

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE Education, Culture and Sport

DATE 24 November 2011

DIRECTOR Annette Bruton

TITLE OF REPORT Aberdeen City Council Water Management Plan: Update

REPORT NUMBER: ECS/11/058

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update of the work completed on the Water Management Plan for Aberdeen city, taking into account the development of the new 50m pool and the impact of the current closure of Tullos pool.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee:

- I. Note the progress of the Water Management Plan Working group
- II. Note the results of the facilities planning model
- III. Instruct officers to develop proposals for a sustainable strategy for the provision of swimming pools in the city as part of the sport and leisure asset plan with Sport Aberdeen.  
This work will be completed in partnership with the Water Management Working group, including Sport Aberdeen, Scottish Swimming, **sportscotland**, Aberdeen Sports Village, local swimming clubs and other key stakeholders.  
The proposals will be linked to the council-wide Asset Management Strategy.
- IV. Instruct officers to address the current lack of access to a swimming pool in Torry and to review the existing programming of pools to take account of the needs of the communities in Northfield. This is to be undertaken through the leisure asset plan and will explore opportunities within the asset plan for schools.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This exercise will provide a long-term strategy for the sustainable provision of pools in Aberdeen, as part of the council's Asset Management Plan. The next stage of the plan will provide recommendations which will impact on both capital and revenue expenditure.

The plan should, through improved programming and asset management, generate revenue savings to be re-invested in the sustainable provision of swimming pools in the city, including the 50m pool. The plan will address the projected displacement of pool use from existing pools to the new 50m pool and the resulting reduction in income.

#### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

This work will be linked to the council-wide Asset Management Strategy and will be continued within the development of a sport and leisure asset plan with Sport Aberdeen.

#### 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The council is committed to the construction of the new 50m pool in partnership with the University of Aberdeen and **sportscotland**. This development will increase and improve the aquatic facilities in the city. It is prudent in the current economic environment to review the citywide pool provision to ensure that we have the appropriate number and quality of pools available in accessible locations across the city, to meet the needs of our communities and athletes within the available budget.

##### I. **Tullos Pool**

At its meeting on 16 September 2010 the committee agreed that the future of Tullos pool be considered as part of a wider city strategy for the provision of pools.

The Head of Communities, Culture and Sport convened a water management working group in partnership with **sportscotland**, Scottish Swimming, Sport Aberdeen, Aberdeen Sports Village, representatives of local aquatic clubs, disability sport and the universities and college.

##### II. **Progress**

The Water Management working group was established.

Work Completed:

- Survey of swimming clubs
- Audit of public and private pools, usage by public and clubs
- Data checking and analysis
- Survey of coaching and training needs
- Facility planning model completed by **sportscotland**

##### III. **Facilities Planning Model**

On behalf of Aberdeen City Council, **sportscotland** has assessed the supply of and the likely demand for swimming pools in Aberdeen using the Facilities Planning Model (FPM). **sportscotland** believes that this approach is the most relevant one for providing guidance to local authorities in relation to their statutory duty to ensure adequate provision for sports and recreation in their area.

The Facilities Planning Model is a tool to provide an objective assessment of the relationship between the likely demand for sports facilities in an area and the actual supply. It takes into account the distribution of the local population and its demographic structure, using census data, as well as the capacity and availability of facilities in the area. The Model provides an objective input to the planning process as a guide to formulating policies for the provision of facilities but it should not be used to determine policy on its own. The results will provide one source of information, which can be used for the development of sports facility strategies, which in turn will help to determine future investment and management decisions for sports facilities in Aberdeen.

Four runs of the model were undertaken for swimming. These runs looked at the ability of the pools to satisfy demand in 2011 and in 2021. The model used the projected population for 2021 taken from information provided by the General Registers Office for Scotland.

