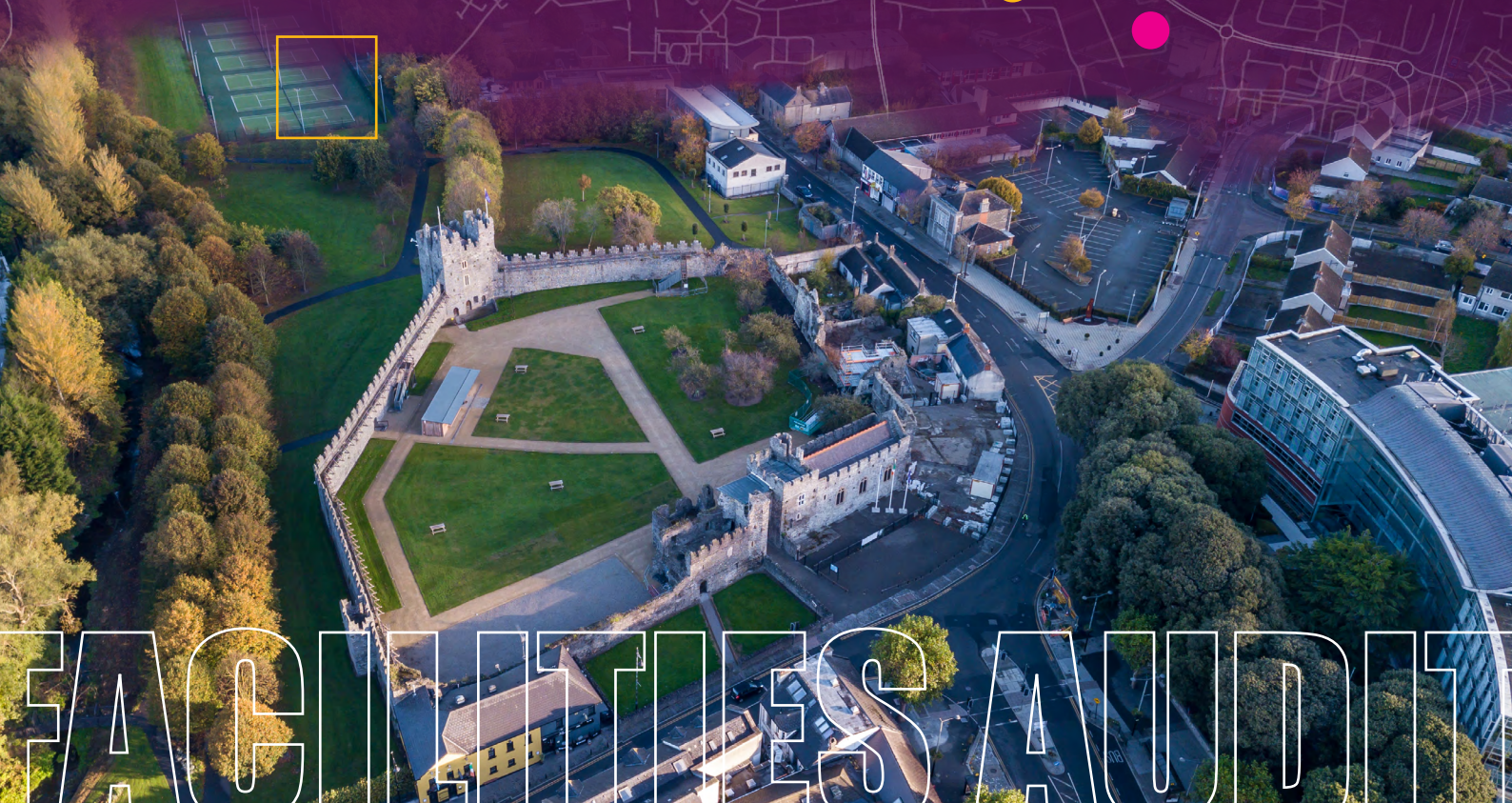


SPORTS AND RECREATION **FACILITIES AUDIT**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*for the Local Electoral Areas of
BALBRIGGAN, SWORDS, RUSH-LUSK.*

February 2021



FACILITIES AUDIT

SPORTS AND RECREATION
FACILITIES AUDIT

*EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY*

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INTRODUCTION

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Scope

In alignment with the National Sports Policy 2018-2027, and to understand the existing facilities, Fingal County Council has commissioned KPMG Future Analytics to conduct a comprehensive audit of recreation, leisure and sports facilities within three of the Local Election Areas (Balbriggan, Rush-Lusk and Swords) in Fingal. This Executive Summary describes the baseline and gap analysis was undertaken to provide an audit and mapping of existing community, sports and recreation facilities in the LEAs of Swords, Balbriggan and Rush-Lusk.

Iteration of facility types and scope specifics have occurred throughout the project, however the following characteristics per facility has been audited:

- Sport type that occurs at the facility;
- Whether the sport is formally organised sports and informal activities;
- Indoor and outdoor activities;
- Those requiring specialised facilities (e.g. soccer pitches) and those requiring more general facilities (e.g. outdoor pitches that may be used for running, rugby, GAA etc.);
- Those requiring specialised equipment (e.g. private gyms) and those requiring less specialised equipment (e.g. outdoor gym equipment); and
- Those that are commercially operated (i.e. require membership/fee to access) and those that are accessible for all (i.e. non commercial).

