



WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORTS STRATEGY

AUGUST 2016

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd

Company No: 9145032 (England)

MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Registered Office: 1 -2 Frecheville Court, off Knowsley Street, Bury BL9 0UF

T: 0161 764 7040 E: mail@knp.co.uk www.knp.co.uk



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WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial grass pitch)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
CC	Cricket Club
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CSP	County Sports Partnership
WBC	Wirral Borough Council
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FE	Further Education
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HC	Hockey Club
HE	Higher Education
IOG	Institute of Groundmanship
JFC	Junior Football Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LDF	Local Development Framework
LMS	Last Man Stands
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PF	Playing Field
RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
RLFC	Rugby League Football Club
S106	Section 106 Agreement
TGR	Team Generation Rate
U	Under

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan (PPS) for Wirral Borough Council (WBC) Council and its partners. Building upon the preceding Assessment Report it provides a strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing outdoor sports pitches and ancillary facilities between 2016 and 2022. The PPS covers the following playing pitches:

Pitch type	Participation in Wirral
Football pitches (including 3G AGPs)	Wirral demonstrates a high level of demand for football and as such is considered a significant area in the region.
Cricket pitches	Wirral is a cricket hotbed with 15 clubs generating 55 senior and 63 junior teams.
Rugby union pitches	Wirral is a priority area for rugby union with 11 clubs providing 120 competitive rugby union teams.
Hockey/artificial grass pitches (AGPs)	Wirral is a strong hockey area both with two large well established clubs and high school participation.
Tennis courts	Wirral is a priority authority for the LTA and ranks within the top ten local authorities nationally.
Bowling greens	Participation is strong in Wirral with 51 crown green bowling greens across 35 sites. Venues such as Ashton Park, Harrison Park and several others regularly stage County matches.

The Strategy is capable of:

- ◀ Providing planning guidance to assess development proposals affecting playing fields, directing open space contributions secured through development and informing and shaping local planning policy.
- ◀ Informing land use decisions in respect of future use of existing outdoor sports areas and playing fields (capable of accommodating pitches) across the Borough;
- ◀ Providing a strategic framework for the provision and management of outdoor sports across the Borough;
- ◀ Supporting external funding bids and maximise support for outdoor sports facilities;
- ◀ Providing the basis for on-going monitoring and review of the use, distribution, function, quality and accessibility of outdoor sport.

1.1: Structure

The Strategy has been developed during 2015/16 from research and analysis of playing pitch provision and usage within WBC to:

- ◀ Provide an evidence base for Parks and Countryside and other Council and partner service planning and delivery.
- ◀ Provide a clear understanding of the mix of pitch provision in Wirral and the roles of different partners
- ◀ Provide an evidence base to support potential future funding decisions/applications.
- ◀ Provide evidence for Wirral's Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan, to inform site allocations and the consideration of planning applications.
- ◀ Underpin the provision of an accessible and realistic network of weather-resilient pitch facilities which are usable throughout the season.
- ◀ Inform and drive achievement of a high standard of pitch and facility maintenance at an affordable price for users and providers.

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- ◀ Deliver the health and social cohesion benefits of pitch sports against a backdrop of major financial austerity and public sector budget reductions.
- ◀ Reduce the level of Council subsidy of pitch provision.
- ◀ Engage with stakeholders on new ways of working, e.g. increasing self-management

The Strategy and Action Plan recommends a number of priority projects for WBC which should be implemented from 2016 to 2022. It provides a framework for improvement and, although resources may not currently be in place to implement it, potential partners and possible sources of external funding (see Appendix Three: Funding Plan).

The recommendations that come out of this Strategy must be translated into local plan policy so there is a policy mechanism to protect existing provision and secure investment where the opportunity arises.

1.2 Context

The primary purpose of this PPS is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of outdoor sports facilities meets the local needs of existing and future residents within the Wirral Area.

One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Section 8 of the NPPF deals specifically with the topic of healthy communities. Paragraph 73 discusses the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation that can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

Paragraphs 73 and 74 of the NPPF discuss assessments and the protection of “existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields”. A Playing Pitch Strategy will also provide the evidence required to help protect playing fields to ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future pitch requirements.

Paragraph 76 and 77 promote the identification of important green spaces by local communities and the protection of these facilities, which may include playing fields.

Wirral Borough Council Local Plan

The Council needs to review and revise its PPS in order to comply with new guidance from Sport England. This new methodology will provide robust evidence for the Council’s Local Plan, statutory land use planning decisions and funding bids, which will involve the following:

- ◀ To provide updated information on the Borough’s existing and future needs for playing pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens and the current ability to meet those needs in terms of quality, quantity and location.
- ◀ To provide evidence to inform wider Green Infrastructure planning across the Borough
- ◀ To review any spare capacity or shortfalls to enable the Council to set priorities.
- ◀ To provide background evidence to support the emerging Core Strategy Local Plan (to be finalised during 2017) to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs 73 and 74.
- ◀ To review the information to justify collecting developer contributions and inform the Council on the distribution of developer contributions to sports and open space in line with Community Infrastructure Levy regulations.

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Wirral Plan 2020

The Wirral Plan, published in June 2015, sets out a series of 20 pledges which the Council and its partners will work to achieve by 2020, focusing on three key themes:

- ◀ Protecting the most vulnerable
- ◀ Driving economic growth
- ◀ Improving the local environment

The Wirral Parks and open Spaces Strategy 2014 – 2024 included a commitment to develop, implement, manage and monitor a revised Playing Pitch Strategy through a partnership approach with the National Governing Bodies for Sport and other operational partners. The partnership will provide the necessary vested interest in ensuring that existing playing fields, pitches and supporting facilities can be protected and enhanced.

The new PPS will also be aligned with the Council's emerging Core Strategy Local Plan.

Wirral Climate Change Strategy 2014-2019

The maintenance and development of playing pitches is also being addressed through the Council's Climate Strategy, which seeks to:

- ◀ Substantially cut climate pollution associated with Wirral
- ◀ Adapt the Borough to unavoidable climate change

These goals are supported by aims to:

- ◀ Reduce demand for energy and make Wirral more energy efficient;
- ◀ Generate and source more local energy needs from 'renewable' sources;
- ◀ Use more sustainable modes of transport, more fuel-efficient vehicles;
- ◀ Reduce the indirect negative impacts that some decisions have for climate pollution;
- ◀ Identify the risks and vulnerabilities from expected climate changes and bring forward plans and actions to limit negative impacts and improve resilience; and
- ◀ Build capacity for action by strengthening local networks and partnerships and by developing wider awareness and education initiatives

1.3 Study area

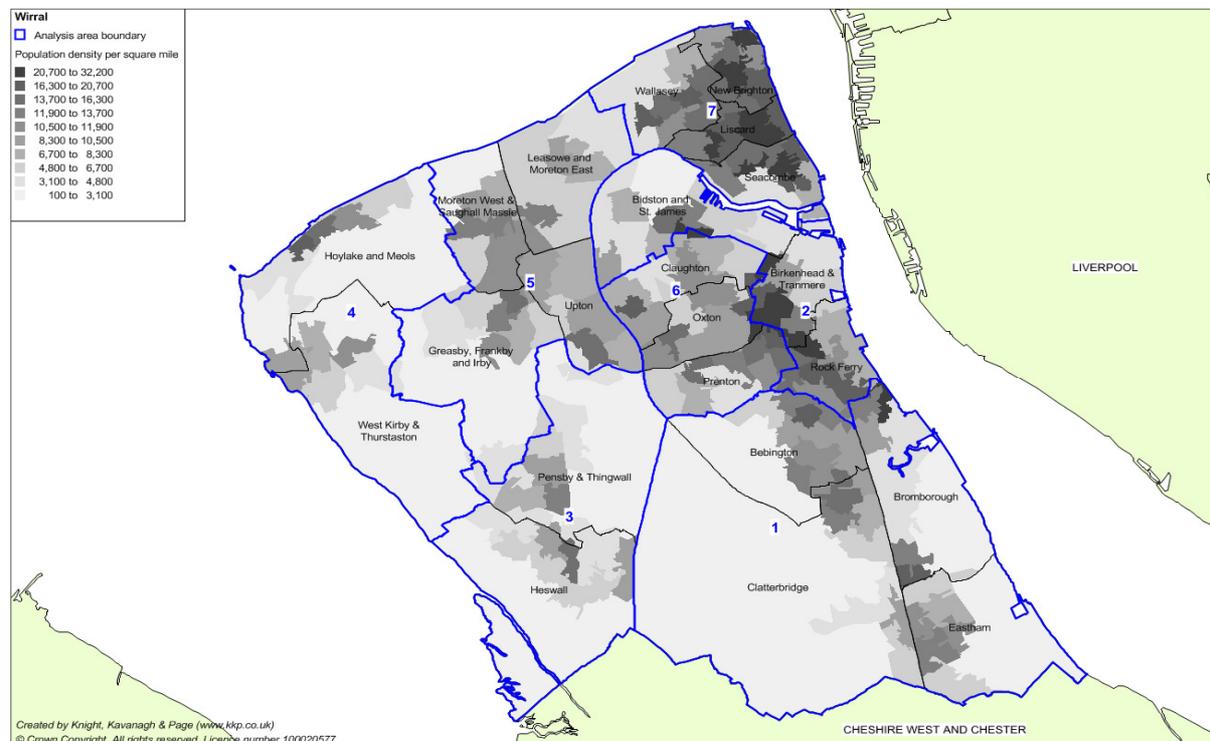
The study area is land within the boundary of the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral which has been divided into seven analysis areas based on groups of Electoral Wards as shown in figure 1.1. The analysis areas are described below;

Analysis area	Description (includes the electoral wards of)
1	Bebington; Bromborough; Clatterbridge; Eastham
2	Bidston and St James; Birkenhead and Tranmere; Rock Ferry
3	Pensby and Thingwall; Heswall
4	Hoylake and Meols; West Kirby and Thurstaston
5	Greasby; Frankby and Irby; Moreton West and Saughall Massie; Leasowe and Moreton East; Upton
6	Claughton; Oxton; Prenton
7	Liscard; New Brighton; Seacombe; Wallasey

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The analysis areas also broadly reflect the Settlement Area approach included in the Council's emerging Local Plan.

Figure 1.1: Analysis area map



1.4 Headline findings

The table below highlights the quantitative headline shortfalls from the WBC Playing Pitch Assessment Report.

Analysis area	Current demand shortfall ¹	Future demand shortfall (2025) ²
Football		
1. Bebington; Bromborough; Clatterbridge; Eastham	No shortfall of adult match sessions No shortfall of youth match sessions No shortfall of mini match sessions	No shortfall of adult match sessions Shortfall of 8 youth match sessions Shortfall of 7.5 mini match sessions
2. Bidston and St James; Birkenhead and Tranmere; Rock Ferry	No shortfall of adult match sessions No shortfall of youth match sessions No shortfall of mini match sessions	No shortfall of adult match sessions No shortfall of youth match sessions No shortfall of mini match sessions
3. Pensby and Thingwall; Heswall	No shortfall of adult match sessions Shortfall of 4 youth match sessions No shortfall of mini match sessions	No shortfall of adult match sessions Shortfall of 6 youth match sessions Shortfall of 2 mini match sessions
4. Hoylake and Meols; West Kirby and Thurstaston	Shortfall of 18.5 adult match sessions Shortfall of 4 youth match sessions Shortfall of 6 mini match sessions	Shortfall of 18.5 adult match sessions Shortfall of 10 youth match sessions Shortfall of 17 mini match sessions
5. Greasby; Frankby and Irby; Moreton West and Saughall Massie; Leasowe	Shortfall of 4 adult match sessions No shortfall of youth match sessions	Shortfall of 4 adult match sessions No shortfall of youth match sessions

¹ Current demand is calculated from an analysis of overplay/latent/displaced demand against actual spare capacity (in the peak period) in match sessions.

² Please note that this is demand that will exist in 2025 if the current demand is not met based on population forecasts only.

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Analysis area	Current demand shortfall ¹	Future demand shortfall (2025) ²
and Moreton East; Upton	No shortfall of mini match sessions	Shortfall of 1.5 mini match sessions
6. Claughton; Oxton; Prenton	No shortfall of adult match sessions No shortfall of youth match sessions Shortfall of 2 mini match sessions	No shortfall of adult match sessions Shortfall of 0.5 youth match sessions Shortfall of 7 mini match sessions
7. Liscard; New Brighton; Seacombe; Wallasey	Shortfall of 11 adult match sessions Shortfall of 7.5 youth match sessions Shortfall of 3.5 mini match sessions	Shortfall of 11 adult match sessions Shortfall of 14.5 youth match sessions Shortfall of 9.5 mini match sessions
Football (3G AGPs)³		
1. Bebington; Bromborough; Clatterbridge; Eastham	Shortfall of four AGPs	Shortfall of four AGPs
2. Bidston and St James; Birkenhead and Tranmere; Rock Ferry	No shortfall of AGPs	No shortfall of AGPs
3. Pensby and Thingwall; Heswall	No shortfall of AGPs	No shortfall of AGPs
4. Hoylake and Meols; West Kirby and Thurstaston	Shortfall of three AGPs	Shortfall of three AGPs
5. Greasby; Frankby and Irby; Moreton West and Saughall Massie; Leasowe and Moreton East; Upton	No shortfall of AGPs	No shortfall of AGPs
6. Claughton; Oxton; Prenton	Shortfall of one AGP	Shortfall of one AGP
7. Liscard; New Brighton; Seacombe; Wallasey	Shortfall of four AGPs	Shortfall of four AGPs
Cricket		
1. Bebington; Bromborough; Clatterbridge; Eastham	Demand is being met	Demand is being met
2. Bidston and St James; Birkenhead and Tranmere; Rock Ferry	Demand is being met	Demand is being met
3. Pensby and Thingwall; Heswall	Demand is being met	Demand is being met
4. Hoylake and Meols; West Kirby and Thurstaston	Demand is being met	Shortfall of one pitch
5. Greasby; Frankby and Irby; Moreton West and Saughall Massie; Leasowe and Moreton East; Upton	Shortfall of 0.5 pitches	Shortfall of 0.5 pitches
6. Claughton; Oxton; Prenton	Demand is being met	Shortfall of 0.3 pitches
7. Liscard; New Brighton; Seacombe; Wallasey	Demand is being met	Shortfall of 0.2 pitches
Rugby union		
1. Bebington; Bromborough; Clatterbridge; Eastham	Shortfall of eight match sessions	Shortfall of 10.5 match sessions
2. Bidston and St James; Birkenhead and Tranmere; Rock Ferry	No shortfall of match sessions	No shortfall of match sessions
3. Pensby and Thingwall; Heswall	No shortfall of match sessions	No shortfall of match sessions
4. Hoylake and Meols; West Kirby and Thurstaston	Shortfall of nine match sessions	Shortfall of 10.5 match sessions

³ Based on accommodating 40 teams to one full size pitch for training. When assessing need on a Borough wide basis there is a shortfall of 11 full size 3G pitches to service training demand. This increases to 12 when calculated on an area by area basis.

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Analysis area	Current demand shortfall ¹	Future demand shortfall (2025) ²
5. Greasby; Frankby and Irby; Moreton West and Saughall Massie; Leasowe and Moreton East; Upton	Shortfall of 13 match sessions	Shortfall of 17.5 match sessions
6. Claughton; Oxtan; Prenton	Shortfall of 16 match sessions	Shortfall of 18 match sessions
7. Liscard; New Brighton; Seacombe; Wallasey	Shortfall of four match sessions	Shortfall of five match sessions
Hockey (Sand AGPs)		
1. Bebington; Bromborough; Clatterbridge; Eastham	Demand exists for increased access to AGPs	Increased access required and pitch/s will require resurface
2. Bidston and St James; Birkenhead and Tranmere; Rock Ferry	No local demand exists	No local demand exists
3. Pensby and Thingwall; Heswall	No local demand exists	No local demand exists
4. Hoylake and Meols; West Kirby and Thurstaston	Demand exists for increased access to AGPs	Increased access required and pitch/s will require resurface
5. Greasby; Frankby and Irby; Moreton West and Saughall Massie; Leasowe and Moreton East; Upton	No local demand exists	No local demand exists
6. Claughton; Oxtan; Prenton	Demand is being met	Pitch/s will require resurface
7. Liscard; New Brighton; Seacombe; Wallasey	No local demand exists	No local demand exists
Tennis		
Wirral	Demand is being met	Qualitative improvements required
Bowls		
Wirral	Demand is being met	Demand is being met

Conclusions

The existing position for all pitch sports is either demand is being met or there is a shortfall. The future position shows that, in some instances, shortfalls become evident where current demand was being met and that current shortfalls are exacerbated. As such, there is a need to protect all existing provision, improve quality where possible to create additional capacity and, if viable, create access to school sites or bring some disused sites back into use.

1.5 Definitions

Match sessions

Pitches have a limit of how much play they can accommodate over a certain period of time before their quality, and in turn their use, is adversely affected. As the main usage of pitches is likely to be for matches, it is appropriate for the comparable unit to be match equivalent sessions but may for example include training sessions and unofficial use.

Based on how they tend to be played this unit for football and rugby union pitches relates to a typical week within the season for each sport. For cricket pitches it is also appropriate to look at the number of match equivalent sessions over the course of a season.

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Pitch capacity

The capacity for pitches to regularly provide for competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affects the playing experience and people's enjoyment of playing a pitch sport. In extreme circumstances it can result in the inability of the pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off peak times. Pitch quality is often influenced by weather conditions and drainage.

As a guide, each NGB has set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its current quality (capacity):

Sport	Pitch type	No. of matches per week		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Football	Adult pitches	3	2	1
	Youth pitches	4	2	1
	Mini pitches	6	4	2
Rugby union*	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2	1.5	0.5
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3	2	1.5
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25	2.5	1.75
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5	3	2
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	N/A	N/A
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	N/A	N/A

Shortfalls

Please note that shortfalls are expressed in match sessions rather than converted to pitches. For football and rugby union pitches, this should relate to a typical week within the season and one match = one match equivalent session if it occurs every week or 0.5 match equivalent sessions if it occurs every other week (i.e. reflecting home and away fixtures). For cricket pitches it is appropriate to look at the number of match equivalent sessions over the course of a season and one match = one match equivalent session.

To convert match sessions into pitches, the number of match sessions should be halved (to take account of teams playing on a home and away basis). For example, a shortfall of eight match sessions should be divided by 0.5 resulting in a shortfall of four pitches.

For a full Glossary of terms please refer to Appendix Four.

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PART 2: VISION

2.1 Vision

A vision has been set out to provide a clear focus with desired outcomes for the WBC Playing Pitch Strategy:

“An accessible, high quality and sustainable network of playing pitches that provides opportunity for residents of and visitors to Wirral Borough Council to play sport and improve their physical activity”.

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PART 3: OBJECTIVES

The following overarching objectives are based on the three Sport England themes (see figure 1 below). Delivery of the Strategy is the responsibility of and relies on, *all* stakeholders.

It is recommended that the following are adopted by the Council and its partners to enable it to achieve the overall vision of the Playing Pitch Strategy and meet Sport England planning objectives.

AIM 1

To **protect** the existing supply of outdoor sports facilities where it is needed for meeting current and future needs

AIM 2

To **enhance** outdoor sports facilities, including playing pitches and ancillary facilities through improving quality and management of sites

AIM 3

To **provide** new playing pitches including other outdoor sports facilities such as greens and courts where there is current or future demand to do so

Figure 1: Sport England themes



Source: Sport England 2015

PART 4: SPORT SPECIFIC ISSUES SCENARIOS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to help develop the recommendations/actions and to understand their potential impact a number of relevant scenario questions are tested against the key issues for each individual sport resulting in the sport specific recommendations.

4.1 Football pitches

Summary – grass pitches

- ◀ Wirral demonstrates a high level of demand for football and as such is considered a significant area in the region; however, poor quality provision is hindering further growth of the sport.
- ◀ The audit identifies a total of 207 grass football pitches located across 82 sites in Wirral. Of these, 179 pitches are known to be available, at some level, for community use. Those not available for community use are all located on education sites, with the exception of Prenton Park (Site ID: 179), home of Tranmere Rovers FC.
- ◀ The non-technical assessment of the quality of pitches in Wirral, shows that 80% of all pitches that are available for community use are rated as standard quality. The remaining pitches are rated as either good (1%) or poor (19%) quality.
- ◀ There are a total of 568 football teams from Wirral playing competitive home fixtures on grass pitches. This includes three teams which are currently accessing pitches outside of the Borough and, therefore, are classed as displaced demand.
- ◀ The level of latent demand appears to be low in Wirral. The highest latent demand is for mini pitches (7.5 match sessions).
- ◀ Population increases are not expected to create any additional future demand for adult teams, although 25 youth teams and 16 mini teams may be created.
- ◀ The Wallasey Girls League also expressed aspirations/future demand to develop and build on their current numbers, the league requires; two additional 5v5 pitches, two 7v7 pitches, two 9v9 pitches, and two 11v11 youth pitches and adequate changing facilities.
- ◀ 24 sites (38 pitches) are overplayed by a total of 64 match equivalent sessions per week. All overplayed pitches are either standard or poor quality. In particular, Caldby Grange Grammar (standard), Newton Park (poor) and Wallacre Recreation Ground (standard) are most overplayed.
- ◀ At peak time, 47 pitches at which potential capacity is expressed are actually unavailable. As a consequence, they should not be classified as offering actual spare capacity. Of the remaining 73 pitches with potential spare capacity, an aggregate of 33.5 match equivalent sessions are available in the peak period per week.
- ◀ Overall in Wirral, there are insufficient adult pitches available to meet total current and future demand although there are small amounts of match sessions available in analysis areas 1, 2, 3 and 6. Shortfalls on adult pitches are primarily a result of significant overplay resulting from poor quality pitches or where adult pitches are over marked with youth/mini pitches.
- ◀ Overall in Wirral, there are insufficient youth pitches available to meet current and future demand although there are small amounts of spare capacity in analysis areas 1, 5 and 6. Shortfalls on youth pitches are generally a result of significant overplay resulting from poor quality pitches.
- ◀ Overall in Wirral, there are insufficient mini pitches available to meet current and future demand, although there are small amounts of match sessions available in three analysis areas (1, 3 and 5). Shortfalls on mini pitches are generally a result of some overplay and latent demand expressed by clubs for access to more pitches.

