



# FOREST OF DEAN PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY DRAFT STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN REPORT

JANUARY 2022

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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# FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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## ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
AP	Active Partnership
BC	Bowls Club
BE	Bowls England
CC	Cricket Club
CFA	County Football Association
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FE	Further Education
FF	Football Foundation
FIT	Fields in Trust
FOD	Forest of Dean
FODDC	Forest of Dean District Council
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GFA	Gloucestershire Football Association
GMA	Grounds Management Association
HE	Higher Education
HC	Hockey Club
IRB	International Rugby Board
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LMS	Last Man Stands
LTA	Lawn Tennis Association
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NGB	National Governing Body
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RFL	Rugby Football League
RLFC	Rugby League Football Club
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
S106	Section 106
TC	Tennis Club
TGR	Team Generation Rate
U	Under
WR	World Rugby

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## **Covid-19**

The PPS has been undertaken as England comes out of the Covid-19 global pandemic, which resulted in unprecedented restrictions that fluctuated over the course of 2020 and early 2021. At various points in time, grassroots sport was halted, leading to truncated seasons and changes to way leagues have been run and fixtures scheduled. This had direct consequence on the supply of and demand for playing pitch and outdoor sport facilities, which, if considered in isolation, would not present an accurate representation of provision.

It is currently unknown what impact the pandemic and enforced restrictions will have on participation and provision moving forward. Therefore, this should form a key aspect of the Stage E process, with the review of the documents ensuring that any recommendations made remain accurate as the effect of Covid-19 becomes clearer.

As part of Stage E, the PPS should be reviewed on an annual basis from the date it is formally signed off by the Steering Group. A review will help to maintain the momentum and commitment built up during its development. Given current circumstances an annual meeting, which could coincide with the annual NGB affiliation process, would be beneficial to understand what impact, COVID-19 and the lockdowns have had within Forest of Dean.

For more information regarding the Stage E process please see Part 8: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date or see <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport>

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## PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Knight, Kavanagh & Page Ltd was appointed by Forest of Dean District Council (FODDC) to undertake an assessment and develop a strategy for all formal outdoor playing pitch facilities across the authority to assist in strategically planning for the future.

This is the Playing Pitch Strategy for the Forest of Dean (FOD). It has been developed in accordance with Sport England guidance and under the direction of a steering group led by the Council and including National Governing Bodies of Sport. It builds upon the preceding Assessment Report and is capable of:

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

### Monitoring and updating

It is important to ensure there is regular annual monitoring and review of the actions identified in the Strategy. This monitoring should be led by the Council and supported by the Steering Group. As a guide, if no review and subsequent update has been carried out within three years of the PPS being signed off by the Steering Group, then Sport England and the National Governing Bodies of Sport would consider the PPS; and the information on which it is based, to be out of date. If the Strategy is used as a 'live' document, and kept up to date, the time frame can be extended to five years.

The PPS should be reviewed on an annual basis from the date it is formally signed off by the Steering Group. This will help to maintain the momentum and commitment built up when developing the PPS. Considering the time spent developing the PPS this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed. Part 8 of this strategy report contains a suggested process for undertaking the update and monitoring. The Steering Group will need to agree the process prior to the adoption of this strategy.

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## Scope

The scope of the PPS will focus geographically on all local provision, regardless of ownership and management arrangements. Provision included within the project is as follows:

Table 1.1: Summary of PPS scope

Grass playing pitches	Artificial turf pitches	Non-pitch facilities
Football pitches Cricket pitches Rugby union pitches Rugby league pitches	Hockey pitches (artificial grass pitches <sup>1</sup> ) Third generation (3G) artificial grass pitches <sup>2</sup>	Tennis courts Bowling greens Athletics facilities

Pitch sports (i.e. football, rugby union, rugby league, hockey and cricket) will be assessed using the guidance set out in Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy (2013). In addition, any other grass sport pitches identified during the project will also be included.

Non-pitch facilities (bowls, tennis, athletics facilities) will be assessed using Sport England's Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (2014). This requires a different methodology to assess supply and demand to that used for pitch sports.

With regards to each sport, the PPS will specifically consider the number of pitches/facilities and will take into account the size, quality, location, accessibility and capacity of the provision as well as accompanying ancillary facilities such as changing accommodation, toilets and car parking.

## Study area

The study area comprises the whole of the District Council's administrative area. Due to its size, Forest of Dean will be broken into smaller subsections known as analysis areas. The District will be divided into three analysis areas which broadly align with other sub-areas used for planning purposes. They are:

- ◀ **North** (19,8293) – taking in the town of Newent and surrounding settlements generally related to Newent but also Gloucester, Ledbury and other larger centres.
  - ◀ Wards: Dymock, Hartpury and Redmarley, Newent and Taynton, Longhope and Huntley, Westbury.
- ◀ **Central** (57,5732) – referred to as the 'Forest core', the Forest of Dean itself with its managed woodlands. The largest area in terms of population, reflective of the inter-relationship of the three main towns (Cinderford, Lydney and Coleford) and their immediate hinterlands. Part of the area is close to Monmouth and Ross (both Wales).
  - ◀ Wards: Mitcheldean Ruardean and Drybrook, Cinderford East, Cinderford West, Newnham, Ruspidge, Lydney West and Alyburton, Lydney East, Lydney North, Bream, Berry Hill, Lydbrook, Coleford, Newland and Sling.

<sup>1</sup> Artificial grass pitches are a surface of synthetic fibres with sand or water infills made to look like natural grass and are most often used to accommodate hockey. For further detail on the specifications, please see Part 6: Artificial grass pitches

<sup>2</sup> Third generation artificial grass pitches provide infills that are mixtures of sand and granules of recycled rubber, or rubber crumb and are most often used to accommodate football and rugby. For further detail on the specifications please see Part 3: Third generation artificial grass pitches

<sup>3</sup> Source: ONS Mid-2019 Population Estimates for Lower Layer Super Output Areas in England and Wales

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- ◀ **South** (9,389<sup>2</sup>) - surrounding southern settlements which relate to Chepstow as well as centres in Forest of Dean District.
  - ◀ Wards: St Briavels, Tidenham.

Forest of Dean District lies within the County of Gloucestershire. Its boundaries include the Gloucestershire districts of Tewkesbury and the City of Gloucester to the east, as well as Stroud to the south and southeast.

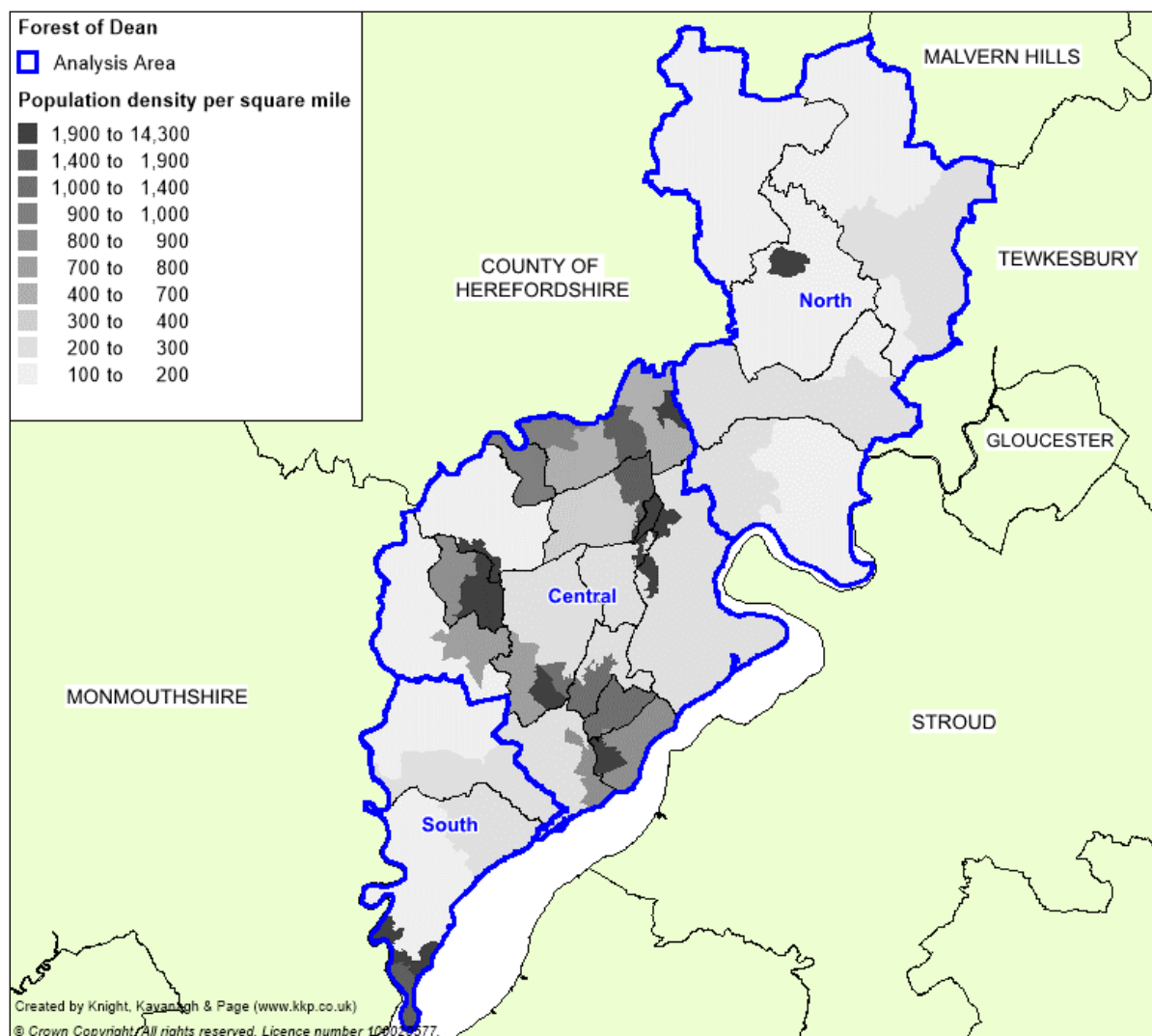
Forest of Dean is also next to the Worcestershire district of Malvern Hills to the north and the County of Herefordshire to the northwest. The western boundary marks the national boundary with Wales where the District borders Monmouthshire, a significant proportion of the Wye Area of Natural Beauty (AONB) lying within the Forest of Dean administrative area.

Much of the District's southern and south-eastern boundaries are marked by the River Severn which run alongside. It has four main settlements: Cinderford, Lydney, Sedbury and Newent.

Cross boundary issues were explored in the assessment to determine the level of imported and exported demand, recognising, for example, that people travel to and make use of strategic facilities irrespective of administrative boundaries.

A map of the analysis areas can be seen overleaf in Figure 1.1.

*Figure 1.1: Forest of Dean study area with analysis areas*



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## *Population growth*

The current resident population in Forest of Dean is 87,107 (2019 mid-year estimates<sup>4</sup>). By 2041 (the period to which this assessment projects population based future demand, in line with the Local Plan period) the population is projected to increase to 100,309<sup>5</sup> representing an increase of 13,202 (or equivalent to a percentage increase of 15.2%) according to Office of National Statistics data.

As Office of National Statistics figures are available by individual age brackets (to reflect team growth) this is considered the most accurate data set to apply to team generation rates (as identified above) to calculate likely future demand within the Assessment Report.

## *Housing growth*

The New Local Plan proposes that there is requirement for approximately 6,660 dwellings to be delivered between 2022/23 to 2040/41, at an average of at least 370 units per annum. Although the location of any new allocations is yet to be decided, additional land for approximately 4000 dwellings would be needed beyond existing commitments to meet this. It is likely new development will be directed in and around existing centres.

Existing commitments include c1400 dwellings currently committed or under construction at Lydney to be built over the next decade, with some additional land potentially to be allocated through the New Local Plan.

There are c570 commitments each at both Coleford at Cinderford, to be built out over the next decade with possible further allocations beyond. The c440 commitments will be built out at Newent, with possible additional allocation for a further 500. Other possible developments include Tutshill and Beachley Camp.

## **1.1: Context**

The primary purpose of the Playing Pitch Strategy is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of outdoor playing pitches and sports facilities meet local and community needs of existing and future residents and visitors to the Forest of Dean. The PPS will be produced in accordance with Sport England PPS and ANOG guidance to provide a robust and up to date assessment of need to comply with Paragraph 98 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), to provide robust and objective justification for future playing pitch provision throughout the Forest of Dean.

One of the core planning principles of the NPPF is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Section 8 of the NPPF deals specifically with the topic of healthy communities; Paragraph 98 discusses the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation that can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

Paragraphs 98 and 99 of the NPPF discuss assessments and the protection of “existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields”. A PPS available to meet existing and projected future pitch requirements.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Office of National Statistics Mid-2019 Population Estimates for Lower Layer Super Output Areas in England and Wales by Single Year of Age and Sex

<sup>5</sup> Source: ONS 2018-based Subnational Population Projections, by Single Year of Age and Sex



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Paragraphs 99 and 100 discuss assessments and the protection of “existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields”. As such, the Forest of Dean PPS will provide the evidence required to help protect playing fields to ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future pitch requirements.

Paragraphs 101 and 102 also promote the identification of important green spaces by local communities and the protection of these facilities. Such spaces may include playing fields.

## ***Forest of Dean Local Plan***

Forest of Dean District Council is currently producing a new Local Plan which will cover the plan period 2021 to 2041. Public consultation on the draft was undertaken through summer 2021, setting out key issues affecting the area and potential options for addressing those issues over the plan period. This includes the potential levels of growth and distribution. The publication version of the plan is anticipated to be made available for formal representations in Spring 2022. To meet current Sport England guidance, a new PPS is required.

The Local Plan for the Forest of Dean District consists of the following documents:

- ◀ Core Strategy: adopted in 2012, it outlines the Vision, Spatial Strategy and Planning Policies for the District including policies CSP.8 Retention of Community Facilities and CSP.9 Recreational and Amenity Land.
- ◀ Allocations Plan: adopted in 2018 the role of the plan is to update and show how the strategy for the Forest of Dean will be implemented and to provide detailed policies including settlement boundaries.
- ◀ Cinderford Northern Quarter Area Action Plan: the Cinderford Regeneration Board started working on an Area Action Plan for Cinderford's Northern Quarter in 2008, later adopted by the District Council in 2012. It provides the blueprint for regeneration so it can improve the area for residents and business and attract investment.

The Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) will be an evidence base document for the new Local Plan. It will ensure that existing facilities are the most appropriate in terms of quantity, quality and location and consider how best to meet the additional needs generated by the planned housing and economic growth.

## **1.2: Headline findings**

The table below highlights the quantitative headline findings identified for all main pitch sports included in the preceding Assessment Report. Match equivalent sessions (MES) has been used as the comparable unit for natural grass pitches. Converting both the amount of play a site can accommodate (its carrying capacity) and how much play takes place there (its current use) into the same unit of demand enables a comparison to be undertaken.

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

Based on how they tend to be played, this unit for football and rugby union pitches relates to a typical week within the season for each sport. For cricket pitches it is appropriate to look at the number of match equivalent sessions over the course of a season. How much play a cricket pitch can accommodate is primarily determined by the number and quality of wickets on a pitch. Only one match is generally played per pitch per day. However, play is rotated across the wickets to reduce wear and allow for repair. Each wicket is able to accommodate a certain amount of play per season as opposed to a week.

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The PPS guidance does not advocate the conversion of MES to pitches as there is not always a case for providing pitches to meet the demand/shortfalls expressed. For example, improving the quality of pitches can also increase the capacity of existing pitches to accommodate such demand. For qualitative findings and site-specific findings, please see Part 4: Sport Specific Recommendations and Scenarios, and Part 6: Action Plan.

For artificial surfaces (AGPs and 3G pitches), how much play can be accommodated is primarily determined by availability, rather than how much play it can accommodate before its quality is adversely affected as with natural grass pitches. Therefore, whole pitches are used as the comparable unit. Similarly, for the other non-pitch sports (i.e. tennis, golf, bowls, other sports etc) where it is not as easy to determine carry capacity, whole facilities are used as the comparable unit.

Table 1.1: Quantitative headline findings

Sport	Analysis area	Current demand (2021)		Future demand (2041)
		Pitch type	Current capacity balance in MES <sup>[1]</sup> per week	Future capacity balance in MES per week <sup>[1]</sup>
Football (grass pitches)	North	Adult	Spare capacity of 2.5	Spare capacity of 1.5
		Youth 11v11	Played to capacity	<b>Shortfall of 0.5</b>
		Youth 9v9	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
		Mini 7v7	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
		Mini 5v5	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
	Central	Adult	Spare capacity of 3	<b>Shortfall of 0.5</b>
		Youth 11v11	Spare capacity of 0.5	Spare capacity of 0.5
		Youth 9v9	<b>Shortfall of 2</b>	<b>Shortfall of 5</b>
		Mini 7v7	Spare capacity of 0.5	Spare capacity of 0.5
		Mini 5v5	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
	South	Adult	<b>Shortfall of 2</b>	<b>Shortfall of 3.5</b>
		Youth 11v11	Spare capacity of 2	Spare capacity of 2
		Youth 9v9	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
		Mini 7v7	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
		Mini 5v5	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
Football (3G pitches) <sup>[2]</sup>	North	Full size w/sports lighting	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
	Central		<b>Shortfall of at least 2 full size pitches for affiliated football and rugby team training</b>	<b>Shortfall of at least 2 full size pitches for affiliated football and rugby team training</b>
	South		Played to capacity	Played to capacity
<b>MES per season for cricket</b>				
Cricket	North	Saturday	Spare capacity of 26	<b>Shortfall of 1</b>
		Sunday	Spare capacity of 30	Spare capacity of 26
		Midweek	Spare capacity of 50	Spare capacity of 25
	Central	Saturday	Spare capacity of 54	Spare capacity of 54
		Sunday	Spare capacity of 60	Spare capacity of 60
		Midweek	Spare capacity of 80	Spare capacity of 70

<sup>[1]</sup> MES – match equivalent sessions per week (per season for cricket)

<sup>[1]</sup> MES – match equivalent sessions per week (per season for cricket)

<sup>[2]</sup> Based on accommodating 38 teams on one full size pitch

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Sport	Analysis area	Current demand (2021)		Future demand (2041)
		Pitch type	Current capacity balance in MES <sup>[1]</sup> per week	Future capacity balance in MES per week <sup>[1]</sup>
Cricket	South	Saturday	Spare capacity of 9	<b>Shortfall of 9</b>
		Sunday	Spare capacity of 12	Spare capacity of 8
		Midweek	Spare capacity of 15	Spare capacity of 10
Rugby union	North	Senior	Spare capacity of 0.5	<b>Shortfall of 2 Districtwide on grass pitches Shortfall of at least 2 full size pitches for affiliated football and rugby team training</b>
	Central	Senior	<b>Shortfall of 1.5 on grass pitches Shortfall of at least 2 full size 3G pitches for affiliated football and rugby team training</b>	
		South	Senior	
Hockey (sand AGPs) w/sports lighting	District	Full size w/sports lighting	Played to capacity	Played to capacity
Tennis	District	Courts	<b>Shortfall of 31</b>	<b>Shortfall of 151</b>
Bowls	District	Greens	Spare capacity	Spare capacity
Athletics	District	Tracks	<b>At capacity but if quality and access issues cannot be resolved, a shortfall of one 400m track</b>	<b>At capacity but if quality and access issues cannot be resolved, a shortfall of one 400m track</b>

### Conclusions

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

Due to the rural nature of the District, most pitches are owned by Town/District councils although some sports clubs have ownership of provision. The District Council does not directly own any sites.

There are current grass pitch capacity shortfalls for adult and youth football pitches and rugby union pitches, as well as for tennis courts and athletics tracks. There is a current and future shortfall of full size 3G pitches with sports lighting for affiliated football team training as well as demand for additional access to compliant 3G pitch provision for rugby union. There is a minor future shortfall for cricket squares when accounting for future demand.

