



COVENTRY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY 2014-2024

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Integrity, Innovation, Inspiration

1-2 Frecheville Court ◀ off Knowsley Street ◀ Bury BL9 0UF
T 0161 764 7040 ◀ F 0161 764 7490 ◀ E mail@kcp.co.uk ◀ www.kkp.co.uk



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Quality assurance	Name	Date
Report origination	David McHendry	20/12/13
Quality control	John Eady	02/1/14
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COVENTRY INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY 2014 – 2024

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INTRODUCTION

This is the Indoor Facilities Strategy for Coventry. It provides the framework to take forward and address the various indoor facility challenges faced by the city within the context of the overarching Coventry Sports Strategy (2014 to 2024). It outlines specific recommendations for the future improvement, refurbishment and replacement of sports facilities across the city and identifies the role that facilities will play in delivery of the various aims and objectives contained within the Strategy.

It is an important document that establishes a framework for future decisions about the provision of sports facilities in the city. It also makes reference to the way in which facilities are managed and programmed to ensure that they address wider participation challenges identified within the Indoor Facilities Assessment Report; which underpins this Strategy.

Definition

For the purposes of the Strategy, 'indoor facilities' relates to the provision of stand-alone community sport and leisure facilities; dual use sports facilities on school sites; schools which provide access to their sports facilities for the community and; specialist sports facilities operated by clubs and the voluntary sector.

Indoor Facilities Assessment Report Conclusions (SWOT Analysis)

The following conclusions can be drawn from the Indoor Facilities Assessment Report. These have been identified within a summary SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis in order that the Strategy should thereafter seek to address weaknesses and potential threats whilst building upon strengths and opportunities.

Strengths

- ◀ There are a wide range of providers and operators of sports facilities in the city including Coventry Sports Trust, Coventry Sports Foundation, schools, universities and commercial operators offering a broad range of facilities across the city.
- ◀ Coventry has a strong sporting heritage and at its height saw the development of the Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre and nine pools on school sites.
- ◀ There are some examples where school sports facilities are available for extensive community use, although it is evident that many others have limited community use.
- ◀ The city has a wide range of specialist indoor sports facilities befitting its size, including ice, indoor bowls, climbing, indoor tennis, gymnastics and combat sports as well as a 50m swimming pool.
- ◀ Coventry has seen some recent investment in its sports facility stock including the building of the Alan Higgs Centre, the Xcel Leisure Centre and Moat House Leisure and Neighbourhood Centre. Consultation suggests that the city recognises the present need to make some tough decisions and is prepared to do so, for the benefit of Coventry residents. A key example of this is the recent decision taken to close Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre, with the re-provisioning of modern aquatic facilities at Centre AT7.

- ◀ Coventry has made considerable progress towards a more coherent management solution across the operation of its public sport and leisure offer. Previously the city has had two operators offering different access arrangements (opening times, membership packages, pricing policies, etc.) to a range of facilities. Since 2012 a more consistent and coherent public sports and leisure offer has been achieved through Coventry Sports Trust (CST) appointing Coventry Sports Foundation to provide management consultancy services to CST.

Weaknesses

- ◀ The indoor sports facilities stock in the city (with an average opening date of the early 1980s) is ageing and there is an evident contrast between some relatively new and modern facilities and others that are in poor or very poor condition.
- ◀ The city's centrally located Coventry Sports & Leisure Centre is no longer fit for purpose, such that the facility has a range of significant asset management issues that need to be resolved. Furthermore, the 50m swimming pool no longer meets the needs of competitive swimmers and meet organisers and therefore now struggles to attract regionally significant events.
- ◀ In some circumstances, Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre is viewed only in the context of its 50m swimming pool, which limits the scope of discussion around its development, refurbishment or replacement.
- ◀ The city's indoor sports facility stock appears to have deteriorated, possibly partially as a result of external influences impacting upon City Council decisions (e.g. the Grade II English Heritage listing of Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre). The decision on Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre is critical to other indoor sports facility developments in the city.
- ◀ The demise of the previous government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme has left a legacy of outdated school facilities that are in need of modernisation. Coventry has subsequently been awarded £36m of funding to rebuild four primary schools, one secondary and one special school. The criteria for this funding does not permit the funding to be used for the refurbishment or replacement of swimming pools on school sites.
- ◀ Community access to school sports facilities is variable, depending upon the operational management arrangements that exist in each of the respective schools. There appears to be a general lack of understanding of the 'value' of different types of community use in schools. This has led to a passive approach within schools to the programming of school sports facilities for community use, which in turn has resulted in a preponderance of indoor football dominating school sports hall space. This restricts the development of other 'non-football' sports in some areas of the city.
- ◀ There does not appear to be a consistent, cohesive sports development link between school sport, club development and the community use of school sports facilities. The potential for schools to move towards Academy status means that this lack of a consistent, cohesive connection between clubs and schools could become even more noticeable.

Opportunities

- ◀ Coventry is at a crossroads in relation to its indoor sport and leisure facility provision and there is an opportunity to embed a longer term strategy that deals with the needs of residents.
- ◀ Coventry is a key city within the West Midlands and should benefit from Sport England's focus on 'core cities'. This may result in additional support and funding to help deliver a new strategic vision for the city.

- ◀ The present local authority grant subsidy for the operation of the city's public sports and leisure facilities is significant, such that any further redevelopment of existing or development of new facilities is likely to continue to reduce this on-going revenue burden.
- ◀ Although the BSF programme has ceased, it is likely that additional funds will be made available on an on-going basis for the redevelopment of schools (as seen in the city's existing plans). The opportunity exists to consider a different type of approach to dual use at some schools in order to widen community access to sports facilities across the education sector.
- ◀ It is likely that the longer term school redevelopment programme and any replacement or relocation of sports facilities will result in land becoming available for alternative use. Any capital receipts generated from these developments could be used to support future investment in the wider sports facility stock.
- ◀ The opportunity exists to co-locate other community based facilities within any future indoor sports facility developments. This could include libraries, cultural, youth and health related facilities and community payment centres, creating a 'total place' solution to frontline community services.
- ◀ The opportunity exists for the planned Coventry Sports Network (CSN) to be the advocate of co-ordinated, high quality community use programmes across school sites. This could extend to defining the role that key schools and community facilities play in meeting the needs of key sports within certain communities. This may also enable some schools to offer more community use than they are currently programming.
- ◀ Links with health partners are increasing and relationships are becoming more formalised. This offers genuine opportunities to ensure that sports facilities serve the health and wellbeing needs of residents. This is specifically relevant given the health challenges faced within the city.
- ◀ The significant challenges relating to the sustainability of the Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre are being addressed with the decision to close the facility and to develop a new aquatics facility at Centre AT7, scheduled for opening in August 2014.
- ◀ With the now more coherent management solution operating across the city's public sports and leisure facilities, the opportunity exists to develop a distinct role for each facility. This could require the planned cross-subsidy of management fees across the core facilities within each organisation's portfolio.

Threats

- ◀ Car ownership in the city is very low, with 1 in 3 households not having access to a car. Facility planning needs to be cognisant of transport and accessibility issues, such that locations which are accessible to communities by foot and public transport must be a priority for the city's residents living within the most deprived areas.
- ◀ Although external partners such as the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) are significant stakeholders in the future of Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre, the city needs to ensure that it makes any tough decisions on the basis of the holistic needs of the city.
- ◀ There is a danger that the discussion on Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre focuses solely on the potential loss of the 50m swimming pool at the at the expense of considering other important activity areas.
- ◀ There is a danger that the rationalisation and development of new facilities could result in less provision being made available in the most deprived communities, which would then further impact upon levels of participation and physical activity.

- ◀ The high level of unmet demand for swimming pool space in the north east of the city is a significant issue. Whilst Centre AT7 is considered to be a favourable location for the development of new aquatic facilities, Sport England Facility Planning Modelling (FPM) suggests that there will still be a level of unmet demand for swimming once the new facility opens.
- ◀ The age profile of the city's indoor facilities stock is significant and there will be a need for major investment, which the city may not be able to justify alongside other capital or revenue spending priorities. The majority of the city's sports halls are now 30 years old or older.
- ◀ It is indicated that at least two school swimming pools in the city may close in the next five years. FPM modelling suggests that the potential loss of swimming pool provision at Ernesford Grange School would result in unmet demand for swimming facilities in the south east of the city.
- ◀ The overall operating cost of the city's public sports and leisure facility infrastructure is relatively high, which reflects the general age and condition of some of these facilities. There is a danger that the city focuses on reducing the revenue cost of the service without addressing the capital investment requirements.

Key Strategy Drivers

The overarching rationale for Coventry Sports Strategy is the need to address some major participation and health challenges facing Coventry. Indoor facilities play a significant role in the delivery of participation opportunities for residents and also have a contribution to make to the wider physical activity and health improvement strategies for the city.

However, the single most determining factor that drives the strategic direction for the city in relation to the development of indoor sports facilities is the decisions that are taken around the future of Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre (CSLC). The City Council has undertaken a technical options appraisal on the Centre, which identified that CSLC is no longer fit for purpose and that an uneconomic level of investment would be required to either refurbish or modernise the facility. As such, the City Council has considered various options for the replacement or relocation of the city centre sports and leisure provision, all of which have been challenged for viability against the investment model of utilising existing revenue subsidy to deliver more efficient and sustainable capital schemes.

In considering the primary criteria for deliverability of a city centre scheme to be its ability to satisfy the parameters of the investment model, the options appraisal has also considered a range of subsequent criteria such as 'destination' impact, regeneration impact and the need for closure of activity areas that would cause an interruption to city centre provision. The key message from the options appraisal is that the facility is no longer financially viable and an alternative solution needs to be identified. This correlates with the Indoor Facilities Assessment Report that identifies that the facility is no longer fit for purpose.

Therefore, this Strategy is predicated upon the rationale for closing Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre, and further recommendations within the Strategy are based on the assumption that some of the facilities within the existing Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre will be re-provisioned within a new city centre facility mix; or will be relocated to other facilities within the city; or will be displaced in their entirety.

BACKGROUND

Coventry is at a cross-roads and needs to implement a direction of travel that not only recognises the importance of indoor sports facilities in addressing the wider challenges presented by the city's health inequalities, but also takes account of the shifting context of local government and the need to deliver efficient, high quality, effectively operated facilities at minimal cost to the City Council.

