Dual use	1
George Green's School and Sports Centre	Dual use	4
Ian Mikardo High School	Dual use	1
Mulberry Sports and Leisure Centre	Dual use	1
Oaklands Secondary School	Dual use	3
Sir John Cass Foundation and Redcoat Church of England School	Dual use	4
St Pauls Way Trust School	Dual use	4
Stepney Green Maths Computing and Science School	Dual use	2
Swanlea School	Dual use	6
Tarling East Community Centre	Dual use	1
The Workhouse Leisure Centre	Dual use	1
Bow School	Dual use	4
Raines Foundation School	Dual use	4
Haileybury Youth Centre	Dual use	2
Q Motion Health & Fitness	Commercial	3
Reebok Sports Club	Commercial	4
<b>Excluded from supply modelling</b>		
<b>Within Borough</b>	<b>Reason for Exclusion</b>	<b>Courts</b>
Bishop Challoner Catholic Collegiate School	Private Use	4
<b>Outside Borough</b>		
Britannia Leisure Centre	Outside Borough - Public	6
Cardinal Pole Catholic School	Outside Borough – Dual Use	1
Hackney Sports and Performing Arts Centre	Outside Borough – Dual Use	6
Haggerston School	Outside Borough – Dual Use	3
The Copperbox Arena	Outside Borough - Public	10
Eastlea Community School	Outside Borough – Dual Use	4
Seven Islands Leisure Centre	Outside Borough - Public	4
The Salmon Youth Centre	Outside Borough – Dual Use	4
Bacons College Sports Centre	Outside Borough – Dual Use	4

Figure 32: Table of sports halls (badminton courts) in and around Tower Hamlets, grouped by facility type, 2016

Facility Type	Number of sites	Number of Courts	
Public	4	16	
Dual Use	18	53	39.75 (weighted for dual use capacity reduction)
Commercial	2	7	
<b>Sub-total – included in supply modelling</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>62.75 (weighted for dual use capacity reduction)</b>

Private Use	1	4
Outside Borough	9	42
<b>Sub-total – excluded from supply modelling</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>44</b>

**Figure 33: Table of swimming pools in and around Tower Hamlets, 2016**

Site Name	Facility Type	M <sup>2</sup>
<b>Included in supply modelling</b>		
Mile End Park Leisure Centre and Stadium	Public	416.25
Poplar Baths	Public	312.5
Tiller Leisure Centre	Public	312.5
St George's Pool	Public	466.2
York Hall Leisure Centre	Public	425.0
<b>Excluded from supply modelling</b>		
<b>Within Borough</b>	<b>Reason for Exclusion</b>	<b>M<sup>2</sup></b>
St George's Pool	Public – Training Pool	50.0
York Hall Leisure Centre	Public – Training Pool	120.00
Poplar Baths	Public – Training Pool	42.5
Mile End Leisure Centre	Public – Training Pool	170.0
The Tower Bridge Health And Fitness Club	Commercial	UKN
Fitness First Health Club (London Thomas More Square)	Commercial	75.00
The Canary Wharf Health Club	Commercial	UKN
Reebok Sports Club (London)	Commercial	224.25
Virgin Active Classic (Canary Riverside Health Club)	Commercial	200.00
Sir John Cass Foundation And Redcoat C Of E Secondary School	Private Use	160.00
Spindles Health & Leisure (London)	Commercial	96.00
<b>Outside Borough</b>		
Bannatynes Health Club (Tower 42)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
Bannatynes Health Club (Tower 42)	Outside Borough – Commercial	108.0
Britannia Leisure Centre	Outside Borough – Public	572.0
Britannia Leisure Centre	Outside Borough – Public	UKN
Circle Spa Health Club	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
City Of London School For Girls	Outside Borough – Dual Use	UKN
Fitness First Health Club (London, London Bridge Cottons)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
Glendinning Fitness Centre	Outside Borough - Private Use	UKN
Golden Lane Sports & Fitness	Outside Borough – Public	UKN
Grange City Hotel	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
Grange City Hotel	Outside Borough – Commercial	192.5
Ironmonger Row Baths	Outside Borough – Public	305.0
Ironmonger Row Baths	Outside Borough – Public	90.0
Lax (London Wall)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
London Aquatics Centre	Outside Borough – Public	1250.0
London Aquatics Centre	Outside Borough – Public	1050.0
London Aquatics Centre	Outside Borough – Public	500.0
London Fields Lido	Outside Borough – Public	850.0
Nuffield Health (City)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
Nuffield Health (City)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
Nuffield Health (Moorgate)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN

