



NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Integrity, Innovation, Inspiration

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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GLOSSARY

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
CSP	County Sports Partnership
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FE	Further Education
FIT	Fields in Trust
FPM	Facilities Planning Model
FTP	Football Turf Pitch
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HE	Higher Education
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
NGB	National Governing Body
NHDC	North Hertfordshire District Council
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RFU	Rugby Football Union
S106	Section 106
TGR	Team Generation Rate
VPWPP	Visits per Week Per Person

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PART 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the Executive Summary of North Hertfordshire's Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) 2015. The Study takes account of:

- ◀ Association Football (football)
- ◀ Hockey
- ◀ Athletics
- ◀ Rugby union
- ◀ Bowls
- ◀ Tennis
- ◀ Cricket
- ◀ Golf

Introduction

The purpose of the PPS is to assess the provision of outdoor pitch and non-pitch facilities across the district of North Hertfordshire in accordance with Sport England's Guidance and to address a range of issues and key challenges that have emerged through the Strategy in partnership with stakeholders.

The Strategy will be used:

- ◀ As the basis for emerging planning policies;
- ◀ To inform the assessment of development proposals that may affect sport and recreational land and buildings;
- ◀ To contribute to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and the implementation of S106 planning obligations and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL);
- ◀ To inform the long-term use, amount, type and location of facilities; and to inform on-going provision and management of facilities;
- ◀ To inform the strategies and action plans of all stakeholders with respect to the facilities that they own or manage or have involvement with.

No one stakeholder, Council, NGB or other body is responsible for delivering the recommendations within the Action Plan associated with the strategy. The strategy aims to provide a clear framework for delivery by working in partnership. In the case of NHDC's actions please refer to the Council's adopted Green Space Management Strategy (GSMS).

The PPS has been developed in partnership with a range of agencies including national governing bodies of sport (NGBs) plus local clubs and leagues, Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, Stevenage Leisure, Herts County Sports Partnership and North Hertfordshire District Council. It will also be influenced by other councils such as Parish and County councils as well as other private providers.

Policy context

The key strategic themes and drivers with regard to outdoor pitch and non-pitch sports in the District of North Hertfordshire are considered to be:

- ◀ Providing a range of accessible and affordable opportunities at sports facilities for all ages, abilities and ethnicities to develop an active, healthy and successful District;
- ◀ Ensure sports facilities are recognised as a key component in the drive to address health inequalities;
- ◀ Provide sports facilities that contribute positively to the local economy, raising the profile of North Hertfordshire as a destination for sport;
- ◀ Ensure sports facilities provide opportunities for talented athletes to achieve their full potential;
- ◀ Provide well maintained and managed sports facilities that are viable and sustainable in the long term.

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Methodology

This Strategy is based on an assessment of playing pitch facilities in accordance with Sport England's PPS Guidance: *An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy*. This methodology has been followed to develop a clear picture of the balance between the local supply of, and demand for, playing pitches and other outdoor sports facilities

Each National Governing Body has a range of policies and strategies which support the development of a PPS strategy in North Hertfordshire; a synopsis of which can be found in the main body of the text.

This study has been developed on the basis of NGB strategic drivers. Consequently there is a sport by sport analysis which addresses key challenges and issues. The agreed vision has been set out to provide a clear focus with desired outcomes for North Hertfordshire's Playing Pitch Strategy:

Vision and strategic challenges

The vision for North Hertfordshire is:

"All partners, subject to available capital and revenue resources, should aim to provide a balanced provision of pitches across the district to meet current and future needs".

The table below identifies key challenges and issues on a sport by sport basis. These have been arrived at by extensive consultation and site visits in accordance with Sport England's methodology.

Sport	Key challenges and issues
Cricket England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Pitch ownership and management is generally considered secure; ◀ Population forecasts indicate potential future growth of at least four men's teams and nine junior boy's teams plus increased demand for women's and girls' cricket; ◀ There is overall spare capacity of cricket pitches within North Hertfordshire although there is a shortfall within the Letchworth & Baldock and District analysis area.
Football The Football Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ There are 150 grass football pitches across 71 sites in North Hertfordshire; ◀ Just over half (55%) of all pitches available to the community are of good quality; ◀ Population increases are likely to result in additional future demand of seven senior teams, 23 youth teams and nine mini teams.
Rugby Union Rugby Football Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ There are four rugby clubs based within North Hertfordshire; ◀ There are 81 competitive rugby union teams within North Hertfordshire; ◀ Population growth (by 2037) is expected to create demand for one additional adult team, four junior teams and ten mini teams; equating to 2 match equivalent sessions per week; ◀ There is evidence to suggest a need for better training venues which could be sourced through investment into current pitches. ◀ Potential move of Stevenage Town RFC to the area shall require careful consideration in the future.

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Sport	Key challenges and issues
Rugby Football League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Protect play for North Herts Crusaders RFL club. ◀ Ensure play is maximised for training and matches at King George V Playing Fields
Hockey England Hockey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ There are three hockey clubs in North Hertfordshire; ◀ There are two full sized sand based AGPs in North Hertfordshire; ◀ Based on 35 adult teams there is a requirement for five full sized AGPs.
Tennis Lawn Tennis Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ There are 114 tennis courts in North Hertfordshire across 48 sites; ◀ In order to capitalise on the good facilities and the aspirations of the clubs to increase participation a Tennis Development Plan could be developed in partnership with the LTA; ◀ The standard of tennis courts is generally high: 40 courts are classed as good, with 56 standard and 18 poor.
Bowls Crown Green Bowls Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ There are 13 flat green bowling greens in North Hertfordshire, servicing 15 clubs; ◀ Of these 11 are good and the remainder standard quality; ◀ Provision of bowling greens is sufficient to accommodate both current and future demand.
Athletics England Athletics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ There are no tracks within North Hertfordshire; ◀ Increase the number of participation running programmes.
Golf England Golf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ There are seven golf courses servicing North Hertfordshire; ◀ All clubs report an intention to increase membership in the future with the exception of Letchworth Golf Club and Tea Green Golf Centre.

Delivering the PPS within the district of North Hertfordshire

As part of the ongoing commitment to the PPS all parties involved should commit to influencing and where possible delivering the objectives set out within the action plan. This will include regular (at least two per year) steering group sessions over the life of the strategy.

Key partners such as the District Council, Parish Councils, NGB's, managing bodies for parks and recreation, education and health should make it a high priority to comprise a priority list of actions based on local priorities (including a year one action plan), NGB priorities and available funding.

North Hertfordshire District Council is a partner within the strategy but in many cases will facilitate the other partners identified to deliver the recommendations.

Many of the actions will be linked to housing growth in terms of funding and site provision where possible, other external sources of funding will also be sought.

The members of the steering group could include the following :

Hertfordshire County Sport Partnership
Hertfordshire Football Association (National Governing Body)
Rugby Football Union (National Governing Body)
England Hockey (National Governing Body)
Rugby Football League (National Governing Body)
England and Wales Cricket Board (National Governing Body)

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England Athletics (National Governing Body)
Sport England
Parish Council representative
Strategic Planning and Project Manager (Council)
Head of Development & Building Control (Council)
Principal Strategic Planning Officer (Council)
Parks & Countryside Development Manager (Council)
Service Manager Grounds Maintenance (Council)

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PART 2: INTRODUCTION

This is the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) for the district of North Hertfordshire. Building upon the preceding Assessment Report, it provides a clear, strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing outdoor sports pitches and ancillary facilities between 2015 and 2025. It also identifies provision for additional facilities to meet increasing demand associated with housing growth over the plan period. The purpose of the PPS is to help prioritise and target resources particularly where resources are limited. The PPS covers the following playing pitches and outdoor pitch sports:

- ◀ Football pitches (grass and third generation turf (3G))
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches
- ◀ Hockey pitches (artificial grass pitches (AGPs))
- ◀ Tennis courts
- ◀ Bowling greens
- ◀ Athletics tracks
- ◀ Golf courses

The strategy is capable of:

- ◀ Providing adequate planning guidance to assess development proposals affecting playing fields, as appropriate, directing open space contributions secured through development and informing and shaping local planning policy.
- ◀ Informing the protection and provision of sports facilities and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and S106 and CIL schedules.
- ◀ Informing land use decisions in respect of future use of existing outdoor sports areas and playing fields (capable of accommodating pitches) across the district;
- ◀ Providing a strategic framework for the provision and management of outdoor sports across the district;
- ◀ Supporting external funding bids and maximise support for outdoor sports facilities;
- ◀ Providing the basis for on-going monitoring and review of the use, distribution, function, quality and accessibility of outdoor sport.
- ◀ Informing on-going provision, maintenance and management of facilities

Structure

The Strategy and Action Plan recommends a number of priority projects for the district, which should aim to be implemented from 2015 to 2025. It provides a framework for improvement and future provision although resources may not currently be in place to implement it, potential partners and possible sources of external funding will be identified.

The recommendations that come out of this strategy may inform local planning policy and can support the local planning evidence base so there is a policy mechanism to support delivery and secure provision/investment where the opportunity arises.

There is a need to build key partnerships between the various levels of Council (County, District and Parish), National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs), Sport England, schools, further education providers, community clubs and private landowners to maintain and improve playing pitch provision. In these instances, the potential for the Council to take a strategic lead is more limited (except through planning applications in terms of Section 106 Agreements/future Community Infrastructure Levy). This document will provide clarity about the way forward, and allow key organisations to focus on the key issues that they can directly influence and achieve subject to available capital and revenue resources.

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Context

North Hertfordshire is a mainly rural district with four towns and a number of villages located throughout the district. The total population of the district, based upon the 2014 Mid-Year Estimates, is 131,000. The Assessment Report provides a district wide assessment of outdoor sports facilities while also taking into account facilities provided in neighbouring authorities like Stevenage and Luton and by others further afield who provide specialised or national level facilities.

The North Hertfordshire District Council Corporate Plan 2016-2021 and North Hertfordshire Partnership Sustainable Communities Strategy 2009-2021 outline the vision for the district.

The vision for the Corporate Plan is 'Making North Hertfordshire a vibrant place to live, work and prosper.' To achieve this are three objectives:

- ◀ to work with our partners to provide an attractive and safe environment for our residents, where diversity is welcomed and the disadvantaged are supported;
- ◀ to promote sustainable growth within our district to ensure economic and social opportunities exist for our communities, whilst remaining mindful of our cultural and physical heritage;
- ◀ and to ensure that the Council delivers cost effective and necessary services to our residents that are responsive to developing need and financial constraints.

The Sustainable Communities Strategy includes themes of;

- ◀ Improving the life chances of children and young people
 - ◀ Improving the health and welfare of young people
 - ◀ Tackle obesity
 - ◀ Providing good quality affordable youth facilities
- ◀ Improving health and wellbeing
 - ◀ Help people live longer, healthier lives and tackle health inequalities
 - ◀ Increase participation levels from all sections of the community
 - ◀ Improving and developing the infrastructure for culture and leisure
 - ◀ Ensure access to culture, sport and leisure
 - ◀ Promote 'Sport for All'
 - ◀ Supporting excellence
- ◀ Enriching the lives of our elders
 - ◀ Respond to the different needs of 'older' people' recognising the wide range of ages, abilities and interests this term encompasses.

Therefore, it is clear that this Playing Pitch Strategy needs to deliver against a range of strategic drivers which include not only the quality of the infrastructure, but how it is used to meet wider sports development, performance sport, physical activity, health, and economic outcomes.

Planning context

The National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 (NPPF) recognises that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

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The NPPF requires that planning policies are based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision.

