

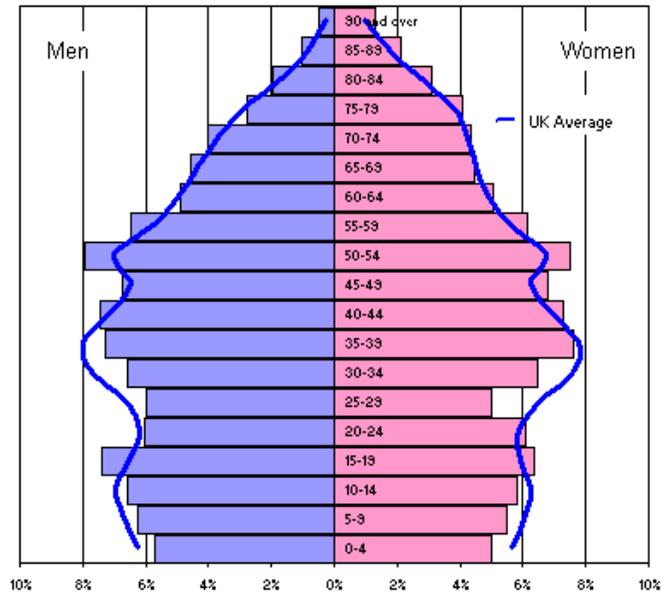
Sub Regional/Regional/Local Authority Swimming Pool Facility Review

The Local Authority area under review is: **Winchester District (Winchester City Council)**

Current Status of Region or Sub-Region

Population as given in the current Sport England FPM: 121,412

The age profile of the area is:



Summary Report on All Swimming Pools in the Local Authority District area of Winchester

General	6
Leisure Pool	1
Teaching	3
Lido	2
Diving	0
Fitness Pools	5
Swimming Pools Total	17
Number of swimming pools sites	15

There is an estimated **3m²** (less than 1%) deficit between the water space that swimming clubs, schools and low-income users have access and the ASA's guidelines

Winchester District (which has the City of Winchester at its heart) is in the South East Region of England, which is the largest in terms of geographical area and the fourth largest in terms of population.

The District hosts the Hampshire and the Isle of Wight County Sports Partnership that is required to consult with the NGBs when formulating their regional strategies in general and in their relationship with facility developments whether they be local authority or education sector.

Local Strategic Planning

Sport England has provided the Active Places database resource as an aide to planning local facility strategy. The database provides the total amount of swimming pool water space available in a given area. However it is important when planning a local strategy to be aware that the water space identified cannot always be accessed by certain significant swimming pool users, e.g. schools, swimming clubs and economically disadvantaged users.

The sub-divisions provided within the database do not necessarily reflect the types of pool that certain users can access.

Active Places Sub-divisions of providers are:

- a. Community use, all ownership types
- b. Community use, commercial ownership
- c. Community use, except commercial ownership
- d. Community use, local authority ownership

For example:

- ❖ Commercial health club swimming pools accommodate general 'pay and play' swimming for their membership only but schools and swimming clubs rarely can gain access to this type of facility because of their ethos of use. Additionally some commercial health clubs have relatively exclusive membership criteria that tend to exclude lower socio-economic groups by price. A more appropriate terminology may be 'Members Only'.
- ❖ Some pools are so small that the ability to learn to swim a significant distance is negated rendering their water area not 'fit for purpose'.
- ❖ Some swimming pools are so designed that large areas of the water area are cosmetic and again 'unfit for purpose' e.g. the shallow beach areas of a leisure pool.
- ❖ Some swimming pools are open-air pools (lidos) and are open for relatively short periods each year.

Additionally Sport England's Active Places Database identifies swimming pools into five types of swimming pool.

Main/General – this term can be applied to any pool of any dimension as the list of pools demonstrates.

Learner/Teaching/Training – Although a learner and teaching pool can be the same thing, a training pool is usually not a learner/teaching pool unless it has a moveable floor. The relevance of Learner and Teaching pools usually relate to depth and dimensions suitable to the swimmer being taught; whereas training pools require sufficient depth for swimming in training mode, which is usually deeper than the depth required for teaching the largest percentage of learner i.e. children. Additionally where competition is a prerequisite of the facility a larger Learner/Teaching/Training pool also functions as a 'swim-down' pool. Again this renders this criteria meaningless.

Leisure – From the data it is clear that the term leisure pool means different things to different pool operators. Hotels and Health Clubs think in terms of small shallow free form pools of less than 100m²; whereas operators such as Butlins and Centre Parcs and some local authorities see leisure pools in terms of giant free form pools in excess of 1,000m². The term leisure therefore covers a wide remit.

Diving – Although the term diving pool denotes a sufficient depth for diving there is nothing in the data set to identify the configuration of any boards in situ, which is surely the point of the pool.

Lido – although it is clear that a lido is an outdoor pool the definition does not identify what use the pool can be put to and whether it is heated and permits longer opening hours than the usual summer season attributed to an unheated pool.