Nuffield Health (Shoreditch)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
Orchard Lisle Swimming Pool At Guys	Outside Borough - Private Use	250.0
Seven Islands Leisure Centre	Outside Borough – Public	UKN
Shooters Hill Post 16 Campus	Outside Borough – Dual Use	160.0
Shoreditch House	Outside Borough – Private Use	96.0
St. Paul'S Health & Fitness Club	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
The Downside Fisher Youth Club	Outside Borough – Dual Use	117.0
The Greenwich Centre	Outside Borough – Public	UKN
The Greenwich Centre	Outside Borough – Public	UKN
The Quad Club (London Docklands)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
Third Space Health Club (Tower Bridge)	Outside Borough – Commercial	140.0
Virgin Active Classic (Bank Health Club)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
Virgin Active Classic (Broadgate Health Club)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN n
Virgin Active Club (Moorgate)	Outside Borough – Commercial	UKN
Virgin Active Club (Tower Bridge)	Outside Borough – Commercial	168.0

**Figure 34: Table of swimming pools in and around Tower Hamlets, grouped by facility type, 2016**

Facility Type	Number of sites	M <sup>2</sup>
Public – Main Pool	4	1932.45
<b>Sub-total – included in supply modelling</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1932.45</b>
Teaching Pool	4	382.5
Private Use	1	160
Commercial	6	Unknown
Outside Borough	36	Unknown
<b>Sub-total – excluded from supply modelling</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>Unknown</b>

**Figure 35: Table of health and fitness gyms in and around Tower Hamlets, 2016**

Site Name	Facility Type	No. of Stations
<b>Included in supply modelling</b>		
<b>Inside Borough</b>		
Ability Bow	Dual Use	17
Anytime Fitness (London City)	Commercial	32
Bodylines (Ladies Only)	Commercial	39
Crossfit London	Commercial	20
Crossfit London (Gales Gardens)	Dual Use	20
East River Spa	Commercial	15
Fit4Less (London Bethnal Green)	Commercial	61
Fit4Less (London Caspian Wharf)	Commercial	40

Fitness First Health Club (London Spitalfields Tower)	Commercial	60
Fitness First Health Club (London Thomas More Square)	Commercial	90
Fitness4Less (London Cambridge Heath)	Commercial	340
Hayaa Fitness	Commercial	53
John Orwell Sports Centre	Public	75
Limehouse Marina Elite	Commercial	100
Mile End Park Leisure Centre And Stadium	Public	124
Mulberry Sports & Leisure Centre	Dual Use	24
Muscle Works Gym	Commercial	115
Poplar Bath	Public	80
Pure Gym (London Canary Wharf)	Commercial	10
Q Motion Health & Fitness	Dual Use	90
Reebok Sports Club (London)	Commercial	170
Soho Gyms (Bow Wharf)	Commercial	73
Spindles Health & Leisure (London)	Commercial	45
St George'S Leisure Centre	Public	30
The Tower Bridge Health And Fitness Club	Commercial	15
Tiller Leisure Centre	Public	60
Urban Fitness (Sugar House)	Commercial	80
Virgin Active Classic (Canary Riverside Health Club)	Commercial	100
Whitechapel Sports Centre	Public	110
Whitechapel Sports Centre	Public	40
York Hall	Public	100
<b>Excluded from supply modelling</b>		
<b>Inside Borough</b>		
Bethnal Green Academy	Private Use	21
Bow School Of Maths And Computing	Private Use	16
Central Foundation Girls School	Private Use	20
Livingwell Express Club (London Canary Wharf)	Private Use	9
London Metropolitan University (London City Campus)	Private Use	17
Morpeth School	Private Use	14
Oaklands Secondary School	Private Use	14
Sir John Cass Foundation And Redcoat C Of E Secondary School	Private Use	15
St Pauls Way Trust School	Private Use	24
Swanlea School	Private Use	12
The Canary Wharf Health Club	Private Use	100
<b>Outside Borough</b>		
1Rebel (St Mary Axe)	Outside Borough - Commercial	20
Bacons College Sports Centre	Outside Borough - Dual Use	15
Bannatynes Health Club (Tower 42)	Outside Borough - Commercial	73
Beefs & Babes (Greenwich)	Outside Borough - Commercial	43
Beormund Community Centre	Outside Borough - Public	12
Better Gym North Greenwich	Outside Borough - Public	83
Britannia Leisure Centre	Outside Borough - Public	61