Indoor sports facilities (and their key components - swimming pools, sports halls, fitness suites and multi-purpose rooms etc.) and their future development will inevitably have a crucial role within the delivery of the Coventry Sports Strategy (2014 to 2024). This is on the basis that:

- ◀ The indoor sports facilities stock in the city (with an average opening date of the early 1980s) is ageing and there is an evident contrast between some relatively new and modern facilities and others that are in poor or very poor condition.
- ◀ The demise of the previous government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme has left a legacy of outdated school facilities that are in need of modernisation. Coventry has subsequently been awarded £36m of funding to rebuild four primary schools, one secondary and one special school. The criteria for this funding does not permit funding to be used for the refurbishment or replacement of swimming pools on school sites.
- ◀ Community access to school sports facilities is variable, depending upon the operational management arrangements that exist in each of the respective schools. There appears to be a general lack of understanding of the 'value' of different types of community use in schools. This has led to a passive approach to the programming of school sports facilities for community use, which in turn has resulted in a preponderance of indoor football dominating school sports halls. This restricts the development of other 'non-football' sports in some areas of the city.
- ◀ Links with health partners are increasing and relationships are becoming more formalised. This offers genuine opportunities to ensure that sports facilities serve the health and wellbeing needs of residents. This is specifically relevant given the health challenges faced within the city.
- ◀ The opportunity exists to co-locate other community based facilities within any future indoor sports facility developments. This could include libraries, cultural, youth and health related facilities and community payment centres, creating a 'total place' solution to frontline community services.

Therefore, this Strategy is an important document in setting the framework for future decisions about the provision of indoor sports facilities in the city and the supporting infrastructure that needs to be put into place. Its adoption and delivery is essential to ensure that Coventry provides good quality sport and leisure facilities for all of its residents. A number of key decisions have already been taken and there are other potential plans that inform this Strategy. These include:

- ◀ The City Council's decision to close Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre and to re-provision aquatic facilities at Centre AT7, scheduled to open in August 2014.
- ◀ The City Council's desire to create a wet and dry, sport and leisure facility that is significant to the Midlands as part of strategic city-centre regeneration.
- ◀ The planned redevelopment of Ernesford Grange School, which could potentially result in the loss of on-site swimming pool.
- ◀ A more coherent management solution across the operation of the city's public sport and leisure offer.

- ◀ The City Council's approval and support of an investment model that repatriates operational efficiency savings to invest in new and improved sports facilities.
- ◀ The coordinated and efficient programming of facilities across the city to ensure assets are utilised to their full potential and are supporting a citywide model of efficiency within aquatic provision.
- ◀ The subsequent development of new community swimming pool provision (where justified by evidenced demand) in the south east and / or north west of the city.

Sports Halls

Generally, Coventry has a good distribution of sports halls when set against the city's residential profile. The majority of the city's residents live within a 15 minute walk of a publically accessible community venue. However, areas where access is limited include the strip that adjoins the south to the north west and a small area in the north east of the city.

Figure 1: Coventry - Sports Halls (4-court +) within a 15 minute walk-time catchment (urban)

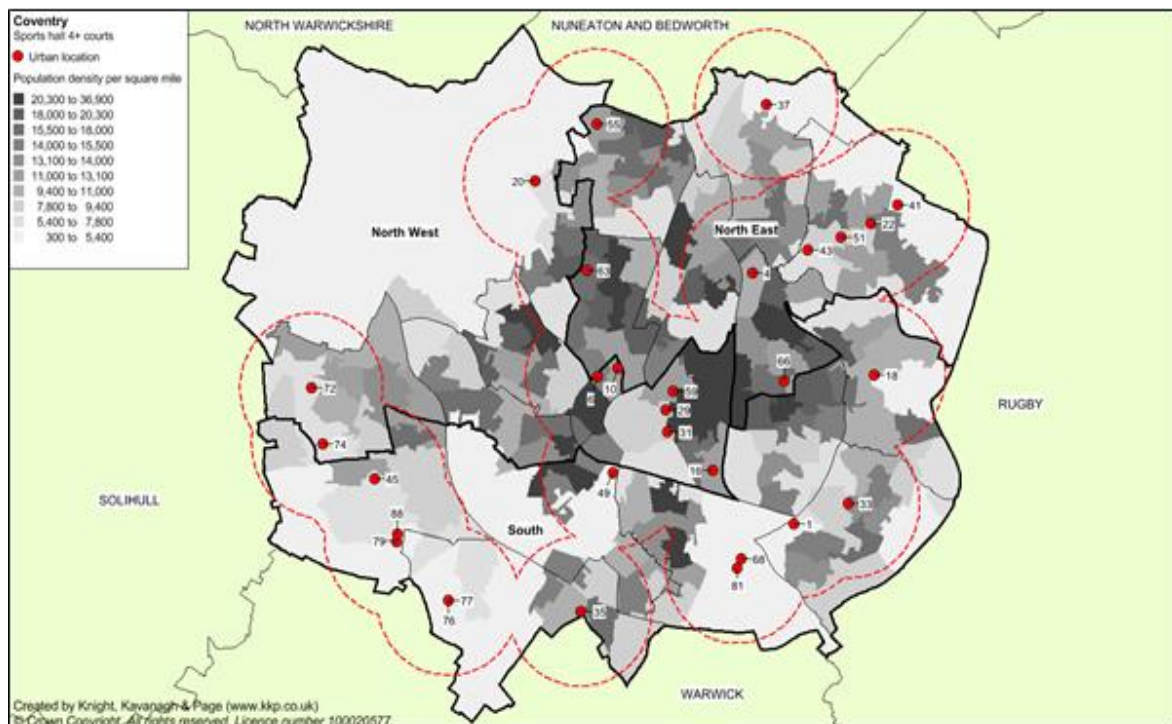
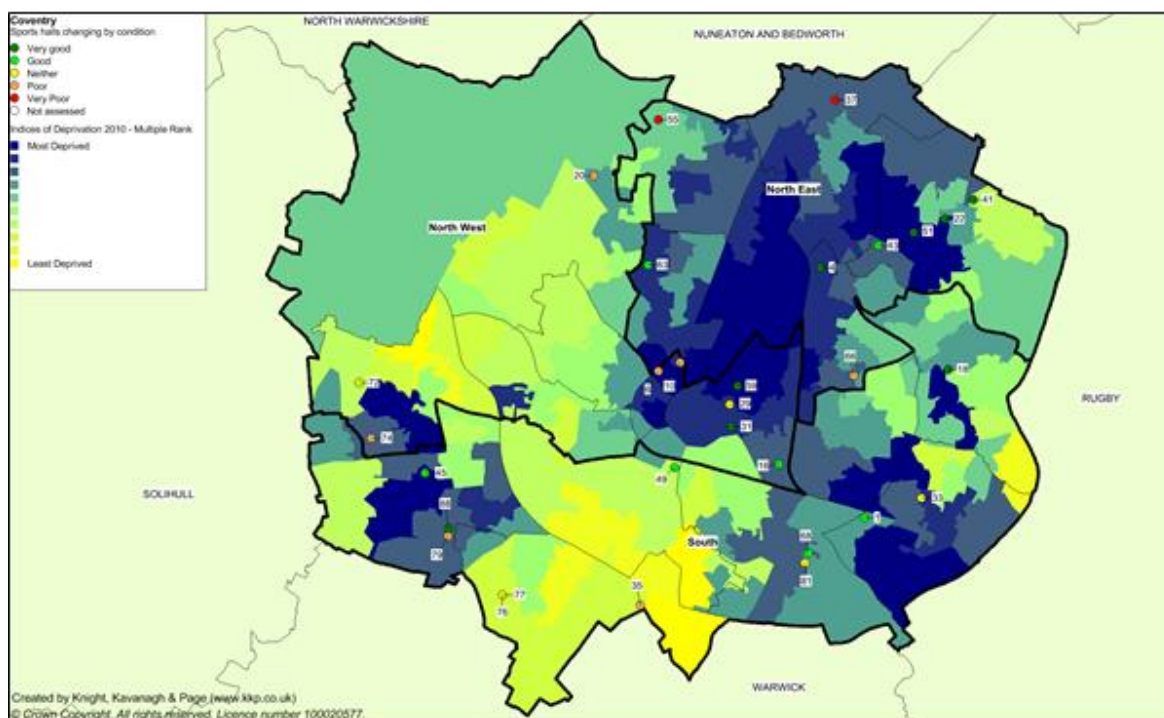


Figure 2: Coventry Sports halls (4-court +) mapped by sports hall and changing facility condition



The table below summarises the condition of sports halls and changing rooms across the city. 53% of the city's sports halls are rated as good or very good, although just over one quarter (27%) are rated as poor or very poor. However, in relation to changing facilities 47% are rated as good or very good while just over one third (34%) are rated as poor or very poor.

Table 1: Coventry sports halls (4-court) by hall and changing facility condition

Map ID	Site	No. of courts	Hall condition	Changing condition	Analysis area
4	Centre AT7	6	Very good	Very good	North East
22	Cardinal Wiseman School & Language College	4	Good	Very good	North East
37	Foxford Leisure Centre	4	Very poor	Very poor	North East
41	Grace Academy Coventry	4	Very good	Very good	North East
43	Henley College Coventry	4	Poor	Good	North East
51	Moat House Leisure & Neighbourhood Centre	4	Very good	Very good	North East
55	President Kennedy School & College	4	Poor	Very poor	North East
63	St Augustine's Sports Centre (Coventry)	4	Poor	Poor	North East
66	Stoke Park School & Community College	4	Average	Poor	North East
6	Bablake School	4	Average	Poor	North West
10	Barrs Hill School & Community College	4	Poor	Poor	North West

Map ID	Site	No. of courts	Hall condition	Changing condition	Analysis area
16	Bluecoat Church Of England School	4	Good	Good	North West
20	Cardinal Newman School	4	Average	Poor	North West
29	Coventry Sports & Leisure Centre	10	Average	Average	North West
31	Coventry University Sports Centre	4	Very good	Very good	North West
59	Sidney Stringer Academy	4	Very good	Very good	North West
72	The Woodlands School And Sports College	4	Very good	Average	North West
74	Tile Hill Wood School And Language College	4	Poor	Poor	North West
1	Alan Higgs Centre	4	Very good	Good	South
18	Caludon Castle School	4	Good	Very good	South
33	Ernesford Grange Sports Centre	4	Poor	Average	South
35	Finham Park School	4	Average	Poor	South
45	Hereward College Sports Centre	4	Good	Good	South
49	King Henry VIII School	4	Good	Good	South
68	The Warwickshire Health And Racquets Club	5	Good	Good	South
76	University Of Warwick Sports Centre	4	Good	Average	South
77	University Of Warwick Sports Centre	4	Average	Average	South
79	Westwood School	4	Very poor	Poor	South
81	Whitley Abbey Business And Enterprise College	4	Very good	Average	South
88	Xcel Leisure Centre	4	Very good	Very good	South

Swimming Pools

Subsequent to the decision to close Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre and develop aquatic facilities at Centre AT7, the infrastructure of publicly accessible swimming pools by the end of 2014 will be as shown below. In the main, the city's poor quality pools are located on school sites, where it is most noticeable that the north east of the city is partly served by two school swimming pools that are of either 'poor' or 'very poor' quality.