Where demand is being met, this does not necessarily equate to a surplus of provision, with any spare capacity instead considered to be a solution to overcoming current or future demand shortfalls. There is a resultant need to protect all existing outdoor sport provision until all

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demand is met, or there is a requirement to replace provision in accordance with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy.

Where there are shortfalls, it must be noted that the grass pitch shortfalls evidenced are relatively minimal. As such, for rugby union and football, it is considered that most shortfalls can generally be met through the better utilisation of existing provision, such as via pitch re-configuration, improving quality and encouraging or enabling access to unused/unavailable provision. The impact of such approaches is shown in Part 4 of this report through scenario testing and modelling.

Strategic priority for site improvements should be determined by the level of priority highlighted and the level of deprivation of the area in which the sites resides. This information can be found in the Action Plan later in the report. Two sites in the Forest of Dean are within most deprived 20% of the population; Miners Welfare Playing Fields (Cinderford) and Valley Road Recreation Ground. Both sites fall in the most deprived IMD band and therefore should be prioritised for improvements.

## **PART 2: VISION**

### **2.1: Vision**

A vision has been drafted to provide a clear focus with desired outcomes for the Forest of Dean Playing Pitch Strategy:

*'To provide a robust and objective assessment of the current quality and quantity of pitch provision and changing facilities, to determine the need now and in the future'*

To achieve this vision the PPS will deliver the following objectives.

The strategy should seek to ensure that there are adequate playing pitches and ancillary facilities of the right quality in the right location. Whilst protecting existing provision and recognising the benefits of multi-pitch sites, by highlighting sites of particular significance for sport and seek to protect local recreational space through development plan processes.

Key partners such as Forest of Dean District Council, its leisure contractor (Freedom Leisure), voluntary sports clubs and NGBs will work collaboratively to maximise the full potential of playing pitch assets and their long term sustainability. This strategy will achieve this by setting out any required improvements to the quality of the District's playing pitches and ancillary facilities. This partnership working will help to provide funding and to secure developer contributions.

In times of public austerity, which has been heightened by the Covid-19 pandemic, it needs to be ensured that investment is allocated to sites which will have the biggest impact and highest increases in participation. This will include providing the required number and type (natural grass or artificial grass surface) of onsite provision or appropriate provision off site to meet specific needs of residential development proposals and in particular to inform the emerging Local Plan, especially in respect of its strategic sites and any masterplan for the Five Acres site.

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## PART 3: AIMS

The following overarching aims are based on the three Sport England themes. It is recommended that they are adopted by the Council and partners to enable delivery of the overall PPS vision and Sport England planning objectives.

### AIM 1

To **protect** the existing supply of outdoor sports facilities where it is needed to meet current and future needs.

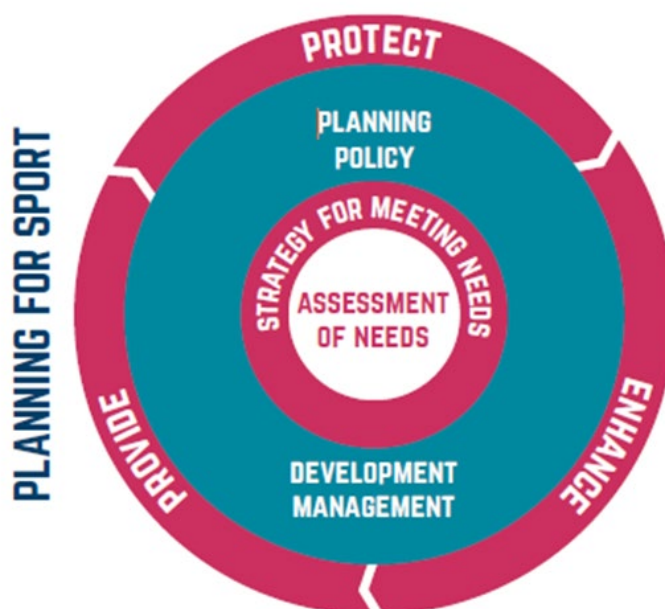
### AIM 2

To **enhance** outdoor sports provision and ancillary facilities through improving quality and management of sites.

### AIM 3

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

Figure 3.1: Sport England themes



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

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## PART 4: SPORT SPECIFIC ISSUES, SCENARIOS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To help develop the recommendations/actions and to understand their potential impact, relevant scenario questions are tested against the key issues in this section for each playing pitch sport, resulting in sport specific recommendations.

### 4.1 Sport specific issues, scenarios and recommendations

#### Football – grass pitches

##### *Assessment Report summary*

- ◀ **Overall, there is a current shortfall evidenced for youth 9v9 pitches, whilst adult, youth 11v11 and mini 7v7 pitches show actual spare capacity. Mini 5v5 pitches are at capacity.**
- ◀ **Accounting for future demand, the existing shortfall of youth 9v9 pitches is expected to worsen whilst overplay occurs on adult pitches. Actual spare capacity for youth 11v11 pitches is reduced.**
  
- ◀ The audit identifies a current total of 72 grass football pitches within the Forest of Dean across 51 sites of which, all are available, at some level, for community use.
- ◀ In addition, five disused sites have been identified that previously accommodated football provision.
- ◀ Tenure of sites in the Forest of Dean is generally secure, with only Rank Outsiders AFC expressing concerns with security of tenure. However, tenure remains unsecure at education sites such as Five Acres High School, despite being used by the community.
- ◀ In addition to the above, Gloucestershire FA and the Football Foundation indicate English Bicknor FC has concerns about its current tenure agreement at English Bicknor Playing Fields.
- ◀ Of the community available pitches, 20 are managed by Parish/Town councils or the respective parish/town council, 19 by clubs and 14 by schools/colleges/universities. The remaining pitches are managed by trusts, community organisations or the MOD.
- ◀ In total, 12 pitches are assessed as good quality, 58 as standard quality and six as poor quality.
- ◀ Changing facilities are generally viewed as being adequate by clubs, with 53% rating provision as good, 27% rating facilities as standard and 20% rating facilities as poor.
- ◀ A total of 165 teams are identified as playing within the Forest of Dean. This consists of 77 men's teams, five women's teams, 49 youth boys' teams, three youth girls' teams and 31 mini soccer teams.
- ◀ Clubs across the Forest of Dean report team numbers at adult, youth and mini level have remained fairly static over the previous three years.
- ◀ There are three clubs in the Forest of Dean competing within the men's National League System.
- ◀ A total of 20 express latent demand linked to grass pitch, training and/or ancillary facility provision.
- ◀ Gorsley Village Youth FC exports all demand outside the Forest of Dean, whilst Staunton & Corse FC exports a single adult team to Tewkesbury.
- ◀ Of the clubs which quantify their potential future demand, there is a predicted growth of 12 teams equating to four adult and two youth match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ Through population increases, a further 12 teams are likely to be generated, although this falls to seven teams when broken down by analysis area.

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## Scenarios

### Improving pitch quality

In total there are 11 pitches overplayed in the Forest of Dean across ten sites, with overplay equating to 11 match equivalent sessions per week. 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 (match equivalent sessions)

Site ID	Site name	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Current quality	Current Capacity rating <sup>6</sup>	Good quality capacity rating <sup>6</sup>
14	Clearwell Recreation Ground	Youth (11v11)	1	Standard	1	1
21	Ellwood Football Club	Adult	1	Good	1	1
24	Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community High School)	Adult	2	Poor	1	3
32	Huntley Recreation Ground	Adult	1	Poor	0.5	1.5
41	Miners Welfare Playing Fields (Cinderford)	Youth (9v9)	1	Poor	2.5	0.5
42	Mitcheldean Playing Fields	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	0.5
60	St Briavels Recreation Ground	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	0.5
67	Freedom Leisure Cinderford (The Forest High School)	Youth (11v11)	1	Poor	1	2
70	Viney St Swithins Sports & Social Club	Adult	1	Standard	0.5	0.5
75	Woolaston Recreation Ground	Adult	1	Poor	2.5	0.5

Please note the match equivalent sessions are in reference to the overall capacity of the pitch and are not in reference to peak time demand.

As seen, most overplayed pitches could accommodate current demand if quality improved to good. The only sites that would continue to accommodate some level of overplay are Ellwood Football Club and Woolaston Recreation Ground. All other pitches would have some form of spare capacity).

<sup>6</sup> Match equivalent sessions per week

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Given the above, some play at Ellwood Football Club and Woolaston Recreation Ground 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 at the site could also be considered.

Overall, only 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week of overplay would remain across the Forest of Dean, compared to 11 match equivalent sessions currently, and this would also only exist on adult pitches. The impact this would have on the supply and demand balance across the District is shown in the table below, with all shortfalls being alleviated. Mini 5v5 pitches would remain at capacity.

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	10	6.5	3.5	1.5	8.5
Youth 11v11	4.5	2	2.5	-	4.5
Youth 9v9	0.5	2.5	2	-	0.5
Mini 7v7	0.5	0	0.5	-	0.5
Mini 5v5	0	0	0	-	0

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 for competitive matches, which can not only alleviate overplay of grass pitches but can also aid quality improvements through the transfer of play and therefore reduced use. However, for sustainability, there also needs to be a sufficient level of midweek training demand taking place on the pitches.

### Loss of sites without secure tenure

The table below identifies the total amount of demand that would need to be replaced if access was to be lost at all existing sites with unsecure tenure. This in total would amount to 14 match equivalent sessions.

Table 4.3: Summary of demand at unsecure sites

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Demand (match equivalent sessions per week)				
			Adult	Youth 11v11	Youth 9v9	Mini 7v7	Mini 5v5
4	Beachley Barracks	South	2	-	-	-	-
14	Clearwell Recreation Ground	Central	-	3	-	-	-
17	Dene Magna School	Central	1	-	-	-	-
31	Hartpury College	North	4.5	-	-	-	-
67	Freedom Leisure Cinderford (The Forest High School)	Central	-	1	-	-	-
81	Five Acres High School	Central	-	1.5	0.5	0.5	-
<b>Total</b>			<b>7.5</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0</b>

It should be noted that despite being listed as unsecure, St Whites Primary School and Tutshill CE Primary School do not feature in the list above as they are not currently accessed by the community.



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If access to these sites was lost, it would have a dramatic impact on the overall supply and demand analysis of football pitches across the Forest of Dean, as indicated in the table below. Shortfalls would become evident on both adult and youth 11v11 pitches, with shortfalls worsening on youth 9v9 pitches. Spare capacity for mini 7v7 is lost whilst mini 5v5 pitches remain at capacity.

Table 4.4: Summary of supply and demand comparison without unsecure sites

Pitch type	Demand (MES)				
	Actual spare capacity	Overplay	Current total	Future demand	Total
<b>Supply and demand</b>					
Adult	10	6.5	3.5	6	2.5
Youth 11v11	4.5	2	2.5	0.5	2
Youth 9v9	0.5	2.5	2	3	5
Mini 7v7	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5
Mini 5v5	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Supply and demand excluding sites with unsecure tenure</b>					
Adult	2.5	6.5	4	6	10
Youth 11v11	1	2	3	0.5	3.5
Youth 9v9	0	2.5	2.5	3	5.5
Mini 7v7	0	0	0	0	0
Mini 5v5	0	0	0	0	0

Based on this information, it is important to secure tenure at these sites in order ensure current and future pitch shortfalls are minimised, although it is noted that this may not be possible at all venues.

### Recommendations

- ◀ Protect all grass football pitches currently in use and pitches that are no longer in use due to the potential that they may offer for meeting current and future needs (unless replacement provision is agreed upon and provided).
- ◀ Prioritise investment to improve the quality of grass pitches at key strategic sites identified within the PPS Action Plan, either to address overuse or to support high levels of site demand or accommodate growth.
- ◀ In the first instance, the Council and local football partners should undertake technical quality assessments using the Football Foundation PitchPower app at key sites identified as requiring improvement to pitch quality (both Council and non-Council managed sites), to establish Grounds Management Association (GMA) professional recommendations on how best to do so.
- ◀ Where pitches are overplayed and/or assessed as poor quality, prioritise investment and review maintenance regimes to ensure they are of an appropriate standard to sustain use and improve quality to increase capacity.
- ◀ Work to accommodate future demand as well as any exported, unmet and latent demand at sites which are not operating at capacity or at sites not currently available for community use that could be moving forward.
- ◀ In conjunction with qualitative improvements to key sites, consider opportunities for reconfiguration of pitches which exhibit spare capacity, to meet demand for pitch shortfalls at other formats.
- ◀ Consider opportunities for community asset transfer where football clubs express desire and evidence ability to feasibly manage, sustain and improve provision, in line with an established criteria for asset transfer.

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- ◀ Review the local authority specification for marking 11v11 pitches (90x55m) to better programme sites for adult and/or youth 11v11 football, ensuring that all teams are playing on the correct pitch sizes where possible in line with the FA Youth Review.
- ◀ Seek to gain increased access to education sites and where possible seek to formalise this use through community use agreements.
- ◀ Improve ancillary facilities at key sites, prioritising those identified within the PPS Action Plan. Priority should be where there is existing demand for use and where it can benefit the wider footballing offer.
- ◀ In line with the development of new 3G pitches, transfer a greater proportion of play from grass pitches to playing competitive matches on pitches certified on the 3G Pitch Register, particularly mini soccer match play.

## Third generation artificial grass pitches

### *Assessment Report summary*

- ◀ **For training purposes, based on the FA model, there is a current shortfall of two full size 3G pitches across the District, increasing to a future shortfall of three.**
- ◀ **On an analysis area basis, the current shortfall exists entirely in the Central Area, whilst additional capacity in the South Analysis Area may also be required.**
- ◀ **There is sufficient demand for increased access to compliant 3G pitch provision for rugby union in the Central Area, where increased capacity and sports lighting would help alleviate capacity issues which exist across a conurbation of sites.**
- ◀ There are three full size 3G pitches within the Forest of Dean, all of which have sports lighting and available to the community.
- ◀ One of the full size 3G pitches is FA registered and can therefore host competitive matches, at Hartpury College.
- ◀ The second full size 3G pitch at Hartpury College is World Rugby compliant.
- ◀ The FA compliant 3G pitch at Hartpury College was resurfaced in 2019 whilst the World Rugby compliant pitch was resurfaced in 2020. Both are assessed as good quality. The remaining pitch at Freedom Leisure Cinderford (The Forest High School) has exceeded its recommended lifespan and is of poor quality.
- ◀ The 3G pitches currently servicing the Forest of Dean are reported to be operating at capacity during the week, with some spare capacity at weekends.
- ◀ Of football clubs responding to consultation, 15 teams (44%) report that they require additional training facilities, or access to additional training facilities, with 13 teams (87%) specifically mentioning demand for 3G pitches.
- ◀ There are three football teams currently playing home matches on the 3G pitch stock, which is a low number when compared to other local authorities.
- ◀ The World Rugby compliant 3G pitch is well used for rugby union activity by the University & College itself, University of Hartpury RFC and Ledbury Rugby RFC (imported demand).

### **Scenarios**

During the last decade 3G FTPs have played an increasing role within the national game. They are regarded by the Football Association (FA) as the optimum facility for training by clubs. In recent seasons they have also become more popular for competitive matches. With this in mind, before developing the recommendations and action plan for this PPS, two scenarios have been looked at to help with understanding what demand there may be for full size sportslit 3G FTPs in the Forest of Dean, if increased amounts of play were to take place on them.

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In order to do so, information from the 'Assessment' stage of developing this PPS, alongside details from the FA, have been used to help answer the following questions:

How many full size sportslit 3G FTPs may be required to meet demand within the Forest of Dean if:

- ◀ All teams playing competitive football had access to a full size sportslit 3G FTP to train on once a week?
- ◀ All matches for teams currently playing competitive football on Forest of Dean District Council managed natural grass pitches were played on full size sportslit 3G FTPs?

The answers to these questions are set out below and are based on full sized sportslit 3G FTPs which have full community use during peak periods. However, the results should be viewed as providing an indication of the 'full size pitch equivalents' that may be demanded. In practice, the most appropriate ways of meeting any such increase in demand will vary depending on the nature of the local area. For example, in some areas new full size sportslit FTPs may be appropriate, whereas in others small sided provision to cater for increased training use or securing greater community use/hours of existing provision may be the best way forward.

Given the above, what the answers may mean for the Forest of Dean, taking into account the wider findings from the Assessment stage of developing the PPS, is also presented below. These details have been used to help inform the development of the PPS's recommendations and the action plan (see pages 49 to 73).

### *Accommodating football training demand*

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 calculated theoretical need for four full size 3G pitches (rounded down from 4.3). This would ordinarily indicate a shortfall of one pitch based on three currently being provided; however, it is considered that the shortfall should actually be increased due to limited football access to the rugby pitch at Hartpury College as well as the prevalence of university use on site. In effect, the two pitches at Hartpury College provide the same level of availability to football clubs as one pitch normally would. Therefore, it is suggested that the shortfall in the Forest of Dean amounts to two full size pitches.

*Table 4.5: Current demand for 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean (based on 38 teams per pitch)*

Current number of teams	3G requirement <sup>7</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Alteration required	Current shortfall
165	4	3	-1	2

When considering future demand for an additional 19 teams (based on population increases and future demand expressed by clubs), the requirement increases to five full size 3G pitches (rounded up from 4.8) which means a future shortfall of three pitches.

*Table 4.6: Future demand for 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean (based on 38 teams per pitch)*

Future number of teams	3G requirement <sup>8</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Alteration required	Future shortfall
184	5	3	-1	3

<sup>7</sup> Rounded to the nearest whole number

<sup>8</sup> Rounded to the nearest whole number

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Alternatively, the table below considers the number of full size 3G pitches required if every team was to remain training within the respective analysis area that they play in. This not only identifies where the needs exist across the Forest of Dean, but it can also be used to guide which areas should be targeted for new provision.

*Table 4.7: Current demand for 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean by analysis area*

Analysis area	Current number of teams	3G requirement <sup>15</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Alteration required	Potential shortfall
North	37	1	2	-1	0
Central	112	3	1	-	2
South	16	0	0	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>2</b>

Assessing need by analysis area shows a shortfall of just two full size 3G pitches, lower than the overall current shortfall across the Forest of Dean. This equates to a shortfall of two pitches in the Central Analysis Area. However, whilst there isn't sufficient demand in the South Analysis Area to warrant a full-size 3G pitch, a half-size 3G pitch could be created to service the teams playing within the area.

There is no change to the previously identified shortfalls after considering future demand, as seen in the table overleaf.

*Table 4.8: Future demand for 3G pitches in the Forest of Dean by analysis area*

Analysis area	Future number of teams	3G requirement <sup>15</sup>	Current number of 3G pitches	Alteration required	Potential shortfall
North	41	1	2	-1	0
Central	125	3	1	-	2
South	19	0	0	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>2</b>

### *Moving play demand from District Council managed pitches to 3G pitches*

To further the use of 3G pitches for matches, the FA is particularly keen to work with local authorities to understand the potential demand for full size 3G pitches have sports lighting should all competitive matches that are currently played on council pitches be transferred. The following table therefore calculates the number of teams currently using District/Parish/Town council facilities in the Forest of Dean for each pitch type.

*Table 4.9: Number of teams currently using council pitches*

Pitch type	Pitch size	Peak period	No. of teams
Adult	11v11	Saturday PM	26
Youth	11v11	Saturday AM	2
Youth	9v9	Saturday AM	7
Mini	7v7	Saturday AM	5
Mini	5v5	Saturday AM	0
<b>Total</b>			<b>40</b>

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

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Table 4.10: 3G pitches required for the transfer of council pitch demand

Format	No. of teams at peak time	No. of matches at peak time	3G units required per match	Total 3G units required	3G pitches required
Adult	26	13	32	416	6.5
11v11	2	1	32	32	0.5
9v9	7	3.5	10	35	0.55
7v7	5	2.5	8	20	0.31
5v5	0	0	4	0	0

A total of eight (rounded up from 7.86) 3G pitches would be required to accommodate all matches currently played on District/Parish/Town council pitches. In the Forest of Dean, there are currently three full-size 3G pitches. As there is only a current and future shortfall of two full size 3G pitches in the District as calculated with the FA's football training demand model, it is not feasible to transfer all competitive matches currently played on District/Parish/Town council pitches to 3G pitches.

