



WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH AND OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
BCGBA	Crown Green Bowling Association
BC	Bowls Club
CC	Cricket Club
CCFA	Cheshire Football Association
DALP	Delivery and Allocations Local Plan
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FF	Football Foundation
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
FPM	Facilities Planning Model
GMA	Grounds Management Association
HC	Hockey Club
JFC	Junior Football Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LFFP	Local Football Facilities Plan
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
NFFS	National Football Facilities Strategy
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPOSS	Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy
RDO	Rugby Development Officer
RFL	Rugby Football League
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RFC	Rugby Football Club
TC	Tennis Club
U	Under

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PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS) for Wirral. Building upon the preceding Assessment Report, it provides a clear, strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing playing pitches and accompanying ancillary facilities up to 2037 (in line with the Council's emerging Local Plan).

The Strategy has been developed to provide:

- ◀ A vision for the future improvement and prioritisation of playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities.
- ◀ A number of aims and objectives to help in delivering the recommendations and actions.
- ◀ A series of sport-by-sport recommendations which provide a strategic framework for sport led improvements to provision.
- ◀ A series of strategic recommendations which provide a framework for the improvement, maintenance, development and, as appropriate, rationalisation of the playing pitch and outdoor sport stock.
- ◀ A prioritised area-by-area Action Plan to address key issues on a site-by-site and sport-by-sport basis.
- ◀ Housing growth scenarios to identify the potential impact of development on playing pitch and outdoor sport provision over the Local Plan period and contributions that can be sought as a result of this.

The PPOSS is being delivered in accordance with Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) Guidance (for playing pitch sports) and Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide (for "non-pitch" sports). The PPS Guidance details a stepped approach, separated into five distinct sections, as follows:

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach (1)
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision (2 & 3)
- ◀ Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views (4, 5 & 6)
- ◀ Stage D: Develop the strategy (7 & 8)
- ◀ Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date (9 & 10)

This report is considered to be Stage D of the process, with stages A-C complete and the outcome contained within the accompanying Assessment Report document. Stage E will commence upon completion of the Strategy and will be ongoing throughout the lifespan of the work.

To best implement the findings of the PPOSS, there is a need to build and sustain key partnerships between various stakeholders. This includes, but may not be limited to, the Council, National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs), Sport England, education providers, leisure contractors, maintenance contractors, community clubs and private landowners. As part of this, it is imperative for the Steering Group that has been responsible for the direction of the work to continue to be engaged.

It is also important that there is regular monitoring and review against the recommendation and actions identified in the PPOSS. As a guide, if no review and subsequent update has been carried out within three years of the work being signed off, or the baseline data having been collected (whichever is sooner), Sport England and the NGBs will consider it to be out of date. If the PPS is used as a 'live' document and kept updated, its lifespan can be extended (see Part 8).

For a glossary of terms, see Appendix 2.

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Covid-19

The PPOSS has been undertaken during the Covid-19 global pandemic, which has resulted in England entering unprecedented restrictions since March 2020. At various points in time, grassroots sport has been halted, leading to truncated seasons and changes to the way leagues have been run and fixtures scheduled. This has had a direct impact on the supply of and demand for playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities.

It is currently unknown what impact the pandemic and restrictions will have on participation and provision moving forward. Therefore, this should form a key aspect of the Stage E monitoring and review process, with the review of the documents needing to ensure that any recommendations remain accurate as the effects of Covid-19 become clearer.

Why the strategy is being developed

The Council has several overarching strategies relevant to the development and implementation of the PPOSS, such as its Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, the Wirral Sport and Recreation Strategy and the Council's Asset Management Plan. Furthermore, the Council has underpinning objectives which drive the study, including the promotion of healthy lifestyles and the development of improved open space in the Borough.

Taking the above into account, the agreed aims of the PPOSS are to:

- ◀ Provide an evidence base for the Council and partner services in parks and countryside as well as planning and delivery.
- ◀ Provide a clear understanding of the mix of provision in the Borough.
- ◀ Provide an evidence base to support potential future funding decisions/applications.
- ◀ Provide evidence for the Council's emerging Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan and to inform site allocations and the consideration of planning applications.
- ◀ Underpin the provision of an accessible and realistic network of weather-resilient facilities which are usable throughout the season.
- ◀ Inform and drive achievement of a high standard of maintenance at an affordable price for users and providers.
- ◀ Deliver the health and social cohesion benefits of sports against a backdrop of major financial austerity and public sector budget reductions.
- ◀ Reduce the level of Council subsidy of provision.
- ◀ Engage with stakeholders on new ways of working e.g. increasing self-management.

The PPOSS will provide an evidence base for planning decisions and funding bids and will ensure that this evidence is sound, robust and capable of being scrutinised through the Local Plan examination. It meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

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, with paragraph 96 discussing 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.

Paragraph 97 discusses assessments and the protection of "existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields". Paragraphs 99 and 100 also promote the identification of green spaces by local communities and the protection of these facilities. Such spaces may include playing fields and outdoor sport facilities.

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Wirral Borough Council's Local Plan

A new Local Plan is being developed by the Council to shape the future of the Borough up to 2037. This will set out the overall requirement for housing and other developments over its lifespan and will be used to make decisions on planning applications. It will also make clear the Council's priorities and provide guidance on what will and will not be permitted. The findings and recommendations of the PPOSS will therefore feed into the process and guide planning policy in relation to relevant facilities.

Agreed scope

The PPOSS covers the following playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities, including accompanying ancillary provision:

- ◀ Football pitches (including 3G pitches)
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches (including 3G pitches)
- ◀ Hockey/artificial grass pitches (sand/water based)
- ◀ Tennis courts
- ◀ Bowling greens

Rugby league also forms part of the scope of a PPOSS. However, no supply or demand has been identified in the Borough and it has therefore not been considered as part of this study, as agreed upon by the Rugby Football League (RFL).

All facilities are included regardless of ownership and/or management. In that regard, the PPOSS has aimed to capture all relevant provision; however, there may be instances that have led to omissions within the report, for example on school or private sites where access was not possible (although facilities at sites not accessed are still included within the PPS where provision is known to exist from other data sources). Where provision has not been recorded within the report, it is still considered to exist and for planning purposes continues to do so. Furthermore, any exclusion does not mean that the provision is not required from a supply and demand point of view; the overarching findings of the Strategy still apply to it.

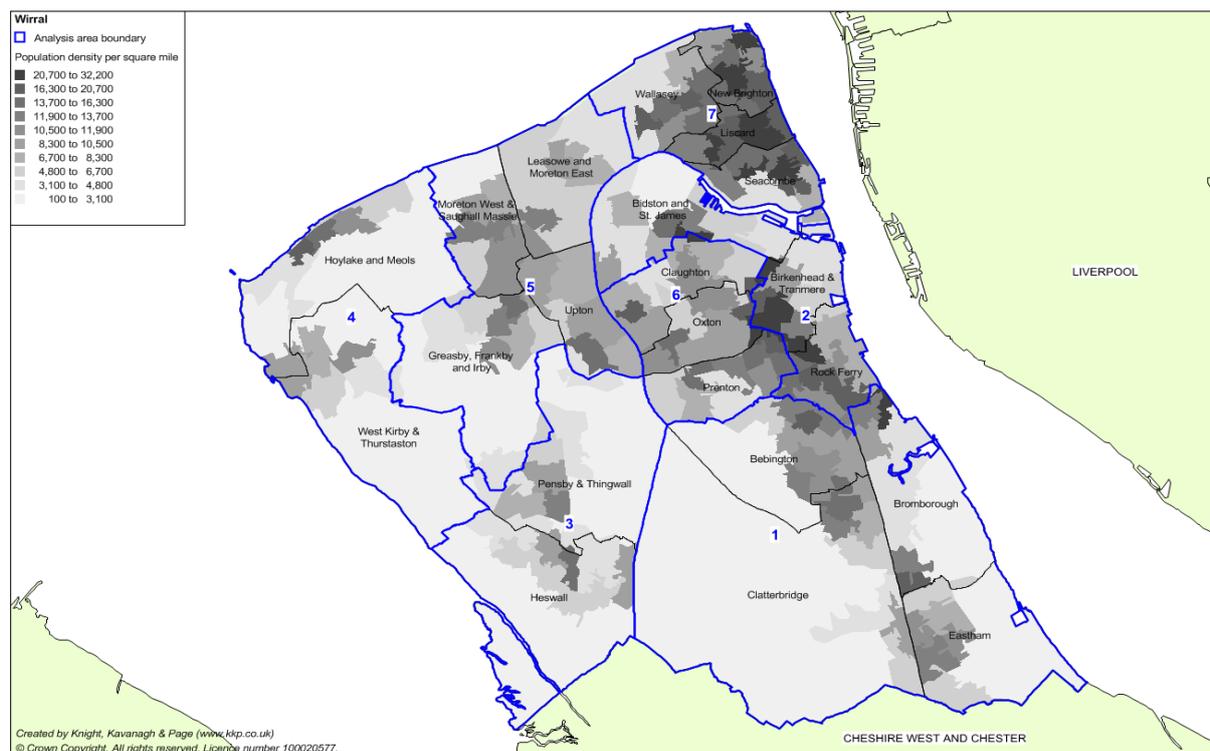
Study area

The study area is the Wirral Borough Council boundary area. Further to this, sub areas or analysis areas are used to allow for a more localised assessment of provision and examination of supply and demand at a local level. For this purpose, the Borough is split into seven sections, as shown in Table 1.1 below and Figure 1.1 overleaf.

Table 1: Analysis areas

Analysis area	Description
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

Figure 1.1: Analysis areas



Cross-boundary migration is also explored i.e. demand from neighbouring authorities that imports into the Borough and demand from within which exports out. Predominately, such migration encompasses the authorities of Liverpool and Cheshire West and Chester.

1.1: Headline findings

The table below highlights the updated quantitative headline shortfalls for each included sport within Wirral from the preceding Assessment Report. For qualitative findings and site-specific findings, please see Part 4: Sport Specific Recommendations and Scenarios, and Part 6: Action Plan.

When determining the current supply and demand balance for pitch sports, match equivalent sessions are used as the unit of calculation. This converts the amount of play provision can accommodate (carrying capacity) and how much play is taking place (current usage) into the same unit of demand. As the main usage of pitches is likely to be for matches, it is appropriate for the unit of calculation to be match equivalent sessions, but it may for example include training sessions and informal use.

The unit for football and rugby union relates to a typical week, whilst for cricket it is per season. This is because play on a cricket square is primarily determined by the number and quality of wickets. As play is rotated across the wickets to reduce wear and to allow for repair, each wicket is able to accommodate a certain amount of play per season as opposed to per week.

For artificial grass pitches (AGPs) and 3G pitches, how much play can be accommodated is primarily determined by availability, rather than overall capacity and quality is not adversely affected by use. Generally, it is considered that an AGP can accommodate up to four hockey matches on one day, whilst 3G pitches can provide a training venue for up to 38 football teams each week (as per the FA training model).

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For non-pitch sports (tennis and bowls), the supply and demand balance is not linked to the number of matches taking place but rather the number of members (and other users) attracted to a site. For tennis, a floodlit hard court is guided by a capacity of 60 members, whereas a non-floodlit hard court has capacity for 40 members (capacity varies for grass courts but none are provided in the Borough). For bowls, the capacity of a green is thought to be 60 members, although this can vary depending on how active the membership is and how many teams are fielded.

Table 1.1: Quantitative headline findings (Borough-wide)

Sport	Type	Current supply/ demand balance	Future supply/ demand balance ¹
Football	Adult	Shortfall of 62 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 64 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 16.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 24 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 12 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 17.5 match equivalent sessions
	Mini 7v7	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session
	Mini 5v5	At capacity	Shortfall of 26 match equivalent sessions
	3G	Shortfall of 14 full size pitches	Shortfall of 17 full size pitches
Cricket	Senior (Saturday)	Shortfall of 93 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 143 match equivalent sessions
	Senior (Sunday)	Shortfall of 41 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 81 match equivalent sessions
	Junior	Capacity of 276 match equivalent sessions	Capacity of 211 match equivalent sessions
Rugby union	Senior	Shortfall of 19 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 24 match equivalent sessions
Hockey	AGP	Adequate provision; five pitches require protection	Adequate provision; five pitches require protection
Bowls	Greens	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Tennis	Courts	Shortfall for Heswall, Hoylake and Thornton Hough tennis clubs	Shortfall for Heswall, Hoylake, Thornton Hough and Upton Victory Hall tennis clubs

Conclusions

From a quantitative perspective, the existing position for all sports is either that demand is being met or that there is a shortfall, whereas the future position shows the creation of shortfalls for some facility types and in some areas where demand is currently being met as well as the exacerbation of existing shortfalls.

¹ Up to 2037 in line with Local Plan

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For the most part, shortfalls can be met by better utilising current provision, such as through improving quality, re-configuring (or re-designating) pitches, installing additional floodlighting, improving ancillary facilities and enabling access to existing unused provision, such as at unavailable school sites. However, the extent of these improvements and changes will have to be significant in some instances, such as for adult football (also impacted upon by a lack of youth 11v11 pitches) and senior rugby union given the considerable deficits identified.

Notwithstanding the above, there is a substantial shortfall of 3G pitches for football training that can only be met through increased provision. An increase in 3G provision could also help reduce grass pitch shortfalls through the transfer of match play, which in turn can aid pitch quality improvements and increase capacity. That being said, given the large 3G shortfall identified, it may be unrealistic to eradicate the entire deficit, at least in the short-term. In that regard, innovative approaches should be considered, where possible, with partnership working between sports around shared surfaces also encouraged.

Where shortfalls are not present and demand is being met, this does not necessarily equate to a surplus of provision, with any spare capacity instead considered to be one of the solutions to overcoming the identified shortfalls. As such, there is a resultant need to protect all existing playing pitch and outdoor sport provision until all demand is met, or there is a requirement to replace provision in accordance with the NPPF.

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PART 2: VISION

A vision has been set out to provide a clear focus with desired outcomes for the PPOSS. It seeks to support the Council and its partners in the creation of:

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

To achieve this strategic vision, the strategy has the following aims - to;

- ◀ Ensure that all valuable facilities are protected for the long term benefit of sport
- ◀ Promote a sustainable approach to the provision of playing pitches and management of sports clubs
- ◀ Ensure that there are sufficient facilities in the right place to meet current and projected future demand
- ◀ Ensure that all clubs have access to affordable facilities of appropriate quality to meet current needs and longer term aspirations.
- ◀ Ensure that all providers seek to ensure all facilities meet up-to-date standards of accessibility.

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PART 3: AIMS

The following overarching aims are based on the three Sport England themes (see figure 3.1 below). It is recommended that they are adopted by the Council and its partners to enable it to achieve the overall vision of the PPOSS and Sport England's Planning for Sport principles. Strategy delivery is the responsibility of, and relies upon, all stakeholders.

AIM 1

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

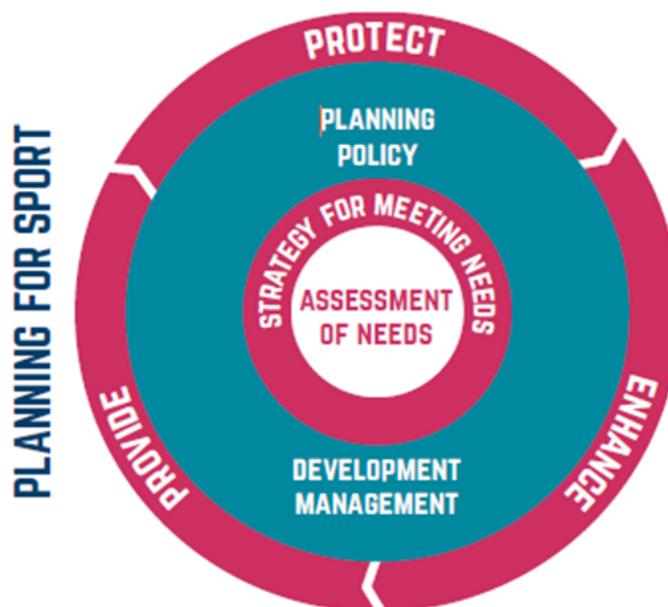
AIM 2

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

AIM 3

To **provide** new playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities where there is current or future demand to do so

Figure 3.1: Sport England Objectives



Source: Sport England, Planning for Sport Guidance (June 2019)

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 in this section for each playing pitch sport; resulting in sport specific recommendations.

Football – grass pitches

Supply and demand summary

- ◀ It is determined that mini 5v5 pitches are currently played to capacity whilst all remaining pitch formats have shortfalls.
- ◀ After factoring in future demand, shortfalls are present for each pitch type and substantially so in most cases, particularly for adult football (64 match equivalent sessions).
- ◀ Actual spare capacity totals 18.5 match equivalent sessions per week on 35 pitches across 10 sites.
- ◀ In Wirral, 68 pitches across 36 sites are overplayed by a combined total of 110 match equivalent sessions per week.

Supply summary

- ◀ The audit identifies a total of 215 grass football pitches within Wirral across 77 sites, with 204 pitches available for community use across 73 sites.
- ◀ There are relatively few youth 11v11 pitches provided, with numerous youth 11v11 teams instead using adult pitches as a consequence.
- ◀ Bromborough and Eastham FC has lost access to its previous home ground, The Octel Sports and Social Club.
- ◀ Tenure of sites in Wirral is generally secure; Glenavon JFC and West Kirby United FC both indicate aspirations to extend their current lease agreements although this is unlikely for the former given its sites designation.
- ◀ New Ferry Rangers has received funding to provide an improved clubhouse at Bebington Youth Club which will include a community café and gym, as well as a small size 3G pitch.
- ◀ Glenavon JFC is without ancillary facilities at both of its venues; The Glen and Solly Recreation Ground. At Solly Recreation Ground, Scottish Power own a disused building alongside the site which they are prepared to gift to Glenavon JFC if the Club can change its use to a sporting facility.
- ◀ Of pitches that are available for community use, only seven are assessed as good quality, 125 as standard quality and 79 as poor quality.
- ◀ Most ancillary facilities accompanying grass football pitches across Wirral is standard or good quality.

Demand summary

- ◀ Through the audit and assessment, 698 teams from within 96 clubs are identified as playing within Wirral. This consists of 94 adult men's, four adult women's, 286 youth boys', 41 youth girls' and 273 mini teams.
- ◀ Most clubs which express latent demand indicate they would be able to increase the number of teams if they have access to more or better training provision including the use of floodlit 3G pitches. This is followed by a need for more and better quality match pitches across the authority.
- ◀ Through the clubs that quantified potential future demand, there is a predicted potential growth of 82 additional teams.

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- Broken down by pitch type, two match equivalent sessions of future demand are identified on adult pitches, 7.5 match equivalent sessions on youth 11v11 pitches, 5.5 match equivalent session on youth 9v9 pitches and 26 match equivalent sessions on mini 5v5 pitches.
- No future demand is identified for mini 7v7 pitches, although such provision is likely to be required as future mini 5v5 teams progress.

Scenarios

Improving pitch quality

In total there are 68 pitches overplayed in Wirral across 36 sites, with overplay equating to 110 match equivalent sessions. Improving quality of such provision (i.e. through increased maintenance or improved drainage) will increase capacity at the sites and as a consequence reduce both current and future shortfalls.

To illustrate the above, Table 4.1 highlights the current levels of overplay that would be alleviated if quality improved to good at each site. As a reminder, the capacity rating for each type and quality rating is:

Adult pitches		Youth pitches		Mini pitches	
Pitch quality	Matches per week	Pitch quality	Matches per week	Pitch quality	Matches per week
Good	3	Good	4	Good	6
Standard	2	Standard	2	Standard	4
Poor	1	Poor	1	Poor	2

Table 4.1: Overplay if all pitches were good quality

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Current quality	Current Capacity rating ²	Good quality capacity rating ³
1	Acres Road Playing Fields	Youth 11v11	2	Standard	1	1
4	Arrowe Park	Adult	6	Poor	4.5	7.5
5	Ashton Park	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	0.5	3.5
8	Belvidere Recreation Ground	Adult	1	Poor	4	2
10	Birkenhead Park	Adult	1	Poor	0.5	1.5
15	Borough Road Playing Fields	Adult	1	Standard	3	2
18	Calday Grange Grammar School	Adult	1	Standard	1.5	0.5
23	Coronation Park	Adult	3	Poor	4	2
24	Devonshire Road Playing Field	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	0.5	0.5
32	Higher Bebington Recreation Ground	Adult	1	Poor	4.5	2.5

² Match equivalent sessions

³ Match equivalent sessions

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Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Current quality	Current Capacity rating ²	Good quality capacity rating ³
33	Hilbre High School Sports Centre	Adult	1	Standard	2.5	1.5
		Youth 9v9	1	Standard	0.5	1.5
36	Irby Cricket Club	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	0.5	2.5
38	Kings Lane Playing Fields	Adult	1	Poor	3	1
		Youth 9v9	2	Poor	1	5
40	Leasowe Leisure Centre (Wallasey)	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	1	1
		Youth 9v9	1	Poor	2	1
43	Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields	Adult	6	Poor	6	6
45	Mayfields Playing Fields	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	0.5	2.5
		Mini 5v5	1	Poor	1.5	2.5
		Adult	1	Poor	2	0
47	New Brighton Rugby Club	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	0.5	0.5
49	Newton Park	Adult	1	Poor	3	1
54	Pensby Sports Complex	Adult	1	Poor	2	0
		Mini 7v7	1	Poor	3	1
		Mini 5v5	1	Poor	0.5	3.5
		Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1	2
60	Ridgewood Park	Adult	2	Poor	6.5	2.5
61	Rycroft Playing Fields	Adult	2	Standard	0.5	1.5
64	Shaftesbury Youth Club	Youth 11v11	1	Standard	6	4
		Youth 11v11	1	Poor	7	4
66	Solly Recreation Ground	Adult	1	Poor	5.5	3.5
		Youth 11v11	1	Poor	1.5	1.5
67	South Wirral High School	Adult	1	Standard	5	4
		Youth 9v9	1	Standard	2	0
70	The Glen	Adult	1	Standard	1	0
		Youth 11v11	1	Poor	0.5	2.5
74	The Puddydale	Youth 9v9	1	Poor	1.5	1.5
76	Thornton Hough	Adult	1	Standard	1	0
77	Tower Grounds	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	2.5	0.5
80	Upton Park	Adult	2	Poor	2	2
82	Victoria Park	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	1	1

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Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Current quality	Current Capacity rating ²	Good quality capacity rating ³
84	Wallacre Recreation Ground	Adult	1	Standard	1.5	0.5
91	Whitfield Common	Adult	1	Standard	1	0
97	Withensfield Playing Field (The Delph)	Mini 7v7	1	Standard	2	0
		Youth 9v9	2	Standard	0.5	3.5
99	Woodchurch Leisure Centre	Adult	2	Poor	4	0
154	Oxton Park	Youth 11v11	1	Poor	1	2
131	Kingsway Academy	Youth 9v9	1	Standard	2	0

As seen, most overplayed pitches could accommodate current demand if quality increased to good. The only sites that would continue to accommodate some level of overplay are:

- ◀ Belvidere Recreation Ground
- ◀ Borough Road Playing Field
- ◀ Calday Grange Grammar School
- ◀ Higher Bebington Recreation Ground
- ◀ Hilbre High School Sports Centre
- ◀ Kings Lane Playing Fields
- ◀ Mayfields Playing Fields
- ◀ Newton Park
- ◀ Shaftesbury Youth Club
- ◀ Solly Recreation Ground
- ◀ South Wirral High School
- ◀ Wallacre Recreation Ground

Some play at these sites should be transferred to sites with actual spare capacity or to an existing or additional 3G pitch. Alternatively, if space and other usage allows, pitch re-configuration could also be considered.

Overall, only 26.5 match equivalent sessions of overplay would remain, compared to 110 match equivalent sessions currently. This would also only exist on adult and youth 11v11 pitches. The impact this would have on the supply and demand balance across Wirral is shown in the table below, with adult and youth 11v11 pitch shortfalls greatly reducing and spare capacity being created on youth 9v9, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches.

Table 4.2: Impact of improving pitch quality on overall supply and demand

Pitch type	Demand (match equivalent sessions per week)				
	Current actual spare capacity	Current overplay	Current total	Potential overplay	Potential total
Adult	6.5	68.5	62	18.5	12.5
Youth 11v11	3.5	20	16.5	8	4.5
Youth 9v9	1.5	13.5	12	-	1.5
Mini 7v7	5	6	1	-	5
Mini 5v5	2	2	0	-	2

In addition, there are currently 15.5 match equivalent sessions of spare capacity discounted (aggregated from all pitch types) due to poor quality. Improving pitch quality at these sites will further reduce shortfalls and increase overall actual spare capacity, which can be used to accommodate demand from currently overplayed sites as well as latent and future demand.

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Given the costs of improving pitch quality, alternatives also need to be considered that can offer a more sustainable model for the future of football. The alternative to grass pitches is the use of 3G pitches for competitive matches. Not only can this alleviate overplay of grass pitches but it can also aid quality improvements through the transfer of play and therefore reduced use.

Providing security of tenure

Currently, 72 match equivalent sessions are played on unsecured pitches throughout Wirral. If these pitches were to fall out of use, shortfalls would be significantly exacerbated, as evidenced in the table below.

Table 4.3: Supply and demand balance without unsecure sites

Pitch type	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Current total	Unsecure usage	Potential total	Future demand	Potential future total
Adult	62	24	86	2	88
Youth 11v11	16.5	1.5	18	7.5	25.5
Youth 9v9	12	18.5	30.5	5.5	36
Mini 7v7	1	15.5	16.5	-	16.5
Mini 5v5	0	12.5	12.5	26	38.5

Most of the unsecured use is located at educational sites. Whilst not always possible, creating community use agreements between providers and users would ensure that such demand continues to be provided for in the longer-term. Where there is external investment on sites e.g. by an NGB or Sport England, there are opportunities to secure community use as part of the funding or approval agreement. This also applies to new schools or for existing schools seeking changes to provision that requires planning permission as, via planning consent, the Council can seek a community use agreement.