ASA Facility Strategy Guidelines

Swimming pool providers should refer to the ASA's facility strategy document "***From Armbands to Gold Medals***" when considering provision options. However, points and objectives to consider are:

- ❖ *The provision of a minimum of 11m² of 'fit for purpose' water area per 1,000 population.*
- ❖ *Within the regional strategies where appropriate local authorities should be encouraged to enter into cross border partnerships to provide community 50-metres swimming pools thereby reducing the overall burden of provision whilst increasing the opportunity for users.*
- ❖ *The use of moveable floors and bulkheads provides a more flexible use pool that increases revenue and enhances the user profile.*
- ❖ *Encouraging the upgrading of facilities in areas that have sufficient demand, to provide at least 25-metres by 8 lane pools plus a learner pool*

- ❖ *Increasing the number of venues suitable for competition and training*
- ❖ *Increasing the number of international and regional standard diving venues*
- ❖ *Ensuring that all schools that aspire to Sports Academy status provide swimming training to lifeguard qualification standard, which would require access to a swimming pool of variable depth with some deep water and of a sufficient size to enable swimming competencies to be achieved.*

Shortfall provision options:

- ❖ *A 25m x 8.5m - 4 lane swimming pool provides 212.5m² of water space*
- ❖ *A 25m x 12.5m – 6 lane swimming pool provides 312.5m² of water space*
- ❖ *A 25m x 12.5m – 6 lane swimming pool plus learner pool 8m x 12.5m provides 412.5m² of water space.*
- ❖ *A 25m x 16.5 – 8 lane swimming pool provides 412.5m² of water space*
- ❖ *A 25m x 16.5 – 8 lane swimming pool plus learner pool 16.5m x 10m provides 577.5m² of water space.*
- ❖ *A 50m x 17m – 8 lane swimming pool provides 850m² of water space*
- ❖ *A 50m x 20.5m – 8 lane swimming pool plus learner pool / training pool 17m x 10m provides 1,170m² of water space*

(The option that is chosen should best reflect the needs of the general community it is to serve and consider the age and estimated life of existing facilities and the demographics and travel and transport issues of the area. As indicated above the use of moveable floors and booms can increase flexibility of use and may reduce water area accordingly)

Taking these variables into account the ASA’s consider, as a minimum requirement, 11m² of ‘fit for purpose’ pool water area per 1,000 head of population that the majority of users (general swimmers, schools, swimming clubs etc.) can access.

This minimum requirement is ascertained by applying ‘weightings’ to pool water areas in swimming pools where community access is limited in the following manner.

Public swimming pools (managed by local authorities, commercial management or trusts)	= 100%
School Pools	= 80%
Commercially Owned Pools	= 15%
Lido’s	= 5%
Others (MOD, Hotels, Sports Clubs etc)	= 15%

Although Active Places indicates whether or not there is spectator seating it provides no indication regarding the number and positioning of the seats therefore there is insufficient data to determine if a venue is suitable to hold competitive spectator events. Generally the majority of commercial facilities have insufficient spectator seating to accommodate main swimming club activities.

Detailed Report on All Swimming Pools in the District of Winchester taken from the Active Power database

Water Space for the Community, Schools or Swimming Clubs can access

Site Name	Facility Sub Type	Ownership	Management Type	Access Type	Year Built	Length	Width	Min Depth	Max Depth	Area
RIVER PARK LEISURE CENTRE	Teaching	Local Authority	Commercial Management	Community use	1974	12.5	10.5	0.9	0.9	131.25
RIVER PARK LEISURE CENTRE	General	Local Authority	Commercial Management	Community use	1974	25	12.5	0.8	3.4	312.5

Sites that have restricted Access

Site Name	Facility Sub Type	Ownership	Management Type	Access Type	Year Built	Length	Width	Min Depth	Max Depth	Area
ARMY TRAINING CAMP	General	MOD	Private Use	MOD		25	13			325
BISHOPS WALTHAM JUNIOR SCHOOL	General	School	School (in house)	Private use	1975	20	10	1	1	200
De VERE HOTEL	Fitness pool	Commercial	Commercial Management	Members only	1986	15	6	1.2	1.2	90
KINGS SCHOOL SPORTS CENTRE	General	School	School(in house)	School use & hire	2000	25	10.9	0.9	1.2	272.5
MARRIOTT LEISURE & COUNTRY CLUB (MEON VALLEY)	Fitness pool	Commercial	Commercial Management	Members only	1977	12	8	1	1.2	96
MOD SOUTHWICK PARK	General	MOD	MOD	MOD	1991	22	12	1.6	3.2	264
NORTON PARK	Fitness pool	Commercial	Commercial Management	Members only	1998	16	6	1.2	1.2	96
SKYLARK COUNTRY CLUB	Fitness pool	Commercial	Commercial Management	Members only	2008	15	5	1.2	1.2	75
WINCHESTER HOTEL & SPA	Leisure Pool	Commercial	Commercial Management	Members only	1995	7	4	0.66	1.2	28
SOLENT HOTEL SPA	Fitness pool	Commercial	Commercial Management	Members only	1990	13	10	1.3	2	130
ST SWITHUNS SCHOOL	Teaching	School	School (in house)	School use & hire	1996	13	5	0.9	0.9	65
ST SWITHUNS SCHOOL	General	School	School (in house)	School use & hire	1996	25	13	1.2	3.8	325
MARWELL HOTEL	Fitness pool	Commercial	Commercial Management	Members only	1990	10	5	1.2	1.8	50