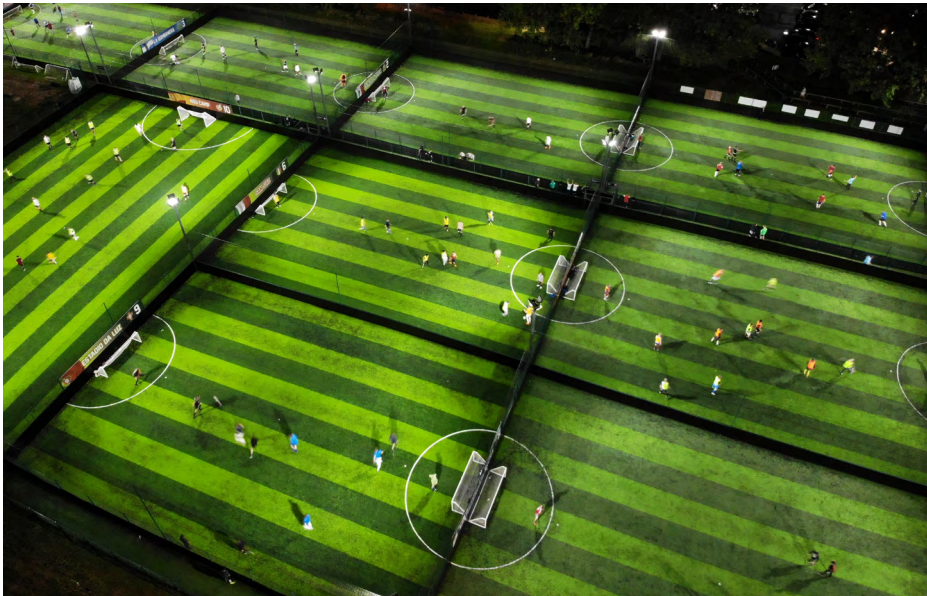


Facility Categories

Sports and recreation facilities cater to a wide array of different activity types and users and in order to assess them robustly. The following broad activity categories were developed to allow for assessment as part of this audit:

- 1. Pitch Sports** - contains outdoor facilities for pitch sports, ranging from GAA clubs, and their associated grounds, to outdoor free access playing pitches in public parks.
 - 2. Indoor Activities** - contains facilities ranging from private leisure centres, such as gyms, to specialised indoor facilities for boxing and martial arts. Community centres also feature in this category as they can facilitate a variety of activities, for all age groups
 - 3. Family Activities** - contains outdoor facilities focusing on public facilities, while including private tennis club facilities, that can be utilised by a range of age groups, with specific child friendly facilities such as playgrounds and MUGAS.
 - 4. Water Activities** - contains both indoor and outdoor facilities for water orientated activities, including some swimming pools within private leisure facilities, but there could be additional swimming facilities identified as 'private leisure facilities' in the "indoor activity" category.
 - 5. Other Activities** - contains the widest variety of activities and therefore facility types. These include both indoor and outdoor facilities, ranging from golf clubs and equestrian centres to scout clubs and libraries
- It should be noted that paths for walking and cycling, greenways, walking and/or hiking trails and beaches have not been included.

Methodology



1. Desktop Assessment

Facilities were identified through desktop assessment by using address level data from Google Earth and OpenStreetMap during Summer 2019.

This information was supplemented by a secondary search of online resources, such as facility websites or group activity webpages.

Characteristic information for each facility was collected across a number of fields, including each facility’s name, contact details, ownership, activity types available and entry arrangements (fee, membership, free, etc.).

A location for each facility was recorded to facilitate on-site validation.

2. On-site Validation

A GIS database was prepared to facilitate on-site validation of facilities using mobile devices.

Each facility was visited by a team during July 2019 who confirmed the validity of the desktop outputs by comparing it to on-site conditions and updating information as needed.

Confirmation of data was sought from facility employees and/or management, if available. Some comments received from members of the public were also recorded.

Some additional facilities were identified during this fieldwork and were added to the database.

Additional fields of information were also collected where practicable, including the facility’s condition, its broad disability access and the range of age groups supported by its activities.

Information on facility capacity and utilisation was sought but could not be reliably determined without more in-depth engagement with each facility operator

3. Email Campaign

Following on-site validation, emails containing a list of questions for each field type were sent to facility representatives, where a point of contact had been determined with either employees or management. This provided an opportunity for validation on behalf of those operators.

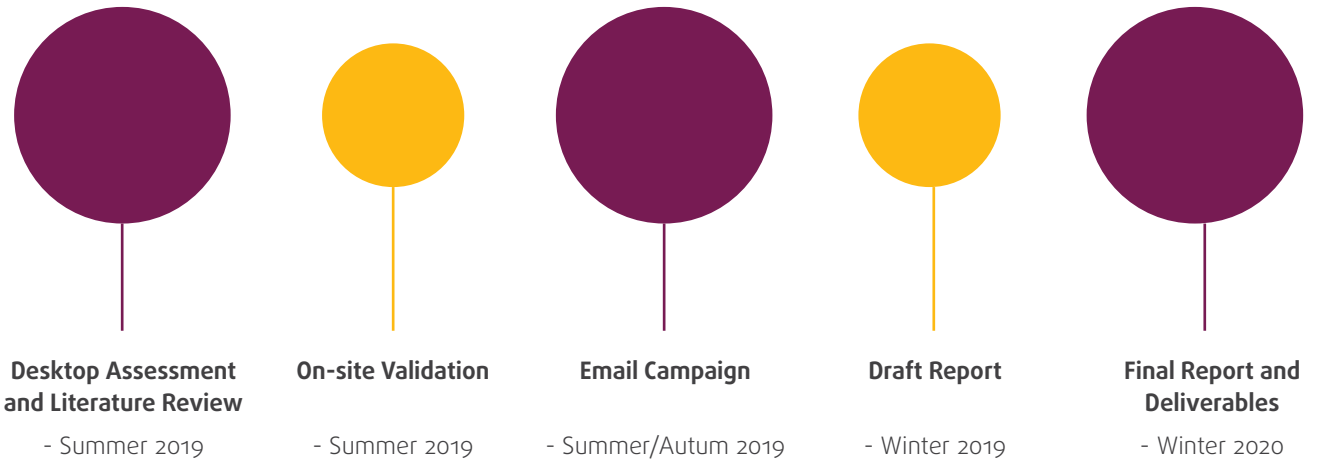
4. Final Review

Summary analysis of the facilities database was then conducted.