### *Moving all mini soccer match play to 3G pitches*

The FA is particularly keen on enabling 3G match usage for mini teams given the high volume of matches that can be played at one time. The table below therefore tests a scenario to permit all 5v5 and 7v7 football to transfer to 3G pitches within the Forest of Dean based on a programme of play at current peak time (Saturday AM).

Table 4.11: Moving all mini matches to 3G pitches

Time	AGP	Total games/teams <sup>9</sup>
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 three full size 3G pitches to accommodate all current mini match play demand. This is calculated based on 13 teams playing 5v5 football requiring two pitches (rounded down from 1.6) and 18 teams playing 7v7 football requiring two pitches (rounded up from 1.5). With a current 3G pitch requirement in the Forest of Dean for training demand of four pitches, it is therefore considered feasible that all mini football could be accommodated on 3G pitches if training shortfalls were to be alleviated.

### *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.

<sup>9</sup> Number of teams is double the number of games based on teams playing home and away

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There is one World Rugby compliant full size 3G pitch within the Forest of Dean, located at Hartpury College. This pitch is used throughout the week by Hartpury College and university BUCS teams fielded by University of Hartpury RFC for both training and some matches. University of Hartpury RFC men's and women's first teams train on the natural turf pitch have sports lighting. The community use programme is heavily made up of use for football and the only community use for rugby union by external clubs is by Ledbury RFC (Herefordshire), imported demand for training.

Drybrook RFC has previously shown aspiration for development of a full size World Rugby compliant pitch in place of one of the natural turf rugby union pitches at Drybrook RFC. The Club has in the past had dialogue with the RFU regarding the potential to develop a pitch onsite through its Rugby 365 investment programme into 3G pitches, however this was not progressed beyond the local partnership needs assessment stage.

The RFU states that there is sufficient demand in the area, notably amongst the three larger clubs Lydney RFC, Cinderford RFC and Drybrook RFC, however, a commitment to shared access and use by these other local clubs would be required for any development to be financially viable at Drybrook RFC.

The Council are now also considering constructing the proposed 3G pitch at Five Acres to be a World Rugby compliant pitch.

### ***Recommendations***

- ◀ Protect the current level of supply of 3G pitches.
- ◀ Ensure that any new 3G pitches are constructed to meet FA recommended dimensions for football (or RFU/RFL recommended dimensions where a specific rugby build facility) where feasible and of performance quality standards to meet performance testing criteria for match play.
- ◀ Ensure England Hockey is consulted with regarding any proposals for development of new 3G artificial grass pitches or proposed conversion to 3G of existing hockey AGPs, in order to ensure the sustainability and sufficient supply of existing AGPs for hockey.
- ◀ Ensure that any new 3G pitches have formal community use agreements associated as part of the planning permission in order to secure access for local sports clubs. This should form part of conditions where partnership funded.
- ◀ Encourage providers to put in place a mechanism for long-term sustainability, preferably a sinking fund formed over time, to fund future repair and eventual surface replacement at end of lifespan.
- ◀ Encourage greater transfer of match play demand from grass pitches to 3G pitches where possible and ensure that pitches remain suitable quality to accommodate such demand through appropriate certification when required to be renewed or retested.
- ◀ Explore opportunity to develop new 3G pitch provision (or added compliancy to existing pitches) to World Rugby/RFL Community Standard compliant specifications for rugby union/league training and match play use. Increased capacity for contact rugby activity and transfer of use can help to alleviate grass pitch shortfalls.

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## Cricket pitches

### *Assessment Report summary*

- ◀ **In conclusion, there is sufficient supply of cricket provision at a Districtwide level to cater for current and future demand for both senior and junior cricket across Forest of Dean.**
- ◀ **However, there are some Area specific future shortfalls expected for senior Saturday cricket in the North and South analysis areas. The shortfall in the North area is minimal and can be sustained.**
  
- ◀ In total, there are 21 grass cricket squares in the Forest of Dean, with all 21 available for community use.
- ◀ There are non-turf pitches accompanying grass wicket squares at four sites and there are standalone non-turf pitches at four sites.
- ◀ Corse and Staunton CC is currently looking and fundraising for a second square, ideally close to its current home site (Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton).
- ◀ Of the responsive clubs in the Forest of Dean, four clubs have freehold of their home venues whilst three have lease agreements in place. The remaining four clubs rent their playing provision.
- ◀ The audit of community available grass wicket cricket squares found 17 to be good quality and the remaining four to be standard quality; none are assessed as poor.
- ◀ Alvington and Woolaston CC reports its facility is sub-standard and is without changing rooms, toilets, electricity or water.
- ◀ All remaining clubs have access to changing room facilities, with nine of the ten responding clubs listing provision as good quality and one with standard quality provision.
- ◀ Eight of the 11 responding clubs report demand for new, improved or additional training facilities.
- ◀ There are 16 clubs in the Forest of Dean which collectively provide 38 senior men's, three senior women's, 30 junior boys and one junior girls team.
- ◀ Four of the 11 responding clubs report that demand has increased in some form over the previous three years with only Newent CC reporting a decrease relating to its junior membership.
- ◀ Lydney, Westbury on Severn, Cinderford, Huntley and Newent cricket clubs are signed up to be part of the All Stars Cricket initiative, whilst Lydney, Cinderford, Huntley and Newent are also signed up to deliver Dynamos Cricket. Corse and Staunton CC reports it will sign up to both initiatives from the 2022 season.
- ◀ Future demand for two junior teams is predicted via population growth, whilst club aspirations equate to the potential growth of five senior men's, two senior women's and five junior boys and one junior girls' team.
- ◀ There are seven squares that show potential spare capacity on grass wickets on Saturdays, 17 on Sundays and 16 during midweek for junior cricket.
- ◀ One site is overplayed; Huntley Cricket Club, by ten match equivalent sessions.

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## **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.

In the Forest of Dean, overplay is identified on a single square at Huntley Cricket Club, equating to a total of ten match equivalent sessions of overplay. The square is already assessed as good quality and so further quality improvements would not reduce the level of overplay on site.

The best solution at Huntley Cricket Club would therefore be to install a non-turf pitch *in situ* as this would allow for the transfer of junior demand away from grass wickets. Removing junior demand from the grass wickets on site would completely alleviate overplay. With senior demand alone, the square at Huntley Cricket Club would be played to capacity.

### *Accommodating future demand*

Of the five clubs that express aspirations to increase their number of junior teams, three have capacity to do so on their current facility stock. In contrast, Huntley and Dymock CC are all unable to accommodate an increase in demand at their respective home venues. Neither club has access to a non-turf pitch, so installing one at each at their respective home venues would provide a solution to accommodate a growth in junior demand.

Five clubs indicate a desire to field additional senior teams. All of these aspire to field additional Saturday teams although only Alvinton and Woolaston and Newent cricket clubs have the capacity to do so on their current facility stock. Dymock and St Briavels cricket clubs also plan to establish women's teams although only St Briavels has capacity to do so. For other clubs, demand will either have to be fielded outside of peak time, or alternative venues will be required.

## **Recommendations**

- ◀ Protect cricket pitch provision currently in use (unless replacement provision is agreed upon and provided).
- ◀ Ensure protection from development that may prejudice the use of a cricket square such as residential development near a cricket outfield (ball strike issues). This includes development of other sports provision which may compromise continued use for cricket.
- ◀ Uphold what are typically high quality maintenance and preparatory regimes at club managed sites to sustain quality and continue to have sufficient capacity to meet levels of demand.
- ◀ Work with clubs and site providers to ensure long-term tenure through formal agreement where current agreements may be due to expire.
- ◀ Support clubs with sufficient access to net training provision, including development of fixed lane net provision onsite where possible (e.g. Huntley CC, Newent CC and Cinderford CC).
- ◀ Support clubs to provide non-turf pitches at their respective home sites to alleviate overplay and better accommodate future demand (e.g. Huntley CC and Dymock CC).
- ◀ Work with clubs to accommodate targeted growth for women's and girls' cricket through the ECB Inspiring Generations Strategy.
- ◀ Improve quality of ancillary provision where poor quality or old and in need of replacing (e.g. Alvinton Playing Fields).



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- ◀ Improve facilities to meet growth markets (All Stars Cricket, Dynamos Cricket, women and girls' cricket) at key clubs. Specifically, improve quality of toilets, changing room and showers and social spaces to meet these growing demands, as well as ensuring sufficient pitch access to help promote these formats.

## Rugby union pitches

### *Assessment Report summary*

- ◀ **Overall, there is insufficient capacity to sufficiently service both senior and junior rugby union demand in Forest of Dean at present and in future.**
- ◀ In total, there are 33 rugby union pitches in the Forest of Dean across 16 sites. There are 24 senior pitches, six dedicated mini pitches and three junior size pitches.
- ◀ There are 28 pitches across 14 sites identified as being available for rugby union activity, all used by community clubs except for seven at education sites. Five pitches are unavailable for external community access, at Hartpury College (four senior pitches) and Beachley Barracks.
- ◀ There is also a full size World Rugby compliant 3G pitch at Hartpury College which accommodates a notable level of rugby union activity, mostly from the College and University in-house programmes and teams.
- ◀ Most available rugby union pitches (19 of 28 pitches – 68%) in the District are rated as poor quality, with seven pitches (25% of available provision) rated as standard quality. There are six good quality pitches.
- ◀ Drybrook RFC aspires to develop World Rugby 3G pitch provision onsite. The Club was previously in exploring the case with the RFU regarding development of a pitch onsite but was not progressed further due to a lack of support for development of a pitch at that site.
- ◀ Clubs are considered to have unsecure tenure at Five Acres (Berry Hill RFC), Lydney Recreation Ground and Bathurst Park (both Lydney RFC) through rental.
- ◀ There are eight affiliated rugby union clubs based and playing within the District, identified as fielding a total of 77 affiliated teams.
- ◀ Training typically takes place either on match pitches with sports lighting or on off-field training areas with sports lighting. Only Drybrook RFC has a dedicated training pitch as such.
- ◀ The 3G pitch at Hartpury College currently plays little part in supporting community rugby union use in the District. The pitch is available for use but is not identified as being used by clubs based in the District.
- ◀ Team generation rates based exclusively on population change forecast the growth of one senior men's team, two new junior boys teams and one junior girls team to 2041. Clubs state aspirations to grow but only Lydney RFC quantified this demand.
- ◀ Future demand from team generation rates would amount to five teams requiring additional match play capacity of 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week on senior pitches.
- ◀ Both Bream RFC and Westbury-On-Severn Rugby Football Club offer secure tenure and have some capacity to accommodate additional use at senior peak time (Saturday afternoon) or on Sundays for junior or women's activity.
- ◀ There are nine pitches overplayed across four sites, to a total of 11.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Overplay is due mainly to high levels of demand for matches and limited carrying capacity as a result of poor quality most sites, though in the case of Drybrook RFC concentrated use of the grass pitch with sports lighting for training is a major contributor.

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## Scenarios

### *Improving pitch maintenance*

Currently, there are nine rugby union pitches across four sites in the Forest of Dean which are overplayed by a total of 11.5 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 Table 4.18, overplay at four sites and on seven pitches (at Berry Hill RFC, Drybrook RFC, Newent Recreation Ground and Valley Road Recreation Ground (Cinderford RFC)) can be alleviated through quality improvements alone. As a reminder, the quality ratings for rugby union pitches are shown in the table below.

*Table 4.12: 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 4.13: Improving maintenance on overplayed rugby union pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Sports lighting	Current quality	Current capacity rating	Improved quality	New capacity rating
8	Berry Hill RFC	Central	1	Senior	Yes	M0 / D1	1.5	M1 / D1	1
			3	Mini	Yes (partial)		0.5		1
18	Drybrook RFC	Central	1	Senior	No	M1 / D1	0.5	M2 / D1	0.5
			1	Junior	Yes		8		7
43	Newent Recreation Ground	North	2	Senior	No	M0 / D1	0.5	M1 / D1	0.5
79	Valley Road Recreation Ground (Cinderford RFC)	Central	1	Senior	No	M0 / D1	0.5	M1 / D1	0

### 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, overplay at only two pitches (at Berry Hill RFC and Drybrook RFC) would be alleviated through drainage improvements alone.

Table 4.14: Improving drainage on overplayed rugby union pitches

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Sports lighting	Current quality	Current capacity rating	Improved quality	New capacity rating
8	Berry Hill RFC	Central	1	Senior	Yes	M0 / D1	1.5	M0 / D2	1.25
			3	Mini	Yes (partial)		0.5		0.25
18	Drybrook RFC	Central	1	Senior	No	M1 / D1	0.5	M1 / D2	0
			1	Junior	Yes		8		7.5
43	Newent Recreation Ground	North	2	Senior	No	M0 / D1	0.5	M0 / D2	0.25
79	Valley Road Recreation Ground (Cinderford RFC)	Central	1	Senior	No	M0 / D1	0.5	M0 / D2	0.25

## FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

### *Improving pitch maintenance and drainage*

A combination of improving maintenance and drainage would create actual spare capacity on seven pitches (at Berry Hill RFC, Drybrook RFC, Newent Recreation Ground and Valley Road Recreation Ground (Cinderford RFC)).

*Table 4.15: Improving maintenance and drainage on overplayed rugby union pitches*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Sports lighting	Current quality	Current capacity rating	Improved quality	New capacity rating
8	Berry Hill RFC	Central	1	Senior	Yes	M0 / D1	1.5	M1 / D2	0.5
			3	Mini	Yes (partial)		0.5		2.5
18	Drybrook RFC	Central	1	Senior	No	M1 / D1	0.5	M2 / D2	0.75
			1	Junior	Yes		8		6.75
43	Newent Recreation Ground	North	2	Senior	No	M0 / D1	0.5	M1 / D2	1.5
79	Valley Road Recreation Ground (Cinderford RFC)	Central	1	Senior	No	M0 / D1	0.5	M1 / D2	0.5

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

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## *Increasing access to training provision with sports lighting*

There is often a preference for rugby clubs to train at their home sites and on their match pitches if they are without dedicated training facilities. In the Forest of Dean, training demand directly results in overplay of four pitches.

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 additional training pitch/es becoming overplayed. As such, whilst additional sports lighting of grass should be pursued, alternatives also need to be considered such as provision of 3G pitches, as explored below, or dedicated training areas with sports lighting.

The table below presents the scenario that World Rugby compliant 3G provision is delivered in the Forest of Dean and Berry Hill and Drybrook rugby clubs (the two clubs that overplay pitches due to training demand) transfer their training demand off their grass pitches. The figures show the significant impact training activity has on grass pitch capacity.

*Table 4.16: Impact of training demand transferring to World Rugby compliant 3G provision*

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area <sup>10</sup>	No. of pitches	Pitch type	Current capacity rating	Training equivalent sessions (per week)	Capacity rating without training demand
8	Berry Hill RFC	Central	3	Mini	0.5	2.5	2
18	Drybrook RFC	Central	1	Junior	8	8	0

The table above suggests significant levels of overplay could be addressed if a WR22 AGP was established in the Central Analysis Area, with Berry Hill and Drybrook rugby clubs securing community use agreements although a commitment to shared access and use by other local clubs such as Lydney and Cinderford rugby clubs would be required for any development to be financially viable.

## **Recommendations**

- ◀ Protect all rugby union pitches currently in use and pitches that are inaccessible or no longer in use due to the potential that they may offer for meeting current and future needs (unless replacement provision is agreed upon and provided).
- ◀ Improve pitch quality to reduce overplay, foremostly through improved and more regular maintenance at sites used by community clubs. Engage and utilise the GMA Pitch Advisory Service to establish recommended programme of works at key sites.
- ◀ Consider opportunities for community asset transfer where rugby union clubs express desire and evidence ability to feasibly manage, sustain and improve provision, in line with an established criteria for asset transfer.
- ◀ Improve quality of ancillary provision servicing pitches, particularly changing and toilet provision. Ensure provision is able to suitably meet requirements of site users, particularly women's teams and where there is crossover of youth/adult female use on Sundays.
- ◀ Consider the impact on rugby union provision if rugby league returns to the District, as hoped for by the RFL.
- ◀ Explore opportunity to develop new 3G pitch provision (or added compliancy to existing pitches) to World Rugby Regulation 22 compliant specifications for rugby union training and match play use. Increased capacity for contact rugby activity and transfer of use can help to alleviate grass pitch shortfalls. This could include shared programmes which may be funded by other partners.

<sup>10</sup> [Click for analysis areas](#)

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## Hockey pitches (sand/water-based artificial grass pitches)

### *Assessment Report summary*

- ◀ **Current demand for hockey is able to be met by existing provision in the District, on the basis that both sufficient quality for use and level of access is sustained or improved/increased.**
- ◀ **There is a requirement for both of the two full size AGPs in the District to be protected and retained as hockey suitable surfaces for continued hockey use.**
- ◀ There are two full size hockey suitable AGPs in the Forest of Dean District, both of which have sports lighting and are available for community use.
- ◀ There is one pitch each in the North and Central analysis areas. There is no full size AGP provision in the South area.
- ◀ Both of the two pitches are considered to be of standard quality, though the surface at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) exceeds the recommended lifespan and consideration should be given to future replacement in the short-term when required. Additionally, the pitch at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) is serviced by poor sports lighting.
- ◀ Use of Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School) is rented from Newent Community Sports Limited. Newent HC is reportedly a priority user but tenure is considered unsecure due to the lack of formal agreement committing to future access.
- ◀ Use of Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) for Lydney HC is rented but tenure for the Club is considered to be secure as part of the Council's maintained sport and leisure provision offering.
- ◀ Both sites offer a good extent of community use availability and neither is known to have limitations on operating hours.
- ◀ Each site is serviced by onsite changing and toilet provision, with no critical issues regarding quality, accessible or suitability.
- ◀ There are two hockey clubs, Newent HC and Lydney HC, which field a combined 16 teams, whilst Hartpury College and University has a further two ladies teams.
- ◀ Plans for growth are limited. Newent HC aspires to establish a women's fourth team but Lydney HC does not expect to grow.
- ◀ No Hockey Heroes or Back to Hockey sessions are held in the District.
- ◀ There is significant use of hockey suitable AGPs for other activities, mostly for formal training or informal use for football.
- ◀ There is capacity to accommodate further midweek and weekend hockey activity at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney).
- ◀ There is considered to be no midweek capacity for further midweek activity at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community School), though there is likely capacity to accommodate additional hockey match play at weekends albeit greater co-ordination of home fixtures with league planners is required

### **Scenarios**

#### *Converting sand-based AGPs*

None of the two sites containing full size sand based AGPs should be considered for conversion/loss as both are in current use by hockey clubs. This is unless replacement provision is provided and agreed upon by EH and Sport England. For clarity, this applies to pitches at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community High School) and Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney).

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Sport England consider that conversion of an AGP requires planning permission because of the extent of engineering works required for its 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.

It should be noted that the pitch at Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney) has now exceeded the recommended surface lifespan. Whilst Freedom Leisure is currently assessing the cost of rejuvenating the surface, the pitch will still require resurfacing in the coming years. Additionally, the pitch at Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community High School) is approaching the end of its recommended lifespan so consideration should be made towards resurfacing the pitch in the near future.

Without quality improvements, both AGPs will soon be of poor quality and may become unsafe to accommodate hockey demand which would cause supply constraints within the District and could lead to the loss of hockey demand within the Forest of Dean altogether.

## **Recommendations**

- ◀ Protect all existing AGPs in the District.
- ◀ Ensure that quality of sports lighting can continue to meet demand at key sites for hockey, replacing bulbs to newer, more effective LED products where in need of replacement.
- ◀ Ensure that any recreational based hockey programmes can be accommodated to service non-competitive or recreational demand.
- ◀ Encourage providers to put in place a mechanism for long-term sustainability, preferably a sinking fund formed over time, in order to fund future repair and eventual surface replacement at end of lifespan.
- ◀ Seek to maximise hockey use of AGPs at sites where hockey is being played.
- ◀ Increase participation driven through community clubs and schools.