WINCHESTER COLLEGE	General	College	College (in house)	College & hire	1968	25	12.5	3.5	1.1	325
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Lidos – that offer limited use due to the seasonal nature of the operation they offer.

Site Name	Facility Sub Type	Ownership	Management Type	Access Type	Year Built	Length	Width	Min Depth	Max Depth	Area
BROCKWOOD PARK SCHOOL	Lido	School	School(in house)	Private Use		12	6			72
THE PILGRIMS SCHOOL	Lido	School	School(in house)	Private Use	2007	20	10	1.5	1.5	200

Total area of swimming pool water space available = **3,057m²**

Total area of swimming pool water space available that swimming clubs, schools, the general public and especially the low-income earners have access using the ASA formula = **1,332.1m²**

Identified variation based on ASA formula

Applying the ASA guidelines to the District of Winchester for the current population of **121,412** indicates a requirement of **1,335m²** of water space.

There is an estimated **-3m** deficit between the water space that swimming clubs, schools and low-income users have access and the ASA's guidelines

The above estimate does not take into account:

- ❖ Any anticipated future population variations in the area
- ❖ Any anticipated variations to the future school places demand in the area
- ❖ Government initiatives to increase sports participation

Taken as a whole these variables will tend to increase shortfalls and decrease surpluses. The Office for National Statistics projects population growth in the district as follows:

- 2020 an estimated population of 123,000, moving the water space into a deficit of -21m²
- 2030 an estimated population of 133,000, increasing the deficit to -131m²

These deficits are not significant.

Sport England’s Facility Planning Model

Sport England uses a different formula to calculate supply and demand. Taking the listed facilities identified from the Active Power database they identify 8 swimming pools on 6 sites. These sites presumably exclude lidos, pools with an area less than 70m² and commercial sites. These sites presumably include:

- River Park Leisure Centre x 2 pools
- St Swithun’s School x 2 pools
- Kings School
- Winchester College
- Army Training Regiment Winchester – MOD
- MOD Southwick Park

Based on the data from these sites the Sport England Facility Planning Model produces the following:

Table 1 - Supply	Winchester
Number of pools	8
Number of pool sites	6
Supply of total water space in sqm	2,046
Supply of publicly available water space in sqm (scaled with hrs avail in pp)	1,223.39
Supply of total water space in VPWPP	10,607
Water space per 1,000	16.85

This supply data provides a different supply model to the ASA calculation and it is necessary to ‘drill down’ into the data to ascertain why? The water space per 1,000 population is significantly higher than the ASA requirement of 11m² and this suggests that the water space included in the Sport England FPM run includes water space at pools that the ASA consider are not accessible to the public.

Table 2 - Demand	Winchester
Population	121,412
Swims demanded –vpwpp	7,690
Equivalent in water space – with comfort factor included	1,276.22
% of population without access to a car	13.50

The ASA model does not identify demand as it recognises that there are two types of demand – current demand which is easily measurable – and latent demand that is not so easily calculated. The Sport England demand model is based on ‘vpwpp’ = visits per week in peak periods. The ASA’s concern is that vpwpp is not the same for each pool. The current Peak Periods identified by the FPM are:

Table 3 - Supply/Demand Balance		Winchester
Supply - Swimming pool provision (sqm) scaled to take account of hours available for community use		1,223.39
Demand - Swimming pool provision (sqm) taking into account a ‘comfort’ factor		1,276.22
Provision available compared to the minimum required to meet demand		-52.83

It follows that the conclusions with regards to the provision available compared to the minimum required to meet demand will differ with the ASA and Sport England models.

Table 4 - Satisfied Demand		Winchester
Total number of visits which are met		7,144
% of total demand satisfied		92.90
% of demand satisfied who travelled by car		86.53
% of demand satisfied who travelled by foot		9.20
% of demand satisfied who travelled by public transport		4.24
Demand Retained		4,544
Demand Retained -as a % of Satisfied Demand		63.60
Demand Exported		2,600
Demand Exported -as a % of Satisfied Demand		36.40

The ASA model does not attempt to analyse satisfied demand. The Sport England FPM run shows some interesting data. There is a high percentage of the demand met within the district but there is also a high percentage of demand exported to adjacent districts and this indicates that the current facilities are full. Customers overwhelmingly access facilities by car and public transport despite the fact that most of the facilities are embedded in the urban area.