The audit was completed by KPMG Future Analytics (formerly Future Analytics Consulting) and a draft of this report was prepared.

The analysis and the facilities database were then reviewed by Fingal County Council.

A final iteration of the audit was undertaken and this report was finalised for publication.



STUDY AREA

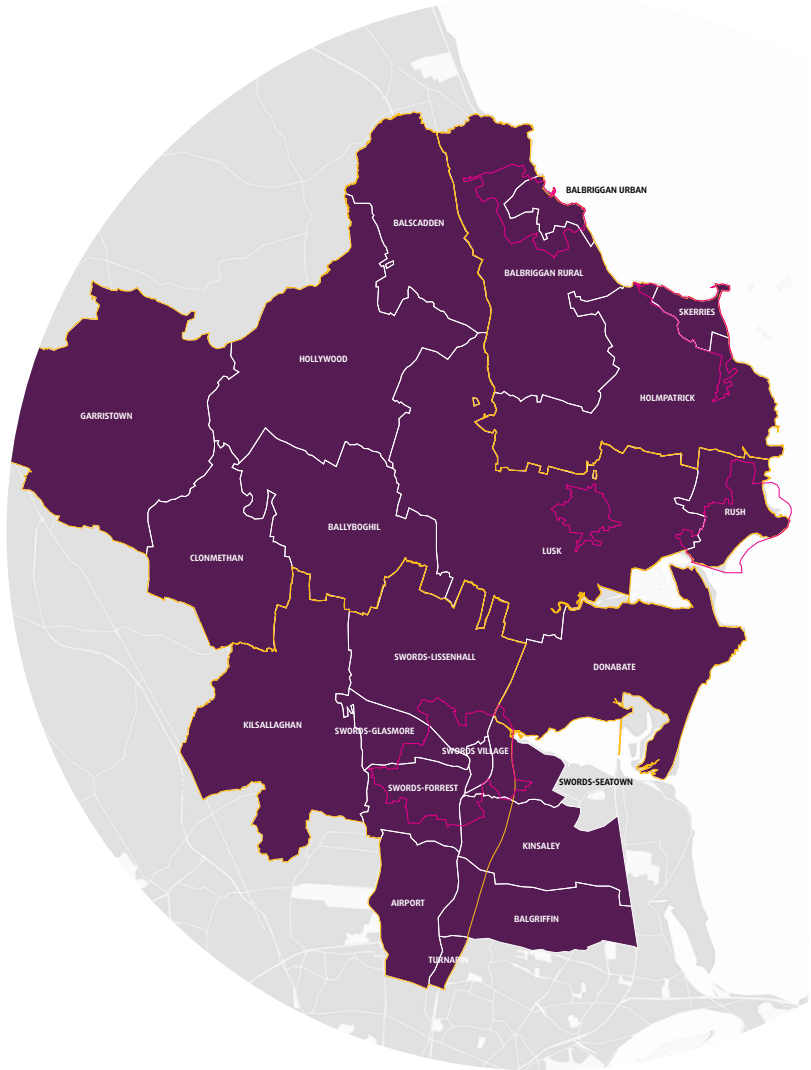
STUDY AREA

STUDY AREA

The Study Area is made up of 3 Local Electoral Areas (LEAs)

Swords LEA
Rush-Lusk LEA
Balbriggan LEA

There are 11 Settlements are within the Study Area and the key demographic information from the 2016 Census was assessed in order to understand the population in the study area. This information was analysed at Electoral Division (ED) level, then scaled to LEA level.