The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area.

Paragraph 74 of NPPF is concerned with the protection of existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields. One of the matters set out is that such buildings and land should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements. National Planning Practice Guidance (March 2014) refers local authorities to Sport England's guidance on how to assess the need for sport and recreation facilities.

Vision

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

"All partners, subject to available capital and revenue resources, should aim to provide a balanced provision of pitches across the district to meet current and future needs."

PART 3: SPORT SPECIFIC ISSUES SCENARIOS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to help develop the recommendations/actions and to understand their potential impact a number of relevant scenario questions are tested against the key issues identified in the Assessment for some of the playing pitch sports, thereby resulting in sport specific recommendations.

Football key issues

- ◀ Future developments include pitch improvements at Walsworth Common (Hitchin & Southern Rural analysis area).
- ◀ Displaced demand has been expressed by one club, Ashwell Academicals FC youth team (displaced to Cambridge).
- ◀ Overall there is currently spare capacity of 8.5 match sessions for adult football across the district. However future demand shows a shortfall of 1.5 match sessions (equivalent to 1 pitch).
- ◀ Overall in the district there is currently spare capacity of 8 match sessions for youth football. However future demand shows a shortfall of 18 match sessions (equivalent to 9 pitches).
- ◀ Overall in the district there is an oversupply of mini soccer match sessions to meet total current demand (19 match sessions). When future demand is taken into account (9.5 match sessions), there is aggregate spare capacity of 9.5 mini soccer match sessions to meet total future demand.
- ◀ The removal of unsecured pitches still results in spare capacity existing on each type. When factoring in future demand, there is an increased undersupply of adult and youth pitches. Spare capacity on mini pitches reduces to 0.5 match equivalents.

Scenarios

- ◀ **Utilising spare capacity** – There are a total of 75 pitches across 60 sites with spare capacity (*with secured community use*)
- ◀ Opening up sites which are currently unavailable for community use i.e. school sites will accommodate future demand for mini pitches and unmet demand.

Recommendations – grass

- ◀ Existing quantity of football pitches to be protected albeit some reconfiguration at youth and mini formats is required.
- ◀ Retain spare capacity on adult pitches as strategic reserve to help protect/improve quality.
- ◀ In a phased approach, establish all mini soccer to be played on 3G pitches and explore options to reconfigure mini grass pitches to youth pitches to address shortfalls.
- ◀ Seek to improve poor quality pitches and prioritise investment in multi pitch sites and review maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain/improve pitch quality.
- ◀ Work with schools to maximise and secure access to pitches on sites which are currently unavailable for community use.
- ◀ Consider the future value of one and two pitch sites and where appropriate, fully mitigate loss and reinvest into the development of hub sites.
- ◀ Where appropriate, develop partnership and/or lease arrangements with large, sustainable, development-minded clubs to manage their own 'home' sites thus facilitating club development.

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3G pitch key issues

- ◀ Of the football clubs that responded to the survey 39% express demand for additional training facilities - all specified 3G pitches as a requirement.
- ◀ The floodlight restriction placed on Hitchin Sports Centre (NH College The Edge) will have an impact on the training for teams as it reduces the amount of hours available, and therefore the availability of pitches within the Hitchin Letchworth analysis area).
- ◀ The FA model estimates that one full size AGP can service 55 teams. On the basis that there are 230 teams playing competitive football within North Hertfordshire, there is a recommended need for four full size 3G pitches to cater for football demand. Currently there are five, however only four are available for community use.
- ◀ The demand generated for AGP provision from the resident population of the district (129,318people) is around 2,792 visits per week in the peak period (vpwpp), the equivalent of about 4 pitches.
- ◀ All AGPs, despite the apparent 'surplus' indicated in the supply/demand balance are operating at full capacity at peak times according to the FPM model.
- ◀ The FPM calculates that 97.1% of the total demand for AGPs in North Hertfordshire is satisfied.
- ◀ Hertfordshire FA have identified three areas whereby due to the demand would be ideal locations for the development of new 3G Football Turf Pitches - Hertfordshire FA stadia (Letchworth), Hitchin and Knebworth.

Scenarios – 3G¹

- ◀ On the basis that 230 teams play competitive football within North Hertfordshire, there is a recommended need for five full size 3G pitches. As there are currently five in the area this target has been met, however, only four are available for community use.

Analysis area	Current number of teams	3G requirement	Current no. of 3G pitches	Potential shortfall
Hitchin & Southern Rural	123	2	2	0
Letchworth & Baldock & District	76	1	2	-
Royston	31	1	1	-
TOTAL	230	4	5	0

Recommendations – 3G

- ◀ Explore options to provide full size 3G pitches to meet current and future demand, taking into consideration current proposals and optimal strategic location to effectively service all analysis areas in the following areas:
 - ◀ Letchworth: the North of the district and the location of a number of clubs including Letchworth Eagles FC with 36 teams who are growing and require additional training and match facilities. The re-surfacing of the Hertfordshire FA stadia pitch to a 3G football turf pitch is one option.
 - ◀ Hitchin & Southern Rural: with the restriction on floodlights at Hitchin Sport Centre and Kingshott School having no community use a new 3G would ideally be located in this analysis area.
 - ◀ Hitchin & Southern Rural: located in Knebworth is the final location. Knebworth Youth FC use facilities located outside of the district for training. This is a growing area for football in particular mini soccer and youth football.

¹ Please refer to Appendix One for the full football scenario of programming 3G pitches for competitive play.

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- ◀ Ensure that new 3G pitches are tested and subsequently FA registered. In addition, ensure that future 3G pitches are used to maximum potential to allow for future back to back programming of mini/youth matches at peak times.
- ◀ Ensure that sinking funds are in place to maintain 3G pitch quality in the long term.

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Cricket key issues

- Four clubs report demand for additional training facilities; all state a need for an artificial turf wicket, practice nets and/or a mobile net.

Club	Demand expressed
Hitchin CC	Requires practice nets so that it can begin training on site. Ideally would like a mobile net.
Knebworth Park CC	Reports a need for an artificial wicket on at least one square. Also requires a mobile net and catching spring boards.
Preston CC	Requires improvements to the current practice nets as they are becoming too dangerous to use.
Weston CC	Reports a need for more practice nets so that teams within the Club can train more often and for longer.

- Six senior and four junior teams from within three clubs are displaced (to Stevenage, Central Bedfordshire and Buntingford. None report a desire for teams to return to play in North Hertfordshire.
- Population forecasts indicate potential future growth of at least four men's teams and nine junior boy's teams plus increased demand for women's and girls' cricket.
- Through consultation with NHCB no new nets are required at educational sites. However Hitchin Boys School wish to further develop the cricket facilities to cater for its play.
- 24 grass cricket squares show potential spare capacity amounting to 410 match sessions, however, only 7.5 pitches are available during peak time for senior cricket (Saturdays).
- There is overplay at one site (Weston Cricket Club) amounting to 37 matches.
- There is overall spare capacity of cricket pitches within the district although there is a shortfall within the Letchworth & Baldock Analysis Area. This shortfall is increased when factoring in displaced demand.
- Transfer of junior teams onto non-turf wickets would help reduce overplay at Weston Cricket Club. The best solution would be the installation of a non-turf wicket on site.

Scenarios

- Addressing overplay** – overplay expressed is not considered to be a significant issue as most of the play is both recreational teams and educational establishments hiring club facilities. Where overplay does exist at Weston Cricket Club, it would help to alleviate this overplay by seeking to sustain and improve the current, standard quality, square.
- Improving quality** – ensuring that quality is maintained/improved as required to meet league requirements is essential.

Recommendations

- Work with clubs to review quality issues on those pitches assessed as standard and poor quality and to ensure any potential overplay is accommodated.
- Work with clubs to ensure appropriate access to good ancillary facilities supports provision of pitches/sites.
- Retain good quality pitches across the district.
- Work with education establishments to implement practice nets where possible such as: Knights Templar School, Baldock; Fearnhill School, Letchworth; Hitchin Boys School and Kingshott School, Hitchin.

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Rugby Union key issues

- ◀ There are 81 competitive rugby union teams within the district. Population growth (by 2025) is expected to create demand for one additional adult team, four junior teams and ten mini teams; equating to 2 match equivalent sessions per week
- ◀ Peak time for senior rugby union pitches is Sunday mornings.
- ◀ Two sites are currently overplayed: King George V Playing Fields (Hitchin RUFC) (3.5 match sessions) and Letchworth Garden City RUFC (8.5 match sessions).
- ◀ There is evidence to suggest a need for better training venues which could be sourced through investment into current pitches or artificial surfaces.
- ◀ Hertfordshire rugby union development also aims to grow the number of girls and women playing the game by an increase of three girls' teams at Hitchin RUFC.
- ◀ The All Schools programme takes place at Fearnhill School.

Scenarios

- ◀ **Reducing overplay** - Two sites are currently overplayed. Both are home to clubs; King George V Playing Fields (Hitchin RUFC) (3.5 match sessions) and Letchworth Garden City RUFC (8.5 match sessions). The main reason for this is training on match pitches. Improving the pitch quality by improving pitch maintenance at King George V Playing Fields (from standard to good) will result in an additional 6 match equivalent sessions per week which will accommodate the level of overplay expressed. Improving pitch maintenance at Letchworth Garden City RUFC (from poor to standard) will result in overplay being reduced to 0.5 match sessions.

Recommendations

- ◀ Work with clubs to access RFU social spaces investment where appropriate.
- ◀ Sustain the relationship with Fearnhill School in relation to the All Schools programme in North Hertfordshire.
- ◀ Improve ancillary facilities at club sites, where there is a need to do so, to allow clubs to accommodate women and girls rugby.

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Rugby League Key issues

- ◀ One Rugby league clubs with four teams.
- ◀ Club have no aspirations to grow.
- ◀ The Club are located at Hitchin Rugby Union Club that play from King George V Playing Fields.

Recommendations

- ◀ Ensure that the Club are supported in terms of play at Recommendations King George V Playing Fields.
- ◀ If club has the aspirations to grow in the future ensure that pitches are available at current location working in partnership with the rugby union club,

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Hockey key issues

- ◀ Latent demand amounting to one men's, two ladies and one junior team is expressed by Blueharts HC and Royston HC.
- ◀ Future demand from Royston HC totals one men's, one junior boys' and two junior girl's teams.
- ◀ Blueharts HC would like to increase the number of teams run in future but cannot quantify this at present.
- ◀ Based on 35 adult teams there is a requirement for five full sized AGPs. There are currently two, suggesting a shortfall of three AGPs.
- ◀ Proposed AGPs at Lucas Lane Recreation Ground and at Royston Heath would help reduce shortfalls, whilst also safeguarding the future of Blueharts HC and returning displaced demand from Royston HC out of the district.

Scenarios

- ◀ Based on 35 adult teams (including quantified displaced, latent and future demand) requiring a pitch at peak time (Saturday) there is a requirement for five (rounded up from 4.375) full sized, floodlit, hockey pitches based on teams playing home and away (and based on a floodlit AGP being able to accommodate a maximum of four matches on a Saturday).
- ◀ Proposals are in place for new AGP's located at Lucas Lane and Royston Heath. At the time of the production of the strategy the Lucas Lane AGP planning application had been granted.
- ◀ **Future demand** – During consultation, two of the clubs confirmed aspirations to increase the number of teams, at junior and senior level via links and partnerships with local schools and the community. Population growth alone (by 2025) is likely to result in additional demand equating to two senior teams and four junior teams.