Table 5 - Unmet Demand		Winchester
Total number of visits in the peak, not currently being met		546
Unmet demand as a % of total demand		7.10
Equivalent in water space m2 - with comfort factor		91
% of Unmet Demand due to ;		
Lack of Capacity -		8.30

Outside Catchment -	91.70
Outside Catchment;	91.70
% Unmet demand who do not have access to a car	58.43
% of Unmet demand who have access to a car	33.30
Lack of Capacity;	8.30
% Unmet demand who do not have access to a car	1.32
% of Unmet demand who have access to a car	6.96

The ASA model does not attempt to analyse unmet demand other than to highlight the water area deficit and imply that this suggests there is unmet demand. The FPM run indicates a low unmet demand, which is at odds with the high percentage of demand exported. Again the identification of the specific pools peak periods can distort the outcomes.

Table 6 - Used Capacity	Winchester
Total number of visits used of current capacity	6,028
% of overall capacity of pools used	56.80
% of visits made to pools by walkers	10.80
% of visits made to pools by road	89.20
Visits Imported;	
Number of visits imported	1,484
As a % of used capacity	24.60
Visits Retained;	
Number of Visits retained	4,544
As a % of used capacity	75.40

Table 7 - Local Share	Winchester
Local Share: where values <1 indicates deficit; values >1 indicate surplus	1.02

Variations between the ASA and Sport England Models

Although the formulas for identifying whether a particular area have a deficit or surplus of water space to meet minimum demand differ the end results are usually remarkably similar and in this case the variance is 37m².

However both of these calculation depend entirely on the true identification of swimming pools that contribute to community use regardless of definition. In this case there are suggestions that the MOD facilities are not valid community facilities and that Bishops Waltham Junior School should not be included in the calculations. If this is the case then both the Sport England and ASA models would be misleading as **789m²** would need to be removed from the base area calculation. This is a situation that needs to be clarified by the District.

ASA data collection does confirm that MOD Southwick Park has no public access and is entirely used by MOD personnel. Additionally the MOD Army Training Regiment Winchester has no general public access and only programmes 6-hous/week to a swimming club. Therefore a case could be made to exclude these facilities from the calculations.

Given the possibility that the three above mentioned facilities should not be included within the calculation the ASA formula would change to the following:

Detailed Report on All Swimming Pools in the District of Winchester taken from the Active Power database

Water Space for the Community, Schools or Swimming Clubs can access

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Lidos – that offer limited use due to the seasonal nature of the operation they offer.

Site Name	Facility Sub Type	Ownership	Management Type	Access Type	Year Built	Length	Width	Min Depth	Max Depth	Area
BROCKWOOD PARK SCHOOL	Lido	School	School(in house)	Private Use		12	6			72
THE PILGRIMS SCHOOL	Lido	School	School(in house)	Private Use	2007	20	10	1.5	1.5	200

Total area of swimming pool water space available = **2,268.25m²**

Total area of swimming pool water space available that swimming clubs, schools, the general public and especially the low-income earners have access using the ASA formula = **1,302.1m²**

Identified variation based on ASA formula

Applying the ASA guidelines to the District of Winchester for the current population of **121,412** indicates a requirement of **1,335m²** of water space.

There is an estimated **-33m²** (3%) deficit between the water space that swimming clubs, schools and low-income users have access and the ASA's guidelines

This deficit taken with the current water area of River Park pools, if closed, would provide a minimum total area of **476.75m²** that Winchester Council may consider it wishes to achieve in a new complex (see Page 4 for configuration options).

ASA Competition Facility Framework

The ASA recognise that not all swimming pools can be competition swimming pools because to meet this requirement the facilities build costs would increase, mainly due to the increase in spectator seating. In terms of competition the ASA anticipate that the Region, Counties and Districts in that region would provide the following minimum competition pools requirement.

- A 50-metres by 8-lane regional competition pool with swim down pool (with the addition of a bulkhead and moveable floor this facility is likely to provide the region a 25-metres x 8-lane short course competition swimming pool in the same water space). Additionally capable of providing water polo to Regional Competition level.
- A 25-metres by 8-lane county competition swimming pools with swim down pool for each county
- A 25-metres by 6-lane district competition swimming pools with a learner pool for each local authority district
- A 10-metres diving facility; additionally capable of providing synchronised swimming to regional competition level in each region.

It should be noted at this point that the South East Region currently has:

Site Name	Area	Diving boards	Lanes	Length	Width	Max depth	Min depth	Movable floor	Year Built
ALDRSHOT GARRISON SPORTS CENTRE	900	Yes	8	50		3.8	2	Yes	2000
K2 CRAWLEY - CRAWLEY	900	Yes	8	50	18	4	0	Yes	2005
SURREY SPORTS PARK - GUILDFORD	1000	No	8	50	18	2	0	Yes	2010
THE MOUNTBATTEN LC PORTSMOUTH	875	No	8	50	20	2	0.03	Yes	2009
WYCOMBE LEISURE CENTRE - HIGH WYCOMBE	1250	No	8	50	17.5	2	0	Yes	2015

The relevance to this report is that the Mountbatten Leisure Centre, Portsmouth is only 29 miles from Winchester and well within the 70 minute drive time to a Regional Competition facility.