Figure 3: Coventry swimming pools that offer community access – September 2014

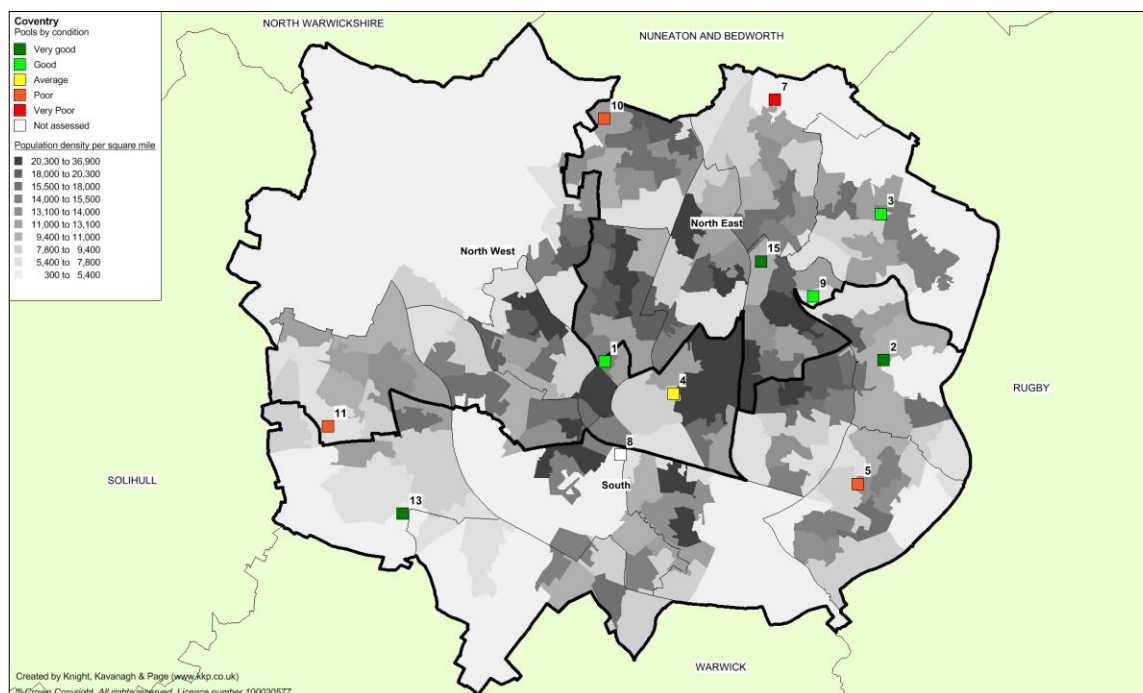


Table 2: Coventry swimming pools – quality rating of pools and changing facilities

ID	Site	Pool type	Quality rating	Quality rating - changing	Analysis area
3	Cardinal Wiseman School/Language College	Main/General	Good	Good	North East
7	Foxford Leisure Centre	Main/General	Very Poor	Poor	North East
9	Lyng Hall School Sports Centre	Main/General	Good	Good	North East
10	President Kennedy School & College	Teaching	Poor	Poor	North East
15	Centre AT7	Main/General	TBC	TBC	North East
1	Bablake School	Main/General	Good	Good	North West
4	Coventry Sports & Leisure Centre	Main/General	Average	Average	North West
11	Tile Hill Wood School & Language College	Teaching	Poor	Poor	North West
2	Caludon Castle School	Main/General	Very Good	Very Good	South
5	Ernesford Grange Sports Centre	Main/General	Poor	Poor	South
8	King Henry VIII School	Main/General	Good	Good	South
13	Xcel Leisure Centre	Main/General	Very Good	Very Good	South

Fitness Suites

Coventry has 42 fitness suites across the city providing over 2,080 fitness stations. Eighteen of the fitness suites are categorised as having community use; that is they offer pay and play access and have no restrictions on access due to specific membership criteria.

Figure 4: Coventry Fitness Suites (facilities available for community use)

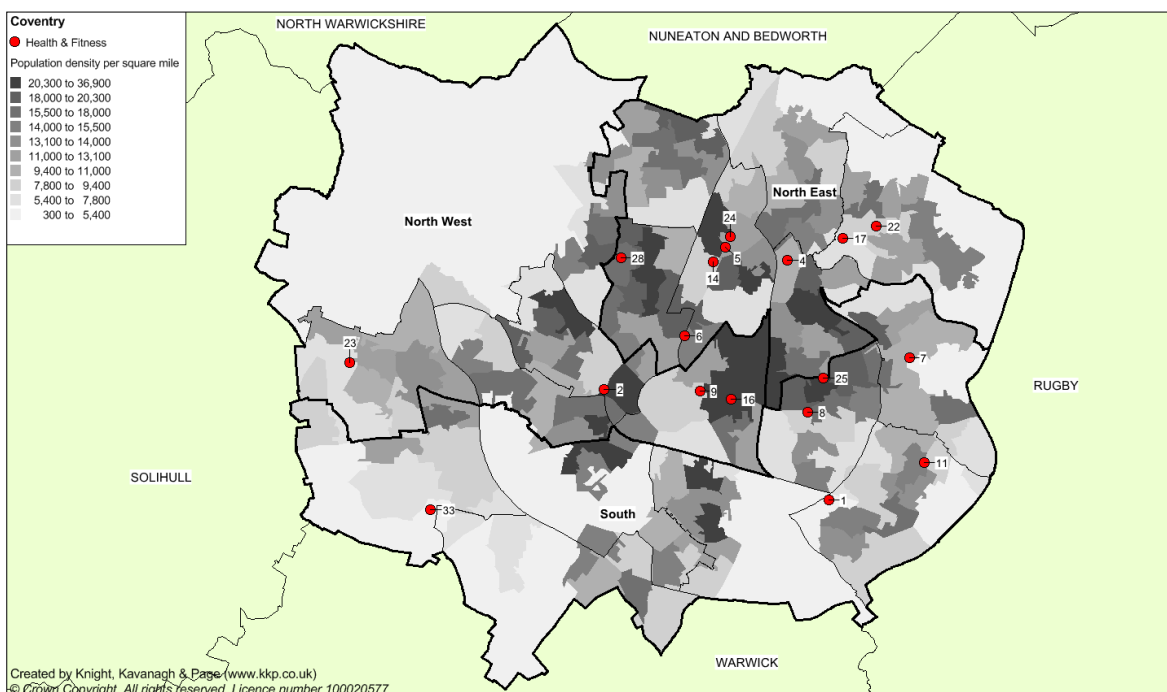


Table 3: Key to map of Fitness Suites in Coventry (facilities available for community use)

Map ID	Site	No. of stations	Analysis area
4	Centre AT7	65	North East
5	Body Worx Gym	50	North East
6	Bodymasters Gym	50	North East
14	Foleshill Sports & Leisure Centre	35	North East
17	Henley College Coventry	25	North East
22	Moat House Leisure & Neighbourhood Centre	40	North East
24	Pro-Gym	100	North East
28	St Augustine's Sports Centre (Coventry)	20	North East
2	Apollo Weights And Fitness Centre	50	North West
9	Coventry Sports & Leisure Centre	58	North West
16	Future Fitness (Coventry)	100	North West
23	Powerleague Soccer Centre (Coventry)	31	North West
1	Alan Higgs Centre	70	South
7	Caludon Castle School	70	South
8	Coventry & North Warwicks Cricket Club	25	South
11	Fitness Factory	45	South
25	Red Corner Gym	17	South
33	Xcel Leisure Centre	60	South

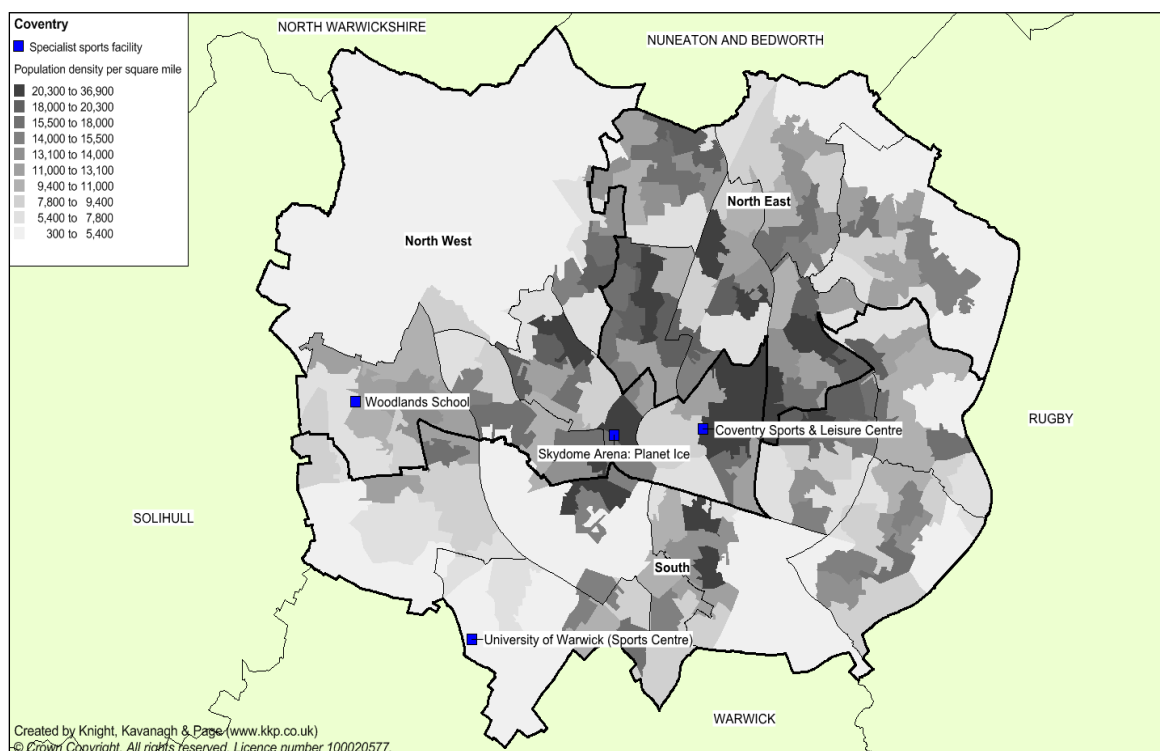
In general the quality of fitness suites is good and reflects the competitive nature of the market for this type of facility. Supply and demand analysis would suggest that Coventry appears to be fully catered for in relation to fitness suites. However, this view has not deterred budget fitness operator Pure Gym, which has opened a new facility in the city centre. The development of fitness suites as part of a wider facility mix needs to be considered on a case by case basis, especially in relation to the wider physical activity role that such facilities play within some communities. This is on the basis that fitness suites are important in minimising the revenue subsidy of facilities.

