

Swale Borough Council

**Indoor Sports Facilities
Strategy**

2015 –2025



Introduction

The Council adopted a Sport and Physical Activity Framework 2012 – 2017 (SPAF) in July 2012, and has since used the framework to act as an enabler to various sports activities and initiatives in the Borough with the aim of increasing participation and addressing the high levels of inactivity.

The SPAF comes to an end in 2017, and Swale Council's contract with Swale Community Leisure Limited (SCLL) and Serco Leisure Ltd for the management and upkeep of the Swallows and Sheppey Leisure Centres comes to an end in 2019. It is therefore timely to review our strategy and priorities for sport and physical activity, and set out a future direction for the provision of facilities.

The purpose of this Indoor Facilities Strategy is to determine what swimming pool and indoor sports facilities are required post-2019 to help meet the aspirations of the residents of Swale and the Council's existing and developing core policies and objectives, within available resources.

Sports provision has traditionally been a huge drain on the public purse locally, and Swale Council spends £659,515 per annum supporting swimming pools and indoor sports facilities in the Borough (see Appendix I). How local government will be funded in the future means that there is likely to be less money available to spend on directly providing sports facilities, and so the Council will need to consider how it will use the scarce resources available to enable the provision required to meet its aspirations and residents' demands for services.

Sport facility provision is a discretionary service provided by the Council, and not one that successive governments have chosen to make mandatory.

The development of future indoor sport facility provision should be evidence-based, and so work has been undertaken to review indoor sports facilities in Swale and the aspirations of stakeholders (Appendix II). This work has followed the methodology set out in Sport England guidance, and considered the following:

- the strategic drivers impacting on provision and delivery of sport and leisure;
- Swale's health and sports profile;
- the impact of population change on provision over the next ten years;
- the needs and expectations of stakeholders; and
- current and planned facility provision in Swale and whether it meets requirements now and in the future.

This work has been used to inform and develop this strategy which sets out:

- the future overarching priorities for the Council's sport and leisure facility provision 2015 – 2025, and
- the outcomes we wish to see as a consequence of implementing this Strategy.

Developing the Strategy

In order to develop this Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy a four stage process is being undertaken:

1. Determining the needs and evidence base for provision now and in the future which has been done through the technical appraisal (Appendix II);
2. Consulting on this strategy and asking what people want in terms of provision;
3. Using any feedback to develop an action plan; and
4. Delivering that action plan.

Strategic Drivers

The national and local drivers this Strategy needs to take into account of to assist private and publicly-funded investors are detailed in the Technical Report at Appendix II, but are summarised below:

National/ Regional	Local
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A new Strategy for Sport (DCMS, 2015) ▪ Everybody Active Everyday (PHE, 2014) ▪ The Strategic Framework for Sport in Kent (KCC) ▪ Kent’s Joint Health and Well Being Strategy 2014 – 2017 (currently being reviewed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Making Swale a Better Place: Corporate Plan 2015-2018 ▪ Swale’s Local Plan ▪ Health and Well Being Improvement Plan ▪ Playing Pitch Strategy

Improving wider health determinants and addressing health inequalities is a strategic priority for the Council and its partners, including the NHS and Public Health.

Current situation

The data and evidence from the review are demonstrated in the Technical Report, which suggests the current swimming pool and indoor sports facilities in Swale are meeting the needs of the population at present, and how residents’ requirements may change in the future. However, it is recognised that non-council-funded provision can be withdrawn without notice.

In summary:

- usage at swimming pools is good, with all three publicly-funded pools in Swale at near capacity;
- population projections suggest there will be an undersupply of pool provision by 2025;
- rural areas have more limited access to the pool provision;
- better use could be made of the natural coastline to complement pool provision and the growth of water-sport activity in Swale, which has the longest coastline of all districts in Kent;

- the top five hall sports (nationally) are badminton, indoor football, dance, body combat, and Pilates, whilst gym provision remains popular;
- Swale Council funds sports halls in Sittingbourne and Sheppey. Neither are used to capacity. There is no dedicated Swale-funded sports hall in Faversham; and
- including village, parish and school halls, there is a projected oversupply of indoor hall provision by 2025.

The data also points to significant health and well being challenges now and in the future.

- The population is estimated to increase from 142,528 to 158,961 by 2025, most notably the 65+ age group. This ageing population is likely to increase the need for different and more accessible low impact sport and leisure provision. Keeping this ageing population active will help to prevent high-cost health conditions.
- There are pockets of severe deprivation, with 18 neighbourhoods amongst the most deprived nationally; 14 of these are located on the Isle of Sheppey.
- Significant health inequalities exist, with a 6.3 year difference in average age between the two ends of the deprivation scale.
- 23.1% of children are currently living in poverty, significantly worse than the national average of 19.2.
- 28% of adults are classified as obese, significantly worse than the national average of 23%.
- 68.8% adults have excess weight, significantly worse than the national average of 63.8%.
- 20.7% of children are obese, worse than the national average of 19.1%.
- 50.7% of adults in Swale are physically active, well below the national average of 56%.
- Participation rates in sport and active recreation (over 16s only) are low compared with neighbouring authorities at 24.4% for 1x 30 mins a week in 2014/15.
- Those adults not participating at all (inactive adults) is high at 57.2% in 2014/15, compared with neighbouring authorities.
- Inactivity rates are higher in certain groups. In 2014/15, the 55+ age group had 67.4% inactivity, for lower socio-economic groups it was 76.4%, and for people with a limiting disability it was 76.4%.
- In 2014, 53% of those using Council leisure facilities were satisfied.
- Barriers to participation include lack of information of what is available, time constraints, cost, access, travel constraints, childcare requirements, ill health, and a lack of motivation.
- Low cost, subsidised activities and family-friendly activities are the most popularly cited when asking for views on how to get more people active.

Proposed Strategic Priorities

This Strategy recognises the market will provide where need exists and can be monetised by private investment. Based on the above information, evidence and other drivers, this Strategy proposes focussing Swale's influence and limited resources on the following priorities:

- residents and visitors to the Borough have available to them accessible, effective and good quality indoor sports facilities, and
- indoor sports facilities in Swale assist in tackling the health in-equalities among the local population.

Collaborative working

To deliver the outcomes of the Strategy the Council will work with public, private and voluntary partners to seek innovative ways forward.

Outcomes

The Strategy will focus on the following measures to deliver outcomes and illustrate success:

- increasing residents' participation levels to match or better the average for England by 2025, and
- reducing residents' obesity levels to match or better the average for England by 2025.

Swimming Pool and Indoor Facilities Spend 2015/16

Item	Budget	Description
SCLL/Serco Contract payments	£595,000	This figure includes utilities, car park refunds, operating costs, Paise payments, maintenance costs and subsidies.
Faversham Pools Grant	£80,000	Grant to Faversham Pools
Faversham Pools maintenance	£4,000	Property Maintenance for indoor pool
Swale Indoor Bowls Facility – Income	(£15,965)	Lease income
Faversham Gym - Income	(£3,520)	Lease income
Total Cost to Council	£659,515	