Securing access to currently unavailable sites

Currently, pitches at Kingsmead School and Woodchurch High School Sports Complex are unavailable for community use, in addition to the two sites operated by Tranmere Rovers FC; Prenton Park and Solar Campus Playing Field. Providing access to the two school sites would provide an additional four match equivalent sessions of spare capacity on adult pitches, which should be sought given the existing shortfalls on the pitch type.

Reconfiguring pitches

If youth 11v11 demand was to be transferred away from adult pitches, spare capacity would be created on adult pitches in four of the seven analysis areas, as evidenced in the table below. Although some of this spare capacity should be retained as strategic reserve i.e. to help protect/improve quality, there are likely to be consequential opportunities to reconfigure adult pitches to better cater for youth 11v11 demand and to reduce youth pitch shortfalls.

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Table 4.4: Capacity if youth 11v11 demand was removed from adult pitches

Analysis area ⁴	Demand (match equivalent sessions)				
	Current adult capacity	Future adult capacity	Youth 11v11 demand on adult pitches	Current adult capacity if removed	Future adult capacity if removed
1	16.5	17	24.5	8	7.5
2	0	0	-	0	0
3	14	14	19.5	5.5	5.5
4	7	7	2	5	5
5	8.5	8.5	11.5	3	3
6	10	10.5	10	0	0.5
7	6	7	12.5	6.5	5.5
Wirral	62	64	80	18	16

As a starting point, adult pitches on sites such as Arrowe Park, Borough Road Playing Fields and The Glen, should be considered for re-configuration from adult to youth 11v11 size as these sites currently have no adult activity, meaning no adult teams would be adversely affected.

Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP)

As improving the quality of all overplayed sites may not be feasible or sustainable from an investment point of view, an alternative or additional approach is to focus on improving strategic sites. To that end, Wirral's Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) identifies 12 sites for grass pitch improvements that are considered to be key for football in the area. The table below therefore identifies what the impact would be if quality was improved to good at each of these sites.

Table 4.5: Impact of LFFP quality improvements

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Quality	Current capacity	Improved capacity
1	Acres Road Playing Fields	Youth (11v11)	2	Standard	1	3
		Mini (7v7)	2	Standard	8	12
2	Anglesey Road Playing Fields	Youth (11v11)	1	Standard	2	4
		Youth (9v9)	1	Standard	0.5	2.5
		Mini (7v7)	1	Standard	0	2
		Mini (5v5)	1	Standard	4	6
4	Arrowe Park	Adult	6	Poor	4.5	7.5
		Youth (9v9)	8	Poor	2	26
		Mini (7v7)	2	Standard	4.5	8.5
15	Borough Road Playing Fields	Adult	1	Standard	3	2
		Youth (9v9)	1	Standard	0	2
		Mini (7v7)	2	Standard	7	11
20	Central Park	Adult	3	Standard	0	3
		Youth (9v9)	3	Poor	1.5	10.5
		Mini (7v7)	1	Poor	2	6
		Mini (5v5)	1	Poor	2	6
22	Conway Playing Fields	Youth (9v9)	1	Poor	1	4

⁴ [Click for analysis areas](#)

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Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Quality	Current capacity	Improved capacity
42	Lingham Park	Adult	3	Standard	1	4
		Youth (11v11)	1	Standard	0.5	2.5
43	Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields	Adult	6	Poor	6	6
55	Plymyard Playing Fields	Adult	8	Standard	10	18
		Youth (9v9)	3	Poor	0	9
		Mini (7v7)	2	Standard	5	9
		Mini (5v5)	1	Standard	3	5
73	The Oval Leisure Centre	Adult	4	Standard	3	7
		Youth (9v9)	3	Standard	4	10
		Mini (7v7)	1	Standard	3.5	5.5
		Mini (5v5)	1	Standard	4	6
80	Wallacre Recreation Ground	Adult	1	Standard	1.5	0.5
		Youth (9v9)	1	Poor	0	3
		Mini (7v7)	1	Poor	2	6
		Mini (5v5)	1	Poor	2	6
97	Withensfield Playing Field (The Delph)	Youth (9v9)	2	Standard	0.5	3.5
		Mini (7v7)	1	Standard	2	0

Improving quality as set out in the table above would create 149.5 match equivalent sessions of additional capacity. In addition, for those pitches that are overplayed, overplay will be alleviated except in the case of the adult pitches at Borough Road Playing Fields and Wallacre Recreation Ground.

The impact the improvements would have on the overall supply and demand balance is shown in the following table. Shortfalls reduce on adult, youth 11v11 and youth 9v9 pitches, whilst spare capacity is created on mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitches.

Table 4.6: Impact of improving pitch quality at LFFP sites on overall supply and demand

Pitch type	Demand (match equivalent sessions per week)	
	Current total	Potential total
Adult	62	39
Youth 11v11	16.5	11.5
Youth 9v9	12	6
Mini 7v7	1	1
Mini 5v5	0	4

As the LFFP is a live document to be informed by an up-to-date PPS, the priority project list should be revisited following this study and updated/amended based on the findings. To help guide this process, the table below comments on whether the PPS provides evidence to support the inclusion of the sites currently featured.

Table 4.7: Assessing LFFP priority list (grass pitch improvements)

Site ID	Site name	Comments	LFFP recommendation
1	Acres Road Playing Fields	Contains overplayed pitches.	Retain
2	Anglesey Road Playing Fields	Improvements are required to support use by West Kirby United FC.	Retain

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Site ID	Site name	Comments	LFFP recommendation
4	Arrowe Park	Key site that is significantly overplayed.	Retain
15	Borough Road Playing Fields	Significantly overplayed.	Retain
20	Central Park	Key site with numerous pitches, including types with significant shortfalls that improvements can help reduce.	Retain
22	Conway Playing Fields	Poor quality.	Retain
42	Lingham Park	No significant quality or capacity issues; however, improvements will help reduce local shortfalls.	Retain but not as a priority
43	Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields	Key site that is poor quality.	Retain
55	Plymyard Playing Fields	Contains some poor quality issues and has capacity issues.	Retain
73	The Oval Leisure Centre	No significant quality or capacity issues; however, improvements will help reduce local shortfalls.	Retain but not as a priority
80	Wallacre Recreation Ground	Contains overplayed pitches.	Retain
97	Withensfield Playing Field (The Delph)	Contains overplayed pitches.	Retain

In addition to the above, additions could also be sought, especially considering the substantial shortfalls identified across Wirral. In that regard, the following sites should be considered given the number of pitches supplied and the quality/overplay issues identified:

- ◀ Coronation Park
- ◀ Kings Lane Playing Fields
- ◀ Pensby Sports Complex
- ◀ Ridgewood Park
- ◀ Shaftesbury Youth Club
- ◀ Woodchurch Leisure Centre
- ◀ Upton Park

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of grass pitches (unless replacement provision is agreed upon and provided).
- ◀ Ensure all teams are playing on the correct pitch sizes and look to reconfigure adult pitches to accommodate more youth 11v11 pitches.
- ◀ Where pitches are overplayed and/or assessed as poor quality, prioritise investment and review maintenance regimes to improve quality.
- ◀ Transfer play from sites which remain overplayed to alternative sites with spare capacity or to sites which are not currently available for community use.
- ◀ Work to accommodate future demand at sites which are not operating at capacity or at sites which are not currently available for community use.
- ◀ Provide security of tenure for clubs using unsecure sites through community use agreements and support negotiation with operators to secure appropriate access.
- ◀ Where appropriate, develop partnerships and/or lease arrangements with large, sustainable, development-minded clubs to manage their own sites.
- ◀ Improve ancillary facilities where there is a demand to do so and where it can benefit the wider footballing offer.

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- ◀ Explore transfer of match play from grass pitches onto 3G.
- ◀ Where a housing development is of a size to justify on-site football provision, focus on the creation of multi-pitch sites that reduce existing shortfalls, where possible.
- ◀ Where a development is not of a size to justify on-site football provision, consider using contributions to improve existing sites within the locality.

3G pitches

Supply and demand summary

- ◀ Priority should be placed on the creation of new 3G pitches.
- ◀ In addition, it is important to sustain the current pitch stock to ensure that the existing shortfalls are not exacerbated, with FA testing required at numerous sites.
- ◀ Given the grass pitch shortfalls identified for rugby union, it is considered that World Rugby Regulation 22 compliant provision would be of benefit to the District.

Supply summary

- ◀ There are five full size 3G pitches in Wirral, four of which, are floodlit and available to the community.
- ◀ The pitch at Pensby Sports Complex had been managed externally until the Covid-19 pandemic. This lettings management company has since folded and so community use has stopped since the School resumed management of the pitch.
- ◀ In addition to the full size pitches, there are also eight smaller size 3G pitches provided in the Borough.
- ◀ The Council is currently working on delivering pitches at four sites; Arrowe Park, Leverhulme Playing Field, Wirral Tennis & Sports Centre and Woodchurch Leisure Centre.
- ◀ Of the existing pitches, only the provision at Pensby Sports Complex is approved for competitive football matches, which means no match play should be taking place on the remaining stock.
- ◀ None of the pitches are World Rugby compliant.
- ◀ All of the full size 3G pitches are within their recommended lifespan, with three assessed as standard quality and two as good.

Demand summary

- ◀ The existing 3G provision is operating at capacity during peak times.
- ◀ With 698 football teams currently playing in Wirral, there is a calculated theoretical need for 18 full size 3G pitches in the Borough, meaning a potential shortfall of 14 pitches is identified.
- ◀ When accounting for future demand for an additional 82 teams (based on latent/future demand expressed by clubs), the shortfall increases by three to 17 pitches.
- ◀ When assessing 3G pitch need by analysis area, the current shortfall increases to 15 pitches (three pitches analysis areas 1, 3, 6 and 7 and two pitches in analysis areas 4 and 5).
- ◀ Taking future demand into consideration, the shortfall in Analysis Area 1 is exacerbated by a single 3G pitch.
- ◀ Although no other sports are presently identified as accessing the existing stock of 3G pitches, that it is not to say that there is no demand from clubs e.g. rugby union clubs.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Scenarios

Accommodating football training demand

In order to satisfy current football training demand (based on the FA's model of one full size 3G pitch being able to cater for 38 teams) there is a need for 18 full size 3G pitches in Wirral. Discounting Pensby Sports Complex, which is currently unavailable for community use, there are currently four full size 3G pitches, all operating at capacity, resulting in a shortfall of 14 pitches.

Table 4.8: Current demand for 3G pitches in Wirral (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Local authority	Current number of teams	3G requirement ⁵	Current number of 3G pitches	Current shortfall
Wirral	698	18	4	14

When considering future demand (based on population increases and future demand expressed by clubs), there is demand for 20 full size 3G pitches, resulting in a shortfall of 16 pitches.

Table 4.9: Potential demand for 3G pitches in Wirral (based on 38 teams per pitch)

Potential future number of teams	3G requirement ⁶	Current number of 3G pitches	Future shortfall
780	20	4	16

Alternatively, if every team were to remain training within the respective analysis area in which they play their matches in, a current shortfall of 16 full size 3G pitches is identified. This equates to three pitches in analysis areas 1, 3, 6 and 7 and two pitches analysis areas 4 and 5. Only Analysis Area 2 is without a shortfall.

Table 4.10: Current demand for 3G pitches in Wirral by analysis area

Analysis area ⁷	Current number of teams	3G requirement ⁸	Current number of 3G pitches	Potential shortfall
1	161	4	1	3
2	13	0	1	-
3	98	3	-	3
4	71	2	-	2
5	158	4	2	2
6	99	3	-	3
7	98	3	-	3
Wirral	698	19	4	16

When accounting for future demand, in line with the overall future shortfall, there is a shortfall of 17 full size 3G pitches. The additional pitch required is in Analysis Area 1 (increasing its shortfall to four pitches).

⁵ Rounded to the nearest whole number

⁶ Rounded to the nearest whole number

⁷ [Click for analysis areas](#)

⁸ Rounded to the nearest whole number

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 4.11: Potential demand for 3G pitches in Wirral by analysis area

Analysis area	Potential future number of teams	3G requirement	Current number of 3G pitches	Potential shortfall
1	179	5	1	4
2	22	0	1	-
3	107	3	-	3
4	81	2	-	2
5	166	4	2	2
6	104	3	-	3
7	121	3	-	3
Wirral	780	20	4	17

Future developments

The Council is currently working on delivering 3G pitches at four sites; Arrowe Park, Lord Leverhulme Playing Field, Wirral Tennis & Sports Centre and Woodchurch Leisure Centre. If all of these were to be delivered, the current overall shortfall in Wirral would reduce to ten pitches, whilst the analysis area shortfall would reduce to 13.

Previously, an additional project was being worked on at Leasowe Leisure Centre; however, latest reports are that this is unlikely to be feasible.

Table 4.12: Impact of Council 3G aspirations

Analysis area ⁹	Current 3G requirement	Current number of 3G pitches	Current shortfall	No. of proposed pitches	Shortfall if delivered
1	4	1	3	1	2
2	0	1	-	1	0
3	3	-	3	1	2
4	2	-	2	-	2
5	4	2	2	1	1
6	3	-	3	-	3
7	3	-	3	-	3
Wirral	19	4	16	4	13

The proposals at Arrowe Park (Area 3), Lord Leverhulme Playing Field (Area 1) and Woodchurch Leisure Centre (Area 5) are all warranted using the FA model. In contrast, the proposal at Wirral Tennis & Sports Centre (Area 2) would add to an apparent oversupply in the area. However, the low number of teams affiliated to the area is because of a lack of grass pitches rather than a lack of demand, with Wirral Tennis & Sports Centre said to be one of the most accessible and centrally located sites in the Borough that can cater for a wide range of demand.

In addition, Cheshire FA is in discussions with Shaftesbury Youth Club in regard to establishing an additional full-size 3G pitch at the site, with a funding application potentially to be submitted for this in January 2022. As the site sits in Analysis Area 6, where a shortfall of three pitches is identified, this should be supported.

⁹ [Click for analysis areas](#)

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Please note that for some proposals, the creation of 3G provision will replace a grass pitch. This will reduce the number of grass pitches available but should not impact on demand as the 3G provision will be able to replicate grass pitch provision for match play purposes, providing they are FA approved.

Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP)

The LFFP for Wirral identifies the following sites for potential 3G pitch development:

- ◆ Arrowe Park – three pitches (Analysis Area 3)
- ◆ Calday Grange Grammar School – one pitch (Analysis Area 4)
- ◆ Hilbre High School – one pitch (Analysis Area 4)
- ◆ Leasowe Road Playing Fields – two pitches (Analysis Area 5)
- ◆ Leasowe Leisure Centre – one pitch (Analysis Area 5)
- ◆ Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields – two pitches (Analysis Area 1)
- ◆ Plymyard Playing Fields – two pitches (Analysis Area 1)
- ◆ Solar Campus – one pitch (Analysis Area 5)
- ◆ Woodchurch Leisure Centre – one pitch (Analysis Area 5)

As the LFFP is a live document to be informed by an up-to-date PPS, the priority project list should be revisited following this study and updated/amended based on the findings, if necessary. For example, as referenced above, the project at Leasowe Leisure Centre is no longer considered to be feasible. To help further guide this process, the table below identifies what impact delivering the current projects would have on existing shortfalls.

Table 4.13: Impact of delivering current LFFP 3G projects

Analysis area ¹⁰	Potential 3G requirement	Current number of 3G pitches	Potential shortfall	No. of proposed pitches	Shortfall if delivered
1	4	1	3	4	0
2	0	1	-	-	0
3	3	-	3	3	0
4	2	-	2	2	0
5	4	2	2	3	0
6	3	-	3	-	3
7	3	-	3	-	3
Wirral	19	4	16	12	6

Whilst fewer pitches are identified in the LFFP than are required overall to meet demand, the current proposals could result in an oversupply of pitches in Analysis Area 5. As such, recommendations at Solar Campus and Woodchurch Leisure Centre, in addition to Leasowe Leisure Centre, should be reassessed to see if the catchment areas overlap or if the catchment areas will serve adjacent analysis areas.

No proposals are currently set out for analysis areas 6 and 7 despite shortfalls being evidenced. Suitable sites should therefore continue to be identified and added to the LFFP, such as Shaftesbury Youth Club in Analysis Area 6, unless it is considered that the apparent proposed oversupply in other areas is well located to meet the demand (or the proposed pitch at Wirral Tennis & Leisure Centre).

¹⁰ [Click for analysis areas](#)

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Conversely, the proposals in analysis areas 1, 3 and 4 will ensure demand is met and should therefore continue to be pursued.

The above is summarised in the table below.

Table 4.14: Assessing LFFP priority list (3G pitches)

Analysis area	Site ID	Site name	Comments	LFFP recommendation
1	43	Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields	Four pitches are proposed to meet a future shortfall of four pitches.	Retain but consider alternative sites if four cannot be delivered across two sites
	55	Plymyard Playing Fields		
2	-	-	No shortfall exists and no shortfalls are identified.	No action required unless it can be shown that provision will directly address shortfalls in other areas
3	4	Arrowe Park	Three pitches proposed to meet a shortfall of three. However, alternatives may be needed if three cannot be delivered at one venue.	Retain but consider alternative sites if three cannot be delivered at one location
4	19	Calday Grange Grammar School	Two pitches are proposed to meet a shortfall of two.	Retain
	33	Hilbre High School		
5	41	Leasowe Leisure Centre	Three pitches are proposed despite a shortfall of only two pitches; however, oversupply may be necessary to meet shortfalls in other areas (e.g. 6 and 7)	Remove Leasowe Leisure Centre given unfeasibility of delivery and re-assess remaining projects to ensure an oversupply is not created
	65	Solar Campus		
	99	Woodchurch Leisure Centre		
6	-	-	No projects identified despite a shortfall of three pitches.	Identify suitable sites and assess whether proposals in area 5 can meet demand (e.g. Shaftesbury Youth Club)
7	-	-	No projects identified despite a shortfall of three pitches.	Identify suitable sites and/or assess whether proposals in area 5 can meet demand

Moving football match play demand to 3G pitches

Moving match play to 3G pitches is supported by the FA but it is relatively uncommon within Wirral with only 11 teams currently playing competitively on 3G surfaces. This is partly due to only one pitch currently being certified for competitive matches.

The FA is particularly keen to work with local authorities to understand the potential demand for full size floodlit 3G pitches should all competitive matches that are currently played on council and voluntary sector pitches be transferred.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 4.15: Number of teams currently using council pitches in Wirral

Pitch type	Pitch size	Peak period	No. of teams
Adult	11v11	Saturday AM	197
Youth	11v11	Saturday AM	28
Youth	9v9	Saturday AM	75
Mini	7v7	Saturday AM	73
Mini	5v5	Saturday AM	14
Total			387

The FA suggests an approach for estimating the number of full size, floodlit 3G pitches required to accommodate the above demand for competitive matches, as seen in the table below.

Table 4.16: Full size 3G pitches required for the transfer of council pitch demand

Format	No teams playing at peak time	No of matches at peak time	3G units required per match	Total 3G units required for demand	3G pitches required
Adult	197	98.5	32	3,152	49.25
11v11	28	14	32	448	7
9v9	75	37.5	10	375	5.86
7v7	73	36.5	8	292	4.56
5v5	14	7	4	28	0.44

Transferring all matches currently played on council pitches in Wirral would equate to the need for 67 (rounded down from 67.11) full size 3G pitches as the requirements for each pitch type needs to be added together (as peak time is the same). In practice, creating this number of 3G pitches is unrealistic and it may therefore be more appropriate to consider the requirement for specific formats of play such as mini football or youth 9v9 football.

The table below therefore tests a scenario to enable all mini 5v5 and mini 7v7 football to transfer to 3G pitches based on a programme of play at current peak time (Sunday AM).

Table 4.17: Moving all mini matches to 3G pitches

Time	AGP	Total games/teams
9.30am – 10.30am	4 x 5v5	4/8
10.30am – 11.30am	2 x 7v7	2/4
11.30am – 12.30pm	2 x 7v7	2/4
12.30pm – 1.30pm	2 x 7v7	2/4

Based on the above programming and separate start times for mini 5v5 and mini 7v7 matches, the overall need is for 17 full size 3G pitches to accommodate all current mini match play demand. This is calculated based on 134 teams playing 5v5 football requiring 17 pitches (rounded up from 16.8) and 139 teams playing 7v7 football requiring 12 pitches (rounded up from 11.6). With a current 3G pitch requirement in Wirral for training demand of 19 pitches, it is therefore considered feasible that all mini football could be accommodated on 3G pitches if training shortfalls were to be alleviated.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

The table below tests a similar scenario for youth 9v9 football. To cater for this demand, 11 (rounded up from 10.8) full size 3G pitches are required based on 129 teams playing this format within Wirral.

Table 4.18: Moving all 9v9 matches to 3G pitches

Time	AGP	Total games/teams
10am – Noon	2 x 9v9	2/4
Noon – 2pm	2 x 9v9	2/4
2pm – 4pm	2 x 9v9	2/4

It is also worth noting that this could coincide with provision catering for mini demand, if all youth 9v9 football was moved to a Sunday and all mini football was retained on a Saturday (or vice versa).

World Rugby compliant 3G pitches

World Rugby produced the ‘performance specification for artificial grass pitches for rugby’, more commonly known as ‘Regulation 22’ that provides the necessary technical detail to produce pitch systems that are appropriate for rugby union. The RFU investment strategy for AGPs considers 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 education establishments.

No existing 3G provision is World Rugby compliant in Wirral, although Caldy, Wirral and Port Sunlight rugby clubs all export some level of training demand to the World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at Chester Rugby Club (in Cheshire West and Chester).

Given the significant grass pitch shortfalls identified for rugby union in Wirral, the creation of World Rugby compliant 3G provision would certainly be of benefit, especially in an area that could accommodate numerous clubs (rather than just a host club).

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect current stock of 3G pitches.
- ◀ Develop additional 3G pitches to alleviate identified football shortfalls.
- ◀ Enable partners to work collaboratively to agree preferred surfaces when AGPs are proposed to ensure sustainability across all relevant sports.
- ◀ Given the large shortfalls identified for football and rugby union, seek innovative approaches to reducing deficits, where necessary and possible.
- ◀ Support creation of additional 3G pitches above and beyond football training shortfalls if it can satisfy rugby union demand, or explore creation of 3G pitches that are both football and rugby appropriate when alleviating shortfalls.
- ◀ Ensure that any new 3G pitches are constructed to meet FA/World Rugby recommended dimensions and quality performance standards to meet performance testing criteria.
- ◀ Ensure all 3G providers have a sinking fund in place for long-term sustainability.
- ◀ Seek FA testing of existing and new 3G pitches to allow for competitive matches to be played on the surface and ensure that all pitches currently on the FA Register are re-tested every three years to sustain certification.
- ◀ Encourage more football match play demand to transfer to 3G pitches.
- ◀ Ensure that any new 3G pitches with external funding have community use agreements in place.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

- ◀ Ensure that community lettings restart and are maximised following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, particularly at school sites.

Cricket pitches

Supply and demand summary

- ◀ Overall, there is a current shortfall of 93 match equivalent sessions on Saturdays and 41 match equivalent sessions on Sundays, however, there is actual spare capacity midweek.
- ◀ When considering future demand, the shortfall on Saturdays increases to 143 match equivalent sessions per season and to 81 match equivalent sessions per season on Sundays whilst actual spare capacity for Sunday and midweek cricket reduces.
- ◀ Of the 14 squares identified with spare capacity, only four are available for further senior cricket activity on a Saturday, amounting to 60 match equivalent sessions (actual spare capacity).
- ◀ Overplay is identified at nine sites and cumulatively totals 153 match equivalent sessions per season.

Supply summary

- ◀ There are 25 grass wicket squares in Wirral located across 19 sites. Of these, 24 squares across 18 sites are available for community use.
- ◀ In Wirral, five NTPs accompany grass wicket squares which are all available for community use. In addition, nine standalone NTPs are identified, of which, three are disused, three are unavailable for community use and three are available for community use.
- ◀ The second square at Oxton Cricket Club is not considered able to accommodate adult cricket until agreed mitigation is in place to alleviate ball strike issues on site.
- ◀ Only Upton CC is deemed to have an unsecure tenure agreement at its home site, Upton Cricket Club. The Club's lease agreement expired in September 2020 and it is currently negotiating a new lease agreement.
- ◀ The non-technical assessment of grass wicket squares in Wirral found 15 squares to be good quality and nine of standard quality.
- ◀ Although no community available poor quality squares are identified, the square unavailable for community use at Wirral Grammar School for Boys is assessed as poor.
- ◀ The audit of ancillary facilities determines that, where known, 11 sites are serviced by good quality facilities, four by standard quality and one by a poor-quality facility.
- ◀ Of the responding clubs, six indicated demand for additional training net facilities and three reported demand for NTPs at their respective home sites whilst Caldy CC reports to demand to replace the NTP at its second site and provide a mobile training net to facilitate training sessions here.

Demand summary

- ◀ There are 15 cricket clubs playing in Wirral, fielding a total of 115 teams.
- ◀ Of the responding clubs, nine indicate aspirations to increase levels of participation. In total, this equates to five senior men's, two senior women's and eight junior boys'.
- ◀ However, due to anticipated growth in women's and girls' cricket through ECB initiatives, total future demand increases to five senior men's, five senior women's, eight junior boys and five junior girls' teams.

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PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Scenarios

Addressing overplay

Although a regular, sufficient maintenance regime can sustain sites with minimal levels of overplay a reduction in play is recommended to ensure there is no detrimental effect on quality over time. For the majority of overplayed sites, the best solution would be to install a NTP *in situ* as this would allow for the transfer of junior demand away from grass wickets.