Variation in Facility Provision

The ASA understands that consideration is being given to a 50-metres pool as part of a new sports complex within the City of Winchester that – ideally through a partnership between the council, the university and local sports clubs – will be able to provide full community compliments for the District. This is likely to result in a strategy to close and not replace the River Park pool and to programme a new 50-metres pool with community-wide programmes. The need for a 50-metres competition pool in Winchester is not identified within the ASA Competition Facilities Framework as the Mountbatten Leisure Centre, Portsmouth fulfils this role in that area. This does not mean that a 50-metres community

swimming pool cannot be considered as long as there is sufficient demand for that water area and that there is a deficit of a similar water area in Winchester and the supply/demand scenario is proven.

Such a community 50-metres swimming pool scenario could be modelled on a 50-metres pool by 17-metres, 8-lane x 2-metres wide pool (850m²) with at least one movable floor and bulkhead to create appropriate separation and flexibility of use.

To achieve this objective would require the closure of the River Park Leisure Centre (443.75m²) and the discounting of the two MOD sites and Bishop Waltham School from the Sport England FPM run and ASA calculations.

It must be emphasised that the Sport England FPM model may give different results and it would be wise to run the FPM run with the three swimming pools identified removed from the calculation.

Table 1 - Supply		Winchester
Number of pools		6
Number of pool sites		4
Supply of total water space in sqm		1,431

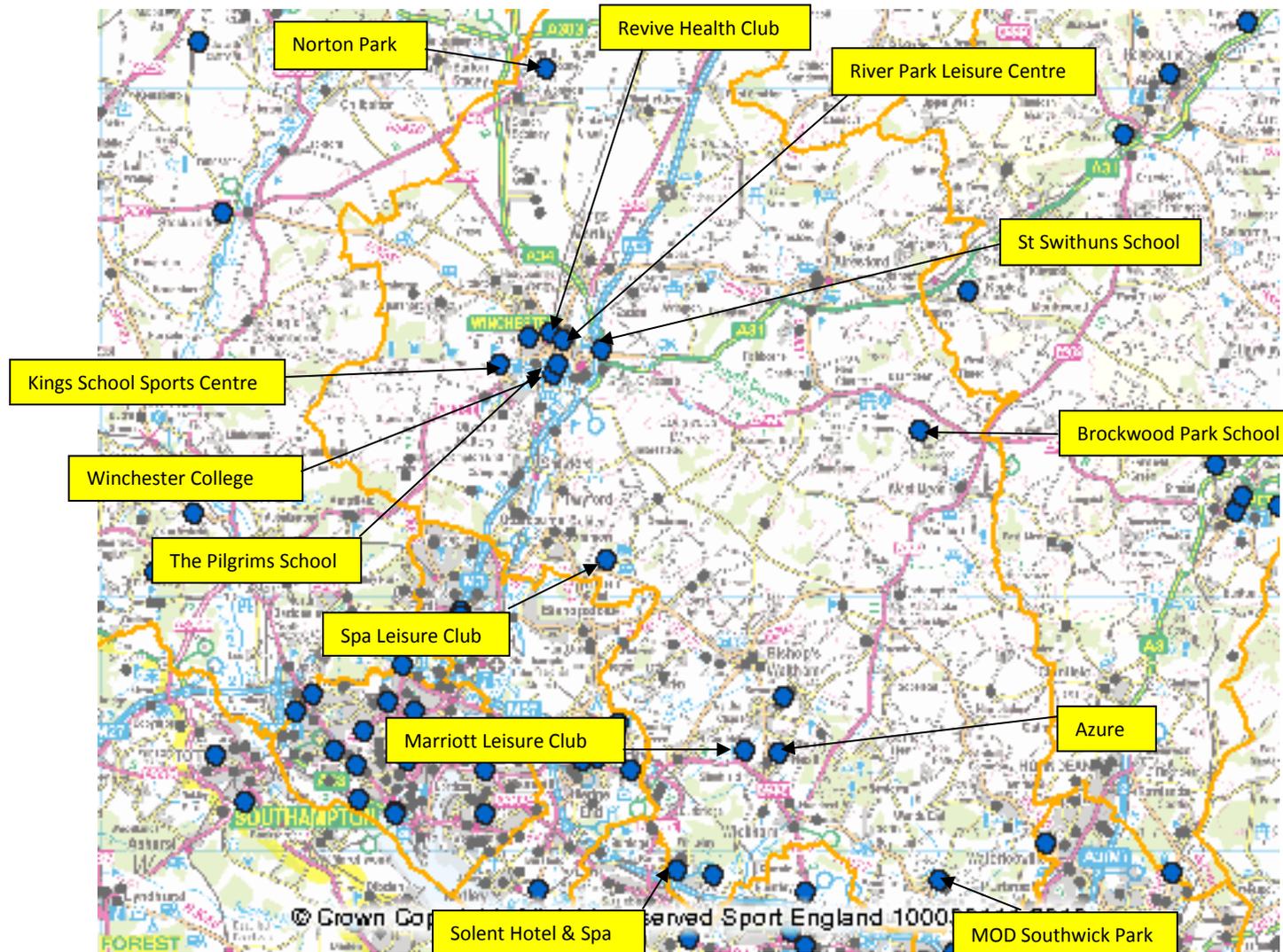
A detailed supply and demand study is required to determine this figure is accurate and it needs to consider import and export of swimmers from the district; however the development of new, attractive and accessible facilities is likely to increase any import of swimmers from neighbouring districts and decrease the export figures.