Specialist Indoor Sports Facilities

Coventry also contains a number of specialist indoor sports facilities, predominantly located to the south of the city. These include

- ◀ Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre, which includes a 50m swimming pool; diving pool (including 10m and 5m boards that are currently out of commission); 6 lane indoor bowls rink; and a 10 court sports / sports events hall.
- ◀ The Skydome Arena; the base for Coventry Blaze ice hockey team plus recreational ice skating.
- ◀ Woodlands School which has a specialist gymnastics facility as part of its sports hall and accommodates two key gymnastics clubs (although it is reported by the clubs that the design of the facility is not ideal from a gymnastics perspective).
- ◀ The University of Warwick (located on the border of the City) which offers a range of specialist sports facilities as part of its wider sports campus, including the indoor tennis facility, the Bear Rock Climbing Centre and the athletics track – the base for Coventry Godiva Harriers Athletics Club.

Figure 5: Coventry - Specialist Sports Facilities



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

National and Local Context

Coventry's Indoor Facilities Strategy is developed in the context of the city's wider strategic vision and aims for sport along with those identified by other strategic bodies such as Sport England. The key national and local themes addressed in the Coventry Sports Strategy are as follows:

National:

- ◀ Increasing levels of physical activity
- ◀ Achieving a healthy weight and reversing the rising tide of obesity
- ◀ Making sport a national habit
- ◀ Sport being a key partner with health in tackling inactivity and health inequalities

Local:

- ◀ Sport defining its role locally in improving levels of physical activity and reducing health inequalities among the city's residents.
- ◀ Low levels of participation in sport and physical activity in the city, especially among women and girls.
- ◀ High levels of obesity in the city, especially among young people.
- ◀ Low levels of car ownership in the city, especially within the most deprived communities.
- ◀ The changing demographic profile of the city, with:
 - ◀ Significant increases in the proportions of people in older and younger age groups;
 - ◀ Significant growth in the BME communities from 16% in 2001; to an estimated 25% in 2007; and predicted to be 35% of the city's population by 2031.

Coventry Sports Strategy 2014 - 2024

The City Council, its partners and stakeholders have undertaken extensive consultation to develop the city's Mission, Vision Aims and Strategic Objectives for the Coventry Sports Strategy 2014 - 2024. The Strategy will be owned by a network of sports partners and recognised and endorsed by other key stakeholders because of the contribution that sport makes to quality of life and to tackling wider challenges in the city.

The overarching mission statement for the Coventry Sports Strategy is identified as follows:

Mission:

To develop a more active, inclusive and vibrant Coventry through positive experiences in sport

This will be delivered through the implementation of eight headline Vision Aims (underpinned by associated Strategic Objectives). The eight Vision Aims for the development of sport within the city from 2014 – 2024 are;

- ◀ To inspire more people within the city to take up and regularly take part in sport
- ◀ To provide a wide range of high quality and exciting sporting opportunities and experiences
- ◀ To inspire more people to volunteer, coach and be facilitators of sport
- ◀ To identify and support talented athletes to reach their sporting potential
- ◀ To provide a range of modern, accessible and high quality sports facilities in the city
- ◀ To attract high profile sporting events to the city and to celebrate sporting achievement
- ◀ To grow and promote sport in the city through effective partnerships
- ◀ For sport to make Coventry a better place to live, work and visit

This Indoor Facilities Strategy is a contextual response to the Mission and Vision Aims, specifically in relation to the future development of indoor facilities in the city.

INDOOR FACILITIES STRATEGY 2014 - 2024

Coventry's Vision Aim for 'Facilities' is outlined within Vision Aim 5 of the Coventry Sports Strategy 2014 – 2024:

'To provide a range of modern, accessible and high quality sports facilities in the city'

1. To develop city centre sports and leisure facilities that are accessible, high quality, sustainable and of significance to the Midlands.
2. To invest in the development of sports and leisure facilities where justified by demand, strategic programming needs and financial sustainability.
3. To provide accessible and high quality outdoor sports, leisure and ancillary facilities across the city.
4. To support sports clubs, venues and schools to secure a total of £4m of investment into their community sports facilities.
5. To partner with National Governing Bodies and funding agencies to support the development of facilities for Coventry's key sports.

As identified previously, the key challenge for the city in successfully delivering this Vision Aim revolves around the decision on the future of Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre and the degree to which any future city centre provisioning meets the city's investment model for sports facilities. The infrastructure requirements set out below are predicated upon a proposed model that includes the closure of Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre, with some of its existing activity areas re-provided within a new city centre facility; relocated to other facilities within the city; or displaced in their entirety.

Sports Halls

The summary of the Indoor Facilities Assessment Report for sports halls identifies that:

- ◀ Coventry has 88 sports hall sites providing 152 badminton courts.
- ◀ There are 29 sports halls of 4 badminton court size or bigger (with a 6 court hall at Centre AT7 and a 10 court hall at Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre).
- ◀ The quality of sports halls is variable across the city, but the majority of halls are rated as good.
- ◀ 74% of all 4+ court sports halls are located on educational establishments (including universities). Almost two thirds (65%) of sports halls are located within schools that provide community access. This is significant because almost 43% of these school sports halls have changing rooms which are rated as being either 'poor' or 'very poor' whilst only 38% are rated as either 'good' or 'very good'.
- ◀ The supply of sports halls in Coventry currently exceeds demand. However, consideration will need to be given to future provision, particularly in light of the declining quality of sports halls that are located on school sites.
- ◀ The amount of community use available within sports halls on school sites varies, depending on the school's approach to managing community access.
- ◀ Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre provides one third of the city's (fully) publically accessible sports hall provision (i.e. stand-alone facilities), which is therefore very significant in the context of the future of the facility.

Given that the primary strategic driver is a model proposing the closure of Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre, the potential impact on sports hall provision is significant. Coventry would lose one third of its community sports hall space. Consideration will therefore need to be given to the displacement of existing facility usage.

Therefore, the key recommendations of this Strategy in relation to sports halls, is that consideration should be given to the following:

- ◀ More effective programming of existing sports hall facility stock
- ◀ Recognising that the city will have to consider the future provision of a medium sized events hall to host regionally significant events.
- ◀ The city must address the extent to which its school facilities are available and managed for community use. The influence on how facilities should be used should be guided by the Coventry Sports Network (CSN) and the sports development priorities for the city. It is, therefore, critical that the CSN achieves buy-in from as many facility operators and education establishments as possible.

Swimming Pools

The summary of the Indoor Facilities Assessment Report for swimming pools identifies that:

- ◀ There are 27 swimming pools on 22 sites across Coventry.
- ◀ There are ten swimming pools located on school sites (i.e. designated as being 'dual use' or schools with community access).
- ◀ The quality of swimming pools in the city varies significantly from those that are very poor quality to those that are very good quality.
- ◀ 47% of publically accessible water space is provided at Foleshill and Coventry Sports and Leisure Centres, both of which are acknowledged as ageing and not fit for purpose. Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre is scheduled to close in August 2014.
- ◀ Current supply and demand analysis indicates that Coventry currently has a very good level of swimming provision, although there is unmet demand in the north east of the city.
- ◀ The decision to close Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre and the development of new aquatic facility at Centre AT7 is a well thought through proposal. However, according to analysis drawn from the Sport England Facilities Planning Model (FPM), the facility will operate at 100% of its capacity from the time of opening and will not therefore address all of the unmet demand in the north east of the city.
- ◀ The key challenge facing the City Council is the future of Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre and the future model of provision for the city centre, where modelling indicates there will need to be some re-provisioning of the swimming facilities.

Furthermore, the City of Coventry Swimming Club is one of the city's key historical successes in sport; therefore as a key user of Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre, the challenge lies in accommodating the club across the city's other pools.

The club currently has 15 coaching groups that have access to 46 hours of pool time per week (the majority of which is at Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre). These coaching groups range from those working with new club swimmers who train for three hours per week, through to performance swimmers that require up to 20 hours of pool time per week. Therefore, a considerable amount of pool time needs to be found across the city in order to accommodate the coaching and performance profile of the City of Coventry Swimming Club.

The Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) has identified the desire to retain a 50m competition swimming pool in the West Midlands and the club would be keen for this to be retained in Coventry. However, both the ASA and the City of Coventry Swimming Club are cognisant of the financial challenges faced by the City Council as the owners of the facility and by Coventry Sports Trust as the operators.

One of the key elements that makes a swimming pool facility suitable as a competition venue is the provision of adequate seating, which itself is a costly addition to any such swimming pool development and one that provides limited return on investment. To some degree, this is why many of the recent 50m swimming pools that have been or are being developed (including the planned 50m swimming pool at the University of Birmingham) exclude the specified spectator capacity of circa 1,000 seats that is required to host national competitions.

Given the financial challenges faced by Coventry City Council and the options appraisal undertaken to date, it is considered that there is limited justification for the City Council to replace the 50m swimming pool, with or without the provision of such seating capacity in order to host swimming competitions.

Regionally Significant Facility

The development of a regionally significant facility is potentially important to the regeneration of Coventry's city centre. The City Council is not of the opinion that this should be a replacement 50m swimming pool due to the challenges outlined above, but should be a leisure pool of 'destination' scale along with a 25m swimming pool and associated dryside facilities including health and fitness, indoor climbing and a court sport such as squash.

The main challenge with developing a leisure pool is that it cannot be a half-hearted approach to leisure water provision and that it needs to be an optimum size and scale to maximise income but operate efficiently. It needs to be leisure water with features of an optimum scale and design in order that it attracts customers from a regional catchment, whilst also being designed in such a way as not to be overly staff intensive which has often been the case with older leisure pools.

A city centre location, in close proximity to the railway station will clearly be an important factor in seeking to develop a market that is substantially wider than Coventry residents, whilst the demands made upon parking facilities for such large capacities of users will also need to be considered in detail. Comfortable access from parking to the facility will be a centrally important factor for the success of such a facility within a city centre location.