## **Tennis courts**

### **Assessment Report summary**

- ◀ **Lydney TC has a sufficient number of courts to meet its current membership whilst Redmarley TC and Taynton and Tibberton TC have memberships that exceed the capacity of their home site.**
- ◀ **If future demand aspirations are realised, Lydney TC will also become overplayed. This would lead to a total shortfall of 151 members in the Forest of Dean.**
- ◀ **As no non-club courts are identified as have any capacity issues, precedence should be placed on improving quality to an adequate standard for informal play, particularly at publicly available sites hosting multiple courts.**
- ◀ There is a total of 36 tennis courts identified in the Forest of Dean across 13 sites, all of which are available for community use.
- ◀ The majority of courts are operated by Trusts or Schools and all of the courts have a macadam surface.
- ◀ In total, nine of the 36 tennis courts are serviced by sports lighting, representing just 25% of the provision. Redmarley TC and Taynton and Tibberton TC both have demand to install sports lighting at their respective home venues.
- ◀ Of the courts, four are assessed as good quality, 13 as standard quality and 19 as poor quality.
- ◀ The courts at Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall are said to be weathered and dated whilst those at Lydney Recreation Ground were resurfaced in spring 2021.

# FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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- ◀ Ancillary facilities accessed by all clubs are deemed to be adequate although Redmarley TC indicates changing facilities at Redmarley Playing Fields are in poor condition.
- ◀ For non-club courts, ancillary provision is generally considered to be problematic.
- ◀ There are four tennis clubs in the Forest of Dean.
- ◀ Lydney TC is the largest club in the District with 212 members whilst Taynton and Tibberton TC is the smallest with 97 members.
- ◀ All three responding clubs have plans to add more members, equating to a total future demand of 120 members.
- ◀ Away from clubs, it is considered that all local authority courts available for community use in the Forest of Dean have spare capacity for a growth in demand, although this is difficult to quantify as use is not always recorded due to the open access nature of many sites.
- ◀ Clubspark is not currently utilised in the Forest of Dean although the courts at Lydney Recreation Ground will soon be available for pay & play via Clubspark.

## **Scenarios**

### *LTA Investment*

The LTA has developed a package of support for LAs to grow the use of park tennis courts by removing key barriers to participation. The three products are ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access and can be used individually or in combination. The products are used to provide a remote booking and access system.

Instead of providing free access, many local authorities are now securing their courts as per an access scheme that allows users access through the use of a Smart Access gates system following payment of an affordable household annual fee. This helps provide sustainable facilities, providing the operator with a sinking fund for future maintenance on the site as well as the ability to track the usage of the site.

The LTA already has plans to open the courts at Lydney Recreation Ground for pay & play through ClubSpark. This should also encourage more community sites to improve their customer journey to get more people playing tennis. It has further identified Bathurst Park, Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy), Freedom Leisure Cinderford (The Forest High School), Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form) and Five Acres High School as key sites across the District for the development of community tennis. In order to facilitate this demand, it is likely that sports lighting would have to be provided, in addition to court improvements and potential provision or improvement of changing facilities.

It is anticipated that if the abovementioned investment takes place, there will also likely be an increase in demand at tennis clubs in the District. However, only Lydney Recreation Ground (Lydney TC) has current capacity for an increase in demand whilst all club sites are expected to become overplayed after accounting for future demand.

LTA insights also suggest that there is scope and demand for additional facilities linked to larger population areas across the District:

- ◀ Community accessible courts in East Lydney to support increased demand following proposed housing developments
- ◀ Three new public pay & play courts in Cinderford (if strategic developments arise in the area)
- ◀ Three new public pay & play courts in Coleford & Coalway (if strategic developments arise in the area)
- ◀ Two new public pay & play courts within recreational green space in Newent



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## **Recommendations**

- ◀ Retain and sustain quality of club courts for competitive play through implementation of appropriate maintenance regimes.
- ◀ As a priority, look at establishing a bespoke package of investment between the Council and LTA to improve the quality and accessibility of identified park sites including the implementation of ClubSpark, Rally and Gate Access schemes as appropriate.
- ◀ Resurface and open up School facilities to the public with clear and affordable customer journey as these provide community tennis courts in areas with no provision.
- ◀ In key towns, review potential to add additional courts as well as upgrading current park facility courts.
- ◀ Across the rest of the Forest, upgrade community courts and support them to become sustainable, such as at Five Acres High School.
- ◀ Sustain club facilities & membership through maintaining current facilities and support sportslighting aspirations where possible to extend court hours.
- ◀ Consider the feasibility of operating LTA programmes such as Tennis for Kids, Tennis for Free and Great British Tennis Weekend in the District to attract new players to the sport.

## **Bowling greens**

### **Assessment Report summary**

- ◀ **Current supply of outdoor bowling green provision is sufficient to meet both current and future demand expressed by Lydney BC and Cinderford BC.**
- ◀ **Lydney BC may require support if future demand aspirations are realised as the green would be operating close to the limit of the capacity threshold.**
- ◀ **Further exploration and understanding are required to determine the capacity position for Coleford BC and Royal Forest of Dean BC, neither of which provided a consultation response.**
- ◀ There are four flat bowling greens in the Forest of Dean provided across four sites.
- ◀ Lydney BC rents the green from the Lydney Recreation Trust whilst Cinderford BC is working to renew its lease agreement for its home green at Steam Mills Recreation Ground.
- ◀ In total, three greens are rated as good quality and one is rated as standard quality (at King George V Playing Fields (Coleford)).
- ◀ Cinderford BC indicates that ancillary provision at Steam Mills Recreation Ground is outdated and a changing room had to be removed to ensure the facility is COVID safe.
- ◀ There are four clubs using bowling greens in the Forest of Dean; where membership is known across two responding clubs to total 76 members, equating to 49 senior men and 17 senior women.
- ◀ Lydney BC indicates membership has declined in recent years due to its ageing player base. However, Cinderford BC reports membership has increase in recent years thanks to an increase in the Club's revenue, which has enabled it to play more games and field more teams.
- ◀ Due to a predicted increase in persons aged 65 and over (to 2041), demand is likely to increase for greens over the coming years. Additionally, Sports England's Segmentation Tool highlights latent demand of 165 people although ageing membership is a concern for bowls nationally.
- ◀ Both Cinderford BC and Lydney BC report future plans to increase membership, with this collectively equating to 20 senior and seven junior members.
- ◀ Both clubs report that existing membership can be accommodated by current provision and that no potential members are being turned away, suggesting that there is no latent or unmet demand not currently able to be met.

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## **Scenarios**

As no clubs in the Forest of Dean indicate a requirement to access an additional green or report that green quality has deteriorated, it is considered that the current provision for bowls is sufficient to meet current and future demand in the District. Therefore, focus should be on increasing participation and improving or maintaining the current stock of bowling greens in the Authority.

## **Recommendations**

- ◀ Retain existing quantity of greens currently used for outdoor bowls.
- ◀ Protect disused bowling greens due to the potential that they may offer for meeting future needs (unless mitigating provision is agreed upon and provided).
- ◀ Assist clubs, where possible, with any future ancillary provision improvements.
- ◀ Support clubs with plans to increase membership so that growth can be maximised.

## **Athletics tracks**

### **Assessment Report summary**

- ◀ **Although there is sufficient quantitative supply of athletics facilities in principle, issues with accessibility and quality results mean that current supply cannot meet demand.**
- ◀ **As a result of quality issues, the Forest of Dean Athletics Club is searching for a suitable location where it could create a new home site.**
- ◀ There is one formal athletics track in the Forest of Dean, located at Five Acres High School. The track has a cinder surface and is in poor condition and no longer fit for purpose.
- ◀ Changing and toilet facilities onsite are also in poor condition.
- ◀ One athletics club is based in the District, Forest of Dean Athletic Club. The Club has approximately 270 members and is based at Five Acres High School. It previously utilised the track six days a week although now is only able to access the track four hours a week. The Club aspires to increase its overall participation to 300 members.
- ◀ In the Forest of Dean, three different Park Run events are held each week. The events are accommodated at Lydney Boating Lake, Mallards Pike and the Coverham Enclosure.
- ◀ Sport England's Segmentation Tool enables analysis of 'the percentage of adults that would like to participate in athletics but 'are not currently doing so'. The tool identifies latent demand amounting to 1,774 people within the Forest of Dean.

## **Scenarios**

### **Retaining athletics facilities**

The track at Five Acres High School is a key strategic facility for athletics in the Forest of Dean. Forest of Dean Athletic Club is the main user of the site and operates a membership of circa 270. The Club hopes to grow to around 300 members but reports many of its high performing junior members leave for larger clubs in the region due to a lack of suitable facilities at Five Acres High School.

Currently, the Club is without a throwing cage so can only provide shotput and javelin training and whilst it owns high jump mats and has access to long jump and triple jump pits, run up areas are not suitable to support these events. The track was previously utilised by the Club six days a week but following new management of the School, this has fallen to just four hours due to a rise in the cost of hire.

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Given the demand generated by the Club, there is a need to protect the existing 400m track at Five Acres High School and improve its quality to allow for sustained usage for both current and future users. Further to this, a long-term tenure agreement between the Club and the School should be pursued and support should be provided to ensure adequate facilities are available on site.

England Athletics has adopted UKA's strategic position of concentrating on preserving and improving the existing stock of 400m tracks rather than seeking to build additional ones. However, there are areas in the country where journey time to the nearest full size outdoor track is longer than ideal, and there are places where good coaching has created significant demand despite the lack of a local athletics facility.

The Compact Athletics concept is intended to fill this gap, providing training facilities in places where there is insufficient demand, funding or land to accommodate a full-size track. A Compact Athletics facility can take a number of forms, but essentially provides a strip of synthetic track plus some capacity for jumps and throws, enabling core athletic skills to be taught, enjoyed and developed.

Consultation with the Club indicated that a compact athletics facility would not be sufficient for its use so if a resolution to the quality and access issues at Five Acres High School cannot be resolved, the Forest of Dean Athletic Club should be supported to provide a new 400m track with supporting facilities in the District.

### ***Recommendations***

- ◀ Protect the athletics track and associated facilities.
- ◀ Work with Five Acres High School and Forest of Dean Athletic Club to resolve quality and access issues. If this cannot be resolved, support the Club to provide a new track in the District.
- ◀ Continue to increase participation both within affiliated clubs and the wider running market, signposting potential club members from the likes of Parkrun events and other health initiatives.

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## PART 5: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategic recommendations for the Strategy have been developed via a 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 outdoor sports facilities and may not be specific to just one sport.

### OBJECTIVE 1

To **protect** the existing supply of outdoor sports facilities where it is needed to meet current and future needs.

#### Recommendations:

- a. Ensure, through the use of the Playing Pitch Strategy, that outdoor sports facilities are 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 there is a need to do so.

**Recommendation (a) – Ensure, through the use of the Playing Pitch Strategy, that outdoor sports facilities are protected through the implementation of local planning policy.**

The PPS Assessment shows that all currently used outdoor sports sites require protection or replacement and therefore cannot be deemed surplus to requirements because of shortfalls now and in the future. Disused, underused and poor quality sites should also be protected from development or replaced as there is a requirement for playing field land to meet the identified shortfalls. Therefore, based on the outcomes of the PPS, local planning policy should reflect this situation.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraph 99 states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

Should outdoor sports facilities be taken out of use for any reason (e.g. District 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, or unless replacement provision is provided to an equal or greater quantity and quality.

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Although there are identified shortfalls of match equivalent sessions, most demand is currently being met and most shortfalls are likely able to be addressed through quality improvements. Including the need for additional facilities in the Local Plan is therefore not recommended as a priority, except in the case of where there is significant housing growth. Housing growth is tested as scenarios for notable allocations in Part 7 of this report.

The PPS should be used to help inform Development Management decisions that affect existing or new outdoor sports facilities and ancillary facilities. 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 playing fields and will use the PPS to help assess that planning application against its Playing Fields Policy<sup>11</sup>.

Sport England's Playing Fields Policy exception E1 only allows for development of disused playing fields if a Playing Pitch Strategy (in this case PPS) shows a clear excess in the quantity of playing pitch provision at present and in the future across all playing pitch sport types and sizes.

### *Policy Exception E1:*

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

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

### *Policy Exception E2*

'The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field and does not affect the quantity and quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use'.

### *Policy Exception E3*

'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 quality.
- ◀ Result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site.
- ◀ Prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site'.

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<sup>11</sup>[https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport#playing\\_fields\\_policy](https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport#playing_fields_policy)

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## *Policy Exception E4:*

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

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

## *Policy Exception E5*

'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 of use, of the area of playing field'.

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. A disused site is a playing field which is not currently being used at all by any users and is not available for community hire either.

Any disused playing fields are included within the Action Plan together with a recommendation in relation to bringing the site back into use or to mitigate the loss on a replacement site to address the shortfalls identified.

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

Several education and dual-use sites are being used in the Forest of Dean for competitive play, predominately for football or hockey. In some cases, use of pitches has been classified as secure, however, use is not necessarily formalised and further work should be carried out to ensure an appropriate community use agreement is in place (including access to changing provision where required).

For the remaining providers, National Governing Bodies, Sport England and other appropriate bodies such as 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 District 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.

As a significant proportion of playing pitch sites are managed by Parish or Town councils, private owners or sports clubs, the District Council may need to support clubs and NGBs in developing relationships with these providers and to establish formal community use agreements.

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## *Alternative management models*

The Council should explore possible alternative options for the future management of some sites within its playing field portfolio, including leasehold or Community Asset Transfer (CAT). Potential benefits of this include reducing costs to the District Council which may allow for the retention and possible improvement of other retained sites within the portfolio, as well as potentially opening up new routes to improvement of sites and access to external funding opportunities through club-led management models.

Local sports clubs should be supported by partners including the District Council and National Governing Bodies 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. All clubs could be encouraged to look at different management models such as registering as Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC)<sup>12</sup>. They should also be encouraged to work with partners locally – such as volunteer support agencies or local businesses.

## *Long-term leasehold*

The District Council should explore opportunities where security of tenure could be granted via lease agreements (minimum 25 years as recommended by Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport) so clubs are in a position to apply for external funding. This is particularly the case at poor quality sites, possibly with inadequate ancillary facilities, so that quality can be improved and sites developed.

For clubs with leaseholds 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 clubs attract funding for site developments. Any club with less than 25 years remaining on an agreement is unlikely to meet conditions of grants funded by external partners.

In addition, clubs should be made fully aware of the associated responsibilities/liabilities when considering leases of multi-use public playing fields. It is important in these instances that the site, to some degree, remains available for other purposes or for other users.

## *Community Asset Transfer*

Another way of ensuring long term tenure for clubs is through a Community Asset Transfer (CAT). This is the transfer of management and/or ownership of public land and buildings from its owner (usually a local authority) to a community organisation (such as a Development Trust, a Community Interest Company or a social enterprise) for less than market value – to achieve a local social, economic or environmental benefit.

Community based organisations are often much more effective at engaging people than other types of organisation because they are close to and directly accountable to their community.

Communities that come together to plan and deliver services can make them more inclusive and responsive than state run services. Communities can mobilise a lot of volunteer time and energy. Asset transfer can, for example:

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/cascbenefits>

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- ◀ Help local authorities meet policy objectives.
- ◀ Make better use of underused assets.
- ◀ Open and increase opportunities for clubs/organisations to access grant funding for which local authorities cannot apply (e.g. Football Foundation Grass Maintenance Fund).
- ◀ Improve assets through increased time and resource (both financial and volunteer) than what the local authority may be able to contribute.
- ◀ Give sports clubs and community organisations more security and sustainability and help transition clubs away from being funding dependent. Opens opportunities to revenue generation and greater self-dependence.
- ◀ Enable people to protect the assets in their communities – including iconic heritage buildings and open spaces. Reducing costs to the local authority and protection against further budgetary cuts.
- ◀ Involve people in designing and running the services from which, they benefit.
- ◀ Be a catalyst for getting people more involved as volunteers.
- ◀ Keep money in the local economy through enterprise and locally owned assets.

The Sport England Community Sport Asset Transfer Toolkit is a bespoke, interactive web based tool that provides a step by step guide through each stage of the asset transfer process should this be an option for the Council to consider. It can be accessed here: <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/community-assets-and-rights>

### **Recommendation (c) - Maximise community use of education facilities where there is a need to do so.**

In order to maximise community use of education facilities it is recommended to establish a coherent, structured relationship with schools. The ability to access good facilities within the local community is vital to any sports organisation, yet many clubs struggle to find good quality places to play and train. Pricing policies at facilities can be a barrier to access but also physical access and resistance from schools to open up provision due to staffing, site security or to protect the quality of facilities for school use.

A number of sporting facilities are located on education sites and making these available to sports clubs can offer significant benefits to both the school/college and the local clubs. The Council and other key partners must work with schools and colleges to develop an understanding of the issues that restrict or affect community access. Support should be provided, where appropriate, to address any underlying problems.

The highest priority sites for securing formal community access arrangements should be those schools which already have community use but do not have secured community use arrangements. These already provide an important role in meeting community needs but this must be secured to ensure continued use into the future. Where appropriate, it will be important for schools to negotiate and sign formal and long-term agreements that secure community use.

As aforementioned, National Governing Bodies and Sport England can often help to negotiate and engage with schools where the local authority 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.



# FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## OBJECTIVE 2

To **enhance** outdoor sports provision and ancillary 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 increase pitch quality and these are explored below.

#### ***GMA Pitch Advisory Service***

With quality of grass pitches becoming one of the biggest influences on participation, the Pitch Advisory Service (PAS, formerly the Grounds and Natural Turf Improvement Programme) was launched in 2014 and is funded by the GMA and its partners; the Football Foundation, Sport England, FA, ECB, RFU and RFL.

Its aim is to raise the standards of sports surfaces as well as the understanding of sports turf management practices among grassroots clubs across England and Wales. The PAS provides an enhanced network of support and expertise available to those maintaining natural turf pitches, particularly at a local level.

The service can be utilised by grassroots clubs, organisations and local authorities with the simple aim of improving the quality of grass pitches. The key principles behind the service are to provide members of the programme with advice/practical solutions via a report which will also identify the key enhanced maintenance works required along with machinery requirements.

For football, Pitch providers are encouraged to complete a self-assessment of pitches using the Football Foundation PitchPower tool, whilst for other sports a site visit in person may be undertaken by a GMA Pitch Advisor.

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 (PQS) assessment. The Performance Quality Standard Assessment assesses a cricket square to ascertain whether it meets the standards that are benchmarked by the Ground Management Association.

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## *Football Foundation PitchPower Assessment*

The Premier League, The FA and the Football Foundation are increasing efforts to improve the quality of grass pitches in England with the launch of the PitchPower app. Launched in 2020 alongside the Football Foundation Pitch Preparation Fund, The app is a new digital self-assessment tool to allow reports and recommendations to be made more quickly and easily once submitted for review by GMA regional pitch advisors.

The tool across mobile app and desktop is open to access by all providers, for example clubs, schools and local authorities. Following a PitchPower Assessment Report, organisations can work towards the recommended dedicated maintenance regime identified to improve the quality of their pitches.

## *Football Foundation Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund*

Eligible clubs and organisations can also utilise the report as an evidence base to acquire potential funding streams, for example, to obtain the required maintenance equipment. If a PitchPower assessment categorises pitches as 'poor' or 'basic' they are then eligible to apply for Grass Pitch Funding through the Football Foundation through the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund<sup>13</sup>, a fund offering six-year tapered grants to help clubs enhance or sustain the quality of their grass pitches. The fund is a key part of the Football Foundation's Grass Pitch Improvement Programme - an ambition to deliver 20,000 quality grass pitches by 2030. Clubs with good or standard quality pitches can also apply for a lower level of funding.

All applicants must have the required security of tenure and have received a PitchPower Pitch Assessment Report, with the fund currently open to football clubs, leagues, National League System Clubs at Steps 1-6 and charities (with an annual turnover of under £500,000). Local authorities are not currently eligible applicants, however, clubs, leagues and charitable organisations using local authority sites can apply provided they have security of tenure.