Age and attractiveness of existing swimming pool stock

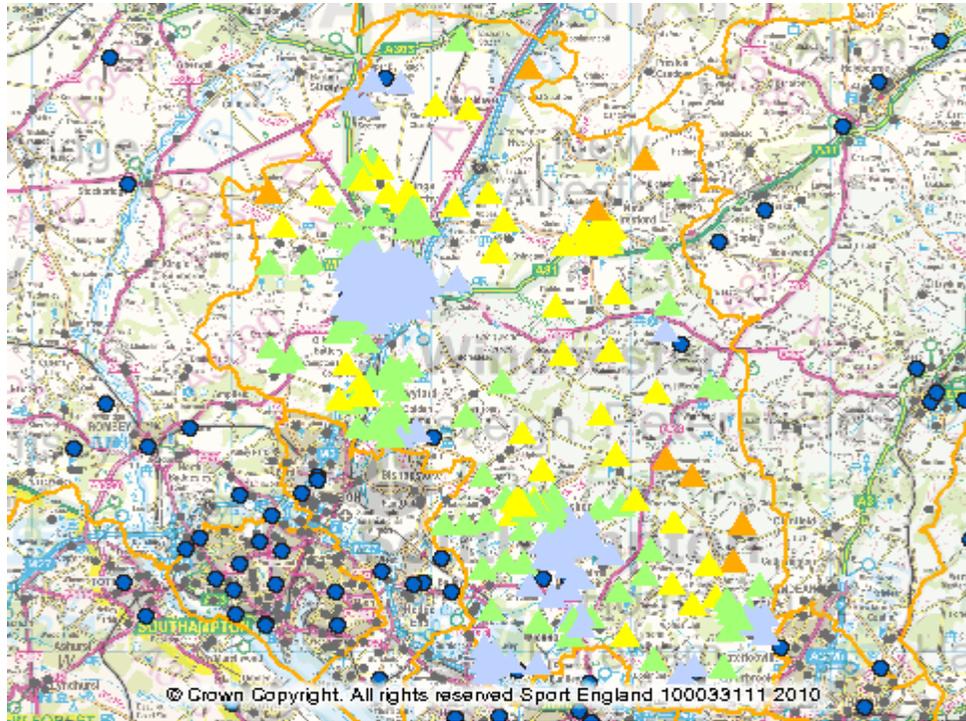
Currently **1** of the District’s swimming pools is over 40 years old; and **3** swimming pools are over 30 years old. This is a significant issue as these represent 50% of the swimming pools that swimming clubs, schools, the general public and especially low-income earners have access.

47% of the swimming pools in Winchester District are private member commercial swimming pools, mostly unsuitable for fitness swimming and swimming lessons, and certainly prohibited to school swimming. This is a very high percentage and is equivalent to central London’s commercial private member club provision.

Travel times and other geographical issues



The location of the pools in Winchester District shows that the community use pools are centred on the City of Winchester and that swimmers living in the south of the district probably migrate to adjacent local authority swimming pools in Southampton and Eastleigh.



Time to the Nearest site

Facility type: Swimming Pool
Sub Facility Type: All
Local Authority: Winchester District
Travel Type: Travel Time
Mode of Travel: By Car

Symbol	Range (minutes)	Site count
	3.08 - 6.248	172
	6.249 - 9.416	107
	9.417 - 12.584	64
	12.585 - 15.752	8
	15.753 - 18.92	

Facility type: Swimming Pool
Sub Facility Type: All
Local Authority: Winchester District
Travel Type: Travel Time
Mode of Travel: By Public Transport

Symbol	Range (minutes)	Site count
	6.17 - 12.502	199
	12.5021 - 18.834	91
	18.8341 - 25.166	54
	25.1661 - 31.498	7
	31.4981 - 37.83	1

The above thematic shows that the swimming pools in the district are easily reached by car within 25 minutes, however public transport to has areas outside of the Winchester conurbation, with the poorest served area is the east of Winchester.