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Scenarios – grass

- ◀ **Improving pitch quality** to good (either through increased maintenance or drainage improvements) at overplayed sites will result in many pitches being able to accommodate their current demand and at least being played to capacity. Overplay would, however, still remain at Riverside Football Ground (1 session), Caldby Grange Grammar School (7.5 sessions), Newton Park (5.5 sessions), Ashville Sports & Social Club (1.5 sessions), Wallacre Recreation Ground (7 sessions) and Whithensfield Playing Field (1.5 sessions), suggesting that access to additional pitches is needed to address remaining shortfalls.
- ◀ Improving quality at all poor and standard quality sites (regardless of whether they are overplayed) will increase capacity throughout Wirral and create additional spare capacity, which can be used to accommodate demand from overplayed sites as well as displaced, latent and future demand.
- ◀ **Transferring play** - Consideration must also be given to the transfer of youth and mini teams currently using adult pitches onto dedicated youth and mini pitches. This will increase the capacity of adult pitches throughout the Borough and also enable some sites to be reconfigured in order to increase youth and mini pitch stock (and in turn increase youth and mini pitch capacity).
- ◀ **Summary** – if pitch quality, overplay and teams needing to use the wrong pitch type is addressed, and if access to existing pitches is maximised, there would be no requirement for new grass pitch provision (although pitch reconfiguration may be necessary).

Recommendations – grass

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of pitches (unless replacement provision is provided).
- ◀ Where pitches are overplayed or assessed as poor or standard quality, prioritise investment and improve maintenance regimes. Given drainage is a specific issue explore opportunities to invest in a verti-drain machine.
- ◀ Ensure all teams are playing on the correct pitch sizes and explore pitch reconfiguration where possible.
- ◀ Seek to accommodate displaced, latent and future demand at sites which are not operating at capacity or at sites which are not currently available for community use.
- ◀ Further explore the role of increasing access to 3G pitches to cater for grass pitch shortfalls and work towards creating more strategic sites to operate as central venues.
- ◀ Seek to improve access to existing changing provision and seek to improve changing provision at key sites and in particular ensure adequate provision of facilities to encourage development of women and girls football in Wirral.
- ◀ Ensure tenure of sites remains secure for clubs with lease agreements in place by extending those that are close to expiring.
- ◀ Where appropriate, develop partnerships and/or lease arrangements with large, sustainable, development-minded clubs to manage their own sites.
- ◀ Explore opportunities to accommodate growth expressed by Wallasey Girls League through creation of a Strategic Site operating as a central venue.

Summary – 3G pitches (all sports)

- ◀ There are three full size 3G pitches in Wirral. According to the FA Football Turf Pitch Register 2015/16, the only pitch that is certified is Wirral Tennis & Leisure Centre. The remaining two are Woodchurch High School Sports Complex and Pensby Sports Complex which failed the FA Test.
- ◀ A variety of additional, smaller AGPs are available throughout the Borough, which provide for the small sided game as well as some training.

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- ◀ A number of clubs report a lack of access to affordable floodlit training facilities, particularly AGPs with a 3G surface. A total of 48 clubs report demand for additional training facilities, 39 of which suggest additional 3G facilities are required.
- ◀ On the basis that there are 568 teams playing competitive home fixtures on pitches within Wirral, there is a recommended need for at least 14 (13.5 rounded up to 14) full size 3G pitches to enable every team a one hour training slot per week (estimating that one full size AGP can service 42 teams). There is a shortfall of 11 in Wirral as a whole.
- ◀ There is also a requirement of 14 full size 3G pitches should all competitive mini football be accommodated. Further to this, only one current 3G pitch is deemed suitable to be used for competitive football via its inclusion on the FA 3G Register.
- ◀ All three full size 3G pitches in Wirral are well used but spare capacity exists during the peak period, albeit during weekends and outside of the most popular slots (Monday to Thursday). There is, however, potential to increase the hours that some of the pitches are available during the peak period. Please note again though that only one pitch is currently suitable for game play which restricts weekend usage.
- ◀ There is a cross boundary relationship with the Ellesmere Port and Neston area which lies outside Wirral. Provision could service beyond the LA boundary and may be a factor for Area 1 (Bebington; Bromborough; Clatterbridge; Eastham) and Area 3 (Pensby and Thingwall; Heswall).

Scenarios – 3G pitches

Moving all mini match play onto 3G pitches - there are currently 108 5v5 teams which would require 13.5 (rounded to 14) AGPs and there are 114 7v7 teams which would require 9.5 (rounded to ten) AGPs. Based on the above programming and separate start times for 5v5 and 7v7 matches, the overall need is for 14 full size 3G pitches to accommodate all mini football demand within Wirral.

Recommendations – 3G pitches

- ◀ Increase provision of 3G pitches in Wirral to meet both training and competitive demand linked to creating more central venues and an aspiration for more sites.
- ◀ Encourage existing providers to undergo FA testing so that pitches can host competitive matches.
- ◀ Carry out consultation with leagues/clubs to gauge acceptance of moving competitive football to 3G pitches in the future.
- ◀ Improve pitch quality through resurfacing Pensby Sports Complex.
- ◀ Encourage providers to put a sinking fund into place to ensure long term sustainability of pitches.
- ◀ Further explore cross boundary opportunities with neighbouring Cheshire West & Chester Council to provide 3G pitches.
- ◀ Explore options for a World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in line with RFU investment plans.

4.2 Cricket pitches

Summary

- ◀ Wirral is a cricket hotbed with 15 clubs generating 55 senior and 63 junior teams notwithstanding the national issues which are affecting growth including a drop off at U15 age groups and a reducing amount of volunteer input.
- ◀ There are 39 cricket pitches in Wirral of which 25 are available for community use and used. Of the remaining pitches, ten are unavailable for community use and four are disused.

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- ◀ 24 are assessed as good quality and 11 are assessed as standard quality. Four are assessed as poor quality, all of which are disused.
- ◀ All responding clubs report that they have access to changing facilities. Ten clubs rate the quality of their changing facilities as good, one rates their quality as adequate and four rate their quality as poor.
- ◀ Five clubs express demand for new or improved training facilities.
- ◀ Team generation rates predict a growth of three junior teams, whilst future demand expressed by clubs amounts to four senior teams and nine junior teams.
- ◀ There is a vibrant Last Man Stands franchise in Wirral with all matches played at Wirral Cricket Club.
- ◀ There are three pitches that have actual spare capacity, equating to a total of 1.5 pitches in the peak period. All spare capacity exists in analysis area 1 (one pitch) and 6 (0.5 pitches).
- ◀ Overplay is evident at four sites by a total of 51 match equivalent sessions. All overplay exists in analysis areas 5 (28 matches), 6 (15 matches) and 7 (eight matches).
- ◀ Overall there is current spare capacity amounting to 0.5 cricket pitches, however, a shortfall exists in analysis areas 5 and 7.
- ◀ Taking into account future demand, there is an overall shortfall of 1.5 pitches with shortfalls evident in analysis areas 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Scenarios

- ◀ **Addressing overplay** – ensuring appropriate maintenance at overplayed sites will help to accommodate overplay as no clubs report that levels of overplay recorded are unmanageable.
- ◀ Alternatively, demand can be transferred away from the overplayed sites through access to pitches with actual spare capacity (including school sites), although this would have financial implications due to the need to rent a secondary venue.
- ◀ **Accommodating future demand** – according to CCCB it is not thought likely that future demand expressed through population growth will result in an increase in teams in Wirral, therefore any resulting additional teams can be accommodated on existing stock without the need for new pitches. If demand does increase, use of school provision should be explored to accommodate this.
- ◀ **Summary** – priority should be placed on sustaining existing provision and ensuring appropriate maintenance is in place to accommodate overplay expressed.

Recommendations – cricket

- ◀ Existing quantity of cricket pitches to be protected.
- ◀ Work with clubs and groundsmen to review quality on those pitches assessed as standard or poor quality and those pitches overplayed to ensure appropriate quality is achieved.
- ◀ Work with clubs to improve access to appropriate training facilities.
- ◀ Seek to improve changing facilities considered to be poor quality by users.
- ◀ Ensure tenure remains secure for all clubs.
- ◀ Ensure Last Man Stands can continue to thrive and grow as required.
- ◀ If future demand increases, explore opportunities to access school sites for community use.

4.3 Rugby union pitches

Summary

- ◀ Wirral is a priority area for rugby union with 11 clubs providing 120 competitive rugby union teams, 34 senior, 35 junior and 51 mini.
- ◀ In total, there are 65 grass rugby union pitches in Wirral located across 22 sites. Of the 47 pitches that are available for community use, three pitches (located at Hilbre High School Sports Centre, South Wirral High School and Wallacre Recreation Ground) are available for community use but not currently used.
- ◀ Five clubs rate the quality of their changing facilities as poor quality, three rate the quality as standard and three rate the quality as good.
- ◀ Tenure is considered secure across Wirral as seven clubs own their home ground, whilst the remaining four clubs lease their pitches. Port Sunlight RUFC, however, leases its site on a yearly basis only and instead requires a long term agreement (at least 25 years) to be able to attract inward investment to improve their facilities.
- ◀ Consultation confirms that all clubs have access to floodlit training facilities to enable organised training throughout winter months, however, this is restricted by the quantity and quality of grass pitches and existing floodlighting.
- ◀ Further to this, the quality of the floodlight varies greatly and in some cases is unfit for purpose and does not meet RFU regulatory requirements.
- ◀ Future demand expressed by clubs equates to an increase of two senior, eight junior and eight mini teams, whilst population growth forecasts an increase of five mini teams.
- ◀ Actual spare capacity amounting to 0.5 match equivalent sessions only exists at Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields.
- ◀ Overplay of 49.5 match equivalent sessions exists on 15 pitches across nine sites.
- ◀ There is an overall current shortfall of 50 match equivalent sessions across the pitches in Wirral and a future shortfall of 61.5 match equivalent sessions.

Scenarios

- ◀ **Improving pitch quality** – installing drainage systems at sites would improve pitch quality and therefore increase the carrying capacity of pitches. This is particularly required at pitches assessed as poor quality and pitches that are subject to overplay. Improving drainage at all sites available for community use to D3 (Pipe and Slit drained) would result in a further 41 match equivalent sessions of capacity on senior pitches and would alleviate overplay at all sites with the exception of Birkenhead Park, New Brighton RUFC, Hoylake RUFC, Caldy Sports Club and Anselmians RUFC.
- ◀ Improving maintenance regimes is also required. By improving maintenance at all sites available for community use to M2 (good), capacity on senior pitches would increase by 34 match equivalent sessions and would alleviate overplay at all sites with the exception of Birkenhead Park, New Brighton RUFC, Hoylake RUFC, Caldy Sports Club and Anselmians RUFC.
- ◀ Improving both drainage to D3 and maintenance to M2 at all sites available for community use would result in a further 61.5 match equivalent sessions and would alleviate overplay at all sites with the exception of Birkenhead Park, New Brighton RUFC, Hoylake RUFC and Caldy Sports Club.
- ◀ **Installing floodlighting** or providing additional floodlighting at sites would enable clubs to spread out their training demand across more pitches (or on separate land away from match pitches). This would create additional pitch capacity and alleviate overplay on pitches that are currently used for training.
- ◀ **Additional pitches** – the creation of additional pitches where the space allows at sites which remain overplayed would allow for the transfer of play. In particular, the creation of additional, dedicated mini pitches would enable the transfer of mini teams away from senior pitches. Alternatively, access to pitches at sites currently unavailable for community use should be explored.

- ◀ **World rugby compliant AGPs** – the RFU would support investment into AGP sites where grass rugby pitches are over capacity and where an AGP would support the growth of the game at the host site and for the local rugby partnership, including local clubs and educational establishments. To achieve this, the RFU is keen to work locally with partners such as the Council and the FA to explore sites of mutual interest.

Recommendations – rugby union

- ◀ Existing quantity of rugby pitches to be protected.
- ◀ Retain minimal spare capacity where possible in order to protect and improve quality.
- ◀ Seek to address overplay at sites through improving pitch quality via improved maintenance regimens and the installation of drainage systems.
- ◀ Work to reduce overplay as a result of training on match pitches through access to dedicated (or an increase in) floodlit pitches/training areas.
- ◀ Ensure all clubs have access to high quality floodlights that are in-line with RFU regulatory requirements.
- ◀ Explore opportunities to secure access to additional pitches in order to transfer play from overused pitches, in particular where mini teams are identified as playing on senior pitches.
- ◀ Seek to provide greater security of tenure to Port Sunlight RUFC through a long term lease arrangement (at least 25 years).
- ◀ Seek to improve changing facility quality and ensure all facilities are in line with RFU recommended standards.
- ◀ Consider the supply of World Rugby compliant AGPs to address levels of overplay, whether at club sites or shared sites.

4.4 Hockey pitches (AGPs)

Summary

- ◀ Wirral is a strong hockey area both with two large well established clubs and high school participation. England Hockey suggests there is demand for future participation to be doubled in Wirral with appropriate access to facilities secured to enable this.
- ◀ There are currently six full-sized sand-based artificial pitches in Wirral; four are assessed as standard quality, one as good quality and one as poor quality.
- ◀ In addition, there is a smaller sized pitch at The Oldershaw Academy which is suitable to accommodate some training demand as it is floodlit.
- ◀ Caldry Grange Grammar School, West Kirby Grammar School, Birkenhead High School Academy and Weatherhead High School are all coming to the end of their lifespan and require resurfacing within the next couple of years.
- ◀ Birkenhead School is unavailable for community use as the School wishes to protect the quality of the pitch, although it is currently being used by Neston South Wirral Hockey Club (imported demand). Weatherhead High School is also unavailable for community use and the run off area is considered too small to be able to host competitive hockey matches.
- ◀ The remaining pitches are available for community use, with hockey use recorded at The Oval Leisure Centre, Caldry Grange Grammar School and West Kirby Grammar School.
- ◀ The cost of hiring the Oval Leisure Centre is considered to be very high, at £140 compared to the regional average of £90 per hour and will inhibit future growth of Bebington HC.
- ◀ A lack of floodlighting restricts use of West Kirby Grammar School and Birkenhead High School Academy.

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- ◀ There are two hockey clubs in Wirral (Oxton Hockey Club and Bebington Hockey Club) consisting of 15 senior and ten junior teams. In addition, Neston South Wirral Hockey Club (from adjoining Cheshire West & Chester authority) also uses a pitch within the Borough at Birkenhead School.
- ◀ Future demand expressed by the two Wirral-based clubs equates to four senior and two junior teams.
- ◀ Bebington Hockey Club indicates that increased access is required at The Oval Leisure Centre (albeit cost is an issue), whilst Oxton Hockey Club reports likewise in relation to Caldys Grange Grammar School.
- ◀ There is significant use of the AGPs by football clubs for training purposes.

Scenarios

- ◀ **Accommodating current and future demand** – in order to address demand expressed for access to additional pitch space (Bebington Hockey Club and Oxton Hockey Club playing at The Oval Leisure Centre and Caldys Grange Grammar School respectively) maximising usage and altering match start times (therefore enabling more matches to be played on one day – EH recommends up to four) would be required.
- ◀ Alternatively, competitive demand could potentially be relocated to a pitch with spare capacity for hockey, although this is dependent on the willingness of clubs to travel greater distances than they currently do. Although potential capacity is identified at West Kirby Grammar School (ad hoc use by Oxton HC), EH does not consider this a current viable option as the pitch is not floodlit.
- ◀ Increasing the supply of 3G pitches in the Borough will also free up capacity on sand based pitches for hockey use as football use will transfer on to 3G pitches.

Recommendations – hockey

- ◀ Retain sand based AGPs currently used for hockey (The Oval Leisure Centre, Caldys Grange Grammar School, West Kirby Grammar School and Birkenhead School) and maximise use of existing provision to accommodate current and future hockey demand.
- ◀ Work with providers, particularly the Oval Leisure Centre, to ensure sustainability of future use for hockey in relation to cost issues.
- ◀ Work to identify funding opportunities to improve quality of pitches nearing the end of their lifespan through re-surfacing the pitches and as priority those with current community hockey use.
- ◀ Encourage providers to put sinking funds into place at all sites with a sand based AGP to ensure long term sustainability.

4.5 Tennis

Summary

- ◀ Wirral is a priority authority for the LTA and ranks within the top ten local authorities nationally.
- ◀ There are a total of 173 tennis courts (39 of which are floodlit) identified within the Borough, of which, 148 are categorised as being available for community use.
- ◀ Of provision that is available for community use, there are 84 club courts, 47 council courts and 17 educational courts.
- ◀ Of provision that is available for community use, 120 courts (81%) are assessed as good quality and 12 courts (8%) assessed as standard quality. The remaining 16 courts (11%), located at Torr Park (Site ID: 123), Ashton Park (Site ID: 5), Marine Park (Site ID: 44), Coronation Park (Site ID: 23) and Harrison Park (Site ID: 30) are assessed as poor quality.

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- ◀ There are 14 tennis clubs located in Wirral. Of clubs which responded to consultation (12), membership is made up of 990 senior members and 702 junior members.
- ◀ As no unmet or latent demand is identified, there are a sufficient number of courts that are available for community use to accommodate current demand.
- ◀ The LTA is working to improve accessibility to tennis courts in order to help deliver its strategy and is keen to encourage parks and clubs to make use of technology solutions, which includes online court bookings and fob access.

Recommendations – tennis

- ◀ Retain existing court provision and ensure sustainability of sites through improving quality and maximising use through delivery of LTA initiatives and encouraging providers to make use of technology solutions.
- ◀ Continue to support clubs to ensure current and future demand is being met.
- ◀ In the longer term and where opportunity exists introduce floodlights to sites in order to help maximise and sustain use of sites, throughout the year.
- ◀ Ensure adequate ancillary facilities are provided on key sites containing four courts or more.

4.6 Bowling greens

Summary

- ◀ There are 51 crown green bowling greens in Wirral across 35 sites. Of these, 34 greens are provided by the Council across 21 sites.
- ◀ Of the greens, 35 are assessed good quality, ten are assessed as standard quality and six are assessed as poor quality.
- ◀ Nine greens have recently been taken out of use by the Council as they were identified as having minimal/no use.
- ◀ There is strong participation in Wirral with 74 clubs accessing bowling greens. Within the consulted clubs (68) there are 2,189 members (1,382 males, 796 females and 11 juniors) with an average membership of 32 members per club.
- ◀ Of the 68 responding clubs, 67 confirm access to a clubhouse on site and 44% of these rate the quality as good, whilst 33% rate quality as standard and 23% rate quality as poor. Only Bromborough Recreation Bowling Club has no access to a clubhouse.
- ◀ The capacity analysis shows a total of 20 sites that are operating below capacity and 11 sites which are being overplayed (according to the British Crown Green Bowling Association suggested capacity of 60 members per green).
- ◀ Although a number of greens are said to be over capacity, a total of 41 clubs report plans to increase membership and suggest that any potential increases would be accommodated on home greens.
- ◀ As such, it is assumed that there is currently a sufficient number of bowling greens across the Borough to accommodate both current and future demand.

Scenarios

- ◀ **Amalgamation** – Given that 20 sites are potentially operating under capacity, there is scope for clubs to share greens whilst retaining their club status onto a lesser number of greens, especially those clubs with the lowest membership numbers that use greens operating significantly under capacity.
This particularly relates to clubs using greens maintained by the Council as fewer greens will free up resources for the Council to improve quality and sustainability of remaining greens through improved maintenance.

Recommendations – bowls

- ◀ Consider shared greens for clubs that are operating significantly under capacity onto a lesser number of greens whilst ensuring well used greens are retained.
- ◀ Explore opportunities to improve green quality at sites assessed as poor or standard.
- ◀ Support clubs expressing a need for changing facility improvements.
- ◀ Support all clubs to ensure demand continues to be met, particularly those clubs using greens that are operating above a membership of 60.

PART 5: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategic recommendations for the Strategy have been developed from the key issues cutting across all identified sports and categorised under each of the Strategy Aims. They reflect overarching and common areas to be addressed which apply across outdoor sports facilities and may not be specific to just one sport.

AIM 1

To protect the existing supply of outdoor sports facilities where it is needed for meeting current and future needs

Recommendations:

- a. Ensure, through the use of the PPS, that sports facilities are protected through the implementation of policy or replaced.
- b. Secure tenure and access to sites for high quality, development minded clubs, through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.
- c. Maximise community use of education facilities where there is a need to do so.

Recommendation a – Ensure, through the use of the PPS, that sports facilities are protected through the implementation of policy or replaced.

NPPF paragraph 74 states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- ◀ An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- ◀ The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- ◀ The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

The PPS Assessment shows that all currently used sites require protection and therefore cannot be deemed surplus to requirements because of shortfalls now and in the future.

Lapsed, disused, underused and poor quality sites should also be protected from development or replaced either by new facilities or by improvements to existing provision, where there is a requirement for playing field land to accommodate more pitches to meet the identified shortfalls.

Development Management - The PPS should also be used to help inform Development Management decisions that affect existing or new playing fields, pitches, tennis courts, bowling greens and ancillary facilities by assessing all applications on a case by case basis taking into account site specific factors. Sport England will in addition use the PPS to help assess planning applications against their Playing Fields Policy.

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New housing development - The PPS should be used to determine what impact any new housing development will have on the demand and capacity of existing sites in the area, and whether there is a need for local improvements to increase capacity or make new provision if required.

School Playing Fields - Local authorities wanting to dispose of school playing field land need consent under Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998. Consent is now also required for disposal of any land used by a school or academy under Schedule 1 to the Academies Act 2010 and Academies also need consent to any leases or disposals under their Funding Agreement.

It should be noted that consent under Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act does not necessarily mean subsequent planning approval will be granted. Therefore, any application for planning permission must still meet the requirements of the relevant land-use planning policy, in this case paragraph 74 of NPPF, Local Plan Policy and Sport England policy. Applicants are advised to engage Sport England before submitting applications. Robust implementation of the statutory obligation will ensure protection of school playing fields for use by pupils (and sometimes the community as a whole) to ensure receipt is ploughed back into sports education.

Sport England's playing field policy exception E1 only allows for development of lapsed or disused playing fields if a PPS shows a clear excess in the quantity of playing pitch provision at present and in the future across all playing pitch sports types and sizes.

Policy Exception E1:

'A carefully quantified and documented assessment of current and future needs has demonstrated to the satisfaction of Sport England that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport'.

Where the PPS cannot demonstrate the site, or part of a site, is clearly surplus to requirements then replacement of the site, or part of a site, will be required to comply with Sport England policy exception E4.

Policy Exception E4:

'The playing field or fields to be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new playing field site or sites:

- ◀ of equivalent or better quality and
- ◀ of equivalent or greater quantity;
- ◀ in a suitable location and
- ◀ subject to equivalent or better management arrangements.

Further to this, all playing fields should be protected or replaced up until the point where all satisfied demand has been met within the study area or each individual sports catchment areas within a sub area.

A number of disused/lapsed sites are included within the action plan together with a recommendation in relation to the need to bring the site back into use or mitigate the loss on a replacement site to address the shortfalls identified with the Assessment.