1. Swimming Pools - current provision using 2011 population figures, excluding Tullos swimming pool;
2. Swimming Pools - current provision using 2011 population figures, including Tullos swimming pool;
3. Swimming Pools - Proposed provision (i.e. new 50m pool and no Aberdeen University Pool) using 2021 population figures, excluding Tullos swimming pool; and
4. Swimming Pools - Proposed provision (ie new 50m pool and no Aberdeen University Pool) using 2021 population figures, including Tullos swimming pool.

**Table 1**

**Table 4 - Waterspace per 1000; met demand & utilised capacity**

	<b>Scottish Average</b>	<b>Run 1</b>	<b>Run 2</b>	<b>Run 3</b>	<b>Run 4</b>
<b>sqm per 1000 popn</b>	15.4 sqm	23 sqm	24.5 sqm	29 sqm	30.4 sqm
<b>Met Demand</b>	85.60%	95.80%	96.80%	95.60%	96.60%
<b>Utilised Capacity</b>	41.50%	36.70%	35.70%	27.80%	27.30%

\* NOTE: The modelling for the national figure did not include all commercial pools and was done in 2005 so the position will have changed in the interim. The modelling process was also different to what is now used, the results of the 2005 national modelling have, however, been tested with the modelling that has been done for this Aberdeen FPM and the outputs show that it is reasonable to make comparison as at a national level the outputs do not change by more than 1.5% . For comparison, Aberdeenshire has been modelled as part of this FPM and has a predicted utilised capacity of 41.8% (Run 1).

#### **IV. Run 1 Existing provision**

The first analysis (Run 1) was based upon the existing pattern of 21 commercial, public and dual use school pools, considered against the population at 2011. The Model estimated that these pools could satisfy some 95.8% of demand for swimming. Accordingly the level of unmet demand is very low. The national average for met demand is 85.6%, based on the national run which was undertaken in 2005. As the national run was undertaken in 2005, there will have been changes in the interim period to the supply of pools; in addition, the modelling process itself has changed since that time. As part of this FPM we have rerun the national model from 2005 (supply not updated and pools not rated by quality) with similar modelling to the Aberdeen pools FPM, in order to test how comparable the two sets of results are. In relation to what is being compared, the difference is no more than 1.5%. As such, for the purposes of the Aberdeen FPM, there is enough correlation in terms of the model outputs to allow useful comparison to be made.

In this run Aberdeen has 23sqm of waterspace per 1000 population, which compares with a Scottish average of 15.4sqm. The annual projected used capacity for the pools is estimated at 36.7% of their theoretical capacity, a figure that is lower than the national average of 41.5%.

(Run 1) was based upon the existing pattern of 21 commercial, public and dual use school pools, considered against the population at 2011. The Model estimated that these pools could satisfy some 95.8% of demand for swimming. Accordingly the level of unmet demand is very low.

#### **V. Run 2 – Existing including Tullos**

The second run for swimming considers the same 21 pools as in Run 1, but includes the pool at Tullos which is currently closed, i.e. a total of 22 pools, considered against the population at 2011.

In this run Aberdeen has 24.5 sqm of waterspace per 1000 population, which compares with a Scottish average of 15sqm (2005 figure).

There is not a significant change from that outlined in Run 1 in relation to patterns of movement between Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council areas.

## **VI. Run 3 – With 50m pool, excluding Tullis and Aberdeen University Pool – at 2021**

This run is at 2021 taking account of the time it will take the new 50m pool to be constructed. The University pool has also been removed and as with run 1 Tullis pool has not been included. The Model estimated that pools will satisfy some 95.6% of demand for swimming. Accordingly the level of unmet demand is low.

With the new pool (excluding the University and Tullis pool) there is 29sqm of waterspace per 1000 (current figure is 23sqm and national average 15sqm, with provisos previously noted in Run 1).

The used capacity goes down to 27.8% from 36.7% (national average 41.5% - 2005 figure). This compares with Aberdeenshire, which has modelled used capacity of 43.8% at 2021. This average figure is based on all used capacities for pools in the City area and these are shown in Table 2. It can be seen that there is significant variation in predicted capacities for different pools.