In Wirral, overplay is identified at nine sites and across ten grass cricket squares. Of these cricket squares, seven of the ten overplayed squares are currently without an NTP and are as follows:

- ◀ Birkenhead Park Cricket Club
- ◀ Calday Grange Grammar School STP
- ◀ Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields
- ◀ New Brighton Cricket Club
- ◀ Oxton Cricket Club
- ◀ Wallasey Cricket Club
- ◀ New Brighton Cricket Club (Wayfarers Ground)

It should be noted that whilst there is a standalone NTP on site at Calday Grange Grammar School STP, it is disused and therefore unable to accommodate demand.

As a caveat, whilst the inclusion of an NTP for the management of fixtures would alleviate overplay issues, usage is subject to league rules and minimum pitch specifications. Furthermore, this should not lead to undue pressure being placed on clubs and volunteers using the above sites to install self-funded NTPs.

Four of the overplayed squares are assessed as standard quality. Improving quality to good would therefore fully eradicate the shortfall at Calday Grange Grammar School STP whilst overplay would reduce at New Brighton Cricket Club (Wayfarers Ground) from six match equivalent sessions to two match equivalent sessions, at Upton Cricket Club from 23 match equivalent sessions to 11 match equivalent sessions and at Oxton Cricket Club from 19 match equivalent sessions to 13 match equivalent sessions.

However, it should be noted that removing senior demand from the second square at Oxton Cricket Club alone (as recommended by the ECB due to ball strike issues on site) would alleviate overplay of this square. The pitch should only continue to be considered for adult match play if appropriate mitigation is provided following the ball-strike risk assessment.

Accommodating future demand

Of the seven clubs that express aspirations to increase their number of junior teams, six have capacity to do so on their current facility stock. The exception to this is Oxton CC, with both squares at Oxton Cricket Club currently overplayed.

Six clubs indicate a desire to field additional senior teams. Of these, Birkenhead St Marys, Merseyside and Cultural Club and Port Sunlight cricket clubs all hope to add further Saturday teams. However, only Port Sunlight CC has the capacity to do so on their current facility stock. Birkenhead St Marys and Merseyside and Cultural Club cricket clubs both play their existing facilities to capacity on Saturdays although could accommodate additional demand outside of the peak period for senior cricket (i.e. on a Sunday or midweek).

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Similarly, Birkenhead Park, Caldy and Irby cricket clubs plan to establish women's teams. However, only Irby CC has capacity to do so, provided that matches take place outside of the peak period for senior cricket. The square at Caldy Cricket Club is currently overplayed whilst the main square at Birkenhead Park Cricket Club has insufficient capacity for an increase in senior demand. The second square on site is overplayed.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of cricket squares (unless replacement provision is agreed upon and provided).
- ◀ Work with clubs and grounds staff to review quality issues on squares to ensure appropriate quality is achieved at sites assessed as standard and sustained at sites assessed as good.
- ◀ Improve quality at Wirral Grammar School for Boys and explore community use options.
- ◀ Address overplay via quality improvement, the transfer of play to sites with actual spare capacity and through an increase in NTPs accompanying grass wickets.
- ◀ Ensure a new lease agreement is secured for Upton Cricket Club.
- ◀ Work to secure mitigation to rectify ball strike issues at Oxtun Cricket Club.
- ◀ Consider options to increase and improve stock of suitable practice facilities.
- ◀ Improve ancillary provision where it is required.
- ◀ Ensure that any large housing developments are provided for and assess the need for new pitch provision through master planning on an individual basis.
- ◀ Where a development is of a size to justify on-site cricket provision, ensure that any proposals for new squares will attract adequate demand.
- ◀ Where a development is not of a size to justify on-site cricket provision, or if sufficient demand cannot be attracted, consider using contributions to improve existing sites within the locality.
- ◀ Ensure appropriate ball-strike risk assessments take place for any developments immediately adjacent to cricket grounds that may prejudice the use of an existing or proposed cricket square.

Rugby union - grass pitches

Supply and demand summary

- ◀ Overall, there is a current shortfall of 19 match equivalent sessions per week on senior rugby union pitches to meet current demand.
- ◀ When considering future demand, the shortfall increases to 24 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ There are nine sites which display potential spare capacity to accommodate additional play; however, only five sites could accommodate an actual increase in use, equating to 8.5 match equivalent sessions across 10 pitches.
- ◀ There are 16 pitches across eight sites in Wirral which are overplayed by a total of 38.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

Supply summary

- ◀ Within Wirral there are 68 rugby union pitches across 23 sites. Of these, 55 pitches across 17 sites are available for community use.
- ◀ Wirral RFC indicates that the lease agreement for the back field on site is up for renewal. The Club reports this is at a high cost although is keen to extend the agreement due to the number of pitches the secondary field accommodates.
- ◀ Of the community available pitches in Wirral, two are assessed as good quality, 37 as standard quality and 16 as poor quality.

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- ◆ New Brighton and Oxton Parkonians rugby clubs aspire to improve drainage at their respective home venues whilst Anselmians RFC reports that pitch quality has deteriorated since having new pitches developed. Oldershaw RFC indicates that pitches at Belvidere Recreation Ground have potholes, sinking ground and are uneven.
- ◆ New Brighton, Prenton and Wirral rugby clubs all have ambitions of improving ancillary provision at their respective home venues whilst both Caldy and Oldershaw rugby clubs aspire to install showers in their clubhouses. Anselmians and Port Sunlight rugby clubs have both recently provided brand new ancillary facilities.

Demand summary

- ◆ There are 11 community rugby union clubs based in Wirral, providing a total of 110 teams. Broken down, this equates to 29 senior men's, two senior women's, 30 junior boys, three junior girls' and 46 mini teams.
- ◆ Prenton RFC has a dedicated training area on site although the floodlights no longer work and the surface suffers from poor drainage. This restricts its use to the summer months, with the Club training indoors over the winter.
- ◆ Future demand, derived solely from clubs aspirations, equates to one senior men's, one senior women's, one colt boys, two youth boys, three youth girls' and four mini teams.

Scenarios

Improving pitch maintenance

Currently, there are 16 rugby union pitches across eight sites in Wirral which are overplayed by a total of 38.5 match equivalent sessions per week. To show how this could be reduced, the first scenario considers the impact of enhancing maintenance across the overplayed sites by an achievable level (one stage e.g. from M0 to M1).

As seen in the table overleaf, overplay at only two pitches (at HM Curphey Memorial Ground and Belvidere Recreation Ground) can be alleviated through quality improvements alone. As a reminder, the quality ratings for rugby union pitches are shown in the table below.

Table 4.19: Pitch capacity (matches per week) based on quality assessments

		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	0.5	1.5	2
	Natural Adequate or Pipe Drained (D1)	1.5	2	3
	Pipe Drained (D2)	1.75	2.5	3.25
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	2	3	3.5

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Table 4.20: Improving maintenance on overplayed rugby union pitches¹¹

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area ¹²	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Floodlit?	Current quality	Current capacity rating	Improved quality	New capacity rating
8	Belvidere Recreation Ground	7	2	Senior	N	M0 / D1	0.5	M1 / D1	0
				Senior	N	M0 / D1	2.5	M1 / D1	2
12	Birkenhead Park Rugby Club	6	2	Senior	Y	M1 / D1	3	M2 / D1	2
				Senior	Y	M1 / D1	2.5	M2 / D1	1.5
34	HM Curphey Memorial Ground	6	1	Senior	N	M1 / D1	1	M2 / D1	0
35	Hoylake Rugby Football Club	4	2	Senior	Y	M1 / D1	2.5	M2 / D1	1.5
				Senior	N	M0 / D1	2	M1 / D1	1.5
47	New Brighton Rugby Club	5	3	Senior	Y	M1 / D0	3	M2 / D0	2.5
				Senior	Y	M1 / D0	3	M2 / D0	2.5
				Senior	Y	M1 / D0	5	M2 / D0	4.5
95b	Wirral Rugby Club (Back Field)	1	1	Senior	Y	M1 / D0	5.5	M2 / D0	5
133	Caldy Sports Club	4	1	Senior	Y	M1 / D1	4	M2 / D1	3

Although overplayed, the pitches at Anselmians Rugby Football Club have not been included in the above table as the maintenance of these pitches cannot be increased by one increment, with current pitch maintenance currently considered to be M2.

Improving pitch drainage

This scenario considers the effect of enhancing drainage by one stage (e.g. D0 to D1) on overplayed pitches. As seen in the table below, only overplay on one of the pitches at Anselmians Rugby Football Club would be alleviated through drainage improvements alone.

¹¹ Sites where maintenance is already maximised (i.e. at Anselmians Rugby Football Club) are not included.

¹² [Click for analysis areas](#)

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 4.21: Improving drainage on overplayed rugby union pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area ¹³	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Floodlit?	Current quality	Current capacity rating	Improved quality	New capacity rating
3	Anselmians Rugby Football Club	1	2	Senior	Y	M2 / D0	3	M2 / D1	2
				Mini	N	M2 / D0	1	M2 / D1	0
8	Belvidere Recreation Ground	7	2	Senior	N	M0 / D1	0.5	M0 / D2	0.25
				Senior	N	M0 / D1	2.5	M0 / D2	2.25
12	Birkenhead Park Rugby Club	6	2	Senior	Y	M1 / D1	3	M1 / D2	2.5
				Senior	Y	M1 / D1	2.5	M1 / D2	2
34	HM Curphey Memorial Ground	6	1	Senior	N	M1 / D1	1	M1 / D2	0.5
35	Hoylake Rugby Football Club	4	2	Senior	Y	M1 / D1	2.5	M1 / D2	2
				Senior	N	M0 / D1	2	M0 / D2	1.75
47	New Brighton Rugby Club	5	3	Senior	Y	M1 / D0	3	M1 / D1	2.5
				Senior	Y	M1 / D0	3	M1 / D1	2.5
				Senior	Y	M1 / D0	5	M1 / D1	4.5
95b	Wirral Rugby Club (Back Field)	1	1	Senior	Y	M1 / D0	5.5	M1 / D1	5
133	Caldy Sports Club	4	1	Senior	Y	M1 / D1	4	M1 / D2	3.5

Improving pitch maintenance and drainage

A combination of improving maintenance and drainage would not eradicate overplay at any of the sites, over and above where overplay can be eradicated through solely improving maintenance or drainage.

¹³ [Click for analysis areas](#)

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Table 4.22: Improving drainage on overplayed rugby union pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area ¹⁴	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Floodlit?	Current quality	Current capacity rating	Improved quality	New capacity rating
3	Anselmians Rugby Football Club	1	2	Senior	Y	M2 / D0	3	M2 / D1	2
				Mini	N	M2 / D0	1	M2 / D1	0
8	Belvidere Recreation Ground	7	2	Senior	N	M0 / D1	0.5	M1 / D2	0.5
				Senior	N	M0 / D1	2.5	M1 / D2	1.75
12	Birkenhead Park Rugby Club	6	2	Senior	Y	M1 / D1	3	M2 / D2	1.75
				Senior	Y	M1 / D1	2.5	M2 / D2	1.25
34	HM Curphey Memorial Ground	6	1	Senior	N	M1 / D1	1	M2 / D2	0.25
35	Hoylake Rugby Football Club	4	2	Senior	Y	M1 / D1	2.5	M2 / D2	1.25
				Senior	N	M0 / D1	2	M1 / D2	1
47	New Brighton Rugby Club	5	3	Senior	Y	M1 / D0	3	M2 / D1	1.5
				Senior	Y	M1 / D0	3	M2 / D1	1.5
				Senior	Y	M1 / D0	5	M2 / D1	3.5
95b	Wirral Rugby Club (Back Field)	1	1	Senior	Y	M1 / D0	5.5	M2 / D1	4
133	Caldy Sports Club	4	1	Senior	Y	M1 / D1	4	M2 / D2	2.75

Based on the above, whilst maintenance and drainage improvements on rugby union pitches across Wirral should be supported, these developments alone are insufficient to holistically address shortfalls.

¹⁴ [Click for analysis areas](#)

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Increasing access to floodlit training provision

Across Wirral, overplay on rugby union pitches is mainly caused by teams training on their match pitches. However, none of the clubs with overplayed pitches have sufficient capacity on their remaining pitches to accommodate training demand without overplay still existing or without the newly floodlit pitch becoming overplayed. As such, whilst additional floodlighting of grass should be pursued, alternatives also need to be considered.

The table below presents the scenario that World Rugby compliant 3G provision is delivered in Wirral and all rugby clubs transfer their training demand off their grass pitches. The figures show the significant impact training activity has on grass pitch capacity.

Table 4.23: Impact of training demand transferring to World Rugby compliant 3G provision

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area ¹⁵	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Current capacity rating	Training equivalent sessions (per week)	Capacity rating without training demand
3	Anselmians Rugby Football Club	1	1	Senior	4	5	1
8	Belvidere Recreation Ground	7	1	Senior	3	3	0
12	Birkenhead Park Rugby Club	6	2	Senior	5.5	3.5	2
34	HM Curphey Memorial Ground	6	1	Senior	1	3	2
35	Hoylake Rugby Football Club	4	2	Senior	4.5	3.5	1
47	New Brighton Rugby Club	5	3	Senior	11	7.5	3.5
95b	Wirral Rugby Club (Back Field)	1	1	Senior	5.5	7	1.5
133	Caldy Sports Club	4	1	Senior	4	5	1

As seen in the table above, relocating training demand away from club sites alleviates the majority of overplay across Wirral, with only Birkenhead Park Rugby Club, Hoylake Rugby Football Club and New Brighton Rugby Club having shortfalls from match play alone.

Notwithstanding the above, transferring all training demand away from grass pitches is considered to be unrealistic given the number of World Rugby compliant 3G pitches that would be required to satisfy such demand. As such, the below table explores the impact of transferring 50% of demand, which is considered to be more feasible.

¹⁵ [Click for analysis areas](#)

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Table 4.24: Impact of 50% of training demand transferring to World Rugby compliant 3G provision

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area ¹⁶	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Current capacity rating	50% Training equivalent sessions (per week)	Capacity rating without training demand
3	Anselmians Rugby Football Club	1	1	Senior	4	2.5	1.5
8	Belvidere Recreation Ground	7	1	Senior	3	1.5	1.5
12	Birkenhead Park Rugby Club	6	2	Senior	5.5	1.75	3.75
34	HM Curphey Memorial Ground	6	1	Senior	1	1.5	0.5
35	Hoylake Rugby Football Club	4	2	Senior	4.5	1.75	2.75
47	New Brighton Rugby Club	5	3	Senior	11	3.75	7.25
95b	Wirral Rugby Club (Back Field)	1	1	Senior	5.5	3.5	1.5
133	Caldy Sports Club	4	1	Senior	4	2.5	1.5

Whilst overplay would only be alleviated at one site (HM Curphey Memorial Ground), it would be reduced at the remaining sites and in most instances to much more manageable levels (particularly if the transfer coincided with pitch improvements).

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of rugby union pitches (unless replacement provision is agreed upon and provided).
- ◀ Improve pitch quality at all sites used by clubs through improved maintenance and/or the installation of drainage systems, particularly at sites containing overplayed pitches that are not a result of training demand (e.g. Birkenhead Park Rugby Club and New Brighton Rugby Club).
- ◀ Consider installation of additional floodlighting at club sites to allow for training demand to be spread across a greater number of pitches/areas.
- ◀ Support the delivery of a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch (or pitches) with associated partner rugby clubs providing that they would be sustainable, and that usage would be maximised.
- ◀ Explore community use aspects at currently unused educational sites to fully determine availability and, as a minimum, protect the pitches for continued curricular and extra-curricular use.
- ◀ Support aspirations for ancillary facility improvements relating to Hoylake, Oldershaw, Caldy, Prenton and Wirral rugby clubs.

¹⁶ [Click for analysis areas](#)

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- ◀ Pursue improved security of tenure for Wirral RFC on the Club's back field.
- ◀ Ensure that any large housing developments are provided for and assess the need for new pitch provision through master planning on an individual basis.
- ◀ Where a development is of a size to justify on-site rugby provision, ensure that any proposals for new pitches will attract adequate demand.
- ◀ Where a development is not of a size to justify on-site rugby provision, or if sufficient demand cannot be attracted, use contributions to improve existing sites within the locality.

Hockey pitches (sand-based AGPs)

Supply and demand summary

- ◀ As all five community available full size pitches are currently in use by hockey clubs, all five require protection as each is serving a specific purpose.
- ◀ It is considered imperative that the current stock of full size pitches are retained for continued hockey use.
- ◀ It must also be a priority to maximise hockey use of the pitches that are provided to reduce capacity issues.
- ◀ To ensure that supply remains sufficient, quality improvements are required at many of the sites due to the age of the current surfaces.

Supply summary

- ◀ The audit identifies five full size hockey suitable AGPs in Wirral, all of which are available for community use although only four are floodlit (the pitch at Birkenhead High School is not).
- ◀ There are also six smaller sized pitches provided; five of these are floodlit and three are available to the community.
- ◀ Wirral Grammar School (for boys) has an aspiration to develop a full size AGP that it will make available for community use, if delivered.
- ◀ Of the full size AGPs, the four floodlit pitches are all readily available during the peak period, whilst the two non-floodlit pitches are only available at weekends due to the lack of lighting.
- ◀ The pitches at Birkenhead High School and West Kirby Grammar School are both considered poor quality having not been resurfaced since being installed in 2006 and 2001, respectively.
- ◀ Similarly, the pitches at Calday Grange Grammar School and The Oval Leisure Centre are over ten years old albeit they are assessed as standard quality.

Demand summary

- ◀ The three hockey clubs in Wirral consist of 24 teams and there are 423 members across the clubs.
- ◀ All three clubs have increased their demand over the last three years.
- ◀ Bebington HC reports that it could expand its junior section on Saturdays if it had better access to pitch provision.
- ◀ Future demand across the clubs equates to the potential growth of four teams.
- ◀ No hockey initiatives are identified as taking place in Wirral (e.g. Back to Hockey and Walking Hockey).

Scenarios

Converting sand-based AGPs

None of the five sites containing full size sand based AGPs should be considered for conversion/loss as all five are in current use by hockey clubs. This is unless replacement provision is provided and agreed upon by EH. For clarity, this applies to pitches at the following sites:

- ◀ Birkenhead High School
- ◀ Calday Grange Grammar School (Glasspool Field)
- ◀ The Oval Leisure Centre
- ◀ West Kirby Grammar School
- ◀ Birkenhead School (McAllister Memorial Field)

Sport England considers that conversions of AGP's require planning permission because the extent of works and engineering works required constitute development. Ensuring that all proposals to convert an AGP require planning permission would therefore ensure a robust consultation process is undertaken and that no sport is negatively impacted.

Accommodating future and latent demand

At the weekends, only pitches at Birkenhead High School, West Kirby Grammar School and Birkenhead School (McAllister Memorial Field) have capacity for an increase in demand. However, the pitches at Birkenhead High School and West Kirby Grammar School are in poor condition and imminent resurfacing is required, meaning an increase in demand is not recommended until resurfacing has taken place. This leaves Birkenhead School as the only hockey suitable venue with capacity in Wirral.

Given the above, whilst the current level of provision is deemed sufficient for the current level of demand, resurfacing is required at Birkenhead High School and West Kirby Grammar School to ensure that growth from team aspiration rates and EH initiatives can be accommodated. Alternatively, or if this is not possible, an additional hockey suitable AGP may be required.

Future developments

Wirral Grammar School (for boys) has an aspiration to develop a full size AGP that it will make available for community use, if delivered. The School currently utilises a grass hockey pitch for its curricular-based demand.

Conversely, early aspirations exist for the pitch at The Oval Leisure Centre to be converted to a 3G surface. Should this be pursued, it is imperative that the hockey demand currently accessing the provision is adequately provided for elsewhere first, with the proposal also needing support from EH. This could potentially be achieved via the abovementioned plans at Wirral Grammar School, given the proximity of the sites, but it needs to take into consideration the needs of Bebington HC as well as any wider hockey-based activity.

Aspirations also exist to convert the existing smaller size pitch at Wirral Hospitals School to a 3G surface. This is because of 3G pitch shortfalls in the area and due to its current dilapidated state. As with the pitch at The Oval Leisure Centre, the conversion must be approved by EH to ensure that there is no negative impact on hockey. The pitch is currently unused by hockey clubs.

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Recommendations

- ◀ As a minimum, protect the five full size AGPs currently in use by hockey clubs, unless replacement provision is provided and agreed upon by EH.
- ◀ To ensure future and latent demand can be accommodated, support the resurfacing of the pitches at Birkenhead High School and West Kirby Grammar School to ensure continued use for hockey.
- ◀ Encourage providers to have sinking funds in place at all sites to ensure long-term sustainability.
- ◀ Pursue long-term security of tenure for all clubs, particularly those using education sites, through community use agreements.
- ◀ Seek to maximise hockey use of AGPs through the transfer of other demand (e.g. football) to existing and new 3G pitches.
- ◀ Ensure that no 3G pitch conversions take place that are detrimental to hockey and revisit hockey demand when and if a conversion is proposed to ensure that the pitch in question is not required.
- ◀ Ensure planning applications for all proposed AGP conversions are submitted to ensure robust consultation with NGBs and Sport England, and that the conversion is sustainable and fit for purpose.
- ◀ Enable partners to work collaboratively to agree preferred surfaces when AGPs are proposed to ensure sustainability across all relevant sports.

Bowling greens

Supply and demand summary

- ◀ Greens at Hoylake Central & Melrose Bowls Club, Tixall Bowling and Social Club, Pensby Bowling Club and The Magazine Public House are all operating over 60 members.
- ◀ Marine Park BC is operating below 20 members, whilst membership levels at Newton Park Vets BC should also be monitored.
- ◀ As no clubs report demand for additional green space, current supply is considered sufficient across Wirral.
- ◀ It is also considered that all existing greens that are in use require protection.

Supply summary

- ◀ There are 60 bowling greens identified in Wirral located across 40 sites.
- ◀ Only Desmesne Street Recreation Ground and Octel Sports & Social Club are known to accommodate lapsed/disused greens.
- ◀ Of the 60 bowling greens identified, 37 are owned by the Council, with 12 greens owned by sports clubs, nine by community organisations and two privately.
- ◀ A total of 19 greens are assessed as good quality, 18 as standard quality and 23 as poor quality.
- ◀ Ancillary facilities at Meols Parade Gardens, Port Sunlight Village Bowling Club, Harrison Park and RNA Naval Club are said to be of poor quality.

Demand summary

- ◀ Where known, membership across Wirral equates to 1,190 people including 987 senior males, 190 senior females and 13 juniors.
- ◀ 20 of the 27 responding clubs state plans to increase their membership bases, equating to the potential growth of 185 seniors and 48 juniors.

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Scenarios

Accommodating current and future demand

The BCGBA does not have any specific guidance on bowling green capacity but, as a guide, it states that any green used by at least 20 members is generally considered to be sustainable. Conversely, any green operating with a membership of over 60 may need additional resource to ensure it is meeting its required level of demand.

Greens at Hoylake Central & Melrose Club, Pensby Bowling Club, Tixall Bowling & Social Club and The Magazine Public House are operating above the threshold of 60 members. Support is therefore required to ensure that all club users continue to have demand satisfied and that the level of use does not impact on quality. No clubs express a need for more green space, suggesting that the provision is sufficient currently.

Provision at Marine Park is currently operating below the threshold of 20 members and therefore support is required to ensure that Marine Park BC and the green remain sustainable for the long term.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of greens.
- ◀ Improve green quality at sites assessed as poor or standard quality and sustain quality at sites assessed as good.
- ◀ To aid quality improvements and sustainability, support clubs with self-management.
- ◀ Seek to improve ancillary facility quality where it is necessary.
- ◀ Support users of the greens at Hoylake Central & Melrose Club, Pensby Bowling Club, Tixall Bowling & Social Club and The Magazine Public House to ensure demand continues to be met, given high levels of membership.
- ◀ Ensure greens at Marine Park remain sustainable and support Marine Park BC to increase membership.
- ◀ Support clubs with plans to increase membership so that growth can be maximised.
- ◀ Mitigate any permanent loss of greens at disused and lapsed sites through equivalent/better replacement provision or through appropriate enhancements to other facilities.

Tennis courts

Supply and demand summary

- ◀ Heswall Lawn Tennis Club, Hoylake Lawn Tennis Club and Thornton Hough Tennis Club are all operating above recommended capacity, suggesting that the current provision available to the clubs is insufficient.
- ◀ As there is considered to be spare capacity existing on all non-club courts, the focus should be on improving quality and encouraging further usage.

Supply summary

- ◀ There are 165 tennis courts identified in Wirral across 38 sites, with 149 courts available for community use.
- ◀ Of the courts, 40 are serviced by floodlighting, with Pinewood, Oxton, Upton Victory Hall and Hoylake tennis clubs aspiring to install floodlighting at their respective home venues.
- ◀ Over 50% of clubs are without access to floodlit courts, which is a significant number, whilst no park courts are serviced by floodlights which can impact on recreational use.

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- ◀ The majority of courts in Wirral have a macadam surface (84%), whilst the remaining courts have either an artificial turf surface or are clay based.
- ◀ Of the community available courts, 60 are assessed as good quality, 65 as standard quality and 24 as poor quality.
- ◀ Ancillary provision servicing club courts across Wirral is adequate although Alderley, North Cheshire, Hoylake and Thornton Hough tennis clubs state changing facilities at their respective home venues are in poor condition.
- ◀ Changing facilities are also a key issue in relation to non-club courts, with provision often of a poor quality or situated too far away from the courts to be used.