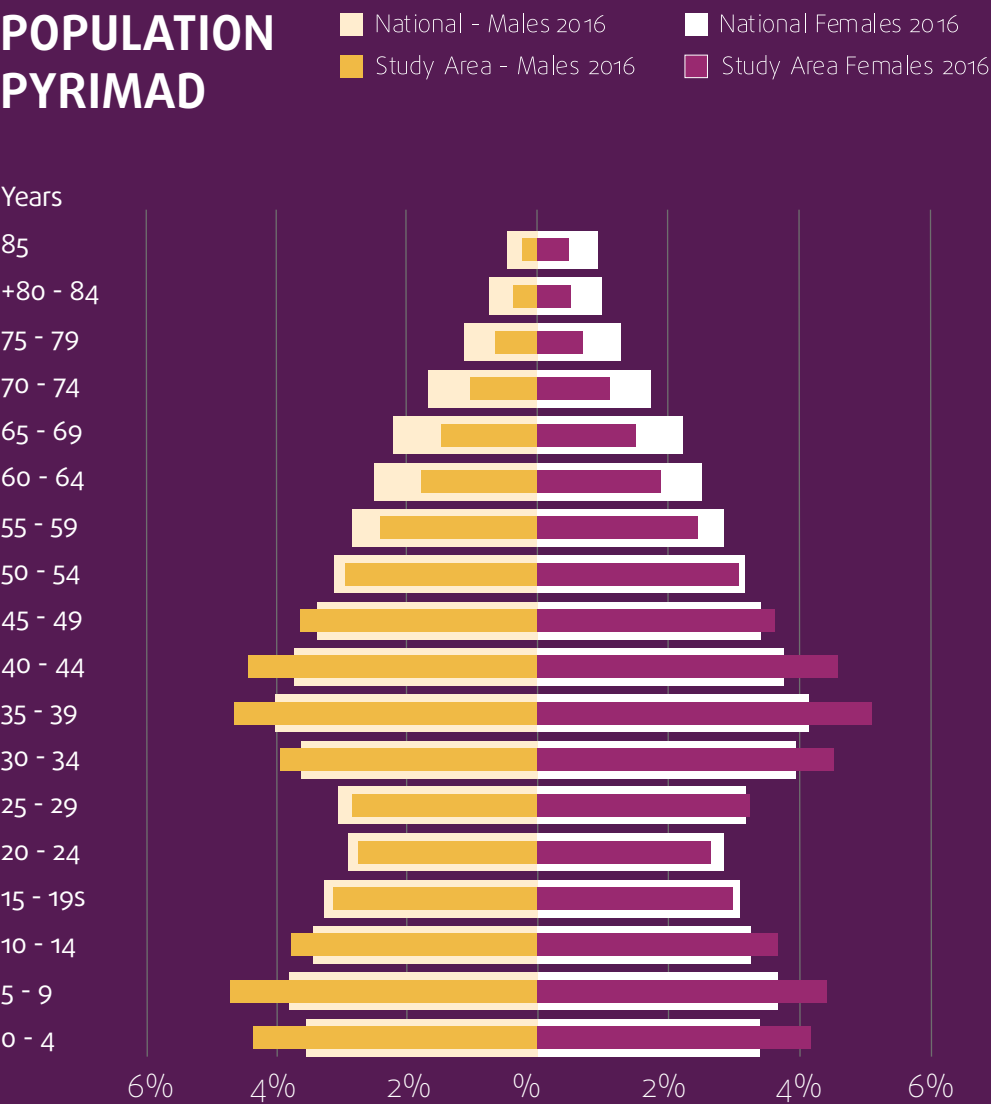
Study Area Profile – 2016 Census

- Population: 135,947
- 29.9% Growth from 2006 - 2016
- 39% of resident population aged 20-44
- 25% of the resident population are under 14 years old

Other Census data that was assessed in this stage include:

- Disability
- Health
- Transport method
- Principal Economic Status

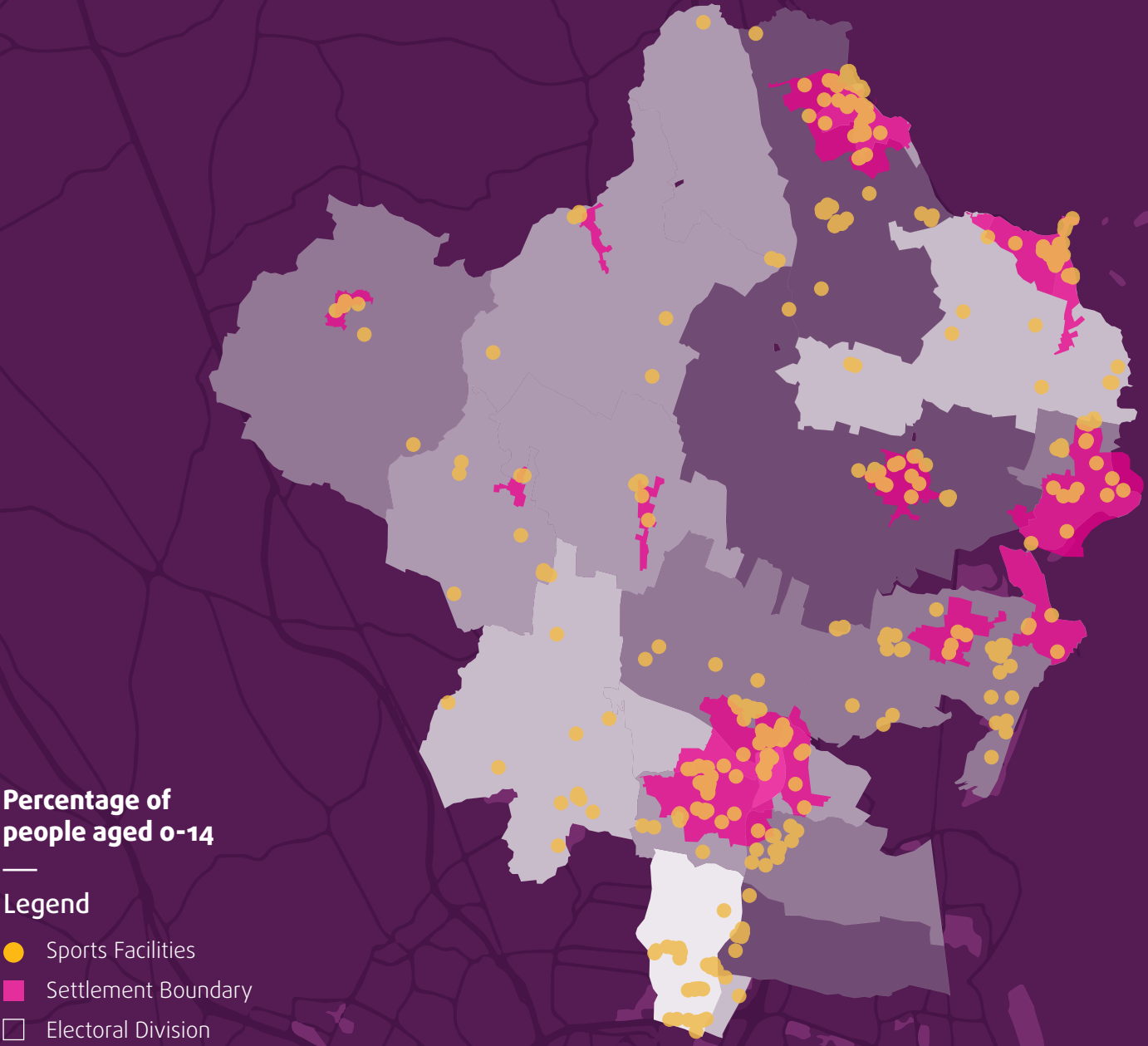
POPULATION PYRAMAD



GREEN
TRANSPORT

Work 16,595 27%
School 18,398 56%
Total 34,993 37%

Study Area Profile



Percentage of people aged 0-14

- Legend
- Sports Facilities
 - Settlement Boundary
 - Electoral Division
 - 14.4%-17.0%
 - 17.1%-21.0%
 - 21.0%-24.8%
 - 24.9%-27.9%
 - 28.0%-32.7%

Percentage with Very Good Health

- Legend
- Sports Facilities
 - Settlement Boundary
 - Electoral Division
 - 51.6%-59.5%
 - 59.6%-62.4%
 - 62.5%-64.3%
 - 64.4%-64.9%
 - 65.0%-67.7%

11.2% of the total population in the study area have a disability, with relatively high proportions evident in Turnapin, Swords Village, Kilsallaghan, Bascadden and Balbriggan Urban EDs.