Recommendation b – Secure tenure and access to sites for high quality, development minded clubs through a range of solutions and partnership agreements

A number of school sites are being used in Wirral for competitive play, predominately for football and rugby union. In some cases use is not necessarily formalised and further work should be carried out to ensure an appropriate Community Use Agreement (CUA) is in place (including access to changing provision where required).

NGBs can often help to negotiate and engage with schools, particularly academies where the local authority may not have direct influence.

Sport England has also produced guidance, online resources and toolkits to help open up and retain school sites for community use and can be found at:

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/use-our-school/>

Local sports clubs should be supported by partners including the Council, NGBs or the County Sports Partnership (CSP) to achieve sustainability across a range of areas including management, membership, funding, facilities, volunteers and partnership working. For example, support club development and encourage clubs to develop evidence of business and sports development plans to generate an income through their facilities. All clubs could be encouraged to look at different management models such as registering as Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC)⁴. Clubs should also be encouraged to work with partners locally whether volunteer support agencies or linking with local businesses.

As well as improving the quality of well-used, local authority sites, there are a number of sites which have poor quality (or no) ancillary facilities. **The Council should further explore opportunities where security of tenure could be granted to the clubs playing on these sites (minimum 25 years as recommended by Sport England and NGBs) so the clubs are in a position to apply for external funding to improve the ancillary facilities.**

Further to this there could be examples where long term leases could be put into place for the continued use of a site. Each club should be required to meet service and/or strategic recommendations. However, an additional set of criteria should be considered, which takes into account the quality of the club, aligned to its long term development objectives and sustainability.

In the context of the Comprehensive Spending Review, which announced public spending cuts, it is increasingly important for the Council to work with voluntary sector organisations in order that they may be able to take greater levels of ownership and support the wider development and maintenance of facilities.

To facilitate this, the Council should support and enable clubs to generate sufficient funds to allow this.

⁴ <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/cascbenefits>

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Recommended criteria for lease of sport sites to clubs/organisations

Club	Site
<p>Clubs should have Clubmark/FA Charter Standard accreditation award.</p> <p>Clubs commit to meeting demonstrable local demand and show pro-active commitment to developing school-club links.</p> <p>Clubs are sustainable, both in a financial sense and via their internal management structures in relation to recruitment and retention policy for both players and volunteers.</p> <p>Ideally, clubs should have already identified (and received an agreement in principle) any match funding required for initial capital investment identified.</p> <p>Clubs have processes in place to ensure capacity to maintain sites to the existing, or better, standards.</p>	<p>Sites should be those identified as 'Club Sites' (recommendation d) for new clubs (i.e. not those with a Borough wide significance) but which offer development potential. For established clubs which have proven success in terms of self-management 'Key Centres' are also appropriate.</p> <p>As a priority, sites should acquire capital investment to improve (which can be attributed to the presence of a Clubmark/Charter Standard club).</p> <p>Sites should be leased with the intention that investment can be sourced to contribute towards improvement of the site.</p> <p>Ideally an NGB/Council representative should sit on a management committee for each site leased to a club.</p>

The Council can further recognise the value of NGB club accreditation by adopting a policy of prioritising the clubs that are to have access to these better quality facilities. This may be achieved by inviting clubs to apply for season long leases on a particular site as an initial trial.

The Council should establish a series of core outcomes to derive from clubs taking on a lease arrangement to ensure that the most appropriate clubs are assigned to sites. As an example outcomes may include:

- ◀ Increasing participation.
- ◀ Supporting the development of coaches and volunteers.
- ◀ Commitment to quality standards.
- ◀ Improvements (where required) to facilities, or as a minimum retaining existing standards.

In addition, clubs should be made fully aware of the associated responsibilities/liabilities when considering leases of multi-use public playing fields.

Community asset transfer

Community asset transfer in Wirral is fundamentally about giving local people and community groups greater control in the future of their area and their community.

If local groups own or manage community buildings – such as community centres or village halls – it can help foster a sense of belonging and bring together people from different backgrounds. Community ownership of buildings can also play a part in raising local people's aspirations, in enhancing the local environment and in alleviating poverty. The Council is committed to working constructively with community groups and local people to ensure that community asset transfer in Wirral is successful.

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The Council's community asset transfer policy:

- ◀ describes how the Council will work with the community to support the successful transfer of Council-owned land and buildings to local people, for the benefit of the community.
- ◀ explains what is meant by the term community asset transfer; explains the background to how the concept has developed; and sets out how asset transfer will be achieved.
- ◀ The policy also provides a clear framework to support the transfer of land and buildings from the Council to local people. Usually this will mean transfer to a formally organised group of local people (a 'community based group').

Community asset transfer is one of the mechanisms the Council can use to support the delivery of the Wirral Plan. The policy forms part of the Council's wider policy framework and should also be read in conjunction with the Council's statutory Local Plan, which guides statutory land use planning within the Borough; the Asset Management Plan, which explains how the Council uses and manages its land and buildings; and the Disposals Policy, which explains the Council's approach to the disposal of assets.

The Council should continue to work towards adopting a policy which supports community management and ownership of assets to local clubs, community groups and trusts, to present sports clubs and national governing bodies with opportunities to take ownership of their own facilities. It may also provide non-asset owning sports clubs with their first chance to take on a building.

The Sport England Community Sport Asset Transfer Toolkit is a bespoke, interactive web based tool that provides a step by step guide through each stage of the asset transfer process: <http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/asset-transfer/>

Recommendation c – Maximise community use of education sites where there is a need to do so

It is not uncommon for school pitch stock not to be fully maximised for community use. Even on established community use sites, access to grass pitches for community use is limited

In order to maximise community use of educational facilities it is recommended that a more coherent, structured relationship is established with individual schools. The ability to access good facilities within the local community is vital to any sports organisation, yet many clubs struggle to find good quality places to play and train. In Wirral pricing policies at facilities can be a barrier to access at some of the education sites but physical access and resistance from schools, especially academies, to open up provision is also an issue.

A large number of sporting facilities are located on education sites and making these available to sports clubs can offer significant benefits to both the school/college and the local clubs. The Council and other key partners must work with schools and colleges to develop an understanding of the issues that restrict or affect community access. Support should be provided, where appropriate, to address underlying problems. Consideration should be given to a centralised booking system for community use of schools and colleges to minimise administration and make access easier for the users.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

In some instances grass pitches are unavailable for community use due to poor quality and therefore remedial works will be required before community use can be established.

Sport England has also produced guidance, online resources and toolkits to help open up and retain school sites for community use and can be found at:

Community use: <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and-guidance/community-use-agreements/>

Use our schools toolkit: <http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/use-our-school/>

Education sites with no current community use include:

- ◀ Bebington High Sports College grass pitches (although there is community use of the 3G pitch)
- ◀ Kingsmead School
- ◀ Ridgeway High School
- ◀ St Anselms College Playing Fields
- ◀ The Oldershaw School and Business and Enterprise College
- ◀ St John Plessington Catholic College
- ◀ Wirral Grammar School for Boys
- ◀ Woodchurch High School Sports Complex (Sport for The Community) grass pitches (although there is a community use agreement in place for the use of the 3G pitch)
- ◀ Birkenhead School (McAllester Memorial Field)
- ◀ Weatherhead High School

Although there are a growing number of academies and college sites in WBC, which the Council has no control over, it is still important to understand the significance of such sites and attempt to work with the schools where there are opportunities for community use.

Further to this, Wirral has a number of PFI schools in place which are all technically available for community use, however, many clubs are discouraged to use these pitches/facilities due to expensive hire charges compared to other local provision.

Each relevant NGB has a role to play in supporting the Council to deliver the strategy and engaging with schools where necessary to address shortfalls in provision, particularly for football pitches.

AIM 2

To enhance outdoor sports facilities, including playing pitches and ancillary facilities through improving quality and management of sites

Recommendation:

- d. Improve quality
- e. Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) for the management and improvement of sites.
- f. Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding

Recommendation d – Improve quality

There are a number of ways in which it is possible to increase pitch quality, including for example, addressing overplay and improving maintenance. These are explored in more detail below. Further to this, Appendix Two sets out additional funding information which includes details of the current opportunities, likely funding requirements and indicative project costs.

Addressing quality issues

The capacity of provision to regularly provide for competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity affects the playing experience and people's enjoyment of a sport. In extreme circumstances it can result in facilities being unable to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off peak times.

All provision has been assessed using non-technical assessments (using the templates provided within the PPS Guidance and as determined by NGBs) and categorised as either, good, standard or poor.

Good quality refers to pitches that have a good maintenance regime coupled with good grass cover, an even surface, are free from vandalism, litter etc. In terms of ancillary facilities, good quality refers to access for disabled people, sufficient provision for referees, juniors/women/girls and appropriate provision of showers, toilets and car parking. For rugby union, a good pitch is also pipe and/or slit drained.

Standard quality refers to pitches that have an adequate maintenance regime coupled with adequate grass cover, minimal signs of wear and tear, goalposts may be secure but in need of minor repair. In terms of ancillary facilities, standard quality refers to adequately sized changing rooms, storage provision and provision of toilets. For rugby union, drainage is natural and adequate.

Poor quality refers to pitches that have poor levels of maintenance coupled with inadequate grass cover, uneven surface and damage. In terms of ancillary facilities, poor quality refers to inappropriate size of changing rooms, no showers, no running water and old dated interior. For rugby union, drainage is natural and inadequate.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Where provision is assessed as standard or poor quality and/or overplayed, **it is recommended that maintenance regimes are reviewed in the first instance to identify any deficiencies and to ensure they are of an appropriate standard to sustain/improve quality.**

Improving maintenance

Standard or poor playing surface quality may not just be a result of poor drainage. In some instances, ensuring there is an appropriate maintenance for the level/standard of play can help to improve quality and therefore increase capacity. Each NGB can provide assistance with reviewing maintenance regimes.

For example, for pitch sports, the FA, ECB and RFL in partnership have recently introduced a Pitch Advisor Scheme and have been working in partnership with Institute of Groundmanship (IOG) to develop a Grass Pitch Maintenance service that can be utilised by grassroots football clubs with the simple aim of improving the quality of grass pitches. The key principles behind the service are to provide football clubs with advice/practical solutions on a number of areas, with the simple aim of improving the club's playing surface.

Consultation with the Council's Parks and Countryside Service confirmed that all Council managed football pitches are maintained on a regular basis. A generic maintenance schedule is summarised below (although certain pitches may receive additional maintenance depending on condition):

- ◀ Soil and Seeded - Yes, as required at the end of season(goalmouths etc)
- ◀ Aerated - Occasionally
- ◀ Sand dressed – Not part of the current routine maintenance due to cost.
- ◀ Fertilised – Pitches fertilised every two years
- ◀ Weed killed – Pitches selective weed killed every two years

All of the maintenance elements listed above form part of the FA's non-technical site assessment form. It is recommended that the Council works with users and Cheshire FA to fully determine the most appropriate improvements on a site by site basis and finding solutions particularly as drainage has repeatedly been raised as an issue at some sites.

Addressing overplay

Further to improving maintenance, it is also necessary to ensure that playing surfaces are not regularly overplayed beyond their recommended weekly carrying capacity. This is determined by assessing the quality of the playing surface (via a non-technical site assessment) and allocating a weekly match limit to each pitch or facility. Each NGB recommends a number of matches that a good quality playing surface should take:

Sport	Pitch type	No. of matches		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Sport	Pitch type	No. of matches		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Rugby union*	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	N/A	N/A
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season		

* Please note that the RFU believes that it is more appropriate to base the calculation of pitch capacity upon an assessment of the drainage system and maintenance programme afforded to a site.

Maintaining high pitch quality is the most important aspect of cricket. If the wicket is poor, it can affect the quality of the game and can, in some instances, become dangerous. The ECB recommends full technical assessments of wickets and pitches available through a Performance Quality Standard Assessment (PQS). The PQS assesses a cricket square to ascertain whether the pitch meets the Performance Quality Standards that are benchmarked by the Institute of Groundsmanship. PQS assessments are also available for other sports.

Recommendation e – Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) for the management and improvement of sites

The Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of playing surfaces and associated facilities, to allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach. Part 6 of the Action Plan recommends a proposed hierarchy.

Recommendation f – Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding

Partners, led by the Council, should ensure that appropriate funding secured for improved sports provision is directed to areas in most need, underpinned by a robust strategy for improvement in playing pitch facilities.

In order to address the community's needs, to target priority areas and to reduce duplication of provision, there should be a coordinated approach to strategic investment. In delivering this recommendation the Council should maintain a regular dialogue with local partners and through the Playing Pitch Steering Group.

Although investment in new provision will not always be made by the Council directly, it is important that the Council seeks to direct and lead a strategic and co-ordinated approach to all facility development by education bodies, NGBs, sports clubs and the commercial sector to address community needs whilst avoiding duplication of provision.

Appendix Two sets out additional funding information which includes details of the current opportunities, likely funding requirements and indicative project costs.

Sport and physical activity can have a profound effect on peoples' lives, and can play a crucial role in improving community cohesion, educational attainment and self-confidence. As one of sport's greatest contributions is its positive impact on public health, it will be important to lever in additional supporting investment from other sectors related to health and wellbeing.

AIM 3

To **provide** new playing pitches including other outdoor sports facilities such as greens and courts where there is current or future demand to do so

Recommendations:

- g. Rectify quantitative shortfalls in provision.
- h. Identify opportunities to add to the overall stock to accommodate both current and future demand.

Recommendation g - Rectify quantitative shortfalls in provision

The Council and its partners should work to rectify identified inadequacies and meet identified shortfalls as outlined in the Assessment Report and the sport by sport specific recommendations.

It is important that the current levels of sports facility provision are protected, maintained and enhanced to secure provision now and in the future. For most sports the future demand for provision identified in Wirral can be overcome through maximising use of existing pitches, courts and greens through a combination of:

- ◀ Improving quality in order to improve the capacity of pitches, courts and greens to accommodate more matches.
- ◀ The re-designation of pitches, courts and greens for which there is an oversupply.
- ◀ Securing long term community use at school sites.
- ◀ Working with commercial and private providers to increase usage.

As an example, there may be an opportunity to use some senior football pitches to provide senior, junior or mini football pitches (through different line markings/coning areas of the pitch). However, the re-designation of adult football pitches that are not currently used may lead to a deficiency of adult football pitches in the medium to longer term as younger players move up the ages. It is likely that for some sports, particularly football, that the provision of new pitches and facilities will be required in the future to support the predicted future demand.

Unmet demand, changes in sport participation and trends, and proposed housing growth should be recognised and factored into future facility planning. Assuming an increase in participation and housing growth occurs, it will impact on the future need for certain types of sports facilities. Sports development work also approximates unmet demand which cannot currently be quantified (i.e., it is not being suppressed by a lack of facilities) but is likely to occur. The following table highlights the main development trends in each sport and their likely impact on facilities. However, it is important to note that these may be subject to change.

Furthermore, retaining some spare capacity allows some pitches to be rested to protect overall pitch quality in the long term. Therefore, whilst in some instances it may be appropriate to re-designate a senior pitch where there is low demand identified a holistic approach should be taken to re-designation for the reasons cited. The site-by-site action planning will seek to provide further clarification on where re-designation is suitable.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Likely future sport-by-sport demand trends

Sport	Future development trend	Strategy impact
Football	As a result of the FA Youth Development Review pitch demands changed. The main change following the youth review which was implemented from the 2013/14 season saw U11 and U12 teams move to a smaller more appropriate sized 9v9 pitch. It also saw the inclusion of 5v5 pitches for U7s and U8s.	The impact of FA Youth Development Review was that there was increased demand for pitches 9v9 and 5v5 pitches and a reduction in the demand for full size pitches. Work with clubs to ensure teams are accessing the correct size pitches and identify the need to reconfigure pitches.
	Demand for senior football is likely to be sustained based on current trends and the move to small sided football. County FA focus to maintain growth of youth football through to adults.	Sustain current stock but consideration given to reconfigure pitches if required.
Cricket	Women's and girls' cricket is a national priority and there is a target to establish two girls' and one women's team in every local authority over the next five years. Disability cricket is established in Wirral through Caldys CC.	Support clubs to ensure access to segregated changing and toilet provision and access to good quality cricket pitches to support growth.
Rugby union	The RFU works towards achieving the stated outcomes of the Rugby Football Union National Facilities Strategy (2013-2017), the Rugby Football Union Women and Girls Strategy and the Rugby Football Union Male XV-a-side Strategy. Locally, the RFU wants to ensure access to pitches in Wirral that satisfies existing demand and predicted growth, particularly following the Rugby World Cup (2015). It also aims to protect and improve pitch quality, as well as ancillary facilities including changing rooms and floodlights.	Clubs are likely to field more teams in the future. It is important, therefore, to work with the clubs to maintain the current pitch stock, support facility development where appropriate and increase the number of floodlit pitches where necessary.
AGPs	Demand for 3G pitches for competitive football will increase. It is likely that future demand for the use of 3G pitches to service competitive football, particularly mini and youth will result in some reduced demand for grass pitches. Provision of 3G pitches which are World Rugby compliant will help to reduce overplay as a result of training on rugby pitches.	Ensure that access to new AGP provision across the Borough is maximised and that community use agreements are in place. Utilise Sport England/NGB guidance on choosing the correct surface: https://www.sportengland.org/media/4275/selecting-the-right-artificial-surface-rev2-2010.pdf

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Sport	Future development trend	Strategy impact
Hockey	The focus in Wirral is to grow participation at the two clubs and to improve pitch quality.	Retain pitches currently used for hockey and resurface as sand-based AGPs if required. In the longer term, consideration for a double pitch site should be explored.
Tennis	With the delivery of new LTA initiatives such as Tennis Tuesdays, it is likely that informal participation will increase in Wirral.	The key aim is to ensure sustainability of park sites through improved quality and implementing online booking systems and gated access.
Bowls	No expected increase in memberships.	Likely that future increase could be accommodated on existing greens.

Recommendation h - Identify opportunities to add to the overall stock to accommodate both current and future demand

The Council should use, and regularly update, the Action Plan within this Strategy to guide improvements to its own facilities whilst recognising the need to support partners. The Action Plan lists improvements to be made to each site focused upon both qualitative and quantitative improvements as appropriate for each area.

New housing development - The PPS should be used to determine what impact any new housing development will have on the demand and capacity of existing sites in the area, and whether there is a need for local improvements to increase capacity or make new provision if required.

The Council should use Sport England's Playing Pitch Demand Calculator as a tool for determining developer contributions linking to sites within the locality. Please contact Sport England for access to the calculator <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/use-our-school/contact-us/>

PART 6: ACTION PLAN

Introduction

This site-by-site Action Plan seeks to address key issues identified in the accompanying Assessment Report. It provides recommendations based on current levels of usage, quality and future demand, as well as the potential of each site for enhancement.

It should be reviewed in the light of staff and financial resources in order to prioritise support for strategically significant provision and provision that other providers are less likely or unable to make. Recommendation e below explains the hierarchy of priorities on the list. It is imperative that additional action plans for priority projects should be developed through the later implementation of the strategy and the Council should make it a high priority to work with NGBs and other partners to comprise a priority list of actions based on local priorities, NGB priorities and available funding.

Recommendation e - Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) to the management and improvement of sites

To allow for facility developments to be prioritised and programmed within a phased approach a tiered model for the improvement of playing surfaces and associated facilities is essential.

The identification of key sites is based on their strategic importance in a Borough-wide context, for example, where they accommodate the majority of demand or the recommended action has the greatest impact on addressing shortfalls identified either on a sport by sport basis or across the Borough as a whole.

Recommended tiered site criteria

Strategic sites	Key centres	Local sites
Strategically located. Priority sites for NGB.	Strategically located within the analysis area.	Primarily services the local community. Likely to include education sites.
Accommodates three or more good quality grass pitches, courts and greens. Including provision of at least one AGP.	Accommodates two or more good quality grass pitches and multiple courts and greens.	Accommodates more than one pitch or sports facility.
Single or multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision.
Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime either by the club or in house maintenance contract.
Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches, courts and greens.	Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches, courts and greens.	Appropriate access changing to accommodate both senior and junior concurrently (if required).

Strategic sites are of Borough wide importance where users are willing to travel to access the range and quality of facilities offered and are likely to be multi sport. These have been identified on the basis of high impact on addressing a wider range of the issues identified in the Assessment Report.

The financial, social and sporting benefits which can be achieved through development of strategic sites are significant.

Where development of Strategic Sites includes provision of 3G pitches for football it is recommended that further modelling/feasibility work is carried out to ensure sustainability of new 3G pitches to accommodate competitive fixtures. Consultation should also be carried out with leagues/clubs to gauge acceptance/buy in of moving competitive play to 3G pitches in the future.

Although **Key centres** are more community focused, some are still likely to draw demand from within a wider analysis area (or slightly wider). There may also be more of a focus on a specific sport, for example, by providing a dedicated site.

Financial investment will be necessary to improve the ancillary facilities at both Strategic sites and Key Centres to complement the sports facilities in terms of access, flexibility (i.e. single-sex changing if necessary), quality and to ensure that they meet the rules and regulations of local competitions.

Local sites will generally be one or two facility sites, which may be Council owned and hired to clubs for a season or are sites which have been leased on a long-term basis. They are also likely to be private club sites serving one particular sport.

As the level of priority attached to local sites for Council-generated investment may be relatively low, consideration should be given, on a site-by-site basis, to the feasibility of a club taking a long-term lease on the site (if not already present), in order to allow external funding to be sought.

It is possible that sites could be included in this tier which are not currently hired or leased to a club, but have the potential to be leased to a suitable club. NGBs would expect the facility to be transferred in an adequate condition that the club can maintain. In the longer term, the Club should be in a position to source external funding to improve/extend the facilities.

Management and development

The following issues should be considered when undertaking sports related site development or enhancement:

- ◀ Financial viability.
- ◀ Security of tenure.
- ◀ Ability to obtain planning permission for any necessary improvements.
- ◀ Adequacy of existing finances to maintain the site.
- ◀ Business Plan/Masterplan – including financial package for creation of new provision where need has been identified.
- ◀ Analysis of the possibility of shared site management opportunities.
- ◀ The availability of opportunities to lease sites to external organisations.
- ◀ Options to assist community groups to gain funding to enhance existing provision.
- ◀ Negotiation with landowners to increase access to private Strategic sites.
- ◀ Availability of funding from NGBs for Strategic site development.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- ◀ Impact on all sports that use a site regardless of the sport that is the subject of enhancement.

Action plan columns

Partners

The column indicating Partners refers to the main organisation that the Council will liaise with in helping to deliver the actions. The next stage in the development of the action plan will be to agree a Lead Partner to help deliver the actions.