Recommendations

- ◀ Retain a sufficient level and continued sustainability of sand AGPs to accommodate current and future hockey demand amidst a number of intended 3G pitch developments.
- ◀ Maximise use of and protect existing sand AGPs (Sites 17, 28, 32) to accommodate training and competitive demand through effective programming to meet the demands of Hockey development.
- ◀ Ensure that sinking funds are in place to maintain sand AGP pitch quality in the long term (these are to be held by the ownership of the pitch eg Council, FA, Club etc).
- ◀ Support all clubs that have aspirations to grow and work with partners to implement playing programmes at proposed new AGP's.

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Tennis key issues

- ◀ No clubs report any latent demand and all clubs confirm that the number of courts available is adequate to meet the needs of members.
- ◀ Letchworth Sports and Tennis Club is an LTA East Regional priority club, has aims to grow its membership and build two new floodlit courts, as well as a seasonal air-hall.
- ◀ In general, the court quality in the district is considered adequate to meet the needs of current and future demand. Focus should be placed on improving courts rated poor.
- ◀ Development interest at the LTA in the district is limited although some clubs have received capital investment.
- ◀ Of the clubs that completed the survey there is a general desire to grow membership.
- ◀ In order to capitalise on the good facilities and the aspirations of the clubs to increase participation a Tennis Development Plan in partnership with the LTA could be developed.

Recommendations

- ◀ Ensure clubs can access the appropriate standard of courts to allow LTA competitions to be played.
- ◀ Although the number of courts in North Hertfordshire is adequate to meet current and future needs, explore options for poor quality courts to be refurbished in partnership with the LTA.
- ◀ Where population increases are expected improve the quality of courts if rating is poor.

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Athletics key issues

- ◀ There are no tracks within the district, however, there is a track located outside the district in Stevenage at Ridlins Wood.
- ◀ There is one track and field club that takes its members from North Hertfordshire - Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Athletics Club. The club's membership has increased over the past 5 years and the club expects this growth to continue.
- ◀ England Athletics state; No new athletics tracks are planned to be constructed; any new tracks across the country will need to have a robust business plan. A funding agreement is in place with NHDC to create more Run England groups and 3-2-1 routes (3-2-1 is Run England's project which aims to provide a range of marked out running or jogging routes across the country that anyone can have a go at. It's a way of providing a meaningful challenge to help more people to get running when it best suits them).
- ◀ There are eight Run England groups within North Hertfordshire.
- ◀ The assessment and analysis of the needs for Stevenage in relation to athletics suggests that the priorities are to retain and improve the existing Ridlins Wood Stadium.

Recommendations

- ◀ Increase the number of accessible 3-2-1 routes across the district and formalise running groups.
- ◀ Increase participation through development programmes such as 3-2-1 routes, education programmes, trim trails and other suitable initiatives.
- ◀ Further develop the number of marked running routes to increase informal / formal running in partnership with England Athletics to encourage more people to take up running.

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Bowls key issues

- ◀ Ten clubs express an intention to increase their membership. Where quantified, this amounts to an increase of 154 senior and 31 junior members.
- ◀ Three clubs report experiencing decreased senior membership over the last three years.
- ◀ All remaining clubs report senior membership to have remained static, apart from Baldock Town Bowls Club, which has grown by two teams.
- ◀ No clubs report an increase in junior membership; St Ippolyts Bowls Club reports a decrease.
- ◀ Seven clubs are operating below the average club/green membership and have capacity to increase usage. Baldock Town Bowls Club and Royston Bowls Club are operating at capacity, although neither reports enough demand to make a case for the provision of additional outdoor greens.
- ◀ Provision of bowling greens is sufficient to accommodate both current and future demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Ensure that appropriate maintenance is applied to sites which are considered to be being played to capacity and beyond.
- ◀ Address spare capacity and maximise the availability of bowling greens for pay and play in order to raise the profile of the game, increase levels of membership and the revenue generated by sites.
- ◀ Support clubs which plan to attract younger people through hosting events such as family days as well as establishing links with local primary schools.
- ◀ Where demand exists, ensuring that quality of the greens is sustained or improved.

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Golf key issues

- ◀ Tea Green Golf Centre is subject to a planning application for a housing development and the Club is concerned that the course could be lost.
- ◀ Golf participation in North Hertfordshire has generally remained static. Only Royston Golf Club reports a decrease in membership over the previous three years, whilst both Knebworth Golf Club and Letchworth Par 3 Family Golf Centre report an increase.
- ◀ Letchworth Golf Club currently operates a waiting list for members, which the Club believes is mainly due to having such a high reputation and a more selective acceptance procedure.
- ◀ All clubs report an intention to increase membership in the future with the exception of Letchworth Golf Club and Tea Green Golf Centre.
- ◀ Both Royston Golf Club and Knebworth Golf Club have sports development plans in place specifically to encourage more juniors and females to the game of golf.
- ◀ The current level of supply is deemed sufficient for residents.

Recommendations

- ◀ Work with the national Governing Body, England Golf to increase golf participation.
- ◀ Retain the quality of the courses and ensure appropriate maintenance is in place.

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PART 4: AIMS

The following Strategy Aims are based on the key issues emerging from the Assessment Report. It is recommended that the following are adopted by the Council and its partners to enable it to achieve the overall vision of the Strategy:

AIM 1

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

AIM 2

To **enhance** outdoor sports facilities through working in partnership with others to improve the quality and management of sites.

AIM 3

To enable the **provision** of new outdoor sports facilities where there is current or future demand to do so.

PART 5: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

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

AIM 1

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

Recommendations:

- a. Ensure local planning policy is in accordance with Government Guidance to protect sports facilities where there is a need to do so.
- b. Assist in securing tenure and access to sites for high quality, development minded clubs, through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.
- c. Maximise community use of outdoor sports facilities where there is a need to do so.
- d. Ensure local maintenance resources are protected to sustain standards and quality.

Recommendation (a) – Ensure local planning policy is in accordance with Government Guidance to protect sports facilities where there is a need to do so.

Based on the outcomes of the playing pitch strategy, and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF paragraph 73) highlight Sport England's statutory consultee role on planning applications that affect playing field land.

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

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

Furthermore any potential school sites which become redundant over the lifetime of the Strategy may offer potential for meeting community needs on a localised basis. Where schools are closed their playing fields may be dedicated to community use to help address any unmet community needs. Closed school playing fields should be considered in the first instance for becoming community playing fields for meeting the needs identified in the Strategy before being considered for other uses.

The following should be considered when assessing the suitability of conversion of former school playing fields for community use:

- ◀ Location and willingness of Local Authority/club or other party to take on ownership/lease /maintenance
- ◀ Size

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- ◀ Quality
- ◀ Physical accessibility
- ◀ History of community access
- ◀ Availability of ancillary facilities
- ◀ Agreement of landowner

Recommendation (b) – Assist in securing tenure and access to sites for high quality, development minded clubs through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.

A number of school sites are being used within the district for competitive play, predominately for football. In all cases use of pitches has not been classified as unsecure, however, use is not necessarily formalised and further work (partnership between the School, Council, NGB, Clubs and leagues where appropriate should be developed) should be carried out to ensure an appropriate Community Use Agreement (CUA) is in place (including access to changing provision where required) at the following sites:

- ◀ Roysia Middle School (Royston Town FC)
- ◀ St John's Catholic Primary School (Baldock FC)
- ◀ Tannery Drift First School (Royston Town FC)
- ◀ Hartsfield Mixed Junior & Infant School (Baldock FC)
- ◀ Ickleford Primary School (Hitchin Belles FC)
- ◀ Mary Exton JMI School (Hitchin Belles FC)

In addition these sites currently do not have any play but they have been identified to have the potential to develop community use agreements in the future:

- ◀ Codicote C of E School
- ◀ St Marys Junior School (Letchworth & Baldock and District)
- ◀ Norton St Nicholas Primary School
- ◀ Garden City Academy
- ◀ Wilbury Junior School
- ◀ Kimpton Primary School
- ◀ Knebworth Nursery & Primary School
- ◀ Sandon JMI School

NGBs can often help to negotiate and engage with schools, particularly academies where the local authority may not have direct influence. For further information on this, please refer to recommendation (g).

Sport England has also produced guidance, online resources and toolkits to help open up and retain school sites for community use and can be found at: <http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/use-our-school>

Local sports clubs should be supported by partners including the various Councils, NGBs or the County Sports Partnership (CSP) to achieve sustainability across a range of areas including management, membership, funding, facilities, volunteers and partnership working. For example, support club development and encourage clubs to develop evidence of business and sports development plans to generate an income through their facilities. All clubs could be encouraged to look at different management models such as registering as Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC)². Clubs should also be encouraged to work with partners locally whether volunteer support agencies or linking with local businesses.

² <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/cascbenefits>

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

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

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

To facilitate this, the Council could support clubs to generate sufficient funds to allow this.

Recommended criteria for lease of sport sites to clubs/organisations

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

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

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

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

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

Community asset transfer

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

Where the district council has the option to transfer a community asset to a third party this should be managed by key partners including the district council, NGB, facility and others on a case by case basis. The community asset transfer process refers to assets owned by the district council being transferred to third sector/community/sports groups by way of a long lease. The group taking on the asset then run, manage and maintain the asset. Further details regarding the CAT process can be found on the council's website at:
<http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/community/community-asset-transfer>

The Sport England Community Sport Asset Transfer Toolkit is a bespoke, interactive web based tool that provides a step by step guide through each stage of the asset transfer process: http://www.sportengland.org/support__advice/asset_transfer.aspx

Recommendation (c) Maximise community use of outdoor sports facilities where there is a need to do so

Education sites

In order to maximise community use of educational facilities it is recommended to establish a more 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 at some of the education sites but physical access and resistance from schools, especially academies, to open up provision is also an issue.

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

It is not uncommon for school pitch stock not to be fully maximised for community use. Even on established community use sites, access to grass pitches for community use is limited. The action plan identifies a number of school sites that have the potential to be further used for community use to help meet future shortfalls identified in the Area:

- ◀ Wilshere-Dacre Junior School for football
- ◀ Codicote C of E School for football
- ◀ Meridian School for football
- ◀ Whitehill Junior School for football
- ◀ Garden City Academy for football
- ◀ Our Lady Catholic Primary School for football

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- ◀ Wilbury Junior School for football
- ◀ Kimpton Primary School for football
- ◀ Knebworth Nursery & Primary School for football
- ◀ Ashwell Primary School for football
- ◀ Highover JMI School for football
- ◀ Pixmore Junior School for football
- ◀ Wymondley JMI School for football
- ◀ Sandon JMI School for football
- ◀ St John's Catholic Primary School for football
- ◀ The Highfield School for football
- ◀ Kingshott School AGP

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

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/accessing-schools/>

Recommendation (d) – Ensure local maintenance resources are protected to sustain standards and quality.

The District Council and partners should use the playing pitch strategy to guide future discussions in relation to the budgets required to improve/retain the quality of pitches and non-pitches within North Hertfordshire.

The District Council and other facility management operators should consider committing to protecting existing open space resources and ensuring that the future needs of communities are planned for using the playing pitch strategy as a basis for decision making.

The key objectives of partners to ensuring maintenance resources are protected would be to ensure that:

- ◀ To protect and enhance networks of open space:
- ◀ To set standards for the quantity and quality of open space in new development and provide for its long-term maintenance;
- ◀ To provide guidance on planning for development of new sports and recreation facilities.