The District Council is not presently eligible to access the GPMF as an applicant, however, can undertake technical assessment of pitches using the PitchPower app. Opportunities to access the fund to support presently Council managed sites include establishment of a service level agreement with a resident club for maintenance responsibilities, or transfer of long-term management to the club/organisation through leasehold or CAT, both enabling the club/organisation to apply to the fund.

Furthermore, the Football Foundation also launched a new Groundskeeping Community online platform in 2019 which provides a resource of expert advice for grounds staff, enabling them to connect with peers, discover new tips and tricks and share advice on best industry practice. Users can seek guidance from the GMA regional pitch advisors, who are available to answer questions and update members on changes to industry standards.

## ***Addressing quality issues***

Where facilities are assessed as standard or poor quality and/or 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 pitch quality. Ensuring continuance of existing maintenance of good quality sites is also essential.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/grant/grass-pitch-maintenance-fund>

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It is also important to note the impact the weather has on quality. The worse the weather, the poorer facilities tend to become, especially if there is no dedicated drainage system in place or if existing drainage systems are inadequate or have become compromised or poorly maintained. 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). The Strategy approach to outdoor sports facilities achieving these standards should be to enhance quality and therefore the planning system should seek to protect them.

For the purposes of quality assessments, the PPS refers to outdoor sports facilities and ancillary facilities separately as being of 'Good', 'Standard' or 'Poor' quality. For example, some good quality sites 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 pitches that have, for example, good grass cover, an even surface, are free from vandalism and litter. For rugby union, a good quality pitch is also pipe and/or slit drained. In terms of ancillary facilities, good quality refers to access for disabled people, sufficient provision for referees, juniors/women/girls and appropriate provision of showers, toilets and car parking.

Standard quality refers to pitches that have, for example, adequate grass cover, minimal signs of wear and tear and goalposts 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, pitches will have inadequate natural drainage. In terms of ancillary facilities, poor quality refers to inappropriate changing rooms with no showers, no running water and/or old, dated interiors. 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. Also, key sites without a suitable offer may not be able to establish or grow participation in key sport development areas with specific requirements, such as disability or women and girls' sport.

In order to prioritise investment into key sites it is recommended that the steering group works up a list of criteria, relevant to the Forest of Dean, to provide a steer on future investment.

For improvement/replacement of artificial grass pitches refer to Sport England and National Governing Bodies 'Selecting the Right Artificial Surface for Hockey, Football, and Rugby Union' document for a guide as to suitable artificial grass pitch surfaces: <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/outdoor-surfaces>

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## Addressing overplay

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 non-technical site assessment) and allocating a usage limit to each (daily for hockey, weekly for football, rugby league and rugby union and seasonal for cricket).

The FA, RFU, RFL and ECB all recommend a number of matches that pitches should be able to accommodate based on quality, as seen in the table below. For other grass pitch sports, no guidelines are set by the National Governing Bodies although it can be assumed that a similar trend should be followed.

*Table 5.1: Recommended carrying capacity of grass pitches*

Sport	Pitch type	Number of matches		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week
Rugby union	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Rugby union	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

For non-pitch sports (e.g. bowls, tennis, athletics) there are no capacity recommendations set out by the respective National Governing Bodies of Sport. Instead, potential capacity is evaluated on a site-by-site basis following consultation and site assessments.

It is imperative to engage with clubs to ensure that sites are not played beyond their capacity. Play 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 grass pitches or to sites not currently available for community use but which may be in the future.

For cricket, an increase in the usage of non-turf pitches is key to alleviating overplay as this allows for the transfer of junior demand (some senior play where permitted by local leagues) from grass wickets, this should be undertaken in-situ of quality improvements to a cricket square to improve the quality which in turn will increase carrying capacity.

For rugby union, additional sports lighting can help reduce some of the overplay on a pitch by pitch basis as it allows training demand to be spread across a greater number of pitches or unmarked areas. However, this is on the basis that there are enough pitches or unmarked training areas on a site to make this feasible, which is not always the case.

Alternatively, access to World Rugby compliant 3G pitches will help the transfer of midweek training demand and competitive match play which in turn will reduce the pressure on grass pitches. There are competing demands for access to 3G pitches from football and both rugby codes and there is no capacity amongst existing use. Consequently, there is case to explore increased compliance of 3G pitches to help meet rugby needs from both codes.

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## ***Increasing maintenance***

Standard or poor grass pitch quality may not just be a result of draining poorly. In some instances, ensuring there is an appropriate maintenance for the level/standard of play can help to improve quality and therefore increase pitch capacity. Each National Governing Body of Sport can provide assistance with reviewing pitch maintenance regimes.

The Pitch Advisory Service has been developed in partnership with the Grounds Management Association (GMA) to establish 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 also aims to focus on developing improved maintenance programmes with local authorities that can be utilised at local authority maintained sites.

## ***Improving changing provision***

There is a need to address changing provision at some sites in the Forest of Dean (these are detailed in the Action Plan). As previously mentioned, 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 example both the Action Plan and Forest of Dean LFFP identify a need for a new or improved changing room facilities at Five Acres to service improved and expanded provision planned for the site.

Sites which predominantly accommodate adult and/or older junior age group sports should be prioritised for improvements, whilst there is a trend for younger junior age groups (particularly for football) not to require use of changing provision, with suitable male and female toilet provision for players and spectators considered to be of greater importance.

## **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 District Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of playing pitch 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 District Council, should ensure that appropriate funding secured for improved sports provision are directed to areas of need, underpinned by a robust strategy for improvement in outdoor sports 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 Steering Group.

Although some investment in new provision will not be made by the District Council directly, it is important that it seeks to direct and lead a strategic and co-ordinated approach to facility development by education sites, National Governing Bodies, Parish and Town Councils, sports clubs and the commercial sector to address community needs whilst avoiding duplication of provision.

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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 health and wellbeing, for example. 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.

For playing pitches, the District Council should use Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator as a tool for determining developer contributions linking to sites within the locality.

This uses team information from the Assessment Report to determine how many new teams would be generated from an increase in population derived from housing growth. It then converts this into pitch requirements and gives the associated costs (both for providing the provision and for its lifecycle).

The PPS should be used to help determine the likely impact of a new development on demand and the capacity of existing sites in the area, and whether there is a need for improvements to increase capacity of existing provision or if new provision is required. Where a development is located within access of existing high-quality provision, this does not necessarily mean that there is no need for further provision or improvement to existing provision, as additional demand arising from the development is likely to result in increased usage (which can result in overplay or quality deterioration). Please refer to Part 7: Housing Growth Scenarios for more detail.

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. To determine what supply of provision is provided, it is imperative that the PPS findings are taken into consideration and that consultation takes place with the relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport. This is due to the importance of ensuring that the stock of facilities provided is correct to avoid provision becoming unsustainable and unused, such as single grass pitch football sites without adequate ancillary facilities or new cricket/rugby grounds located away from existing clubs. Instead, multi-pitch and multi-sport sites should be developed, supported by a clubhouse and adequate parking facilities which consider the potential for future artificial grass pitch development.

Several planning policy objectives could 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/CIL 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.
- ◀ Contributions should also be secured towards the first ten years of maintenance on new pitches. National Governing Bodies 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 and its subsequent maintenance.
- ◀ Where new multiple pitches are provided, appropriate changing rooms and associated car parking should be located onsite.
- ◀ All new or improved outdoor sports facilities on school sites should be subject to community use agreements.

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## OBJECTIVE 3

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

### Recommendations:

- h. Identify opportunities to add to the overall stock to accommodate both current and future demand.
- i. Rectify quantitative shortfalls through the current stock.
- j. Consider opportunities to meet the need of community demand for playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities through new and proposed education facilities.

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

The Steering Group should use the Action Plan within this Strategy for improvements to the Council's own outdoor sports facilities whilst recognising the need to support partners. The Action Plan lists improvements to be made to each site focused upon both qualitative and quantitative improvements as appropriate for each area.

Although there are identified shortfalls of match equivalent sessions, most current and future demand is currently being met and most shortfalls 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 where there is significant housing growth, or where sites fall out of use and require mitigation.

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

The District 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 3) as well as the following Action Plan (Part 6).

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

- ◀ Improving quality in order to improve the capacity to accommodate more demand
- ◀ Transferring demand from overplayed sites to sites with spare capacity
- ◀ Securing long term community use at school sites including those currently unavailable

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

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

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

Sport	Future sports development trend	Strategy impact
Football	Demand for adult male 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 consider pitch reconfiguration to accommodate youth 11v11 football. Qualitative improvements.
	Demand for mini and youth football is likely to increase based on team generation rates 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 3G testing.
	The FA's strategy for Women's and Girls' football, Inspiring Positive Change (2020-2024), was released in October 2020. One of the major goals of the new strategy will be to encourage early participation from primary school and for 90% of schools in England to become part of the FA Girls' Football School Partnerships network.	Demand for grass pitches and 3G pitches is likely to increase. Demand for football pitch provision in school settings.
	Greater focus on the growth of non-formalised recreational and informal football participation.	Increased use of public access sites for informal play. Need to incorporate capacity for small sided play within 3G pitch programmes.
Third generation (3G) artificial grass pitches	Demand for 3G pitches for football is high and will continue to increase as currently there is a shortfall of full size pitches. 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 community use agreements 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/National Governing Body guidance on choosing the correct surface. Develop additional World Rugby and RFL Community Standard compliant pitches to help reduce capacity shortfalls for both rugby codes.
Cricket	Except for at grounds identified as poor quality, ECB predicts further growth in cricket demand for pitch use over the next few years.	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.



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Sport	Future sports development trend	Strategy impact
Cricket	<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. Increasing numbers of those children are continuing to play cricket as they get older so junior numbers are increasing within clubs.</p> <p>Dynamos Cricket is the ECB national programme for 8-11 year old. It builds on the core principles of All Stars Cricket and participants will continue to develop skills and be introduced to a countdown style of cricket.</p>	<p>Greater usage of outfields 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>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, it is expected that there will be a rise in demand which will lead to a higher demand for pitches and midweek training 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. 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 pitches with sports lighting to support training and match play demand.</p>
Hockey	<p>Current playing level in the District is likely to increase with growth achievable anticipated by England Hockey.</p>	<p>Ensure continued access to all sand-based artificial grass pitches to best accommodate current demand and ensure sinking funds are in place for long-term sustainability.</p> <p>Ensure that no AGP to 3G pitch conversions take place that are detrimental to hockey.</p> <p>Develop additional hockey AGPs to meet capacity shortfalls in the District.</p>
	<p>High profile events (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>New England Hockey initiative, Hockey Heroes (aimed at growing participation for under 10s).</p>	<p>Ensure that existing facilities can accommodate additional future demand.</p>

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Sport	Future sports development trend	Strategy impact
Rugby league	RFL is working towards growing rugby league participation including through growth at junior clubs, Play Touch RL and 9 aside RL. Expected future increase in participation as a legacy of the Rugby League World Cup (RLWC) to be held in the UK in 2021.	A need to improve pitch quality and address overplay within shared settings with rugby union. Seek access to 3G pitches for training, Play Touch and grass pitches for 9 aside. Opportunities to support growth in participation through investment in facilities as part of CreatedBy, the RLWC2021 Capital Grants Programme.
Bowls	No expected net increase in memberships.	Likely that any future increase could be accommodated on existing greens.
Tennis	The LTA has a key priority for the strategic development and growth of tennis at both club and wider community level such as local parks.	Increases in participation can be accommodated through providing additional courts with sports lighting. An increase in casual play can be encouraged through adopting LTA initiatives such as digital access systems.
Athletics	Membership is expected to remain static.	Ensure membership stays above 200 to ensure that track facilities are sustainable.
	Focus on retention of existing 400m track facilities where viable, with funding opportunities for compact or innovative athletics facilities.	A need to ensure track quality is sustained and repairs, cleaning and eventual replacement is planned and budgeted for.

### **Recommendation (j) - Consider opportunities to meet the need of community demand for playing pitches through new and proposed education facilities.**

The District Council and its relevant education partners should consider how the creation of new school facilities in the Forest of Dean can meet the needs of community sport. New facilities (and particularly those in major new residential developments) may provide opportunities to address shortfalls for grass playing pitches which have been identified in the PPS.

As detailed in Recommendation B, to maximise community use of education facilities it is recommended to establish a coherent, structured relationship with schools. The ability to access good facilities within the local community is vital to any sports organisation, yet many clubs struggle to find good quality places to play and train. Securing the use of new school facilities through a formal community use agreement (secured through planning permission) therefore provides a platform for local sports organisations to securely access facilities and may also work to address identified shortfalls.

The PPS should be used as a baseline to inform the facility mix of playing pitches at any new school developments in the District (in line with consultation with the National Governing Bodies of Sport) to ensure that both community and educational needs are provided for.

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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 covers the whole of the District.

The Council should make it a high priority to work with National Governing Bodies and other partners to comprise a priority list of actions based on local priorities, National Governing Body priorities and available funding. 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 outdoor facility sites and associated provision.

The identification of sites is based on their strategic importance within the Forest of Dean District i.e. they accommodate the majority of demand, or the recommended action has the greatest anticipated impact on addressing shortfalls (identified either on a sport-by-sport basis or across the District as a whole).

*Table 6.1: Proposed tiered site criteria*

Criteria	Hub sites	Key centres	Local sites
<b>Site location</b>	Strategically located within the District. Priority sites for National Governing Bodies of Sport.	Strategically located within the District.	Serves the local community.
<b>Site layout</b>	Accommodates three or more grass pitches, including provision of an artificial grass pitch.	Accommodates two or more grass pitches.	Accommodates one or more pitches.
<b>Type of sport</b>	Single or multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision.
<b>Management</b>	Management control remains within the local authority/other provider or with an appropriate lease arrangement through a committee or education owned.	Management control remains within the local authority/provider or with an appropriate club on a lease arrangement.	Management control remains within the local authority/provider or with an appropriate club on a lease arrangement.
<b>Maintenance regime</b>	Maintenance regime aligns with National Governing Bodies guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns with National Governing Bodies guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime either by the club or in house maintenance contract.
<b>Ancillary facilities</b>	Good quality ancillary facility onsite, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	No changing room access on site or appropriate access to accommodate both senior and junior use concurrently (if required).

Hub sites are of strategic 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

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the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the issues identified in the assessment.

Key centres are more community focused sites, although some are still likely to service a wider travel to play area. There may be more of a focus on a specific sport.

Additionally, it is considered that some financial investment may be necessary to improve the ancillary facilities at both hub sites and key centre sites to complement the pitches in terms of access, flexibility (i.e. single-sex changing if necessary), quality and 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. The level of priority attached to them for external investment may be relatively low.

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.

Some local sites may be suitable for rationalisation providing that capital receipts are allocated to replace the lost provision at larger, multi-pitch sites.

## **Management and development**

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

- ◀ Financial viability.
- ◀ Security of tenure.
- ◀ 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.
- ◀ 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 hub sites.
- ◀ Football investment programme/ third generation artificial grass pitch development with the FA and Football Foundation.

## **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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## **Priority**

Though 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).

The majority of key centres are a medium priority, have local 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 £50,000
- ◀ (M) – Medium: £50,000 - £250,000
- ◀ (H) – High: £250,000 or more

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.

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**ACTION PLAN**

**North Area**

Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
19	Dymock Cricket Club	6	Cricket	Sports Club	There is one good quality square with 12 grass wickets. Square quality has recently improved thanks to the grounds team spending more time on maintenance. However, the site still suffers from dog fouling. The square is currently played to capacity.	Ensure a dedicated maintenance regime is in place to sustain square quality. Explore the feasibility of providing a non-turf pitch on site to ensure future demand can be accommodated on site.	ECB/GCF Sports Club	Local site	L	S	L	Protect Provide
24	Freedom Leisure Newent (Newent Community High School)	6	Football	School	Two poor quality adult football pitches of which one is overmarked with a 9v9 pitch. Available and used by community clubs. Site drains poorly and games have also been called off due to the goals on site not being the correct height. The site is overplayed by one MES per week.	Undertake PitchPower assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay. Replace goalposts with compliant sizes to ensure suitability for both community and school use.	FF/GFA ECB/GCF EH Trust	Hub site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
			Rugby Union	Two senior rugby union pitches of poor (M0/D1) quality. The pitches are available for community use but suffer from unsecure tenure and are played to capacity through curricular demand.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime for curricular demand.	L			L	L		
			Cricket	A standalone non-turf pitch of standard quality.	Sustain wicket quality through dedicated maintenance regime.							
			Hockey AGP	Full size hockey pitch with sports lighting, available for community use. Sand filled surface of standard quality. The pitch was resurfaced in 2013 and so is approaching the end of its lifespan. Sports lighting is also said to need improvement. Used by Newent HC.	Protect the AGP and retain in the long-term for hockey use. Formally secure long-term tenure for Newent HC at this site and ensure that hockey demand and needs can be met here for the future. Resurface the pitch as a hockey suitable surface to meet current and future demand for hockey at this site and replace sports lighting bulbs with new LED bulbs. Ensure the provider has in place a mechanism for future sustainability, such as a sinking fund formed over time, is in place for repair and resurfacing when necessary.	M			S-M	H		

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
31	Hartpury College	7	Football	University College	Four good quality adult football pitches which are available to the community. Spare capacity is discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA RFU College	Hub site	L	L	L	Protect
			3G pitch		Two full size 3G pitches, both of which have sports lighting and are available to the community. One is on the 3G Register for competitive football match play (FIFA approved), whilst the other is a rugby union build pitch and is World Rugby Reg 22 Compliant. Both are rated as good quality, the football build pitch having been resurfaced and extended to recommended dimensions supported by 2019 Football Foundation grant funding. Pitches are available to the community from 6-10pm Monday to Friday and from 08:30 until 5pm Saturday to Sunday. There is a waiting list for access to the 3G pitches. Central venue location for GFA Vets League.	Sustain pitch quality through a high quality and dedicated maintenance regime. Ensure 3G certification (FIFA and WR) is renewed when required so that the pitches can continue to support use for competitive match play and contact rugby union activity. Ensure the provider has in place a mechanism for future sustainability, such as a sinking fund formed over time (as per Terms and Conditions of Football Foundation grant funding), is in place for repair and resurfacing when necessary.						
			Rugby Union		Four standard (M1/D1) quality senior rugby union pitches that are unavailable for community use. One pitch has sports lighting.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.						
32	Huntley Recreation Ground	6	Football	Parish Council	One poor quality adult pitch which is overplayed by 0.5 MES per week. Huntley FC has been unable to undertake the required maintenance to improve quality due to Parish Council restrictions.	Undertake PitchPower assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay.	FF/GFA Parish Council	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
35	Longhope Recreation Ground	7	Football	Community	One standard quality football pitch with actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA LTA Community	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
			Tennis		One tennis court of standard quality which is overmarked by netball courts. Court has no sports lighting and is mainly for summer use.	Sustain court quality through dedicated maintenance regime.						
43	Newent Recreation Ground	6	Rugby Union	Town Council	There are two senior pitches of poor (M0/D1) quality and a grass training area with sports lighting. The pitches are overplayed by 0.5 MES per week due to Newent RFC's match demand.	Undertake GMA Pitch Advisory Service assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay.	RFU Town Council	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
44	Newent Town AFC	6	Football	Sports Club	One good quality pitch that is played to capacity at peak times. Newent Town FC has plans in place to extend its clubhouse at Newent Town AFC.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Consider the feasibility of extending ancillary provision on site.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect Provide
48	Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton	7	Football	Community	Staunton & Corse FC would like to purchase land surrounding their current site at Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton to create a second pitch, although the Club believes additional changing facilities would also have to be constructed to facilitate this. An adult pitch overlaps a cricket outfield. Pitch quality was historically poor but Staunton & Corse FC received a maintenance grant in 2020 for maintenance equipment to improve. Pitch quality has now improved and is rated as standard, although the site still drains poorly. The pitch is played to capacity at peak times.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Support Staunton & Corse FC to create a second pitch.	FF/GFA ECB/GCF Community	Local site	L	M	M-H	Protect Provide
			Cricket		There is one good quality square which accommodates for 13 grass wickets and one non turf wicket. Corse and Staunton CC is currently looking and fundraising for a second square, ideally close to its current home site (Queen Elizabeth II Playing Field Corse & Staunton). The square has no additional capacity.							
50	Redmarley Cricket Club	5	Cricket	Sports Club	There is one good quality square with 16 wickets. Spare capacity on Sundays for senior cricket and weekdays for junior cricket.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	ECB/GCF Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
51	Redmarley Playing Fields	5	Football	Parish Council	There are two standard pitches which are currently unused, providing two MES per week of actual spare capacity.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Look to relocate some demand to the site to alleviate overplay from other pitches in the area.	FF/GFA LTA Parish Council	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide
			Tennis		Two standard quality macadam tennis courts that are available to the community but without sports lighting. Redmarley TC aspires to install sports lighting on site and planning permission has been secured for this. Changing facilities are said to be in poor condition.							
64	Stockings Field	6	Cricket	Sports Club	There is one good quality square which accommodates for 14 grass wickets. Potential spare capacity on Sunday for senior cricket and Midweek for junior cricket.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	ECB/GCF LTA Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
			Tennis		Two macadam courts of standard quality which have sports lighting and available for community use. Used by Aston Ingham TC.							