Site hierarchy tier and priority level

Although Strategic Sites are mostly likely to have a **high** priority level as they have Borough wide importance, high priority sites have also been identified on the basis of the impact that the site could have on addressing the key issues identified in the Assessment Report and some Key Centres are also identified as having a high priority level. It is these projects/sites which should generally be addressed within the short term (1-2 years).

It is recommended that as the Steering Group reviews and updates the action plan that medium and low priority sites are then identified as the next level of sites for attention. As a guide it is recommended that:

Key centres will generally be a **medium** priority, identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the issues for each analysis area identified in the Assessment Report.

Low priority sites are club or education sites with a specific local importance, identified on a site by site basis in line with any site-specific issues identified in the Assessment Report

Costs

The strategic actions have also been ranked as low, medium or high based on cost. The brackets in which these sit are:

(L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above. These are based on Sport England's estimated facility costs which can be found at <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/>

Timescales

The action plan has been created to be delivered over a ten year period. The information within the Assessment Report, Strategy and Action Plan will require updating as changes to individual sites occur. The timescales relate to delivery times and are not priority based.

Timescales: (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years).

Aim

Each action seeks to meet at least one of the three aims of the Strategy; **Enhance, Provide, Protect**.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ANALYSIS AREA 1 (BEBINGTON; BROMBOROUGH; CLATTERBRIDGE; AND EASTHAM)

Football

Summary of current and future demand for grass football

Pitch type	Demand (match sessions per week)					
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Latent demand	Total (current)	Future demand	Total (future)
Adult	10.5	5.5	-	5	2	3
Youth	2	-	1	1	9	8
Mini	3	-	0.5	2.5	10	7.5

- ◀ Spare capacity exists overall on adult pitches both now and in the future, although overplay is evident at Higher Bebington Recreation Ground, Mayfields Playing Fields, New Ferry Park and Riverside Football Ground.
- ◀ Spare capacity exists currently on youth and mini pitches, however, future demand results in shortfalls across both pitch types.
- ◀ There is demand for four full size 3G pitches to accommodate all training demand, of which, there are currently none.

Recommendations

- ◀ Retain small amounts of spare capacity to help protect pitch quality.
- ◀ Improve the quality of existing pitches to alleviate overplay and reduce future shortfalls.
- ◀ Seek transfer of teams from overplayed sites to sites with actual spare capacity.
- ◀ Transfer youth 11v11 teams from adult pitches to youth 11v11 pitches. Use resultant spare capacity on adult pitches to create and build future youth pitch capacity.
- ◀ Seek opportunities to increase 3G pitch provision as a high priority given the deficit identified.

Cricket

- ◀ There are ten cricket pitches within the Analysis Area, eight of which are available for community use.
- ◀ Actual spare capacity equating to one pitch exists at Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields.
- ◀ There is overall spare capacity equating to 0.5 pitches when also considering future demand.
- ◀ Wirral Cricket Club is used for Last Man Stands.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect current stock of pitches.
- ◀ Review quality issues.
- ◀ Retain some spare capacity in order to protect and improve wicket quality.
- ◀ Extend lease agreements for Wirral CC and Port Sunlight CC.
- ◀ Ensure long term sustainability of Last Man Stands.
- ◀ Improve/increase training provision.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Rugby union

- ◀ There are 11 senior and five mini pitches within the Analysis Area.
- ◀ All pitches are assessed as poor or standard quality, with the exception of the senior pitches at Wirral RUFC.
- ◀ Actual spare capacity amounting to 1.5 match equivalent sessions is identified at Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields.
- ◀ Overplay amounting to 7.5 match equivalent sessions is evident at Anselmians RUFC.
- ◀ There is an overall shortfall of 8 match equivalents currently and 10.5 match equivalents when accounting for future demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing pitch supply.
- ◀ Explore potential use of currently unavailable pitches within education sites to increase capacity.
- ◀ Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay through installation of drainage systems and/or improved maintenance regimes.
- ◀ Seek to install floodlights or provide additional floodlighting at overplayed sites in order to spread out training demand.
- ◀ Explore creation of new pitches where the space allows or consider the need for a World Rugby compliant AGP.
- ◀ Provide Port Sunlight RUFC with a long term lease at Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields.
- ◀ Improve changing facilities at Anselmians RUFC and Wirral RUFC.

Hockey

- ◀ There is one full sized sand based AGP within the Analysis Area, located at The Oval Leisure Centre.
- ◀ The pitch was refurbished in 2010 and is assessed as standard quality.
- ◀ The pitch is used by Bebington HC and is considered to be running at capacity.
- ◀ The Club reports that the costs of hiring the pitch are restrictive, especially in a regional context.

Recommendations

- ◀ Seek resolution to Bebington HC's need for greater access to pitches.
- ◀ Encourage providers to put a sinking fund in place to ensure long term sustainability.

Tennis

- ◀ There are 30 courts within the Analysis Area available for community use and eight courts unavailable for community use.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand. However, court quality and ancillary provision could be improved at Port Sunlight LTC.

Recommendations

- ◀ Identify funding options to improve court quality and ancillary provision at Port Sunlight LTC.
- ◀ Maximise use of Council sites through delivery of LTA initiatives.

Bowls

- ◀ There are six greens within the Analysis Area, all of which are assessed as good or standard quality.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand, with no clubs expressing a need for an additional green.

Recommendations

- ◀ Sustain/improve green quality.

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
32	Higher Bebington Recreation Ground	Tennis	Local Authority	Three macadam good quality courts, not floodlit. Publicly available. LTA currently implementing an online booking system.	Continue to sustain quality and maximise use.	Council LTA	Key Centre (M)	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		One good quality green which is not floodlit. Used by Bebington Park Bowling Club, Higher Bebington Ladies Bowling Club and Higher Bebington Legion.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality is sustained.	Council		L	L	
		Football		One standard quality adult pitch and one standard quality mini (7v7) pitch. The adult pitch is overplayed by 0.5 sessions a week, whereas the mini pitch has a spare capacity of three sessions a week. Used by Higher Bebington Junior FC and Shore Villa FC.	Ensure appropriate maintenance regimes to reduce overplay and seek to improve quality. Improving the quality of the pitches will accommodate more sessions per week and alleviate the overplay.	Council FA		M	L	
114	Port Sunlight Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Eight macadam considered standard quality courts for club use, four courts are floodlit. Poor quality ancillary facilities.	Consider funding options for investment in court quality and ancillary provision in order for the Club to provide a better community offer. Maximise use through gate access for casual community use.	Club LTA	Local Site (M)	S	M	Protect Provide
67	South Wirral High School	Tennis	Education	Three macadam hard courts which are of poor quality. Courts are not available for community use.	Retain for school usage and improve quality as required.	Education	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
		Cricket		Two poor condition non turf wickets which are disused. Not available for community use.	Retain for school usage and improve quality as required.					
		Rugby union		One unused poor quality (M0/D0) senior pitch which is not floodlit. Available for community use but currently not used.	Retain for school usage and improve quality as required.					
73	The Oval Leisure Centre	Tennis	Local Authority	Six macadam good quality courts which are all floodlit. Investment made in 2015. Publicly available but also club use.	Continue to sustain quality and maximise use. Key site for delivery of LTA initiatives.	Council	Strategic Site (H)	M	H	Protect Provide Enhance
		Cricket		One standard quality pitch. No actual spare capacity identified in the peak period for senior cricket. Used by Merseyside Cricket & Cultural Club and Wallasey CC. Poor quality changing facilities and users report demand for non-turf practice nets.	Retain spare capacity and improve quality to ensure standard of quality is retained. Improve the changing facilities which are used by the clubs. Investigate potential for install non turf wicket if space is available.	Council CCCB		M	M	
		Football		Six adult standard quality pitches which have spare capacity of seven match equivalent sessions a week. Three youth (9v9) standard quality pitches which have spare capacity of 3.5 sessions a week. One mini (7v7) standard quality pitch with no peak time capacity. Used by multiple teams including Young Lions FC.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain/improve quality where possible. In the longer term consider the improvement/development of the site in order to fully achieve strategic site status. Explore the feasibility of locating a 3G pitch on site (in addition to retaining the sand AGP for hockey).	Council FA		S	M	
		AGP (Hockey)		One standard quality full sized sand based AGP which is floodlit. Available for community use but no spare capacity. Used by Bebington HC but also football usage. High cost is inhibiting increased use of the site for hockey particularly for training.	Protect current sand based AGP for hockey and work to resolve costs issues in order to sustain and increase hockey use. In the longer term ensure quality is improved.	Council EH		S	M-H	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
122	Thornton Hough Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Two macadam good quality courts not floodlit and leased from Wirral Council to Thornton Hough Tennis Club. No reports of additional demand or issues regarding quality.	Sustain quality and ensure security of tenure is secured for continued future use.	Council	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect
123	Torr Park	Tennis	Local Authority	Two macadam/ tarmac poor quality courts not floodlit. Publicly available.	Ensure future sustainability and seek options to improve quality and increase use linked to delivery of LTA initiatives.	Council LTA	Local Site (M)	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Cricket		One standard quality grass pitch which is now likely to have some spare capacity as Eastham CC have resigned from the league and no longer exist although the ground is still in use.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to retain quality and sustained play. Maintain a strong lease between the Council and the Club.	Council CCCB		M	M	
		Bowls		One bowling green recently taken out of use due to minimal/no use.	No action required.	Council		-	-	
94	Wirral Grammar School for Girls	Tennis	Education (In house)	Five macadam good quality courts which are not floodlit and available for community use. Five macadam poor quality courts which are not floodlit and available for community use (Used predominantly by netball).	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality. Improve and sustain quality of poor courts.	Education	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect
43	Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields	Cricket	Council	Three good quality pitches used by Port Sunlight CC and Bromborough CC. No actual spare capacity identified during the peak period for senior cricket Club reports changing facilities at the site are poor.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to retain quality. Investigate potential for investment to refurbish the changing facilities.	Council Club CCCB	Strategic Site (H)	S	H	Protect Enhance Provide
		Rugby union		Two standard senior pitches (M1/D1) which are not floodlit. Both pitches have spare capacity of 1.5 match sessions. Used by Port Sunlight RUFC. Club leases the clubhouse facility on a rolling five-year lease which is due to expire (shared use with cricket).	Retain spare capacity for potential growth and explore options to improve quality. As a high priority seek to secure a long term lease (at least 25 years) on these pitches in order to attract inward investment. Further to this, also explore options for a lease on the clubhouse to allow clubs jointly to apply for funding to extend/improve the clubhouse as a site solution.	Council Club RFU		M	M	
		Football		Six adult standard quality pitches with a spare capacity of 1.5 sessions a week. Other playing formats use cones to outline appropriate size pitches.	Retain spare capacity to help improve quality and to accommodate additional mini play on site. Potential site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme. In the longer term, consider the feasibility of potential for 3G pitch provision. As this site is located in the Green Belt associated planning constraints apply.	Council FA		S	M-H	
156	Heygarth Primary School	Football	Education	One mini (7v7) standard quality pitch with a spare capacity of two sessions per week. Two mini (5V5) standard quality pitches with a spare capacity of five sessions per week. Used by Allport Hawks JFC. No changing provision available on site.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied to improve the quality. Discuss with the school if changing facilities can be used by the Club.	Education	Local Site (M)	L	L	Protect Enhance
93	Wirral Grammar School for Boys	Cricket	Education	Two good quality grass wickets not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	Education	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect Provide
		Rugby union		Six poor (M1/ D0) quality senior pitches which are not floodlit and not available for community use.	Retain for school use however seek to upgrade the quality of pitches for school usage.				M	Protect Enhance

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
17	Bromborough Recreation Ground	Bowls	Local Authority	One good quality green which is not floodlit and overplayed. No pavilion available.	Ensure maintenance is able to sustain levels of overplay and work to establish access to changing provision/pavilion.	Council Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
95/92	Wirral RUFC	Rugby union	Club	Wirral RUFC - two senior standard (M1/D2) quality pitches which are not floodlit. The pitches have spare capacity of 2 match sessions. Clubhouse, which is owned by the Club, is in need of refurbishment. Main ground is on a 99 year lease from Leverhulme Estates.	In the short term retain spare capacity and in the longer term improve pitch quality. Ensure access to floodlit training facilities. Support the Club to explore funding opportunities to improve clubhouse facilities.	Club RFU Council	Key Centre (M)	L	M	Protect Enhance
		Football		One adult standard quality pitch with a spare capacity of 1.5 sessions a week. Pitch is rented to Wirral Masters FC.	Retain the quality of the pitches to retain the spare capacity.	Club				
		Cricket		Wirral Cricket Club - one good quality grass pitch with no spare capacity and one non-turf wicket. Non-turf wickets used for Last Man Stands. Reports that current non-turf practice nets require refurbishment.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to retain quality. Investigate grants for net refurbishment.	Club CCCB		L	L	
	Ocean Field	Rugby union		Wirral RUFC - three senior standard (M1/D2) quality pitches which are not floodlit. The pitches have spare capacity of 2.5 match sessions are used by junior/mini teams. This site located at the rear of the clubhouse is leased from the Leverhulme Estate on a ten year lease signed in 2013.	In the short term retain spare capacity and in the longer term improve pitch quality. Ensure long term security across all pitches.	Club RFU		L	L	
		Cricket		Two non-turf wicket pitches located on the same field as above.	Maximise use of the non turf wickets for LMS and junior development.	Club CCCB		L	L	
141	Lever Club	Bowls	Club	One good quality green which is not floodlit and overplayed.	Ensure maintenance is able to sustain levels of overplay.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
134	Port Sunlight Village Bowling Club	Bowls	Club	Two good quality greens which are not floodlit and have available spare capacity.	Sustain quality and maximise use.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect Provide
3	Anselmians RUFC	Rugby union	Club	Two senior standard (M1/D1) pitches not floodlit and a third junior sized which is floodlit and as such also used for training. In total overplay on the pitches account for 7.5 match sessions. The site also includes an area that is marked out as five mini pitches (interchangeable) which are not floodlit. Clubhouse architect plans have been received to develop the facilities. Car parking is also a reported issue. The RFU considers this site/club a high priority for improvement/development.	Improve maintenance on all pitches and seek options to reduce training on the floodlit pitch where possible. Investigate the feasibility for additional floodlighting and for improvements to the quality of the clubhouse and the potential for a 3G pitch. As this site is located in the Green Belt and in a Conservation Area associated planning constraints apply.	Club RFU Council	Key Centre (H)	S	H	Protect Enhance
69	St. John Plessington Catholic College	Rugby union	Education	One senior poor (M0/ D0) quality pitch which is not floodlit. Not available for community use.	Retain for school usage and improve quality as required.	Education	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
156	Heygarth Primary School	Football	Education	One mini (7v7) standard quality pitch with a spare capacity of two sessions per week. Two mini (5V5) standard quality pitches with a spare capacity of five sessions per week. Used by Allport Hawks JFC. No changing provision available on site.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied to improve the quality. Discuss with the school if changing facilities can be used by the Club.	Education	Local Site (M)	L	L	Protect Enhance

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
38	Kings Lane Playing Fields	Football	Club	One adult, two 9v9, two 7v7 and 5v5 pitches all standard quality. Spare capacity exists across all pitches. Five year lease by Higher Bebington Junior FC from the Council, signed in 2010.	Retain spare capacity in order to help improve quality. Seek to extend lease arrangement with the Club in order to provide greater security of tenure.	Council FA	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect Enhance
45	Mayfields Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	One poor quality adult pitch which is overplayed by two sessions a week. Two 9v9, one 7v7 and one 5v5 pitch of standard quality and with spare capacity. Used by multiple teams.	Retain any spare capacity and improve pitch quality in order to address overplay. Potential site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme.	Council FA	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance
48	New Ferry Park	Football	Local Authority	One adult standard quality pitch which is overplayed by one match equivalent session a week. Used by New Ferry Rangers FC.	Improve maintenance in order to improve quality and address overplay.	Council FA	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect Enhance
55	Plymyard Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	Operating as a central venue site. Nine adult standard quality pitches which have spare capacity of seven match equivalent sessions a week. Four youth (9v9) standard quality pitches which have spare capacity of 5.5 match equivalent sessions a week. Two mini (7v7) standard quality pitches that have spare capacity of three match equivalent sessions a week. Used by multiple teams. Changing provision available but not always accessible.	Retain spare capacity and seek options to improve quality. Potential site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme. Work to ensure adequate access to changing provision is secured. Explore the feasibility of potential for 3G pitch provision.	Council FA	Strategic Site (H)	S	L-H	Protect Enhance
177	Riverside Football Ground (Eastham)	Football	Club	One adult standard quality pitch which is overplayed by two sessions a week. Leased by MSC Eastham FC from Peel Holdings Ltd, however, tenure is unsecure as Peel Holdings is currently looking into the feasibility of bring back into use Prices Sports & Social Club – Site 137 and to relocate the Club.	If disposal of the site is inevitable it must meet the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 of NPPF. This requires replacement provision of an equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location.	Council Peel Holdings FA	Local Site (M)	M	L	Provide
76	Thornton Hough	Football	Local Authority	One adult standard quality pitch with spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalent sessions a week. Used by AFC Tima.	Retain spare capacity and seek options to improve quality.	Council FA	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Enhance Provide
		Cricket		The site also contains an old non turf cricket wicket which has occasional use and previously accommodated some Last Man Stands. Pavilion also on site.	Explore options to bring back into use if demand increases in the Area.	Council CCCB		M	L-M	
137	Prices Sports & Social Club, Bromborough Pool	Football	Private	Currently disused site which previously contained a West Cheshire League quality adult pitch (with dugouts etc) plus a full sized adult training pitch and had been in and out of use for some years by a variety of clubs and teams once Bromborough Pool FC folded.	Peel Holdings Ltd is now looking to rejuvenate this site for use by MSC Eastham to enable them to relocate from the Riverside Football Ground (which it is looking to develop to provide expanded port facilities) – Site 177 (Riverside Football Ground). Ensure proposals meet the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 of NPPF. This requires replacement provision of an equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location.	Council FA Peel Holdings	Local Site (L)	S	M-H	Provide
		Bowls		One standard quality green which is floodlit and is slightly under capacity. Used by Bromborough Pool BC following amalgamation with Prices BC some years ago, resulting in the bowling green at York Street/The Green to be disused.	Retain the bowling green and improve quality as required to maximise use.	Club	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
-	York Street/The Green, Bromborough Pool	Cricket	Private	Site previously used by Prices Sports and Social and then intermittently as an additional 3rd XI venue for a number of different clubs. This site was thought to be disused but CCCB reports that it is now being used by Maritime CC.	Engage further with the Club to establish use of the site and work to ensure future sustainability and tenure.	CCCB	Local Site (L)	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		Disused bowling green since Bromborough Pool BC amalgamated with Prices BC and moved to Prices Sports & Social Club – Site 137.	No current or future demand expressed to suggest the need to bring this site back into use. Should an opportunity to secure developer contributions arise, quality improvements should be sought at other existing bowling facilities.	Council	-	M	M	Enhance
-	Green Lane Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	One adult and one youth football pitch disused with no changing facilities but the site has capacity to accommodate up to four junior pitches. Previously used as a central venue for Eastham and District Junior Football League	Explore opportunities to bring the site back into use to meet identified shortfalls in the Assessment. If bringing the site back into use is not feasible or sustainable retain as part of Eastham Country Park as public open space in the Green Belt. Any disposal would need to meet the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 of NPPF. This requires replacement provision of an equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location.	Council FA	TBC	M	M	Provide
51	OC Sport & Leisure	Football	Private	Former company sports ground now operating as private sports club and social venue. Two adult football pitches (disused) and one cricket pitch (lapsed). Previously used by Manor Athletic AFC and Octel CC.	Explore opportunities to bring the site back into use to meet identified shortfalls in the Assessment. If bringing the site back into use is not feasible or sustainable or disposal of the site is inevitable it must meet the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 of NPPF. This requires replacement provision of an equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location.	Council FA	TBC	M	M	Provide
		Tennis		Four macadam good quality courts which are not floodlit. Available for community use.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality.	Club LTA	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
7	Bebington High Sports College	Football	Education	One floodlit 3G pitch which is almost full size but is included as a small pitch due inadequate run-offs but is well used for community use. The site also contains a full size grass pitch which is unused for community use.	Retain the site and maximise use of the 3G pitch and grass pitch for community use through encouraging inclusion on the 3G FA Register.	FA	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
-	Acre Lane Resource Centre	Football	Local Authority	Former secondary school re-used for education training, now closed and demolished. Two adult football pitches last used by Shore Villa JFC in 1999, disused due to poor drainage and fixture cancellations. Declared surplus in 2013 and marketed for residential development in 2014.	Planning application for residential development not yet submitted. Development brief requires developer contributions to be secured for quality improvements at other existing sites within the area. If disposal of the site is inevitable it must meet the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 of NPPF.	Council	-	S	S	Provide

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ANALYSIS AREA 2 (BIDSTON AND ST JAMES; BIRKENHEAD AND TRANMERE; AND ROCK FERRY)

Football

Summary of current and future demand for grass football

Pitch type	Demand (match sessions per week)					
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Latent demand	Total (current)	Future demand	Total (future)
Adult	1	-	-	1	-	1
Youth	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mini	-	-	-	-	-	-

- ◀ A small amount of spare capacity exists overall on adult pitches both now and in the future. There is no shortfall of youth and mini pitches.
- ◀ Demand for training is being met by 3G pitches.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve pitch quality to alleviate future shortfalls and build future capacity.
- ◀ Encourage providers to put a sinking fund in place to ensure long term 3G sustainability and seek FA testing.

Cricket

- ◀ There are no cricket pitches within the Analysis Area and no demand.

Rugby union

- ◀ There are no rugby pitches within the Analysis Area and no demand for any to be provided.

Hockey

- ◀ There are no sand-based AGPs within the Analysis Area and no demand for one to be provided.

Tennis

- ◀ There are three courts within the Analysis Area, all of which are available for community use.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve and sustain court quality.

Bowls

- ◀ There are 3 active greens within the Analysis Area and no demand for additional provisions.