Circle Spa Health Club	Outside Borough - Commercial	30
City Athletic	Outside Borough - Commercial	19
City Golf And Health Club	Outside Borough - Commercial	23
Citysport	Outside Borough - Dual Use	132
Energie Fitness Club (Hackney)	Outside Borough - Commercial	45
Fit4Less (London Old Street)	Outside Borough - Commercial	100
Fit4Less (London Tower Hill)	Outside Borough - Commercial	32
Fitness First Health Club (London Angel)	Outside Borough - Commercial	79
Fitness First Health Club (London Bishopgate)	Outside Borough - Commercial	50
Fitness First Health Club (London Broadgate)	Outside Borough - Commercial	80
Fitness First Health Club (London Devonshire Square)	Outside Borough - Commercial	67
Fitness First Health Club (London Fenchurch Street)	Outside Borough - Commercial	123
Fitness First Health Club (London Gracechurch Street)	Outside Borough - Commercial	110
Fitness First Health Club (London Liverpool Street)	Outside Borough - Commercial	78
Fitness First Health Club (London Tower Hill)	Outside Borough - Commercial	100
Fitness First Health Club (London, London Bridge Cottons)	Outside Borough - Commercial	98
Fitness4Less (London Canning Town)	Outside Borough - Commercial	58
Golden Lane Sports & Fitness	Outside Borough - Public	27
Gymbox (Bank)	Outside Borough - Commercial	100
Gymbox (Farringdon)	Outside Borough - Commercial	100
Gymbox (Old Street)	Outside Borough - Commercial	50
Gymbox (Westfield Stratford)	Outside Borough - Commercial	75
Hackney Sports & Performing Arts Centre (Space)	Outside Borough - Dual Use	30
Ironmonger Row Baths	Outside Borough - Public	136
Kings Gymnasium Health Club	Outside Borough - Commercial	50
La Fitness (St Pauls)	Outside Borough - Commercial	51
Lax (Aldgate)	Outside Borough - Commercial	78
Lax (London Wall)	Outside Borough - Commercial	77
London Aquatics Centre	Outside Borough - Dual Use	50
Nuffield Health (Moorgate)	Outside Borough - Commercial	60
Nuffield Health (Shoreditch)	Outside Borough - Commercial	50
Otium Leisure Club (Barbican)	Outside Borough - Commercial	22
Peacock Gymnasium	Outside Borough - Dual Use	30
Pure Gym (London Bermondsey)	Outside Borough - Commercial	220
Queensbridge Sports & Community Centre	Outside Borough - Public	40
Seven Islands Leisure Centre	Outside Borough - Public	60
Shoreditch House	Outside Borough - Commercial	26
Slim Jim'S Health Club	Outside Borough - Commercial	92
Soho Gyms (Farringdon)	Outside Borough - Commercial	55
Surrey Docks Watersports Centre	Outside Borough - Public	70
The Copper Box Arena	Outside Borough - Public	100
The Downside Fisher Youth Club	Outside Borough - Dual Use	8
The Greenwich Centre	Outside Borough - Public	130
The Gym (London Angel)	Outside Borough - Commercial	117

The Quad Club (London Docklands)	Outside Borough - Commercial	25
Third Space Health Club (Tower Bridge)	Outside Borough - Commercial	100
Titan Fitness Centre Ltd	Outside Borough - Commercial	50
Tokei Martial Arts & Fitness Centre	Outside Borough - Commercial	17
Virgin Active Classic (200 Aldersgate)	Outside Borough - Commercial	93
Virgin Active Classic (Bank Health Club)	Outside Borough - Commercial	75
Virgin Active Classic (Broadgate Health Club)	Outside Borough - Commercial	130
Virgin Active Club (Barbican)	Outside Borough - Commercial	100
Virgin Active Club (Islington Angel)	Outside Borough - Commercial	200
Virgin Active Club (Moorgate)	Outside Borough - Commercial	180
Virgin Active Club (Tower Bridge)	Outside Borough - Commercial	170

**Figure 34: Table of health and fitness gyms in and around Tower Hamlets, grouped by facility type, 2016**

Facility Type	Number of Sites	Number of Stations
Public	8	619
Dual Use	4	131
Commercial	19	1478
<b>Sub-total – included in supply modelling</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>2228</b>
Private Use	11	262
Outside Borough	62	4355
<b>Sub-total – excluded from supply modelling</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>4617</b>