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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
65	Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall	6	Football	Community	There is one standard pitch which is currently unused and so has actual spare capacity.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Look to relocate some demand to the site to alleviate overplay from other pitches in the area.	FF/GFA ECB/GCF LTA Community	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide
			Cricket		There is one good quality square that accommodates for six wickets. It is currently unused. There is potential spare capacity throughout the week for both senior and junior cricket.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Look to relocate some demand to the site to alleviate overplay from other pitches in the area.						
			Tennis		Two poor quality macadam tennis courts that are available for community use but are without sports lighting. Taynton and Tibberton TC indicates court quality has deteriorated due to weathering and the age of the court. The Club believes it could attract more members if the courts on site had sports lighting.	Improve court quality through enhanced maintenance and/or resurfacing. Explore the feasibility of providing sports lighting on site.			M	S	M-H	
66	The Federation Of Newent Schools (Glebe Infant & Picklenash Junior)	6	Football	Education Trust	A mini 7v7 and a mini 5v5 pitch although the site is used for youth 9v9 football which overlaps both pitches. Both these pitches are good quality and played to capacity at peak times.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA School	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
71	Westbury-On-Severn Parish Hall	5	Football	Parish Council	There is one standard quality pitch with actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA ECB/GCF Parish Council	Local site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance
			Cricket		There is one good quality cricket quare which accommodates ten grass wickets. Westbury on Severn CC reports the outfield at Westbury-on-Severn Parish Hall has poor land drainage, particularly at the bottom edge of the playing field. It is reported that it is too costly for the Parish Council to rectify. The square has capacity for additional play on Sundays and midweek.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of rectifying drainage issues on site.						
73	Westbury-On-Severn Rugby Football Club Ltd	5	Rugby Union	Sports Club	There are two standard (M1/D1) quality senior pitches available for community use, as well as a training area with sports lighting. Used for senior men's matches. Capacity for additional use including at peak time.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	RFU Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
82	Newent Cricket Club	6	Cricket	Sports Club	There are two good quality squares that accommodate 16 and four grass wickets respectively. The smaller square is supported by a non-turf pitch. Newent CC states the top ground at Newent Cricket Club needs a larger outfield whilst there is rabbit damage to the outfield of both squares.  The main square is played to capacity whilst the second square has additional capacity for all cricket formats.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	ECB/GCF Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
84	Huntley Cricket Club	6	Cricket	Sports Club	There is one good quality square that accommodates for eight grass wickets. Huntley Cricket Club indicates demand for non-turf pitches to be installed at the venue, it also states a need for a mobile net cage. There is overplay by ten match equivalent sessions.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of providing a non-turf pitch and training facilities on site.	ECB/GCF Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
87	Mill Meadow	6	Cricket	Sports Club	There is one standard square accommodating for six grass wickets. There is potential spare capacity throughout the week for both senior and junior cricket.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	ECB/GCF Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect

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**Central Area**

Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
2	Aylburton Village Playing Field	5	Cricket	Sport Club	An adult football pitch was previously marked on site although this was replaced by a cricket square between 2014 and 2017 according to aerial imagery. A single set of goalposts remains on site for informal and recreational football. There is one good quality square which accommodates for eight grass wickets and is currently unused.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Look to relocate some demand to the site to alleviate overplay from other squares in the area.	ECB/GCF Sports Club	Local site	M	S	L	Protect
3	Bathurst Park	7	Football	Trust	One adult and one youth 11v11 pitch, both of standard quality. Pitches have actual spare capacity of one and 0.5 MES per week respectively.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Look to relocate some demand to the site to alleviate overplay from other squares in the area.	FF/GFA RFU ECB/GCF BE LTA Trust	Key centre	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
			Rugby Union		There is one poor quality (M0/D1) mini pitch. Used for mini matches and training by Lydney RFC. Some capacity for additional use exists but not at peak time. The site is located on a floodplain and which all flood significantly in times of consistent and heavy rainfall. The site last flooded from the River Severn in Winter and Spring in 2020 which left the entire local area under deep water.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime.			L	L	L	
			Cricket		There is one good quality cricket square which accommodates for eight grass wickets. The square is currently unused so there is actual spare capacity for both senior and junior cricket.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Look to relocate some demand to the site to alleviate overplay from other squares in the area.			M	S	L	
			Bowls		There is one good quality bowling green. Lydney BC indicates that the rinks at Bathurst Park have recently been re-marked although this needs re-doing in order to have the correct playing surface. Lydney BC states ancillary provision at Bathurst Park is of good quality. It aspires to provide shelters on the green to protect players from sun and rain.	Sustain green quality through dedicated maintenance regime.			L	L	L	
			Tennis		There are two poor quality macadam courts which are available for community use but without sports lighting.	Resurface, paint & gate access courts to provide a sustainable site.						
5	Beavis Memorial Ground	3	Rugby Union	Sport Club	There is one good (M2/D1) quality pitch that is used by Cinderford RFC which plays at National 1 in the RFU rugby union league system, the RFU reports that Cinderford RFC is restricted in terms of pitch space. Ancillary provision on site is in good condition although there is a need to repair sports lighting on site. The pitch is played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of replacing sports lighting on site.	RFU Sports Club	Local site	L	M	L	Protect Enhance

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
6	Bells Hotel & Golf Club	3	Bowls	Private	There is one good quality bowling green used by Royal Forest of Dean BC.	Sustain green quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	BE Private	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
8	Berry Hill RFC	6	Rugby Union	Sport Club	Berry Hill RFC have four poor (M0/D1) quality pitches (one senior pitch and three mini pitches). Area with partial sports lighting also marked with mini pitches. All pitches on site are overplayed.	Undertake GMA Pitch Advisory Service assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay.	RFU Sports Club	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
9	Blakeney Recreation Field	4	Football	Parish Council	There is one standard quality pitch that is played to capacity at peak times. The site drains poorly.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA Parish Council	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
10	Bream Cricket Club	7	Cricket	Sport Club	There is one standard quality green which accommodates for five grass wickets. There is actual spare capacity for senior cricket on a Sunday and junior cricket Midweek. Changing facilities at Bream Cricket Club are said to be in poor condition, planning permission has been granted for a new pavilion on site. A planning application for a stand and ball-stop netting has been submitted. The pitch and changing rooms on site have been under gradual development for the past 20 years. Aerial imagery indicates that part of the outfield (including the football pitch on site) was excavated between 2014 and 2017. This land has now been replaced and Bream Amateurs FC hope to return to the site for the 2021/22 season if funds allow.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Support the Club to provide a new pavilion, stand and ball-stop netting on site.	ECB/GCF FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	M	S	H	Protect Provide
			Football		Bream Amateurs FC vacated the site due to persistent flooding. The Club hopes to return to the site from the 2021/22 season. The pitch and changing rooms on site have been under gradual development for the past 20 years. Aerial imagery indicates that part of the outfield (including the football pitch on site) was excavated between 2014 and 2017. This land has now been replaced and Bream Amateurs FC hope to return to the site for the 2021/22 season if funds allow.	Ensure pitches are re-provided on site.			M	S	L	

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
11	Bream RFC	7	Rugby Union	Sport Club	There are two poor (M0/D1) quality senior pitches which have actual spare capacity of one MES per week. Pitches are overmarked for the use of rugby union pitches for rugby league by Gloucester All Golds Rugby League Club and for football by Lydney U8s football team. Bream RFC was granted planning permission in October 2020 for the development of a new clubhouse, to be constructed to low carbon and environmentally sustainable design. The Club states that it plans to use the soil from the groundworks to level more playing areas across the site. There is a grass training area with sports lighting located between pitches. Bream hopes that the development of better facilities onsite will help to attract more players to the Club.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime. Support the Club to provide improved ancillary facilities on site.	RFU Sports Club	Local site	M	M	H	Protect Enhance Provide
12	Broadwell Amateurs Football Club	4	Football	Sport Club	There is one good quality pitch that is played to capacity at peak time. The Club indicates it is working with the Football Foundation to improve the pitch on site following a PIP/PitchPower assessment. It has received a grant from the Football Foundation for a new car parking area and a hard standing area around the ground. The Club is now looking to construct a stand and install sports lighting to meet Step 6 ground grading requirements as well as improving catering facilities on site.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Support the Club to improve ancillary provision and meet ground grading requirements.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	M	M	H	Protect Provide
13	Causeway Ground	3	Football	Sport Club	There is one standard quality pitch, quality issues restrict further play. Cinderford Town FC is working with The Forest High School and a local housing association in an attempt to sell the Causeway Ground for residential and social housing. This would see the Club move onto The Forest High School's site to construct a community hub with a 3G stadia pitch that would have the facilities for Step 3 football. It is looking to attract part funding from the Football Foundation to facilitate this development. The pitch has no topsoil and therefore cannot accommodate a lot of demand and requires constant work to keep in playable condition. The pitch also drains poorly. Ancillary provision is very poor, the roof is damaged and changing rooms and stands are said to be very dated.	Support the Club to rectify pitch and ancillary quality issues on site or support the Club's relocation.	FF/GFA Sports Club School	Local site	H	M	H	Protect Enhance Provide

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
14	Clearwell Recreation Ground	6	Football	Parish Council	There is one standard pitch which is overplayed by one MES per week. The pitch is a youth 11v11 pitch overmarked with a youth 9v9 pitch.	Undertake PitchPower assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay.	FF/GFA Parish Council	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
15	Coalway Recreation Ground	3	Football	Town Council	There is one standard quality pitch which is played to capacity at peak time.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA Town Council	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
16	Collingwood Skatepark	4	Football	District Council	Disused site, previously marked with one youth 11v11 pitch with space for a mini pitch. Site suffers from wild boar damage. Since allocated for the development of a new hospital.	Should a proposal come forward for development of the site for alternative use, ensure that appropriate mitigating provision is able to meet Sport England Playing Fields Policy and secured for the benefit of community sport.	FF/GFA FODDC	Local site	-	-	-	Protect
17	Dene Magna School	8	Football	Education	Two standard quality adult pitches. Spare capacity has been discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Look to formalise a community use agreement to provide security of tenure.	FF/GFA RFU ECB/GCF LTA School	Local site	L	L	L	Protect Enhance Provide
			Rugby Union		There are two poor (M0/D1) quality senior pitches. The rugby union pitches share outfield area with non-turf cricket pitches. The pitches are played to capacity through curricular use.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime.						
			Cricket		Two standalone non-turf pitches which are deemed to be in poor condition. Moss is growing on the wickets and signs of wear and tear are evident.	Look to replace to non-turf pitches to service curricular demand.						
			Tennis		There are three standard macadam courts without sports lighting that are available for community use.	Sustain court quality through dedicated maintenance regime and develop clear offer to public.						

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
18	Drybrook RFC	6	Rugby Union	Sport Club	<p>There are five pitches, one good (M2/D1) quality senior pitch, one standard (M1/D1) quality senior pitch, one standard (M1/D1) quality junior pitch and two standard (M1/D1) quality mini pitches.</p> <p>Drybrook RFC has four separate changing rooms, with portacabins purchased for additional changing. These have two changing rooms but the Club is planning to remove them due to poor quality and lack of use. The Club deems changing rooms insufficient to suitably service current teams if there are three home games being held at the same time.</p> <p>The junior training pitch with sports lighting is overplayed by eight MES per week whilst the standard quality senior pitch is overplayed by 0.5 MES per week. The mini pitches are played to capacity and the good quality pitch is played to capacity at peak time.</p> <p>Drybrook RFC has previously shown aspiration for development of a full size World Rugby compliant pitch in place of one of the natural turf rugby union pitches at Drybrook RFC.</p>	<p>Undertake GMA Pitch Advisory Service assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality.</p> <p>Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay.</p> <p>Support the Club to expand changing provision on site.</p> <p>Explore the feasibility of installing an artificial surface on site to alleviate overplay of the training pitch.</p>	RFU Sport Club	Key centre	H	L	H	Protect Enhance Provide
21	Ellwood Football Club	6	Football	Sport Club	An adult pitch overmarked with a mini 7v7 pitch. Ellwood FC wants to fence the perimeter of the ground at Ellwood Football Club. The pitch is good quality but is overplayed by one MES per week.	<p>Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.</p> <p>Look to relocate some demand away from the site to alleviate overplay.</p>	FF/GFA Sport Club	Local site	M	S	L	Protect
22	English Bicknor Playing Fields	7	Football	Community Organisation	There is one standard adult pitch that is played to capacity at peak time. English Bicknor FC has concerns with the tenure agreement regarding the ancillary provision on site.	<p>Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.</p> <p>Support the Club to rectify tenure concerns on site.</p>	FF/GFA Community	Local site	M	S	L	Protect

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
23	Five Acres	6	Football	Parish Council	<p>One youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch, both of standard quality although reported to drain poorly. The youth 9v9 pitch has 0.5 MES of actual spare capacity whilst the mini pitch is played to capacity at peak times.</p> <p>The site and former College building is planned for a new £9m leisure and community facility, supported by funding secured through the government Levelling Up Fund.</p> <p>The ground floor plans include a gym, changing facilities, office and meeting space and a central cafe. The first floor includes further office and meeting space, a multi-function community room and two dance studios. Further multi-function rooms are planned for the second floor, along with two learning space for Hartpury University and College.</p> <p>Existing hard sports courts at the site will also be retained and upgraded, potentially with a sand based surface to act as a multi-sport facility.</p> <p>Phase two of the development includes the building of a new four-court sports hall, a 3G pitch and cycle hub, planned for completion by the end of 2023. The Council is considering making the 3G pitch World Rugby compliant.</p> <p>Future plans include the development of a hotel, to be located near the sports hall and parking areas.</p>	<p>Undertake feasibility to develop a new 3G pitch onsite to meet identified shortfalls for affiliated team training in the Central Area.</p> <p>Ensure any new 3G pitch is compliant and 3G Registered for use for competitive football match play and maximise use for matches.</p> <p>Explore opportunity for inclusion of shock pad and World Rugby Reg 22 compliancy for rugby union activity to help alleviate shortfalls, including at Berry Hill RFC adjacent.</p> <p>Ensure the provider has in place a mechanism for future sustainability, such as a sinking fund formed over time, is in place for repair and resurfacing when necessary.</p>	FODDC Parish Council FF/GFA RFU LTA	Key Centre (potential hub site)	H	S-M	H	Protect Enhance Provide
			Rugby Union		<p>There is one poor quality (M0/D1) mini rugby union pitch. Used by neighboring Berry Hill RFC for mini matches and training on Sunday mornings. The Club uses the mini pitch onsite via informal agreement and therefore has unsecure tenure for continued long term use of the site.</p>	<p>Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime.</p> <p>Look to formalise a community use agreement to provide security of tenure.</p>			L	L	L	
			Tennis		<p>Three standard quality macadam tennis courts that have sports lighting and available for community use.</p> <p>As part of the phase one developments on site, the courts will be upgraded.</p>	<p>Improve court quality in line with wider site development and develop clear community offer.</p>			M	S-M	M	



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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
27	Freedom Leisure Cinderford (The Forest High School)	3	Tennis	Leisure Trust/ School	sports lighting These courts are also overmarked with netball courts.	Sustain court quality through dedicated maintenance regime for curricular use.	FF/GFA LTA Trust Sports Club	Key Centre	L	L	L	Protect Enhance Provide
			Football		One poor quality youth 11v11 pitch which is currently overplayed by one MES per week. Cinderford Town FC is working with The Forest High School and a local housing association in an attempt to sell the Causeway Ground for residential and social housing. This would see the Club move onto The Forest High School's site to construct a community hub with a 3G stadia pitch that would have the facilities for Step 3 football. It is looking to attract part funding from the Football Foundation to facilitate this development.	Undertake PitchPower assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay. Support the Club to rectify pitch and ancillary quality issues at the Causeway Ground or support the Club's relocation to the School.			H	M	H	
			3G pitch	Sports Club	Full size 3G pitch with sports lighting of poor quality. The pitch is not on the 3G Register, meaning it cannot be used for competitive matches. Previously managed by Freedom Leisure but Cinderford Town Youth FC has since taken over management of the pitch via long-term lease. Cinderford Town Youth FC aspires to resurface the pitch but reports the cost as prohibitive and any costs would be shared with the SGS Academy Trust which manages the School. The pitch was initially supported by Football Foundation grant funding awarded in 2005 for a new 3G pitch and changing room.	Resurface the pitch to ensure it's continued suitability and safety for use. Once resurfaced, undertake performance testing and ensure inclusion on the 3G Register so that the pitch can support use for competitive match play. Ensure the club has in place a mechanism for future sustainability, such as a sinking fund formed over time (as per Terms and Conditions of Football Foundation grant funding), is in place for repair and resurfacing when necessary.			H	S	H	

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
28	Freedom Leisure Lydney (The Dean Academy Lydney)	7	Hockey AGP	Leisure Trust/ Academy	Full size hockey pitch with sports lighting. Sand dressed and standard quality. It was resurfaced in 2011 and has been reportedly poorly maintained. The Dean Academy Lydney is solely responsible for all revenue repairs and maintenance, including but not limited to carpet brushing, line marking, perimeter fencing and gates. The cost of replacing the bulbs shall be split equally between the Academy and Freedom Leisure. There is currently no sinking fund in place for future refurbishment of this pitch.	Protect the AGP and retain in the long-term for hockey use. Formally secure long-term tenure for Lydney HC at this site and ensure that hockey demand and needs can be met here for the future. Resurface the pitch as a hockey suitable surface to meet current and future demand for hockey at this site. Ensure the provider has in place a mechanism for future sustainability, such as a sinking fund formed over time, is in place for repair and resurfacing when necessary.	Academy Leisure Trust Sports club	Key centre (potential hub site)	M	S-M	H	Protect Enhance Provide
			3G pitch		Identified as a potential location for a new full size 3G pitch. Existing site user Lydney Town Youth FC is working with The Dean Academy School to explore a potential full size 3G project, additional to the existing sand based AGP. The School is reportedly willing to contribute the required land in exchange for day time access to the pitch. Potential to link into existing community use model operated by Freedom Leisure on behalf of the District Council, or for an alternative club-led model.	Undertake feasibility to develop a new 3G pitch onsite to meet identified shortfalls for affiliated team training in the Central Area. Ensure any capacity released on the hockey AGP through the relocation of football demand to 3G is firstly offered to Lydney HC to meet hockey needs and facilitate growth in participation. Ensure any new 3G pitch is compliant and 3G Registered for use for competitive football match play and maximise use for matches. Ensure the provider has in place a mechanism for future sustainability, such as a sinking fund formed over time, is in place for repair and resurfacing when necessary.			H	S	H	
29	Harrow Hill A.F.C.	6	Football	Sport Club	There are two standard adult pitches with actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week. Gloucestershire FA indicates the changing facilities at Harrow Hill AFC are subsiding and panels have been placed across the walls to hold the building up. A new clubhouse is deemed to be required on site.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Support the Club to provide new ancillary provision on site.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	H	S	M-H	Protect Provide
33	King George V Playing Fields (Coleford)	4	Football	Town Council	There are two standard adult pitches with actual spare capacity of one MES per week.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Ensure capacity on site is fully utilised to alleviate overplay of other pitches in the area.	FF/GFA BE Town Council	Local site	M	S	L	Protect
			Bowls		There is one bowling green rated at standard quality due to signs of wear, the prevalence of litter/leaf fall etc. on the green and only adequate ditches and boards surrounding the playing surface. The green is used by Coleford BC.	Sustain green quality through dedicated maintenance regime.			L	L	L	