Demand summary

- ◀ There are 14 tennis clubs in Wirral; of the 10 that responded to consultation requests, combined membership equates to 1,631 members, which is derived from 1,217 senior members and 414 junior members.
- ◀ Six clubs indicate plans to increase membership, equating to an additional 108 senior members and 100 junior members.
- ◀ Clubspark is implemented at all park sites in Wirral, allowing for recreational usage to be monitored.
- ◀ A growing number of clubs also allow access to non-members on a pay and play basis.

Scenarios

Accommodating current and future demand

As a broad guideline, the LTA suggests that a non-floodlit court can accommodate a maximum of 40 members, whereas a floodlit court can accommodate 60 members. Based on this, Heswall Lawn Tennis Club, Hoylake Lawn Tennis Club and Thornton Hough Tennis Club are all considered to be operating above their capacity, albeit only minimally with the latter.

Hoylake TC aspires to install floodlights on the remaining two non-floodlit courts at Hoylake Lawn Tennis Club which would reduce overplay of the site from 60 members to 20 members. Heswall TC could also theoretically increase the number of floodlit courts at its home venue, as could Thornton Hough, which is currently without floodlit provision. Subject to planning requirements, this would alleviate current capacity concerns.

If additional floodlighting is not possible, secondary venues for the clubs could be pursued. This could be in the form of enabling access to local authority or school-based provision.

Improving the recreational tennis offer

Increasing recreational tennis demand via the utilisation of park courts is currently a priority for the LTA in Wirral. Twice as many people play in parks than at clubs and such usage is therefore considered to be a key driver for the NGB. To that end, a significant number of sites in Wirral currently implement the LTA's Clubspark programme, allowing for users to book courts as part of a streamlined process. The non-club sites utilising this are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ◀ Arrowe Park | ◀ Ashton Park |
| ◀ Birkenhead Park | ◀ Harrison Park |
| ◀ Coronation Park | ◀ Irby Recreation Ground |
| ◀ Higher Bebington Recreation Ground | ◀ Meols Parade Gardens |
| ◀ Marine Park | ◀ New Ferry Park |
| ◀ Saughall Grange | ◀ Torr Park |

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However, despite a large number of park sites being part of the Clubspark programme, none of them contain any courts that are floodlit, which impacts on all-year round usage. As such, exploration should take place in relation to providing floodlights at suitable sites, which in turn would likely increase demand. The most suitable sites are those with three or more courts and that are supported by ancillary facilities, although those not fitting this criteria should not be discounted.

The LTA would like a Park Strategy to be developed on the back of this study and the creation of sustainable tennis facilities should form a key aspect of this. Whilst many of the park sites contain standard quality courts, unless a capital investment plan is developed, the stock could become increasingly poor which would further inhibit usage. If capital budgets are restricted, income generation opportunities linked to utilising the technology provided by the LTA should be pursued.

To assist the above, the LTA is currently making grants available to install Gate Access systems in parks, which are shown to increase participation and provide a better customer experience. In Wirral, 12 park sites currently meet LTA penetration levels, meaning the LTA grants could be applied for as well as loans towards facility upgrades.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of courts.
- ◀ Improve court quality at sites assessed as poor or standard quality and sustain quality at sites assessed as good, especially at sites in use by clubs or that are well used for recreational demand.
- ◀ Develop a strategy for the improvement and sustainability of park sites.
- ◀ Explore options to increase quantity of floodlit courts and quality of ancillary provision at park sites across Wirral to further support recreational demand.
- ◀ Improve and sustain quality at publicly available courts in order to increase programmed activity and ensure an appropriate model is in place to support this.
- ◀ Seek to improve wider tennis offering at sites through continued and greater use of Clubspark and use of the booking module to optimise usage and provide greater accuracy as to the capacity of included sites.
- ◀ Look to implement the Gate Access system at suitable park sites.
- ◀ Pursue improved access to courts at education sites to enhance the community offer across Wirral.
- ◀ Look to increase club capacity across Wirral by ensuring additional courts can be used year-round via the addition of floodlights (prioritising those currently without).
- ◀ Support Hoylake, Heswall and Thornton Hough tennis clubs to provide additional floodlighting or court space to alleviate current capacity issues.
- ◀ Support Alderley, North Cheshire, Hoylake and Thornton Hough tennis clubs to improve ancillary provision.

PART 5: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategic recommendations for the Strategy have been developed via the combination of information gathered during consultation, site visits and analysis which culminated in the production of an assessment report, as well as key drivers identified for the Strategy. They reflect overarching and common areas to be addressed, which apply across playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities and may not be specific to just one sport.

OBJECTIVE 1

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

Recommendations:

- a. Ensure, through the use of the PPOSS, that provision is protected through the implementation of local planning policy.
- 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 needed.

Recommendation (a) – Ensure, through the use of the PPOSS, that provision is protected through the implementation of local planning policy.

The Wirral PPOSS Assessment shows that all currently used playing field and outdoor sport sites require protection or replacement and therefore cannot be deemed surplus to requirements because of shortfalls now and in the future. This includes lapsed, disused, underused and poor quality sites, which should also be protected from development or replaced as there is a requirement for such provision to meet the identified shortfalls.

NPPF paragraph 97 states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land 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.

Should outdoor sports facilities be taken out of use for any reason (e.g. council budget restraints), it is imperative that the land is retained so that it can be brought back into use in the future. This means that land containing provision should not be altered (except to improve play) and should remain free from tree cover and permanent built structures, unless the current picture changes to the extent that the site in question is no longer needed (subject to being informed by a review of the PPOSS), or unless replacement provision is provided to an equal or greater quantity and quality.

New housing development

Where proposed housing development is located within close proximity of an existing site identified in the PPOSS, this does not necessarily mean that there is no need for further improvements. To the contrary, provision enhancements may be required in order to accommodate additional demand arising from a particular development (or group of developments). The PPOSS should be used to help determine what impact the new development will have on the demand for, and capacity of, existing sites, and whether improvement to increase capacity or new provision is required.

Housing growth scenarios have been provided in Part 7 of this document to provide a guide and to estimate the additional demand that could be generated by specific housing growth by sport and facility type. Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator, which has informed the scenarios, will be available for the Council to use upon completion of the PPOSS.

Development Management

The PPOSS should be used to help inform Development Management decisions that affect existing or new playing fields, outdoor sport facilities and ancillary provision. All applications are assessed by the Local Planning Authority on a case-by-case basis, taking into account site specific factors.

In addition, Sport England is a statutory consultee on planning applications that affect or prejudice the use of sports facilities and will use the PPOSS to help assess such planning applications against its Playing Fields Policy. It will object to proposals unless at least one of its five policy exceptions is met. The exceptions are:

- ◀ **Exception 1:** Excess of provision - a robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.
- ◀ **Exception 2:** Ancillary development - the proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.
- ◀ **Exception 3:** Land incapable of forming part of a pitch - the proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:
 - ◀ reduce the size of any playing pitch;
 - ◀ result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
 - ◀ reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;
 - ◀ result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or
 - ◀ prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.
- ◀ **Exception 4:** Replacement provision of equivalent or better quality and quantity - the area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:
 - ◀ of equivalent or better quality, and
 - ◀ of equivalent or greater quantity, and
 - ◀ in a suitable location, and
 - ◀ subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.
- ◀ **Exception 5:** New sports provision benefit outweighs the loss of the playing field - the proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Lapsed and disused sites should also be protected from development or replaced in accordance with Sport England's policy exceptions as they currently provide a solution to reducing identified shortfalls. Any disused/lapsed playing fields identified within this PPOSS are therefore included within the Action Plan together with a recommendation in relation to bringing the site back into use or to mitigate the loss via a replacement site to address the shortfalls identified.

Over the lifetime of the PPOSS other lapsed and disused playing fields may be identified that are not contained within the PPS. These sites remain playing field and should be afforded the same protection as sites contained within the PPOSS. Previously unidentified sites should be included in annual updates of the study.

It may be appropriate to consider rationalisation of certain low value sites (i.e. poor quality one/two pitch sites with no changing provision) to generate investment in creating bigger and better venues (hub sites). It is vital, however, that there is no net loss of facilities and that replacement provision is provided, available and useable prior to existing provision being lost (including an allowance for a "bedding-in" period. As such, rationalisation needs to be carried out in accordance with paragraph 97 of the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy.

Recommendation (b) – Secure tenure and access to sites through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.

A number of school, commercial and private sites are being used in Wirral for competitive play, predominantly for football. In some cases, use of provision has been classified as secure, however, it is not necessarily formalised and relevant organisations should seek to establish appropriate community use agreements, including access to changing provision where required/available. This is especially the case for sites that have unsecured community use despite receiving high levels of use, such as Kingsway Academy and South Wirral High School.

For unsecure sites, NGBs, Sport England and other appropriate bodies such as Active Cheshire and the Football Foundation can often help to negotiate and engage with providers where the local authority may not have direct influence. This is particularly the case at sites that have received funding from these bodies or are going to receive funding in the future as community access can be a condition of the agreement.

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 to enable them to take greater levels of ownership and support the wider development and maintenance of facilities. To facilitate this, where practical, it should support and enable clubs to generate sufficient funds, providing that this is to the benefit of sport.

The Council should further explore opportunities where security of tenure could be granted via lease agreements (for a minimum of 25 years, as recommended by Sport England and NGBs) so that clubs are in a position to apply for external funding. This is particularly the case at poor quality local authority sites, possibly with inadequate or no ancillary facilities, so that quality can be improved and sites developed.

Local sports clubs should be supported by partners including the Council, NGBs or Active Cheshire to achieve sustainability across a range of areas including management, membership, funding, facilities, volunteers and partnership work. For example, support club development and encourage clubs to develop evidence of business and sports development plans to generate income via their facilities.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

All clubs could be encouraged to look at different management models such as registering as Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC)¹⁷. They should also be encouraged to work with partners locally – such as volunteer support agencies or local businesses.

For clubs with lease arrangements already in place, these should be reviewed when fewer than 25 years remain on existing agreements to secure extensions, thus improving security of tenure and helping them attract funding for site developments. Any club with less than 25 years remaining on an agreement is unlikely to gain any external funding (unless the agreement has been recently entered into).

Each club interested in leasing a council site should be required to meet service and/or strategic recommendations. An additional set of criteria should also be considered, which takes into account club quality, aligned to its long-term development objectives, and sustainability, as seen in the table below. Clubs in Wirral that express an interest in acquiring a lease that do not currently do so include Glenavon JFC and West Kirby United FC.

Table 5.1: Recommended criteria for lease of council sport sites to clubs/organisations

Club	Site
<p>Clubs should have Clubmark/NGBs 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 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 'Local Sites' (recommendation d) for new clubs (i.e. not those with a Borough wide significance) but that offer development potential.</p> <p>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>Site should be subject to an appropriate designation so that the use proposed is likely to be suitable and secure over the longer term.</p>

The Council could 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 examples, 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 facilities. It is important in these instances that the site remains available for other purposes or for other users.

¹⁷ <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/cascbenefits>

Recommendation (c) - Maximise community use of education facilities where needed

To maximise community use, a more coherent, structured relationship with schools is recommended. 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 education sites but physical access, staffing issues, poor quality and resistance from schools, especially some academies, to open up provision is also an issue.

A large number of sporting facilities are located on education sites and making as many of these available as possible to sports clubs can offer significant benefits to both the schools and local clubs. Many schools in Wirral currently prevent community use of some or all of their facility stock and, as a priority, community use options should be explored at these sites. This is particularly the case at large schools offering numerous pitches as securing access to these sites will significantly reduce shortfalls throughout the analysis areas that they are based within and for the sports that they provide facilities for.

In some instances, provision is unavailable for community use due to poor quality and therefore remedial works will be required before it can be established. The low carrying capacity at these sites sometimes leads to them being played to capacity or overplayed simply due to curricular and extra-curricular use, meaning they cannot accommodate any additional use by the community.

Although there is a growing number of academies over which Wirral has little or no control, 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. In addition, the relevant NGBs have a role to play in supporting the Council to deliver the strategy and communicating with schools where necessary to address shortfalls in provision, particularly for football pitches.

As detailed earlier, NGBs, Active Cheshire and Sport England can often help to negotiate and engage with schools where the Council may have limited direct influence. This is particularly the case at sites that have received funding from the relevant bodies or are going to receive funding in the future as community access can be a condition of the funding agreement.

It is also common for school facility stock not to be fully maximised for community use, even on established community use sites. This could be due to clubs not being aware of availability, perceived quality issues, a lack of security of tenure and/or a lack of access to appropriate ancillary facilities. Where this is identified as being the case, further exploration should take place with the schools and potential users to better understand what is currently preventing access and how this can be overcome.

Where new schools are provided in major new residential developments, they should be designed to facilitate community access, with opportunities for meeting the community's outdoor sporting needs explored at the outset to maximise the potential for facility provision to be made within the developments, if appropriate. An example of this is ensuring the provision of youth 11v11 and/or youth 9v9 grass football pitches given current shortfalls and their suitability for the playing format of students.

OBJECTIVE 2

To enhance playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities through improving quality and management of sites

Recommendations:

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

Recommendation (d) – Improve quality

There are a number of ways in which it is possible to improve quality, including, for example, addressing overplay and improving maintenance. Given that the majority of councils' face reducing budgets it is currently advisable to look at improving key sites as a priority (e.g. the largest sites that are the most overplayed or the poorest). The Action Plan within this document provides a starting point for this, identifying key sites, poor quality sites and/or sites that are overplayed. These should be prioritised for improvement.

With such pressures on budgets, any wide-ranging direct investment into quality is unlikely and other options for improvements should be considered. This could be via asset clubs leasing/managing sites as highlighted in Objective 1, with clubs taking on maintenance. Other options may include the creation of equipment banks and the pooling of resources for maintenance/enhancement.

Addressing quality issues

Quality in Wirral is variable but generally facilities are assessed as standard or poor quality. Where provision is not assessed as good and/or are overplayed, maintenance regimes should be reviewed and, where possible, improved to ensure that what is being done is of an appropriate standard to sustain/improve quality. Ensuring continuance of existing maintenance of good quality facilities is also essential.

It is also important to note the impact that weather has on quality. The worse the weather, the poorer the facilities tend to become, especially if no, or inadequate, drainage systems are in place, especially in relation to rugby union where pitch quality is directly linked to the drainage profile of a site. This also means that quality can vary, year on year, dependent upon the weather and levels of rainfall.

Based upon an achievable target using existing quality scoring to provide a baseline, a standard should be used to identify deficiencies and investment should be focused on those sites which fail to meet the proposed quality standard (using the site audit database as provided in electronic format).

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

For the purposes of quality assessments, the PPOSS refers to pitches and ancillary facilities separately as being of 'Good', 'Standard' or 'Poor' quality. However, some good quality sites may have poor quality elements and vice versa (e.g. a good quality pitch may be serviced by poor quality changing facilities).

Good quality refers to facilities with, for example, good grass cover, even surfaces and that are free from vandalism and litter. For rugby union, a good pitch is also pipe and/or slit drained. For ancillary facilities, it refers to access for disabled people, sufficient provision for referees, juniors/women/girls and appropriate showers, toilets and car parking. The age of the facilities can also have a significant bearing on the overall quality rating.

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

Poor quality refers to provision with, for example, inadequate grass cover, uneven surfaces and poor drainage. For rugby union, pitches will have inadequate natural drainage. In terms of ancillary facilities, poor quality refers to inappropriate (too small) changing rooms, no showers, no running water and old, dated interiors. They are often unsuitable for mixed gender use.

If a poor quality site receives little or no usage that is not to say that no improvement is needed. It may instead be the case that it receives no demand because of its quality, thus an improvement in said quality will attract demand to the site, potentially from overplayed standard or good quality sites.

Without appropriate, fit for purpose ancillary facilities, good quality pitches may be underutilised. Changing facilities form the most essential part of this offer and therefore key sites should be given priority for improvement. For the majority of sports, no senior league matches can take place without appropriate changing facilities and the same applies to women's and girls' demand.

To prioritise investment into key sites it is recommended that the steering group works up a list of criteria, relevant to Wirral, to provide a steer on this. It is the responsibility of the whole steering group to agree and to attend regular subsequent update meetings to ensure progress is being made.

For improvement/replacement of 3G pitches and AGPs, please refer to Sport England and the NGBs 'Selecting the Right Artificial Surface for Hockey, Football, Rugby League and Rugby Union' document for a guide as to suitable AGP surfaces: www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/artificial-sports-surfaces/. Generally, such provision requires refurbishment after being 10 years old, although this can vary depending on usage and maintenance levels.

For tennis, the lifespan of hard courts is also considered to be around 10 years. To ensure courts can continue to be used beyond this time frame, it is recommended that a sinking fund is put into place for eventual refurbishment. The LTA reports that this should cost £1,200 a year per macadam court (which includes on-going maintenance costs). In comparison, it indicates an approximate sinking fund of £1,800 needed to refurbish an artificial court.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Addressing overplay

In order to improve the overall quality of the outdoor facility stock; it is necessary to ensure that provision is not overplayed beyond recommended carrying capacity. This is determined by assessing quality (via a non-technical site assessment) and allocating a limit to each. For pitch sports, this relates to matches (daily for hockey, weekly for football and rugby union and seasonal for cricket), whereas for non-pitch sports it relates to membership.

The FA, the RFU, the ECB and EH all recommend a maximum number of matches that pitches should take based on quality, as seen in the table below. For other grass pitch sports, no guidelines are set by the NGBs although it can be assumed that a similar trend should be followed.

Table 5.2: Carrying capacity of pitches

Sport	Pitch type	No. of matches		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Football (grass)	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
Rugby union ¹⁸	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
Rugby league	Senior pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	4 per season	0 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	60 per season	0 per season
Hockey	Sand/water based AGP	Four matches per day	Four matches per day	N/A

For tennis, the LTA suggests that a floodlit hard court can accommodate 60 members, whereas a non-floodlit court can cater for 40 members. For crown green bowls, the BCGBA reports a green can provide for up to 60 members, although this can be increased through good maintenance and programming.

It is imperative to engage with clubs to ensure that sites are not played beyond their capacity. Play at overused sites should therefore be encouraged, where possible, to be transferred to alternative venues that are not operating at capacity. This may include transferring play to 3G pitches or to sites not currently available for community use but which may be in the future.

For cricket, an increase in NTPs is key to alleviating overplay as this allows for the transfer of junior demand from grass wickets. It also does not require any additional pitch space as NTPs can be installed in situ to existing squares.

For rugby union, additional floodlighting will reduce overplay at club sites as it will allow clubs to spread training demand across a greater number of pitches or unmarked areas. If permanent floodlighting is not possible, portable floodlighting is an alternative.

¹⁸ The RFU believes that it is most appropriate to base the calculation of pitch capacity upon an assessment of the drainage system and the maintenance programme afforded to a site.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

As mentioned earlier, there are also sites that are poor quality but which are not overplayed. These should not be overlooked as often poor quality sites have less demand than others but demand this could increase if the quality was improved. It does, however, work both ways as potential improvements may make sites more attractive and therefore more popular, which in the long run can again lead to them becoming poor quality pitches if not properly maintained. It is therefore imperative that any enhancements are supported by adequate maintenance to ensure that the improvements are sustainable.

Increasing maintenance

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

The FA has a general pitch improvement strategy which has been developed in partnership with Grounds Management Association (GMA) to develop a grass pitch maintenance service that can be utilised by grassroots clubs with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and therefore the quality of pitches. The key principles behind the service are to provide clubs with advice/practical solutions in a range of areas, with the simple aim of improving playing surfaces. The programme is designed to help clubs on sites that they themselves manage and maintain but can also be used to advise council-maintained sites.

In addition, the FA's Strategy also aims to focus on developing improved maintenance with local authorities that can be utilised at local authority-maintained sites.

Further to the above, the Football Foundation and the FA have recently developed a new pitch maintenance grant fund that allows clubs and sports organisations to apply for funding for maintenance assistance, consumables and/or equipment. Local authorities are currently ineligible applicants through this fund; however, clubs, leagues and or charitable organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have security of tenure and/or a proforma is in place.

For cricket and the ECB, the equivalent is the Grounds and Natural Turf Improvement Programme (GaNTIP), which is jointly funded by the ECB, FA, Football Foundation and the GMA. Its aim is to raise the standards of sports surfaces as well as the understanding of sports turf management practices among grassroots sports clubs across England Wales.

In relation to cricket specifically, maintaining high pitch quality is the most important aspect of the sport. If the wicket is poor, it can affect the quality of the game and, 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 it meets the standards that are benchmarked by the GMA.

At local authority sites in Wirral, maintenance is deemed to be minimal due to budget constraints. As such, if budget restrictions allow, additional work should be carried out. This could include sand dressing, weed-killing and/or fertilising pitches and greens (little of which currently takes place), more regular cleaning of courts and an improvement in post-season remedial work.

The Council should work with users and the relevant NGBs to achieve the above and to fully determine the most appropriate improvements on a site-by-site basis.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

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

To allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach, the Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of sites and associated facilities. Please refer to Part 6: Action Plan for the 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 of need, underpinned by a robust strategy for improvement in playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities as well as accompanying ancillary 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 PPOSS Steering Group.

Although some investment in new provision will not be made by the Council directly, it is important that the Steering Group seeks to direct and lead a strategic and co-ordinated approach to facility development by education sites, NGBs, sports clubs and the commercial sector to address community needs.

One of sport's greatest contributions is its positive impact on public health and it is therefore important to lever in investment from other sectors such as, for example, health and wellbeing. Sport and physical activity can have a profound effect on peoples' lives, and plays a crucial role in improving community cohesion, educational attainment and self-confidence.

Recommendation (g) –Secure developer contributions

It is important that this strategy informs policies and supplementary planning documents by setting out the approach to securing sport and recreational facilities through new housing development. This is especially pertinent to Wirral given the level of housing growth planned.

For playing pitches, it is recommended the Council use Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator as a tool for helping to determine the additional demand for pitches and to estimate the likely developer contribution required linking to sites within the locality. This uses the current number of teams by sports pitch type contained within the Assessment Report and calculates the percentage within each age group that play that sport. That percentage is then applied to the population growth. The additional teams likely to be generated are then converted into match equivalent sessions and associated pitch requirements in the peak period, with the associated costs (both for providing the provision and for its life cycle) then given. The calculator splits the requirement into peak time demand for natural turf pitches, training demand for artificial grass pitches, and the number of new changing rooms required.

It is recommended the Council work with Sport England to develop a process and guidance for obtaining contributions using the Playing Pitch Calculator to help inform that process.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

The guidance should form the basis for negotiation with developers to secure contributions for new sustainable provision and/or enhancement of appropriate playing fields and subsequent maintenance. On-site provision is not generally supported unless it is accompanied by ancillary facilities with a management and maintenance scheme and community use agreement. Section 106 contributions could also be used to improve the condition of pitches in order to increase capacity to accommodate more matches.

Where it is determined that new provision is required to accompany a development, priority should be placed on providing facilities that contribute towards alleviating existing shortfalls within the locality, with the PPOSS used to guide this. Where improvements are required, the PPOSS and in particular the Action Plan can identify sites in the locality that would most benefit from contributions and that would best cater for the increased demand.

To determine what supply of provision is provided, it is imperative that the PPOSS findings are taken into consideration and that for particularly large developments consultation takes place with the relevant NGBs and Sport England. This is due to the importance of ensuring that the stock of facilities provided is correct to avoid provision becoming unsustainable and unused. The preference is for multi-pitch and multi-sport sites to be developed, supported by a clubhouse and adequate parking facilities which consider the potential for future 3G/AGP development.

It is recognised that consultation cannot take place with NGBs for every development due to resource restrictions. Instead, it is recommended that such discussions take place within the PPOSS Steering Group meetings that should take place regularly following adoption of this study as part of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation process. It is recommended that these take place every 6-12 months and inform the annual PPS review/update (see Part 8 for further information).

Sport England recommends that a number of objectives should be implemented to enable the above to be delivered:

- ◀ Planning consent should include appropriate conditions and/or be subject to specific planning obligations. Where developer contributions are applicable, a Section 106 agreement or equivalent must be completed that should specify, when applied, the amount that will be linked to Sport England's Building Cost Information Service from the date of the permission and timing of the contribution/s to be made. To ensure deliverability the developer contribution must be linked to a specific site and set of works.
- ◀ Contributions should also be secured towards the first ten years of maintenance on new pitches, the cost of which is indicated by the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator. NGBs and Sport England can provide further and up to date information on the associated costs.
- ◀ External funding should be sought/secured to achieve maximum benefit from the investment into appropriate playing pitch facility enhancement, alongside other open space provision, and its subsequent maintenance.
- ◀ Where new multiple pitches are provided, appropriate changing rooms and associated car parking should be located on site.
- ◀ All new or improved outdoor sports facilities on school sites should be subject to community use agreements.

Please see Part 7 for further information in regards to Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator.

OBJECTIVE 3

To provide new playing pitches and outdoor sport facilities where there is current or future demand to do so

Recommendations:

- h. Identify opportunities to increase add to the overall stock to accommodate both current and future demand.
- i. Rectify quantitative shortfalls through the current facility stock.

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

The Steering Group should use and regularly update the Action Plan within this Strategy for improvements to the Council's own provision 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.

Although there are identified shortfalls of match equivalent sessions, most deficits can be addressed via quality improvements and/or improved access to sites that are presently used minimally or currently unavailable. Adding to the current stock, particularly in the short term is therefore not recommended as a priority, except in the case of 3G pitches and where there is significant housing growth.

Where new schools are provided in major new residential developments, they should be designed to facilitate community access, with opportunities for meeting the community's outdoor sporting needs explored at the planning stage to maximise potential demand and ensure the correct facility provision. For example, full size 3G pitches are often best suited to secondary school sites, whereas mini football pitches and small sided AGPs are best situated at primary school sites.

Any new provision, whether that be at a school or as a result of housing growth, should also consider the Council's wider sporting needs. This means that the focus should not solely be on sports featured in the PPOSS but also other types of sports facilities (including indoor) as well as provision for wider recreational activity (e.g. walking/cycling routes).