What the model predicts is that some of the existing demand is relocated to the 50m pool. As this additional waterspace has been provided, based on the demand levels, which are unchanged, the amount of users using the existing pools in the area nearest the 50m pool will decrease, although this effect is less as you move away from the 50m pool.

There is not a significant change from that outlined in Run 1 in relation to patterns of movement between Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council areas.

The demand met does not change to any noticeable extent with the new pool; the figures are similar to those outlined in Run 1. This is because the existing pools are already meeting the demand from their catchments, and the new 50m pool does not reach any of those who sit outwith these catchments. It should, however, be considered in the context of the Beach Leisure Centre which is currently operating near its notional annual capacity. It should also be considered in the context of the 50m pool being a national priority for swimming development in this area of the country. In this respect it is likely that car users will travel more than the 20 minutes, which the model assumes, to the new 50m pool.

In relation to the University Pool not being included, this area of the city is well provided for pools so it is not expected that the closure of this will result in demand from its catchment area not being met, as there are other pools that users can divert to.

In relation to Tullis Pool, as with Run 1, much of this area will not have a pool within a 20 minute walk. However, as with Run 1, the numbers of visits per week in the peak period not met as a result of this is not predicted to be large – 533 visits per week are not met compared with 407 not being met in Run 4 – i.e. visits not met due to Tullis pool not being available is 126 per week. The plans attached as Appendix 1 show walking catchments in the city.

## **VII. Run 4 – With 50m pool, including Tullos and excluding Aberdeen University Pool – at 2021**

The results of this run are similar to Run 3. The ability for those in the Tullos Area to walk to a pool remains as was the case with Run 2 but little more demand is met – 96.6% as compared to 95.6% in run 3– this equates to 126 visits in the peak period per week being met which would not have been the case if the pool was closed.

The waterspace per 1000 is 30.4sqm.

## **VIII. Summary of the results of the Swimming Pools Analyses**

The pools in Aberdeen are fairly well located relative to population. There is a good supply of pools per 1000 population (greater than the national average – 2005 figure) and according to the model most demand is met, and most pools are operating comfortably within their notional capacity. In relation to the national model that was undertaken in 2005, comparison shows that the supply of pools in Aberdeen results in demand being met that is greater than the national average. Demand that is not met is mainly due to walkers living outwith the catchment population of the nearest pool, but these numbers are relatively small.

With the new 50m pool it is predicted that the used capacity levels will decrease. This will have revenue issues for operators. It is, however, expected that the 50m pool is likely to have a greater driving catchment time than the 20 minutes used in the model – given that this is a national level swimming facility and the modelled used capacity figures and associated used capacity.

The loss of the pool at Tullos means this area does not have access to a pool, which people can walk to within 20 minutes. This is not ideal as a significant proportion of pool users access the facility by walking – especially children. However, given its proximity to other pools in the city, those using car travel or public transport can access these and as noted above the differences in terms of demand met is not significant at a city scale – in 2021 Run 4 shows an additional 126 visits per week in the peak period are met when Tullos pool is open.

It should also be remembered that of the existing pools, a number are not open for all of the 52 hours in the peak period, so there is additional peak period capacity available that could be freed up depending on hours of opening/programming.

From the findings of the Model there is no need for any additional pools in Aberdeen, and resources should be concentrated on improving the facilities that already exist, and consideration given to programmes of use once the 50m pool is open.