Kilsallaghan ED has a disability rate of 13.7-18.6%, which is high relative to other EDs and in comparison to the national average (13.5%).

Equitable access to all facilities should be made for people with any disabilities.

Percentage with Disability

Legend

- Sports Facilities
- Settlement Boundary
- Electoral Division
- 8.1-9.4
- 9.5-11.5
- 11.6-12.5
- 12.6-13.6
- 13.7-18.6



FACILITIES AUDIT

FACILITIES AUDIT

FACILITIES AUDIT



A total of 323 facilities were identified across all categories, during the course of the audit.

1. Pitch Sports -	141
2. Indoor Activities -	55
3. Family Activities -	53
4. Water Activities -	9
5. Other Activities -	65

The distribution of facilities and facility types can be seen on the following maps.

The facilities were assessed on multiple criteria, which include:

- Ownership
- Access type
- Condition



- Activity Type**
- Legend**
- Pitch Sport
 - Indoor Activities
 - Family Activities
 - Water Activities
 - Other Activities
 - Settlement Boundary
 - Electoral Division

- Facility Concentration**
- Legend**
- Facilities
 - Concentration
 - Settlement Boundary
 - Electoral Division

Facility
Access

Legend

- Free
- Entry Fee
- Membership
- Settlement Boundary
- Electoral Division

Facility
Condition

Legend

- Well Maintained
- Requires Enhancement
- Could not be fully determined
- Settlement Boundary
- Electoral Division

Facility
Ownership Type

Legend

- Commercial
- Non Commercial
- Settlement Boundary
- Electoral Division



Overview of Facilities

Detailed breakdown of Categories and quantity within each LEA.

Category	Balbriggan LEA	Rush-Lusk LEA	Swords LEA	Grand Total
Pitch Sport	38	47	56	141
All Weather Pitch	3	4	4	11
Cricket Club*	3	3	†	6
Football Club*	4	6	4	14
GAA Club*	2	11	14	27
Outdoor Pitch	20	23	34	77
Rugby Club*	6		1	7
Indoor Activity	19	12	24	55
Boxing Club	1			1
Community Centre	4	2	3	9
Indoor Facility	3		1	4
Martial Arts		1	2	3
Private Leisure Facility	11	9	18	38
Family Activity	15	12	26	53
Heritage Site Which Caters For Sport	1	1	1	3
Multi-Use Games Areas	1	1	3	5
Outdoor Basketball Courts	1			1
Outdoor Facility		1	1	2
Outdoor Gym Equipment	2	2	3	7
Outdoor Tennis Courts	3	2	6	11
Play Area	5	5	11	21
Skate Park	2		1	3

*Total includes identified pitches and clubhouses, for further information see Appendix 3.
†There is a Cricket club based in Swords but their facility is located in Newbridge Demesne which is in Rush-Lusk LEA.

Detailed breakdown of Categories and quantity within each LEA.

Category	Balbriggan LEA	Rush-Lusk LEA	Swords LEA	Grand Total
Watersports	4	2	3	9
Boating	2	1		3
Private Leisure Facility			3	3
Watersports	2	1		3
Other	12	31	22	65
Bowling Club			1	1
Bridge Club	1			1
Caravan Park		4		4
Equestrian	3	9	8	20
Golf Club	2	8	7	17
Gun Club			1	1
Hockey Club		1		1
Library	2	3	1	6
Other	1	2		3
Parish Centre		1		1
Racing	1			1
Running Track			2	2
Scouts	1	2	2	5
Shooting	1	1		2
Grand Total	88	104	131	323

