

APPENDIX 1 – SWIMMING POOL STRATEGY 2018

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 In general the residents of Cambridge City enjoy a very good level of supply of pools and diversity of water space, within the City, with provision above the national average, being delivered through a good mixture of school, commercial and local authority facilities.
- 1.2 Although the Sport England modelling data indicates that there is an oversupply of water space in the City these figures are based pre-dominantly on the demand placed on them by Cambridge City residents in isolation, when the model utilises data relating to imported use from outside of the City as well, it provides a different picture and results in an undersupply of water space.
- 1.3 Of the seven modelled sites two are Council owned pools providing 51% of the swims available in the peak period based on the data that has been modelled. The only negative is that the City pools offer is not accessible by all members of the community based on the 20 / 30 minutes / walk times used within the analysis.
- 1.4 A number of the pool facilities in the City are starting to age (The Abbey Pool is now 27 years old and Parkside Pools is 19 years old), and most non authority run sites do not have recorded refurbishments according to Sport England's Facility database - Active Places. Whilst with investment all these sites should be in a position to continue to offer quality community opportunities for a number of years, with population growth and increased participation in swimming, it is likely the public swimming offer in Cambridge is going to struggle to meet demand in the future.
- 1.5 Overall site usage across the City in the peak period is at 69%, just 1% short of the "full" level used by Sport England. However, it is clear that certain pools are under pressure. Parkside is at 98% capacity, Abbey at 62% and other facilities – Leys at 87% and Nuffield Health at 69% are at or nearing capacity too.
- 1.6 If there continues to be no additional offers that are more convenient to South Cambs residents the City's capacity issues are unlikely to change, and demand will eventually outstrip supply, and all sites will have to operate at full capacity which will bring issues with the quality of the swimming experience offered, with accessible times and overcrowding problems.
- 1.7 The only facilities with good availability are private ones at DW, David Lloyd and Frank Lee.

- 1.8 There is minimal exportation of swimmers out of the city, and areas that have the lowest levels of access to pools in Cambridge at present are those who live in the north west of the authority.
- 1.9 Acknowledgement needs to be given that there are other swimming facilities in the City which have not been modelled as they fall outside of the Sport England Facilities criteria, and do contribute to the overall provision of water space in the city namely; Chesterton Community College Pool, Kings Hedges Learner Pool, and Jesus Green Lido.
- 1.10 Capacity building for additional water space needs to be a priority for both authorities and going forward investment should be focussed on;
- Improving existing stock that is aging
 - Additions to existing facilities
 - Negotiate community access to privately owned facilities
 - New provision

2.0 Introduction

2.1 This report provides a strategic assessment of the current level of provision for Pools in Cambridge using Sport England’s Facilities Planning Model run with data as of January 2015, ¹ which fed into the Indoor Sport Strategy for the City adopted in June 2016.

2.2 Where applicable the data outputs for Cambridge are compared with;

- (a) national and regional averages,
- (b) neighbouring authorities and
- (c) CIPFA ‘Nearest Neighbour’ authorities. (Exeter & Oxford)

2.3 Supply of Pools from the Sport England Facilities modelling

Table 1 - Supply	Cambridge	ENGLAND	EAST REGION	Cambridgeshire County	South Cambridgeshire	Exeter	Oxford
Number of pools	10.00	3,053.00	339.00	27.00	2.00	9.00	13.00
Number of pool sites	7.00	2,156.00	241.00	21.00	2.00	7.00	11.00
Supply of total water space in sqm	2,172.00	681,427.00	75,729.00	5,756.00	410.00	2,084.00	3,234.00
Supply of publicly available water space in sqm (scaled with hrs avail in pp)	2,038.27	567,268.52	63,123.69	5,139.19	329.01	1,546.86	2,712.00
Supply of total water space in VPWPP	17,672.00	4,918,218.00	547,282.00	44,557.00	2,853.00	13,411.00	23,513.00
Water space per 1,000	17.36	12.46	12.51	8.94	2.61	17.21	20.88

2.4 There are a total of 10 pools on seven sites across Cambridge, of which 7 pools are used in the facility modelling. Current Sport England guidance is that pools need to be open all year round and measure at least; 8.5m for a 4 lane pool, 10.5m width for a 6 lane pool, 12.5 or 13 for a 6 lane pool and 17m for an 8 lane pool.