AIM 2

To **enhance** outdoor sports facilities through working in partnership with others to improve the quality and management of sites

Recommendations:

- e. Maintain the quality of sites (pitches) and improve (pitches) where appropriate.
- f. Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) to the management and improvement of sites.
- g. Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure community funding.
- h. Secure developer contributions.

Recommendation (e) – Maintain the quality of sites (pitches) and improve (pitches) where appropriate.

There are a number of ways in which it is possible to increase pitch quality, including for example, addressing overplay and improving maintenance. These are explored in more detail below.

Addressing quality issues

Generally, where pitches are assessed as standard or poor quality and/or overplayed, review/improve maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain/improve pitch quality. Ensuring existing maintenance of good quality pitches continues is also important. This can be achieved by working with the NGBs (clubs and leagues) to source partnership funding to improve pitches/non pitches that require reinvestment.

Based on 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 (the site audit database should be used, this is provided in electronic format as part of the Assessment Study).

For the purposes of the Quality Assessments, this Strategy will refer to pitches and ancillary facilities separately as Good, Standard or Poor quality. For example, some good quality sites have poor quality elements i.e. changing rooms or a specific pitch.

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

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

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

In terms of ancillary facilities, poor quality refers to inappropriate size of changing rooms, no showers, no running water and old dated interior. The following sites were highlighted through the non-technical assessments and club consultation as poor quality:

- ◀ St Johns Road (Site ID 53)
- ◀ Hexton Recreation Ground (Site ID 9908)
- ◀ Archers Way (Site ID 9907)
- ◀ Lucas Lane Recreation Ground (Site ID 32)
- ◀ Pirton Recreation Ground (Site ID 36)
- ◀ St Ippolyts Recreation Ground (Site ID 47)
- ◀ Cadwell Lane (Site ID 8)
- ◀ Bakers Close (Site ID 3)

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 such as those mentioned above should be given priority for improvement.

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

For improvement/replacement of AGPs refer to Sport England and the NGBs 'Selecting the Right Artificial Surface for Hockey, Football, Rugby League and Rugby Union' document for a guide as to suitable AGP surfaces:

www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/artificial-sports-surfaces/

In order to improve the quality of pitches and non-pitches all partners should work in a co-ordinated way to address the issues. By working with the NGBs through the key programmes as follows

- ◀ Grass pitches – addressing poor quality pitches through the Pitch Improvement Programme
- ◀ Rugby Union pitches – addressing quality issues at club sites through the RFU and implementing a groundsman programme.
- ◀ Cricket pitches – addressing poor quality wickets through technical assessments of wickets and pitches available through a Performance Quality Standard Assessment (PQS).
- ◀ Tennis courts – priority and improvements should be made to poor quality tennis courts.

Addressing overplay

In order to improve the overall quality of the playing pitches stock; it is necessary to ensure that pitches are not overplayed beyond recommended weekly carrying capacity. This is determined by assessing pitch quality (via a non-technical site assessment) and allocating a weekly match limit to each. Each NGB recommends a number of matches that a good quality pitch should take:

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Sport	Pitch type	No. of matches
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week
Rugby union*	Pipe and Slit Drained and a good level of maintenance (D3/M2)	3.5 per week
	Pipe drained and a good level of maintenance (D2/M2)	3.25 per week
	Natural (adequate) drainage and a good level of maintenance (D1/M2)	3 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season

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

		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	Poor	Poor	Standard
	Natural Adequate (D1)	Poor	Standard	Good
	Pipe Drained (D2)	Standard	Standard	Good
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	Standard	Good	Good
		Maintenance		
		Poor (M0)	Standard (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage	Natural Inadequate (D0)	1	1	-
	Natural Adequate (D1)	2	4	-
	Pipe Drained (D2)	-	-	-
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	-	1	-

There are also sites that are poor quality but are not overplayed. These sites should not be overlooked as often poor quality sites have less demand than other sites but demand could increase if the quality was to increase. Improving pitch quality should not be considered in isolation from maintenance regimes.

Whilst it works both ways, in so much as, poor pitch condition is a symptom of pitches being over played, potential improvements may make sites more attractive and, therefore, more popular; which in the long run can lead again to poor quality pitches if they are not maintained properly.

There is also a need to balance pitch improvements alongside the transfer of play to alternative pitch sites. Therefore, it is beneficial to work with clubs to ensure that sites are not played beyond their capacity and encourage play, where possible, to be transferred to alternative venues which are not operating at capacity.

Increasing pitch maintenance

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

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

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

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

To allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach the Council and key partners such as NGBs should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of playing pitch sites and associated facilities. Please refer to Part 5: Action Plan for the proposed hierarchy.

Recommendation (g) – Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure community funding.

Partners, should ensure that appropriate funding secured for improved sports provision are directed to areas of need, underpinned by a robust strategy for improvement in playing pitch facilities.

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

Investment in new provision will not be made by the District Council directly, it is important, however, that the various partners seek to direct and lead a strategic and co-ordinated approach to facility development by education sites, NGBs, sports clubs and the commercial sector to address community needs whilst avoiding duplication of provision.

Appendix Two provides further funding information which includes details of the current opportunities, likely funding requirements and indicative project costs.

Recommendation (h) –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 where appropriate. As the District Council is not currently pursuing CIL, the

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Playing Pitch Assessment and Strategy should be used as the evidence base for securing and negotiating developer contributions.

The guidance should form the basis for negotiation with developers to secure contributions to include provision and/or enhancement of appropriate playing fields and its subsequent maintenance. Section 106 contributions could also be used to improve the condition and maintenance regimes of the pitches in order to increase pitch capacity to accommodate more matches. A number of planning policy objectives should be implemented to enable the above to be delivered:

- ▶ Planning permission should include appropriate conditions and/or be subject to specific planning obligations. Where developer contributions are applicable, a Section 106 Obligation or equivalent must be completed specifying the amount which will be linked to Sport England's Building Cost Information Service from the date of the Planning Committee, and timing of the Contribution(s) to be paid.
- ▶ Contributions should also be secured towards the first ten years of maintenance on new pitches. NGBs and Sport England can provide further and up to date information on the associated costs.
- ▶ External funding should be sought/secured to achieve maximum benefit from the investment into appropriate playing pitch facility enhancement and its subsequent maintenance .
- ▶ Where new multiple pitches are provided, appropriate changing rooms and associated car parking should be located on site.
- ▶ All new or improved playing pitches on school sites should be subject to community use agreements. For further guidance please refer to Sport England:
<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and-guidance/community-use-agreements/>

Population/housing growth scenario

The current resident population in North Hertfordshire is 129,318³. The most recent ONS projections indicate a rise of 24.6% in North Hertfordshire's population (+31,573) over the 25 years from 2012 to 2037.

The proposed number of new homes at each of these allocations is set out below (for the period 2011-2031 as indicated by the district council in its Preferred Options Local Plan published December 2014) is as follows:

Location	Number of new homes
Hitchin & Southern Rural	6,876 new homes
Letchworth & Baldock and District	5,738 new homes
Royston	1,611 new homes

To account for the potential future demand required from increased housing the national average household size of 2.3 persons per dwelling is used to calculate the equivalent potential population increase (based on the proposed number of dwellings) for each analysis area:

The table below indicates the current population, the predicted number of new dwellings per analysis area and the population the number of new dwellings will bring.

³Source: ONS Mid-2013 Population Estimates for Lower Layer Super Output Areas in England and Wales by Single Year of Age and Sex and ONS 2012-based projections 2012-2032. Released: 29 May 2014

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Analysis area	Current Population	Predicted growth in dwellings up to 2031	Population
Hitchin & Southern Rural	61,584	6,876	141,643
Letchworth & Baldock and District	49,070	5,738	131,97
Royston	18,664	1,611	3705
NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE	129,318	14,225	158,546

The information provided above does not take into account a number of variables including age and gender and thus it does not show the number of new sports facilities that would need to be provided using the Team Generation Rates (TGR) model. Once the housing numbers and sites have been approved as part of the Local Plan, NHDC and partners can agree, the level of new sports provision likely to be generated from the new housing developments.

NHDC and partners should look to commit to further investigation and planning in relation to securing sports facility provision within North Hertfordshire through CIL and planning obligations.

AIM 3

To enable the **provision** of new outdoor sports facilities where there is current or future demand to do so.

Recommendations:

- i. Seek to address the quantitative shortfalls in the current pitch stock.
- j. Identify opportunities to add to the overall pitch stock to accommodate both current and future demand.

Recommendation (h) - Seek to address quantitative shortfalls in the current pitch stock.

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

It is important that the current levels of grass pitch provision are protected, maintained and enhanced to secure provision now and in the future. Maximising use of existing pitches through a combination of the following will help to reduce shortfalls:

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

There are some minimal shortfalls in all football pitches (adult, youth and mini) across the district. The strategy recommends that all spare capacity is retained to help protect and enhance quality.

It has also been identified that there is a shortfall for future demand of 3G football turf pitches as identified through consultation although the sites locations are not confirmed, areas have been identified which include Letchworth and the Hitchin and Southern rural areas.

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

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

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Likely future sport-by-sport demand trends

Sport	Future development trend	Strategy impact
Football	The needs of the game will change significantly from the 2014/15 season with the implementation of the new recreation/ participation strategy.	Consider re-allocating leases to Community Charter Standard clubs with a large number of teams. Work with clubs to identify facility development opportunities.
	Demand for mini soccer and youth football is likely to increase based on current trends and the move to small sided football. County FA focus to maintain growth of youth football through to adults.	Sustain current stock but consideration given to reconfigure pitches if required.
Cricket	Demand is likely to increase in North Hertfordshire for grass wickets for both junior and adult participation.	Isolated pockets of demand for access to additional facilities where pitches are operating at capacity
	Women's and girls' cricket is a national priority and there is a target to establish two girls' and one women's team in every local authority over the next five years.	Support clubs to ensure access to segregated changing and toilet provision and access to good quality cricket pitches to support growth.
Rugby union	The Rugby World Cup (2015) is predicted to see a further increase in the demand for rugby provision.	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 to support facility development where appropriate.
FTP's and AGP's	Demand for 3G football turf pitches for competitive football will increase. It is likely that future demand for the use of 3G pitches to service competitive football, particularly mini and youth will result in some reduced demand for grass pitches. Provision of 3G pitches which are World Rugby compliant will help to reduce overplay as a result of training on rugby pitches.	Ensure that access to new AGP or FTP provision across the District is maximised and that community use agreements are in place. Utilise Sport England/NGB guidance on choosing the correct surface: http://www.sportengland.org/media/30651/Selecting-the-right-artificial-surface-Rev2-2010.pdf
Tennis	It is likely that future demand for access to tennis courts in North Hertfordshire will generally remain static.	Poor quality courts will require future investment in order to retain usage, even for recreational play. Increasing court capacity through floodlighting and/or increasing the quality of provision could build in future capacity to accommodate growth.

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

Site managers should use, and regularly (annually) update, the Action Plan within this Strategy for improvements to pitches 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.

Furthermore any potential school sites which become redundant over the lifetime of the Strategy may offer potential for meeting community needs on a localised basis. Where schools are closed their playing fields may be converted to dedicated community use to help address any unmet community needs.

PART 6: ACTION PLAN

Introduction

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

It should be reviewed in the light of staff and financial resources in order to prioritise support for strategically significant provision and provision that other providers are less likely to make. Recommendations below explain the hierarchy of priorities on the list. It is imperative that action plans for priority projects should be developed through the implementation of the strategy.