The population catchment within given travel times of the University of Winchester Sports Centre is illustrated in the table below:

Drive Time	Gender	Total Population by gender	9 & Below	<u>10-14</u>	<u>15-24</u>	<u>25-39</u>	<u>40-59</u>	<u>60-79</u>	<u>80+</u>	Total
10 Minutes	Male	19,239	1934	968	3760	3924	4960	3692	1490	39,967
	Female	20,728	4041	2269	6965	8104	9833	6603	2152	
20 Minutes	Male	79233	9246	5745	12083	16061	21860	12162	2345	161,556
	Female	82323	8792	5088	11599	16012	21865	14011	4956	
30 Minutes	Male	319973	40253	21182	47548	70778	85209	46460	8543	647,794
	Female	327788	38089	20225	43792	71359	83619	52741	17996	

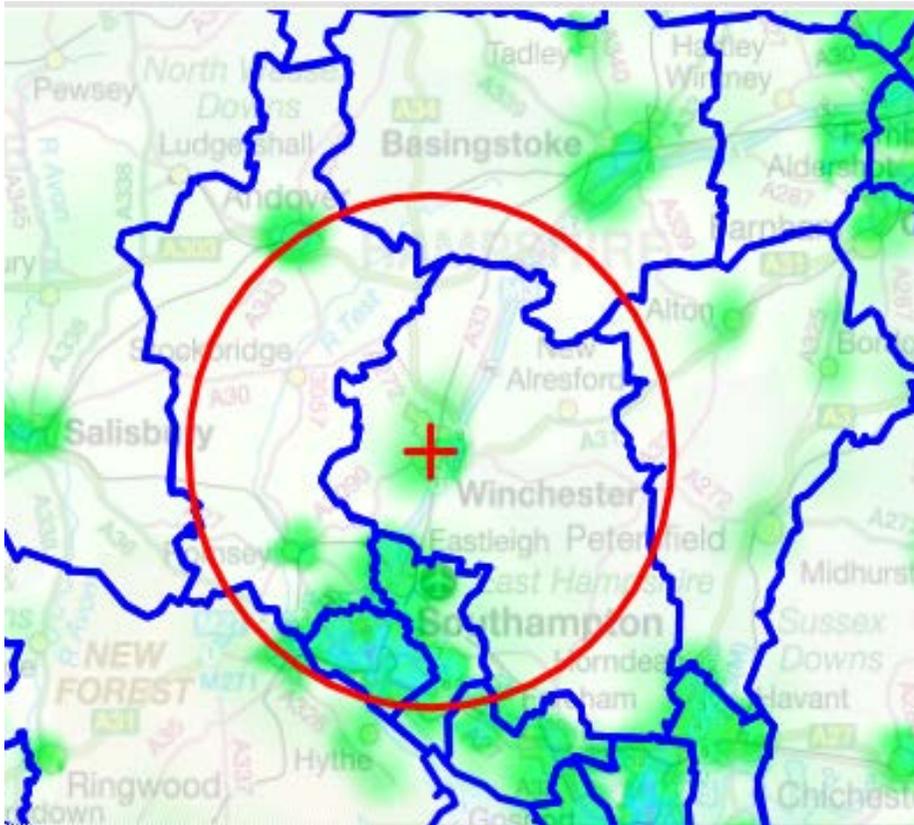
This catchment time takes in the population in the north of the neighbouring district of Southampton and based on a transient workforce and mobile population may well form part of the regular user base for the centre. Stretching the catchment area to 30 minutes travel time demonstrates the users that are more likely to use the centre less frequently but still once or twice per week.

The following map shows the latent demand for swimming in the 20 kilometre catchment area as described above. It can be seen that the areas of Eastleigh and north Southampton are much more densely populated and has a greater latent demand for swimming than a high proportion of the district of Winchester and in most occasions is much more accessible to the proposed site at the University of Winchester than the southern most parts of the Winchester District.

The residents of these neighbouring districts would pass several publically accessible swimming pools en route to the new 50-metres pool. From Southampton the two pools are *Red Lodge Community Pool*, which is 20-metres by 8-metres and the *Jubilee Sports Centre* at the University of Southampton.

Eastleigh cannot boast the same in terms of modern facilities as the University of Southampton but en route to Winchester potential customers will pass *Fleming Park Leisure Centre*, which has 25m 6 lane pool and teaching pool. Built in 1974 it is not as likely to meet the expectations of the customer in the same way that the Jubilee centre or the proposed 50m pool in the district of Winchester will.

Thematic showing 20km catchment area from the University of Winchester Sports Centre



Aquatic disciplines

Diving

There are **3** swimming pools with a water depth sufficient for poolside flat competitive and plunge dives can be taught safely. There are **2** swimming pools with diving boards and springboards where more advanced diving can be taught.

Synchronised Swimming –

The teaching and practice of the most basic introductory water skills may be carried out in pools which have areas of water of 1.0m or more in depth.

There are **4** swimming pools that have sufficient depth for more advanced synchronised swimming training to be undertaken

There are **no** swimming pools with sufficient depth and area for synchronised swimming competition to be undertaken.