2.5 The seven pools included in the local modelling are;

Public Pools

Abbey Pool a 25x12m Pool offering 5 lanes

Cambridge Parkside Pools a 25x18m pool offering 8 lanes

Private Membership Pools

David Lloyd a 25x10m pool offering 4 lanes

DW Fitness a 20x9m pool offering 3 lanes

The Frank Lee a 25x9m pool offering 3 lanes

The Leys a 25x10m pool offering 4 lanes

Nuffield Health a 25x 8m pool offering 2-3 lanes

2.6 The 3 remaining pools are all secondary pools – two at Parkside – 1 toddler leisure pool and 1 diving pool with a moveable floor, and the other one is the learner pool at Abbey.

2.7 There are a number of other pools in Cambridge but these are either too small to be considered for the modelling (those under 20m in length and / or under

¹ , As no new swimming facilities have been built since 2015 and the modelling considered known population growth till 2032, the data set is still considered to be up to date.

160sqm (Chesterton Community College Pool, Kings Hedges Learner Pool & the Grove Pool), or they are lido facilities (Jesus Green and Sheeps Green) and have a limited number of weeks of access.

- 2.8 Although the modelling excludes these facilities from the analysis they do assist in meeting the needs of the community swimming offer. In some locations club and learn to swim programmes have been migrated to these smaller sites to free up more pay and play access at key community sites in order to free up key pool time and space.
- 2.9 The type of management does have an impact on the way that the model works and how it distributes visits to sites. The model uses the demographics, and thereby relative affluence, to push specific users to specific facilities. If a site is identified as commercial the model will make assumptions that it is less accessible to the general public through membership systems and costs to use.
- 2.10 Age of the facilities also has an impact on the modelling and a number of the facilities in the area are starting to age;
- The Frank Lee facility was built in 1973 and has no recorded refurbishment, so it is likely to require some investment in order to ensure it can continue to provide an offer that is attractive to community users.
 - Abbey is now 27 years old and had a refurbishment of changing facilities in 2009 which would have impacted positively on its attractiveness to users in the modelling.
 - Parkside is now 19 years old with a refurbishment in 2012 for changing accommodations again uplifting its attractiveness in the modelling.
 - Nuffield Health is around 17 years old with no recorded refurbishment.
 - The Leys is 20 years old with no recorded refurbishment.
 - David Lloyd was built in 2004 now 14 years old and,
 - DW Sports in 2008, at 10 years old, neither have recorded refurbishments.
- 2.11 Two of the 7 sites are owned by the Council and operated by GLL which means that the authority has control over 51% of the swimming offer in the peak period (Abbey 3,663 visits per week peak period (vpwpp) and Parkside 5,275 – total 8,937 of the 17,672 available. This shows the importance of the City Councils pools but also highlights how important wider providers are in meeting the overall swimming needs of Cambridge residents.
- 2.12 The total amount of square meters (sqm) of pool space provided in Cambridge is 2,172sqm. When the availability of this space for community use in the peak period is considered this figure drops to 2,038sqm.
- 2.13 This level of supply equates to 17.36sqm of water space per 1,000 residents. This level of provision is high in comparison to the National average being

12.46sqm, Regional being 12.51sqm, and County down at 8.94sqm. These compare well to CIPFA comparators at 17.21sqm, but are lower than Oxford at 20.88sqm.

- 2.14 The figure for the whole of Cambridgeshire is low in comparison to Cambridge City due to the low level of provision in South Cambridgeshire at just 2.61sqm of water space per 1,000 residents. This is the 4th lowest level of provision for any authority in England. This is suggesting that the facilities in Cambridge City are likely to play a major role in serving the swimming needs of many South Cambs communities.
- 2.15 It is important to note that the modelling data set views just the City pools and provides a measure of water space supply provided by facilities based within the City boundary against demand created by the population of the City. The modelling does not take in to account the fact that additional pressure from potential users who do not live in the City, nor the fact that Cambridge residents may also go out of the City to participate in swimming activities.
- 2.16 Due to the challenges of getting around Cambridge via cars the location of sites may have an impact on resident's decisions to participate in swimming and whilst the travel distances are short, travel times across the city may have an impact on regular participation.

3.0 Demand for Pools

- 3.1 The modelled pools give a supply of 2,038spm, with the City's residents generating a total VPWPP (visits per week in the peak period) of 8,158 vpwpp, in comparison to a supply capable of providing 17,672 vpwpp. This is a large oversupply of 9,514 vpwpp but is modelled on the pools being at 100% capacity.
- 3.2 A "Comfort Factor" is therefore modelled and this comfort factor is based on a 70% occupancy rate instead, and when this comfort factor of access is considered, the supply of the city pools equate to 1,354sqm of water space and 12,370 vpwpp, an oversupply of 4,212 vpwpp.