Key partners such as NGB's, managers of parks and recreation, education and health should make it a high priority to comprise a priority list of actions based on local priorities, NGB priorities and available funding.

Recommendation (j) - 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 system a tiered approach should be adopted for the management and improvement of playing pitch sites and associated facilities.

North Hertfordshire has a number of 'key centres', which are sites that are considered to be the most popular and therefore need to be of a high standard in order that they can accommodate a sufficient number of matches per week. This applies mostly to football pitch hire. However, this provision model should be extended to recognise the supply and demand issues identified throughout the Assessment Report (i.e. current levels of overplay) and the investment necessary to improve sites based on current levels of usage. The identification of sites is based on their strategic importance in a district-wide context (i.e. they accommodate the majority of play). In addition to this, there are a number of sites which have been identified as accommodating both senior and junior matches, sometimes concurrently. Not only could such sites require a mixture of mini, youth and senior pitches, but they also require ancillary facilities, in order to maximise their usage at all times.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Proposed tiered site criteria

Strategic sites	Key centres	Club or education sites	Reserve sites
Strategically located in the District. Priority sites for NGB.	Strategically located within the analysis area.	Serves the local community.	Serves the local community.
Accommodates three or more grass pitches. Including provision of an AGP.	Accommodates two or more grass pitches.	Accommodates more than one pitch.	Likely to be single-pitch site.
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.	Supports informal demand and/ or training etc.
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 or with an appropriate club on a lease arrangement.	Club either has long-term lease/hires the pitch for the entire season or owns the site. Management control remains within the local authority/other provider or with an appropriate lease arrangement through a committee or education owned.	Management control remains with the Council or existing management body.
Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime either by the club or in house maintenance contract.	Basic level of maintenance i.e. grass cutting and line marking as required.
Good quality ancillary facility on site, 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.	Appropriate access changing to accommodate both senior and junior use concurrently (if required).	No requirement for access changing to accommodation.

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

The financial, social and sporting benefits which can be achieved through development of strategic sites (also known as hub sites) are significant. Sport England provides further guidance on the development of community sports hubs at:

http://archive.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/planning_tools_and_guidance/sports_hubs.aspx

Key centres

Although these sites are more community focused, some are still likely to service a wider analysis area (or slightly wider). However, there may be more of a focus on a specific sport i.e. a dedicated site.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

From a football perspective, these sites already seek to accommodate the growing emphasis on football venues catering for youth football (especially mini-soccer) matches. The conditions recommended for mini and youth football are becoming more stringent. This should be reflected in the provision of a unique tier of pitches for mini and youth football solely that can ensure player safety, as well as being maintained more efficiently. It is anticipated that both youth and mini-football matches could be played on these sites. Initial investment could be required in the short term and identified in the Action Plan.

Additionally, it is considered that some financial investment (working in partnership with key stakeholders such as NGBs, Parish Councils, Sport England, Clubs and School) will be necessary to improve the ancillary facilities at both Strategic 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.

Club/Education sites refer to those sites which are hired to clubs for a season, or are sites which have been leased on a long-term basis. Primarily they are sites with more than one pitch. The level of priority attached to them for Council-generated investment may be relatively low and consideration should be given, on a site-by-site basis, to the feasibility of a club taking a long-term lease on the site (if not already present), in order that external funding can be sought.

It is possible that sites could be included in this tier which are not currently hired or leased to a club, but have the potential to be leased to a suitable club. Such sites will require some level of investment, either to the pitches or ancillary facilities, and it is 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 the facilities.

Reserve sites could be used as overspill for neighbouring sites and/or for summer matches/competitions, training or informal play. They are most likely to be single-pitch sites with no ancillary facilities.

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 strategic sites.
- ◀ Football investment programme/3G pitches development with The FA.

Action plan

Partners

The column indicating Partners refers to the main organisation(s) who should work together in helping to deliver the actions. The next stage in the development of the action plan will be to agree a Lead Partner to help deliver the actions.

Site hierarchy tier and priority level

Strategic sites have a **high** priority level as they have District wide importance and have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the key issues identified in the assessment.

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

Low priority sites are club or education sites with local specific importance. They have been identified on a site by site basis as issues appertaining to individual sites but that may also contribute to addressing the issues identified in the assessment

Costs

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

(L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above. These are based on Sport England's estimated facility costs which can be found at www.sportengland.org/media/198443/facility-costs-4q13.pdf

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 timescales relate to delivery times and are not priority based.

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

Aim

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

Almost all sites are currently recommended to be protected. It is imperative therefore to **keep the action plan up to date and review regularly** as developments take place. With pitch improvements and/or facility developments the status of sites could therefore change, as could any site specific recommendations.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

HITCHIN AND SOUTHERN RURAL SUMMARY

Football

Summary of pitches required to meet current and future demand

Pitch type	Actual spare capacity ⁴	Demand (match equivalent sessions)					
		Overplay	Strategic reserve (20%)	Latent demand	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult pitches	10.5	2.5	2	0.5	-5.5	6	0.5
Youth pitches	6	1	1	2	-2	12	10
Mini pitches	10	-	2	-	-8	26	18

- ◀ Spare capacity exists on each pitch type currently, however, future demand results in a shortfall of each pitch type.
- ◀ Overplay exists on adult pitches at Ransome Recreation Ground, Hitchin; St Johns Playing Field, Hitchin; and Swinburne Recreation Ground, Hitchin. Youth pitches at King George V Playing fields, Hitchin are also overplayed.
- ◀ There are 15 youth teams playing on adult pitches.

Recommendations

- ◀ Users to improve pitch quality in order to increase potential capacity and better accommodate current/future demand.
- ◀ Alleviate overplay.
- ◀ Transfer youth teams playing on adult pitches to youth pitches.
- ◀ Consider 3G provision as a way to accommodate increased demand and shortfalls.
- ◀ Improve changing facilities at Pirton Recreation Ground and explore football use of changing facilities at Lucas Lane Recreation Ground, Hitchin.

3G pitches

- ◀ There is a requirement for three full size 3G pitches within the Analysis Area, of which there are currently two; Hitchin Sports Centre and Kingshott School, Hitchin. Of these, only Hitchin Sports Centre is available for community use.
- ◀ Hitchin Sports Centre is only available until 8pm on weekdays due to floodlight restrictions. The majority of use is taken up by the College during the day and Watford FC during the evening.
- ◀ The surface of the pitch at Kingshott School is over ten years old (1999).
- ◀ Neither pitch is FA certified to host competitive matches.

Recommendations

- ◀ Explore community use options at Kingshott School.
- ◀ Resurface the pitch at Kingshott School and ensure sinking funds are in place for both pitches in the Analysis Area.
- ◀ Seek FA testing at Hitchin Sports Centre so that it can be used to host competitive matches.
- ◀ Explore possible sites for a new full size 3G pitch in order to reduce shortfalls.

⁴ In match equivalent sessions

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Cricket

- ◀ There are 16 grass wicket pitches available for community use.
- ◀ Actual spare capacity amounting to six match equivalents exists across the Analysis Area with no pitches overplayed.

Recommendations

- ◀ Extend lease arrangements for Lilley CC and Ickleford CC in order to provide greater security of tenure.
- ◀ Ensure proposed developments for ancillary and new cricket square facility improvements at Knebworth Park Cricket Club and Hitchin Cricket Club (Lucas Lane Recreation Ground) go ahead as planned.
- ◀ Increase and improve training provision, particularly at sites that do not contain practice nets.

Rugby union

- ◀ Senior pitches at King George V Playing Fields (used by Hitchin RUFC) are played to capacity, whilst mini pitches have actual spare capacity amounting to 4.5 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ A senior pitch at the Priory School, Hitchin is used for training purposes by Hitchin RUFC and has one match equivalent of spare capacity.
- ◀ There are pitches at Hitchin Boys School Sports Centre and Kingshott School which are not available to the community.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve quality from standard (M21/D2) in order to provide additional capacity on senior pitches at King George V Playing Fields.
- ◀ Explore community use possibilities at currently unavailable schools.
- ◀ Support Hitchin RUFC in its facility investment programme.

Hockey

- ◀ There is one full size hockey suitable AGP located at Hitchin Boys School.
- ◀ A proposal is in place for a sand-based AGP to be provided at Lucas Lane Recreation Ground.

Recommendations

- ◀ Support Blueharts Hockey Club in its proposal for an AGP at Lucas Lane Recreation Ground subject to planning permission.
- ◀ Ensure hockey play on the AGP is protected for current and future demand and retained as a suitable surface for hockey.
- ◀ Ensure sinking funds are in place.

Tennis

- ◀ The current supply of tennis courts is deemed adequate to accommodate current and future demand.

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Recommendations

- ◀ Improve court quality to good across all sites.
- ◀ Support Pirton Tennis Club in its plans to resurface its courts and build a clubhouse, subject to planning permission.
- ◀ Support St Pauls Walden Tennis Club in its plans to provide floodlighting on its two remaining courts, subject to planning permission.

Athletics

- ◀ There are no athletics tracks in the Analysis Area and no plans to create one.

Recommendations

- ◀ Seek potential sites for creation of trim trails around pitches or open spaces with 3-2-1 routes.
- ◀ Support road running clubs.

Bowls

- ◀ There are five bowling greens in the Analysis Area, all of which are assessed as good quality.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed adequate to service demand, as the majority of bowling greens are considered to have spare capacity.

Recommendations

Retain the quality and usage of the greens.

Golf

- ◀ The Analysis Area contains three golf courses; Chesfield Downs Golf & Country Club, Tea Green Golf Centre and Knebworth Golf Club.
- ◀ Tea Green Golf Centre is subject to a proposal for a residential development.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ⁵	Aim	Cost ⁶	
7	Breachwood Green Recreation Ground (Breachwood Green CC)	Cricket	Club	One pitch (7 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. No spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Club ECB	Club (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L	
		Tennis		One macadam court assessed as good quality. One macadam court and one artificial turf court assessed as standard. Good quality court is floodlit.	Sustain quality.	Club LTA		L	Protect	L	
8	Cadwell Recreation Ground, Hitchin	Football	District Council	One good quality adult pitch used by Hitchin Rovers FC with spare capacity of two matches per week.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council FA	Key centre (L)	L	Protect	L	
9	Codicote Sports and Social Club	Cricket	Club	One pitch (10 grass wickets) assessed as good quality. No spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. Codicote CC rent the pitches and express that they are good quality, however the changing facilities are poor.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. Investigate potential for funding to refurbish poor ancillary facilities.	Club ECB	Key centre (M)	M	Protect Enhance	M	
		Football		One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of 1.5 matches and one good quality mini soccer with spare capacity of four matches per week. Used by Codicote Youth FC.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Club FA		(L)	L	Protect	L
		Tennis		Three macadam courts, floodlit and assessed as good quality.	Sustain quality.	Club LTA		(L)	L	Protect	L
13	Graveley Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One pitch (8 grass wickets) assessed as good quality. No spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. Graveley CC lease the pitches and express that they are standard quality.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Club ECB	Club (L)	L	Protect Enhance	M	
17	Hitchin Boys School Sports Centre	Cricket	Education	One pitch (6 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality and used by Preston CC. No spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. Preston CC also expresses the desire for practice nets.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. Investigate possibility for funding for practice nets.	Education ECB	Education (L)	L	Protect	n/a	
		AGP		One full size floodlit sand dressed pitch that is utilised by Blueharts Hockey Club. The pitch was refurbished in 2011.	Ensure appropriate maintenance is in place and sinking funds for any refurbishments.	Education EH					
		Rugby union		Two poor quality mini pitches and one –poor quality senior pitch that are not available for community use.	Not current local demand for community use. Retain for school use.	Education RFU					
		Football		Three good quality pitches; adult, mini and youth (9v9). With spare capacity. Leased to Hitchin Town FC	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Education FA					L
		Tennis		Five macadam courts assessed as good quality. Two courts are floodlit. All courts are available to the community and well used by HBS Lawn Tennis Club.	Sustain quality.	Education Club LTA				L	Protect