### Appendix Three: action plan

Strategic Option	Strategic Objective	Key Deliverables and Milestones	Senior Lead	Date
1. Investigate any opportunities for adding indoor sports provision as part of the Bishopsgate Goods Yard development, potentially as a joint venture with partners, including neighbouring councils.	Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets	Advise plan making team as to the likely site footprint of an indoor sports facilities at the site allocation	Divisional Director for Strategy, Policy, Equalities and Partnerships	May 2017
		Plan making team to consider requirement as part of the prioritisation for wider requirements of the site	Divisional Director Planning and Building Control	September 2017
2. Investigate any opportunities to develop indoor sports provision as a joint venture with partners, including neighbouring councils.	Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets	Review strategies and site allocations for sports facility development in Local Plans of Hackney, Newham, the City of London and Islington	Divisional Director for Strategy, Policy, Equalities and Partnerships	July 2017
		Establish communication and explore options regarding any identified opportunities	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	December 2017
3. Explore provision of Whitechapel Sports Centre with an enhanced facilities mix (pitch and sports hall, plus possibly a pool) on the existing or an alternative site as part of the wider re-development of the Whitechapel area.	Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets  Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance  Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities	Commission review of leisure stock and options	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	February 2018
		Commission full structural survey of Whitechapel Sports Centre following completion of Crossrail works	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	May 2018
		Commission design and feasibility study	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	September 2018
4. Investigate options for increasing community access to sports halls on school sites and other dual-use facilities.	Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets	Complete audit of all existing and planned dual-use school sports halls in borough	Divisional Director for Strategy, Policy, Equalities and Partnerships	September 2017
		Identify existing sites where improved community access to dual use facilities might be possible	Divisional Director for Strategy, Policy, Equalities and Partnerships	September 2017
		Enter discussions with operators of facilities that are not currently publicly accessible	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	October 2017
		Put in place a process that allows Sport and Physical Activity Service to review planning applications for new schools	Divisional Director Planning and Building Control	June 2017
5. Investigate options for a lido in the borough to provide additional swimming pool capacity in line with the Mayor's pledge.	Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets	Identify potential sites for lido development	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	July 2017
		Commission feasibility study for lido development recommendations at prospective sites	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	September 2017

<p>6. At York Hall, the council should explore either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Refurbishment of York Hall with the existing facilities mix (excluding Mayfield House), or;</li> <li>○ Re-development of the site including Mayfield House and retention of the historic York Hall building, with pool provision and potentially enhanced facilities mix and housing development, or;</li> <li>○ Re-development of the site including Mayfield House and retention of the historic York Hall building and the event function / boxing hall, with housing development, but with pool provided elsewhere.</li> </ul>	<p>Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets</p> <p>Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance</p> <p>Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities</p>	<p>Commission review of leisure stock and options</p> <p>Commission full structural survey of York Hall</p> <p>Commission design and feasibility study</p>	<p>Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth</p> <p>Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth</p> <p>Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth</p>	<p>February 2018</p> <p>May 2018</p> <p>September 2018</p>
<p>7. The council should investigate either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The retention/refurbishment of the St George's Pool, with the addition of a sports hall, with an option for housing development on the site, or;</li> <li>• The addition of new facilities at John Orwell Leisure Centre, including a swimming pool, of high design quality, to replace any lost provision at St George's and new facilities such as 5-a-side playing pitches. St George's could then be redeveloped to help fund the new facilities.</li> </ul>	<p>Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets</p> <p>Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance</p> <p>Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities</p>	<p>Commission review of leisure stock and options</p> <p>Commission full structural surveys of St George's Pool and John Orwell Sports Centre</p> <p>Commission design and feasibility study</p>	<p>Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth</p> <p>Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth</p> <p>Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth</p>	<p>February 2018</p> <p>May 2018</p> <p>September 2018</p>
<p>8. The council should explore options to improve the facility mix of the Tiller Leisure Centre by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigating if the adjacent proposed school sports facilities could be brought into the footprint of the leisure centre. This could include the redevelopment of Tiller Leisure Centre to create a more financially viable and attractive provision in a high growth area.</li> <li>• Investigating the inclusion of alternative site allocations for the Isle of Dogs in the Local Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Increase the overall supply of publicly accessible sports halls and swimming pools in Tower Hamlets</p> <p>Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance</p> <p>Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities</p>	<p>Advise plan making team as to the likely site footprint of an indoor sports facilities at the site allocation</p> <p>Plan making team to consider requirement as part of the prioritisation for wider requirements for the Isle of Dogs site allocations</p> <p>Work with property services, planning and education colleagues to explore options for achieving a more comprehensive leisure offer at the existing site and in conjunction with the adjacent proposed school site</p> <p>Commission review of leisure stock and options</p>	<p>Divisional Director for Strategy, Policy, Equalities and Partnerships</p> <p>Divisional Director Planning and Building Control</p> <p>Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth</p> <p>Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth</p>	<p>May 2017</p> <p>September 2017</p> <p>July 2017</p> <p>February 2018</p>

		Commission full structural surveys of Tiller Leisure Centre	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	May 2018
		Commission design and feasibility study	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	September 2018
9. Continue to support the implementation of the council's Carbon Management Plan, Climate Change Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan	Improve economic efficiency and energy efficiency of indoor sports facilities	Put forward proposals to consider the use of Carbon Offset Funds for energy efficient retrofits of council leisure centre sites, based on the relatively high energy consumption of these buildings as detailed in the Carbon Offset Solutions Study	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	Ongoing
10. Work with the council's equalities forums to evaluate the accessibility and suitability of the council's indoor sports facilities for people of all protected characteristics	Re-provide indoor sports facilities with improved provision that is consistent with best practice guidance	Work with our leisure management contractor to ensure accessibility improvement works are considered in all future refurbishment improvements	Divisional Director for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Youth	Ongoing