Notwithstanding the above, there also remains an isolated need to reconfigure pitches at certain sites, in particular in relation to the lack of dedicated youth 11v11 football pitches.

Recommendation (i) - Rectify quantitative shortfalls through the current facility stock

The Council and its partners should work to rectify identified inadequacies and meet identified shortfalls as outlined in the preceding Assessment Report and the sport-by-sport specific recommendations (Part 4) as well as the following Action Plan (Part 6). Linked to this, it is important that the current levels of provision are protected, maintained and enhanced to secure provision now and in the future.

WIRRAL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY

Maximising use of existing facilities through a combination of the following will help to reduce shortfalls and accommodate future demand:

- ◀ Improving quality in order to improve the capacity to accommodate more demand.
- ◀ Transferring demand from overplayed sites to sites with spare capacity.
- ◀ The re-designation of facilities e.g. converting an unused pitch (or pitch type) for one sport to instead cater for another sport (or another pitch type).
- ◀ Securing long term community use at school sites including those currently unavailable.
- ◀ Working with commercial and private providers to increase usage.

Unmet demand, changes in sport participation and trends and proposed housing growth should be recognised and factored into future facility planning. Assuming that 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 and the consequences of Covid-19 also needs to be monitored.

Table 5.3: Likely future sport-by-sport demand trends

Sport	Future sports development trend	Strategy impact
Football	Demand for adult football is likely to be sustained with the FA focusing on retention. There is also likely to be some continued movement towards small sided football for adults.	Additional need for 3G pitches. Sustain current pitch stock but give consideration to pitch reconfiguration to accommodate youth 11v11 football. Qualitative improvements.
	Demand for mini and youth football is likely to increase and the FA has a key objective to deliver 50% of mini and youth football on 3G pitches.	Sustain current stock and consideration given to reconfigure pitches if required. Qualitative improvements. Where possible utilise new or existing 3G pitches to further accommodate this demand and ensure FA testing.
	The FA has a strategy for Women's and Girls' football: 2020 – 2024 in October 2020. One of the major goals of the new strategy will give every girls the earliest opportunity to play the game. ¹⁹	Demand for grass pitches and 3G pitches is likely to increase.
	Focus on recreational/informal play	Greater need for small-sided and informal football spaces e.g. MUGAs, indoor facilities and developed open spaces.
3G pitches	Demand for 3G pitches for football is high and will continue to increase. It is likely that future demand for the use of 3G pitches will increase for both training and match play purposes.	Requirement for new 3G pitches to be provided and a need for CUAs to be in place for any new pitches as well as sinking funds. Requirement for 3G pitches to be FA/FIFA tested to host competitive matches. Utilise Sport England/NGB guidance on choosing the correct surface.

¹⁹ <https://www.thefa.com/news/2020/oct/19/sue-campbell-inspiring-positive-change-191020>

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Sport	Future sports development trend	Strategy impact
Cricket	<p>Except for grounds identified as poor quality, ECB predicts further growth in cricket demand for pitch use over the next few years.</p>	<p>Pitches that are already identified in the PPS as being at capacity will not be able to accommodate additional playing demand generated and it is predicted there will be demand for additional cricket playing facilities.</p>
	<p>All Stars Cricket, the ECB national programme for 5-8 year olds, is engaging large numbers of children and has already been delivered over the past 3-4 years, with increasing numbers of participants year on year, alongside Chance to Shine cricket delivery in primary schools.</p> <p>Dynamos Cricket is the latest launch by the ECB, building on the existing All Stars programme for 5-8-year-olds. Participants will continue to develop their skills and be introduced to a countdown style of cricket match.</p>	<p>Greater usage of outfielders to accommodate demand from All Stars Cricket.</p> <p>Shorter formats of cricket, and additional formats including softball cricket, are also driving up demand for pitches.</p> <p>An increase stock of NTPs likely to be required to accommodate demand.</p>
	<p>Women's and girls' cricket is a national ECB priority and there is a target to establish more female teams in every local authority.</p>	<p>Increased requirement for peak time access to pitches.</p> <p>Need to ensure access to good quality facilities including, segregated changing and toilet provision.</p>
Rugby union	<p>Locally, the RFU want to ensure access to pitches satisfies existing demand and predicted growth. It is also an aim to protect and improve pitch quality, as well as ancillary facilities.</p>	<p>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 and support facility development. In particular, capital improvements are required to the existing natural turf pitches as is improvements to the quality of changing rooms, where appropriate. All clubs should have access to high quality floodlit pitches to support training and match play demand.</p>
Hockey	<p>Current playing level is likely to continue to increase.</p>	<p>Ensure continued use of sand-based AGPs to accommodate current demand and ensure sinking funds are in place for long-term sustainability.</p> <p>Ensure that no 3G pitch conversions take place that are detrimental to hockey.</p>
	<p>High profile events (e.g. Hockey World Cup 2018 Legacy)</p>	<p>These high profile events aim to raise the profile of the game within England and there will be community events in the build-up within clubs and a promotional programme through clubs and local schools. This will inevitably raise the profile of the game with the aim to increase participation.</p>
	<p>2019 launched England Hockey initiative, Hockey Heroes (aimed at growing participation for under 10s).</p>	<p>Ensure that outfielders are able to accommodate additional future demand.</p>

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Sport	Future sports development trend	Strategy impact
Tennis	New LTA Facilities Investment Strategy has a focus on parks tennis and indoor facilities.	Need to improve/develop courts at key local authority sites to cater for recreational and informal demand. Potential for outdoor courts to be covered to provide indoor spaces (e.g. through air domes).
	Continued implementation of Clubspark	To be installed and utilised at more local authority and club sites to help monitor and increase usage
Bowls	Increasing elderly population	Demand for bowling greens may increase as the age profile of Wirral increases

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PART 6: ACTION PLAN

The site-by-site action plan seeks to address key issues identified in the preceding 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 to make. The Action Plan is separated by analysis area.

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. As stated in Recommendation (e), to allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach, the Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of playing pitch sites and associated facilities.

The identification of sites is based on their strategic importance in a Borough-wide context i.e. 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 area as a whole. The table below provides a guide as to how sites are assigned.

Table 6.1: Proposed tiered site criteria

Criteria	Hub sites	Key centres	Local sites
Site location	Strategically located in the Borough. Priority sites for NGBs.	Strategically located within the analysis area.	Serves the local community.
Site layout	Accommodates three or more grass pitches, generally including provision of an AGP (or with the potential).	Accommodates two or more grass pitches.	Accommodates one or two pitches.
Type of sport	Multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision.	Generally single sport provision but may cater for two.
Management	Management control allows for wide community use, i.e. through the local authority, a leisure operator or a school with a community use agreement.	Management control generally allows for wide community use but may include sites that are owned or leased by clubs/other organisations.	Management control can be via the local authority, schools, clubs and other providers.
Maintenance regime	Maintenance regime aligns or could align with NGB guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns or could align with NGB guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime or an in-house maintenance contract.
Ancillary facilities	Good quality ancillary facilities on site (or potential), with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches; may include wider social/function facilities.	Good quality ancillary facility on site (or potential), with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	Limited or no changing room access on site.

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Hub sites are of Borough wide importance where users are willing to travel to access the range and high quality of facilities offered and are likely to be multi-sport. These have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the issues identified in the assessment.

Key centres are more community focused, although some are still likely to service a wider analysis area (or slightly wider); however, there may be more of a focus on a specific sport i.e. a dedicated site.

It is considered that some financial investment may be necessary to improve the facilities at both hub sites and key sites. This could be to improve the provision, create additional provision (e.g. a 3G pitch) or to enhance the ancillary facilities in terms of access, flexibility (i.e. single-sex changing if necessary) and quality as well as ensuring that they meet the rules and regulations of local competitions.

Local sites refer to those sites offering minimal provision or that are of minimal value to the wider community. Primarily they are sites with one facility or a low number of facilities that service just one or two sports.

For local authority sites, consideration should be given, on a site-by-site basis, to the feasibility of a club taking on a long-term lease (if not already present), in order that external funding can be sought. Such sites will require some level of investment, either to the outdoor sport facilities or ancillary facilities and is it anticipated that one of the conditions of offering a hire/lease is that the Club would be in a position to source external funding to improve/extend the provision.

Other sites considered in this tier may be primary school sites or secondary school sites that are not widely used by the community or that do not offer community availability.

Management and development

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

- ◀ Financial viability and sustainability.
- ◀ Security of tenure (funding should not be directed to a site that offers no community use or that does not provide users with a guarantee of long-term access).
- ◀ Planning permission requirements and any foreseen difficulties in securing permission.
- ◀ Adequacy of existing finances to maintain existing sites.
- ◀ 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 (e.g. a lease arrangement incorporating multiple clubs and/or multiple sports under an umbrella).
- ◀ 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.
- ◀ Football investment programme/3G pitches development with the FA.

Partners

The column indicating partners refers to the main organisations that the Council would look to work with to support delivery of the actions. Given the extent of potential actions it is reasonable to assume that partners will not necessarily be able to support all of the actions identified but where the action is a priority and resource is available the partner will endeavour to provide support.

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Whilst the Council is considered to be a partner within each action to a lesser or greater extent, it is only referenced where it is considered to be a key stakeholder (e.g. at council operated sites).

Priority

Although hub sites are mostly likely to have a **high** priority level as they have wide importance, high priority sites have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the key issues identified in the assessment. Therefore, some key centres and local sites are also identified as having a high priority level. It is these projects/sites which should generally, if possible, be addressed within the short term (1-2 years), unless the actions are not considered relevant or achievable in such a timeframe.

The majority of key centres are a **medium** priority, have analysis area importance and have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the issues identified in the assessment.

The **low** priority sites tend to be single pitch or single sport sites and often club or education sites with local specific importance but that may also contribute to addressing the issues identified in the assessment for specific users.

Costs

The strategic actions have also been ranked as low, medium or high based on cost. The brackets 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/design-and-cost-guidance/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 developments occur. The indicative timescales relate to delivery times and are not priority based:

- ◀ (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**.

In addition, reference in the aim column is made to sites that are included as priority projects in the Wirral **LFFP**, or that should be included when the plan is updated based upon the findings of this study.

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
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Analysis Area 1

Quantitative headline findings

Sport	Type	Current supply/ demand balance	Future supply/ demand balance²⁰
Football	Adult	Shortfall of 16.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 17 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 11v11	At capacity	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session
	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 2.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 3 match equivalent sessions
	Mini 7v7	Capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions
	Mini 5v5	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 6.5 match equivalent sessions
	3G	Shortfall of 3 full size pitches	Shortfall of 4 full size pitches
Cricket	Senior (Saturday)	Capacity of 21 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 9 match equivalent sessions
	Senior (Sunday)	Capacity of 31 match equivalent sessions	Capacity of 23 match equivalent sessions
	Junior	Capacity of 96 match equivalent sessions	Capacity of 96 match equivalent sessions
Rugby union	Senior	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session	Shortfall of 2.5 match equivalent sessions
Hockey	AGP	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Bowls	Greens	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Tennis	Courts	Shortfall for Thornton Hough TC	Shortfall for Thornton Hough TC

²⁰ Up to 2037 in line with Local Plan
July 2021

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
3	Anselmians Rugby Football Club	Rugby union	Club	Three senior and one mini pitch, all of standard (M2/D0) quality. Despite pitches on site being newly developed, the playing surface holds water and thus drains poorly. Two of the three senior pitches have minimal spare capacity whilst the third pitch is overplayed by three match equivalent sessions per week due to training demand. The mini pitch is also overplayed by one match equivalent session per week. The Club aspires to replace two senior pitches on site with World Rugby compliant 3Gs. The pitches are supported by good quality ancillary provision.	Support the Club to improve drainage on site. Explore the feasibility of providing World Rugby compliant 3G pitches to relieve capacity issues at the site and in the wider area.	RFU Club	Local	M	S	H	Protect Enhance Provide
7	Bebington High Sports College	3G	School	One full-size, floodlit 3G pitch of standard quality which is available for community use. It is currently used to capacity for football training demand.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Ensure sinking fund is in place for resurfacing when required. Seek FA testing so that the pitch can be used for competitive matches.	FA RFU School	Key	H	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide
		Rugby union		One poor quality (M0/D0) mini rugby union pitch that is without floodlighting and unavailable for community use. The pitch is played to capacity through curricular use.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime. Explore community use options should club demand exist in the future.			L	S	L	
16	Bromborough Pool Price Sports & Social Club	Bowls	Club	One bowling green which is of poor quality and not known to be used.	Retain green as strategic reserve or consider re-purposing for other sporting use.	BCGBA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect
	Prices Sports Ground/South View Playing Field/Bromborough Pool Playing Fields	Football	Housing Association	Adjacent playing field which used to be part of Bromborough Pool Price Sports & Social Club now owned by a Housing Association but lapsed. Suitable for at least two adult pitches.	Explore opportunities to bring the site back into use to accommodate displaced demand from other sites. Feasibility required to determine levels of investment to bring back into use.	Council FA	Local	M	S-M	M	Protect Enhance Provide
17	Bromborough Recreation Ground	Football	Council	One youth 11v11, one youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch, all of poor quality. All pitches have spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality to provide actual spare capacity.	Council FA BCGBA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		One bowling green of good quality which is used by Bromborough Recs BC. The green is supported by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain green quality.			L	L	L	
27	Green Lane Playing Fields	Football	Council	The site previously hosted three adult pitches which, aerial imagery indicates, were last utilised in 2012.	Consider bringing the site back into use given local shortfalls.	Council FA	Local	M	S	M	Protect Provide

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
32	Higher Bebington Recreation Ground	Football	Council	One poor quality adult football pitch that is overplayed by 4.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality to reduce capacity issues, first and foremost through enhanced maintenance regime. Transfer some demand to an alternative site with spare capacity to fully eradicate overplay.	Council FA BCGBA LTA	Local	H	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		One poor quality bowling green used by Bebington Park BC and Cammell Laird BC. Improved maintenance is expected to result in an improvement in green quality for the upcoming season. The green is supported by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain enhanced maintenance regime to ensure green quality improves.			L	L	L	
		Tennis		Three standard quality macadam tennis courts that are without floodlighting. The courts are part of the ClubSpark programme and are considered to be sustainable.	Sustain court quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.			L	L	L	
38	Kings Lane Playing Fields	Football	Council	One adult and two youth 9v9 pitch of poor quality and two mini 7v7 and two mini 5v5 pitches of standard quality. All four mini pitches are played to capacity at peak time whilst the adult and youth pitches are overplayed by three and one match equivalent session per week, respectively.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and consider adding to LFFP priority project list. Transfer some demand to an alternative site with spare capacity to fully eradicate overplay.	Council FA	Local	H	S	L	Protect Enhance LFFP
43	Lord Leverhulme Playing Fields	Football	Council	Six poor quality adult football pitches that are overplayed by six match equivalent sessions per week. Pitches suffer from poor drainage, unauthorised access and the goal posts are badly rusted. The site is listed for pitch and pavilion improvements in the LFFP, as well as two 3G pitches.	Improve pitch and ancillary quality in line with recommendations from the LFFP to alleviate overplay. Further explore feasibility of providing 3G provision on site given local shortfalls.	Council FA ECB RFU LTA	Hub	H	M	H	Protect Enhance Provide LFFP
		Cricket		Three good quality grass cricket squares that suffer from dog fouling, litter and glass. The site has also suffered from vandalism. Port Sunlight CC has recently constructed a new pavilion on site. All three squares have capacity for some form of additional play although one of the three squares is played to capacity on Saturdays.	Sustain square quality. Pursue resolution to unofficial use.			M	S	L	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
		Rugby union		Two poor (M0/D1) quality senior rugby union pitches that are used by Port Sunlight RFC. The pitches have spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality. Port Sunlight RFC is in the process of agreeing terms with Port Sunlight CC and the Council to ensure access to the new pavilion.	Improve pitch quality to provide actual spare capacity through enhanced maintenance and/or the installation of a drainage system. Ensure secure access to the pavilion for the rugby club.			M	S	L/M	
		Tennis		Eight macadam tennis courts used by Port Sunlight TC. The four floodlit courts are assessed as standard quality whilst the non-floodlit courts are in poor condition. The site is part of the ClubSpark programme.	Sustain good quality courts through dedicated maintenance regime. Improve poor quality courts through resurfacing and enhanced maintenance regime. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.			M	S	L	
45	Mayfields Playing Fields	Football	Council	One adult, one youth 9v9, two mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch, all of poor quality. The mini 7v7 pitches have spare capacity which has been discounted due to poor pitch quality. All remaining pitch formats are overplayed. The site is reported to drain poorly due to undulations in the playing surface. The site is serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities but is listed for pavilion improvements in the LFFP.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay. Look to improve ancillary facility quality in line with LFFP recommendations.	Council FA	Local	H	M	M	Protect Enhance
48	New Ferry Park	Football	Council	One poor quality adult football pitch which is played to capacity.	Improve pitch quality to provide spare capacity.	Council FA LTA	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Tennis		Four macadam tennis courts that are without floodlighting. Two courts are in good condition whilst the remaining two are in poor condition. The site is part of the ClubSpark programme.	Sustain good quality courts through dedicated maintenance regime. Improve poor quality courts through resurfacing and enhanced maintenance regime. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.			M	M	L	
51	Octel Sports & Social Club	Football	Private	The site previously accommodated two adult football pitches and has recently been marked for mini football as well. There is a current planning application for the construction of 106 houses on site with all sports facilities set to be lost. A Sports Needs Assessment has been conducted and proposes a range of mitigation options, none of which have been agreed at the time of writing.	Based on the findings of this PPS, the site is not considered to be surplus to requirements. As such, any permanent loss of the provision and the mitigation options brought forward must align with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy requirements to provide an equivalent or better quantity and quality replacement.	Council FA ECB BCGBA LTA	Key	H	S	L	Protect
		Cricket		The site previously provided a cricket square.	Ensure any permanent loss of provision aligns with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy requirements.			H	S	L	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
		Bowls		The site previously provided one bowling green.	Ensure any permanent loss of provision aligns with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy requirements.			H	S	L	
		Tennis		The site previously provided four tennis courts.	Ensure any permanent loss of provision aligns with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy requirements.			H	S	L	
55	Plymyard Playing Fields	Football	Council	Eight adult, three youth 9v9, two mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch. The youth 9v9 pitches are of poor quality whilst all remaining pitch formats are of standard quality. The youth 9v9 and mini pitches are played to capacity whilst the adult pitches have actual spare capacity of 3.5 match equivalent sessions per week. The site is listed in the LFFP for pitch and ancillary improvements, as well as two 3G pitches.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate over play issues. Improve ancillary facilities. Further explore creation of 3G provision given local shortfalls.	Council FA	Key	H	S	H	Protect Enhance Provide LFFP
67	South Wirral High School	Football	School	One adult and one youth 9v9 pitch, both of standard quality. Both pitches are overplayed, by five and two match equivalent sessions per week, respectively. Tenure on site is unsecure.	Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay. Transfer some demand to an alternative site to fully eradicate overplay. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide security of tenure to club users.	FA ECB RFU LTA	Local	H	S	M	Protect Enhance
		Cricket		Two standalone NTPs that now lie disused.	Consider reinstatement of provision to accommodate curricular needs.			L	L	L	
		Rugby union		One senior rugby pitch of poor (M0/D1) quality. The pitch is currently used for curricular demand and has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide potential future users with security of tenure.			L	S	L	
		Tennis		Three macadam tennis courts that are without floodlighting and unavailable for community use.	Sustain court quality for curricular demand.			L	L	L	
69	St John Plessington Catholic College	Rugby union	School	One poor (M0/D0) quality senior rugby union pitch that is unavailable for community use.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime. Make the pitch available for community use to help alleviate overplay at club sites.	RFU School	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
73	The Oval Leisure Centre	Football	Council	Four adult, three youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 all of standard quality. All pitch formats on site display actual spare capacity. Ancillary facilities on site are in poor condition.	Improve pitch quality on site and explore transfer of demand from sites that are overplayed. Improve ancillary provision on site to help attract demand.	Council FA ECB EH LTA	Hub	H	S	H	Protect Enhance LFFP

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
		3G		Eight small-size 3G pitches that are floodlit and available for community use. The pitches were last resurfaced in 2010 and therefore are in need of resurfacing imminently.	Improve pitch quality through resurfacing.			M	S	M	
		Cricket		One standard quality grass cricket square with 12 wickets. The square is played to capacity on Saturdays but has capacity on Sundays and during midweek. The site is supported by poor quality ancillary facilities and car parking is reported to be insufficient.	Improve square quality to increase capacity and to better accommodate demand. Explore the feasibility of improving ancillary provision on site.			M	S	L	
		Hockey		One full-size AGP that is floodlit and available for community use. The pitch was last resurfaced in 2010 although remedial work in the last year means that the pitch is of standard quality. Floodlighting is reported to be an issue on site and Bebington HC reports it would benefit from improved ancillary provision. Preliminary discussions have taken place regarding the potential conversion of the AGP to a 3G surface.	Improve pitch quality through resurfacing and retain as hockey suitable unless an alternative pitch is established in the area and supported by England Hockey. Improving floodlighting and ancillary facilities on site.			H	S	H	
		Tennis		Six standard quality macadam tennis courts that are floodlit and available for community use.	Sustain court quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Consider implementation of ClubSpark to increase and monitor community demand.			M	S	L	
76	Thornton Hough	Football	Council	One standard quality adult football pitch which is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week. The site is supported by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay on site.	Council FA ECB LTA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Cricket		One standalone NTP which is available for community use.	Sustain wicket quality through dedicated maintenance regime.			L	L	L	
92	Wirral Cricket Club	Football	Club	One poor quality adult football pitch that is currently unused. Spare capacity on site is discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality to provide actual spare capacity.	FA ECB Club	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Cricket		One standard quality grass cricket square with 14 wickets and an NTP. The square is played to capacity on Saturdays and Sundays although spare capacity exists midweek. Wirral CC reports ambitions for more practice nets on site. The site is supported by good quality ancillary provision.	Support Wirral CC to improve maintenance on site to improve square quality. Explore the feasibility of supporting Wirral CC's aspirations to provide additional practice nets on site.			M	S	L	

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
93	Wirral Grammar School for Boys	Cricket	School	A poor quality grass square with 16 wickets that is unavailable for community use. Also now unused by the School due to quality issues.	Improve quality to enable use. Explore community use options.	ECB RFU School	Local	L	S	L	Protect Provide Enhance
		Rugby union		Five poor quality (M0/D0) senior rugby pitches that are unavailable for community use. The pitches are played to capacity through curricular use.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime. Explore community use to help alleviate overplay at club sites.			L	S	L	
94	Wirral Grammar School for Girls	Tennis	School	Seven good quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but are without floodlighting.	Sustain court quality for curricular demand.	LTA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
95a	Wirral Rugby Club	Rugby union	Club	Two good (M2/D2) quality senior rugby union pitches that are without floodlighting. Both pitches have spare capacity although are played to capacity at peak time. Wirral RFC hopes to improve ancillary provision on site in terms of changing room and social space.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure demand can continue to be accommodated. Support Wirral RFC's aspiration to improve ancillary provision (changing rooms and social space) on site.	RFU Club	Local	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
95b	Wirral Rugby Club (back field)	Rugby union	Club	Four senior rugby union pitches of which three are of standard (M1/D1) quality and without floodlighting whilst the remaining pitch is floodlit but in poor (M1/D0) condition. The three standard quality senior pitches have actual spare capacity of three match equivalent sessions per week whilst the floodlit senior pitch is overplayed by 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality through to reduce shortfalls. Examine the potential of installing floodlights on additional pitches to spread training demand across the site. Ensure security of tenure for the Club. Replace existing floodlights on site in line with RFU specification in terms of LUX levels and uniformity.	RFU Club	Local	H	M	M	Protect Enhance Provide
122	Thornton Hough Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Two good quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. The courts are currently minimally oversubscribed with members. Changing facilities on site are reported to be in poor condition. The site is part of the ClubSpark programme and deemed to be sustainable.	Ensure usage can be sustained through maintaining good quality. Explore the installation of floodlights or access to alternative additional courts to better support membership. Support the Club to improve changing facilities on site.	LTA Club	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
123	Torr Park	Tennis	Council	Two poor quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. The site is part of the ClubSpark programme and deemed to be sustainable.	Improve court quality to support increased recreational demand. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.	Council LTA ECB	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
		Cricket		One lapsed grass cricket square.	Site has the potential to alleviate identified shortfalls. Determine future use of the provision based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs.			L	L	L	
134	Port Sunlight Village Bowling Club	Bowls	Club	Two poor quality crown bowling greens. Port Sunlight Village & Works BC report that green quality has deteriorated due to limited maintenance. The greens are serviced by poor quality ancillary facilities and insufficient parking.	Improve green quality through enhanced maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of improving ancillary provision on site.	BCGBA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
141	Lever Club	Bowls	Community	One poor quality crown bowling green. Lever Club BC reports that green quality has deteriorated due to limited maintenance. The green is serviced by good quality ancillary facilities.	Improve green quality through enhanced maintenance regime.	BCGBA	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
156	Heygarth Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 and one mini 5v5 pitch, both of standard quality. Both pitches have actual spare capacity although this has been discounted due to unsecure tenure. Allport Hawks JFC rents the pitches and pays for a groundsman to maintain the pitches but quality is still limited and the site drains poorly.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure demand can continue to be accommodated. Pursue security of tenure for Allport Hawks JFC and to provide actual spare capacity.	FA School	Local	M	S	L	Protect
163	Mendell Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality youth 9v9 pitch that is played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality and ensure security of tenure for club users.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
169	Woodslee Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality youth 9v9 pitch that is played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality and ensure security of tenure for club users.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
177	Riverside Football Ground (also known as Eastham Locks)	Football	Club	One standard quality adult pitch which has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to unsecure tenure. The site is being promoted for an employment development as part of Peel's 'Port Wirral'.	Sustain pitch quality and ensure security of tenure for club users. Ensure appropriate mitigation in line with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy should the site be lost to development.	FA Club	Local	H	S	M	Protect
181	Brackenwood Junior School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 7v7 pitch which is played to capacity at peak time.	Sustain pitch quality and ensure security of tenure for club users.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
182	Christ the King Catholic Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 7v7 pitch which has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain pitch quality and pursue security of tenure for club users to provide actual spare capacity.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
186	Raby Vale Training Ground (Tranmere Rovers)	Football	Sports Club	A disused playing field site that previously accommodated two adult pitches with space for youth and mini pitches to be marked when necessary. The site was used as a training ground by Tranmere Rovers FC before relocating to Solar Campus Playing Field.	Look to reinstate pitches on site to support with shortfalls in grass pitch provision.	FA Sports Club	Local	M	L	L	Protect Provide
195	Maritime Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One standard quality grass cricket square with 12 wickets. The square is played to capacity on Saturdays but has capacity on Sundays and during midweek. The site is prone to dog fouling, unofficial use and vandalism. The site is supported by standard quality ancillary facilities and Maritime CC aspires to install an NTP.	Improve square quality to better accommodate demand. Install an NTP on site to provide spare capacity.	ECB Club	Local	M	L	L	Protect Provide
197	The Lyceum Club	Bowls	Community	Two good quality crown bowling greens. The site is serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain green quality.	BCGBA	Local	L	L	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Analysis Area 2