Water Polo –

Ideally Water Polo should be played in pitches with a minimum depth of 1.8m however low-level training and competition can take place in conventional 25m x 10m x 0.9m to 1.8m depth main pools.

There are **4** swimming pools that have sufficient water space and depth for low-level water polo competition to take place.

There are **no** swimming pools that have sufficient water space and depth for a major competition to take place.

Options

The Amateur Swimming Association would wish to see the swimming pool stock in the City of Winchester maintained in line with the national average.

The University has an estimated 6,500 students registered which obviously increases the population on a seasonal basis. This population increase will increase any deficit in swimming provision but only in as much to require an additional 125m² of water space, which is equivalent to a new learner pool, or an expansion of lane space (e.g. two 25m lanes or one 50m lane).

50m community pools

The major stumbling blocks to persuading pool providers to invest in the development of new 50-metres pools are the myths that:

- 50-metres pools are for elite swimmers and un-suited to the general needs of the community
- the deficit on running this type of pool is substantially greater per user than for a 25-metres pool

The generalisation concerning elitism is untrue. The design of public 50-metres pools in this country has always been based upon meeting the needs of the community from learn to swim through a continuum of use, including recreational and disability swimming, to swimming for persons of advancing years for health reasons. Further, there is evidence that 50-metres pools are attractive to the public who welcome the better conditions and spacious feel prevailing in 50m pools.

Similarly, modern 50-metres pools, which make use of technology such as moveable floors and bulkheads, provide leisure water and combine swimming pools with health and fitness activity areas, so become increasingly flexible in their programming. They offer the potential for a number of different activities to take place simultaneously and provide the opportunity to increase the throughput of users and income streams, without additional costs.

University 50-metres Pool considerations

When considering a new swimming pool development, there are a number of detailed questions an organisation needs to investigate before considering moving to the next stage, which is developing the feasibility study and business case.

These questions include:

- What is the pool for?
There are many reasons for developing a new pool, whether it is 50-metres or 25-metres. These motivations determine the stakeholder groups and fundamentally affect sources of funding to construct and support the facility throughout its operable life. If there is a failure to provide a clear understanding of what the pool is for, it will be difficult to design and operate and is unlikely to prove successful.
 - Universities develop pools for a number of reasons: primarily it is for the benefit of their students but they often become full community pools with the university working with the local authority, county sports partnerships and National Governing Bodies (NGB) to provide a comprehensive programme that operates in tandem with that of the other pools in the area.
 - The pool can also be seen as an addition to the package offered to students, thus making the consideration of studying at the institution more attractive, especially to overseas students. These students are not limited to those studying sport. Therefore, any financial subsidy of the sports facilities by the university can be justified as marketing expenditure, because of the financial benefits it brings to the institution as a whole.
- How will it be used?
Determines the size and design requirements of the pool and what impact it will have on existing facilities sharing a similar catchment. How it will be used also has a major impact on the location of the pool within a site.
- Who will use it?
Students, community, swimming clubs, NGB programme, learn to swim, school swimming, GP Referral, Research groups etc. Determining this will determine the business case and programming, especially if there is synchronicity with other District facilities.
- Are there wider benefits for having the pool? For example:
 - Attractiveness to potential students / staff. Increase student population and overall revenue for the entire university.
 - Develop performance athletes.

- Increase university exposure and status.
- What are the risks?
Capital commitment and ongoing revenue costs. If the business case is not thoroughly determined and prepared the pool could be a significant ongoing cost for the university (and any other partners involved).
Swimming clubs alone do not make swimming pools financially successful. Usually a programme that offers varied and flexible activities including a good learn to swim scheme need to be combined to achieve financial success. This would be achieved the District Council and University developing the pool in.
- Distance to other facilities.
 - Enthusiastic swimmers will travel further on a regular basis to access long course swimming opportunities. Therefore, 50-metres pools can plan for a greater catchment than traditional 25-metres swimming pools. It is anticipated this catchment will grow to 45 minutes travel time. Therefore a different analysis of pools offering similar opportunities is required when the pool is in long course configuration.
 - Portsmouth 50-metres pool is 29 miles away with an indicative travel time of 40 minutes. This is outside of the suggested 20 minute travel time for general healthy lifestyle to become habitual, therefore can be discounted apart from the long course element. The distance to the Quays in Southampton is less than 17 miles from the University of Winchester, dependant on the route taken with an anticipated travel time of 25 minutes. This is a 25-metres by 8 lane pool but should be considered as forming part of the local facility consideration especially as there is likely to be a significant commuter population travelling to and from Southampton each working day.

Usually, the ASA Facilities Team anticipate a catchment population in the region of 200,000 to support a community 50-metres swimming pool. However, there are a number of examples where this is not the case and the pool is a success. Without detailed consideration of the above points a clear business case cannot be made, and therefore the ASA would wish to engage in discussion with District stakeholders, including the University, to define the appropriate strategy for swimming provision.

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