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

⁶ (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ⁵	Aim	Cost ⁶
18	Hitchin Girls School	Tennis	Education	Four macadam courts assessed as good and four assessed as poor. Not floodlit and not available to the community.	No local demand for community use. Improve poor quality courts for school use.	Education LTA	Education (L)	S	Enhance	M
19	Hitchin Sports Centre	AGP	Education	One full size floodlit 3G Football Turf Pitch. The pitch is currently used during peak community hours by a number of clubs including Watford FC academy. There is a restriction on the floodlights to 8pm.	Ensure 3G pitch is registered and subsequently included on the FA Football Turf Pitch Register. Ensure sinking fund is in place for the future replacement / refurbishment of the carpet. Seek to maximise community use of the FTP through extended floodlighting.	Education FA	Education (H)	S	Protect Enhance	L
20	Ickleford Sport & Recreation Club	Cricket	Parish Council	One pitch (10 grass wickets) assessed as good quality with nets and used by Ickleford CC. No spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. Ickleford CC leases the pitch from the council however there is less than 10 year remaining.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. Ensure that community use agreement (lease) with Ickleford CC is renewed.	Parish Council	Education (L)	L	Protect	L
20	Ickleford Sport & Recreation Club	Football	Club	One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of one match per week. One 7v7 and one 5v5 mini pitch good quality with spare capacity of 4.5 matches per week. Pitches are used by a number of clubs including FC Comets, Ickleford Sports FC and Hitchin Town FC.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Club FA	Club (L)	L	Protect	L
22	Kimpton Recreation Ground	Football	Parish Council	One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of one match per week and two good quality mini soccer pitches with spare capacity of 4.5 matches per week. Pitch is leased to Kimpton Rovers from the parish council.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Parish Council FA	Key centre (L)	L	Protect	L
23	King George V Playing Fields, Hitchin	Football	County Council District Council	Two adult poor quality and one youth (9v9) poor quality pitch with overplay of one match per week.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	County Council FA	Strategic (H) (H)	S	Protect	M
		Rugby union / Rugby League		Three standard quality (M1/D2) pitches used by Hitchin RUFC for training and matches that are overplayed by 3.5 matches. Three standard quality senior pitches with no spare capacity, pitches are also used by North Herts Crusaders RLFC (as of summer 2015). Pitches are also used during the summer by North Herts Crusaders Rugby League Club. (Four teams).	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council RFU RFL Club	(M)	S	Protect Enhance	H
		Tennis		One macadam court assessed as standard quality.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council LTA		M	Enhance Protect	L
24	King George's Way Playing Field,	Cricket	Parish Council	One pitch (4 grass wickets) assessed as poor quality and used by Whitwell CC. No spare	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and	Parish Council	Strategic (H)	S	Protect Enhance	L

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ⁵	Aim	Cost ⁶
	Whitwell			capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. Whitwell CC rent the pitches and express that they are poor quality.	current usage. Ensure that community use agreement with Gravely CC remains in place.	ECB				
		Football		One good quality pitch with spare capacity of 2.5 matches per week.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Parish Council FA	(L)	L	Protect	L
25	Knebworth Park Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One pitch (15 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality and used by Knebworth Park CC. No spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. Knebworth Park CC express that the ancillary facilities are poor. The Club reports a need for an artificial wicket on at least one square. Also requires a mobile net and catching spring boards. The Club lease the facilities on a one year rolling lease. The Club have an agreement to relocate the facilities within the park to a more ideal location.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. Ensure that the lease remains in place. Further investigate the future need for artificial wicket at the site. Support the relocation of the Club and its facilities within the park.	Club ECB	Club (H)	S	Protect Enhance Provision	L
26	Knebworth Recreation Ground	Football	Parish Council	Three good quality adult pitches with considerable spare capacity of 7.5 matches per week. Two mini soccer pitches with spare capacity of 3.5 matches per week. Two youth pitches with spare capacity of 3.5 matches per week.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Parish Council FA	Club (L)	L	Protect	L
		Tennis		Four standard quality macadam courts which are floodlit.	Improve and sustain court quality.	Parish Council LTA	(M) (L)	M	Enhance Protect	L
		Bowls		A good quality green.	Sustain green quality.	Parish Council		L	Protect	L
30	Lilley Recreation Ground (Lilley CC)	Cricket	Parish Council	One pitch (10 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality and used by Lilley CC. Actual spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. Lilley CC have a lease which has less than 10 years remaining.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. Ensure that the lease is renewed.	Club ECB Parish Council	Club (H)	S	Protect Enhance	L
31	Little Wymondley Playing Field	Football	Parish Council	One standard quality adult pitch with spare capacity of two matches per week. No changing facilities exist.	Investigate options to improve quality in order to address overplay and build future site capacity. Investigate potential for new changing / modular build facilities.	Parish Council FA	Key centre (L)	L	Protect Enhance	M
32	Lucas Lane Recreation Ground, Hitchin	Cricket	Club	One pitch (14 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality and used by Hitchin CC and one good quality non-turf wicket. Actual spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. Hitchin CC own the ground. Hitchin Cricket Club, who are based at Lucas Lane recreation ground are currently working with Hertfordshire Cricket to develop new changing facilities as the current clubhouse is old and worn. A planning application has been submitted and the Club await planning consent.	Ensure quality of the ground maintenance is retained. Ensure that plans to develop the club house and ancillary facilities are actioned.	ECB Club	Strategic (H)	S	Protect Enhance	H
		Football		Two adult standard quality pitches with spare capacity of 2.5 matches per week and one mini soccer (7v7) standard quality pitch with spare	Investigate options to improve quality in order to address overplay and build future site capacity.	FA		L	Protect Enhance	L

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ⁵	Aim	Cost ⁶
		AGP		capacity of 2.5 matches per week.						
				In September 2015 planning permission was granted for the development of a new full size floodlit sand dressed pitch for Blueharts Hockey Club. The Club will now be located at two locations Lucas lane and Hitchin Boys School.						
Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ⁷	Aim	Cost ⁸
34	Offley Sports and Social Club	Cricket	Club	One pitch (12 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality and rented from the Council by Offley & Stopsley CC and one standard quality non-turf wicket.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Club ECB	Club (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
		Football		One adult good quality pitch with spare capacity of 0.5 matches per week. Two good quality mini soccer (5v5) and one good quality mini soccer pitches (7v7) both with spare capacity.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Club FA	(L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
35	Parkfield Crescent Sports Ground (Kimpton CC)	Cricket	Club	One pitch (12 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. Actual spare capacity during peak time exists.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Club ECB	Club (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
		Tennis		Three standard quality, floodlit, macadam courts.	Improve and sustain quality.	Club LTA	(M)	M	Protect Enhance	L
36	Pirton Recreation Ground	Cricket	Parish Council	One pitch (7 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality and one standard quality non-turf wicket. Actual spare capacity during peak time exists. Pitch is used by Pirton CC.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Parish Council ECB	Strategic (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
		Football		Four good quality pitches; adult, youth (9v9) and mini soccer (5v5 and 7v7) all with spare capacity. Changing facilities are expressed as poor.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Parish Council FA	(M)	M	Protect	L
39	Preston Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One pitch (12 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality with nets but club require additional nets. Actual spare capacity during peak time exists.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. Investigate potential for more nets at the Club ground.	Parish Council ECB	Key centre (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
40	Purwell Recreation Ground, Hitchin	Football	District Council	Two standard quality youth 11v11 pitches with spare capacity of 2.5 matches per week.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council FA	Key centre (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
42	Ransome Recreation Ground, Hitchin	Football	District Council	One poor quality adult pitch with overplay of one match per week.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council FA	Key centre (H)	S	Protect Enhance	L
47	St Ippolyts Recreation Ground	Football	Parish Council	One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of two matches per week.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Parish Council FA	Key centre (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L

⁷ Timescales: (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years).

⁸ (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ⁵	Aim	Cost ⁶
		Bowls		A good quality green.	Sustain green quality.	Parish Council	(L)	L	Protect	L
53	St. Johns Playing Field, Hitchin	Football	District Council	One poor quality adult pitch that is overplayed by one match per week. Changing facilities expressed as poor.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council FA	Key centre (H)	S	Protect Enhance	M
54	Swinburne Recreation Ground, Hitchin	Football	District Council	Two poor quality pitches; one adult with overplay of 0.5 matches per week and one youth (11v11) with no spare capacity. Changing facilities are poor.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council FA	Key centre (H)	S	Protect Enhance	M
58	The Holwell Recreation Ground	Cricket	Parish Council	One pitch (8 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality with no spare capacity within the peak period. Pitch is used by Ickleford CC.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Parish Council ECB	Key centre (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
		Football		One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of 2.5 matches per week.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Parish Council FA				
		Bowls		A good quality green.	Sustain green quality.	Parish Council				
60	The Priory School, Hitchin	Football	Education	Two good quality adult pitches with spare capacity of 2.5 matches per week and one youth (11v11) good quality pitch with spare capacity of 2.5 matches per week.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Education FA	Education (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
		Rugby union		The Priory School has extensive links with Hitchin RUFC, the pitch was assessed as M1 / D1 (standard) with a good drainage system at the School and a good maintenance programme which is managed by the School.	Retain training use by Hitchin RUFC.	Education RFU Club				
		Tennis		Five tarmac courts assessed as standard. Not floodlit and not available for community use.	No local demand. Retain for school use.	Education LTA				
63	Top Field, Hitchin	Football	Club	One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of two matches per week. The pitch is used by Hitchin Town FC,	Retain the quality of the pitch and ensure that appropriate maintenance is in place.	Club FA	Key centre (M)	M	Protect	L
64	Walsworth Common, Hitchin	Football	District Council	One good quality youth (9v9) pitch with spare capacity of three matches per week. Changing facilities expressed as poor.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council FA	Key centre (M)	M	Protect	L
66	Wilshere-Dacre Junior School, Hitchin	Football	Education	One good quality mini soccer (5v5) pitch with spare capacity of one match per week and one good quality mini soccer (7v7) pitch with spare capacity of 2.5 matches per week.	Retain the quality for the school and ensure any community use at the school.	Education FA	Education (L)	L	Protect	L
69	Riverain Bowls Club, Hitchin	Bowls	Club	A good quality green.	Sustain green quality.	Club	Club (L)	L	Protect	L