Quantitative headline findings

Sport	Type	Current supply/ demand balance	Future supply/ demand balance²¹
Football	Adult	At capacity	At capacity
	Youth 11v11	Capacity of 1 match equivalent session	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session
	Youth 9v9	At capacity	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session
	Mini 7v7	At capacity	At capacity
	Mini 5v5	At capacity	Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions
	3G	At capacity	At capacity
Cricket	Senior (Saturday)	At capacity	At capacity
	Senior (Sunday)	Capacity of 8 match equivalent sessions	Capacity of 8 match equivalent sessions
	Junior	Capacity of 16 match equivalent sessions	Capacity of 16 match equivalent sessions
Rugby union	Senior	At capacity	At capacity
Hockey	AGP	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Bowls	Greens	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Tennis	Courts	Adequate provision	Adequate provision

²¹ Up to 2037 in line with Local Plan

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

ANALYSIS AREA 2

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
82	Victoria Park	Cricket	Council	One standard quality grass cricket square with 11 wickets. The square is played to capacity on Saturdays but has capacity on Sundays and during midweek. The site is supported by standard quality ancillary facilities and insufficient parking.	Improve square quality to better accommodate demand. Pursue car parking improvements.	Council ECB	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Football		One youth 9v9 pitch and two mini 7v7 pitches, both of standard quality. The mini pitches are played to capacity at peak time whilst the youth 9v9 pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay.			M	S	L	
		Bowls		Three poor quality crown bowling greens. Higher Tranmere Vets BC indicates that maintenance has been poor over the past season.	Improve green quality through enhanced maintenance regime.			M	S	L	
96	Wirral Tennis and Leisure Centre	Football	Council	Two standard quality youth 11v11 pitches that have actual spare capacity equating to one match equivalent session per week. The pitches are reported to be well maintained but drain poorly. The site is supported by ancillary facilities that are in need of refurbishment/modernisation.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of improving drainage on site. Seek transfer of demand from overplayed sites to utilise actual spare capacity. Refurbish changing provision.	Council FA FA LTA	Key	M	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide
		3G		One full-size 3G pitch and two small-size 3G pitches that are all floodlit and available for community use. The full-size pitch is of standard quality although the small-size pitches are in poor condition and are in need of imminent resurfacing. The full-size pitch is played to capacity at peak time. The Council is currently working to deliver an additional full-size 3G pitch on site.	Sustain full-size pitch quality and ensure a sinking fund is in place for future refurbishment. Seek FA testing so that the provision can be used for competitive matches. Look to resurface the small-size pitches on site in the near future to ensure recreational demand can continue to be accommodated. Support plans for the creation of an additional pitch given Borough-wide shortfalls and the sites central location.			H	S	H	
		Tennis		Three good quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. The site is used by the Parks tennis league in Wirral.	Sustain court quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Explore creation of floodlighting to better accommodate demand. Consider implementation of ClubSpark to increase and monitor community demand.			M	S	M	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
150	Birkenhead Youth Club	3G	Club	One standard quality small-size 3G pitch that is available for community use but without floodlighting.	Sustain pitch quality to continue accommodation of recreational demand. Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment when necessary.	FA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect
194	Albany Bowling Club	Bowls	Club	One standard quality crown bowling green used by Albany BC.	Improve green quality to better accommodate demand.	BCGBA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Analysis Area 3

Quantitative headline findings

Sport	Type	Current supply/ demand balance	Future supply/ demand balance²²
Football	Adult	Shortfall of 3 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 3 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 11v11	At capacity	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session
	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 2.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 3 match equivalent sessions
	Mini 7v7	Shortfall of 3 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 3 match equivalent sessions
	Mini 5v5	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 4 match equivalent sessions
	3G	Shortfall of 3 full size pitches	Shortfall of 3 full size pitches
Cricket	Senior (Saturday)	At capacity	At capacity
	Senior (Sunday)	Capacity of 16 match equivalent sessions	Capacity of 16 match equivalent sessions
	Junior	At capacity	At capacity
Rugby union	Senior	At capacity	At capacity
Hockey	AGP	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Bowls	Greens	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Tennis	Courts	Shortfall for Heswall TC	Shortfall for Heswall TC

²² Up to 2037 in line with Local Plan

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

ANALYSIS AREA 3

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
4	Arrowe Park	Football	Council	Six adult, eight youth 9v9 and two mini 7v7 pitches, all available for community use. The adult and youth pitches are in poor condition whilst the mini pitches are of standard quality. The adult pitches are overplayed by 4.5 match equivalent sessions per week, whereas the mini pitches are played to capacity at peak time. The youth pitches have actual spare capacity which has been discounted due to poor pitch quality. The site is serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities. The Council is working to deliver a full-size 3G pitch on site.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and provide actual spare capacity. Consider re-configuring pitches to better accommodate youth 11v11 demand. Improve ancillary facilities given key nature of the site. Explore the feasibility of delivering 3G pitches on site given local shortfalls.	Council FA BCGBA	Hub	H	S	H	Protect Enhance Provide LFFP
		Bowls		Two poor quality crown bowling greens that are currently unused.	Look to improve green quality through enhanced maintenance to encourage demand, or repurpose for other sporting use.			M	S	L	
26	Gayton Park (Heswall FC)	Football	Council	One standard quality adult football pitch that is played to capacity. The pitch is well maintained but drains poorly. The site is supported by good quality ancillary facilities.	Explore the feasibility of rectifying drainage issues on site.	Council FA	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
53	Pensby High School for Girls	Tennis	School	Eight macadam tennis courts that are available for community use although only four are floodlit. The floodlit courts are of good quality whilst the non-floodlit courts are of standard quality.	Sustain court quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Consider implementation of ClubSpark to increase and monitor community demand.	LTA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
54	Pensby Sports Complex	Football	School	One adult, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch, all of poor quality. All pitch formats on site are overplayed.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and consider adding to LFFP priority project list.	FA RFU School	Local	M	M	L	Protect Enhance LFFP
		3G		One good quality full-size 3G pitch which is floodlit but currently unavailable for community use following the collapse of the external lettings company that managed community access. The pitch is the only FA registered 3G pitch in Wirral.	In the immediacy, explore solutions to reinstate community use. Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment when necessary. Ensure re-testing every three years for continued accommodation of competitive matches.			H	S	L	
		Rugby union		One senior rugby union pitch of poor (M0/D0) quality that is unavailable for community use and without floodlighting. The pitch is played to capacity through curricular demand.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime.			L	S	L	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
60	Ridgewood Park	Football	Council	Two adult pitches and one youth 9v9 pitch, all of which are available for community use and of poor quality. The adult pitches are overplayed by 6.5 match equivalent sessions per week whilst spare capacity on the youth 9v9 pitch has been discounted due to poor pitch quality. Pitches were previously used by Heswall JFC but this has ceased as the Club reports that pitches were unusable for the majority of the season.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and consider adding to LFFP priority project list. Transfer some demand from the adult pitches to alternative sites with spare capacity to fully eradicate overplay.	Council FA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance LFFP
74	The Puddydale	Football	Council	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch that is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay.	Council FA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
91	Whitfield Common	Football	Council	One standard quality adult pitch which is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week. Ancillary facilities on site are in poor condition.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay. Improve ancillary facilities.	Council FA LTA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Tennis		Two poor quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting.	Improve court quality through resurfacing. Consider implementation of ClubSpark to increase and monitor community demand.			M	S	L	
104	Heswall Hall	Bowls	Community	One standard quality crown bowling green.	Pursue green improvements to better accommodate demand.	BCGBA	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance
105	Heswall Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Eight artificial tennis courts that are all available for community use although only four are floodlit. The floodlit courts are in good condition whilst the non-floodlit courts are of standard quality. The site is oversubscribed by 50 members.	Sustain court quality. Explore the feasibility of floodlighting the remaining four courts on site to alleviate capacity issue, or pursue access to additional courts.	LTA Club	Local	M	S	L	Protect Provide
112	Pinewood Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Four standard quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but are without floodlighting.	Sustain court quality and pursue improvements where possible. Support the Club in its aspirations to install floodlighting.	LTA Club	Local	M	M	L	Protect Enhance
113	Poll Hill	Bowls	Council	One standard quality crown bowling green.	Pursue green improvements to better accommodate demand.	Council BCGBA	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
129	Heswall RBL Bowling Club	Bowls	Club	One good quality crown bowling green used by Heswall RBL BC. After considering future demand, a minimal level of overplay is expected to occur. The green is supported by good quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain green quality. Monitor the level of demand to ensure potential overplay does not cause green quality to deteriorate.	BCGBA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect
138	Pensby Bowling Club	Bowls	Club	One good quality crown bowling green that is oversubscribed by Pensby BC.	Sustain green quality. Monitor green quality to ensure potential overuse does not cause green quality to deteriorate.	BCGBA Club	Local	M	L	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
139	Thingwall Bowling Club	Bowls	Club	Two good quality crown bowling greens. The site is supported by good quality ancillary facilities although parking is said to be insufficient.	Sustain green quality. Explore resolution to car parking issues.	BCGBA Club	Local	L	M	L	Protect
185	Heswall Primary School	Football	School	Two standard quality mini 5v5 pitches that are available for community use. Spare capacity on site has been discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide users with security of tenure.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
-	Chester Road Playing Fields	Football	Council	A disused youth pitch that has not been used for a number of years due to quality issues. Heswall JFC expresses an interest in bringing the provision back into use but also reports that the Council has instead suggested using an adjacent piece of land.	Consider bringing the pitch back into use to alleviate shortfalls and/or utilise adjacent piece of land for similar purposes.	FA	Local	L	S	L	Protect Provide

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Analysis Area 4

Quantitative headline findings

Sport	Type	Current supply/ demand balance	Future supply/ demand balance²³
Football	Adult	Shortfall of 7 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 7 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 11v11	At capacity	At capacity
	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions
	Mini 7v7	Capacity of 2 match equivalent sessions	Capacity of 2 match equivalent sessions
	Mini 5v5	Capacity of 1 match equivalent session	Shortfall of 4 match equivalent sessions
	3G	Shortfall of 2 full size pitches	Shortfall of 2 full size pitches
Cricket	Senior (Saturday)	Shortfall of 8 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 8 match equivalent sessions
	Senior (Sunday)	Shortfall of 8 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 16 match equivalent sessions
	Junior	At capacity	At capacity
Rugby union	Senior	Shortfall of 3.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 4.5 match equivalent sessions
Hockey	AGP	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Bowls	Greens	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Tennis	Courts	Shortfall for Hoylake TC	Shortfall for Hoylake TC

²³ Up to 2037 in line with Local Plan

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

ANALYSIS AREA 4

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
1	Acres Road Playing Fields	Football	Council	Two youth 11v11 and two mini 7v7 pitches of standard quality. The youth 11v11 pitches are overplayed by one match equivalent session per week whilst the mini 7v7 pitches have actual spare capacity of two match equivalent sessions per week. Fundraising has taken place to install drainage on site. The site is supported by good quality ancillary facilities although parking facilities are insufficient.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay of youth 11v11 pitches. Explore transfer of demand to the site from overplayed sites to utilise actual spare capacity. Consider reconfiguring pitches on site to better cater for current demand. Explore resolution to car parking issues.	Council FA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance LFFP
2	Anglesey Road Playing Fields	Football	Council	One youth 11v11, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch, all of standard quality. The youth 11v11 and mini 5v5 pitches each have one match equivalent session of actual spare capacity whilst the youth 9v9 pitch is played to capacity at peak time. The mini 7v7 pitch is at capacity.	Improve pitch quality to provide actual spare capacity and reduce local shortfalls.	Council FA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
5	Ashton Park	Football	Council	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch which is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality to eradicate overplay and provide actual spare capacity.	Council FA BCGBA LTA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		Two crown bowling greens of which one is good quality and one is poor quality. The site is serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain good green quality and seek improvements to poor quality green.			M	S	L	
		Tennis		Two poor quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. The site is part of the ClubSpark programme. Three grass tennis courts were previously provided on site although these now lie disused.	Improve court quality to better accommodate recreational demand. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.			M	S	L	
18	Calday Grange Grammar School	Football	School	One standard quality adult football pitch which is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week. The site is identified as an option to deliver a full size 3G pitch.	Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay. Transfer some demand to an alternative site to fully eradicate overplay. Support 3G pitch aspirations given local shortfalls.	FA School	Local	H	S	H	Protect Enhance LFFP
19	Calday Grange Grammar School STP	Cricket	School	One standard quality grass cricket square with eight and one standalone NTP which now lies disused. Caldyc CC aspires to replace the NTP on site. The site is supported by standard quality ancillary facilities. The grass square has capacity although this has been discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide Caldyc CC with security of tenure and to provide actual spare capacity. Replace the NTP on site to better accommodate junior demand.	ECB RFU EH School	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
		Rugby union		Three senior rugby union pitches of standard (M1/D1) quality that are available for community use but without floodlighting. Each pitch currently has one match equivalent session of spare capacity per week.	Sustain pitch quality and ensure community availability remains in the future.			L	L	L	
		Hockey		One full-size hockey suitable AGP that is floodlit and available for community use. The pitch was last resurfaced in 2006.	Retain as a hockey suitable pitch. Resurface pitch and ensure a sinking fund is in place for long-term sustainability. Look to formalise community use agreement to provide Oxtun HC with security of tenure.			H	S	M	
24	Devonshire Road Playing Field	Football	Council	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch which is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay.	Council FA	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
33	Hilbre High School Sports Centre	Football	School	One adult, one youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch, all of standard quality. The adult and youth pitches are overplayed by 2.5 and 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week, respectively, whilst the mini 7v7 pitch is played to capacity at peak time. The site is identified as an option to deliver a full size 3G pitch.	Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay. Transfer some demand to an alternative site to fully eradicate overplay. Support 3G pitch aspirations given local shortfalls.	FA RFU School	Local	H	S	H	Protect Enhance LFFP
		Rugby union		One poor (M0/D1) quality mini pitch which is available for community use but without floodlighting. The pitch has spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality to better accommodate curricular demand.			L	S	L	
35	Hoylake Rugby Football Club	Rugby union	Club	Two senior rugby union pitches of which one is of standard (M1/D1) quality and floodlit whilst the second is of poor (M0/D1) quality and without floodlighting. Both pitches are overplayed, by 2.5 and two match equivalent sessions per week, respectively. Hoylake RFC believes that it could field more teams if it was supported by improved changing facilities and additional car parking.	Improve pitch quality through maintenance enhancements and/or the installation of a drainage system to reduce overplay. Explore re-establishment of a third senior pitch on site to reduce overplay. Explore further options of removing training demand from match pitches to alleviate overplay e.g. via a separate training area or access to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch. Support Hoylake RFC in its aspirations to improve changing and car parking facilities.	RFU FA Club	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Football		One standard quality adult football pitch which is played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure demand can continue to be accommodated.			L	L	L	
39	Kingsmead School	Football	School	Two standard quality adult pitches that are unavailable for community use.	Sustain pitch quality for curricular demand. Explore community use options given local shortfalls.	FA ECB LTA School	Local	L	S	L	Protect Provide
		Cricket		One standalone NTP which is unavailable for community use.	Sustain wicket quality for curricular demand.			L	L	L	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
		Tennis		One macadam tennis court that is without floodlighting and unavailable for community use.	Sustain court quality for curricular demand.			L	L	L	
44	Marine Park, West Kirby (West Kirby AFC)	Football	Council	One standard quality adult pitch that is played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	Council FA	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
49	Newton Park	Football	Council	One poor quality adult football pitch which is overplayed by three match equivalent sessions per week. The pitch drains poorly and maintenance is reported to be inadequate.	Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay. Transfer some demand to an alternative site with spare capacity to fully eradicate overplay.	Council FA BCGBA LTA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		One poor quality green used by Newton Park Vets BC. The site has suffered from vandalism.	Improve green quality to better accommodate demand.			M	S	L	
		Tennis		Four macadam tennis courts of poor quality that are available for community use but without floodlighting.	Improve court quality to attract increased demand. Consider implementation of ClubSpark.			M	S	L	
62	Sandringham Avenue Playing Fields	Football	Council	The site previously consisted of an adult pitch and a youth 11v11 pitch which was last maintained in late 2009.	Consider bringing the site back into use given local shortfalls.	Council FA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Provide
90	West Kirby Grammar School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 and two mini 7v7 pitches, all of standard quality. Both pitch formats have spare capacity although this has been discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain pitch quality. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide potential users with security of tenure and to provide actual spare capacity.	FA EH LTA School	Key	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Hockey		One full-size hockey suitable AGP that is available for community use but without floodlighting. The pitch was last resurfaced in 2001 and is in need of resurfacing imminently.	Retain as a hockey suitable pitch. Resurface pitch and ensure a sinking fund is in place for long-term sustainability.			H	S	H	
		Tennis		Five macadam tennis courts that are without floodlighting and unavailable for community use.	Sustain court quality for curricular demand. Explore community use options with the School given quantity of courts on offer.			L	S	L	
100	Alderley Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Four good quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. Serviced by poor quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain court quality. Explore options to improve ancillary facilities.	LTA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect
101	Bertram Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Five standard quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting.	Sustain court quality.	LTA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
106	Hoylake Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Five macadam and three artificial tennis court that are all available for community use and of good quality. The artificial courts and three of the five macadam courts are floodlit. The site is currently operating above its recommended capacity by 60 members. Hoylake TC aspires to add floodlighting to the remaining non-floodlit courts on site and resurface three courts.	Sustain court quality. Support Hoylake TC in providing additional floodlighting to alleviate potential capacity issues.	LTA Club	Local	M	M	M	Protect Provide
109	Meols Lower Green	Bowls	Council	One crown bowling green of standard quality, used by Great Meols BC.	Pursue quality improvements to better accommodate demand.	Council BCGBA	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
110	Meols Parade Gardens	Bowls	Council	Two standard quality crown bowling greens. The site is serviced by poor quality ancillary facilities.	Pursue green and ancillary facility quality improvements to better accommodate demand.	Council BCGBA LTA	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Tennis		Two good quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. The site is part of the ClubSpark programme.	Sustain court quality. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.			L	L	L	
117	Queens Park, Meols	Bowls	Council	One poor quality green which is currently unused.	Improve green quality to attract demand or repurpose area for other sporting use.	Council BCGBA	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
127	Hoylake Central & Melrose Bowls Club	Bowls	Club	One good quality green used by Hoylake Central & Melrose BC. The green is operating above the recommended capacity. The site is serviced by good quality ancillary provision but suffers from vandalism.	Sustain green quality. Monitor club growth to ensure overplay does not deteriorate green quality.	BCGBA Club	Local	M	L	L	Protect
133	Caldy Sports Club	Cricket	Club	One good quality grass cricket square with ten wickets and an NTP. The square is played to capacity. The outfield is reported to be uneven and the site is subject to dog fouling, unofficial use and damage from rabbits. The site is supported by standard quality ancillary facilities but suffers from vandalism.	Sustain square quality and pursue improvements to outfield. Seek resolution to unofficial use and vandalism issues.	ECB RFU Club	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide
		Rugby union		Three senior and 14 mini rugby union pitches, all of standard (M1/D1) quality. One of the three senior pitches is floodlit. The floodlit senior pitch is overplayed by four match equivalent sessions per week whilst the remaining senior pitches are played to capacity. The mini pitches have actual spare capacity. Ancillary facilities on site are of poor quality and the changing rooms have no showers although development is restricted as the land is owned by the National Trust.	Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay through maintenance enhancements and/or the installation of a drainage system. Explore option of installing additional floodlights to spread training demand more evenly across the site. Support Caldly RFC in its aspirations to improve the ancillary facilities on site to support the Club's continued growth.			M	M	H	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
140	Victoria Gardens (West Kirby)	Bowls	Council	One standard quality green which is currently unused.	Improve green quality to attract demand or repurpose area for other sporting use.	Council BCGBA	Local	L	L	L	Protect
184	Great Meols Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 pitch of standard quality which is played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality. Ensure security of tenure for club users through a community use agreement.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
-	Elm Grove	Football	Council	A lapsed adult football pitch that suffered from significant waterlogging issues.	Site has the potential to alleviate identified shortfalls. Determine future use of the provision based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs.	Council FA	Local	L	L	L	Protect Provide

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Analysis Area 5

Quantitative headline findings

Sport	Type	Current supply/ demand balance	Future supply/ demand balance²⁴
Football	Adult	Shortfall of 8.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 8.5 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 11v11	Capacity of 1 match equivalent session	Capacity of 1 match equivalent session
	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 4 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 4 match equivalent sessions
	Mini 7v7	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 0.5 match equivalent sessions
	Mini 5v5	At capacity	Shortfall of 4 match equivalent sessions
	3G	Shortfall of 2 full size pitches	Shortfall of 2 full size pitches
Cricket	Senior (Saturday)	Shortfall of 13 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 13 match equivalent sessions
	Senior (Sunday)	Capacity of 1 match equivalent session	Shortfall of 7 match equivalent sessions
	Junior	Capacity of 10 match equivalent sessions	Capacity of 10 match equivalent sessions
Rugby union	Senior	Shortfall of 11 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 11 match equivalent sessions
Hockey	AGP	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Bowls	Greens	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Tennis	Courts	Adequate provision	Shortfall for Upton Victory Hall TC