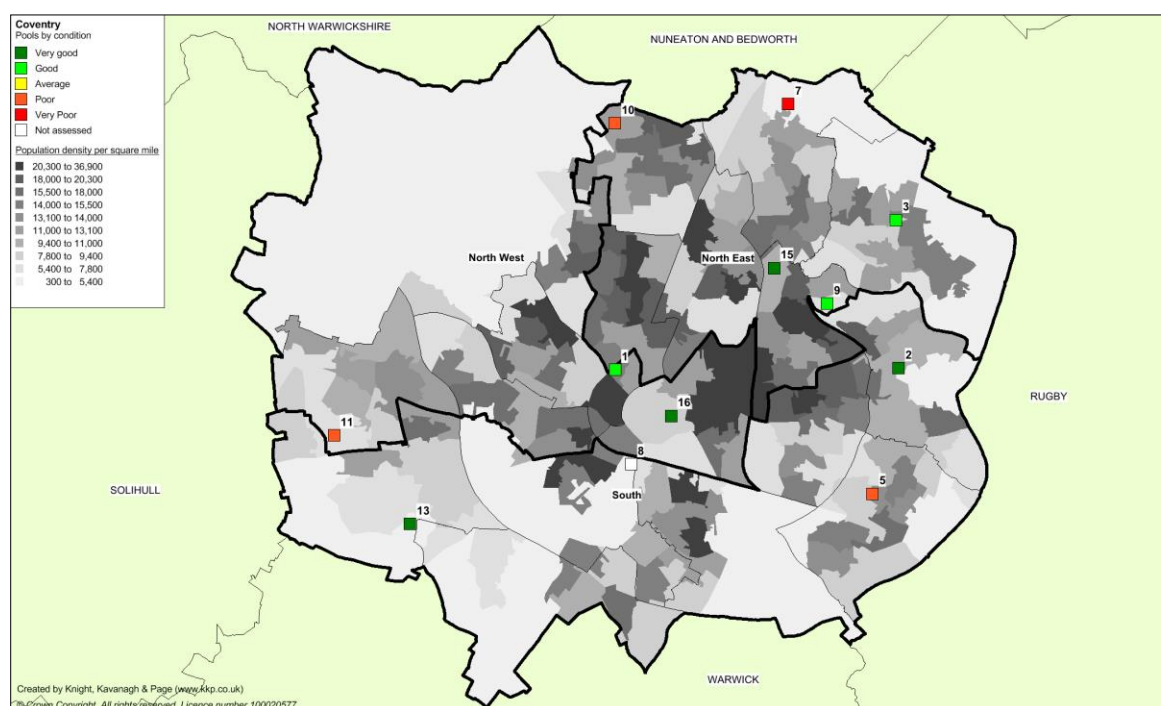
In relation to the contribution that such a facility could make to city centre regeneration, it should be recognised as an economic development driver for the city, such that appropriate consideration should be given to capturing additional secondary spend in the city centre from these visitors.

The design of the aquatic area of the facility may (and almost certainly should) separate the leisure pool from the 'traditional' 25m swimming pool. This will not only assist with the programming of the facilities, but also enable the operator to limit the use of the leisure pool to mainly evenings, weekends and school holiday periods based on demand.

The proposed 25m swimming pool at the facility is unlikely to accommodate the full range of programmes currently available to the City of Coventry Swimming Club at the existing Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre. The swimming pool will primarily support the development of city centre swimming opportunities aligned to the operator’s health and fitness membership offer, although other community provision such as swimming lessons and club use will also be programmed.

The proposed relocation of the city centre swimming pool to the south of the city centre is mapped overleaf. It does not have a major impact on the spread of swimming facilities. The proposed new city centre facility (reference 16 on Figure 6) has currently been mapped to be located closer to the railway station, to the south of the city centre. Although this aligns with a potential redevelopment of the city centre, it moves the facility further away from the main bus station, such that in addition to parking facilities, consideration will also need to be given to the public transport links serving the proposed location (specifically bus access).

Figure 6: Coventry – Relocation of City Centre Swimming Facility



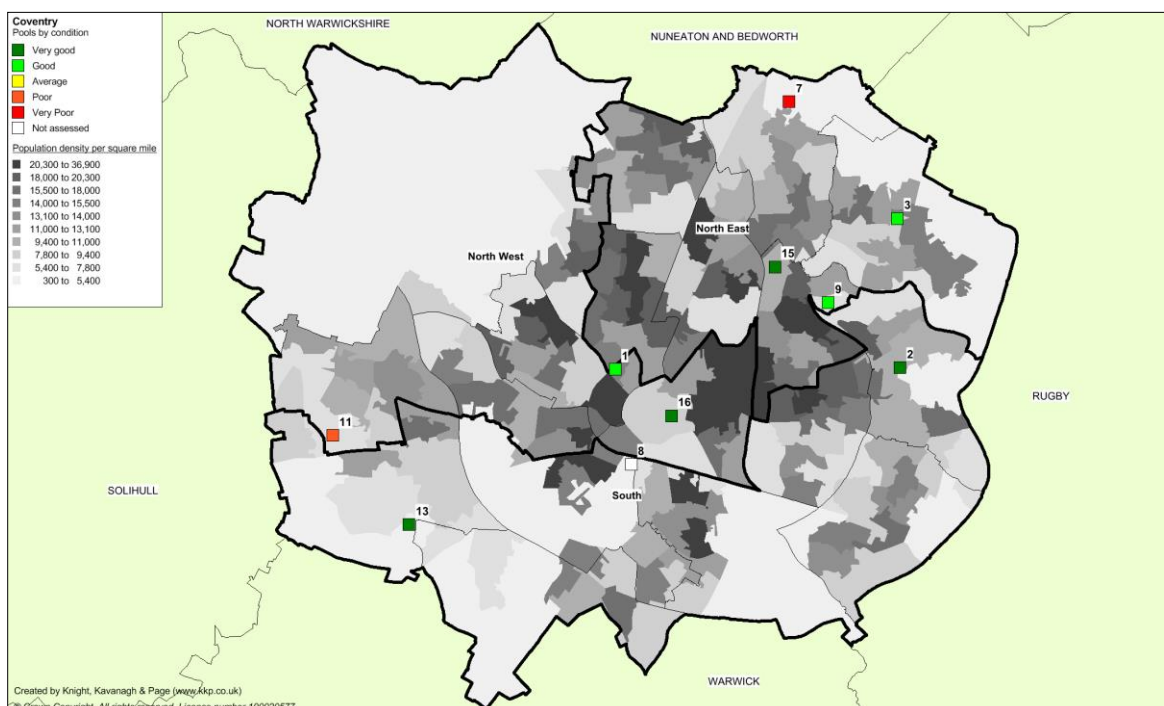
Community Swimming Pools

Coventry City Council has already taken the decision to close Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre and to re-provide aquatic facilities nearby at Centre AT7. It is anticipated that the development of the new aquatic facilities will lead to a greater level of use than that generated at Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre, which is considered unattractive and has a limited customer base.

In addition to this, there is the potential that the two swimming pools at President Kennedy School and Community College and Ernesford Grange School and Community College could close as a result of the national Priority School Capital Programme, which does not include the provision of funding to replace or refurbish swimming pools. There is a passion from President Kennedy school to refurbishing the existing the aquatic facilities at the school.

There would, as a consequence, be a significant impact on access to swimming pools across the city, although it should be noted that the above two school pools presently only offer limited public access. The potential distribution of pools as a result of these closures is outlined below:

Figure 7: Location of publically accessible swimming pools should President Kennedy and Ernesford Grange pools both close



Given that the City of Coventry Swimming Club has 15 coaching groups and 430 members, it is likely that the club demand could be accommodated across the programming of the new swimming pool in the city centre, Centre AT7, the Xcel Leisure centre, the University of Warwick and Caludon Castle School swimming pool.

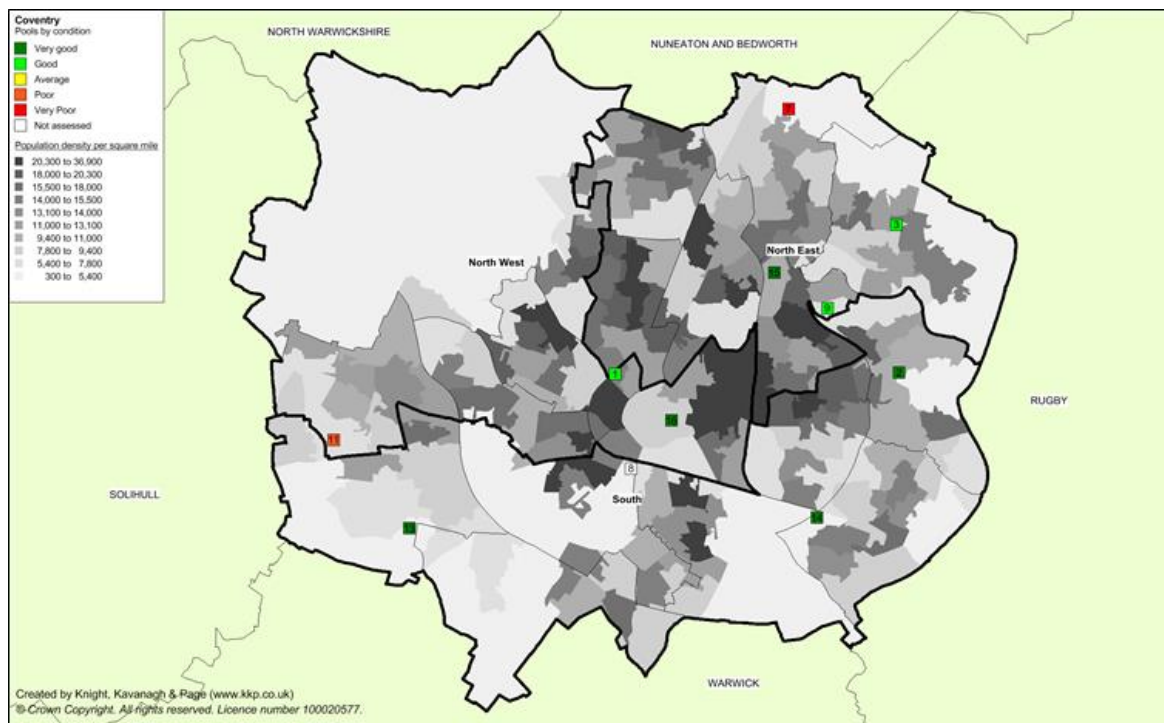
Furthermore, the development of any additional community swimming pools (and/or competition water) such as demand modelling suggests is necessary, could also accommodate additional programming for the City of Coventry Swimming Club.

Sport England’s FPM demand modelling suggests that the most likely location for such re-provisioning would be in the south east of the city, where a similar approach to that being developed at Centre AT7 could add aquatic facilities to an existing dry side leisure centre or onto a school site.

The potential distribution of pools as a result of developing a new swimming pool in the south east of the city is outlined below, with a replacement pool (purely for the purposes of

modelling) being shown in proximity to both Ernesford Grange school and the Alan Higgs Centre:

Figure 8: Indicative location of publically accessible swimming pools should a pool be added to the south east of the city



Gap Analysis

In addition to the indicated demand in the east of the city (referenced above), Sport England's Facilities Planning Modelling identifies a potential gap in swimming pool provision in the north west of the city. Although the north west has limited population density at present, indications are that there could be future housing growth in this part of the city over the next ten years. This additional growth would create further demand for water space in this area of the city.