## IX. Summary of the Key Outcomes of Model

- A high level of demand is met – 96% without Tullos and 97% with Tullos
- Demand not met is from those without access to a car living outwith walking catchments
- Used capacity of pools is 28% (national average 42%)
- Tullos closure – affects those without access to a car

**Table 2 Benchmarking with other cities**

Council area	SQM per 000 population	Number of pools
Aberdeen	23 (present excluding Tullos, 18 at 2005)	21 (present, excluding Tullos)
Aberdeenshire	16	15
Dundee	11	4
Edinburgh	20	27
Glasgow	15	22
Perth & Kinross	17	7
Scottish average	15	n/a

## X. Future work

Further work is now required to develop the results of the Model into a comprehensive water management plan for the city as part of the leisure asset plan. This will take into account:

- the needs of local communities,
- the programming of existing pools
- the cost per swim and subsidy levels
- the opportunities for participation in aquatic sports
- Athlete development
- The regional plan for swimming
- The development of the 50m pool
- The asset management plans for leisure
- Capital and revenue costs
- The projected reduction in income and proposals for sustainability

Officers will continue to work with **sportscotland** and the Water Management group to report back to committee with options for consideration by elected members as part of the council asset management plan for leisure facilities. The current Aberdeen City Council pools are listed below in Table 3.

**Table 3: List of Aberdeen City Council Pools**

<b>Pool</b>	<b>Building Type</b>
Aberdeen Grammar School	Attached to School
Beach Leisure Centre	Freestanding (Leisure)
Bridge of Don Academy	Attached to School
Bucksburn Swimming Pool	Freestanding (part of Beacon Centre Complex)
Cults Academy	Attached to School
Dyce Academy	Attached to School
Dyce Primary Pool	Attached to School
Hazlehead Swimming Pool	Attached to School
Hazlewood School Pool	Attached to School
Kincorth Academy	Attached to School
Northfield Swimming Pool	Freestanding
Tullos School	Temporarily Closed (Attached to School)

## **XI. Tullos pool**

Officers will continue to review the access to swimming pools across the city and further explore how to address the temporary closure of Tullos pool through the leisure asset plan and the asset plan for schools.

The results of the facilities planning model show that the city has a level of pool capacity that is significantly higher than the national average. The level of met demand (95.6%) means that, once the 50m pool is open, it is projected that existing pools will experience a drop in usage and income. This will also impact on the viability of pools provided out with the city council. The council needs to consider where it provides pools to ensure access to pools across the city and to meet the needs of communities within areas of multiple deprivation. Therefore the leisure asset plan will need to address whether the council should rationalise the number of pools to ensure the financial viability of its own and other facilities. The council needs to consider how the current programming can be improved.

Aberdeen enjoys a good level of pool provision and will have an excellent 50m pool. The challenge is to develop a long-term plan to sustain a good level of affordable high quality facilities that meet the needs of our communities.

## **6. IMPACT**

Corporate - The report relates to the key aims set out in the Arts, Heritage and Sport strand of the Community Plan, specifically in relation to the sports, leisure and recreation vision of developing Aberdeen as an 'Active City'.

The report also links to the sport and cultural objectives laid out in 'Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward looking':



- Increase participation in sport, provide support for athletes and reward excellence
- Recognise the contribution of sport, culture and the arts to promoting the area as a tourist destination
- Recognise the role of sport and the arts in tackling anti social behaviour

The City's sport and physical activity strategy, 'Fit for the Future' has five strategic objectives:

- Promote and increase opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity for everyone in Aberdeen
- Provide a comprehensive and high quality range of sports facilities in Aberdeen
- Maximise the social, educational, health and economic benefits of sport and physical activity in Aberdeen
- Develop and sustain pathways which nurture local, regional and national sporting people to reach their potential
- Raise the profile of sport in Aberdeen

## **I. Public**

There is likely to be considerable public interest in this report from the communities in Torry concerned about the future of Tullos pool and the potential to re-open or replace it.

Additionally members of the public and members of aquatic sports clubs will be interested in the future of local swimming and leisure pools and the pool capacity for participation in sport and athlete development.