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ⁵	Aim	Cost ⁶
70	Kimpton Bowling Club	Bowls	Club	A standard quality green.	Support club in sustaining an improving green quality.	Club	Club (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
71	Bancroft Recreation Ground, Hitchin	Bowls	Club	A good quality green. Another green on site is no longer in use and proposals for regeneration of the site would result in its permanent loss.	Sustain green quality. No demand for second green.	Club District Council	Club (L)	L	Protect	L
78	Wymondley Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Two standard quality macadam courts. Not floodlit.	Improve and sustain court quality.	Club LTA	Club (M)	M	Protect Enhance	L
81	Hitchin Lawn Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Three good quality, floodlit, macadam courts located in Bancroft Park.	Sustain court quality.	Club LTA	Club (L)	L	Protect	L
82	Bancroft Recreation Ground, Hitchin	Tennis	District Council	Closed.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council LTA	Club (H)	S	Enhance	M
87	Pirton Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Four macadam courts, all of which are floodlit. Two are assessed as good quality after recently being resurfaced, whilst the remaining two are standard quality.	Sustain court quality.	Club LTA	Club (L)	L	Protect	L
88	St Pauls Walden Tennis Club, Whitwell	Tennis	Club	One standard quality macadam court and two poor quality macadam courts. Standard quality court is floodlit.	Improve poor quality courts.	Club LTA	Club (H)	S	Protect Enhance	M
9902	Kimpton Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Three good quality, floodlit, macadam courts.	Sustain court quality.	Club LTA	Club (L)	L	Protect	L
9904	Kingshott School, Hitchin	Cricket	Education	One pitch (8 grass wickets) assessed as good with Spare capacity discounted due to non-availability for community use. One good quality non-turf wick.	Retain the quality and use for school.	Education FA RFU	Education (L)	L	Protect	L
		FTP		One full size 3G football turf pitch that is not available to community use and built in 1999.	Retain the pitch for education use.					
		Rugby union		At the independent school there are three mini poor quality pitches used for PE lessons only with no community use.	Not current local demand for community use. Retain for school use.					
9908	Hexton Recreation Ground	Football	Parish Council	One standard quality adult pitch with spare capacity of one match per week and one youth (11v11) standard quality pitch with spare capacity 1.5 matches per week. The pitches are leased to Hexton FC.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. Retain spare capacity in order to protect pitch quality.	Parish Council FA	Key centre (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
9909	Ickleford Primary School	Football	Education	One mini soccer (7v7) standard quality pitch with spare capacity of two matches per week. Pitch used by Hitchin Belles FC.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. Retain spare capacity in order to protect pitch quality.	Education FA	Education (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
9910	Mary Exton JMI School, Hitchin	Football	Education	One mini soccer (7v7) standard quality pitch with spare capacity of 2.5 matches per week. Pitch used by Hitchin Belles FC.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. Retain spare capacity in order to protect pitch quality.	Education FA	Education (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
9913	Cowards Lane, Codicote	Tennis	Parish Council	One poor quality macadam court. Not floodlit.	Improve court quality.	Parish Council	Club (H)	S	Protect Enhance	M

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ⁵	Aim	Cost ⁶
						LTA				
9914	Codicote C of E School	Football	Education	One mini soccer (7v7) and one youth (9v9) both standard quality pitches available for community use but not used.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (L)	L	Provision	L
9918	Whitehill Junior School, Hitchin	Football	Education	One mini soccer (7v7) and one youth (11v11) both standard quality pitches available for community use but not used.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provision	L
9921	Our Lady Catholic Primary School, Hitchin	Football	Education	One standard quality adult pitch not available for community use.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provision	L
9924	Kimpton Primary School	Football	Education	One mini soccer (7v7) and one youth (9v9) both standard quality pitches available for community use but not used.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provision	L
9925	Knebworth Nursery & Primary School	Football	Education	One youth (11v11) standard quality pitch available for community use but not used.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provision	L
9926	Ashwell Primary School	Football	Education	One mini soccer (7v7) standard quality pitch not available for community use.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provision	L
9929	Highover JMI School, Hitchin	Football	Education	One youth (9v9) and one youth (11v11) both standard quality pitches. Not available for community use.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provision	L
9932	Wymondley JMI School	Football	Education	One youth (9v9) and one youth (11v11) both standard quality pitches. Not available for community use.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provision	L
9933	Sandon JMI School	Football	Education	One youth (9v9) standard quality pitch available for community use but not used.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provision	L
9951	Chesfield Downs Golf & Country Club	Golf	Club	An 18-hole course privately owned by Crown Gold. Also contains a par 3 nine-hole course.	Retain course.	Club	Club (L)	L	Protect	L
9955	Tea Green Golf Centre	Golf	Club	A nine-hole par 3 course subject to a planning application for a housing development.	The privately owned nine-hole par 3 course is currently subject to a planning application for a housing development. Further investigation is required as to the development of housing and the impact on the Club.	Club	Club (M)	M	Provide	L
9956	Knebworth Golf Club	Golf	Club	An 18-hole course owned by the Club on a 75 year lease. The Club has 520 members.	Retain course.	Club	Club (L)	L	Protect	L

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ROYSTON SUMMARY

Football

Summary of pitches required to meet current and future demand

Pitch type	Actual spare capacity ⁹	Demand (match equivalent sessions)					
		Overplay	Strategic reserve (20%)	Latent demand	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult pitches	3	-	0.5	-	-2.5	1	-1.5
Youth pitches	3	-	0.5	-	-2.5	4	1.5
Mini pitches	7	-	1.5	-	-5.5	1	-4.5

- ◀ Spare capacity exists on adult and mini pitches both now and after taking into account future demand.
- ◀ Spare capacity of 2.5 match equivalents currently exists on youth pitches, however, future demand results in a potential shortfall of 1.5 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ There is no recorded overplay.
- ◀ There are 10 youth teams playing on adult pitches.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve pitch quality in order to increase potential capacity and better accommodate current/future demand.
- ◀ Retain small amounts of spare capacity where it can be used to protect/improve quality.
- ◀ Transfer youth teams playing on adult pitches to youth pitches.
- ◀ Consider 3G provision as a way to accommodate increased demand and shortfalls.

3G pitches

- ◀ There is a requirement for one full size 3G pitch within the Analysis Area and there is currently one pitch, located at Meridian School.
- ◀ The pitch is FA certified for competitive matches and available for community use.

Recommendations

- ◀ The School should ensure sinking fund is in place for eventual re-surfacing of the carpet at Meridian School.

Cricket

- ◀ There are five grass wicket pitches available for community use.
- ◀ Actual spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalents exists in the Analysis Area, with no pitches overplayed.

Recommendations

- ◀ Extend lease arrangement for Reed CC in order to provide greater security of tenure.
- ◀ Increase and improve training provision, particularly at sites that do not contain practice nets.

⁹ In match equivalent sessions

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Rugby union

- ◀ The pitch at Heath Sports Centre used for senior matches and training by Royston RUFC is played to capacity.
- ◀ The pitch used by junior and mini teams has one match equivalent of spare capacity.

Recommendations

- ◀ Sustain quality of pitches in order to continue accommodating demand.

Hockey

- ◀ There are no hockey suitable AGPs in the Analysis Area despite demand existing from Royston Hockey Club. Teams within the Club are currently displaced.
- ◀ A proposal is in place for sand-based AGP at Royston Heath.

Recommendations

- ◀ Support the proposal for a new hockey suitable AGP at Royston Heath, which would be subject to planning permission.

Tennis

- ◀ The current supply of tennis courts is deemed adequate to accommodate current and future demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve court quality to good across all sites.

Athletics

- ◀ There are no athletics tracks in the Analysis Area and no plans to create one.

Recommendations

- ◀ Seek potential sites for creation of trim trails around pitches or open spaces with 3-2-1 routes.
- ◀ Support road running clubs.

Bowls

- ◀ Royston Bowling Club provides the only green in the area.
- ◀ There is no reported demand for additional outdoor greens.

Recommendations

- ◀ Sustain good green quality at Royston Bowling Club.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Golf

- ◀ The Analysis Area contains two golf courses; Barkway Park Golf Club and Royston Golf Club.
- ◀ The current level of supply is deemed sufficient to meet demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Retain the quality of the courses and ensure appropriate maintenance is in place.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ¹⁰	Aim	Cost ¹¹
5	Barkway Recreation Ground	Football	Parish Council	Two adult good quality pitches with spare capacity of four matches per week and one mini soccer (7v7) good quality pitch with spare capacity of six matches per week. Pitches used by Royston Town FC who utilise the pitches for training and matches.	Retain quality and maintenance programme for club usage.	Parish Council FA	Key centre (L)	L	Protect	L
6	Barley Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One pitch (12 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. No spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. The ground is leased from the Council and practice nets are available.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Club ECB	Club (L)	L	Protect Enhance	M
10	Cokenach Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One pitch (10 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. With spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. There is also a non-turf wicket. The ground is leased from the Council. The Club are affiliated to Cambridgeshire Cricket Board.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Club ECB	Club (L)	L	Protect Enhance	M
14	Heath Sports Centre, Royston	Football	Private	One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of one match per week. One standard quality youth (9v9) pitch with spare capacity of two matches per week and one standard quality with spare capacity of 3.5 matches per week.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. New sand based AGP to be located at the sports centre will result in the displacement of the youth pitch. The pitch will be used by Royston Hockey Club as the Clubs home base.	Town Council FA EH	Strategic (H)	S	Protect Enhance Provide	M
		Rugby Union		The Heath Sports Centre pitches (2) were assessed as M1 / D3 (Good) - good quality pitches, Royston RUFC confirmed that they are of good quality and that it has no drainage or maintenance issues. Access to changing is via a modular build.	Retain the quality of the pitches for the Club. Investigate the potential for a purpose built changing / community facility for the Club. Ensure lease is renewed when appropriate.	Town Council RFU Club	(H)	S	Protect Enhance	M
		Tennis		Six macadam courts assessed as good quality. Floodlit.	Sustain quality.	LTA	(L)	L	Protect	L
33	Meridian School, Royston	Cricket	Education	One good quality stand-alone non-turf wicket that is available for community use but not used.	Retain the quality for the wicket and explore options for community use.	Education ECB	Education (M)	M	Protect Provide	L
		Football		One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of two matches per week and one good quality youth (11v11) pitch with spare capacity of four matches per week. Pitches are not available for community use.	Retain the quality for the wicket and explore options for community use.	Education FA	(L)	L		
		FTP		One full size floodlit 3G football turf pitch built in 2009 and funded by the football foundation. The pitch has been FA certified. Pitch is used to capacity during peak hours.	Retain the quality of the pitch. Ensure sinking funds are in place and retain all community use for football.					

¹⁰ Timescales: (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years).

¹¹ (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

		Tennis		Six macadam courts, three of which are over marked by netball. Not floodlit. Available to the community but unused.	No local demand. Retain for school use.	Education LTA	(L)	L		
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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ¹²	Aim	Cost ¹³
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38	Plaistow Recreation Field, Barley	Tennis	Parish Council	Two macadam courts assessed as standard quality. Not floodlit.	Improve and sustain quality.	Parish Council LTA	Key centre (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
43	Reed Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One pitch (17 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. With no spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. The ground is leased from the Council and has less than 10 years remaining. The ground also has practice nets.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Club ECB	Club (L)	L	Protect Enhance	M
45	Roysia Middle School, Royston	Football	Education	Five standard quality pitches. One adult with overplay of one match per week. Two youth (9v9) with spare capacity of two matches per week, one mini soccer (7v7) with spare capacity of two matches per week and one mini soccer (5v5) with spare capacity of three matches per week.	Improve the quality of the adult pitch, whilst retaining the quality of the additional pitches. Ensure community use is secured and continues.	Education FA	Education (M)	M	Protect Enhance	L
46	Royston Town Football Club	Football	Club	One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of 1.5 matches per week. The Club has aspirations to relocate however discussions have not taken place with the FA.	Retain the quality of the pitch and ensure that appropriate maintenance is in place. Ensure all partners are aware of and up to date with the Club's aspirations in terms of relocation within the district.	Club FA	Club (M)	M	Protect	L
56	The Greneway School, Royston	Cricket	Education	One pitch (6 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. With spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. The pitch is available for community use however it is not used.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and investigate the options for club usage for training and matches	Education ECB	Education (M)	M	Protect Provision	L
		Football		Five pitches located at the School. One standard quality youth (11v11) with no spare capacity, one good quality youth (9v9) pitch with spare capacity of six matches per week and two mini soccer (5v5 and 7v7) good quality pitches of five matches per week.	Retain the quality of the pitches and ensure that community use agreements are in place.	Education FA				
62	Therfield Recreation Ground	Cricket	Conservators of Therfield Heath	One pitch (8 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. With spare capacity identified in the peak period for cricket. The pitch is used by Therfield & Kelshall CC rented to the Club from the Council.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and	Club ECB	Key Centre (M)	M	Protect Provision	L
		Football		One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of four matches per week.	Retain the quality of the pitch and ensure that appropriate maintenance is in place.	Club FA				
77	Royston Bowling Club	Bowls	Club	A good quality green.	Sustain green quality.	Club	Club (L)	L	Protect	L
9905	Tannery Drift First School, Royston	Football	Education	One good quality mini soccer (7v7). The School has proposed an extension to its	Retain the quality for the school and ensure any community use at the school.	Education FA	Education (L)	L	Protect	L

¹² Timescales: (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years).