As a result of any such housing growth in the north west of the city, there is the potential that a new primary and/or secondary school would be required. There may, therefore, be an opportunity to develop a new swimming pool as part of any such proposed development. However, in such a situation where housing growth produces the necessary critical mass and associated demand in this area of the city for new aquatic provision, the City Council would need to make further decisions between the relative success of a 'school owned swimming pool' with limited community access and a community swimming pool located on a school site that provides programmed access to the school.

The management and therefore relative viability of such options can be evidenced when comparing the management of many school swimming pools that have community access arrangements with the Xcel Leisure Centre that has a publically accessible swimming pool located on a school site, but is operated by a leisure operator.

In this circumstance, as at the Xcel Leisure Centre, the pool is programmed for the community and local education swimming rather than the priority access being for (and

controlled by) the secondary school (which is not required to deliver swimming for the national curriculum).

Longer term consideration will need to be given to the potential location of schools and road networks in the area to ensure that any new facility developments are viable from a sport and leisure perspective. That is, the criteria for the location of the facility should be commercially driven against defined social inclusion and health related expectations.

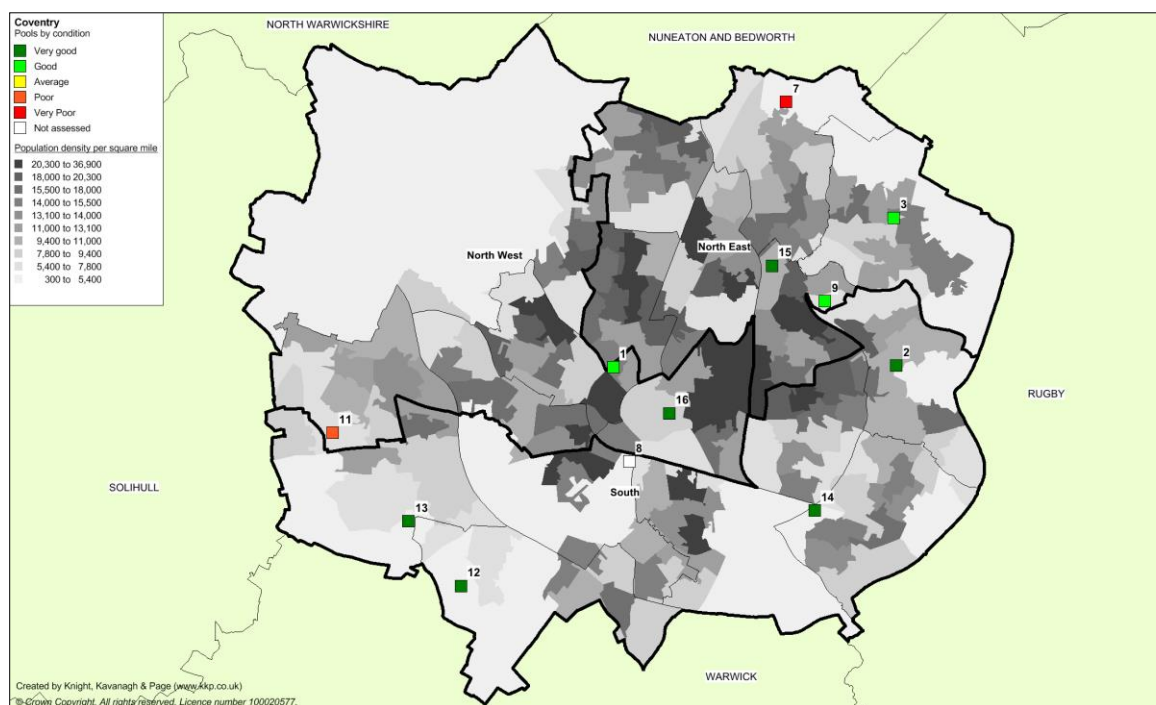
Regional Competition Pool

Coventry has a track record of hosting regional swimming events and the club infrastructure and the city's profile in swimming continue to make it a significant location for the sport moving forwards. Therefore, it is recommended that, where evidenced by demand, any further pool development proposals within the city should pay due consideration to whether the facility specification should be for an eight lane 25m competition pool (as a minimum) with seating for circa 250 spectators and room for 250 competitors.

Whilst the development of a new competition pool could potentially be integral to the development of any future community facilities for the south east of the city (modelled above), the city should also consider wider partnership opportunities for facility development and the programming of competitive aquatic activities. The University of Warwick has previously articulated a goal for the "establishment of a Regional Centre for English Swimming following the development of a 50m pool on campus" (Vision 2015). With significant changes in recent years to the higher education landscape and the challenging wider economic climate, it may no longer be considered a key priority for the University. However, it is recommended that the City Council should discuss with the University the institution's future facility aspirations before the Council considers support for the provision of new competition facilities in any further community aquatic facility development proposals.

In line with the University's previously stated goal, should any future competition facility be developed at the university campus, the distribution of swimming facilities across the city would be as illustrated in Figure 9 overleaf.

Figure 9: Location of publically accessible swimming pools should a pool be added to the east of the city and a new competition pool be located at the University of Warwick



Therefore, the key recommendations of this Strategy in relation to the development and distribution of swimming pools in the city, is that consideration will need to be given to:

- ◀ The development of a new city centre regionally significant leisure pool coupled with a 25m swimming pool to complement a major city centre health and fitness offer.
- ◀ The operation of the proposed city centre leisure pool and associated facilities in such a way that they minimise cost and generate a surplus to cross subsidise community swimming pools and wider sports provision.
- ◀ The development of new community swimming pool provision (based on evidenced demand) in the south east and / or north west of the city, with one of the developments potentially being a regional competition pool with appropriate spectator, technical and ancillary facilities.
- ◀ Working with the ASA and Sport England to identify appropriate funding opportunities for investment into the city's aquatic and swimming pool infrastructure.
- ◀ Developing new pools only when it is clearly demonstrated that the operation of the existing infrastructure is reaching capacity and the potential market exists to accommodate additional swimming.

Fitness Suites

The summary of the Indoor Facilities Assessment Report for fitness suites identifies that:

- ◀ There are 42 sites, providing at least 2,080 fitness stations in Coventry.
- ◀ On average, there are 49 pieces of fitness equipment per facility.
- ◀ There are a range of operators in the city that provide a mixture of pay and play and membership options. In general the quality of fitness suites is good and reflects the competitive nature of the market for this type of facility
- ◀ There is a cluster of pay and play fitness suites in the north east of the city, which reflects operators' recognition that pricing and membership fees can be a challenge for some residents.
- ◀ Although Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre draws members from a wider catchment than other facilities, the more localised facilities appear to attract a greater proportion of members from within their local communities, often achieving greater participation among the more deprived communities.
- ◀ Supply and demand analysis would suggest that Coventry appears to be fully provided for in relation to health and fitness suites. However, this has not deterred budget fitness operators such as 'Pure Gym' from opening new facilities in the city centre.

In light of this summary drawn from the Indoor Facilities Assessment Report, the key recommendations of this Strategy in relation to fitness suites are that consideration should be given to:

- ◀ The development of fitness suites as part of a wider facility mix needs to be considered on a case by case basis, especially in relation to the wider physical activity role that such facilities may play within some communities.
- ◀ Fitness suites are an essential facility within the health and fitness offers of any provider and as such are important in minimising the revenue subsidy of other activity areas. Their integration within a wider public sports and leisure facility offer can often provide the sustainability that is necessary alongside less financially viable sporting areas.

Specialist Sports Facilities

The summary of the Indoor Facilities Assessment Report for specialist facilities identifies that:

- ◀ Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre facilitates a 50m competition pool, some diving facilities, the city's only indoor bowls facility and a 10 court sports events hall
- ◀ Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre (similar to other facilities) also accommodates a range of combat sports (e.g. martial arts) within its sports hall and multi-purpose spaces.
- ◀ The Skydome Arena offers a base for Coventry Blaze ice hockey team as well as recreational ice skating. The level of interest in ice hockey and the need to accommodate a significant number of training squads as well as matches has a negative impact on recreational skating, especially during peak times
- ◀ Although Woodlands School has a gymnastics facility aligned to its sports hall, it is clear that the design is not conducive to gymnastics and other forms of community use operating side by side. To some degree both the school and gymnastics have compromised in order to achieve the current layout.

- ◀ University of Warwick (located on the border of the city) offers a range of specialist sports facilities as part of its wider sports campus, including: indoor tennis and the Bear Rock Climbing Centre (which complements outdoor climbing facilities at Centre AT7).

The recommendations relating to the 50m competition swimming pool and 10 court sports hall have been addressed within the preceding sections of this Strategy.

Diving

Although Coventry has a diving facility it has not had a comprehensive diving development programme or club for a number of years. This is due to a combination of factors such as:

- ◀ The diving pool area being used for competitive swimming training, which is seen as a priority over diving.
- ◀ The lack of a 'dry diving' facility at Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre; which limits the development potential of divers.
- ◀ The poor quality of the diving facility and the recent closure of the 5m and 10m boards.

The ASA's decision in 2011, given finite capital resources, not to part-fund a scheme to refurbish the diving platforms at Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre. There is no strategic intention to replace the diving facility within any of the potential new swimming pool developments across the city; therefore there is no recommendation to progress with this activity provision in the city.

Indoor Bowls

Based on the rationale and recommendations for the closure of Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre, the City Council will need to take a decision on the future of indoor bowls provision within the city.

Any decision to re-provide the indoor bowls facility may present operational and management challenges. The use of such a venue is primarily restricted to the winter (i.e. 6 months) and normally attracts significantly less usage during the 'outdoor season' (in summer months). Therefore, the biggest challenge for an indoor bowls facility operator is how to make the large facility space viable during what is an extensive off-peak period. The City Council will, however, seek to work with key bowls clubs and the National Governing Body to explore the feasibility of future sustainable provision for indoor bowls.

Skydome Arena – Ice

The continued provision of ice facilities in the city is critical to the ongoing delivery of recreational skating as well as figure skating and ice hockey. The facility is a key component in the city having an ice hockey team and contributing to the city's branding and external profile.

Therefore, it is important that this Strategy reflects the need to retain an ice facility in the city and for this to continue to serve the needs of recreational skating, figure skating and ice hockey development and fixtures.

Gymnastics

There has been a national trend in recent years for gymnastics facilities to be developed within industrial units that have become available as a result of the economic downturn. There are numerous examples of this up and down the country in places such as Widnes (Focus Gymnastics Club) and Preston (Preston Gymnastics Club). England Gymnastics has supported these clubs with grant aid and with assistance to achieve long term leases on their facility sites.

Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre historically had a comprehensive and vibrant gymnastics programme, although it is recognised that this has declined over recent years. Consultation suggests that this usage has not transferred to other providers in the city. Therefore, compared to other similar sized cities there is the potential that demand for gymnastics is not being satisfied. In order to address this, the City Council should consider working in partnership with England Gymnastics to assess the likely demand for gymnastics in the city and how it can support local clubs to meet this. This could include identifying a potential facility that could accommodate a stand-alone venue and to work with it and England Gymnastics to apply for external funding to equip the facility. However, there would also need to be work undertaken to ensure the club infrastructure is 'ready' to deliver this.

Indoor Tennis

The University of Warwick has a modern indoor tennis centre. There is also a modern indoor tennis centre at the Warwickshire Health and Racquets Club. If, in the future, there is a reconsideration of current levels of provision in the city, this will need to be viewed within the wider provisions of the overarching Sports Strategy.

Climbing

The University of Warwick has an indoor climbing centre that complements the outdoor facilities at Centre AT7. The city centre public leisure proposals will need to consider the provision of proposed new climbing facilities within the local context of both these facilities and the wider provisions of the overarching Sports Strategy.

Therefore, the key recommendations of this Strategy in relation to specialist sports facilities is that consideration will need to be given to:

- ◀ Working with key stakeholders in exploring the feasibility of re-provisioning indoor bowls in the city.
- ◀ Working with appropriate NGBs to determine the potential readiness factors for incumbent clubs and users to take on the management of the above facilities, rather than this being the responsibility of the City Council.
- ◀ Working with key partners, the city and CSN will need to determine how to optimally integrate, alongside wider sports facilities, any future plans for the provision of specialist sports facilities within the city.

CONTRIBUTION TO OTHER VISION AIMS OF THE COVENTRY SPORTS STRATEGY 2014 – 2024

Vision Aim 1: To inspire more people within the city to take up and regularly take part in sport

To deliver Vision Aim 1 the following Strategic Objectives have been identified:

1. To increase the number of children and young people that regularly participate in sport.
2. To increase regular adult participation in sport to a level higher than national and regional averages.
3. To increase regular participation in sport by disabled people to a level higher than national and regional averages.
4. To increase regular participation in sport by females to a level higher than national and regional averages.
5. To increase regular participation in sport by those on lower incomes to a level higher than national and regional averages.
6. To increase participation in Coventry's key sports to levels higher than national and regional averages for each of these sports.

Coventry has a very real challenge to get more people participating in sport. These challenges relate to higher than average inactivity levels; low take up among women and girls; a high proportion of residents with a limiting long term illness and high levels of obesity (including childhood obesity) - all of which have a negative impact on the overall participation levels.

The indoor facilities infrastructure is important in that it can and should offer residents and target communities the opportunity to access high quality facilities and services to enable positive lifestyle and participation choices to be made. However, it is also recognised that facilities in and of themselves are not sufficient to drive participation and that they need to be programmed in such a way that people are provided with fully informed and positive lifestyle choices.

Notwithstanding the facilities infrastructure considerations, it is essential that residents have access to high quality services. This includes, for example, programmes of activity that keep pace with new trends and developments in the market place, a range of personalised plans for fitness improvement and introductory sessions for a wide range of activities that are designed to introduce new people to existing activities as well as existing participants to new activities.

Indoor sports facilities are often the main focus for inspiring residents to take up, and regularly take part in, sport in that they are often the focus for participation across the city and within specific neighbourhoods.

Therefore, the key recommendation of this strategy in relation to Vision Aim 1 is that consideration should be given to:

- ◀ Delivering a range of programmes and activities that contribute to improving the city's participation levels to reach levels higher than national and regional averages.
- ◀ Delivering a range of sports development programmes for young people that contribute to increasing the levels of participation among children and young people year on year.
- ◀ Ensuring that all of the city's publicly accessible sports and leisure facilities are fully inclusive and programmed in such a way as to contribute to an increase in participation by disabled people to levels that are higher than the national and regional averages.
- ◀ Developing programmes of activity in partnership with public health partners that are designed to help Coventry residents lead healthier lifestyles, address obesity levels and improve levels of physical activity, particularly among those with a disability or long term limiting illness.
- ◀ Developing programmes of activity and ways of working that contribute to increasing the overall levels of women's participation in the city

Vision Aim 2: To provide a wide range of high quality, exciting sporting opportunities and experiences

1. To increase the number of people receiving structured sports coaching or tuition to a level higher than national and regional averages.
2. To have 120 National Governing Body accredited sports clubs, associations and organisations committed to the Coventry Sports Charter.
3. To form delivery partnerships between a range of community sports clubs and forty-five schools throughout the city.
4. To have ten sports implementing local strategic Sports Implementation Plans within the city.

Aligned to Vision Aim 1 which is focused on inspiring more people within the city to take up and regularly take part in sport, it is recognised that to achieve this people need quality, excitement and satisfaction from their sporting experiences to stimulate them to make appropriate lifestyle choices. It is fundamentally important that public sports and leisure facility operators position themselves as a valued part of everyday life for individuals and provide a viable, attractive alternative to inactivity. Key areas where facilities will contribute to this positive sporting experience are:

Facility Programming

Facility programming is instrumental in developing a range of high quality, exciting sporting opportunities and experiences for participants. This not only relates to the activities on offer at public sport and leisure facilities throughout the city, but also how school sports facilities are used in order to achieve this.

It is incumbent on the Coventry Sports Network (CSN) to advocate for and support the development of an overarching approach to programming across the city. This is to ensure that maximum benefit is achieved from all available hours and that the 'gearing' of programmes is designed to meet wider objectives.

This approach should be developed around the following definition of community use across all of the city's public sports and leisure facilities:

"The efficient, effective programming and use of leisure facilities and services for the benefit of local communities so that their use directly assists the achievement of key (national and local) targets such as:

- ◀ *Improving the quality of life for residents in Coventry.*
- ◀ *Connecting local people to local services to enable them to have a more fulfilled life.*
- ◀ *Contributing to people having a more active, less sedentary lifestyle.*
- ◀ *Increasing participation in sport and physical activity.*
- ◀ *Enabling participants to achieve their full sporting potential.*

Adopting the above definition and a related approach to managing facilities and services requires the CSN and its partners to:

- ◀ Develop capacity to ensure that they know who their users and customers are, the extent to which they currently participate; where and in what activities, and have the wherewithal to communicate effectively with them.
- ◀ Develop, use and apply their knowledge and understanding of the demographic profiles and needs of local residents.
- ◀ Develop and keep up to date, accurate knowledge and understanding of community need, through continually engaging and consulting with local representative agencies such as youth clubs, tenants and residents associations, older people's groups, local pressure groups, etc.
- ◀ Develop and maintain a detailed knowledge and understanding of the whole sporting infrastructure across the city.
- ◀ Understand and appreciate the strategic definitions of 'need' applied across the city by key partner agencies such as health, housing, regeneration, etc.
- ◀ Commit to the achievement of strategic impacts and outcomes within the local area.

Adopting this approach to managing public sports and leisure facilities will enable partners to:

- ◀ Provide variety across programming to accommodate a broad range of sport and activity from introductory levels through recreational involvement on to performance.
- ◀ Offer a combination of direct delivery and intervention programmes with partners (e.g. sports clubs, health partners, NGBs etc.).
- ◀ Collect management information and intelligence to underpin actions to extend the reach of the service, which will:
 - ◀ Introduce new people and communities to existing activities and club opportunities.
 - ◀ Introduce existing users/customers to new activities and club opportunities.
 - ◀ Enable operators to develop innovative programmes and processes to improve service impact among hard to reach groups.
- ◀ Continually re-present the sport and leisure offer to local communities.
- ◀ Develop the various services offered in such a way that people in local communities are able to make informed choices about them.

In addition to this, it is proposed that the city's main public sports and leisure facility operators take a more strategic approach to facility programming on a city-wide basis. The key benefits of this will be to:

- ◀ Ensure that all facilities, including schools, are programmed to their optimum capacity reflecting local needs and contexts. This may mean the main operators having to take on advocacy and leadership roles in the management and letting of sports facilities across the city.
- ◀ Ensure that the operation of all sites facilitates collection of management information and that this is used to inform strategic and operational decision making in the future - particularly in relation to the planning of service delivery.
- ◀ Develop an effective monitoring and evaluation process for all facilities on the back of being furnished with appropriate management information.
- ◀ Ensure, where possible, that all school sports facilities are accessible to the local community for as much time as is feasible and useful (i.e. a minimum of 20 to 30 hours per week).
- ◀ Ensure that the cost of accessing facilities is appropriate for different client groups and does not become (or remain) a significant barrier to participation.

Therefore, the key recommendation of this strategy in relation to Vision Aim 2 is that consideration should be given to:

- ◀ Adopting a common definition of community use of school facilities across all CSN partners
- ◀ Developing a wide range of programmes and activities designed to increase participation in sport and physical activity for targeted client groups.
- ◀ Increasing the number of introductory and skill development courses available at and across the city's sports facilities.
- ◀ Adopting a city-wide approach to programming sports facilities which not only seeks to develop opportunities to participate in a variety of sports but also enables clubs to 'grow' a home facility base.
- ◀ Ensuring that access to sports facilities aids delivery of CSN sports implementation plans and, where appropriate, contributes to the development of performance pathways.

Vision Aim 3: To inspire more people to volunteer, coach and be facilitators of sport

To deliver Vision Aim 3 the following Strategic Objectives have been identified:

1. To establish a funding and investment programme to encourage and develop new and existing volunteers, coaches and facilitators of sport.
2. To increase the number of adults volunteering in sport for at least one hour per week to a level higher than national and regional averages.
3. To deliver initiatives that support and develop children and young people as volunteers, coaches and facilitators of sport.
4. To create and be actively operating a sports volunteering network within the city.
5. To create a comprehensive club, volunteer and coach education programme that includes pathways to employment.

Sports facilities are an important factor in inspiring more people to volunteer, coach and be facilitators of sport. Many clubs deliver their training sessions and programmes at sport and leisure centres and do so through a range of volunteer coaches and club management volunteers. It is, therefore, vital that operators support these clubs as their longer term sustainability is not only important for that particular sport but also ensures business continuity. Furthermore, the facility infrastructure is also instrumental in enabling volunteers to become qualified and to pursue a voluntary or professional career in their chosen activity.

The facility network across the city is integral to the development of volunteers, coaches and facilitators of sport. It is, as a consequence, important that operators recognise their role in delivering these opportunities and do not perceive themselves simply as participation vehicles.

Operators will need to make themselves an integral part of the network that identifies and develops opportunities for sports coaching and volunteering. This is on the basis that many sports (e.g. swimming) have 'accredited centres' where the delivery of teaching and coaching courses takes place. In some instances the operator(s) will need to take a strategic view on what should be delivered at each site in order to support this wider Vision Aim.