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
96	Wirral Tennis and Leisure Centre	Tennis	Local Authority	Three macadam courts good quality, not floodlit which are available for community use. Key delivery site for LTA.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality and maximise use for LTA initiatives.	Council LTA	Strategic Site (H)	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Football		Two poor quality adult pitches with spare capacity of one session a week. Used by Beechwood Athletic FC and Crown FC.	Retain spare capacity and seek options to improve quality.	Council FA		M	L	
		AGP (football)		One full size medium pile 3G pitch which is FA tested to host competitive matches. Previous issues with drainage resolved.	Maximise competitive use and ensure a sinking fund is created to address future refurbishment.			L	M	
142	Northwest Contruction Stadium (Cammell Laird FC 1907)	Football	Club	One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of two match equivalent sessions per week. Owned by Cammell Lairds FC which plays at Step 5 of the football pyramid.	Retain some spare capacity in order to sustain and protect pitch quality. Investigate what would be needed if the Club secured promotion to Step 4 of the football pyramid. Ensure plans and forecasts are in place if this occurs. National Ground Grading - Category D would be required which is available here: http://www.thefa.com/my-football/club-leagues/ground-grading	Club FA Council	Key Centre (M)	M	M	Protect
176	St. Werburgh's RC Primary School	Football	Education	One standard quality youth (9v9) pitch which is played to capacity. Used by Peninsula Stars JFC. No changing provision available.	Improve quality as required and secure access for the Club.	Education FA	Local Site (L)	S	L	Protect Enhance
82	Victoria Park, Tranmere	Football	Local Authority	One youth (9v9), one mini (7v7) and one mini (5v5) pitch all standard quality and no spare capacity due to over marking. Used by Victoria Colts JFC. No changing provision available.	Retain spare capacity and seek options to improve quality. Potential site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme. Further assess need for changing facility and if required explore options for funding.	Council FA	Key Centre (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance
		Cricket		One standard quality grass pitch that has no spare capacity in the peak period. Club has obtained PQS. Used by Tranmere Victoria CC and club rents the ground from the Council on a year on year agreement. The Club highlights concern with regards to additional cost of outfield maintenance.	Explore options for a longer term lease to be put into place and support the Club in seeking funding to improve pitch quality/maintenance. Consider options for sharing of maintenance equipment and expertise with other local clubs.	Council CCCB		S	L	
		Bowls		Three good quality greens which are overplayed. One of which is currently being maintained by Gladstone Bowling Club.	Ensure maintenance programme for appropriate to sustain likely overplay.	Council		L	L	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
-	Conway Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	Two youth and three mini soccer pitches now disused. Previously leased to Shore Villa JFC.	Explore opportunities to bring the site back into use to meet identified shortfalls in the Assessment. If bringing the site back into use is not feasible or sustainable retain site as Urban Greenspace in an area of shortfall in public open space. Any disposal would need to meet the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 of NPPF. This requires replacement provision of an equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location.	Council FA	TBC	S	M	Provide
-	Former Rock Ferry School	Football	Education	Disused school playing field. No changing facilities.	Continue to work with the local resident's association to bring forward proposals for the management of the playing fields at the former Rock Ferry High School.	Council FA	Local Site (L)	M	M	Provide

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ANALYSIS AREA 3 (PENSBY AND THINGWALL; AND HESWALL)

Football

Summary of current and future demand for grass football

Pitch type	Demand (match sessions per week)					
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Latent demand	Total (current)	Future demand	Total (future)
Adult	5.5	1.5	-	4	0.5	3.5
Youth	-	4	-	4	2	6
Mini	1	-	-	1	3	2

- ◀ Spare capacity exists on adult pitches both now and in the future, although overplay is evident at Pensby Sports Complex.
- ◀ There is a current and future shortfall of youth match sessions due to overplay at Arrowe Park, Pensby Sports Complex, Puddydale and Thingwell Primary School.
- ◀ There is current spare capacity on mini pitches, however, future demand results in a shortfall of match sessions.
- ◀ Demand for training is being met by 3G pitches.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and reduce current and future shortfalls.
- ◀ Seek use of currently unavailable sites in order to further reduce shortfalls and build future capacity.
- ◀ Transfer youth 11v11 teams from adult pitches to youth 11v11 pitches. Use resultant spare capacity on adult pitches to create and build future youth pitch capacity.

Cricket

- ◀ There are no cricket pitches within the Analysis Area and no demand.

Rugby union

- ◀ There are is one senior poor quality senior pitch located at Pensby High School for Girls which is not available for community use.

Hockey

- ◀ There are no sand-based AGPs within the Analysis Area and no demand for one to be provided.

Tennis

- ◀ There are 20 courts within the Analysis Area available for community use and four courts unavailable for community use.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve and sustain court quality.

Bowls

- ◀ There are eight greens within the Analysis Area, all of which are assessed as good or standard quality.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand, with no clubs expressing a need for an additional green.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve/sustain green quality.

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
4	Arrowe Park	Tennis	Local Authority	One macadam court of good quality which is not floodlit. Three standard grass courts which are not floodlit. Publicly available with good footfall.	Maximise use and improve quality of the grass courts which are limited. Link to Upton TC as the closest community club.	Council LTA	Strategic Site (H)	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		Two good quality greens with significant spare capacity. Used by Penketh Argyle Bowling Club. One bowling green recently taken out of use due to minimal/no use.	Maximise use and ensure quality is appropriate to levels of use.	Council		L	L	
		Football		Seven poor quality adult pitches with spare capacity of four match sessions a week. Two poor quality youth (9v9) pitches overplayed by one session a week. Two mini (7v7) and two mini (5v5) pitches both poor quality with spare capacity of 1.5 sessions a week. Users report poor pitch quality due to insufficient maintenance and poor drainage. Changing provision available but not always accessible. No dedicated parking available for this site so parking is along the road.	High priority site for football. Look to reconfigure pitches to better accommodate users and improve quality in order to address overplay. Potential site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme. Work to secure access to changing rooms as required. Explore feasibility of future 3G pitch development as additional land is available to accommodate this but as this site is located in the Green Belt associated planning constraints apply. Explore opportunities for a solution to parking issues.	Council FA		S	H	
105	Heswall Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Eight artificial courts in good condition, four of which are floodlit. There is a rolling programme of maintenance and repair, with two courts to be re-carpeted when funds are available. Membership has increased with further plans to increase.	Ensure quality is sustained through maintenance and repair.	Club LTA	Key Centre (M)	M	M	Protect Provide
53	Pensby High School for Girls	Tennis	Education	Four macadam courts of good quality. Floodlit and available for community use. Four macadam courts of standard quality. Not floodlit and not available for community use.	Retain for school use and improve quality as required.	Education	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby union		One senior poor quality (M0/ D0) pitch not available for community use.	Retain for school use and improve quality as required.					
112	Pinewood Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Four macadam courts of good quality not floodlit. Club plans to increase membership but reports no issues regarding court quality, access or demand for extra facilities.	Ensure quality is sustained through maintenance and repair.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
104	Heswall Hall	Bowls	Local Authority	One poor quality green with some spare capacity.	Improve the quality of green and maximise use.	Council	Local Site (L)	S	L	Protect Enhance
129	Heswall Royal British Legion Bowling Club	Bowls	Private	One good quality green with likely spare capacity.	Sustain quality of green and maximise use.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
138	Pensby Bowling Club	Bowls	Private	One good quality green which is overplayed.	Ensure maintenance programme is adequate enough to accommodate overuse.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
113	Poll Hill	Bowls	Local Authority	One good quality green with some spare capacity.	Sustain quality of green and maximise use.	Council	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
139	Thingwall Bowling Club	Bowls	Private	Two standard quality greens which are floodlit and is overplayed.	Ensure maintenance programme is adequate enough to accommodate overuse.	Club	Club Site (L)	L	L	Protect Enhance
159	Barnston Primary School	Football	Education	One standard quality mini (7v7) pitch with spare capacity of one session a week. Used by Heswall Juniors FC. No access to changing provision on site.	Retain spare capacity to help improve quality and ensure community use agreements is in place.	Education	Local Site (L)	S	L	Protect Enhance
158	Gayton Primary School	Football	Education	One standard quality mini (7v7) pitch with spare capacity of 2.5 sessions a week. Used by Heswall Juniors FC. No access to changing provision on site.	Retain spare capacity to help improve quality and ensure community use agreements is in place.	Education	Local Site (L)	S	L	Protect Enhance
144	Gayton Park	Football	Local Authority	One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of one session a week. Leased to Heswall FC playing at Step 7 of the football pyramid.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain/protect pitch quality. Ensure that the pitch is maintained appropriately for the level of football the Club play at.	Council Club FA	Key Centre (L)	L	L	Protect
160	Pensby Primary School	Football	Education	One standard quality mini (7v7) pitch with spare capacity of 2.5 sessions a week. Used by Heswall Juniors FC. No access to changing provision on site.	Retain spare capacity to help improve quality and ensure community use agreement is in place.	Education	Local Site (L)	S	L	Protect Enhance
54	Pensby Sports Complex	Football	Education	One adult standard quality pitch which is overplayed by 1.5 sessions a week. Two standard quality youth (9v9) pitches which are overplayed by one session a week. Used by Heswall FC and Barnstoneworth Utd FC.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance in order to address overplay.	Education FA	Key Centre (M)	S	M	Protect Enhance
		Football		One full size medium pile 3G pitch with no community use as it is assessed as poor quality and is now ten years old and requires resurfacing in the near future.	Improve pitch quality through resurfacing and consider World Rugby compliance as this is a key rugby school.	RFU Council		L	L	
60	Ridgewood Park	Football	Local Authority	Two standard quality adult pitches which are overplayed by 0.5 sessions a week. Used by multiple teams including Glenavon Juniors FC.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance in order to address overplay.	Council	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Enhance
74	The Puddydale	Football	Local Authority	One standard quality youth (9v9) pitch which is overplayed by 1.5 sessions a week. Used by Heswall Juniors FC. No access to changing provision on site.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance in order to address overplay.	Council	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Enhance
157	Thingwall Primary School	Football	Education	One poor quality youth (9v9) pitch which is overplayed by 0.5 sessions a week. Used by Heswall Juniors FC. No changing provision on site.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance in order to address overplay.	Education	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Enhance
-	Gayton Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	One youth football pitch disused, with no changing facilities. Previously used as local overspill by Heswall JFC.	Explore opportunities to bring the site back into use to meet identified shortfalls in the Assessment. If bringing the site back into use is not feasible or sustainable retain as part of Gayton Park, as public open space in the Green Belt	Council FA	TBC	S	M	Provide

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ANALYSIS AREA 4 (HOYLAKE AND MEOLS; WEST KIRBY AND THURSTASTON)

Football

Summary of current and future demand for grass football

Pitch type	Demand (match sessions per week)					
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Latent demand	Total (current)	Future demand	Total (future)
Adult	0.5	19	-	18.5	-	18.5
Youth	-	1	3	4	6	10
Mini	-	1	5	6	11	17

- Shortfalls are identified across each pitch type both now and in the future.
- Overplay is identified on adult pitches at Anglesey Road Playing Fields, Caldy Grange Grammar School, Elm Grove and Newton Park, as well as on youth and mini pitches at Hilbre High School Sports Centre.
- There is demand for three full size 3G pitches to accommodate all training demand, of which, there are currently none.

Recommendations

- Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and reduce current and future shortfalls.
- Seek transfer of teams from overplayed sites to sites with actual spare capacity.
- Seek use of currently unavailable sites in order to further reduce shortfalls and build future capacity.
- Transfer youth 11v11 teams from adult pitches to youth 11v11 pitches. Use resultant spare capacity on adult pitches to create and build future youth pitch capacity.
- Encourage providers to put a sinking fund in place to ensure long term 3G sustainability and seek FA testing.
- Seek opportunities to increase 3G pitch provision as a high priority given the deficit identified.

Cricket

- There are four cricket pitches within the Analysis Area, two of which are available to the community.
- Future demand results in a shortfall of one pitch.

Recommendations

- Protect current stock of pitches.
- Review quality issues.
- Seek resolution to future shortfalls.
- Improve/increase training provision.

Rugby union

- There are nine senior and seven mini pitches within the Analysis Area, all of which are available for community use.
- All pitches are assessed as poor or standard quality, with the exception of two senior pitches at Hoylake RUFC.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- ◀ Overplay is evident at both Caldy Sports Club (5.5 match equivalents) and Hoylake RUFC (3.5 match equivalents).
- ◀ There is an overall shortfall of nine match equivalents currently and 10.5 match equivalents when accounting for future demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing pitch supply.
- ◀ Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay through installation of drainage systems and/or improved maintenance regimes.
- ◀ Seek to install floodlights or provide additional floodlighting at overplayed sites in order to spread out training demand.
- ◀ Explore creation of new pitches where the space allows or consider the need for a World Rugby compliant AGP.

Hockey

- ◀ There are two full sized sand based AGPs within the Analysis Area, located at Caldy Grange Grammar School and West Kirby Grammar School.
- ◀ A new carpet is required at both facilities; the carpet at Caldy Grange Grammar School is ten years old and the carpet at West Kirby Grammar School is 15 years old.
- ◀ Both pitches are used by Oxton Hockey Club.
- ◀ Use of West Kirby High School is restricted by a lack of floodlighting.

Recommendations

- ◀ Refurbish both pitches for continued hockey use.
- ◀ Encourage providers to put a sinking fund in place to ensure long term sustainability.

Tennis

- ◀ There are 29 courts within the Analysis Area available for community use and eight courts unavailable for community use.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve and sustain court quality.

Bowls

- ◀ There are eight greens within the Analysis Area, all of which are assessed as good or standard quality.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand, with no clubs expressing a need for an additional green.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve/sustain green quality.

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
100	Alderley Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Four macadam good quality courts which are not floodlit. The Club reports no issues regarding court quality, access or demand for any additional facilities.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
5	Ashton Park	Tennis	Local Authority	Two macadam good quality courts which are not floodlit. Three poor quality grass courts which are not floodlit. Publicly available.	Ensure future sustainability of the site and improve quality as required.	Council LTA	Key Centre (M)	M	L-M	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		Two good quality greens with likely spare capacity. Used by multiple clubs.	Sustain quality of green and maximise use.	Council		L	L	
		Football		One standard quality youth (9v9) pitch with no spare capacity at peak time. Used by West Kirby Panthers FC. No changing provision on site.	No further usage recommended to help sustain/protect pitch quality. Ensure access to toilets is secured.	Council FA		S	L	
101	Bertram Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Four macadam good quality courts which are not floodlit. No demand for additional facilities.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
18	Caldy Grange Grammar School	Tennis	School (Private)	Four macadam standard quality courts which are not floodlit. Not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	School (Private)	Key Centre (M)	L	L	Protect Enhance Provide
		Cricket		One good quality grass pitch. Not available for community use.	Retain for School use.			S-M	L	
		Football		One standard quality adult pitch which is overplayed by 8.5 sessions a week (mini pitches marked by cones). Used by West Kirby Panthers FC. Changing provisions onsite but not used.	Reconfigure pitches in order to reduce overplay or transfer teams to sites with spare capacity.	FA		S	L	
		AGP (Hockey)		One full size sand based full sized standard quality AGP which is floodlit and predominately hockey use. No spare capacity due to school use and also used by Oxton HC. New carpet will be required and floodlights need upgrading.	Ensure there is a sinking fund in place for future refurbishment to ensure continued use for hockey. Explore funding options to upgrade floodlighting. In the longer term, this site could offer opportunity for a double pitch site.	EH		M	H	
106	Hoylake Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Eight artificial good quality courts, three of which are floodlit. Plans to increase senior membership but no reported issues regarding quality, access or demand for additional facilities.	Sustain court quality for continued use.	Club LTA	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect
39	Kingsmead School	Tennis	Education	One macadam good quality court which is not floodlit. Not available for community use.	Retain for school use and improve quality as required.	Education	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
		Cricket		One standard quality non-turf wicket. Not available for community use.						
110	Meols Parade Gardens	Tennis	Local Authority	Two macadam courts standard quality which are not floodlit. Publicly available.	Ensure quality is appropriate to standard of use and maximise use.	Council	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
		Bowls		One poor quality green with significant spare capacity. Second green recently taken out of use due to minimal/no use.	Explore options to improve quality.			M	L-M	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
49	Newton Park	Tennis	Local Authority	One macadam court standard quality which is not floodlit. Publicly available.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality.	Council	Local Site (L)	L	L	Provide Enhance
		Bowls		One standard quality green which is not floodlit with some spare capacity.	Sustain quality of green.	Council		L	L	
		Football		One adult poor quality pitch which is overplayed by 7.5 sessions a week. Used by AC Hoylake. No changing facilities on site.	Improve pitch quality and reduce use in order to address overplay. Ensure access to toilets is provided.	FA		M	L-M	
119	St Lukes Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Private	Two macadam courts of good quality which have no floodlights. No current usage. Land sold resulting in loss of the two courts. Members have joined local clubs in the area.	Planning permission has already been granted with a sum secured to upgrade the courts at Meols Parade.	Council LTA Sport England	-	-	-	-
90	West Kirby Grammar School	Football	Education (In house)	Three mini (7v7) pitches standard quality with spare capacity of 7.5 sessions a week and three mini (5v5) standard quality pitches with spare capacity of nine sessions a week. Leased to West Kirby and Wasps FC.	Retain some spare capacity in order to sustain/protect pitch quality.	School FA	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance
89		Tennis		Five macadam good quality pitches which are not floodlit. Not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	School		M	L	
		AGP (Hockey)		One sand based full size standard quality pitch which is not floodlit (due to Green Belt restrictions). New carpet required in the next couple of years. Spare capacity but limited due to the lack of floodlights. Used as and when required by Oxton HC.	Explore opportunities for a new hockey carpet and retain use by Oxton HC.	School EH		M	H	
133	Caldy Sports Club (Caldy CC and Cald RUFC)	Cricket	Club	Two good quality grass wickets with no spare capacity. One good quality non-turf wicket which is used for training. Club has a PQS which outlines required works.	Ensure pitch maintenance and facilities continue to meet with PQS standards.	Club CCCB	Key Centre (H)	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby union		Three senior standard (M1/ D1) pitches, one is floodlit. Overplay on two of the pitches accounts for 5.5 match sessions. There are also six mini pitches standard (M1/ D1) quality with a spare capacity. Club is looking into building a new clubhouse. The RFU considers this site/club a high priority for improvement/development.	Explore options to improve pitch quality and look to reduce training on the floodlit pitch and ensure access to appropriate floodlit training facilities. Support the Club to explore funding opportunities to improve clubhouse facilities.	Club RFU Council		L	M	
127	Hoylake Central Bowling Club	Bowls	Private	One good quality green with likely spare capacity.	Sustain quality of green and maximise use.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
44	Marine Park	Football	Local Authority	One standard quality adult pitch which has a spare capacity of 0.5 sessions a week. One youth (9v9) standard quality pitch which has a spare capacity of one session a week. Leased by West Kirby and Wasps FC, signed in 2009 for 25 years. Club plays at Step 7 of the football pyramid.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain/protect pitch quality. Ensure that the pitch is maintained appropriately for the level of football the Club play within.	Council Club FA	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect Enhance
109	Meols Lower Green	Bowls	Local Authority	One standard quality green with likely spare capacity.	Improve green quality and maximise use.	Council	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect Enhance
117	Queens Park (Meols)	Bowls	Local Authority	One standard quality green with likely spare capacity.	Improve green quality and maximise use.	Council	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect Enhance
140	Victoria Gardens	Bowls	Local Authority	One standard quality green with likely spare capacity.	Improve green quality and maximise use.	Council	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect Enhance
19	Caldy Grange Grammar School (Sports Field)	Rugby union	Education (In house)	Three senior standard (M1/D1) pitches. Two pitches are used by Caldyp RUFC junior teams. All pitches are played at capacity.	Improve pitch quality in order to build future capacity and ensure a formal community use agreement is in place for continued community use.	Education RFU	Local Site (M)	M	M	Protect Enhance
33	Hilbre High School Sports Centre	Rugby union	Education (In house)	One mini poor (M0/D1) quality pitch with no spare capacity. Available for community use but not currently used.	Retain for school use and improve quality as required.	Education FA	Local Site (M)	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Football		One adult standard quality pitch with spare capacity of 0.5 sessions a week. One youth (9v9) and one mini (7v7) standard quality pitch, each are overplayed by one session a week. Used by West Kirby Panthers FC.	Improve pitch quality in order to address overplay. Potential site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme.			L	M	
35	Hoylake RUFC	Rugby union	Club	Two senior standard (M1/D2) pitches, one of which is floodlit. The floodlit pitch is overplayed by 3.5 matches per week. Drainage for this pitch is nearly 10 years old and may require and upgrade. One mini standard (M1/D1) pitch is played to capacity. The Club also leases adjacent land from private owner and has one junior pitch marked out.	Explore options to improve pitch quality and look to reduce training on the floodlit pitch and ensure access to appropriate floodlit training facilities. Explore options to secure lease arrangements for adjacent land and develop additional pitches. As this site is located in the Green Belt associated planning constraints apply.	Club RFU Council	Local Site (H)	M	M	Protect Enhance Provide
1	Acres Road Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	Currently no pitches marked following the installation of pitch drainage (Football Foundation funding). Leased by AC Hoylake FC for 25 years signed in 2014. Site will be back in use for the 2016/2017 season with two adult pitches, one mini 7v7 pitch and one mini 5v5 pitch. Changing provision on site.	Ensure that once works have been completed on the drainage that maintenance is of a good standard to help sustain quality.	Council Club FA	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
2	Anglesey Road Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	One standard quality adult pitch overplayed by one match equivalent session. One standard quality youth (9v9) pitch with spare capacity of 0.5 sessions a week. One standard quality mini (7v7) pitch with spare capacity of 2.5 sessions a week. One standard quality mini (5v5) pitch with spare capacity of three sessions a week. Leased to West Kirby and Wasps FC and awaiting council confirmation. Club plays at Step 7 on the adult football pitch. Changing facilities are located adjacent at Marine Park (Site: 44, which is also rented by the Club).	Secure lease arrangements. Retain spare capacity in order to sustain/protect pitch quality. Ensure that the pitch is maintained appropriately for the level of football played.	Council Club FA	Key Centre (M)	S-M	L	Protect Enhance
24	Devonshire Road Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	One standard quality youth (11v11) pitch with one match equivalent session of spare capacity. Used by West Kirby Panthers. No changing facilities on site.	Retain spare capacity in order to help improve pitch quality.	Council	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Enhance
178	Elm Grove	Football	Local Authority	One poor quality adult pitch which is overplayed by two sessions a week. Leased by West Kirby and Wasps FC, signed in 2013 for 25 years and also includes a five year lease for Sandringham Avenue Playing Fields (Site ID:62). Club plays at Step 7 on the football pyramid. No changing provision on site.	Improve pitch quality in order address overplay. Ensure that the pitch is maintained appropriately for the level of football played.	Council Club FA	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance
62	Sandringham Avenue Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	One adult and one youth football pitch with no changing facility, disused because of drainage issues and flooding. Leased by West Kirby and Wasps FC.	Explore opportunities to bring the site back into use to meet identified shortfalls in the Assessment. If bringing the site back into use is not feasible or sustainable retain as public open space in the Green Belt.	Council FA	TBC	S	M	Provide
-	Greenbank Road	Football	Local Authority	Three senior football pitches with changing rooms and car park, lapsed because of ground conditions from brick rubble from former landfill. Changing rooms now need major refurbishment/replacement.	Explore opportunities to bring the site back into use to meet identified shortfalls in the Assessment. If bringing the site back into use is not feasible or sustainable retain as public open space in the Green Belt.	Council FA	TBC	S	M	Provide

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ANALYSIS AREA 5 (GREASBY, FRANKBY AND IRBY; MORETON WEST AND SAUGHALL MASSIE; LEASOWE AND MORETON EAST; AND UPTON)

Football

Summary of current and future demand for grass football

Pitch type	Demand (match sessions per week)					
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Latent demand	Total (current)	Future demand	Total (future)
Adult	1.5	5.5	-	4	-	4
Youth	1.5	-	-	1.5	1.5	
Mini	0.5	-	-	0.5	2	1.5

- ◀ A shortfall is identified on adult pitches both now and in the future, with overplay evident at Coronation Park, Irby Playing Fields, Upton Park and Woodchurch Leisure Centre.
- ◀ Spare capacity exists currently on youth and mini pitches, however, future demand results in a shortfall of match sessions on both.
- ◀ Demand for training is being met by 3G pitches.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve the quality of existing pitches to alleviate overplay and reduce current and future shortfalls.
- ◀ Seek transfer of teams from overplayed sites to sites with actual spare capacity.
- ◀ Seek use of currently unavailable sites in order to further reduce shortfalls and build future capacity.
- ◀ Transfer youth 11v11 teams from adult pitches to youth 11v11 pitches. Use resultant spare capacity on adult pitches to create and build future youth pitch capacity.
- ◀ Encourage providers to put a sinking fund in place to ensure long term 3G sustainability and seek FA testing of existing stock as well as future developments.