4.0 Supply & Demand Balance

- 4.1 Based on Cambridge's population, demographic and pools comfort factor the demand is for 1,354sqm of water space, with a supply of 2,038sqm this results in a significant oversupply of 684sqm of water space. To give a context to this data a 25m 6 lane pool capable of meeting community need is 312.5sqm (25x12.5). Therefore the oversupply is marginally more than two 6 lane pools if the demand generated by just the population of the City is used.

- 4.2 Of the comparator authorities South Cambs has a very significant undersupply of 1,321sqm, (equivalent to over four 6 lane 25m pools). However, the two CIPFA comparators both have oversupplies too – Exeter not as high as Cambridge at 258sqm and Oxford even higher at 1,003sqm.
- 4.3 This statistic only provides a ‘global’ view of provision and does not take account of the location, nature and quality of facilities in relation to demand; how accessible facilities are to the resident population (by car, cycle and on foot); nor does it take account any facilities in adjoining authorities and the demand that their communities create.
- 4.4 Data shows that 65% of the visits to pools were made by people travelling by car. This figure is far lower than the National (75.65), Regional (83.42%) County averages (85.72%). This is not a surprise for Cambridge with its active travel approach and promotion of cycling throughout the City. The figures are similar to those in Exeter (67.86%) and Oxford (62.63%).
- 4.5 Of the modelled visits 95% are met within the catchment areas for travel times for facilities based in the City. This compares well the County average (90%) and is similar to those of Exeter (95.1%) and Oxford (93.6%). Higher figures of retained demand in urban areas is usually due to the reduced distances for travel experienced in tighter geographical areas.
- 4.6 This means that just 5% of the demand generated by Cambridge residents is modelled to be exported to facilities in neighbouring authorities. It is likely that most of this is modelled export of swimmers to go to Impington or Bottisham Pools.
- 4.7 In contrast South Cambs retains just 21.6% of its swimming participation and exports 78.4% of its generated demand. Whilst the national facilities report cannot provide detail of where this export is going directly, it is clear that many South Cambs residents will make use of facilities based in Cambridge City.
- 4.8 Although Cambridge has a high level of identified oversupply, all the needs of residents are not being met as some are outside the walk / drive time of a local facility. Of the unmet demand 99.5% is as a result of residents being outside the catchment of an existing facility and just 0.5% as a result of lack of capacity at an existing site. This means that the only way the needs of residents can be met is by the provision of additional water space in alternative locations. However, the modelling data does not provide a clear indication of where any new provision should be provided.
- 4.9 Cambridge exports just 384 vpwpp to neighbouring authorities and imports 4,852. This makes Cambridge a significant net importer of 4,681 vpwpp. This equates to 777sqm of water space or nearly two and a half 25m x 6 lane pools. (or 15 lanes)

- 4.10 In comparison South Cambs is a net exporter of 6,236 vpwpp, (four 25m x 6 lane pools) this identifies the significant reliance that South Cambs residents have on the City based facilities in meeting their swimming needs.

5.0 Used Capacity - How well used are the facilities?

- 5.1 The modelled used capacity in the peak period of the facilities in the City is 68.8%. This is higher than the National (64.8%) and Regional (63.3%) averages but lower than the County (76.7%) average. This is not a surprise when you consider the large amount of identified oversupply in the City, and undersupply in South Cambs, means the County demand takes in to account the net result of both positions.
- 5.2 Sport England considers a pool to be “full” when its % utilisation in the peak period reaches 70% or more. This is due to the fact that it is difficult to book and programme a facility to meet the needs of users when a facility is this full. 68.8% capacity for the City Pools very close to this 70% line, and as a result the ability of the City pools to take on significant further usage for its own resident growth demand is very limited, to provide a satisfactory user experience.
- 5.3 This means in the longer term the provision of additional water space in either the City or South Cambs needs to be considered, to take on the increased demand as a result of population growth, along with general increase in participation.
- 5.4 At an individual facility level Abbey is modelled to be at 62% capacity and Parkside 98%. This indicates that Parkside is almost full and many users may experience lower quality swimming experiences due to how busy the site is. Abbey still has some capacity before the model would identify it as full.
- 5.5 Nuffield Health is modelled at 69% close to the 70% capacity line and The Leys is over capacity at 87%. David Lloyd (37%), DW (56%) and Frank Lee (33%) are the only modelled sites with any spare capacity in the city. As these sites are all commercial it is unlikely that they can play much of a role in taking up the slack of increased demand to any great degree as they all require signing up to membership packages, and some sell themselves on the exclusivity of membership.