GAP ANALYSIS

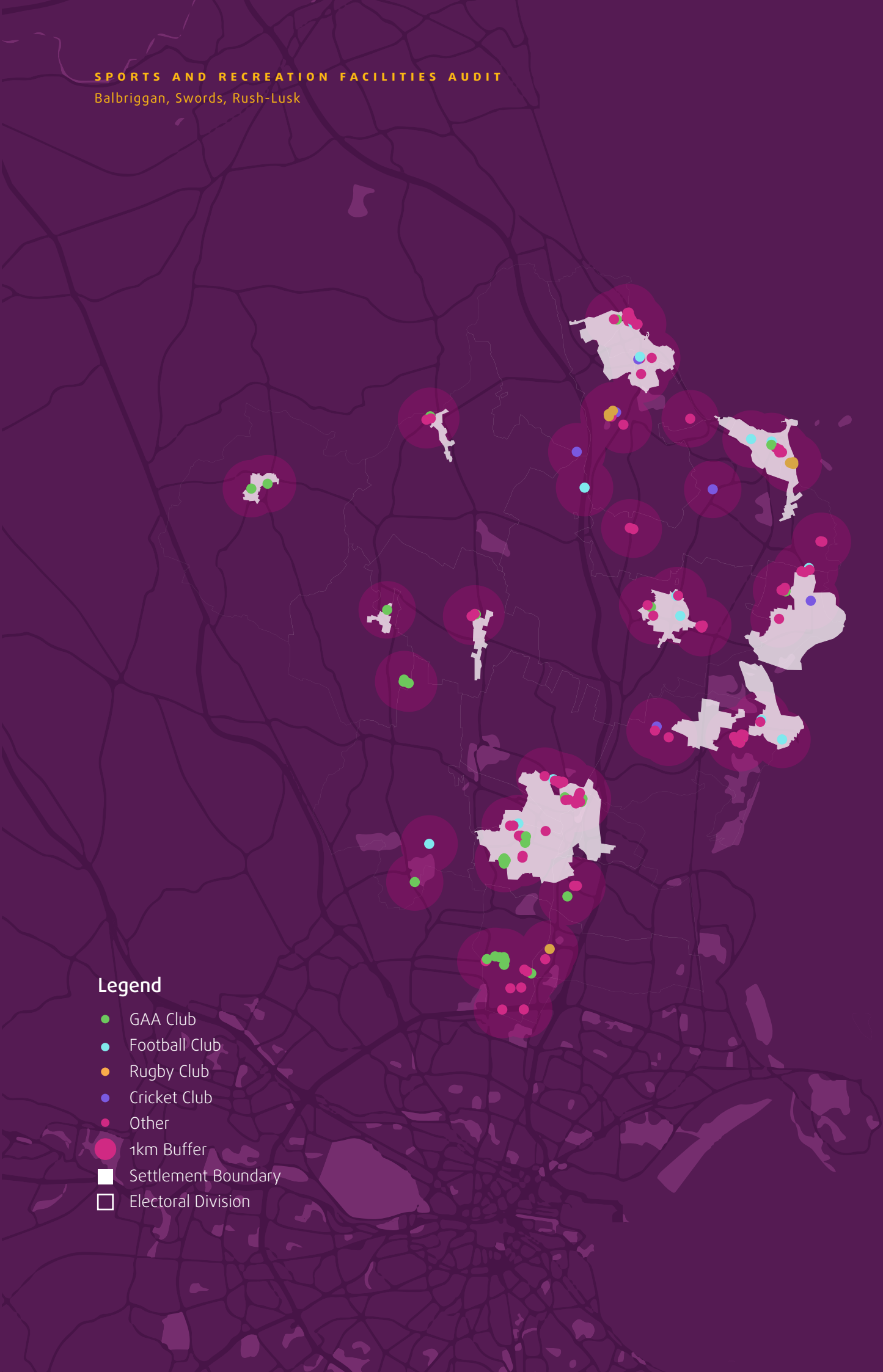
GAP ANALYSIS

GAP ANALYSIS

The spatial distribution of identified facilities was assessed to identify gaps in current provision. This formed the basis of the proceeding needs assessment and recommendations

A 1km buffer around each facility was used, as a means of informing a reasonable walking catchment area. It should therefore be noted that facilities outside of the study area considered in this audit may therefore be accessed by those living in the study area.

The highest concentration of facilities is within the settlement boundaries. The settlements of Balbriggan, Skerries and Swords have the highest density of facilities (between 24 to 57 facilities) whilst Donabate, Lusk, Rush and Portrane also are showing a strong presence of facilities. Generally rural areas have a lower density of facilities, particularly those rural locations to the west of the M1.



- Legend
- Indoor Activities
 - 1km Buffer
 - Settlement Boundary
 - Electoral Division

- Legend
- MUGA
 - Play Area
 - Other
 - 1km Buffer
 - Settlement Boundary
 - Electoral Division

- Legend
- Water Activities
 - 1km Buffer
 - Settlement Boundary
 - Electoral Division

- Legend
- Fingal Facilities (Other)
 - 1km Buffer
 - Settlement Boundary
 - Electoral Division

IDENTIFIED NEEDS

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Population and Projections

The identification of needs has considered the current number of persons per facility (i.e. based on the 2016 population from the Census) and in the future (i.e. based on the projected population in 2026). The current population data has been taken from the 2016 Census whilst a custom population projection scenario has been developed for 2026.

It should be noted that this approach was taken in advance of the publication of the Governmental population targets and allows for sub county estimations and determination of the age profile of the future population within the study area which are key to this audit as the assessment takes place at LEA level. It should be noted that the estimated population for Fingal County is projected to grow to up to 333,000 persons by 2026 and 349,000 people by 2031 under the Governmental scenarios.

LEA	2016 Population	2026 Projected Population	Growth	% Growth
Balbriggan	36,570	42,558	5,988	16%
Rush-Lusk	34,674	40,218	5,544	16%
Swords	64,703	77,222	12,519	19%
Total	135,947	159,998	24,051	18%

% Population change
2016-2026

Legend

- Facilities
- Settlement Boundary
- Electoral Division
- 3.9%-9.0%
- 9.1%-13.1%
- 13.2%-17.8%
- 17.9%-21.9%
- 22.0%-42.7%

Needs Assessment

The tables below illustrates the persons in 2016 and 2026 per existing facility. Utilising both this table and mapping of facilities from the gap analysis allows for the identification of opportunity sites that will meet the needs of the study area.

The pressure on the current facilities will increase by 2026 if the existing provision is not expanded upon during that time.

The most dramatic of these is in the water activities, as there may be a need for additional provision of facilities, which will only continue to grow by 2026. We can see from the table that Rush-Lusk LEA will have the will have the greatest increase in persons per facilities for water and indoor activities.

Category	LEA	No. of facilities	No. of people per facility 2016	No. of people per facility 2026	Difference	
Pitch Sport	Balbriggan	38	962	1,120	158	16.4%
	Rush-Lusk	47	738	856	118	16.0%
	Swords	56	1,155	1,379	224	19.3%

Category	LEA	No. of facilities	No. of people per facility 2016	No. of people per facility 2026	Difference	
Indoor Activities	Balbriggan	19	1,952	2,240	315	16.4%
	Lush-Rusk	12	2,890	3,352	462	16.0%
	Swords	24	2,696	3,218	522	19.3%

Category	LEA	No. of facilities	No. of people per facility 2016	No. of people per facility 2026	Difference	
Family Activities	Balbriggan	15	2,438	2,837	399	16.4%
	Rush-Lusk	12	2,890	3,352	462	16.0%
	Swords	26	2,489	2,970	482	19.3%

Category	LEA	No. of facilities	No. of people per facility 2016	No. of people per facility 2026	Difference	
Water Activities	Balbriggan	4	9,143	10,640	1,497	16.4%
	Rush-Lusk	2	17,337	20,109	2,772	16.0%
	Swords	3	21,568	25,741	4,173	19.3%

Category	LEA	No. of facilities	No. of people per facility 2016	No. of people per facility 2026	Difference	
Other Activities	Balbriggan	12	3,048	3,547	499	16.4%
	Rush-Lusk	31	1,119	1,297	179	16.0%
	Swords	22	2,941	3,510	569	19.3%

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Balbriggan LEA

Pitch Sports -Pitch sports facilities are generally provided throughout, with minor gaps in different areas located outside of the settlement boundaries.