Cricket

- ◀ There are four cricket pitches within the analysis area, all of which are available for community use.
- ◀ There are also two disused pitches at The Kingsway Academy.
- ◀ Overplay amounting to 28 matches per season is identified at Upton Cricket Club.
- ◀ There are current and future shortfalls equating to 0.5 pitches.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect current stock of pitches.
- ◀ Review quality issues.
- ◀ Seek resolution to overplay at Upton Cricket Club.
- ◀ Extend lease agreement for Upton CC.
- ◀ Improve/increase training provision.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Rugby union

- ◀ There are two senior and one mini pitch within the Analysis Area, all of which are available for community use and located at New Brighton RUFC.
- ◀ All pitches are assessed as poor quality.
- ◀ The senior pitches are overplayed by 11.5 match equivalent sessions, whilst the mini pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ There is an overall shortfall of 13 match equivalents currently and 18 match equivalents when accounting for future demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing pitch supply.
- ◀ Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay through installation of drainage systems and/or improved maintenance regimes.
- ◀ Seek to provide additional floodlighting at New Brighton RUFC in order to spread out training demand.
- ◀ Explore creation of new pitches where the space allows or consider the need for a World Rugby compliant AGP.
- ◀ Improve changing facilities at New Brighton RUFC.

Hockey

- ◀ There is no sand based AGP within the Analysis Area and no demand for one to be provided.

Tennis

- ◀ There are 17 courts within the Analysis Area available for community use and three courts unavailable for community use.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve and sustain court quality.

Bowls

- ◀ There are six greens within the Analysis Area, all of which are assessed as good or standard quality.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand, with no clubs expressing a need for an additional green.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve/sustain green quality.

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
23	Coronation Park	Tennis	Local Authority	One macadam poor quality court which is not floodlit. Publicly available.	Improve quality to an appropriate standard for recreational use.	Council	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		One good quality green with some spare capacity. Second green recently taken out of use due to minimal/no use.	Maximise use of green.	Council		-	-	
		Football		Three standard quality adult pitches which are overplayed by 0.5 sessions a week. Used by multiple teams including West Kirby Panthers FC. Changing provision available although not always accessible.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to improve quality and address overplay. Work to ensure access to changing is secured as required.	Council FA		M	M	
37	Irby Playing Fields	Tennis	Local Authority	Two macadam standard quality courts which are not floodlit. Publicly available.	Improve quality to an appropriate standard for recreational use.	Council	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		One standard quality green which has spare capacity. Used by Dawpool Women's Institute Bowling Club and Irby Ladies Bowling Club.	Improve quality as required and maximise use.	Council		L	L	
		Football		One standard quality adult pitch which is overplayed by 0.5 sessions a week. One standard quality youth (9v9) pitch which has 1.5 match equivalents of spare capacity a week.	Improve quality through increased maintenance in order to address overplay.	Council FA		M	M	
131	Kingsway Academy	Tennis	Education	Three macadam standard quality courts not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	Education	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect
		Cricket		Two poor quality non-turf wickets not available for community use.						
118	Saughall Grange	Tennis	Local Authority	Two macadam good quality courts which are not floodlit. Publicly available.	Sustain quality and maximise use.	Council	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		One poor quality green with spare capacity.	Improve quality and maximise use.					
79	Upton Hall School FCJ	Tennis	Education	Three macadam poor quality courts which are not floodlit. Not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	Education	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
		AGP		Small 60x40m sand based AGP. Not available for community use.						
125	Upton Victory Hall	Tennis	Club	Four good quality artificial courts and four good quality grass courts. Publicly available. Club plans to increase membership through open days and reports that the artificial courts need refurbishment and installation of floodlights would increase usage. The Club has recently received a Sport England Inspired Facilities grant to refurbish the clubhouse and improve security.	Ensure high quality maintenance in order to sustain quality in the short term and explore options for funding to improve quality and installation of floodlighting in order to increase capacity to accommodate future demand.	Club Council LTA	Local Site (M)	M	M	Protect Enhance Provide
		Bowls	Private	One poor quality green with likely spare capacity.	Improve quality of green and maximise use.	Club		L	L	Protect Enhance

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
98	Woodchurch High School Sports Complex (Sport for The Community)	Tennis	Education (In house)	Four macadam good quality courts which are all floodlit. Available for community use but unused.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality.	Education FA	Local Site (M)	S	M	Protect
		AGP		One full size medium pile 3G pitch, good quality. Minimal spare capacity available midweek. Community use agreement in place.	Encourage provider to undergo FA testing so that pitch can host competitive matches to maximise use. Ensure sinking fund is in place for the future replacement / refurbishment of the carpet.					
36	Irby Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	Two good quality grass wickets with no actual spare capacity in the peak period for senior cricket. One good quality non-turf wicket with spare capacity.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality. Consider non-turf wicket to host Last Man Stands.	Club CCCB	Local Site (L)	S	L	Protect Enhance
78	Upton Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	Two good quality grass pitches one with no spare capacity and the other with overplay of 28 matches per season. Club has obtained a PQS and overplay/current usage is not considered to be an issue. Club lease the ground from Leverhulme Estates with the lease due to expire 2020.	Retain quality to ensure appropriate standards and ensure pitch maintenance and facilities continue to meet with PQS standards. Ensure long term security of tenure is agreed or alternatively consider relocation options including school access.	Club CCCB Leverhulme Estates	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance
42	Lingham Park	Bowls	Local Authority	One poor quality green which is likely to be slightly overplayed. Used by multiple clubs.	Improve the quality of green in order to meet likely overplayed.	Council	Local Site (M)	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Football		Four adult standard quality pitches with spare capacity of 5.5 match equivalent sessions a week.	Consider reconfiguration of two adult pitches to better service demand in the Area.	Council		S	L	
128	Royden Hall Bowling Club	Bowls	Community	One poor quality green with spare capacity.	Improve the quality of green in order to maximise use.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
47	New Brighton RUFC	Rugby union	Club	The club owns the pitches and tenure is secure. Two poor (M1/D0) quality senior pitches, both of which are floodlit. The pitches are overplayed by 11.5 matches. There is one poor (M1/ D0) quality mini pitch which is overplayed 1.5 sessions a week. The Club doesn't have access to enough pitches. However, the site is landlocked in as far as it can't expand in any direction. Poor quality, old dilapidated changing facility with only one officials changing room (no shower/toilet) which requires potential rebuild.	Explore options to improve pitch quality and seek short term options for access to additional pitches (off site). Explore options to improve/re-provide clubhouse facilities as required. A long term solution would be to work with the Club to explore relocation options to a new site. It is recommended that the Council meet with the Club to discuss their long term options.	Club RFU Council	Key Centre (H)	S-M	M	Protect Enhance
40	Leasowe Leisure Centre	Football	Local Authority	One youth (9v9) poor quality pitch which has spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions a week. One mini (7v7) standard quality pitch which has a spare capacity of three sessions a week. One mini (5v5) standard quality pitch which has spare capacity of 3.5 sessions a week. Used by Rakers FC. No changing provision on site.	Retain spare capacity to help improve/protect quality. Possible site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme. Ensure appropriate access is secured to changing provision in order to ensure continued use of the site.	Council Club FA	Local Site (M)	M	M	Provide Enhance

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
152	Milcroft Ground	Football	Local Authority	One standard quality adult pitch which has spare capacity of 0.5 sessions a week. Used and leased by Newton FC from the Council. Club is on Step 7 of the football pyramid.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain/protect pitch quality and ensure that the pitch is maintained appropriately for the level of football played.	Council Club FA	Local Site (L)	S	L	Protect Enhance
173	Overchurch Junior School	Football	Education	One youth (11v11) standard quality pitch with spare capacity of 0.5 sessions a week. Used by Upton FC. No access to changing provision onsite.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain/protect pitch quality. Investigate if changing provision can be accessed for community purposes if required.	Education Club	Local Site (L)	S	L	Protect Enhance
80	Upton Park	Football	Local Authority	Two poor quality adult pitches which are overplayed by two sessions a week. Used by multiple teams including Upton FC.	Investigate improving the quality of the pitches through improve maintenance. Possible site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme.	Council Club FA	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance
99	Woodchurch Leisure Centre	Football	Local Authority	Two poor quality pitches which are over used by 2.5 sessions a week. Pitch quality is poor due to insufficient maintenance and poor drainage. Used by multiple teams including Woodchurch Stars FC.	Improve pitch quality through an enhanced maintenance regime to decrease the amount of overplay. Possible site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme.	Council FA	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance Provide
				Site at the rear of Woodchurch Leisure Centre contains floodlit track with a disused all-weather multi-sports area in the centre.	Explore opportunities to bring the pitch back into use to meet identified shortfalls. If bringing the site back into use is not feasible or sustainable, retain as part of Woodchurch Leisure Centre in the Green Belt.					
-	Leasowe Road Playing Field	Football	Council	Three youth football pitches disused, with no changing, previously used as overspill for junior teams from Wallasey and Leasowe.	Site to be re-laid and brought back into community use as part of Tranmere Rovers proposals at Solar Campus Playing Field.	Council FA	TBC	S	M-H	Protect Enhance Provide
-	Solar Campus Playing Field	Football	Council	Two youth football pitches disused but with recent informal use and significant additional capacity. Previously St. Marys College Playing Field. No changing provision.	Site currently being re-laid and brought back into use to provide Tranmere Rovers with a training facility.					
				Large open space in between this site and Leasowe Road which needs significant levelling but could offer potential new playing field opportunity.	If access to changing provision can be secured develop this area to provide pitches for Wallasey Girls League on a more permanent basis and consider longer term management options. Also consider the potential for 3G pitch provision.					
-	Premier Brands Playing Field	Football	Private	One adult football pitch, now with no changing facilities. Former factory playing field on land allocated for industrial expansion (not used for more than 5 years).	Explore opportunities to bring the site back into use to meet identified shortfalls in the Assessment. If bringing the site back into use is not feasible or sustainable or disposal of the site is inevitable it must meet the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 of NPPF. This requires replacement provision of an equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location.	Council FA	TBC	M	M	Provide

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales	Cost	Aim
-	Burtons Biscuits Sports Ground	Football Cricket Bowls	Private	Former Premier Brands company social club and sports ground, closed before transfer to Burtons Biscuits in 2007. Grassed frontage formerly provided one senior football and one senior cricket pitch. The separate bowling club relocated to Greasby in 2012.	Planning application for residential development submitted and refused in 2014. Re- submitted in 2016. If bringing the site back into use is not feasible or sustainable or disposal of the site is inevitable it must meet the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 of NPPF. This requires replacement provision of an equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location.	Council FA ECB	TBC	M	M	Provide

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ANALYSIS AREA 6 (CLAUGHTON; OXTON; PRENTON)

Football

Summary of current and future demand for grass football

Pitch type	Demand (match sessions per week)					
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Latent demand	Total (current)	Future demand	Total (future)
Adult	2	1	-	1	-	1
Youth	1	-	-	1	1.5	0.5
Mini	-	-	2	2	5	7

- ◀ Spare capacity is identified both currently and in the future on adult pitches, however, overplay is evident at Shatesbury Youth Club.
- ◀ Spare capacity exists currently on youth pitches, however, future demand results in a small shortfall of match sessions.
- ◀ A shortfall of match sessions is identified on mini pitches both now and in the future.
- ◀ There is demand for one full size 3G pitch to accommodate training demand, of which, there are currently none.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and reduce current and future shortfalls.
- ◀ Seek use of currently unavailable sites in order to further reduce shortfalls and build future capacity.
- ◀ Transfer youth 11v11 teams from adult pitches to youth 11v11 pitches. Use resultant spare capacity on adult pitches to create and build future youth pitch capacity.
- ◀ Seek opportunities to increase 3G pitch provision as a high priority given the deficit identified.

Cricket

- ◀ There are 12 cricket pitches within the analysis area, seven of which are available for community use.
- ◀ Actual spare capacity equating to 0.5 pitches exists at New Brighton Cricket Club.
- ◀ Overplay amounting to 15 matches per season is identified at Oxtton Cricket Club.
- ◀ Overall spare capacity of 0.2 pitches exists currently, however, future demand results in a shortfall of 0.3 pitches.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect current stock of pitches.
- ◀ Review quality issues.
- ◀ Seek resolution to overplay at Oxtton Cricket Club and future shortfalls.
- ◀ Retain some spare capacity in order to protect and improve wicket quality.
- ◀ Improve/increase training provision.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Rugby union

- ◀ There are seven senior pitches within the Analysis Area available for community use and four senior and two mini pitches unavailable for community use.
- ◀ All pitches available for community use are assessed as poor or standard quality.
- ◀ Overplay is evident at Birkenhead Park, HM Curphey Memorial Ground and Prenton Rugby Club.
- ◀ There is an overall shortfall of 16 match equivalents currently and 18 match equivalents when accounting for future demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing pitch supply.
- ◀ Explore potential use of currently unavailable pitches within education sites to increase capacity.
- ◀ Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay through installation of drainage systems and/or improved maintenance regimes.
- ◀ Seek to install floodlights or provide additional floodlighting at overplayed sites in order to spread out training demand.
- ◀ Explore creation of new pitches where the space allows or consider the need for a World Rugby compliant AGP.
- ◀ Improve changing facilities at Prenton Rugby Club.

Hockey

- ◀ There is two full sized sand based AGP within the Analysis Area, located at Birkenhead High School Academy and Birkenhead School.
- ◀ The pitch at Birkenhead High School requires resurfacing as it ten years old and considered poor quality, whilst the pitch at Birkenhead School was refurbished in 2010.
- ◀ Birkenhead School is unavailable for community use but it is temporarily used by Neston South Wirral Hockey Club (representing imported demand).
- ◀ Use of Birkenhead High School is restricted due to a lack of floodlighting and is not currently accessed for hockey.

Recommendations

- ◀ Resurface carpet at Birkenhead High School.
- ◀ Encourage providers to put a sinking fund in place to ensure long term sustainability.

Tennis

- ◀ There are 24 courts within the Analysis Area, all of which are available for community use.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve and sustain court quality.

Bowls

- ◀ There are eight greens within the Analysis Area, all of which are assessed as good or standard quality.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand, with no clubs expressing a need for an additional green.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve/sustain green quality.

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim				
147	Birkenhead School (McAllester Memorial Field)	Tennis	Education (In house)	Nine artificial courts of good quality which are floodlit. Not available for community use.	Retain facilities for school use and consider for future community use if demand increases.	Education	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Provide				
		Cricket		One good standard non-turf wicket. Not available for community use.										
		Rugby union		Two senior and two mini good (M1/ D3) quality pitches, none of which are floodlit. Not available for community use.										
		AGP (Hockey)		One good quality full sized sand based AGP which is floodlit. Only used by Neston South Wirral Hockey Club a club from Cheshire West & Chester which will be returning to Neston Recreation Centre in 2017 following a refurbishment, mostly used for school fixtures.	It is highly unlikely that the pitch will be made available for further community use once the Club returns to its home ground. Retain for school use.	Education EH								
148	Birkenhead School (Noctorum Field)	Cricket		Four good quality grass wickets. Not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	Education		M	L	Protect				
		Rugby union		One standard (M1/ D1) senior pitch. Not available for community use but used to capacity for school use.	Retain for school use and improve quality as required.									
102	Birkenhead Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Six macadam good quality courts three of which are floodlit. The club plans on increasing membership and reports no issues with quality, access or demand for additional facilities. The Club currently leases the courts from The Girls School Day Trust.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality. Ensure long term security of tenure.	LTA Girls School Day Trust	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect				
10	Birkenhead Park	Tennis	Local Authority	Six macadam good quality courts which are not floodlit. In addition, there are also four mini courts marked. Publicly available and used to deliver a range of LTA initiatives such as Tennis for Free initiative (TFF). Steering group establish at this site and set up of hub and spoke model linked to the Tennis Centre. Challenge on site relates to distance to ancillary facilities and lack of storage.	Priority LTA site. Sustain quality and maximise use. This will be the launch site for new LTA initiatives and in the longer term gated access should be developed to achieve a sustainable model linked to greater access to ancillary provision.	Council LTA	Strategic Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance				
		Cricket		One standard quality grass pitch with no spare capacity in the peak period for senior cricket. Used by Birkenhead Park CC teams. Indoor facilities are good quality and used.							Improve quality and ensure appropriate standard is achieved for level of play.	Council CCCB	S	L
		Bowls		Four good quality greens with significant spare capacity. Two bowling greens recently taken out of use due to minimal/no use.							Sustain quality of green and seek options to maximise use.	Council	L	L
		Football		Three poor quality adult pitches which have spare capacity of 0.5 sessions a week. Two poor quality youth (9v9) pitches with three match sessions of spare capacity. Used by multiple teams including Birkenhead Youth FC.							Retain spare capacity in the short term and consider funding for improvements in the longer term. Possible site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme.	Council FA	M	M

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
52	Oxton Cricket and Sports Club	Tennis	Club	Four macadam courts of good quality which are not floodlit. One grass court of good quality which is not floodlit. Club is unable to host two home matches at the same time due to capacity and hires courts at The Oval Leisure Centre (Site ID: 73). The Club also hires courts at Wirral Tennis and Leisure Centre (Site ID: 96) for winter training. Aspirations to improve changing facilities as currently there are no ladies changing rooms.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality. Explore funding options for installation of floodlights in order to increase court capacity to meet displace and future demand.	Club LTA Council	Local Site (H)	L	M	Protect Provide Enhance
		Cricket		Two good quality grass pitches (one of which includes a non-turf wicket). One pitch has no actual spare capacity in the peak period for senior cricket and one is overplayed by 15 sessions a season. The Club has obtained PQS. Used by Oxton CC and hosts county fixtures and a large number of juniors. Club owns the pitch and has a secured tenure.	Improve quality as required to ensure appropriate play. Ensure pitch maintenance and facilities continue to meet with PQS standards.	Club CCCB		M	M	
		Bowls		One good quality green which has spare capacity.	Sustain quality of green and maximise use.	Club		L	L	
115	Prenton Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Four macadam good quality courts which are not floodlit. Three artificial good quality courts which are floodlit.	Retain the level of maintenance to ensure site quality.	Club LTA	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect
11	Birkenhead Park Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One good quality grass pitch with no actual spare capacity in the peak period for senior cricket. The Club has obtained PQS. Club leases the ground from the Council and is currently negotiating a renewal. The Club reports that a mobile batting cage is required.	Ensure pitch maintenance and facilities continue to meet with PQS standards. Ensure lease is put in place in order to secure tenure.	Club Council CCCB	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
146	Birkenhead School	Cricket	Education	Twelve good quality grass wickets. Not available for community use.	Retain for School usage	Education	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Provide
14	Birkenhead St. Mary's Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One standard quality grass pitch with no actual spare capacity in the peak period of senior cricket. Club leases the ground from the Council but there is little engagement from the Club with either the Council or CCCB. Vandalism at the site is a reported issue.	Make further attempts to engagement with the Club in order to support where possible pitch/site improvements and to ensure future sustainability of the site.	CCCB Council	Local Site (M)	L	L	Protect Enhance

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
34	HM Curphey Memorial Ground (Old Parkonians CC) (Oxton Parkonians RUFC)	Cricket	Club	One good quality grass pitch with no actual spare capacity in the peak period for senior cricket. Club owns the pitch and has secured tenure.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to maintain quality.	Club CCCB	Local Site (M)	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby union		Three senior pitches all of poor (M1/D0) quality, one of which is floodlit. The floodlit pitch is overplayed by two matches a week as it is used for matches and all training. The other two pitches are played to capacity. Club owns the pitches and has secured tenure. Club received a Biffa grant, RFU loan and used its own funds to refurbish changing facilities.	Explore options to improve pitch quality and look to reduce training on the floodlit pitches and ensure access to appropriate floodlit training facilities.	Club RFU		S	M	
132	Wayfarers Ground - New Brighton Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	Club's second home ground, located quite a distance from main home ground at New Brighton Cricket and Bowling Club – Site 46. One good quality grass pitch with spare capacity of 19 sessions matches per season. (Minimal actual spare capacity identified in the peak period for senior cricket of 0.5. Changing facilities are in need of attention.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to maintain quality. Ensure the Club is aware of and accessing the Grounds maintenance programme. Explore funding opportunities for improved changing facilities.	Club CCCB	Local Site (L)	M	M	Protect Enhance
59	Ridgeway High School	Cricket	Education	One standard quality non-turf wicket. Not available for community use.	Retain for school use and improve quality as appropriate.	Education	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
		Rugby union		On senior poor (M0/D0) quality pitch. Not available for community use, just school.						
68	St. Anselms College Playing Fields	Cricket	Education	One good quality grass pitch. Not available for community use.	Retain for school use and improve quality as appropriate.	Education	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
		Rugby union		Four senior standard (M1/ D1) quality pitches, none of which are floodlit. Not available for community use as used to capacity for school use.						
136	Oxton Conservatives Bowling Club	Bowls	Private	One good quality green which is floodlit with minimal spare capacity	Sustain quality of green.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
130	Prenton Bowls Club	Bowls	Private	One good quality green with likely spare capacity	Sustain quality of green.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
135	Tixall Bowling and Social Club	Bowls	Private	One good quality green which is floodlit and overplayed.	Sustain quality of green is able to accommodate overplay.	Club	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
12	Birkenhead Park RUFC	Rugby union	Club	The Club owns the pitches and has secured tenure. Two senior pitches both with floodlights. One pitch standard (M1/D1) quality the other poor (M1/D0). The standard quality pitch has no spare capacity. The poor quality pitch is overplayed 11 matches per week. The RFU considers this site/club a high priority for improvement/development.	Explore options to improve pitch quality and look to reduce training on the floodlit pitches and ensure access to appropriate floodlit training facilities.	Club RFU Council	Local Site (H)	S	M	Protect Enhance