## **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

ECS 16 September 2010 Tullos Swimming Pool - Internal Works - Referred from Finance and Resources Committee of 17 June 2010

ECS 2 June 2011 50 Metre Pool - Tender Report - ECS/11/044

## **8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

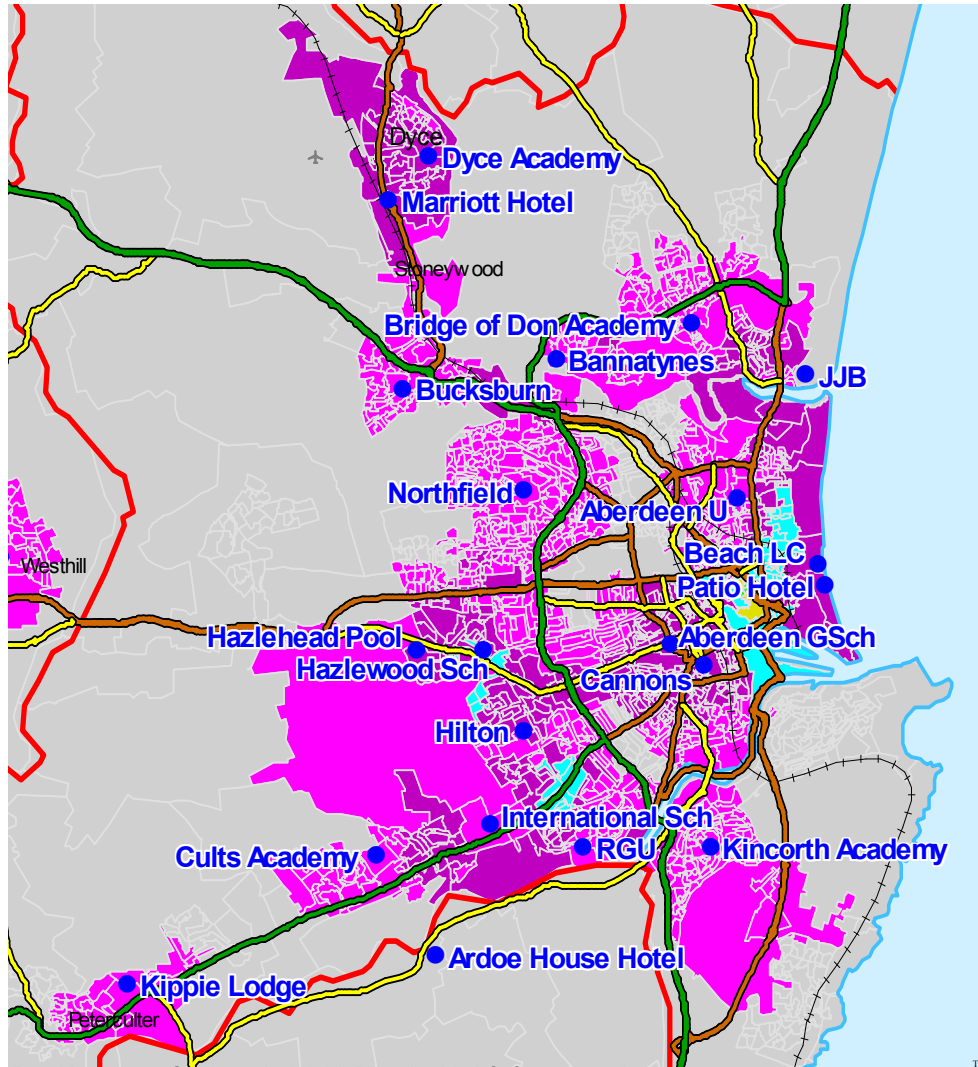
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Appendix 1 – Walking Catchment Maps

# ABERDEEN POOLS FPM

## NUMBER OF ACCESSIBLE POOLS WITHIN WALKING CATCHMENTS

### RUN 1 -PRESENT PROVISION, EXCLUDING TULLOS



#### Key

Number of pools within  
20 mins walking time  
(Approx 1 Mile)  
of OA centroids