Indoor Activities - Facilities supporting indoor activities may be beneficial throughout the entire area, particularly in Holmpatrick and Balbriggan Rural EDs where relatively large population growth is anticipated. Further, private leisure facilities dominate therefore the LEA would benefit from more noncommercial and community facilities that facilitate a range of indoor activities.

Family Activities - Additional Playgrounds and MUGAs may be considered, especially in the Holmpatrick area, where there is one existing facility and a significant increase in population is anticipated.

Water Activities - The existing outdoor facilities exploit the advantage of the vicinity of the Irish Sea, however they are all located in Skerries. Further, swimming pool facilities are required in this LEA and this may be provided in Balbriggan through the Castlelands Masterplan.

Other facilities - Facilities that support other activities are provided throughout this LEA. Activities situated within settlements are predominantly community centres, libraries and clubs, whereas those located outside, are typically more purpose-orientated facilities, such as golf courses or equestrian centres

Rush-Lusk LEA

Pitch Sports - Pitch sports facilities are generally provided for throughout, with minor gaps for sports other than GAA in those areas to the west of the M1 and those located outside of the settlement boundaries.

Indoor activities - Facilities supporting indoor activities may be beneficial throughout this entire area due to the dominance of private leisure facilities. At present, other than Garristown, the west of this LEA has no indoor facilities.

Family Activities - Facilities for family activities are provided throughout the study area. Playgrounds may be considered in areas towards the west of this LEA such as the Naul, Oldtown and Garristown.

Water Activities - Water Activities - Both outdoor facilities, which take advantage of the Irish Sea, are opportunities that could be developed further for the LEA. At present, Rush is the only area which provides outdoor water activity facilities.

Other facilities - Facilities that support other activities are provided throughout this LEA. Activities situated within settlements are predominantly community centres, libraries and clubs, whereas those located outside, are typically more purpose-orientated facilities, such as golf courses or equestrian centres.

Swords LEA

Pitch Sports – Pitch sports facilities are numerous, however there are some gaps in provision evident outside of the settlement boundaries. Moreover, certain sports may require greater development, such as rugby, as the Swords settlement currently has no dedicated rugby club facility and it is understood that Swords Rugby Club make use of facilities in ALSAA and Newbridge House.

Indoor Activities - There is no indoor activity facilities to the north and west (with the exception of Rolestown) at present. Further, private leisure facilities dominate therefore the LEA may benefit from more non-commercial and community facilities.

Family Activities - Family activity facilities are provided throughout the settlement of Swords. Provision of Playgrounds may be explored in rural areas towards the north of the LEA.

Water Activities - Further water activity facilities should exploit the advantage of the vicinity of the Irish Sea and swimming pool facilities, particularly publicly accessible ones, may be beneficial within the LEA.

Other facilities - Other facilities are provided and relatively well distributed throughout this LEA. Future provision should be analysed in greater detail to determine specific needs in relation to those that are not provided for such as hockey club, bridge club, parish centre and shooting facilities.





General Recommendations

Further work is recommended to investigate facilities in other part of Fingal county as well as to develop a robust understanding of the public and owner perceptions, the affordability, condition and utilisation of facilities.

Fingal County Council will continue to encourage and promote equitable access, inclusivity and participation across all facilities.

Engagement with the operators and managers will continue in order to identify and coordinate discussions in relation to strategic community and charitable initiatives in order to achieve policy objectives in relation to health, wellbeing, amenity and recreation.

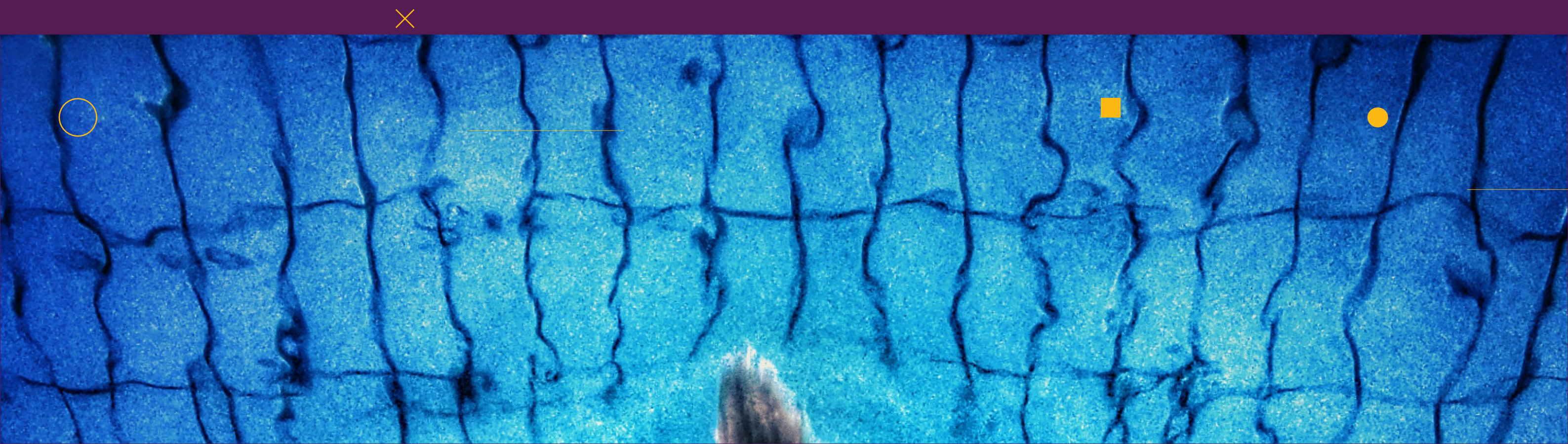
In relation to pitch sports,further investment may be considered to develop further community facilities, particularly in those rural areas to the west where GAA is the dominant sport.