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
34	Littledean Recreation Ground	6	Football	Parish Council	There is one standard quality youth 11v11 pitch which is currently unused.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Ensure capacity on site is fully utilised to alleviate overplay of other pitches in the area.	FF/GFA Parish Council	Local site	M	S	L	Protect
36	Lydbrook Recreation Ground	6	Football	Community Organisation	One adult pitch which was previously used by Lydbrook Athletic. The Club has since relocated to Reeds Ground and the pitch now lies disused.	The site should be protected from development until all demand is met (unless adequately re-provided elsewhere in accordance with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy), as there is potential need for playing field land to accommodate more pitches to meet the identified shortfalls.	FF/GFA Community Organisation	Local site	-	-	-	Protect
37	Lydney Recreation Ground	3	Football	Trust	There is an adult pitch, a youth 11v11 pitch, a youth 9v9 pitch and a mini 7v7 pitch, all of standard quality. The youth pitches are played to capacity whilst the adult and mini pitches are played to capacity at peak time.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA RFU ECB/GCF LTA Trust	Key centre	L	L	L	Protect Enhance Provide
			Rugby Union		There is one senior pitch that is poor (M0/D1) quality. The site sits on a floodplain. There is also a grass training area with sports lighting.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime.						
			Cricket		There is one standard cricket square which accommodates three grass wickets. There is potential for spare capacity for senior cricket on a Sunday and junior cricket Midweek.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.						
			Tennis		There are four macadam courts with sports lighting, of good quality. The courts were fully resurfaced in 2021 through a loan from the LTA. The LTA reports that the next step for these courts is to open them up for pay and play through the Clubspark initiative as stipulated within the LTA's loan agreement. Lydney TC also has plans to replace the fencing surrounding the courts onsite.	Sustain court quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Ensure Clubspark is implemented on site to support recreational demand.						
38	Lydney Rugby Club	3	Rugby Union	Sport Club	There is one senior pitch which is standard (M1/D1) quality, with sports lighting. The site is located on a floodplain. The pitch is played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	RFU Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
40	Milkwall Football Club	8	Football	Sport Club	There is a good adult pitch that is played to capacity at peak time. The Club has plans to improve changing facilities on site.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of improving changing facilities on site.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
41	Miners Welfare Playing Fields (Cinderford)	1	Football	Town Council	A poor quality youth 9v9 pitch although the site is also used for adult football which overlaps the youth pitch. The pitch is overplayed by 2.5 MES per week. The pitches are marked out using cones due to a lack of pitch markings as well as enabling the club to save money.	Undertake PitchPower assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay.	FF/GFA Town Council	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
42	Mitcheldean Playing Fields	8	Football	Sports Club	There is one standard adult pitch which is overplayed by 0.5 MES per week. There is another mini 7v7 pitch which is standard quality and played to capacity at peak time. The adult pitch is overmarked with a 9v9 youth pitch.	Undertake PitchPower assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
45	Newnham Recreation Ground	4	Football	Parish Council	There is one standard quality adult pitch which has actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Ensure capacity on site is fully utilised to alleviate overplay of other pitches in the area.	FF/GFA LTA Parish Council	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
			Tennis		There is one poor quality macadam court which is available for community use but without sports lighting.	Improve court quality through enhanced maintenance regime & develop clear community offer.			L	L	L	
49	Redbrook Rovers Football Club	6	Football	Sport Club	The pitch is a standard quality and is played to capacity at peak times. It is said to be below minimum size and is without sports lighting meaning the Club cannot be promoted any further. Redbrook Rovers FC reports changing facilities at Redbrook Rovers Football Club have been built as an extension to the neighbouring village hall. The Club only rents these facilities from the village hall and whilst they are considered to be of adequate quality, the changing rooms are said to be small.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of extending the pitch and providing sports lighting on site to meet ground grading requirements.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	M	S	M	Protect Enhance
52	Reeds Ground	6	Football	Sport Club	There is one standard adult pitch that is played to capacity at peak time.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
54	Ruardean Hill Recreation Ground	7	Football	Community	There is one good quality adult pitch that is played to capacity at peak time. Ruardean Hill Rangers FC is looking to add a new youth pitch and a training area at Ruardean Hill Recreation Ground.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of providing additional match and training space on site.	FF/GFA Community	Local site	L	L	L	Protect Provide

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
54	Ruardean Hill Recreation Ground	7	Cricket	Community	There is one good quality cricket square that accommodates for eight grass wickets and one non-turf pitch. There is potential spare capacity for senior cricket on a Sunday and junior cricket Midweek.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	Community ECB/GCF	Local site	L	L	L	Protect Provide
55	Ruardean Memorial Ground	4	Football	Community	There is one standard youth 11v11 pitch with actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Ensure capacity on site is fully utilised to alleviate overplay of other pitches in the area.	FF/GFA Community	Local site	M	S	L	Protect
56	Ruspidge Field	6	Football	Trust	There is one standard adult pitch with actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week. The site drains poorly.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA Trust	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
58	Sling Recreation Ground	6	Football	Parish Council	There is one standard adult pitch which is currently unused.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Ensure capacity on site is fully utilised to alleviate overplay of other pitches in the area.	FF/GFA Parish Council	Local site	M	S	L	Protect
59	Soudley Recreation Ground	6	Football	Parish Council	There is one good quality adult pitch that is played to capacity at peak time.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA Parish Council	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
61	St Whites Primary School	5	Football	School	There is one standard mini 7v7 pitch that is available for community use. Spare capacity is discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Look to formalise community use agreement to provide security of tenure.	FF/GFA School	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
62	St. John's Cricket Ground	4	Football	Sport Club	There is one standard mini 7v7 pitch with actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week. There is one standard youth 9v9 pitch that is played to capacity at peak time. There is a third pitch that is a standard youth 11v11 pitch that has actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week. All pitches on site overlap a cricket outfield.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA ECB/GCF Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
			Cricket		There is one good quality square that accommodates for 11 grass wickets. Even though this site is assessed as good quality the outfield drains poorly. There is potential spare capacity for senior cricket on Sunday and junior cricket Midweek.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.						
63	Steam Mills Recreation Ground	4	Football	Town Council	There is one standard adult pitch that is played to capacity, however there is room for another pitch. The site suffers from wild boar damage and drains poorly. Rank Outsiders AFC only has a verbal agreement in place for the use of the ground. Ancillary facilities are rated as poor quality.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of providing an additional pitch on site. Explore the feasibility of improving changing facilities on site. Support the Club to secure a tenure agreement for the site.	FF/GFA Town Council	Local site	M	M	M-H	Protect Enhance Provide

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
63	Steam Mills Recreation Ground	4	Bowls	Town Council	There is one good quality bowling green. Cinderford BC reports it has recently installed a new green at Steam Mills Recreation Ground which is currently bedding in and requires some time to do so before it can be used. Cinderford BC indicates ancillary provision at Steam Mills Recreation Ground is in poor condition. The clubhouse is said to be outdated due to a lack of investment in recent years. There are no catering or bar facilities and to ensure the clubhouse is COVID safe, an internal changing room had to be removed to make more space.	Sustain green quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Explore the feasibility of improving ancillary provision on site.	BE Town Council	Local site	M	M	M-H	Protect Enhance Provide
70	Viney St Swithins Sports & Social Club	7	Football	Sport Club	There is one standard adult pitch that is overplayed by 0.5 MES per week.	Undertake PitchPower assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
74	Whitcroft Recreation Ground	7	Football	Sport Club	There are two standard adult pitches that have actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
76	Worrall Hill Recreation Ground	6	Football	Community Organisation	There is one standard adult pitch that is played to capacity at peak time.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FA FF/GFA Community	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
77	Yorkley Community Centre	5	Football	Sport Club	There is one standard adult pitch that is played to capacity at peak time.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
79	Valley Road Recreation Ground (Cinderford RFC)	1	Rugby Union	Sport Club	There is one poor quality (M0/D1) senior pitch without sports lighting. It is overplayed by 0.5 MES per week. Cinderford RFC states the site is on a significant slope and is subject to damage from wild boars.	Undertake GMA Pitch Advisory Service assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay.	RFU Council	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance
81	Five Acres High School	6	Football	School	There are three standard football pitches, one youth 11v11 pitch that is played to capacity at peak time, one youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch that have spare capacity discounted due to unsecure tenure. The site drains poorly. The site is identified for pitch quality improvements in the LFFP.	Improve pitch quality through enhanced maintenance regime in line with LFFP recommendations. Look to formalise community use agreement to provide security of tenure.	EA School	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide

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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
81	Five Acres High School	6	Athletics	School	<p>The athletics track has a cinder surface and is adjudged as being in poor condition and reported to no longer be fit for purpose.</p> <p>The Club previously accessed the track for six days a week but since new management took over the site, it is now only able to afford to utilise the track for four hours a week. It has no security of tenure on site.</p> <p>Changing and toilet facilities at Five Acres High School are also reported to be in poor condition. The Club owns three portacabins across the road from the track which function as the clubhouse and additional storage space for Forest of Dean AC. These portacabins are also old but in adequate condition and sufficient for the Club's needs in the short-term.</p>	<p>Improve track quality through resurfacing and work with the Club and School to formalise an increased access agreement.</p> <p>If this is not possible, support the Club to create a new site within the Forest of Dean.</p>	FF/GFA School	Local site	H	M	H	Protect Enhance Provide
83	Parkend Cricket Club	7	Cricket	Sports Club	There is one good quality square that accommodates six grass wickets. There is spare capacity for senior cricket on a Sunday.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	ECB/GCF Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
85	Newnham On Severn Cricket Club	4	Cricket	Sports Club	There is one standard quality square that accommodates seven grass wickets and one non-turf pitch. The playing surface was damaged by a recent sheep incursion.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	ECB/GCF Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
86	Lydney Cricket Club	3	Cricket	Sport Club	There is one good quality square that accommodates 15 grass wickets. Lydney CC aspires to expand the clubhouse at Lydney Cricket Club in order to relocate the bar area and provide the players with their own balcony. A tea/lounge area would replace the previous bar area and the extended facility would also be used as a secondary function area. The Club is also due to begin construction of a floodproof machinery store in the immediate future. The square has spare capacity for Sunday and midweek cricket.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	ECB/GCF Sports Club	Local site	L	L	L	Protect

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**South Area**

Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim
1	Alvington Playing Fields	5	Football	Parish Council	There is one standard adult pitch with actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week. There is demand for a changing pavilion to be constructed on site for which some funding has already been provided by the ECB.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Support the development of ancillary provision on site.	FF/GFA ECB Parish Council	Local site	M	M	M	Protect Provide
			Cricket		There is one good quality square that accommodates for seven grass wickets. The square has spare capacity for all forms of cricket. Alvington and Woolaston CC may require support to improve ancillary provision at Alvington Playing Fields. Some funding has already been provided towards this development from the ECB.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Support the development of ancillary provision on site.						
4	Beachley Barracks	7	Football	MOD	There is one standard adult football pitch that is played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA RFU MOD	Local site	L	L	L	Protect
			Rugby Union		There is one poor (M0/D1) quality senior pitch. Used only by military personnel onsite. Likely to be played to capacity by private use.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime for military use.						
25	Freedom Leisure Sedbury (Wyedean School & Sixth Form)	7	Football	Leisure Trust/ School	There are two standard quality youth 11v11 pitches that are currently unused. Listed in the LFFP for a small size 3G pitch development.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime. Ensure capacity on site is fully utilised to alleviate overplay of other pitches in the area. Explore the feasibility of providing a 3G pitch on site in line with LFFP recommendations.	FF/GFA RFU ECB LTA Trust	Local site	M	S	H	Protect Enhance Provide
			Rugby Union		There is one senior pitch and two junior pitches, all of poor (M0/D1) quality and played to capacity through curricular use.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime for curricular demand.			L	L	L	
			Cricket		One standalone non-turf pitch which is deemed to be in poor condition. Moss is growing on the wickets and signs of wear and tear are evident.	Improve wicket quality through replacement for curricular use.						
			Tennis		There are seven poor quality macadam courts which are available to the community but without sports lighting. These courts are overmarked with netball courts.	Improve court quality through dedicated maintenance regime for curricular demand & develop clear community offer.						



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Site ID	Site	IMD 10% bands (1 = most deprived)	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales	Cost	Aim			
60	St Briavels Recreation Ground	6	Football	Community	There is one standard adult pitch overmarked with a mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitch. The pitch is overplayed by 0.5 MES per week.	Undertake PitchPower assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay.	FF/GFA ECB LTA Community	Local site	M	S	L	Protect Enhance			
			Cricket		There is one good quality cricket square that accommodates six grass wickets. There is potential spare capacity for senior cricket on Sunday and junior cricket Midweek.	Sustain square quality through dedicated maintenance regime.							L	L	L
			Tennis		There is one poor quality macadam court which is available for community use but without sports lighting. Supported by good quality ancillary provision.	Improve court quality through dedicated maintenance regime & develop clear community offer.									
68	Tidenham Recreation Ground	8	Football	Trust	There is one standard adult pitch with actual spare capacity of 0.5 MES per week. Tidenham FC received a maintenance grant to support with improved drainage and promote grass growth. It has also purchased a ride on mower to support with maintenance.	Sustain pitch quality through dedicated maintenance regime.	FF/GFA Trust	Local site	L	L	L	Protect			
69	Tutshill CE Primary School	8	Football	Education	There is one mini 7v7 pitch that is standard quality. Spare capacity is discounted due to unsecure tenure.	Sustain pitch quality for curricular use.	FF/GFA School	Local site	L	L	L	Protect			
75	Woolaston Recreation Ground	7	Football	Sports Club	There is one poor adult pitch that is overplayed by 2.5 MES per week. Site suffers from mole and rabbit damage. Woolaston AFC are working with the Woolaston Hall Committee on a new pavilion project on site.	Undertake PitchPower assessment to develop a programme of technical recommendations to support the improvement of pitch quality. Improve pitch quality through improved quality and frequency of maintenance, in line with technical recommendations, to increase carrying capacity and reduce overplay. Support the Club to improve ancillary provision on site.	FF/GFA Sports Club	Local site	H	S	L	Protect Enhance			

# FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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## PART 7: HOUSING GROWTH SCENARIOS

The Playing Pitch Strategy provides an estimate of demand for pitch sport based on population forecasts and club consultation to 2041 (in line with the New Local Plan period). This future demand is translated into teams likely to be generated, rather than actual pitch provision required. The Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) 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. This is achieved via team generation rates in the Assessment Report to determine how many new teams would be generated from an increase in population derived from housing growth and gives the associated costs of supplying the increased pitch provision.

The scenarios below show the additional demand for pitch sports generated from housing growth over the Local Plan period. The demand is shown in match equivalent sessions per week for most sports, except for cricket, where match equivalent sessions are by season. Training demand is expressed in either hours or match equivalent sessions. Where expressed in hours, it is expected that demand will be to either a third generation artificial grass pitch (to accommodate football demand) or an artificial grass pitch (to accommodate hockey demand). Where expressed in match equivalent sessions, it is expected training will take place on grass pitches with sports lighting.

The indicative figures assume that population growth will average 2.3 per dwelling (based on the national average occupancy rate).

The scenarios below are examples on how the PPC can be used to understand the potential additional demand for pitch sports from housing growth in addition to potential associated costs. It is recommended that the Council should use the PPC to test further when individual sites as they come forward or as greater details emerge.

Note that the scenarios can also be updated as required over the Local Plan period throughout the lifespan of the PPS to reflect population projections and projections, changes in the housing requirement and change in the average household size.

The number of pitches required in the following tables has been rounded up or down accordingly, however, capital and revenue costs are based on indicative pitch costs, proportionate to the total match equivalent sessions required rather than just whole pitches required. Though increases in match sessions for some sports are not sufficient to warrant the creation of new pitches, the associated costs have been incorporated and investment into alternative sites could instead be considered to increase capacity to accommodate this new demand.

### **New Local Plan Housing Requirement – c6,660 forecasted dwellings**

The New Local Plan identifies a housing delivery requirement of c370 new homes per year. This represents a housing requirement of 6,660 over an 18 year period 2022/23-2040/41, at an average of at least 370 units per annum.

The estimated additional population derived from this level of housing growth from 2022/23-2040/41 is 15,180 (based on 6,660 dwellings being delivered). This population increase equates to 19.04 match equivalent sessions of demand per week for grass pitch sports, 1.2 match equivalent sessions of demand per week on artificial grass pitch for hockey and 112.49 match equivalent sessions of demand per season for cricket.

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Training demand equates to 28.2 hours of use per week for football on 3G pitches and hockey equates to 3.89 hours of use per week on artificial grass pitches. There are also 5.51 match equivalent sessions per week of training for rugby union on a grass pitch with sports lighting.

*Table 7.1: Likely demand for grass pitch sports generated from 6,660 forecasted dwellings*

Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport	
	Match demand (MES) per week <sup>14</sup>	Training demand <sup>15</sup>
Adult football	7.01	28.2 hours
Youth football	4.4	
Mini soccer	2.65	
Rugby union	4.98	5.51
Adult hockey	1.2	3.59 hours
Junior & mixed hockey	0	0.3 hours
Cricket	112.49	-

The table below translates estimated demand into new pitch provision with associated capital and lifecycle costs. The PPC estimates the total capital cost for the anticipated growth across all pitch types would be £586,424 which would require an annual lifecycle cost of £6,584,071 per annum.

*Table 7.2: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision*

Pitch type	Estimated demand and costs for new provision				
	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost <sup>16</sup>	Lifecycle Cost (per annum) <sup>17</sup>	Changing rooms (numbers)	Changing rooms (capital cost)
Adult football	7 (7.01)	£721,988	£152,340	14 (14.02)	£2,490,860
Youth football	4 (4.44)	£365,956	£76,851	6 (5.98)	£1,062,422
Mini soccer	3 (2.65)	£68,228	£14,328	0	£0
Rugby union	5 (4.98)	£717,827	£153,615	10 (9.96)	£1,768,931
Cricket	3 (2.51)	£762,572	£154,039	5 (5.02)	£891,821
Sand based artificial grass pitches	0 (0.3)	£255,786	£7,929	1 (0.6)	£106,321
Third generation artificial grass pitches	1 (0.74)	£760,571	£27,321	1 (1.48)	£263,716

The calculator also estimates that there will be a need to provide 37.06 changing rooms to support the new pitch provision identified in the table above. The total capital cost to deliver this level of provision is estimated to be £3,652,928.

<sup>14</sup> As per the Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance, demand for cricket is considered in terms of match equivalent sessions per season rather than per week.

<sup>15</sup> Hours equate to access to a full size 3G pitch or hockey suitable artificial grass pitch, each with sport lighting

<sup>16</sup> Sport England Facilities Costs Second Quarter 2019 – (<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>)

<sup>17</sup> 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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## *Conclusion*

For the scenario above, the tables above show that through housing growth, demand will be generated for each pitch sport to a lesser or greater extent. The level of demand generated for football, rugby union and cricket is such that new provision will be required.