— OA boundary

● Pool Site

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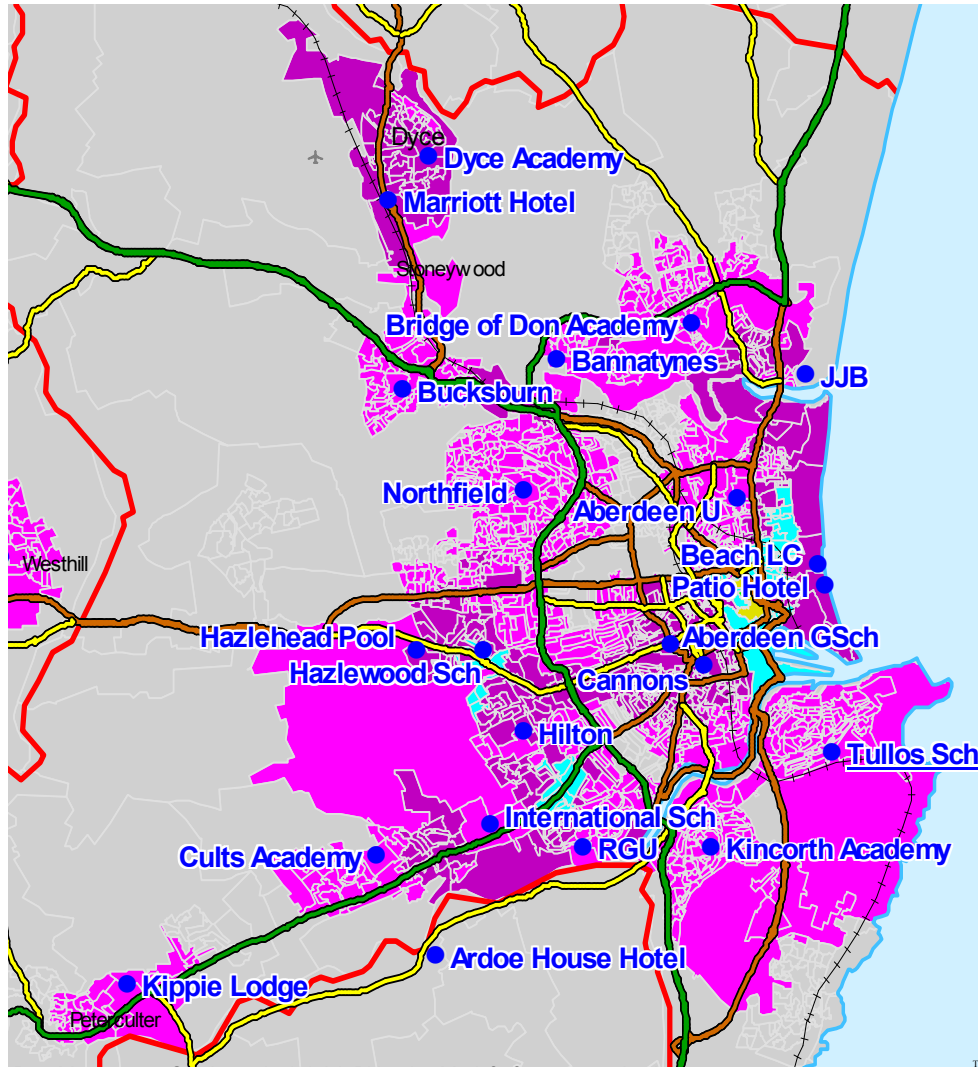
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# ABERDEEN POOLS FPM

## NUMBER OF ACCESSIBLE POOLS WITHIN WALKING CATCHMENTS

### RUN 2 - PRESENT PROVISION, INCLUDING TULLOS



#### Key

Number of pools within  
20 mins walking time  
(Approx 1 Mile)  
of OA centroids