6.0 Relative & Equity share of facilities

- 6.1 Relative share helps to show which areas have a better or worse share of facility provision. It takes into account the size and availability of facilities as

well as travel modes. It helps to establish whether residents within a particular area have less or more share of provision than other areas when compared against a national average figure which is set at 100. This score is based on access to facilities regardless of their location so it is not merely determined by modelling access to facilities.

- 6.2 The overall score for Cambridge is slightly above the National average at 103.5. South Cambs is rated at 93.8 and is not as low as one would expect with its level of supply but again it clearly identifies the reliance on the City and other neighbouring Authorities swimming provision to meet this need.
- 6.3 CIPFA comparison authorities report Exeter at 90.3 overall, and have poorer access than Cambridge residents but those in Oxford enjoy a high figure of 135.
- 6.4 The lowest scores in the area are the north west of the City at just 81, and the highest are in the Cherry Hinton area at 137. The score for the central city areas are around 94. This may seem surprising with the volume of water space in this area but it is reflective of the population in the area and the fact that the facilities are at capacity so even though these residents have access, the quality of that access is compromised by how busy the sites are modelled to be.

7.0 Summary

- In general the residents of Cambridge City enjoy a very good level of supply of pools and water space and provision is above the national average.
- There is a good mixture of school, commercial and local authority operated facilities.
- Although the data indicates that there is a major oversupply of water space these figures are based pre-dominantly on the demand placed on them by Cambridge residents in isolation, when the model utilises data relating to imported use as well it provides a different picture,
- Overall site usage across the City in the peak period is at 69%, just 1% short of the full level used by Sport England. However, it is clear that certain pools are under pressure. Parkside is at 98%, Abbey at 62% and other facilities – Leys at 87% and Nuffield Health at 69% are at or nearing capacity too.
- The only facilities with available capacity are private ones at DW, David Lloyd and Frank Lee.
- There is minimal exportation of swimmers out of the city and areas that have the lowest levels of access in Cambridge at present are those that live in the north west of the authority.

- Acknowledgement that there are other facilities in the City which have not been modelled as they fall outside of the Sport England Facilities criteria, and do contribute to the overall provision of water space in the city namely; Chesterton Community College Pool, Kings Hedges Learner Pool, and Jesus Green Lido.
- Capacity building for additional water space needs to be a priority for both authorities and going forward investment should be focussed on;
 - Improving existing stock that is aging
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SWIMMING FACILITY INVESTMENT PLAN

Indoor Sports Strategy 2016 - Actions for Swimming Pool development

Option	Water Space required - Equivalent to 2x 6 lane x 25m pools
1	Increase access to existing commercially operated pools in the City
2	Open a new pool at the University with secured community access (minimum 8 lane x 25m pool)
3	Relocate at least some club training to the new university pool to free up public time at Parkside pools
4	Develop additional swimming facilities in South Cambs as part of future facility strategy updates on needs generated by new growth communities in Northstowe, Cambourne and Waterbeach
5	Adapt Jesus Green Lido to enable all year round opening and usage
6	Investment and updates to the Frank Lee Centre and open for community use

City Council Owned Facilities

Location: Abbey Pool		
Proposal	Investment	Timeframe
Additional water play features on poolside To increase family and young children's usage of the pool.		
Additional large scale poolside feature To increase the leisure element of swimming pool and water confidence and increase family usage and activities.		
Pool Hall refurbishment. To keep the facility modern and welcoming		
Poolside surrounds retile To keep the facility well maintained and safe		
Wetside changing room refurbishment To keep ancillary area up to date, fully accessible for all ages and abilities, modern and welcoming		
Investment in energy saving technology To reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions and help maintain pool plant and environments		
Extension of opening hours To potentially increase longer hours later at night and at the weekends		

Poolside health suite To offer a different range of facilities for users of the centre		
Exterior landscaping works To the rear of the site to enhance the general area and create additional space for users to enjoy whilst at the centre.		
Café provision To offer affordable and nutritional food and vending		