Therefore, the key recommendation of this Strategy in relation to Vision Aim 3 is that consideration should be given to:

- ◀ Designating key indoor sports facilities with a coach and volunteer development role, as appropriate; and to prioritise the opportunities for delivery where relevant.
- ◀ Actively promote the development of coach and volunteer education programmes within facilities and to assist local clubs to access these.
- ◀ Work with clubs using facilities to identify opportunities for young people to become volunteers, coaches and facilitators of sport.
- ◀ Identify opportunities for volunteers and coaches to progress into employment if appropriate.
- ◀ Proactively work with users, customers, clubs etc., to identify and recruit people to become part of a city sports event volunteers network.

Vision Aim 4: To identify and support talented athletes to reach their sporting potential

To deliver Vision Aim 4 the following Strategic Objectives have been identified:

1. To establish and embed a Coventry Institute of Sport that provides early specialist support services for the benefit of talented athletes.
2. To establish local talent identification programmes that are fully integrated into all strategic Sport Implementation Plans.
3. To establish talent identification and development programmes across ten sports that support disabled people to reach their sporting potential.
4. To work in partnership with National Governing Bodies of sport to establish four Midlands-based development hubs in Coventry.

The Indoor Facilities Strategy supports the delivery of this Vision Aim in an indirect form. It is important that the wider programming of facilities supports development of talented and performance athletes across the city.

This will be partly achieved through the creation of a facility hierarchy that identifies a specific role for facilities across the city. In some instances, a facility may be identified as primarily serving its local neighbourhood but may also have a performance focus for a particular sport. This could be based on the specification of part of the facility or be based upon the programming time that is allocated to a particular high performance club. Therefore, the Indoor Facilities Strategy will support talented athletes through a coordinated programme of activities and programming priorities across the city.

Some facilities will also support the development of athletes by providing access to fitness, strength and conditioning facilities and services. Although this may not be significant from a public sport and leisure perspective, it may be something that is negotiated with University partners that potentially have this service available to their students who are high performance athletes.

Vision Aim 6: To attract high profile sporting events to the city and celebrate sporting achievement

To deliver Vision Aim 6 the following Strategic Objectives have been identified:

1. To create a strategic events and tourism partnership that will bid for and host fifteen major sporting events in the city.
2. To develop a regular events programme within the city for each of Coventry's key sports.
3. To develop and support high-profile events which celebrate local sporting achievement, volunteering and coaching.

The ability to attract and deliver high profile events to the city will be determined by a wide range of factors – including the facility infrastructure. Coventry has played host to a number of high profile 'performance' and community participation events in recent years. These have been focused around the Ricoh Arena and a range of multi-sports venues. They include:

- ◀ Olympic Football (London 2012 Games)
- ◀ Champion of Champions Snooker
- ◀ TAGB World Tae Kwon-Do Championships
- ◀ Davis Cup by BNP Paribas
- ◀ International netball
- ◀ Heineken Cup rugby
- ◀ U21 European football
- ◀ International Children's Games
- ◀ UK School Games.
- ◀ UK Corporate Games
- ◀ UK Transplant Games

The city will need to work hard to attract events in the future. However, there is an expectation and aspiration to attract major events to the city, particularly within the potential 'Key' and 'Development' sports of:

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| ◀ Athletics | ◀ Football | ◀ Rugby Union |
| ◀ Badminton | ◀ Golf | ◀ Squash and Racketball |
| ◀ Bowls | ◀ Ice Hockey | ◀ Swimming |
| ◀ Cricket | ◀ Netball | ◀ Tennis |
| ◀ Cycling | ◀ Rugby Football League | |

The facility infrastructure required to attract events is critical. However, a key advantage for Coventry is that it has a facility such as the Ricoh Arena that has hosted a range of sporting events and could accommodate the majority of the indoor (dry) events identified above. In addition to this, the city has a number of facilities (both community and university based) that could accommodate these types of events - particularly those that are outdoor based.

A key focus for facility operators is the degree to which they wish to attract events and host them at their facilities given the impact this has on regular use and income. As a result, it is important for the CSN to establish an events network or forum for operators to ensure that they are 'geared up' to attracting and hosting events across a range of facilities. It will be important for each venue to learn from the previous experiences of all partners and to ensure that Coventry delivers a high quality, city wide events 'package'.

Another key consideration is the depth and breadth of 'event volunteers'. By way of an example, the City of Coventry Swimming Club has a network of officials to deliver swimming competitions within the city. This has been built up over years of experience at delivering national and regional swimming tournaments. It is important that clubs are involved in the development and delivery of events across the city, as it is often these organisations that are tasked with making the occasion work - not just the quality, scale and capacity of the facility infrastructure where the event is taking place.

The Coventry Ambassadors provide another example of the city's substantial event volunteering capability and networks. Emerging as a sustained legacy of hosting Olympic Football for the the London 2012 Games, the Coventry Ambassadors have continued to provide an experienced, enthusiastic body of event volunteers, supporting events as diverse as the Davis Cup, Coventry Half Marathon and Christmas lights switch-on.

Therefore, the key recommendations of this Strategy in relation to Vision Aim 6 are that consideration should be given to:

- ◀ Ensuring that facilities partners commit to being part of a CSN events working network or group.
- ◀ Working with key facility based clubs to ensure they have sufficient officials and volunteers to enable the delivery of high quality events.
- ◀ Ensuring that facility operators recognise the importance of events beyond their direct and immediate financial impact.
- ◀ Promoting events across the facility infrastructure and ensuring that host facilities are supported by the pooling of appropriate resources.
- ◀ Proactively working with users, customers, clubs etc., to identify and recruit people to become part of a city sports event volunteers network.

Vision Aim 7: To grow and promote sport in the city through effective partnerships

To deliver Vision Aim 7 the following Strategic Objectives have been identified:

1. To establish a strategic Coventry Sports Network that comprises key decision makers from the organisations that influence sport across the city.
2. To secure £10m of investment in sport through a strategic Coventry Sports Network.
3. To ensure that all sports providers in the city have access to a network of support through a strategic Coventry Sports Network.
4. To ensure that Coventry is represented within all relevant partnerships that clearly contribute to the achievement of the city's sporting objectives.

It is clear that in order for this Indoor Facilities Strategy to be delivered it requires buy in and partnership working from a range of stakeholders including:

- ◀ Coventry City Council.
- ◀ Coventry Sports Foundation
- ◀ Coventry Sports Trust
- ◀ Coventry University.
- ◀ University of Warwick.
- ◀ Key Coventry sports clubs
- ◀ National Governing Bodies of Sport
- ◀ Public Health
- ◀ CSW Sport
- ◀ Schools and colleges.

Individual facility based partners must commit to joining the CSN, and to delivering the key outcomes of this Strategy. Each partner needs to sign up to commit to delivering 'slices' of work or activity which will inevitably make the whole Strategy more substantial than the sum of the parts and to collectively achieve stated outcomes.

Partners should not only be committed to the delivery of key infrastructure projects across the city, but also the delivery of high quality services and programmes. This could include elements such as hosting aspects of the Coventry Institute of Sport or the development of key sports development initiatives geared at increasing participation. Similarly this could also include the development of new programmes designed to get targeted groups within the city more active.

In some instances, facility operators may need to be open and honest about the financial impact of some programmes or initiatives; but signing up to the overarching principles of the Strategy is a statement of intent that these financial considerations will not derail what is the 'right thing to do for Coventry'.

Therefore, the key recommendations of this Strategy in relation to Vision Aim 7 are that consideration should be given to:

- ◀ All key facility operators committing to being an integral partner in the CSN.
- ◀ Driving as many colleges, schools and academies as possible to sign up to being partners in the CSN.
- ◀ Facility partners committing to establishing a facility operators working group/network as part of the Strategy implementation process.
- ◀ Each facility operator agreeing to ensure that their facility performs its particular role within the facility hierarchy for the wider benefit of Coventry's residents and the city's sporting profile.

Vision Aim 8: For sport to make Coventry a better place to live, work and visit

To deliver Vision Aim 8 the following Strategic Objectives have been identified:

1. To actively demonstrate the positive impact that regular sports participation has in addressing public health inequalities in the city.
2. To harness the power of sport to promote and encourage social inclusion and community cohesion within the city.
3. To connect sport to the city's cultural, heritage, events and tourism offers.
4. To increase visitor numbers and secure economic benefit from hosting high-profile sporting events.
5. To ensure that all proposed regeneration schemes within the city consider the potential for incorporating sustainable sporting provision.
6. To increase training and employment within the city as a consequence of investment in sport.

It is widely recognised that sport and physical activity have a clear role to play in contributing to making the city a better place to live, work and visit. Indoor sports facilities are an integral part of this by providing high quality 'spaces to learn, play, train and compete' and accommodating the delivery of activity programmes for all residents. This includes provision for those communities experiencing health inequalities, people with limiting long term illnesses and a range of diversionary activity initiatives as well as sports performance pathway based programmes.

Central Government and health and sports agencies have identified (in a range of policy documents such as the Department of Health's *'Let's Get Moving'* programme) that increased levels of sport and physical activity are key contributors to improving peoples' health and well-being.

It is therefore important that this Indoor Facilities Strategy gears facility operators to deliver against the overarching Strategic Vision Aim and the wider aspirations of the city along with Government and strategic agencies.

Sports facilities and the programmes they deliver contribute to broader education, employment and regeneration initiatives designed to make Coventry a better place to live, work and visit. This includes development of new sports and leisure facilities (e.g. a regionally significant leisure facility) that will contribute to the economic and physical regeneration of the city centre, as well as the provision of facilities that allow residents to develop a life skill that can bring fun, enjoyment and health benefit.

The development of a co-ordinated approach to programming sports facilities across the city will ensure that key health related interventions are developed within key neighbourhoods and in environments in which people in groups currently under-represented in sport feel confident and comfortable to participate. This is a key driver for public health partners and will ensure that key communities are well served with local programmes. In addition to targeted programmes, operators will also need to ensure that appropriate concessionary pricing schemes are in place to safeguard access to facilities for economically challenged communities and for target groups identified as being a priority.

It is a mix of factors that will enable indoor sports facilities to deliver this wider objective and contribute to ensuring that Coventry is recognised as a good place to live, work and visit.

Therefore, the key recommendations of this Strategy in relation to Vision Aim 8 are that consideration should be given to:

- ◀ Targeted programmes of activity at indoor facilities that will make a positive contribution to improving public health inequalities by increasing participation within the most deprived wards.
- ◀ Indoor sports facility programmes being used to promote and encourage social inclusion and community cohesion within the city.
- ◀ Indoor facility programmes being culturally diverse and appropriate to the wider cultural needs of specific communities.
- ◀ The development of a city centre, regionally significant indoor facility that will contribute to increased visitor numbers and to delivering sustained economic benefit to the city.