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
58	Prenton Rugby Club	Rugby union	Club	Two senior poor (M0/D0) quality pitches which are not floodlit. Both pitches are overplayed by 1.5 matches a week. Changing facilities required investment.	Explore options to improve pitch quality and look to reduce training on the floodlit pitches and ensure access to appropriate floodlit training facilities. Explore options to improve clubhouse facilities as required.	Club RFU Council	Local Site (M)	S	M	Protect Enhance
15	Borough Road Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	One adult standard quality pitch which has one match equivalent of spare capacity. One youth (11v11) standard quality pitch which is played to capacity.	Retain spare capacity and ensure maintenance is appropriate.	Council FA	Local Site (L)	L	M	Protect Enhance
64	Shaftesbury Youth Club	Football	Club	Privately owned but pitches are available to rent and are used by Wirral Schools FA, Shaftesbury FC and Lions FC. Usage is secured. Two standard quality adult pitches overplayed by one match equivalent session a week. One youth (9v9) standard quality pitch with spare capacity of 1.5 sessions a week. One mini (7v7) standard quality pitch with spare capacity of 2.5 sessions a week. One mini (5v5) standard quality pitch with spare capacity of three sessions a week. Site also includes two small sided 3G pitches (although one is larger) which are important to the sustainability of the Youth Club. The Club has indicated a need for these to be resurfaced	Retain spare capacity and seek options to improve quality as required. Possible site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme. Explore funding opportunities for refurbishment of 3G pitches.	FA	Key Centre (M)	S	M	Protect Enhance
161	St. Peters RC Primary School	Football	Education	One mini (7v7) standard quality pitch with spare capacity of two sessions a week. Used by Heswall Juniors FC. No access to changing provision on site.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality. Investigate the possibility accessing changing if required.	Education FA	Education (M)	S	L	Protect
70	The Glen	Football	Club	One adult and one 9v9 youth pitch both standard quality. Youth pitch is played to capacity and adult pitch has 0.5 spare capacity. Used by Glenavon JFC on a short term licence from the Council as site is reserved for the development of a future railway station. No changing provision.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain/protect pitch quality, if no longer retained for a future railway station.	Club FA	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect
66	Solly Recreation Ground	Football	Club	Leased by Glenavon JFC from a private landowner. Three 5v5 mini and one 7v7 mini pitch, quality assumed standard based on club consultation as no NTA took place. Some evidence of poor drainage. No peak time capacity. No changing provision.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain/protect pitch quality. Possible site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme. Ensure NTA is carried out at this site within the PPS Annual Review to fully determine quality. Explore funding options for provision of changing rooms/toilets to service both this site and the Glen and to potentially replace the Glen, if it needs to be used to provide for a future railway station.	Club FA	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
9	Birkenhead High School Academy	AGP (Hockey)	Education (In house)	One full size poor quality sand based AGP which is not floodlit due to planning constraints. The pitch is used by football clubs only, but is however limited due to no floodlights. The site is closely enclosed by residential property and as such there is highly unlikely to gain planning permission for floodlighting.	Retain for school use and improve quality as required.	Education	Local Site (L)	L	M	Enhance
-	Glenavon Road Playing Field	Football	Private	Former private school playing field, previously used for junior football by Glenavon JFC, disused since the closure and redevelopment of Pershore House School in 2000. Planning permission for residential development refused in 2005, 2011 and 2016.	If disposal of the site is inevitable it must meet the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 of NPPF. This requires replacement provision of an equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location.	Council FA	TBC	M	M	Provide

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ANALYSIS AREA 7 (LISCARD; NEW BRIGHTON; SEACOMBE; AND WALLASEY)

Football

Summary of current and future demand for grass football

Pitch type	Demand (match sessions per week)					
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Latent demand	Total (current)	Future demand	Total (future)
Adult	2.5	13.5	-	11	-	11
Youth	1	8.5	-	7.5	7	14.5
Mini	-	3.5	-	3.5	6	9.5

- Match session shortfalls are identified across each pitch type both currently and in the future.
- Overplay is evident on adult pitches at Ashville Sports & Social Club, Belvidere Recreation Ground and Wallace Recreation Ground, youth pitches at Central Park and Oxtan Park and youth and mini pitches at Whithensfield (the Delph) Playing Field.
- There is demand for four full size 3G pitches to accommodate all training demand, of which, there are currently none.

Recommendations

- Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and reduce current and future shortfalls.
- Seek transfer of teams from overplayed sites to sites with actual spare capacity.
- Seek use of currently unavailable sites in order to further reduce shortfalls and build future capacity.
- Transfer youth 11v11 teams from adult pitches to youth 11v11 pitches. Use resultant spare capacity on adult pitches to create and build future youth pitch capacity.
- Seek opportunities to increase 3G pitch provision as a high priority given deficit identified.

Cricket

- There are five cricket pitches within the analysis area, four of which are available for community use.
- Overplay is evident at Central Park (two matches per season) and New Brighton Cricket Club (six matches per season).
- There are current and future shortfalls amounting to 0.2 pitches.

Recommendations

- Protect current stock of pitches.
- Review quality issues.
- Ensure appropriate maintenance regimes at Central Park and New Brighton Cricket Club to sustain minimal overplay.
- Improve changing facilities at Wallasey Cricket Club.
- Improve/increase training provision.

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Rugby union

- ◀ There are five senior pitches within the Analysis Area, all of which are available for community use.
- ◀ All pitches are assessed as poor quality.
- ◀ Overplay is evident at Belvidere Recreation Ground (three match equivalents) and Wallacre Recreation Ground (one match equivalent).
- ◀ There is an overall shortfall of four match equivalents currently and five match equivalents when accounting for future demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing pitch supply.
- ◀ Explore potential use of currently unavailable pitches within education sites to increase capacity.
- ◀ Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay through installation of drainage systems and/or improved maintenance regimes.
- ◀ Seek to install floodlights or provide additional floodlighting at overplayed sites in order to spread out training demand.
- ◀ Improve changing facilities at Wallasey RUFC and Belvidere Recreation Ground.

Hockey

- ◀ There is one full sized sand based AGP within the Analysis Area, located at Weatherhead High School, and a smaller sized pitch located at The Oldershaw Academy.
- ◀ The carpet at Weatherhead High School is now nine years old and is therefore nearing the end of its lifespan.
- ◀ Weatherhead High School is not available for community use, whereas The Oldershaw Academy is available but records no hockey use.

Recommendations

- ◀ Explore local demand and community use options at Weatherhead High School.
- ◀ Seek to resurface pitch before it reaches the end of its lifespan.
- ◀ Ensure a sinking fund is in place to ensure long term sustainability.

Tennis

- ◀ There are 25 courts within the Analysis Area available for community use and two courts unavailable for community use.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve and sustain court quality.

Bowls

- ◀ There are 13 greens within the Analysis Area, all of which are assessed as good or standard quality.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed sufficient to service demand, with no clubs expressing a need for an additional green.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve/sustain green quality.

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
30	Harrison Park	Tennis	Local Authority	Six macadam poor quality courts which are not floodlit. Publicly available.	Improve quality to an appropriate standard for recreational use and maximise use.	Council LTA	Local Site (L)	M	L-M	Provide Enhance
		Bowls		Three good quality greens with spare capacity. Used by multiple clubs.	Sustain quality of the greens and maximise use.	Council		L	L	
		Football		Two adult standard quality pitches which have spare capacity of 0.5 sessions a week. Used by multiple teams.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain/protect pitch quality.	Council FA		M	M	
111	North Cheshire Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Four shale surface standard quality courts which are not floodlit. Although the courts are assessed as standard the Club reports that often in the winter the courts are unusable forcing them to play matches away from home.	Explore options for funding to improve the quality of courts to enable greater use during winter.	Club LTA	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance
71	The Mosslands School	Tennis	Education	Two macadam standard quality courts not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	Education	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
121	Thorndale Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Five macadam good quality courts which are floodlit. Club also hires courts from Wirral Tennis & Leisure Centre (Site ID: 96) due to lack of court space. Recently received a Sport England Inspired Facilities grant to upgrade courts and clubhouse.	Ensure maintenance levels are appropriate to sustain quality following investment.	Club LTA	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
126	Wallasey Manor Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Six macadam good quality courts which three out of the six are floodlit. The Club has aspirations to increase membership but reports no issues with court quality, access or demand for extra facilities. Club has received Sport England Inspired Facilities funding and hope to complete a clubhouse refurbishment by early 2016.	Ensure maintenance levels are appropriate to sustain quality.	Club LTA	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect
88	Weatherhead High School	Tennis	Education	Four macadam good quality courts which are not floodlit.	Retain for school use.	Education	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Protect Enhance
		AGP		One standard quality sand based AGP (not full size – runoffs not correct size to accommodate community hockey) which is floodlit. New carpet required in the next couple of years. No community use available, school use only.	Retain for school use and consider feasibility of resurfacing as a 9v9 3G surface if community use can be agreed. EH and FA to work together to ensure no impact on hockey.	Education EH FA				

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
20	Central Park	Cricket	Local Authority	One standard quality grass pitch which is overplayed two matches per season. Club has obtained PQS. Used by Parkfield Liscard CC and leases the ground from the Council. Lease due to expire in 2034.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to maintain quality and reduce overplay.	Club CCCB	Key Centre (M)	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		Five good quality greens which all have spare capacity. Used by multiple clubs.	Sustain quality of greens and seek options to maximise use.	Council		L	L	
		Football		Three standard quality adult pitches with 1.5 sessions of spare capacity. Two poor quality youth (9v9) pitches which are overplayed by one session a week. Used by a multiple of teams including Liscard Panthers JFC and Wallasey Wanderers JFC.	Improve pitch quality in order to address overplay. Possible site for FA Pitch Improvement Programme.	Council FA		S	M	
46	New Brighton Cricket and Bowling Club	Cricket	Club	One good quality grass pitch which is overplayed by six matches a season. Club owns the pitch and leases the ground from the Council with secured tenure. Also uses second home ground quite a distance from this site – Site 132: Wayfarers Ground.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to maintain quality and reduce overplay. Ensure the club is aware of and accessing the Grounds maintenance programme. Ensure to renew the lease when the time is appropriate.	Club CCCB	Local Site (H)	L	L	Protect
		Bowls		Two good quality greens with spare capacity. Used by New Brighton B.C and New Brighton Queen's Royal.	Sustain quality of greens and maximise use.	Club		L	L	
72	The Oldershaw School and Business Enterprise College	Cricket	Education (In House)	One standard quality non-turf wicket. Not available for community use.	Retain for school use.	School	Local Site (M)	M	M	Protect Enhance
		Football		Two standard quality youth (9v9) pitches with spare capacity of one match equivalent session a week. Used by Oldershaw Athletic FC.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	FA				
		AGP (Hockey)		One sand based AGP (just under full size) which is not floodlit. Available for community use Mon-Fri (5:30-9:30pm) with significant football usage.	Retain as a sand surface and explore options for increasing hockey use.	School EH				
83	Victoria Park (the Manor Ground)	Football	Club	One standard quality adult pitch with spare capacity of one session a week. Leased by Manor FC (from Poulton Victoria Sports and Social Club).	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain/ protect pitch quality and ensure security of tenure.	Council FA	Local Site (L)	S	L	Protect Enhance
85	Wallasey Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One good quality grass pitch that has no actual spare capacity in the peak period for senior cricket. One good quality non-turf wicket which is not used for competitive matches. Club has obtained a PQS. Club leases the ground from the Council on a 99 year lease. Club reports changing provision is poor quality.	Ensure pitch maintenance and facilities continue to meet with PQS standards. Promote Last Man Stands use of the non-turf wicket. Investigate funding options in order to improve changing provision.	Club CCCB	Local Site (M)	M	M	Protect Enhance
116	Quarry Recreation Ground	Bowls	Local Authority	One good quality green with spare capacity. Used by New Brighton Ladies B.C and Sandridge BC.	Sustain quality of green and maximise use.	Council	Local Site (L)	L	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
8	Belvidere Recreation Ground	Rugby union	Local Authority	Two senior poor (M0/D0) quality pitches, one of which is floodlit. The floodlit pitch is overplayed by 2.5 matches per week and is used for training sessions. The other pitch is overplayed by 0.5 matches a week. Used by Oldershaw RUFC which leases two pitches from the Council on a 25 year lease, signed 2015. Clubhouse is owned by the Club and requires investment.	Explore options to improve pitch quality and look to reduce training on the floodlit pitches and ensure access to appropriate floodlit training facilities. Investigate funding opportunities in order to upgrade the clubhouse.	Club Council RFU	Local Site (H)	S	M	Protect Enhance
		Football		One adult poor quality pitch which is overplayed by two match equivalent sessions a week. Poor pitch quality due to insufficient maintenance, poor maintenance and high levels of dog fouling.	Improve the poor quality of the pitches through an enhanced maintenance regime to decrease the amount of overplay. Investigate access to the FA Pitch Improvement Programme for pitch advice. Seek resolution to dog fouling issue.	Council FA		M	M	
84	Wallacre Recreation Ground	Rugby union	Local Authority	One poor (M0/D0) quality senior pitch used by The Mosslands School. Overplayed by one session a week.	Improve quality where possible.	Council RFU	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance
		Football		Two standard quality adult pitches over marked by two standard quality youth (9v9) pitches which and overplayed by nine sessions a week. Used by multiple teams and Mosslands School.	Look to reconfigure pitches to better accommodate demand and reduce overplay. Improve pitch quality and consider for FA Pitch Improvement Programme. In the longer term, work with the School re feasibility for site to accommodate a 3G pitch.	Council FA		S	M-H	
86	Wallasey RUFC	Rugby union	Club	Club owns the pitch and secure tenure. Two senior poor (M1/ D0) quality pitches, one of which is floodlit. Floodlit pitch has no spare capacity, used for training and junior team U13s. The pitch with no floodlights has a spare capacity of 0.5 matches a week. Changing facilities require investment.	Retain maintenance and ensure the quality of the pitches does not worsen. Investigate possible funding opportunities in order to upgrade the clubhouse. Potential future site for development of a 3G pitch also linked to Ashville FC.	Club Council RFU FA	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect
6	Ashville Sports and Social Club	Football	Local Authority	One standard quality adult pitch which is overplayed by 2.5 sessions a week. Leased by Ashville FC.	Improve quality in order to address overplay and ensure security of tenure for the Club. Consider development of a 3G pitch in partnership with the Club. Explore potential for this with Wallasey RUFC.	Council Club FA RFU	Local Site (M)	M	L	Protect Enhance
154	Oxton Park	Football	Local Authority	Two youth (9v9) standard quality pitches which are overplayed by 3.5 sessions. Used for girls' football.	Improve quality in order to address overplay.	Council FA	Local Site (H)	S	L-M	Protect Enhance
61	Rycroft Playing Fields	Football	Local Authority	Two standard quality adult pitches with spare capacity of 2.5 sessions a week. Used by multiple teams including Peninsular Stars JFC.	Retain some spare capacity but could accommodate further use.	Council FA	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Enhance
77	Tower Grounds	Football	Local Authority	One standard quality youth (9v9) with one match equivalent of spare capacity. Used by New Brighton Saints JFC. No changing provision on site.	Retain spare capacity in order to help improve/protect quality and seek options for access to changing provision as required.	Council FA	Local Site (L)	M	L	Protect Enhance

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Hierarchy tier/priority level	Timescales	Cost	Aim
-	School Lane Recreation Ground	Football	Local Authority	Previously accommodated three adult football pitches on the main site and one junior pitch on the former allotment area to the north but disused due to drainage issues and flooding. No changing facilities unless shared by agreement with adjoining clubs. Located close to Wallacre Recreation Ground.	Explore opportunities to bring the site back into use to address overplay at Wallacre Recreation Ground and linking to use by Ashville AFC and also possibility of accommodating rugby for Mosslands School. If bringing the site back into use is not feasible or sustainable, retain as Urban Greenspace in an area of shortfall in public open space. Any disposal of the site would need to meet the requirements of the second criterion of paragraph 74 of NPPF. This requires replacement provision of an equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location.	Council FA RFU	Local Site (M)	S	M	Enhance Provide
44	Marine Park	Bowls	Local Authority	Two standard quality greens significantly overplayed. Used by Marine Park Bowling Club and Marine Park Ladies Bowling Club.	Improve green quality and ensure appropriate maintenance is in place to accommodate overplay.	Council	Local Site (L)	L	M	Protect Enhance
		Tennis		Four macadam poor quality courts which are not floodlit. Publicly available.	Improve court quality to an appropriate level for recreational use and maximise use.	Council LTA		M	L	
-	Kings Parade New Brighton	Bowls	Local Authority	Two greens recently taken out of use due to minimal/no use.	No action required.	Council	Local Site (L)	-	-	-

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

PART 7: KEEP THE STRATEGY ROBUST AND UP TO DATE

Delivery

The Playing Pitch Strategy seeks to provide guidance for maintenance/management decisions and investment made across the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral. By addressing the issues identified in the Assessment Report and using the strategic framework presented in this Strategy, the current and future sporting and recreational needs of the Borough can be satisfied. The Strategy identifies where there is a deficiency in provision and identifies how best to resolve this in the future. The steering group established for the development of the playing pitch strategy will continue to meet to ensure the PPS is used reviewed and up dated as needed.

This document will be used in a practical manner, is engaged with partners and encourages partnerships to be developed, to ensure that outdoor sports facilities are regarded as a vital aspect of community life and which contribute to the achievement of Council priorities.

The production of this Strategy is the beginning of the planning process. The success of this Strategy and the benefits that are gained are dependent upon regular engagement between all partners involved and the adoption of a strategic approach.

Each member of the steering group will take the lead to ensure the PPS is used and applied appropriately within their area of work and influence. The role of the steering group does not end with the completion of the PPS document

To help ensure the PPS is well used it should be regarded as the key document within the Borough guiding the improvement and protection of playing pitch, tennis court and bowling green provision. It needs to be the document people regularly turn to for information on how the current demand is met and what actions are required to improve the situation and meet future demand. In order for this to be achieved the steering group need to have a clear understanding of how the PPS can be applied and therefore delivered. Key uses for the PPS include evidence for supporting funding bids, guidance to inform planning decisions and planning applications and decision making for capital investment.

The process of developing the PPS has already resulted in a number of benefits that will help with its application and delivery. These include enhanced partnership working across different agendas and organisations, pooling of resources along with strengthening relationships and understanding between different stakeholders and between members of the steering group and the sporting community. The drivers behind the PPS and the work to develop the recommendations and action plan have also been highlighted, and helped the steering group to understand, the key areas to which it can be applied and how this has delivered.

Monitoring and updating

There will be regular annual monitoring and review against the actions identified in the Strategy. This monitoring will be led by the local authority and supported by all members of, and reported back to, the steering group. Understanding and learning lessons from how the PPS has been applied should also form a key component of monitoring its delivery. This should form an on-going role of the steering group. Between annual reviews the steering group will operate as a 'virtual' group; prepared to comment on suggestions and updates electronically when relevant. The key partners will be able to meet quarterly as part of the boroughs Parks Partnership and Performance to review progress on key indicators.

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As a guide, if no review and subsequent update has been carried out within three years of the PPS being signed off by the steering group, then Sport England and the NGBs would consider the PPS and the information on which it is based to be out of date. If the PPS is used as a 'live' document, and kept up to date, the time frame can be extended to five years.

Furthermore, the process of refreshing the PPS will be much less resource intensive if changes and updates have been made throughout the five years. If there are no updates to the document within the period the nature of the supply and in particular the demand for playing pitches is likely to have changed. Therefore, without any form of review and update within this time period it would be difficult to make the case that the supply and demand information and assessment work is sufficiently robust.

The PPS will be reviewed each autumn on an annual basis from the date it is formally signed off by the steering group. This will help to maintain the momentum and commitment that has been built up when developing the PPS. Taking into account the time to develop the PPS this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed.

An annual review should not be regarded as a particularly resource intensive task. However, it will highlight:

- ◀ How the delivery of the recommendations and action plan has progressed and any changes required to the priority afforded to each action (e.g. the priority of some may increase following the delivery of others)
- ◀ How the PPS has been applied and the lessons learnt
- ◀ Any changes to particularly important sites and/or clubs in the area (e.g. the most used or high quality sites for a particular sport) and other supply and demand information, what this may mean for the overall assessment work and the key findings and issues
- ◀ Any development of a specific sport or particular format of a sport
- ◀ Any new or emerging issues and opportunities.

Once the PPS is complete the role of the steering group will evolve so that it:

- ◀ Acts as a focal point for promoting the value and importance of the PPS and playing pitch provision in the area
- ◀ Monitors, evaluates and reviews progress with the delivery of the recommendations and action plan
- ◀ Shares lessons learnt from how the PPS has been used and how it has been applied to a variety of circumstances
- ◀ Ensures the PPS is used effectively to input into any new opportunities to secure improved provision and influence relevant programmes and initiatives
- ◀ Maintains links between all relevant parties with an interest in playing pitch provision in the area;
- ◀ Reviews the need to update the PPS along with the supply and demand information and assessment work on which it is based. Further to review the group should either:
 - ◀ Provide a short annual progress and update paper, with a report to the Council's Cabinet lead of sports.
 - ◀ Provide a partial review focussing on particular sport, pitch type and/or sub area; or
 - ◀ Lead a full review and update of the PPS document (including the supply and demand information and assessment details).

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Alongside the regular steering group meetings it is recommended that Wirral Council will hold annual sport specific meetings with the pitch sport NGBs and other relevant organisations. These meetings will look to update the key supply and demand information, if necessary amend the assessment work, track progress with implementing the recommendations and action plan and highlight any new issues and opportunities. Things to consider include formation of new teams or loss of teams, any new formats of the sports that would impact on facilities, changes in quality or creation of new facilities.