Location: Cambridge Parkside Pools

Proposal	Investment	Timeframe
Investment in energy saving technology To reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions and help maintain pool plant and environments		
Extension of opening hours To potentially increase longer hours later at night and at the weekends		
Flume tower refurbishment To keep the facility well maintained and safe		
Diving board tower refurbishment To keep the facility well maintained and safe		
Additional water play features on poolside To increase the leisure element of swimming pool and water confidence and increase family usage and activities.		
Pool Hall refurbishment. To keep the facility modern and welcoming		
Poolside surrounds retile To keep the facility well maintained and safe		
Flume refurbishment To increase the leisure element of swimming pool and water confidence and increase family usage and activities		
Studio space expansion To increase the range of activity space within the centre and offer a range of fitness options		

<p>Relocation of swimming club training hours To relocate some of the training sessions of the swimming club to any new pool facilities to allow for more public swimming sessions</p>		
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Location: Jesus Green Lido

Proposal	Investment	Timeframe
<p>Poolside access To improve the access around the poolside and into the pool for all ages and ranges of ability.</p>		
<p>New Entrance To change the entrance to the pool to provide a new entrance and courtyard into the pool from the tow path</p>		
<p>New landscaping Enhanced landscaping throughout the pool area to increase space and capacity and provide better sunbathing areas and areas of natural shade</p>		
<p>New Building for pool entry, changing rooms and café To provide a new building to encompass a new pool reception, public toilets, new changing rooms and showers for pool users, community rooms and café to serve both the pool and Jesus Green</p>		
<p>New Pool Plant and plantroom Invest in new pool plant to increase and enhance the water quality and provide a modern building to replace the existing pool plantroom.</p>		
<p>Studio space expansion To increase the range of activity space within the centre and offer a range of fitness options</p>		
<p>Investment in energy saving technology To reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions and help maintain pool plant and environments</p>		
<p>Extension of opening hours To increase the hours of opening and look at lengthening the season or adapting the pool to be able to operate all year round</p>		
<p>Additional water play features on poolside To increase the leisure element of swimming pool and water confidence and</p>		

increase family usage and activities.		
Pool Tank works To reconfigure the pool tank profile to reduce the volume of water and provide usable shallower water space for families and younger children.		
Increased Security to the perimeter To upgrade the security fence around the pool to prevent unauthorised access out of hours		

Location: Kings Hedges Learner Pool		
Proposal	Investment	Timeframe
Additional Changing Room To provide additional changing room or group change area with toilet and showers. Potential to incorporate public toilet block and provide new public toilet		
New Entrance To change the entrance to the pool to provide a new entrance and foyer / lobby into the pool from the public footpath path		
Additional water play To increase the leisure element of swimming pool for water confidence and increase family usage and activities.		
Pool Hall refurbishment. To keep the facility modern and welcoming		
Poolside surrounds To keep the facility well maintained and safe		
Investment in energy saving technology To reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions and help maintain pool plant and pool environments.		
Extension of opening hours To increase the hours of opening and look at lengthening opening hours at the weekend and late evenings.		

Paddling Pools & Splash Pads

Site	Investment	Timeframe
Abbey Splashpad	Change around water features	
Cherry Hinton Hall	Refurbish pool plantroom building Develop toddler paddling pool Introduce water play features Redesign pool entrance Introduce concession kiosk position Relocation of toilet facilities	
Coleridge Splashpad	Change around water features Refurbish pool surrounds	
Kings Hedges Water Play	Increase incoming water supply to features tank Increase features run time Increase water play footprint Introduce toddler water play Introduce Paddling pool	
Lammas Land	New pool tank or line existing pool tank Introduce water play features Segregate off pool for splashpad elements Enclose pool area	
Sheeps Green	Introduce ecological pool water heating	

Other Locations

Non Council & Commercial Facilities		
Sites	Investment	Timeframe
Chesterton Community College	Pool tank work – modify pool profile for more usable shallower water space Moveable floor/boom Pool lining replacement Pool hall lighting	
David Lloyd Centre	Public Pay & Play access	
DW Sports	Public Pay & Play access	
Frank Lee Centre	Public Pay & Play access	
Nuffield Health	Public Pay & Play access	
The Leys Pool	Public Pay & Play access	

South Cambs		
Sites	Investment	Timeframe
Cambourne Pool	New Pool provision Management arrangement options	
Northstowe Pool	New Pool provision Management arrangement options	
Waterbeach Pool	New Pool provision Management arrangement options	

University Facilities		
Proposal	Investment	Timeframe
Support Community Pay & Play access	Community use agreement for capital funding contribution	
Enable Swimming Club usage		
Community access to Swimming Lessons		