²⁴ Up to 2037 in line with Local Plan

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

ANALYSIS AREA 5

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
23	Coronation Park (Greasby)	Football	Council	Three poor quality adult football pitches that are overplayed by four match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and consider adding to LFFP priority project list. Consider transfer of demand to sites with actual spare capacity.	Council FA BCGBA LTA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance LFFP
		Bowls		Two standard quality greens used by Greasby BC.	Improve quality to better accommodate demand.			M	S	L	
		Tennis		One poor quality macadam tennis court that is available for community use but without floodlighting. The site is part of the ClubSpark programme.	Improve court quality through resurfacing the court. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.			M	S	L	
25	Foxfield School, Woodchurch	Football	School	One youth 9v9 pitch of standard quality which is played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality. Ensure security of tenure for club users through a community use agreement.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
36	Irby Cricket Club	Football	Club	One youth 11v11 pitch of poor quality which is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week and overmarked on a cricket outfield.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and ensure maintenance is appropriate to sustain over markings.	FA ECB Club	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Cricket		Two grass cricket squares of good quality that are both supported by an NTP. The site is serviced by good quality ancillary facilities. The main square is played to capacity on Saturdays but has capacity on Sundays and during midweek. The second square has capacity throughout the week.	Sustain square quality. Ensure maintenance is appropriate to sustain over markings			L	L	L	
37	Irby Recreation Ground	Football	Council	One youth 11v11 and one mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. The youth 11v11 pitch is played to capacity whilst the mini 7v7 has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to quality issues. The site suffers from very poor drainage.	Improve pitch quality to provide actual spare capacity.	Council FA BCGBA LTA	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		One poor quality green which is currently unused.	Improve green quality to attract demand or repurpose area for other sporting use.			L	L	L	
		Tennis		Two poor quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. The site is part of the ClubSpark programme.	Improve court quality through resurfacing the court. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.			L	S	M	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
40	Leasowe Leisure Centre	Football	Council	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch and one standard quality mini 7v7 pitch. The youth 9v9 pitch is overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week whilst the mini 7v7 pitch is overplayed by one.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay.	Council FA	Key	M	S	M	Protect Enhance Provide
		3G		One good quality full-size 3G pitch which is floodlit and available for community use. The pitch is used to capacity at peak time.	Sustain pitch quality and ensure a sinking fund is in place for eventual resurfacing. Seek FA testing so that the provision can accommodate competitive matches.			H	S	H	
41	Leasowe Road Playing Field	Football	Council	Two youth 11v11, three youth 9v9, three mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch, all of standard quality. The mini 5v5 pitch is played to capacity at peak time whilst remaining pitch formats all display actual spare capacity. Ancillary facilities require improvement.	Sustain pitch quality. Explore transfer of demand from overplayed sites to utilise actual spare capacity. Explore options to improve ancillary facilities.	Council FA	Key	M	S	M	Protect Enhance Provide
42	Lingham Park	Football	Council	Three adult pitches and one youth 11v11 pitch all of standard quality. The adult pitches have one match equivalent session of actual spare capacity whilst the youth pitch has 0.5 match equivalent sessions. The site is supported by poor quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain pitch quality and consider further improvements given local shortfalls. Explore transfer of demand from overplayed sites to utilise actual spare capacity. Explore options to improve ancillary facilities.	Council FA BCGBA	Local	M	S	M	Protect Enhance LFFP
		Bowls		One poor quality green used by Sacred Heart BC.	Improve green quality.			L	S	L	
47	New Brighton Rugby Club	Football	Club	One adult, one youth 11v11 and one youth 9v9 pitch, all of standard quality. The youth 9v9 pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week whilst the remaining pitches are also overplayed due to rugby union use.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay. Ensure maintenance is sufficient to support over markings.	FA RFU Club	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby union		Three senior pitches of poor (M1/D0) quality that are all floodlit. All three pitches on site suffer from significant overplay.	Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay through maintenance enhancements and/or the installation of a drainage system. Ensure maintenance is sufficient to support over markings. Explore the feasibility of relocating a portion of demand to alternative sites (or to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch should one be established) to fully eradicate overplay.			H	S	L	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim		
65	Solar Campus Playing Field	Football	Club	Three adult, one youth 11v11 and two youth 9v9 pitches, all of good quality. Usage is restricted to Tranmere Rovers FC's training and academy teams.	Retain for continued use by Tranmere Rovers FC.	FA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect		
78	Upton Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One good quality and one standard quality cricket square. The good quality square is supported by an NTP. The Club's lease agreement expired in September 2020 and negotiations to renew this are ongoing. Spare capacity on site has been discounted due to unsecure tenure. The site is serviced by good quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain square quality. Support Upton CC to secure a new lease agreement on site to provide security of tenure and actual spare capacity.	ECB Club	Local	H	S	L	Protect		
79	Upton Hall School	Hockey	School	One smaller sized AGP which is unavailable for community use and without floodlighting.	Retain for curricular demand.	EH LTA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect		
		Tennis		Three macadam courts that are unavailable for community use and without floodlighting.	Retain for curricular demand.			L				L	L
80	Upton Park	Football	Council	Two poor quality adult football pitches that are currently overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week. The site is serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and consider adding to LFFP priority project list.	Council FA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance LFFP		
98	Woodchurch High School	Football	School	Two standard quality adult football pitches that are unavailable for community use.	Explore community use options given local shortfalls.	FA LTA School	Key	M	S	L	Protect Provide		
		3G		One standard quality full-size 3G pitch that is available for community use and floodlit. The pitch is played to capacity. Aspirations exist for an additional pitch to be established	Sustain pitch quality and ensure a sinking fund is in place for eventual resurfacing. Seek FA testing so that the provision can accommodate competitive matches.			M				M	H
		Tennis		Four good quality macadam tennis courts that are floodlit and available for community use.	Sustain court quality through dedicated maintenance regime.			L				L	L
99	Woodchurch Leisure Centre	Football	Council	Two poor quality adult football pitches that are overplayed by four match equivalent sessions per week. Ancillary facility improvements are required.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and consider adding to LFFP priority project list. Explore the feasibility of improving ancillary facilities.	Council FA	Local	H	S-M	H	Protect Enhance Provide LFFP		
		3G		Disused floodlit all weather pitch located between the leisure centre and the motorway.	Explore feasibility of this location being suitable to develop as a 3G pitch to meet local shortfalls.								
118	Saughall Grange	Bowls	Council	One good quality green used by Grange BC.	Sustain green quality.	Council BCGBA LTA	Local	L	L	L	Protect		

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
		Tennis		Two standard quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. The site is part of the ClubSpark programme and considered to be sustainable.	Sustain court quality and pursue improvements where possible to better accommodate and to increase demand. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.			L	L	L	
125	Upton Victory Hall	Bowls	Community	One good quality green used by Upton Victory Hall BC.	Sustain green quality.	BCGBA LTA	Local	L	L	L	Protect
		Tennis		Three good quality artificial, one good quality macadam and three standard quality grass tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. The site is used by Upton Victory Hall TC, which has spare capacity for an increase in membership. The Club has plans to install floodlights on three of the four artificial courts on site.	Sustain court quality. Support Upton Victory Hall TC in its floodlighting aspiration to better accommodate demand.			M	S	M	
128	Royden Hall Bowls Club	Bowls	Club	One poor quality green used by Royden Hall BC.	Improve green quality to better accommodate demand.	BCGBA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
131	Kingsway Academy	Football	School	One youth 11v11, one youth 9v9, three mini 7v7 and three mini 5v5 pitches, all of standard quality. The youth 9v9 pitch is overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week whilst the mini pitches are played to capacity at peak time. The youth 11v11 pitch has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay. Explore the feasibility of reconfiguring pitches on site to better cater for current demand. Pursue security of tenure for club users through community use agreements.	FA LTA School	Local	M	M	L	Protect Enhance
		Tennis		Four macadam tennis courts that are unavailable for community use.	Sustain court quality for curricular demand and explore community use options given quantity of courts.			L	L	L	
152	Millcroft Ground	Football	Council	One standard quality adult football pitch which has 0.5 match equivalent session of actual spare capacity.	Sustain pitch quality and explore transfer of demand to the site from overplayed pitches.	Council FA	Local	L	S	L	Protect
175	Greasby Junior School	Football	School	One standard quality youth 9v9 pitch which is played to capacity. The pitch suffers from poor drainage.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure demand can continue to be accommodated. Pursue security of tenure for club users through community use agreements.	FA EH School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
		Hockey		One small size hockey suitable AGP that is without floodlighting and unavailable for community use.	Retain for curricular demand.			L	L	L	
187	Sacred Heart RC Aided Primary School	Football	School	Three standard quality mini 5v5 pitches which are available for community use and have capacity although this has been discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain pitch quality. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide users with security of tenure.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Analysis Area 6

Quantitative headline findings

Sport	Type	Current supply/ demand balance	Future supply/ demand balance²⁵
Football	Adult	Shortfall of 10 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 10.5 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 15 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 15 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session
	Mini 7v7	Capacity of 1 match equivalent session	Capacity of 1 match equivalent session
	Mini 5v5	At capacity	Shortfall of 2 match equivalent sessions
	3G	Shortfall of 3 full size pitches	Shortfall of 3 full size pitches
Cricket	Senior (Saturday)	Shortfall of 15 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 35 match equivalent sessions
	Senior (Sunday)	Shortfall of 11 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 19 match equivalent sessions
	Junior	Capacity of 20 match equivalent sessions	Capacity of 20 match equivalent sessions
Rugby union	Senior	Shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 3.75 match equivalent sessions
Hockey	AGP	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Bowls	Greens	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Tennis	Courts	Adequate provision	Adequate provision

²⁵ Up to 2037 in line with Local Plan

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

ANALYSIS AREA 6

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
9	Birkenhead High School	Hockey	School	One full size hockey suitable AGP which is available for community use but without floodlighting. The pitch was last resurfaced in 2006 and is in need of resurfacing imminently.	Retain as a hockey suitable pitch. Resurface pitch and ensure a sinking fund is in place for long-term sustainability.	EH School	Local	M	S	H	Protect Enhance
10	Birkenhead Park	Football	Council	One adult and one youth 9v9 pitch of poor quality. The adult pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week whilst the youth 9v9 pitch has capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality to eradicate overplay and provide actual spare capacity.	Council FA BCGBA LTA	Key	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		Four greens of good quality that are used by Kendal BC, RNA BC and Birkenhead Park BC. Ancillary facilities on site are of standard quality but have issues with vandalism.	Sustain green quality and consider ancillary facility improvements.			M	L	L	
		Tennis		Six standard quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. Improved ancillary provision is being considered by the LTA. A parks tennis league and tennis for free sessions operate on site and the site is part of the ClubSpark programme.	Sustain court quality. Support aspirations to improve ancillary facilities. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand. Ensure parks tennis league and tennis for free sessions can continue to operate from the site.			M	L	L	
11	Birkenhead Park Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	Two good quality grass cricket squares that suffer from dog fouling, unofficial use and vandalism. Both squares are played to capacity on Saturdays but have capacity on Sundays and during midweek. The site is serviced by good quality ancillary provision although parking is said to be insufficient. Birkenhead Park CC has demand for additional practice nets on site.	Sustain square quality. Support Birkenhead Park CC with aspirations for additional practice nets and car parking improvements.	ECB Club	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
12	Birkenhead Park Rugby Club	3G	Club	One smaller sized 3G pitch which is floodlit and available for community use. The pitch was last resurfaced in 2007 and so is in need of resurfacing imminently.	Improve pitch quality through resurfacing. Ensure sinking fund is in place for long-term sustainability.	FA RFU Club	Local	L	S	M	Protect Enhance
		Rugby union		Two senior rugby union pitches of standard (M1/D1) quality that are both floodlit and available for community use. Both pitches are overplayed, by three and 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay. Explore the feasibility of relocating a portion of demand to alternative sites (or to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch should one be established) to fully eradicate overplay.			M	S	L	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
13	Birkenhead School	Cricket	School	One good quality grass cricket square which is unused by the community.	Sustain square quality for curricular demand.	ECB School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
14	Birkenhead St Mary's Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One good quality grass cricket square that is played to capacity on Saturday but has capacity on Sundays and during midweek. The outfield is reported to drain poorly. Ancillary facilities are of good quality although parking facilities are insufficient and vandalism is an issue.	Sustain square quality and pursue improvement to the outfield. Explore resolution to car parking and vandalism issues.	ECB Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect
15	Borough Road Playing Fields	Football	Sports Club	One adult, one youth 9v9 and two mini 7v7 pitches of standard quality. The adult pitch is overplayed by three match equivalent sessions per season whilst the youth 9v9 pitch is played to capacity. The mini 7v7 pitches have actual spare capacity of one match equivalent session. Ancillary facilities on site are in poor condition.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay. Consider re-configuring pitches to better accommodate youth 11v11 demand. Transfer some demand from the adult pitch to a site with spare capacity to fully eradicate overplay. Improve ancillary facilities.	Council FA	Local	M	S	M	Protect Enhance LFFP
22	Conway Playing Fields	Football	Council	One poor quality youth 9v9 pitch which has spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality. Ancillary facilities are in need of improvement.	Improve pitch quality to provide actual spare capacity. Improve ancillary facilities.	Council FA	Local	M	M	M	Protect Enhance LFFP
34	HM Curphey Memorial Ground	Cricket	Council	One good quality grass cricket square with 14 wickets. The square is played to capacity on Saturdays but has capacity on Sundays and during midweek. Old Parkonians CC aspires to install additional training facilities on site, including an NTP. The site is serviced by good quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain square quality. Support Old Parkonians CC in its aspiration to install additional training facilities on site.	Council ECB RFU	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide
		Rugby union		Two senior and one junior rugby union pitch, all of standard (M1/D1) quality. The senior pitches are played to capacity whilst the junior pitch is overplayed by one match equivalent session due to training demand. Oxtan Parkonians RFC is saving and fundraising to replace the drainage on site.	Improve pitch quality to eradicate overplay. Support Oxtan Parkonians RFC to improve drainage on site. Support the Club to install additional floodlighting on the site to ensure that training demand takes place in a less concentrated area.			M			

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
52	Oxton Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One good and one standard quality grass cricket square. Both are overplayed. A recent ball strike risk assessment on the second square has identified mitigation is required to protect users and adjacent properties. Without this, the provision is not suitable for adult cricket; planning permission has been granted for mitigation and as such the ground should only be used for adult cricket once this agreed mitigation is in place. The site is serviced by good quality ancillary facilities.	Sustain good square quality and improve standard square to reduce overplay on site. Ensure appropriate mitigation for identified ball strike issues.	ECB BCGBA LTA Club	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		One good quality green used by Oxton Argyle BC.	Sustain green quality.			L	L	L	
		Tennis		Four standard quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use. Two courts have temporary floodlights installed.	Sustain court quality. Explore permanent floodlighting solution.			L	L	L	
58	Prenton Rugby Club	Rugby union	Club	Two senior rugby union pitches of standard (M1/D1) quality. Neither pitch is. Both pitches have spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week each. Prenton RFC is working to convert its training area into a full-size, floodlit senior pitch. The Club also aspires to improve and extend changing facilities, expand the social space and create a kitchen on site to turn the site into a local community hub. The first team pitch on site cannot accommodate midweek demand as it is used as a driving range during the week.	As a minimum, sustain pitch quality to ensure no future capacity issues. Support the Club in its aspirations of improving ancillary provision on site. Support Prenton RFC's aspiration to create a floodlit senior pitch in place of its current training area. Ensure maintenance is sufficient to support dual use driving range.	RFU Club	Local	M	M	M	Protect Enhance Provide
59	Ridgeway High School	Football	School	Three adult and one youth 9v9 pitch. One adult and the youth 9v9 pitch are of standard quality whilst the remaining adult pitches are in poor condition. The adult pitches are played to capacity whilst the youth 9v9 pitch is played to capacity at peak times.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure no future capacity issues. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide users with security of tenure.	FA ECB RFU School	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Cricket		One standalone NTP which is unavailable for community use.	Sustain quality for curricular demand.			L	L	L	
		Rugby union		One senior rugby union pitch of poor (M0/D0) quality that is unavailable for community use.	Improve pitch quality for curricular demand. Make the pitch available for community use to support demand from overplayed club sites.			L	S	L	

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
64	Shafesbury Youth Club	Football	Club	Two youth 11v11 pitches, one of standard quality and one of poor quality. Both pitches are severely overplayed. The site is serviced by standard quality ancillary facilities.	<p>Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay and consider adding to LFFP priority project list.</p> <p>Explore the feasibility of transferring some demand to an alternative site with actual spare capacity, or to the proposed full size 3G pitch on site.</p> <p>Consider ancillary facility improvements given key nature of the site.</p>	FA Club	Key	H	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide LFFP
		3G		<p>One standard quality smaller sized 3G pitch which is floodlit and available for community use.</p> <p>The Youth Club also aspires to install a full-size 3G pitch on site, with Cheshire FA in discussions with the Club.</p>	<p>Sustain pitch quality.</p> <p>Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment when necessary.</p> <p>Support proposals for an additional 3G pitch to be established on site.</p> <p>Ensure ancillary facilities are appropriate to support the provision.</p>			H	S	H	
66	Solly Recreation Ground	Football	Council	<p>One adult and one youth 11v11 pitch, both of poor quality. Both pitches are severely overplayed.</p> <p>The site sits on a slight gradient; Glenavon JFC has received a grant to level one of the pitches. Scottish Power owns a disused building alongside the site which it is reportedly prepared to gift to Glenavon JFC if the Club can change its use to a sporting facility.</p>	<p>Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay.</p> <p>Explore the feasibility of transferring some demand to an alternative site with spare capacity to fully eradicate shortfalls.</p> <p>Support Glenavon JFC in its bid to convert the disused building into ancillary provision for the site.</p>	Council FA	Local	M	M	M	Protect Enhance
68	St Anselms College Playing Fields	Cricket	School	One good quality grass cricket square with six wickets that is unavailable for community use.	Sustain square quality for curricular demand.	ECB RFU School	Local	L	L	L	Protect Provide Enhance
		Rugby union		Four senior rugby union pitches of poor (M0/D1) quality that are unavailable for community use.	<p>Improve pitch quality through an enhanced maintenance regime to support continued curricular and extra-curricular activity.</p> <p>Make the pitches available for community use to accommodate demand from overplayed club sites.</p>			L	S	L	
70	The Glen	Football	Council	One standard quality adult pitch and one poor quality youth 11v11 pitch. Both pitches are overplayed by one and 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week, respectively. Glenavon JFC aspires to extend its lease agreement for the site and provide ancillary facilities. The Council notes that the site is allocated for a railway station and car park and is located in the Green Belt.	<p>Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay.</p> <p>Consider re-configuring pitches to better accommodate youth 11v11 demand.</p> <p>Explore option of provide Glenavon JFC with improved security of tenure.</p> <p>Ensure site is replaced in line with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy if it is to be lost to development plans.</p>	Council FA	Local	M	M	M	Protect Enhance

**WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH & OUTDOOR SPORT STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
102	Birkenhead Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Eight macadam tennis courts that are all available for community use. Three courts are floodlit and are good quality, whilst the non-floodlit courts are standard quality.	Sustain good court quality and pursue improvements to standard quality courts.	LTA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
115	Prenton Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Three good quality artificial courts that are floodlit and four standard quality macadam courts that are without floodlighting. All courts are available for community use.	Sustain good court quality and pursue improvements to standard quality courts.	LTA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect
130	Prenton Bowls Club	Bowls	Club	One standard quality green.	Pursue improvements to better accommodate demand.	BCGBA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
135	Tixall Bowling & Social Club	Bowls	Club	One standard quality green used by Tixall BC and Arno Tixall BC. The green is currently operating above capacity by 35 members. The site is serviced by good quality ancillary provision although parking facilities are insufficient.	Pursue improvements to better accommodate demand. Monitor demand to ensure that overplay does not cause green quality to deteriorate. Explore resolution to car parking issues.	BCGBA Club	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
136	Oxton Conservatives Bowling Club	Bowls	Club	One good quality green used by Oxton Conservatives BC.	Sustain green quality.	BCGBA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect
142	Cammell Laird Football Club	Football	Club	One standard quality adult pitch that is played to capacity at peak time. The site is serviced by standard quality ancillary provision.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure no future capacity issues.	FA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect
145	Wirral Hospitals School	Hockey	School	One small size hockey suitable AGP that is floodlit but unavailable for community use. The pitch is reported to be dilapidated and has been earmarked for conversion to 3G. Any conversion must be approved by EH to ensure that there is no negative impact on hockey.	Look to resurface the pitch and consider 3G conversion given local shortfalls, provided that it is supported by EH.	EH School	Local	M	S	H	Protect Enhance
147	Birkenhead School (McAllister Memorial Field)	Cricket	School	One standalone NTP that is available for community use.	Sustain quality for curricular demand.	ECB EH School	Key	L	L	L	Protect
		Rugby union		Four senior pitches of poor (M0/D1) quality that are available for community use but without floodlighting. Spare capacity has been discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Improve pitch quality through an enhanced maintenance regime. Retain as community available and look to formalise agreements to provide potential future users with security of tenure.			L	S	L	
		Hockey		One good quality full size hockey suitable AGP which is floodlit and available for community use.	Sustain pitch quality and retain for hockey use. Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment when necessary.			M	L	L	

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
148	Birkenhead School (Noctorum Field) / (Noctorum Road Playing Fields)	Rugby	School	A disused site that previously provided a senior pitch. Subject to development proposals that could result in the loss of the provision.	Based on the findings of this PPS, the site is not considered to be surplus to requirements. As such, any permanent loss of the provision and the mitigation options brought forward must align with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy requirements to provide an equivalent or better quantity and quality replacement.	RFU School	Local	H	S	H	Protect
		Cricket	School	A disused site that previously provided a grass wicket square. Subject to development proposals.	Based on the findings of this PPS, the site is not considered to be surplus to requirements. As such, any permanent loss of the provision and the mitigation options brought forward must align with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy requirements to provide an equivalent or better quantity and quality replacement.	ECB School		M	S	L	
172	Manor Primary School	Football	School	One mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality which is played to capacity at peak times.	Sustain pitch quality. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide users with security of tenure.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
183	Fender Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 and two mini 5v5 pitches, all of standard quality. Both pitch formats have capacity although this has been discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain pitch quality. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide potential users with security of tenure.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
189	The Hive (Wirral Youth Zone)	3G	Community	One good quality smaller sized 3G pitch which is available for community use but without floodlighting.	Retain for recreational activity. Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment when necessary.	FA	Local	L	L	L	Protect
190	RNA Naval Club	Bowls	Community	One poor quality green used by Naval BC. The site is supported by poor quality ancillary facilities with no water, toilets or electricity. Vandalism is also an issue on site.	Improve green quality. Explore the feasibility of improving ancillary provision on site.	BCGBA	Local	H	M	M	Protect Enhance
-	Rock Ferry High School	Football	Council	A lapsed playing field which previously accommodated a youth 9v9 pitch.	Site has the potential to alleviate identified shortfalls. Determine future use of the provision based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and mitigate loss to meet Sport England Playing Field Policy requirements.	Council FA	Local	L	L	L	Protect

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Analysis Area 7

Quantitative headline findings

Sport	Type	Current supply/ demand balance	Future supply/ demand balance²⁶
Football	Adult	Shortfall of 6 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 7 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 3.5 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 6.5 match equivalent sessions
	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session
	Mini 7v7	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session	Shortfall of 1 match equivalent session
	Mini 5v5	At capacity	Shortfall of 4 match equivalent sessions
	3G	Shortfall of 3 full size pitches	Shortfall of 3 full size pitches
Cricket	Senior (Saturday)	Shortfall of 78 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 78 match equivalent sessions
	Senior (Sunday)	Shortfall of 78 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 86 match equivalent sessions
	Junior	At capacity	At capacity
Rugby union	Senior	Shortfall of 2 match equivalent sessions	Shortfall of 3.5 match equivalent sessions
Hockey	AGP	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Bowls	Greens	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Tennis	Courts	Adequate provision	Adequate provision

²⁶ Up to 2037 in line with Local Plan

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ANALYSIS AREA 7

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
6	Ashville Sports and Social Club	Football	Club	One standard quality adult pitch which is played to capacity. A Sport England grant was recently awarded to improve changing and shower facilities on site. Ashville FC is now fundraising to improve the kitchen.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure no future capacity issues. Support Ashville FC in its kitchen aspirations.	FA Club	Local	L	M	L	Protect Enhance
8	Belvidere Recreation Ground	Football	Council	One poor quality adult football pitch which is overplayed by four match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance to reduce overplay. Transfer some demand to an alternative site with actual spare capacity to fully eradicate overplay.	Council FA RFU	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby union		Two senior rugby union pitches of poor (M0/D1) quality that are available for community use but without floodlighting. Both pitches are currently overplayed by a combined total of three match equivalent sessions a week. Oldershaw RFC is seeking funding to convert the baths in the clubhouse to shower facilities.	Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay. Explore installation of permanent floodlighting to better accommodate training demand. Support Oldershaw RFC to install shower facilities on site.			M	S	M	
20	Central Park	Football	Council	Three adult, three youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch. The adult pitches are of standard quality whilst the remaining pitches are of poor quality. The adult pitches are played to capacity whilst spare capacity on remaining pitch formats has been discounted due to quality issues.	Improve pitch quality to provide actual spare capacity.	Council FA ECB BCGBA	Key	M	M	L	Protect Enhance LFFP
		Cricket		One standard quality grass cricket square with 10 wickets. The square is overplayed by four matches per season. The outfield is reported to drain poorly and the site suffers from vandalism, dog fouling, unofficial use and litter. The site is serviced by good quality ancillary facilities although parking facilities are insufficient.	Improve square quality to alleviate overplay. Consider installation of an NTP on site to further resolve capacity issues. Pursue resolution to car parking and vandalism/unofficial use issues.			M	M	L	
		Bowls		Five poor quality greens used by Liscard BC, Poulton BC and Telegraph BC. Green quality is expected to improve thanks to improve Council maintenance over the previous year. The site is serviced by standard quality facilities.	Improve green quality to better accommodate demand.			M	M	L	

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
29	Guinea Gap Leisure Centre	3G	Council	One standard quality smaller sized 3G pitch which is floodlit and available for community use.	Retain for continued recreational activity. Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment when necessary.	Council FA	Local	L	L	L	Protect
30	Harrison Park	Football	Council	Two standard quality adult football pitches that are played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure no future capacity issues.	Council FA BCGBA LTA	Local	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Bowls		Three standard quality bowling greens used by Parkfield BC and Harrison Park BC. Ancillary facilities on site are in poor condition and the roof is reported to be leaking.	Improve green quality to better cater for demand. Explore the feasibility of improving ancillary facilities on site.			M	S	L	
		Tennis		Six poor quality macadam courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. The site is part of the ClubSpark programme.	Improve court quality to better cater for demand. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.			M	S	L	
46	New Brighton Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One good quality grass cricket square with nine wickets. The square is overplayed by 55 matches per season. New Brighton CC has demand for mobile net cages on site.	Sustain square quality. Consider installation of an NTP on site to reduce capacity issues. Explore the feasibility of relocating some demand to an alternative site with spare capacity to fully eradicate overplay. Support New Brighton CC in its aspirations for mobile nets.	ECB BCGBA Club	Local	M	S	L	Protect Provide
		Bowls		Two standard quality greens used by New Brighton Quarry Vikings BC and New Brighton Queens Royal BC.	Pursue quality improvements to better accommodate demand.			L	L	L	
61	Rycroft Playing Fields	Football	Council	Two adult and one mini 7v7 pitch, all of standard quality. The adult pitches are overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week whilst the mini 7v7 pitch has actual spare capacity. The site is serviced by poor quality ancillary provision.	Improve pitch quality to eradicate overplay. Seek to utilise actual spare capacity through the transfer of demand from overplayed sites. Explore options to improve ancillary facilities.	Council FA	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
71	The Mosslands School	Hockey	School	One smaller sized hockey suitable AGP which is floodlit and available for community use.	Retain for curricular usage. Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment when necessary.	EH FA ECB School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
		Football		Two youth 11v11 football pitches that now lie lapsed. The School indicates that poor drainage meant the pitches became unusable.	Consider bringing the pitches back into use to alleviate shortfalls and/or utilise adjacent piece of land for similar purposes.			L	L	L	
		Cricket		One NTP that is now lapsed. The School indicates that poor drainage meant the pitches became unusable.	Consider bringing the pitch back into use to alleviate shortfalls and/or utilise adjacent piece of land for similar purposes.			L	L	L	
72	The Oldershaw School	Football	School	Two standard quality youth 9v9 pitches which have spare capacity although this has been discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain pitch quality. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide potential users with security of tenure and to provide actual spare capacity.	FA EH ECB School	Local	L	S	L	Protect