— OA boundary

● Pool Site

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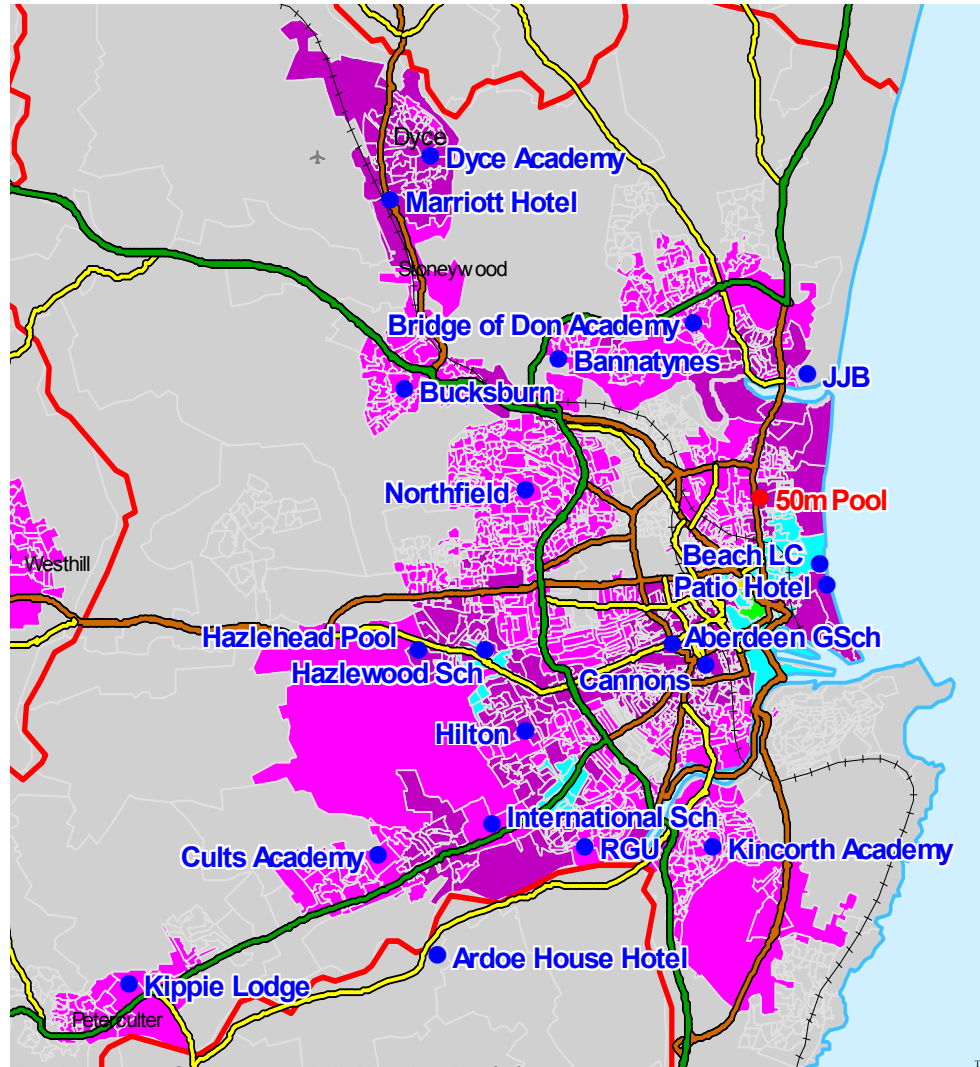
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# ABERDEEN POOLS FPM

## NUMBER OF ACCESSIBLE POOLS WITHIN WALKING CATCHMENTS

### RUN 3 - PROPOSED PROVISION WITH 50M POOL, EXCLUDING ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY & TULLOS



#### Key

Number of pools within  
20 mins walking time  
(Approx 1 Mile)  
of OA centroids