There is unlikely to be a requirement for new provision for sand based artificial grass pitches for hockey, instead, as the demand generated from the housing growth does not equate to a whole pitch for this sport, contributions would be better focused on improving existing sites to increase capacity to an appropriate level. The PPS and in particular the Action Plan, as well as future consultation with NGBs, should be used to inform this (e.g. to select suitable sites).

The scenario indicates that, over the course of the Local Plan period to 2041, housing growth will result in increased demand equating to the need for at least seven adult, four youth and three mini football pitches, in addition to a full size 3G pitch to meet demand for training (also able to support match play). There would also be demand for at least five senior rugby union pitches and three cricket pitches.

Whilst this initially seems substantial, it must be noted that these figures are based upon the whole of Forest of Dean District and account for 18 years of development. In practice, the requirements will be staggered, with existing provision able to meet some if not all of the needs when developments are considered on a case-by-case basis. This would be achieved through contributions being directed towards improvements rather than new provision.

Experience shows that only significantly large housing sites are likely to generate demand for new provision to be created. 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.

Where demand does not warrant new pitch provision (such as for hockey), contributions should be used to enhance existing provision in the locality through, for example, improving quality or providing new or improved ancillary provision. The Action Plan in this document, as well as consultation with appropriate NGBs, should be used to assist in the selection of suitable sites and suitable enhancements.

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

### ***Delivery***

The PPS provides guidance for maintenance/management decisions and investment made across the Forest of Dean District. By addressing issues identified in the Assessment Report and using the strategic framework presented in this Strategy, the current and future sporting and recreational needs of the District can be met. 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 Strategy 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 important that this document is used in a practical manner, supports engagement with partners and encourages partnerships to be developed, to ensure that outdoor sports facilities are regarded as a vital aspect of community life and which contribute to the achievement of District Council priorities.

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

To help ensure that the PPS 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 to which people and agencies regularly turn to for information in respect of how current demand should be met and what actions are required to improve the situation and meet future demand. To ensure that this is achieved the Steering Group needs to have a clear understanding of how the PPS can be applied and therefore delivered.

The process of PPS development has already led to several benefits that assist its application and delivery. These include enhanced partnership work across different agendas and organisations, pooling of resources along with strengthened relationships and understanding between stakeholders, members of the Steering Group and the sporting community. The drivers behind the PPS and the work to develop the recommendations and Action Plan will have also highlighted, and helped the Steering Group to understand, the key areas to which its influence should be applied and strategy delivered.

Following sign off of the PPS, a short-term Action Plan should be prepared by the Council, in consultation with relevant partners, in order to distil the existing Action Plan and to give the Steering Group a short-term focus. This would then need to be revised through regular meetings.

### ***Monitoring and updating***

It is important that there is regular annual monitoring and review against the actions identified in the Strategy. This 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 PPS has been applied should be a key component of monitoring its delivery and be an on-going role of the Steering Group.

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The Steering Group that takes the PPS forward should be a sub-regional group made up of representatives from the District Council as well as other partners such as the National Governing Bodies of Sport. This offers benefits in terms of joint working on strategic and cross-boundary issues and will also be more efficient in terms of administration when compared to each authority having its own individual Steering Group.

KKP will provide the tools used to produce the PPS to the District Council as well as training on how to use such tools, such as the Playing Pitch Database used to hold all information gathered. This will enable the monitoring and updating process to be carried out.

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 National Governing Bodies will consider the PPS and the information on which it is based to be out of date.

The nature of the supply and in particular the demand for outdoor sports facilities will likely to have changed over the three years. Therefore, without any form of review and update within this time period it would be difficult to make the case that the supply and demand information and assessment work is sufficiently robust.

Ideally the PPS should be reviewed on an annual basis from the date it is formally signed off by the Steering Group. This will help to maintain the momentum and commitment built up during its development. Taking into account the time to develop the PPS this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed.

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

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

Once the PPS is complete, the role of the Steering Group should evolve so that it:

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

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- ◀ Consider how provision for sport be made in new development, where onsite provision is required and how developer contributions are used.

Alongside regular Steering Group meetings, a good way to keep the PPS up to date and maintain relationships is to hold annual sport specific meetings with pitch sport National Governing Bodies and other relevant parties. These could be part of a process of updating key supply and demand information plus, if necessary, amending assessment work, tracking progress in respect of implementing action plan recommendations and highlighting new issues and opportunities.

Meetings could be timed to coincide with annual National Governing Body affiliation processes. This would help to signal changes in the number and nature of sports clubs in the area. Other information that is already collected on a regular basis such as pitch booking records for local authority and other sites should also feed into these meetings.

National Governing Bodies will also be able to confirm any further performance quality assessments undertaken within the study area. Discussion with league secretaries may also indicate annual league meetings may be useful to attend to pick up on specific issues and/or enable a review of the relevant club details to be undertaken.

The Steering Group should regularly review and refresh area by area plans taking account of any improvements in pitch quality (and hence increases in pitch capacity) and also any new negotiations for community use of education sites in the future.

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

### ***Forest of Dean Local Football Facility Plan***

The findings of and any subsequent changes to the PPS should align with the Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) for the Forest of Dean, which will also serve as a live document requiring concurrent management by the Football Foundation in partnership with County FAs and the local authority.


The position for formal and affiliated football provision determined and updated through the PPS should form the basis for investment into formalised football provision echoed through the LFFP, which will further explore opportunities for investment into informal, recreational, small sided and indoor football as an extension of the PPS findings, the result being a wholistic plan for partnership investment into football facilities in the Forest of Dean over the next decade. The PPS and LFFP should demonstrate synergy and should inform each other.

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## Checklist

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

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport>

Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date	Tick 	
	Yes	Requires Attention
<b>Step 9: Apply &amp; deliver the strategy</b>		
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?		
<b>Step 10: Keep the strategy robust &amp; up to date</b>		
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 National Governing Bodies 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 1: SPORTING CONTEXT

The following section outlines a series of national, regional and local policies pertaining to the study and which will have an important influence on the Strategy.

### National context

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

### ***Department of Media Culture and Sport Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation (2015)***

The Government published its strategy for sport in December 2015. This strategy confirms the recognition and understanding that sport makes a positive difference through broader means and that it will help the sector to deliver five simple but fundamental outcomes: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of 23 performance indicators under nine key headings, as follows:

- ◀
- ◀ More people taking part in sport and physical activity.
- ◀ More people volunteering in sport.
- ◀ More people experiencing live sport.
- ◀ Maximising international sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ A more productive sport sector.
- ◀ A more financially and organisationally sustainable sport sector.
- ◀ A more responsible sport sector.

### ***Sport England: Uniting the Movement (2021)***

Sport and physical activity have a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all. From this notion, Sport England has recently released its new strategy, Uniting the Movement, its 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

It seeks to tackle the inequalities long seen in sport and physical activity. Providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important.

There are three key objectives to the Strategy:

- ◀ Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity.
- ◀ Joining forces on five big issues
- ◀ Creating the catalyst for change

In particular, the five big issues are identified where the greatest potential is seen for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity. Each one is a building block that, on its own, would make a difference, but together, could change things profoundly:

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**Recover and reinvent:** Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.

**Connecting communities:** Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.

**Positive experiences for children and young people:** Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.

**Connecting with health and wellbeing:** Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.

**Active environments:** Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

The specific impact of the Strategy will be captured through programmes funded, interventions made, and partnerships forged. For each specific area of action, a set of key performance indicators will be developed. This hybrid approach will help evidence the overall progress being made by all those involved in supporting sport and physical activity.

## **National Planning Policy Framework (amended 2021)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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## ***The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)***

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: *"Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed"*

£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government's shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- ◀ **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches**, with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents'** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses**, linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
- ◀ **Support access to flexible indoor spaces**, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- ◀ **Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision**, recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- ◀ **Support testing of technology and innovation**, building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

## ***Local Football Facility Plans***

To support in delivery of the NFFS, The FA commissioned a national project. Since 2020, every local authority across England has a Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP). Each plan is unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation, including currently underrepresented communities.

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Identifying strategic priorities for football facilities across the formal, recreational and informal game, LFFPs present a ten-year vision for football facilities that aims to transform the playing pitch stock in a sustainable way. They identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. LFFPs guide the allocation of 90% of national football investment (The FA, Premier League and DCMS) and forge stronger partnerships with local stakeholders to develop key sites. This, together with local match-funding will deliver over one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next 10-years.

It is important to recognise that an LFFP is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential investment - it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Therefore, it cannot be used as a replacement for a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and it will not be accepted as an evidence base for site change of use or disposal.

A LFFP will; however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans and may adopt relevant actions from a PPS and/or complement these with additional investment priorities.

### ***The FA: Time for Change Strategy (2020-24)***

The FA launched its new National Game Strategy in January 2021 which aims to 'unite the game and inspire the nation'. It will do this in two ways, by 'changing the game to maximise its impact' and by 'serving the game to deliver football for all'.

To achieve this, the strategy will focus on six Game Changer objectives, to change the fabric of the game and tackle long-term issues, to make the largest possible impact in the years ahead:

- ◀ Win a major tournament
- ◀ Service > two million through a transformed media platform
- ◀ Ensure equal opportunities for every girl
- ◀ Delivery of 5,000 quality pitches
- ◀ A game free of discrimination
- ◀ Maximise the appeal and revenue of the FA cups and BFAWSL

These are underpinned by eight Serve objectives, ensuring maintenance of brilliant business-as-usual services to support the growing and evolving needs of the game:

- ◀ Trusted, progressive regulation and administration
- ◀ Safe and inclusive football pathways and environment
- ◀ Personalised and connected learning experiences
- ◀ Maximum investment into the game
- ◀ Diverse, high-performing workforce and inclusive culture
- ◀ World class venues and events
- ◀ Strong reputation and clear brand identity
- ◀ Technology enabled and insight driven

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## ***England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Inspiring Generations (2020-2024)***

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic plan in 2019. The strategic plan aims to connect communities and improve lives by inspiring people to discover and share their passion for cricket

The plan sets out six important priorities and activities, these are:

- ◀ ***Grow and nurture the core***
  - ◀ Create an infrastructure investment fund for First Class County Clubs (FCCs)
  - ◀ Introduce a new Community Investment Funding for FCCs and County Cricket Boards (CCBs)
  - ◀ Invest in club facilities
  - ◀ Develop the role of National Counties Cricket
  - ◀ Further invest in County Competitions
- ◀ ***Inspire through elite teams***
  - ◀ Increase investment in the county talent pathway
  - ◀ Incentivise the counties to develop England Players
  - ◀ Drive the performance system through technology and innovation
  - ◀ Create heroes and connect them with a new generation of fans
- ◀ ***Make cricket accessible***
  - ◀ Broaden crickets appeal through the New Competition
  - ◀ Create a new digital community for cricket
  - ◀ Install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas
  - ◀ Continue to deliver South Asian Action Plans
  - ◀ Launch a new participation product, linked to the New Competition
- ◀ ***Engage children and young people***
  - ◀ Double cricket participation in primary schools
  - ◀ Deliver a compelling and coordinated recreational playing offer from age five upwards
  - ◀ Develop our safeguarding to promote safe spaces for children and young people
- ◀ ***Transform women's and girls' cricket***
  - ◀ Grow the base through participation and facilities investment
  - ◀ Launch centres of excellence and a new elite domestic structure
  - ◀ Invest in girls' county age group cricket
  - ◀ Deliver a girls' secondary school programme
  - ◀
- ◀ ***Support our communities***
  - ◀ Double the number of volunteers in the game
  - ◀ Create a game-wide approach to Trust and Foundations through the cricket network
  - ◀ Develop a new wave of officials and community coaches
  - ◀ Increase participation in disability cricket

## ***The Rugby Football Union Strategy 2021 Onwards***

Through the strategy, the RFU aims to enrich lives, introduce more people to rugby union and develop the sport for future generations. The goal is to achieve this by strengthening and uniting rugby union in England and producing consistently winning England teams.

Eight key strategic priorities are identified with all investment decisions aligned to these. The strategy also outlines the RFU's core activities which form the backbone of its business operations and services to the game.

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The priorities include four 'Game Objectives' and four 'Driving Objectives' as detailed below.

## Game Objectives:

- ◀ Enjoyment – enable positive player experiences on and off the field
- ◀ Winning England – create the best possible high-performance system for England Rugby
- ◀ Welfare – enhance player welfare to protect and support the wellbeing of players
- ◀ Flourishing rugby communities – support clubs to sustain and grow themselves and to reflect society

## Driving Objectives:

- ◀ Diversity & Inclusion – drive rugby union in England to reflect the diversity of society
- ◀ Understand – build a deep understanding of players, volunteers and fans to shape the future of the game
- ◀ Connect – connect with and grow the rugby community and create exceptional experiences
- ◀ Commercial and operational excellence – ensure a sustainable and efficient business model delivered by an inspired workforce

## **England Hockey Strategy**

England Hockey's Facilities Strategy can be found [here](#). It is presently updating the incumbent strategy, to be completed in 2022.

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

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

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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## ***Rugby Football League Strategic Plan 2015 – 2021***

The RFL's most recent strategy aims to establish rugby league as "a growing sport, available throughout the country, that is recognised as providing positive experience for all participants and spectators, in environments that are welcoming, inclusive, vibrant, safe and comfortable - encouraging people to return again and again, featuring:

- ◀ Financially viable and sustainable professional clubs creating stable employment opportunities, showcasing local, national and international playing talent, and leading the sport's development - and making a difference - in their own communities;
- ◀ Welcoming community clubs, putting players first, offering recreational enjoyment for children and adults alike in a safe and inclusive environment;
- ◀ A central organisation that stands out for excellence, innovation, mutual respect, integrity and inclusion that understands its role in servicing the wider sport;
- ◀ A sports that lives its values in all its decisions and actions.

This vision is underpinned by 13 core principles, including:

- ◀ **An integrated whole sport.** Each constituent part of the sport will have a responsibility to ensure the good health of the entire game;
- ◀ **Return on investment.** Investment will be targeted to ensure the sustainability of member clubs, and growth in the number and quality of players thus seeking an effective return for the game;
- ◀ **Financial parameters.** Financial distributions will be undertaken to ensure the whole of the game will move forward together;
- ◀ **Geographic expansion.** Geographic expansion of the sport should be carried out in a proportionate and sustainable manner.

## ***Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme***

The Rugby League World Cup 2021 will develop a £10 million legacy programme with funds driven into local clubs and community projects. The government investment, delivered by Sport England, is part of RLWC 2021's ambitious plan to grow the sport and make it more visible, engaging and welcoming to current and potential participants.

The funding will be split into large transformational community projects, such as changing room improvements and new artificial grass pitches with the remaining funding used for smaller scale initiatives such as supplying new kit and equipment to promote club and community development. The investment will focus on the following four key areas:

- ◀ Creating welcoming environments
- ◀ Encouraging participation growth
- ◀ Building community engagement
- ◀ Cultivating further investment

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## **British Tennis Strategy 2019**

The new LTA Strategy includes seven strategies relating to three objectives which are built around the following vision and mission:

**Vision:** tennis opened up

**Mission:** to grow tennis by making it relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable

### *Objectives*

- ◀ Increase the number of fans on our database from [623,602] to [1,000,000] by 2023.
- ◀ More people playing more often:
  - ◀ Increase the number of adults playing tennis each year from [7.7% (4,018,600)] of the population to [8.5% (4,420,460)], and the frequency of adults playing tennis twice a month from [1.9% (858,700)] of the population to [2.2% (1,000,000)] by 2023.
- ◀ Increase the number of children playing once a week from 550,000 to 700,000 (7.9% to 10% of the population) by 2023.
- ◀ Enable 5 new players to break into the top 100 by 2023 and inspire the tennis audience.

### *Strategies*

1. Visibility - Broaden relevance and increase visibility of tennis all year round to build engagement and participation with fans and players.
2. Innovation - Innovate in the delivery of tennis to widen its appeal.
3. Investment - Support community facilities and schools to increase the opportunities to play
4. Accessibility - Make the customer journey to playing tennis easier and more accessible for anyone
5. Engagement - Engage and collaborate with everyone involved in delivering tennis in Britain, particularly coaches and volunteers to attract and maintain more people in the game.
6. Performance - Create a pathway for British champions that nurtures a diverse team of players, people and leaders.
7. Leadership - Lead tennis in Britain to the highest standard so it is a safe, welcoming, well-run sport.

## **Bowls England: Strategic Plan 2014-2017**

Although the Plan is out of date, it remains the most up to date available. Bowls England will provide strong leadership and work with its stakeholders to support the development of the sport of bowls in England for this and future generations.

The overall vision of Bowls England is to:

- ◀ Promote the sport of outdoor flat green bowls.
- ◀ Recruit new participants to the sport of outdoor flat green bowls.
- ◀ Retain current and future participants within the sport of flat green bowls.

In order to ensure that this vision is achieved, ten key performance targets have been created, which will underpin the work of Bowls England up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

- ◀ 115,000 individual affiliated members.
- ◀ 1,500 registered coaches.
- ◀ Increase total National Championship entries by 10%.
- ◀ Increase total national competition entries by 10%.



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- ◀ Medal places achieved in 50% of events at the 2016 World Championships.
- ◀ 35 county development plans in place and operational.
- ◀ County development officer appointed by each county association.
- ◀ National membership scheme implemented with 100% uptake by county associations.
- ◀ Secure administrative base for 1st April 2017.
- ◀ Commercial income to increase by 20%.

Despite a recent fall in affiliated members, and a decline in entries into National Championships over the last five years, Bowls England believes that these aims will be attained by following core values. The intention is to:

- ◀ Be progressive.
- ◀ Offer opportunities to participate at national and international level.
- ◀ Work to raise the profile of the sport in support of recruitment and retention.
- ◀ Lead the sport.
- ◀ Support clubs and county associations.

### ***England Athletics Strategic Plan – Athletics & Running: for everyone, forever – 2017 and beyond***

This plan sets out England Athletics' mission, vision and strategic priorities that will direct how they work as an organisation during the coming years: what they do and how they will do it.

**Vision:** Make athletics and running the most inclusive and popular sport in England, led by a network of progressive clubs and organisations and supported by a sustainable, respected and trusted governing body.

For England Athletics to achieve this vision, they will focus on three values:

- Pride – taking pride in their work and demonstrating to athletes that they recognise the importance of their role in bettering athletics.
- Integrity – demonstrate integrity to earn respect and to build effective partnerships.
- Inclusivity – promote inclusivity in all their actions.

**Mission:** To grow opportunities for everyone to experience athletics and running, to enable them to reach their full potential.

In order to achieve their mission, England Athletics will have three strategic priorities.

1. To expand the capacity of the sport by supporting and developing its volunteers and other workforce. The target is to achieve a 6% increase every year of licensed leaders, coaches and officials.
2. To sustain and increase participation and performance levels in our sport. To achieve this, England Athletics' current targets are to increase the number of club registered athletes from (149,000 to 172,000), engage 135,000 people through the RunTogether programme and to increase athlete performance levels across all events and disciplines by 1% every year.
3. To influence participation in the wider athletics market. Their target here is to increase the number of regular athletes or runners by at least one million.

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### ***England Athletics Facility Strategy (2018 – 2025)***

The purpose of this document is to set out our long term vision for athletics facilities in England. Facilities form a vital component of the overall England Athletics strategy.

The development, protection and enhancement of facilities will support our strategic plan and help England Athletics contribute to the delivery of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Sporting Futures: A New Strategy for Sport and Sport England's strategy Towards an Active Nation. Appropriate facilities help to attract and inspire new participants and provide the foundation and focus for a significant proportion of the England Athletics family.

The England Athletics Strategic Plan notes that the sport increasingly needs to become financially sustainable and that a business-like and innovative approach is a vital component of its future success. Facilities are fundamental, but they are also expensive to create and to maintain. The sport therefore faces a significant challenge to develop, improve and maintain facilities, most of which are currently operated and funded by third parties.

This strategy sets out a challenge to all those involved with the delivery of the sport to be innovative and business like in the operation and development of facilities at a time of financial challenge, as it aims "To create an innovative and inspiring network of sustainable athletic facilities, with the capacity to meet both current and future demand across England".