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
		Cricket		One standalone NTP which is unavailable for community use.	Retain for curricular demand.			L	L	L	
		Hockey		One smaller size AGP which is floodlit and available for community use.	Retain for curricular usage. Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment when necessary.			L	L	L	
77	Tower Grounds	Football	Council	One youth 11v11 pitch of poor quality which is overplayed by 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay. If good quality cannot be achieved, look to relocate some demand to an alternative site with spare capacity.	Council FA	Local	H	S	L	Protect Enhance
84	Wallacre Recreation Ground	Football	Council	One adult, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch. The adult pitch is of standard quality whilst the remaining pitches are in poor condition. The adult pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week whilst the youth 9v9 pitch is played to capacity. The mini pitches have spare capacity although this has been discounted due to poor pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality to eradicate overplay and to provide actual spare capacity.	Council FA RFU	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance LFFP
		Rugby union		One senior rugby union pitch of poor (M0/D0) quality that is available for community use. The pitch is played to capacity through curricular demand.	Improve pitch quality for curricular demand and to ensure no future capacity issues. Continue to make the pitch available for community use.			L	L	L	
85	Wallasey Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One good quality grass cricket square with 10 wickets. The square is overplayed by 30 matches per season.	Sustain quality. Consider installation of an NTP on site to reduce overplay.	ECB Club	Local	M	S	L	Protect Provide
86	Wallasey Rugby Union Football Club	Football	Club	One standard quality adult football pitch. The pitch has spare capacity although this has been discounted to preserve quality for rugby union demand.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure no future capacity issues and ensure maintenance is appropriate for dual use.	FA RFU Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect Provide Enhance
		Rugby union		Two senior rugby union pitches of standard (M1/D1) quality. Both pitches are without floodlighting and have actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure no future capacity issues and ensure maintenance is appropriate for dual use. Look to establish a floodlit training area either on site, or on adjoining land, to accommodate midweek training demand, without compromising pitch capacity.			M	M	L	
88	Weatherhead High School	Hockey	School	One smaller sized hockey suitable AGP which is floodlit and available for community use.	Sustain quality. Ensure sinking fund is in place for refurbishment when necessary.	EH LTA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
		Tennis		Four good quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting.	Sustain court quality.			L	L	L	

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
97	Withensfield Playing Field (The Delph)	Football	Council	Two youth 9v9 pitches and one mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Both pitch formats are overplayed, by 0.5 and two match equivalent sessions per week, respectively. Ancillary improvements are required.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay issues. Explore ancillary facility improvements.	Council FA	Local	M	S	M	Protect Enhance LFFP
111	North Cheshire Tennis Club	Tennis	School	Four standard quality shale tennis courts that are available for community use but without floodlighting. Changing facilities on site are reported to be in poor condition.	Pursue quality improvements to better accommodate demand. Explore the feasibility of improving changing facilities on site.	LTA School	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
116	Quarry Rec	Bowls	Council	One poor quality green used by Sandridge BC.	Improve green quality to better accommodate demand.	Council BCGBA	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
121	Thorndale Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Five macadam tennis courts of which three are floodlit. All courts are available for community use. The floodlit courts are assessed as standard quality whilst the non-floodlit courts are in poor condition.	Improve court quality to better accommodate demand, particularly in relation to the poor quality courts.	LTA Club	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
126	Wallasey Manor Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Six good quality macadam tennis courts of which three are floodlit. Wallasey Manor TC reports three courts will need resurfacing in the next three years.	Sustain court quality. Support the Club in its aspirations to resurface.	LTA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect
132	New Brighton Cricket Club (Wayfarers Ground)	Cricket	Club	One standard quality grass cricket square that is overplayed by 14 matches per season.	Improve square quality to reduce overplay Consider installation of an NTP on site to fully eradicate capacity issues.	ECB Club	Local	M	M	L	Protect Enhance
154	Oxton Park (Liscard)	Football	Council	One poor quality youth 11v11 pitch which is overplayed by one match equivalent session per week.	Improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay.	Council FA	Local	L	S	L	Protect Enhance
188	St Georges Primary School	Football	School	One mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch, both of standard quality. Both pitches are played to capacity at peak time.	Sustain pitch quality to ensure no future capacity issues. Look to formalise community use agreements to provide potential users with security of tenure.	FA School	Local	L	L	L	Protect
191	The Magazine Public House	Bowls	Private	One standard quality green used by Magazine BC. The green is currently operating above the recommended capacity. The green is serviced by good quality ancillary facilities although parking is insufficient and the site suffers from vandalism.	Sustain green quality. Monitor demand to ensure overplay does not lead to a deterioration of green quality. Explore resolution to car parking and vandalism issues.	BCGBA	Local	M	S	L	Protect

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
192	Desmesne Street Recreation Ground	Bowls	Council	A lapsed site which previously provided two bowling greens.	Consider bringing the site back into sporting use, although not necessarily for bowls. Ensure any permanent loss conforms with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy requirements.	Council BCGBA	Local	L	L	L	Protect
193	Wallasey Central Conservative Club	Bowls	Club	One good quality green.	Sustain quality.	BCBGA Club	Local	L	L	L	Protect
200	Marine Park, New Brighton	Bowls	Council	Two greens of standard quality used by Marine Park BC. The site is supported by standard quality ancillary facilities but insufficient parking. The site also suffers from vandalism.	Explore options to improve quality to better accommodate demand. Support Marine Park BC to increase membership to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Club and the site. Support the Club in its aspirations to improve car parking.	Council BCGBA LTA	Local	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Tennis		Four standard quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but are without floodlighting. Tennis for free sessions operate on site and it is part of the ClubSpark programme.				Sustain court quality and seek improvements where possible. Monitor ClubSpark implementation to increase recreational demand.	L	L	
-	School Lane Playing Fields	Football	Council	A lapsed playing field site which previously accommodated three adult and two mini 7v7 pitches. Significant drainage issues as well as a lack of parking and ancillary facilities restricted usage. Ashville FC has registered interest in bringing the site back into use.	Explore the feasibility of bringing the site back into use, in line with Ashville FC's aspirations, to address local shortfalls.	Council FA	Local	M	L	M	Protect Provide

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DISUSED/LAPSED PROVISION

Although also included in the above tables, the table below separates currently disused and lapsed playing pitch and outdoor sports sites for ease of reference and provides some holistic recommendations in regards to them. Based on the findings of this PPS, none of these sites are considered to be surplus to requirements. As such, any permanent loss of the provision and the mitigation options brought forward must align with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy requirements to provide an equivalent or better quantity and quality replacement.

Site	Analysis area	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners
Octel Sports & Social Club	Area 1	Football Cricket Bowls Tennis	Private	The site previously accommodated two adult football pitches, one grass wicket cricket square, one bowling green and four tennis courts. It has recently been marked for mini football as well. There is a current planning application for the construction of 106 houses on site with all sports facilities set to be lost. A Sports Needs Assessment has been conducted and proposes a range of mitigation options, none of which have been agreed at the time of writing.	Future priority order of options: 1) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to appropriate mitigate the provision in line with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy.	FA ECB BCGBA LTA
Prices Sports Ground / South View Playing Field / Bromborough Pool Playing Fields	Area 1	Football	Housing Association	Adjacent playing field which used to be part of Bromborough Pool Price Sports & Social Club now owned by a Housing Association but lapsed. Suitable for at least two adult pitches.	Future priority order of options: 1) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs.	FA
Green Lane Playing Fields	Area 1	Football	Council	The site previously hosted three adult pitches which, aerial imagery indicates, were last utilised in 2012.	Future priority order of options: 1) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs.	FA
Torr Park	Area 1	Cricket	Council	One lapsed grass cricket square.	Site has the potential to alleviate identified shortfalls. Determine future use of the provision based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs.	ECB
Raby Vale Training Ground (Tranmere Rovers)	Area 2	Football	Sports Club.	A disused playing field site that previously accommodated two adult pitches with space for youth and mini pitches to be marked when necessary. The site was used as a training ground by Tranmere Rovers FC before relocating to Solar Campus Playing Field	Future priority order of options: 1) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs.	FA
Chester Road Playing Fields	Area 3	Football	Council	A disused youth pitch that has not been used for a number of years due to quality issues. Heswall JFC expresses an interest in bringing the provision back into use but also reports that the Council has instead suggested using an adjacent piece of land.	Future priority order of options: 1) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs.	FA
The Mosslands School	Area 3	Football Cricket	School	Two youth 11v11 football pitches and one NTP that now lie lapsed. The School indicates that poor drainage meant the pitches became unusable.	Future priority order of options: 1) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to appropriate mitigate the provision in line with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy.	FA ECB

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Site	Analysis area	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners
Elm Grove	Area 4	Football	Council	A lapsed adult football pitch that suffered from significant waterlogging issues.	Future priority order of options: 1) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs.	FA
Sandringham Avenue Playing Fields	Area 4	Football	Council	The site previously consisted of an adult pitch and a youth 11v11 pitch which was last maintained in late 2009.	Future priority order of options: 1) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs.	FA
Birkenhead School (Noctorum Field) / (Noctorum Road Playing Fields)	Area 6	Rugby union Cricket	School	A disused site that previously provided a senior rugby pitch and a grass wicket cricket square. Subject to development proposals that could result in the loss of the provision.	Future priority order of options: 1) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to appropriate mitigate the provision in line with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy.	FA ECB
School Lane Playing Fields	Area 7	Football	Council	A lapsed playing field site which previously accommodated three adult and two mini 7v7 pitches. Significant drainage issues as well as a lack of parking and ancillary facilities restricted usage. Ashville FC has registered interest in bringing the site back into use.	Future priority order of options: 1) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to appropriate mitigate the provision in line with NPPF and Sport England's Playing Field Policy.	FA

PART 7: HOUSING GROWTH SCENARIOS

The PPOSS provides an estimate of demand for pitch sport based on population forecasts and club consultation to 2037 (in with the Local Plan). This future demand is translated into teams likely to be generated, rather than actual pitch provision required. Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator adds to this, updating the likely demand generated for pitch sports based on housing increases and converts the demand into match equivalent sessions and the number of pitches required. It also gives the associated costs of supplying the increased pitch provision. The Calculator splits the total pitch requirement into natural turf pitches to meet peak period demand, artificial grass pitches to meet training demand, and the additional number of changing rooms required to support the new demand.

The scenarios below are examples on how the Playing Pitch Calculator can be used in order to understand the potential additional demand for pitch sports from housing growth in addition to potential associated costs. It is recommended that the Council work with Sport England to develop a process and guidance to obtain developer contributions from single or cumulative housing developments

Please note that the scenarios can be updated as required over the Local Plan period and throughout the lifespan of the PPS to reflect population projections, team generation rates and change in the average household size.

Scenario 1: Example of likely demand generated for pitch sports from projected population growth over the Local Plan period (to 2037)

The projected population increase for Wirral, to 2037, based on ONS 2018-based population projections, would be 8,215 people. What this means in terms of demand increases for each pitch sport is shown in the table below.

Table 7.1: Example of likely demand for pitch sports generated from projected population growth to 2037

Pitch sport	Estimated additional demand by sport to 2037	
	Match demand per week ²⁷	Training demand ²⁸
Adult football	1.24	17.67 hours
Youth football	4.27	
Mini soccer	3.33	
Rugby union	0.96	1.10 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	0.00
Adult hockey	0.22	0.65 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.11	0.29 hours
Cricket	26.68	-

The table below translates demand into new pitch provision required to accommodate the demand, with associated capital and lifestyle costs. The Calculator estimates the total capital cost for the anticipated growth across all pitch types would be £1,333,413 which would require an annual lifecycle cost of £192,882 per annum.

²⁷ As per the PPS Guidance, demand for cricket is considered in terms of match equivalent sessions per season rather than per week.

²⁸ Hours equate to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch or hockey suitable AGP

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Table 7.2: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision

Pitch type	Estimated demand and costs for new pitches			Changing rooms	
	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost ²⁹	Lifecycle cost (per annum) ³⁰	Number	Capital cost
Adult football	1.24	£120,314	£25,386	2.48	£415,084
Youth football	4.27	£330,987	£69,507	5.01	£838,638
Mini soccer	3.33	£80,721	£16,951	0.00	£0
Rugby union	0.96	£491,562	£27,770	1.91	£319,784
Rugby league	0.00	£0	£0	0.00	£0
Cricket	0.60	£170,996	£34,541	1.20	£119,978
Sand based AGPs	0.06	£51,866	£1,608	0.13	£21,559
3G	0.46	£448,761	£17,118	0.93	£155,601
Total	10.92	£1,333,431	£192,882	11.66	£1,950,644

The calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 11.66 changing rooms to support the new pitch provision in the table above. The total capital cost to deliver this level of provision is estimated to be £1,950,644.

Given the above, the overall cost is estimated at £3,284,075, plus £192,888 per annum (a 25-year cost model is referenced by the Calculator). This equates to just over £399 per person (discounting the life cycle costs).

Scenario 2: Example of demand generated by new dwellings for one year

In the Council's emerging Local Plan, it is stated that the Council has a requirement to deliver 800 net new homes per annum and an overall requirement of 12,000 net new homes over the period to 2037. However, a 20% buffer also needs to be applied for the first five years, which increases the need to 960 homes per annum for this period.

Delivering 960 homes per annum for the first five years of the Local Plan period will result in a population growth of 2,304 people per year. As such, this scenario explores the impact of such growth over a single year period. This is based on an occupancy of 2.4 people per dwelling, which is the national average used when specific detail is unknown.

Table 7.3: Likely demand for pitch sports generated from annual housing growth

Pitch sport	Estimated additional demand by sport from annual housing growth	
	Match demand per week ³¹	Training demand ³²
Adult football	0.35	4.96 hours
Youth football	1.16	
Mini soccer	0.97	
Rugby union	0.27	0.31 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	0.00

²⁹ Sport England Facilities Costs Second Quarter 2020 – (<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>)

³⁰ Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

³¹ As per the PPS Guidance, demand for cricket is considered in terms of match equivalent sessions per season rather than per week.

³² Hours equate to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch or hockey suitable AGP

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Pitch sport	Estimated additional demand by sport from annual housing growth	
Adult hockey	0.06	0.18 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.02	0.06 hours
Cricket	6.77	-

The table below translates demand into new pitch provision required to accommodate the demand, with associated capital and lifecycle costs. The Calculator estimates the total capital cost for the anticipated growth across all pitch types would be £366,368 which would require an annual lifecycle cost of £52,741 per annum.

Table 7.4: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision

Pitch type	Estimated demand and costs for new pitches			Changing rooms	
	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost ³³	Lifecycle cost (per annum) ³⁴	Number	Capital cost
Adult football	0.35	£33,744	£7,120	0.70	£116,415
Youth football	1.16	£90,075	£18,916	1.41	£235,207
Mini soccer	0.97	£23,500	£4,935	0.00	£0
Rugby union	0.27	£36,877	£7,892	0.54	£90,875
Rugby league	0.00	£0	£0	0.00	£0
Cricket	0.15	£42,879	£8,662	0.30	£50,147
Sand based AGPs	0.02	£13,432	£416	0.03	£5,583
3G	0.13	£125,861	£4,801	0.26	£43,640
Total	3.05	£366,368	£52,741	3.23	£541,867

The calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 3.23 changing rooms to support the new pitch provision in the table above. The total capital cost to deliver this level of provision is estimated to be £541,876.

Given the above, the overall cost is estimated at £908,235, plus £52,741 per annum. This equates to just over £946 per dwelling (discounting the life cycle costs).

The small amount of additional demand generated suggests improvements to existing sites within the locality may be required rather than new provision.

Scenario 3: Example of demand generated for one development (100 dwellings)

Delivering a single development of, as an example, 100 new homes, would result in a population growth of 240 people (based on 2.4 people per dwelling). What this means in terms of demand increases for each pitch sport is shown in the table below.

Table 7.5: Likely demand for pitch sports generated from 100 dwellings

³³ Sport England Facilities Costs Second Quarter 2020 – (<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>)

³⁴ Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

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Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport for 100 dwellings	
	Match demand per week ³⁵	Training demand ³⁶
Adult football	0.03	0.56 hours
Youth football	0.14	
Mini soccer	0.12	
Rugby union	0.03	0.03 match equivalent sessions
Rugby league	0.00	0.00
Adult hockey	0.01	0.02 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0.00	0.01 hours
Cricket	0.79	-

The table below translates demand into new pitch provision required to accommodate the demand, with associated capital and lifecycle costs. The Calculator estimates the total capital cost for the anticipated growth across all pitch types would be £46,034 which would require an annual lifecycle cost of £6,688 per annum.

Table 7.6: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision

Pitch type	Estimated demand and costs for new pitches			Changing rooms	
	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost ³⁷	Lifecycle cost (per annum) ³⁸	Number	Capital cost
Adult football	0.03	£3,172	£999	0.09	£16,190
Youth football	0.14	£12,071	£2,251	0.18	£30,751
Mini soccer	0.12	£2,672	£652	0.00	£0
Rugby union	0.03	£4,760	£1,022	0.06	£11,199
Rugby league	0.00	£0	£0	0.00	£0
Cricket	0.01	£5,700	£1,103	0.04	£5,831
Sand based AGPs	0.00	£1,091	£49	0.01	£672
3G	0.01	£15,569	£612	0.03	£5,819
Total	0.34	£46,034	£6,688	0.41	£70,463

The calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 0.41 changing rooms to support the new pitch provision in the table above. The total capital cost to deliver this level of provision is estimated to be £70,463.

Given the above, the overall cost is estimated at £116,497, plus £6,688 per annum. This equates to just over £1,164 per dwelling (discounting the life cycle costs).

As with Scenario 2, the small amount of additional demand generated suggests improvements to existing sites within the locality may be required rather than new provision.

Conclusions

³⁵ As per the PPS Guidance, demand for cricket is considered in terms of match equivalent sessions per season rather than per week.

³⁶ Hours equate to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch or hockey suitable AGP

³⁷ Sport England Facilities Costs Second Quarter 2020 – (<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>)

³⁸ Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

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Scenario One indicates that, over the course of the Local Plan period, projected population growth will result in increased demand equating to a significant increase in demand for pitches. However, whilst this initially seems somewhat substantial, it must be noted that these figures are based upon the whole of Wirral and account for 17 years of growth development. In reality, the requirements will be staggered, with improvements to existing provision able to meet some of the needs when the impact of development is considered on a case-by-case or area-by-area basis. This could be achieved through contributions being directed towards improvements of existing provision rather than new provision.

Experience shows that only significantly large housing sites are likely to generate demand for new provision to be created in their own right, as evidenced through Scenario Three where the increased demand does not equate to a whole pitch for any of the sports. However, the cumulative impact of such developments must also be taken into account.

Where new pitches are required, consideration should be given to providing multi-pitch sites with suitable ancillary provision, including appropriate clubhouse/changing facilities and car parking. Single pitch sites which have been provided traditionally by developers are not considered to offer long-term sustainability. As such, if numerous developments in an area warrant new pitch provision, consideration should be given to pooling resources to create one larger site, rather than numerous smaller sites.

It is strongly recommended the Council work with Sport England to develop a process and guidance to calculate and obtain developer contributions. This should be done on a per person or per dwelling basis to meet the costs identified.

PART 8: DELIVER THE STRATEGY AND KEEP IT ROBUST AND UP TO DATE

The section below is a generalised approach on how to deliver a PPOSS whilst also keeping it robust and up to date. However, as agreed by Sport England and the NGBs, a more tailored approach should be considered for Wirral, aligning with the processes adopted by other local authorities in the North West (see Appendix 1).

Delivery

The PPOSS seeks to provide guidance for maintenance/management decisions and investment made across 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 Wirral and its residents can be satisfied. The Strategy identifies where there is a deficiency in provision and identifies how best to resolve this in the future.

Production of this Strategy is the start of the planning process. Successful implementation and the benefits to be gained depend upon regular engagement between all partners involved and the adoption of a mutually bought into strategic approach. It is therefore important that this document is used in a practical manner, supports engagement with partners and encourages partnerships to be developed. This is to ensure that outdoor sports facilities are regarded as a vital aspect of community life and which contribute to the achievement of the Council's priorities.

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

To help ensure the PPOSS is well used it should be regarded as the key document within the study area guiding the improvement and protection of playing pitch and outdoor sport provision. It needs to be the document people regularly turn to for information on the 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 needs to have a clear understanding of how the PPOSS can be applied and therefore delivered.

The process of developing the PPOSS has already led to a number of benefits that assist in its application and delivery. This include enhanced partnership work across different agendas and organisations, the pooling of resources and strengthened relationships and understanding between stakeholders, members of the Steering Group and the sporting community. The drivers behind the PPOSS and the work to develop the recommendations will have also highlighted, and helped the Steering Group to understand, the key areas to which its influence should be applied and strategy delivery enhanced.

Monitoring and updating

It is important that there is regular annual monitoring and review against the actions identified in the Strategy. This monitoring should be led by the Council and supported by all members of, and reported back to, the Steering Group. Understanding and learning lessons from how the PPOSS has been applied should also form a key component of monitoring its delivery. This should form an on-going role of the steering group.

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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, Sport England and the NGBs will consider the PPS and the information on which it is based to be out of date. As such, the PPOSS should be reviewed on an annual basis from the date it is formally signed off by the Steering Group. This will help maintain the momentum and commitment built up during its development and, taking into account the time to develop the PPOSS, 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 should 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 PPOSS 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 PPOSS is complete the role of the Steering Group should 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 PPOSS has been used and how it has been applied to a variety of circumstances
- ◀ Ensures the PPOSS 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 PPOSS 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;
 - ◀ Provide a partial review focussing on particular sport, pitch type and/or sub area; or
 - ◀ Lead a full review and update of the PPOSS document (including the supply and demand information and assessment details).

Alongside regular steering group meetings, a good way to keep the strategy up to date and maintain relationships may be to hold annual sport specific meetings with the pitch sport NGBs and other relevant parties. These meetings could 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.

Meetings could 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 booking records for local authority and other sites could be fed into these meetings.

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The Steering Group should regularly review and refresh the Action Plan, taking account of any changes in pitch quality (and hence changes in pitch capacity) and demand as well as new provision that has been created or any new negotiations for community use of education sites in the future. The NGBs will also be able to indicate any further performance quality assessments that have been undertaken within the study area.

It is important that the Council maintains the data contained within the accompanying PPOSS database. This will enable it to refresh and update the work on a regular basis. The accompanying database is intended to be refreshed on a season-by-season basis and it is important that there is cross-departmental work encompassing, for example, grounds maintenance and sports development departments, to ensure that this is achieved. The results should inform subsequent annual sports facility development plans and be shared with partners via a consultative mechanism.

Checklist

To help ensure the PPS is delivered and is kept robust and up to date, the Steering Group can refer to Sport England's 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?		

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APPENDIX ONE: TAILORED APPROACH FOR WIRRAL STAGE E

What?	Who?	When?
<p>1. Internal Steering Group Meeting</p> <p>Meeting between council officers internal Steering Group members to discuss and log key changes in provision, covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ New pitch provision ◀ Pitch improvements ◀ Pitch re-configuration ◀ Pitch loss/threat ◀ Community access agreements (e.g. education/private sites) ◀ Plans for future provision <p>The outcomes from the meeting and updates to documents should be recorded.</p>	<p>Wirral Council</p>	<p>Bi-Annually</p>
<p>2. Sport England and NGB Update Meetings</p> <p>The Council to hold series of update meetings with individual sports NGBs to discuss and log:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Any changes in club and team details ◀ Any changes in sport format ◀ Any site specific updates ◀ Changes to supply and demand data ◀ The application and use of the PPOSS e.g. in delivery of new or improved provision, funding opportunities, programmes and initiatives ◀ Any new issues and opportunities. 	<p>Wirral Council NGBs Sport England</p>	<p>Annually for each sport, to fit with affiliation process (generally October for winter sports and June for summer sports)</p>

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What?	Who?	When?
<p>3. Prepare Annual PPS Progress Paper</p> <p>Based on the outcome of actions above, a short Annual PPOSS Progress and Update paper should be produced, highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ The delivery of PPOSS recommendations and any changes in priority; ◀ Changes to particularly important sites and/or clubs in the area and other supply and demand information with implications for PPOSS's key findings; ◀ Details of any developments of a specific sport or particular format; ◀ Details of any new or emerging issues and opportunities; ◀ Any issues with the application of the PPOSS and lessons learnt; ◀ Actions needed to keep the PPOSS 'live' and up to date. <p>Based on the above, the Annual Progress Paper will also consider if a partial or full update of the PPS is required.</p> <p>Alternatively, both the Assessment Report and the Strategy can be updated to take into account and referencing all of the above.</p>	PPOSS Steering Group	Annually
<p>4. Circulation and Agreement</p> <p>Circulate the Annual Progress Paper or updated PPOSS document to the Steering Group for comment and agreement with opportunity to hold a further meeting to discuss findings and issues.</p>	PPOSS Steering Group	Annually
<p>5. Publish Paper</p> <p>Make Annual Progress paper or updated documents available online; report any significant findings to appropriate committee if considered necessary.</p>	Wirral Borough Council	Annually – following completion of all of the above

APPENDIX TWO: GLOSSARY

Exported demand generally relates to play by teams or other users of facilities 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 provision. 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 facilities 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, AGPs, courts and greens 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 facilities 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 facility is used over the amount that the carrying capacity will allow, (i.e. more than the site can accommodate). Provision has a limit of how much play it can accommodate over a certain period of time before quality is adversely affected.

Spare capacity is the amount of additional play that a facility 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 playing 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.

Non-pitch sports do not have match equivalent sessions, with capacity instead linked to membership.