— OA boundary

● Pool Site

● Proposal

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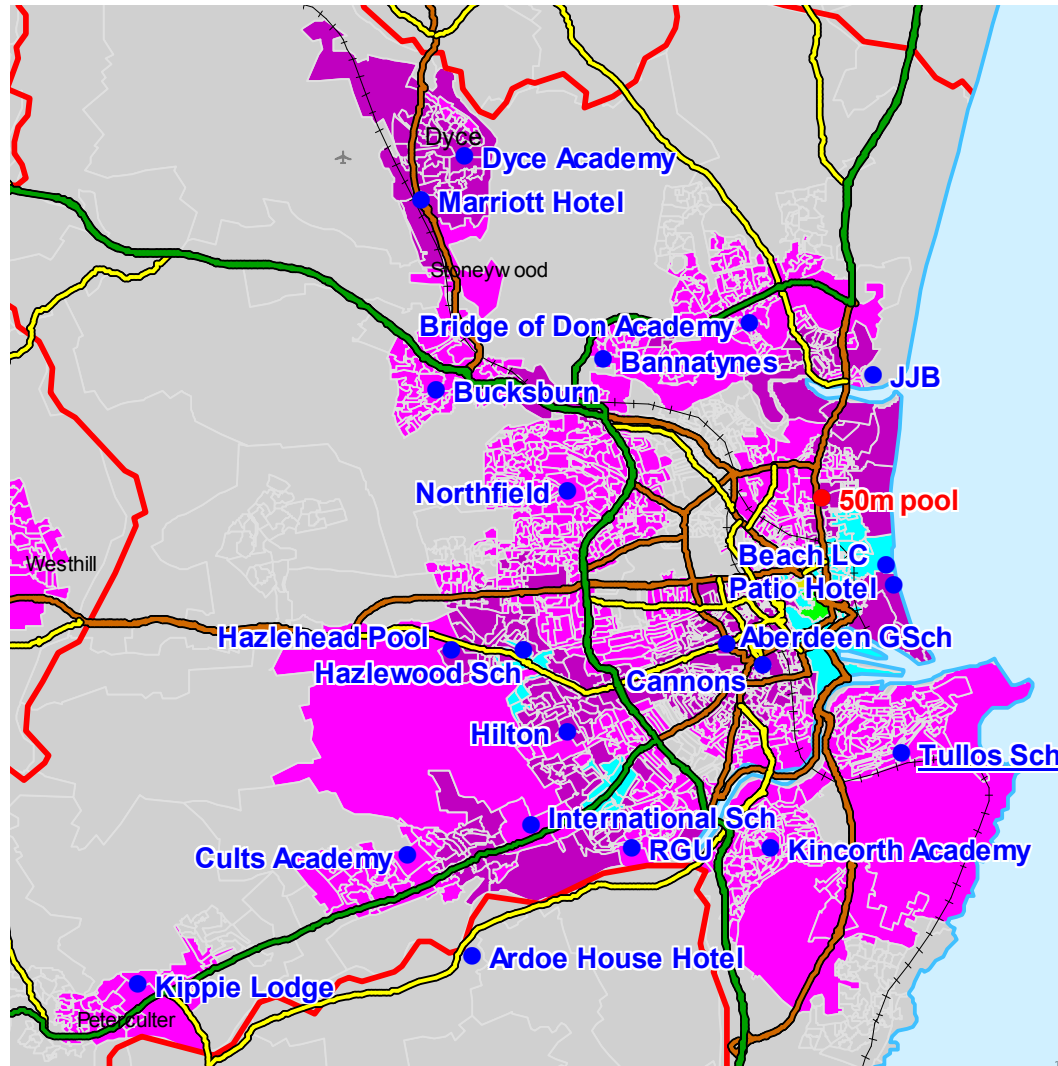
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# ABERDEEN POOLS FPM

## NUMBER OF ACCESSIBLE POOLS WITHIN WALKING CATCHMENTS



RUN 4 - PROPOSED PROVISION WITH 50M POOL, EXCLUDING ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY, INCLUDING TULLOS



### Key

Number of pools within 20 mins walking time (Approx 1 Mile) of OA centroids



— OA boundary

● Pool Site

● Proposal

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