These meetings will be timed to fit with the annual affiliation process undertaken by the NGBs which would help to capture any changes in the number and nature of sports clubs in the area. Other information that is already collected on a regular basis such as pitch booking records for local authority and other sites could be fed into these meetings. The NGBs will also be able to indicate any further performance quality assessments that have been undertaken within the study area. Discussion with the league secretaries may also indicate annual league meetings which it may be useful to attend to pick up any specific issues and/or enable a review of the relevant club details to be undertaken.

Each year the steering group will regularly review and refresh area by area plans taking account of any improvements in pitch quality (and hence increases in pitch capacity) and also any new negotiations for community use of education or other private sites in the future. Updating the action plans will make the task of updating the PPS much easier.

The Council will maintain the data contained with the accompanying Playing Pitch Database. This will enable it to refresh and update area by area plans on a regular basis. The accompanying databases are intended to be refreshed on a season by season basis and it is important that there is cross-departmental working, including for example, Parks and Countryside and sports development staff, to ensure that this is achieved and that results are used to inform subsequent annual sports facility development plans. Results should be shared with partners via a consultative mechanism.

The Steering group is comprised of,

- ◀ WBC Strategic lead for environment and community services
- ◀ WBC strategic planner
- ◀ WBC Parks and Countryside lead for the PPS
- ◀ WBC Sports and Development lead for the PPS
- ◀ WBC Asset management lead for the PPS
- ◀ NGB for Tennis, Football, Rugby, Hockey, Cricket and Bowls.

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Checklist

To help ensure the PPS is delivered and is kept robust and up to date, the steering group can refer to the new methodology Stage E Checklist: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date:

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and-guidance/playing-pitch-strategy-guidance/>

Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date	Tick 	
	Yes	Requires Attention
Step 9: Apply & deliver the strategy		
1. Are steering group members clear on how the PPS can be applied across a range of relevant areas?		
2. Is each member of the steering group committed to taking the lead to help ensure the PPS is used and applied appropriately within their area of work and influence?		
3. Has a process been put in place to ensure regular monitoring of how the recommendations and action plan are being delivered and the PPS is being applied?		
Step 10: Keep the strategy robust & up to date		
1. Has a process been put in place to ensure the PPS is kept robust and up to date?		
2. Does the process involve an annual update of the PPS?		
3. Is the steering group to be maintained and is it clear of its on-going role?		
4. Is regular liaison with the NGBs and other parties planned?		
5. Has all the supply and demand information been collated and presented in a format (i.e. single document that can be filtered accordingly) that will help people to review it and highlight any changes?		
6. Have any changes made to the Active Places Power data been fed back to Sport England?		

APPENDIX ONE: STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The recommendations within this Strategy have been developed via the combination of information gathered during consultation, site visits and analysis. They reflect key areas to be addressed over its lifetime. However, implementation must be considered in the context of financial implications and the need for some proposals to also meet planning considerations.

National context

The provision of high quality and accessible community outdoor sports facilities at a local level is a key requirement for achieving the targets set out by the Government and Sport England. It is vital that this strategy is cognisant of and works towards these targets in addition to local priorities and plans.

DCMS (Department for Culture Media & Sport) is currently (2015) consulting on a new strategy for sport. It will seek to address the following challenges:

- ◀ How to address the recent decline in the number of people that regularly take part in sport and deliver a long-term sustainable increase in participation;
- ◀ What type(s) of participation should be encouraged and how should they be measured;
- ◀ How to ensure that funding goes to those who can best deliver results;
- ◀ How to specifically target under-represented groups;
- ◀ Understanding the role of the private sector, and how public sector bodies, National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and other sports bodies should work with the private sector to help deliver an increase in participation;
- ◀ How to best support participation in new and/or non-traditional sports and activities;
- ◀ How to maximise the potential of new technology to increase participation;
- ◀ How to use the power of sport to achieve broader positive social outcomes and whether some funding should specifically be spent for that purpose.

Sport England: Towards an Active Nation (2016-2021)

Sport England has recently released its new five year strategy 'Towards an Active Nation'. The aim is to target the 28% of people who do less than 30 minutes of exercise each week and will focus on the least active groups; typically, women, the disabled and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Sport England will invest up to £30m on a plan to increase the number of volunteers in grassroots sport. Emphasis will be on working with a larger range of partners with less money being directed towards National Governing Bodies.

The Strategy will help deliver against the five health, social and economic outcomes set out in the Government's Sporting Future strategy.

- ◀ Physical Wellbeing
- ◀ Mental Wellbeing
- ◀ Individual Development
- ◀ Social & Community Development
- ◀ Economic Development

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National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out planning policies for England. It details how these changes are expected to be applied to the planning system. It also provides a framework for local people and their councils to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

The NPPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It identifies that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

The 'promoting healthy communities' theme identifies that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficiencies or surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- ◀ An assessment has been undertaken, which has clearly shown that the open space, buildings or land is surplus to requirements.
- ◀ The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.
- ◀ The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities.

The FA National Game Strategy (2015 – 2019)

The Football Association's (FA) National Game Strategy provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities, expenditure proposals and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a four year period. The main issues facing grassroots football are identified as:

- ◀ Sustain and Increase Participation.
- ◀ Ensure access to education sites to accommodate the game.
- ◀ Help players to be the best that they can be and provide opportunities for them to progress from grassroots to elite.
- ◀ Recruit, retain and develop a network of qualified referees
- ◀ Support clubs, leagues and other competition providers to develop a safe, inclusive and positive football experience for everyone.
- ◀ Support Clubs and Leagues to become sustainable businesses, understanding and serving the needs of players and customers.
- ◀ Improve grass pitches through the pitch improvement programme to improve existing facilities and changing rooms.
- ◀ Deliver new and improved facilities including new Football Turf Pitches.
- ◀ Work with priority Local Authorities enabling 50% of mini-soccer and youth matched to be played on high quality artificial grass pitches.

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England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Cricket Unleashed 5 Year Plan

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic five-year plan in 2016 (available at <http://www.cricketunleashed.com>). Its success will be measured by the number of people who play, follow or support the whole game.

The plan sets out five important headline elements and each of their key focuses, these are:

- ◀ **More Play** – make the game more accessible and inspire the next generation of players, coaches, officials and volunteers. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Clubs and leagues*
 - ◀ *Kids*
 - ◀ *Communities*
 - ◀ *Casual*
- ◀ **Great Teams** – deliver winning teams who inspire and excite through on-field performance and off-field behaviour. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Pathway*
 - ◀ *Support*
 - ◀ *Elite Teams*
 - ◀ *England Teams*
- ◀ **Inspired Fans** – put the fan at the heart of our game to improve and personalise the cricket experience for all. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Fan focus*
 - ◀ *New audiences*
 - ◀ *Global stage*
 - ◀ *Broadcast and digital*
- ◀ **Good Governance and Social Responsibility** – make decisions in the best interests of the game and use the power of cricket to make a positive difference. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Integrity*
 - ◀ *Community programmes*
 - ◀ *Our environments*
 - ◀ *One plan*
- ◀ **Strong Finance and Operations** – increase the game's revenues, invest our resources wisely and administer responsibly to secure the growth of the game. Focus on:
 - ◀ *People*
 - ◀ *Revenue and reach*
 - ◀ *Insight*
 - ◀ *Operations*

The Rugby Football Union National Facilities Strategy (2013-2017)

The RFU National Facility Strategy 2013-2017 provides a framework for development of high-quality, well-managed facilities that will help to strengthen member clubs and grow the game in communities around them. In conjunction with partners, this strategy will assist and support clubs and other organisations, so that they can continue to provide quality opportunities for all sections of the community to enjoy the game. It sets out the broad facility needs of the sport and identifies investment priorities to the game and its key partners.

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It identifies that with 1.5 million players there is a continuing need to invest in community club facilities in order to:

- ◀ Create a platform for growth in club rugby participation and membership, especially with a view to exploiting the opportunities afforded by RWC 2015.
- ◀ Ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of rugby clubs, through supporting not only their playing activity but also their capacity to generate revenue through a diverse range of activities and partnerships.

In summary the priorities for investment which have met the needs of the game for the Previous period remain valid:

- ◀ Increase the provision of changing rooms and clubhouses that can sustain concurrent adult and junior male and female activity at clubs
- ◀ Improve the quality and quantity of natural turf pitches and floodlighting
- ◀ Increase the provision of artificial grass pitches that deliver wider game development

It is also a high priority for the RFU to target investment in the following:

- ◀ Upgrade and transform social, community and catering facilities, which can support the generation of additional revenues
- ◀ Facility upgrades, which result in an increase in energy-efficiency, in order to reduce the running costs of clubs
- ◀ Pitch furniture, including rugby posts and pads, pitch side spectator rails and grounds maintenance equipment

England Hockey (EH) - A Nation Where Hockey Matters (2013-2017)

EH have a clear vision, a powerful philosophy and five core objectives that all those who have a role in advancing Hockey can unite behind. With UK Sport and Sport England's investment, and growing commercial revenues, EH are ambitious about how they can take the sport forward in Olympic cycles and beyond.

"The vision is for England to be a 'Nation Where Hockey Matters'. A nation where hockey is talked about at dinner tables, playgrounds and public houses, up and down the country. A nation where the sport is on the back pages of our newspapers, where children dream of scoring a goal for England's senior hockey team, and where the performance stirs up emotion amongst the many, not the few"

England Hockey aspires to deepen the passion of those who play, deliver and follow sport by providing the best possible environments and the best possible experiences. Whilst reaching out to new audiences by making the sport more visible, available and relevant and through the many advocates of hockey.

Underpinning all this is the infrastructure which makes the sport function. EH understand the importance of volunteers, coaches, officials, clubs and facilities. The more inspirational people can be, the more progressive Hockey can be and the more befitting the facilities can be, the more EH will achieve. The core objectives are as follows:

- ◀ Grow our Participation
- ◀ Deliver International Success
- ◀ Increase our Visibility
- ◀ Enhance our Infrastructure

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- ◀ Be a strong and respected Governing Body

England Hockey has a Capital Investment Programme (CIP), that is planned to lever £5.6 million investment into hockey facilities over the next four years, underpinned by £2m million from the National Governing Body. With over 500 pitches due for refurbishment in the next 4-8 years, there will be a large focus placed on these projects through this funding stream. The current level of pitches available for hockey is believed to be sufficient for the medium term needs, however in some areas, pitches may not be in the right places in order to maximise playing opportunities

England Hockey Strategy

Vision: For every hockey club in England to have appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players.

Mission: More, Better, Happier Players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities.

Our club market is well structured and clubs are required to affiliate to England Hockey to play in community leagues. As a result, only relatively few occasional teams lie outside our affiliation structure. Schools and Universities are the other two areas where significant hockey is played.

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

- 1. PROTECT:** To conserve the existing hockey provision

We currently have over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities.) We need to retain the current provision where appropriate to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country.

- 2. IMPROVE:** To improve the existing facilities stock (physically and administratively)

The current facilities stock is ageing and there needs to be strategic investment into refurbishing the pitches and ancillary facilities. There needs to be more support for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers & education around owning an asset.

- 3. DEVELOP:** To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain. This might include consolidating hockey provision in a local area where appropriate.

The research has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable Hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site.

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2015-2018 British Tennis Strategy

The new strategy is presented in a concise one page framework that includes key strategies relating to three participation "focus" areas, six participation "drivers" and three participation "enablers". To achieve success, the 12 strategy areas will need to work interdependently to stem the decline and unlock sustainable growth:

The three participation "focus" areas are where tennis is consumed:

- ◀ Deliver great service to clubs
- ◀ Build partnerships in the community, led by parks
- ◀ Enhance the tennis offer in education

The six participation "drivers" are the areas that will make the biggest difference where tennis is consumed. They must all be successful on a standalone and interconnected basis and include:

- ◀ Becoming more relevant to coaches
- ◀ Refocusing on recreational competition
- ◀ Providing results orientated facility investment
- ◀ Applying best in class marketing and promotion
- ◀ Jump starting the peak summer season
- ◀ Establishing a "no compromise" high performance programme with focus

The final layer is comprised of three participation "enablers" that underpin our ability to be successful. These enablers are rooted in how the LTA will get better; how the entire network of partners must be harnessed to work together and the need to raise more financial resources to fund our sport's turnaround. They include:

- ◀ Becoming a more effective and efficient LTA
- ◀ Harnessing the full resource network
- ◀ Generating new revenue

For further information and more detail on the framework please go to <http://www.lta.org.uk/about-the-lta/structure-vision>

British Crown Green Bowling Association

Please note there is no current facility guidance provided by British Crown Green Bowling Association responsible for crown green bowls in England.

<http://crowngreenbowls.sharepoint.com/Pages/default.aspx>

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APPENDIX TWO: FUNDING PLAN

Funding opportunities

In order to deliver much of the Action Plan it is recognised that external partner funding will need to be sought. Although seeking developer contributions in applicable situations and other local funding/community schemes could go some way towards meeting deficiencies and/or improving provision, other potential/match sources of funding should be investigated. Below is a list of current funding sources that are relevant for community improvement projects involving sports facilities.

Awarding body	Description
Big Lottery Fund http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/	Big invests in community groups and to projects that improve health, education and the environment
Sport England The current funding streams will change throughout 2016/17 so refer to the website for the latest information: https://www.sportengland.org/funding/our-different-funds/	Sport England is keen to marry funding with other organisations that provide financial support to create and strengthen the best sports projects. Applicants are encouraged to maximise the levels of other sources of funding, and projects that secure higher levels of partnership funding are more likely to be successful.
Football Foundation http://www.footballfoundation.org.uk/	This trust provides financial help for football at all levels, from national stadia and FA Premier League clubs down to grass-roots local development.
Rugby Football Foundation - The Grant Match Scheme www.rugbyfootballfoundation.org	The Grant Match Scheme provides easy-to-access grant funding for playing projects that contribute to the recruitment and retention of community rugby players. Grants are available on a 'match funding' 50:50 basis to support a proposed project. Projects eligible for funding include: 1. Pitch Facilities – Playing surface improvement, pitch improvement, rugby posts, floodlights. 2. Club House Facilities – Changing rooms, shower facilities, washroom/lavatory, and measures to facilitate segregation (e.g. women, juniors). 3. Equipment – Large capital equipment, pitch maintenance capital equipment (e.g. mowers).
EU Life Fund http://ec.europa.eu/environment/funding/intro_en.htm	LIFE is the EU's financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU.
EH Capital Investment Programme (CIP)	The CIP fund is for the provision of new pitches and re-surfacing of old AGPs. It forms part of EH's 4 year Whole Sport's Plan.
National Hockey Foundation http://www.thenationalhockeyfoundation.com/	The Foundation primarily makes grants to a wide range of organisations that meet one of our chosen areas of focus: Young people and hockey. Enabling the development of hockey at youth or community level.

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Protecting Playing Fields

Sport England's Strategy: Towards an Active Nation (2016-2021) will simplify the funding reducing the number of investment programmes from 30 to 7:

- ◀ Tackling Inactivity
- ◀ Children and Young People
- ◀ Volunteering
- ◀ Taking sport and activity into the mass market
- ◀ Supporting sports core markets
- ◀ Local delivery
- ◀ Creating welcoming sports facilities

The current funding streams listed below will remain operational during 2016/17 but will be phased out and replaced by one or more of the seven listed above.

It launched Protecting Playing Fields (PPF) as part of its Places People Play Olympic legacy mass participation programme and is investing £10 million of National Lottery funding in community sports projects.

The programme is being delivered via five funding rounds (with up to £2 million being awarded to projects in each round). Its focus is on protecting and improving playing fields and developing community sport. It will fund capital projects that create, develop and improve playing fields for sporting and community use and offer long term protection of the site for sport. Projects are likely to involve the construction of new pitches or improvement of existing ones that need levelling or drainage works.

Sport England's 'Inspired Facilities' funding programme will be delivered via funding rounds and where clubs, community and voluntary sector groups and local authorities can apply for grants of between £25k and £150k where there is a proven local need for a facility to be modernised, extended or modified to open up new sporting opportunities.

The programmes three priorities are:

- ◀ Organisations that haven't previously received a Sport England Lottery grant of over £10k.
- ◀ Projects that are the only public sports facility in the local community.
- ◀ Projects that offer local opportunities to people who do not currently play sport.

Besides this scheme providing an important source of funding for potential voluntary and community sector sites, it may also providing opportunities for Council to access this funding particularly in relation to resurfacing the artificial sports surfaces

Strategic Facilities Fund

Facilities are fundamental in providing more people with the opportunity to play sport. The supply of the right facilities in the right areas is key to getting more people to play sport. Sport England recognises the considerable financial pressures that local authorities are currently under and the need to strategically review and rationalise leisure stock so that cost effective and financially sustainable provision is available in the long-term. Sport England has a key role to play in the sector, from influencing the local strategic planning and review of sports facility provision to investing in major capital projects of strategic importance.

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The Strategic Facilities Fund will direct capital investment into a number of key local authority projects that are identified through a strategic needs assessment and that have maximum impact on growing and sustaining community sport participation. These projects will be promoted as best practice in the delivery of quality and affordable facilities, whilst demonstrating long-term operational efficiencies. The fund will support projects that bring together multiple partners, including input from the public and private sectors and national governing bodies of sport (NGBs). The fund is also designed to encourage applicants and their partners to invest further capital and revenue funding to ensure sustainability. Sport England has allocated a budget of circa £30m of Lottery funding to award through this fund (2013-17).

Key features which applications must demonstrate are:

- ◀ A robust needs and evidence base which illustrates the need for the project and the proposed facility mix
- ◀ Strong partnerships which will last beyond the initial development of the project and underpin the long-term sustainability of the facility
- ◀ Multi-sport provision and activity that demonstrates delivery against NGB local priorities
- ◀ A robust project plan from inception to completion with achievable milestones and timescales.

Lottery applications will be invited on a solicited-only basis and grants of between £500,000 and £2,000,000 will be considered.

The Strategic Facilities Fund will prioritise projects that:

- ◀ Are large-scale capital developments identified as part of a local authority sports facility strategic needs assessment/rationalisation programme and that will drive a significant increase in community sports participation
- ◀ Demonstrate consultation/support from two or more NGBs and delivery against their local priorities
- ◀ Are multi-sport facilities providing opportunities to drive high participant numbers
- ◀ Are a mix of facility provision (indoor and/or outdoor) to encourage regular and sustained use by a large number of people
- ◀ Offer an enhancement, through modernisation, to existing provision and/or new build facilities
- ◀ Have a long-term sustainable business plan attracting public and private investment
- ◀ Show quality in design, but are fit for purpose to serve the community need
- ◀ Have effective and efficient operating models, combined with a commitment to development programmes which will increase participation and provide talent pathways.

Projects will need to demonstrate how the grant will deliver against Sport England's strategic priorities. The funding available is for the development of the capital infrastructure, which can contribute to the costs of new build, modernisation or refurbishment and purchasing of major fixed equipment as part of the facility development.

Funder's requirements

Below is a list of funding requirements that can typically be expected to be provided as part of a funding bid, some of which will fall directly out of the Playing Pitch Strategy:

- ◀ Identify need (i.e., why the Project is needed) and how the Project will address it.
- ◀ Articulate what difference the Project will make.

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- ◀ Identify benefits, value for money and/or added value.
- ◀ Provide baseline information (i.e., the current situation).
- ◀ Articulate how the Project is consistent with local, regional and national policy.
- ◀ Financial need and project cost.
- ◀ Funding profile (i.e., Who's providing what? Unit and overall costs).
- ◀ Technical information and requirements (e.g., planning permission).
- ◀ Targets, outputs and/or outcomes (i.e., the situation after the Project/what the Project will achieve)
- ◀ Evidence of support from partners and stakeholders.
- ◀ Background/essential documentation (e.g., community use agreement).
- ◀ Assessment of risk.

Indicative costs

The indicative costs of implementing key elements of the Action Plan can be found on the Sport England website:

<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>

The costs are for the development of community sports facilities and are based on providing good quality sports facility based on the last quarter. The Facilities Costs are updated on the Sport England website every quarter. These rounded costs are based on schemes most recently funded through the Lottery (and therefore based on economies of scale), updated to reflect current forecast price indices provided by the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS), prepared by Technical Team Lead of Sport England.

APPENDIX THREE: GLOSSARY

Displaced demand generally relates to play by teams or other users of playing pitches from within the study area (i.e. from residents of the study area) which takes place outside of the area. This may be due to issues with the provision of pitches and ancillary facilities in the study area, just reflective of how the sports are played (e.g. at a central venue for the wider area) or due to the most convenient site for the respective users just falling outside of the local authority/study area.

Unmet demand is demand that is known to exist but unable to be accommodated on current supply of pitches. This could be in the form of a team with access to a pitch for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa. This could also be due to the poor quality and therefore limited capacity of pitches in the area and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement. League secretaries may be aware of some unmet demand as they may have declined applications from teams wishing to enter their competitions due to a lack of pitch provision which in turn is hindering the growth of the league.

Latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. This could include feedback from a sports club who may feel that they could set up and run an additional team if they had access to better provision.

Future demand is an informed estimate made of the likely future demand for pitches in the study area. This is generally based on the most appropriate current and future population projections for the relevant age and gender groupings for each sport. Key trends, local objectives and targets and consultation also inform this figure.

Casual use or other use could take place on natural grass pitches or AGPs and include:

- ◀ Regular play from non-sports club sources (e.g. companies, schools, fitness classes)
- ◀ Infrequent informal/friendly matches
- ◀ Informal training sessions
- ◀ More casual forms of a particular sport organised by sports clubs or other parties
- ◀ Significant public use and informal play, particularly where pitches are located in parks/recreation grounds.

Carrying capacity is the amount of play a site can regularly accommodate (in the relevant comparable unit) for community use without adversely affecting its quality and use. This is typically outlined by the NGB

Overplay is when a pitch is used over the amount that the carrying capacity will allow, (i.e. more than the site can accommodate). Pitches have a limit of how much play they can accommodate over a certain period of time before their quality, and in turn their use, is adversely affected.

Spare capacity is the amount of additional play that a pitch could potentially accommodate in addition to current activity. There may be reasons why this potential to accommodate additional play should not automatically be regarded as actual spare capacity, for example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below its carrying capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of friendly matches and training activity. This needs to be investigated before the capacity is deemed **actual spare capacity**.

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Match equivalent sessions is an appropriate comparable unit for pitch usage. For football, rugby union and rugby league, pitches should relate to a typical week within the season and one match = one match equivalent session if it occurs every week or 0.5 match equivalent sessions if it occurs every other week (i.e. reflecting home and away fixtures). For cricket pitches it is appropriate to look at the number of match equivalent sessions over the course of a season and one match = one match equivalent session.

Lapsed and disused – playing field sites that formerly accommodated playing pitches but are no longer used for formal or informal sports use within the last five years (lapsed) or longer (disused).