Community centre and multi-use indoor facilities can support multiple uses and a variety of age groups and are recommended to the west of the M1 corridor.

Family activity facilities should be accessible andmay be considered in the smaller settlements, particularly where future growth is forecasted and those that currently have no facilities.

A broad mix of water activity facilities may be considered across the study area and opportunities to leverage off the coastline should be progressed.

The development and maintenance of the other activity facilities may be required in order to improve participation in a broad range of activities.



Conclusion

The following objectives have been achieved as part of this audit:

A review of international, national, regional and local policy documents in relation to recreation, health and sports facilities and promotion has been undertaken.

A comprehensive audit of the study area has been undertaken to identify and investigate each facility.

The demographic profiles for the study area and within each LEA have been analysed.

The existing and future population of each LEA has been investigated to understand anticipated demand as well as information on ownership status, accessibility and equitability and insights into the demographics and quality of health.

The gaps and needs analysis of the study area have been interrogated to focus on what is required in order to develop and maintain facilities.

Recommendations have been made to inform a strategy for Fingal County Council which identifies which facilities are needed and where, to allow the evidence base to be used to help secure new investment in facilities throughout the study area.

The gap and needs analysis has identified what facilities are required now and in the future in the study area. There were several gaps in provision and needs associated with current and future provision of facilities highlighted including:

323 facilities were identified within the study area as part of this audit.

The distribution of facilities varies by category type, however inequitable distribution of some facilities was evident between urban and rural areas in each LEA.

Pitch sports, are the most prominent facility type in the study area with 141 facilities identified and of these, GAA clubs and outdoor pitches are most common throughout.

The considerably low provision of water activity facilities throughout the county, especially indoor swimming pools in the Balbriggan and Rush-Lusk LEAs.

67% of the indoor activity facilities are private leisure facilities that are not publicly accessible.



Portrane aerial view

Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall
Fingal County
Council

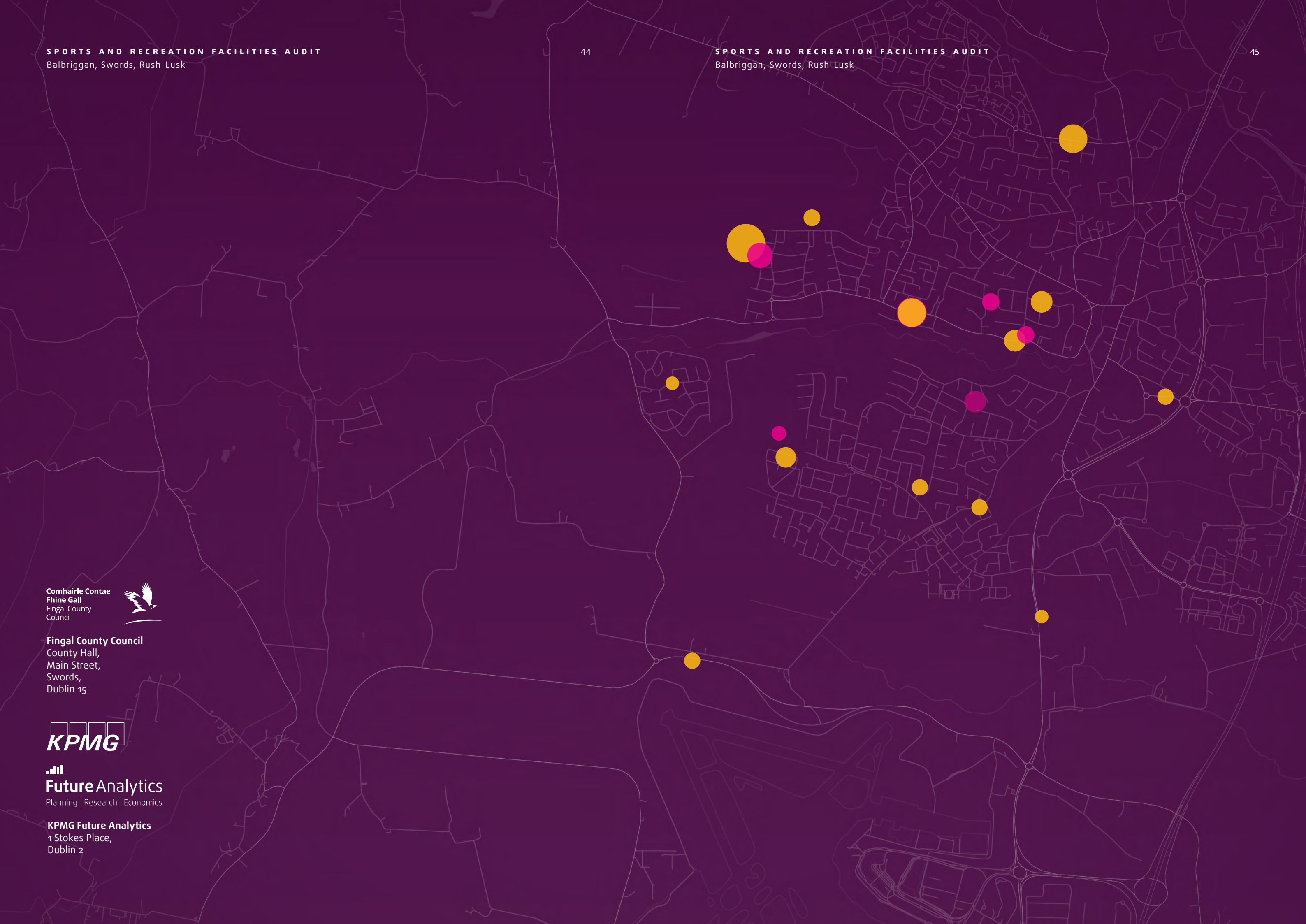


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