¹³ (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

				current facilities with a small multi use games area (MUGA)	Support expansion of School facilities ensuring that a community use agreement is in place.					
9911	Priory Gardens, Royston	Tennis	District Council	One macadam court assessed as standard quality. There is also an additional macadam court that is used for multi sport.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council LTA	Club (L)	L	Protect Enhance	L
9950	Barkway Park Golf Club	Golf	Club	A privately owned 18-hole course. Membership is unknown.	Retain course.	Club	Club (L)	L	Protect	L
9954	Royston Golf Club	Golf	Club	An 18-hole course rented from the Conservators of Therfield. The Club has 485 members in total.	Retain course.	Club	Club (L)	L	Protect	L

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

LETCHWORTH AND BALDOCK SUMMARY

Football

Summary of pitches required to meet current and future demand

Pitch type	Actual spare capacity ¹⁴	Demand (match equivalent sessions)					
		Overplay	Strategic reserve (20%)	Latent demand	Current total	Future demand	Total
Adult pitches	3.5	2.5	-	0.5	-0.5	3	2.5
Youth pitches	4.5	-	1	-	-3.5	10	6.5
Mini pitches	7	-	1.5	-	-5.5	2	-3.5

- ◀ Spare capacity exists on adult pitches amounting to 0.5 match equivalents of spare capacity. When taking into account future demand, there is a shortfall of 2.5 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ Similarly, spare capacity totalling 3.5 match equivalents exists on youth pitches, however, future demand results in a shortfall of 6.5 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ Spare capacity exists on mini pitches both now and in the future.
- ◀ Overplay exists on adult pitches at Bakers Close Playing Field and Grange Playing Field. No youth or mini pitches are overplayed.
- ◀ There are 19 youth teams playing on adult pitches.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve pitch quality in order to increase potential capacity and better accommodate current/future demand.
- ◀ Retain small amount of spare capacity on mini pitches to protect/improve quality.
- ◀ Alleviate overplay.
- ◀ Transfer youth teams playing on adult pitches to youth pitches.
- ◀ Consider 3G provision as a way to accommodate increased demand and shortfalls.

3G pitches

- ◀ There is a requirement for one full size 3G pitch within the Analysis Area; there are currently two (Knights Templar Sports Centre, Baldock and The Arena, Baldock).
- ◀ Both pitches are available for community use and well used.
- ◀ Letchworth Garden City Eagles FC, users of Knights Templar Sports Centre, report a need for additional provision in order to accommodate training demand.
- ◀ A new 5v5 3G FTP which is to be installed at Lordship Farm Primary school should be maximised for community usage.

Recommendations

- ◀ Seek to further investigation as to improvements to be made at the Arena following FA 3G testing.
- ◀ Ensure sinking fund is in place for eventual re-surfacing.

¹⁴ In match equivalent sessions

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- ◀ Explore possible locations for future 3G pitch provision in order to accommodate additional demand. The resurfacing of Hertfordshire FA stadia pitch, in Letchworth, to a 3G pitch is one option.

Cricket

- ◀ There are five grass wicket pitches available for community use.
- ◀ Weston Cricket Club is overplayed by 37 match equivalents, whilst no pitches have actual spare capacity.

Recommendations

- ◀ Alleviate overplay at Weston Cricket Club.
- ◀ Increase and improve training provision, particularly at sites that do not contain practice nets.

Rugby union

- ◀ Senior pitches at Letchworth Garden City RUFC are overplayed by 8.5 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ The Recreation Ground (Site ID 61) has spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ Pitches at Knights Templar Sports Centre and Fearnhill School are available to the community but unused.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve quality in order to reduce overplay at Letchworth Garden City RUFC.
- ◀ Consider additional floodlighting.

Hockey

- ◀ There is one full size hockey suitable AGP located at Letchworth Corner Sports Club, which is deemed sufficient to meet demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Ensure a sinking fund is in place.

Tennis

- ◀ The current supply of tennis courts is deemed adequate to accommodate current and future demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve court quality to good across all sites.
- ◀ Support Letchworth Sports & Tennis Club in its plans to build two new floodlit courts and a seasonal air-hall, which would be subject to planning permission.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Athletics

- ◀ There are no athletics tracks in the Analysis Area and no plans to create one.

Recommendations

- ◀ Seek potential sites for creation of trim trails around pitches or open spaces with 3-2-1 routes.
- ◀ Support road running clubs.

Bowls

- ◀ There are six bowling greens in the Analysis Area, all of which are assessed as good quality with the exception of Howard Garden, Letchworth.
- ◀ Current supply is deemed adequate to service demand, as the majority of bowling greens are considered to have spare capacity.

Recommendations

- ◀ Sustain quality of bowling greens.

Golf

- ◀ The Analysis Area contains two golf courses; Letchworth Golf Club and Letchworth Par 3 Family Golf Centre.
- ◀ The current level of supply is deemed sufficient to meet demand.

Recommendations

- ◀ Retain the quality of the courses and ensure appropriate maintenance is in place.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ¹⁵	Aim	Cost ¹⁶
1	Ashwell Recreation Ground (Ashwell CC)	Cricket	Club	One pitch (9 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. Actual spare capacity identified in the peak period for senior cricket. Changing provision available and rated as poor quality.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage. Explore future options to accommodate demand/shortfalls from other Areas/sites.	Club ECB	Club	M	Protect Provide Enhance	M
2	Avenue Park Sports and Social Club, Baldock (Baldock CC)	Cricket	District Council	One pitch (9 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. Actual spare capacity identified in the peak period for senior cricket. Changing provision available and rated as standard quality.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	Club ECB District Council	Club	M	Protect Provide Enhance	M
		Football		One poor quality youth (9v9) pitch used by Baldock Town FC with no spare capacity.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	FA District Council		H		
3	Bakers Close Playing Field, Baldock	Football	District Council	One adult poor quality pitch with overplay of one match per week. The pitch is used by Baldock Town FC and The Boot Baldock FC.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council FA	Key centre	S	Protect Provide Enhance	M
4	Baldock Road Recreation Ground, Letchworth	Football	Council	Two poor quality adult pitches with spare capacity 9of 0.5 matches per week. Used by Letchworth Garden City Eagles FC. No changing facilities exist.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council FA	Key centre	S	Protect Provide Enhance	M
11	Fearnhill School, Letchworth	Cricket	Education	One pitch (4 grass wickets) assessed as good quality. Actual spare capacity identified in the peak period. However not used by the community.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage for the school.	Education ECB	Education	L	Protect	L
		Football		One adult good quality pitch with spare capacity of three matches per week. And two youth (11v11) good quality pitches with spare capacity of eight matches per. Week. Pitches not available for community use.	Retain quality for school use.	FA				
		Rugby union		One poor quality pitch, with no community use. Indoor facilities community use is managed by Stevenage Leisure Limited, however, outdoor provision has no community use.	Retain quality for school use.	Education RFU		M	Protect Enhance	L
		Tennis		Four tarmac courts unavailable to the community and not floodlit. Assessed as standard quality.	No local demand. Retain for school use.	Education LTA		L	Protect	L
15	Herts FA County Ground, Letchworth	Football	Club	One adult good quality pitch with spare capacity of 1.5 matches per week. Home to Herts FA.	Investigate the potential for the refurbishment of the main stadia pitch to a 4G football turf pitch.	FA	Club	S	Protect Provide	H
21	Jackmans Playing Field, Letchworth	Football	District Council	Two poor quality adult pitches with no capacity. Used by Letchworth Garden City	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy	District Council	Club	S	Protect	M

¹⁵ Timescales: (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years).

¹⁶ (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

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				FC.	for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	FA			Enhance	
27	Knights Templar Sports Centre, Baldock	Cricket	Education	One non-turf pitch assessed as good quality. Actual spare capacity identified in the peak period. Available to the community and unused.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage for the school.	Education ECB	Education	L	Protect Enhance Provide	L
		Tennis		Four tarmac courts not floodlit. Available to the community and assessed as standard quality.	Improve and sustain court quality.	Education LTA		L		
		Football		One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of one match per week and one mini soccer pitch (7v7) with spare capacity of six matches per week.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality	Education FA		L		
		FTP		One full size floodlit 3G football turf pitch. That has been certified on the FA register used extensively during peak community hours by clubs such as Baldock Town FC and Letchworth Eagles FC.	Retain the quality of the pitch, ensure sinking funds are in place and retain community use hours.			L		
		Rugby union		Two poor quality mini pitches that have spare capacity of 2.5 ma5tch equivalents, however, there is no community use.	Seek to improve the quality of the pitches to accommodate any shortfalls within the analysis area.	Education RFU		M		M
28	Letchworth Corner Sports Club, Letchworth	Cricket	Club	One pitch (14 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. Actual spare capacity identified in the peak period. Leased to Letchworth Garden City CC. The ground has nets and good quality ancillary facilities.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Club ECB	Strategic	L	Protect Enhance	L
		Football		One good quality adult with spare capacity of two matches per week and one good quality mini soccer (7v7) with spare capacity of six matches per week. Leased to Whitehorn Wanderers from the Council.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality	Club FA		L		
		AGP		One full size sand dressed floodlit pitch that was refurbished in 2014 and used by Letchworth Hockey Club.	Retain the quality of the AGP with appropriate maintenance and sinking funds.	Club EH		L		
		Bowls		A good quality green.	Sustain green quality	Club		L		
29	Letchworth Garden City RUFC	Rugby Union	Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation	There are four poor quality pitches, one of which is floodlit and one of which is specifically used for training. The site is overplayed by 8.5 match equivalents. The site is home to Letchworth Garden City RUFC with a lease to 2036.	Ensure lease is renewed when appropriate. Investigate potential for further floodlights on a second pitch. Investigate access to further RFU funding to improve the pitches.	Club RFU	Club	S	Protect Enhance	H
34	Offley Sports & Social Club	Tennis	Club	Two macadam courts assessed as poor quality.	Improve court quality.	Club LTA	Club	S	Protect Enhance	M
37	Pixmore Playing Fields, Letchworth	Football	Club	Eight good quality pitches; adult, mini soccer (5v5v and 7v7) and youth (9v9) and two standard quality pitches all with spare capacity.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Council FA	Club	L	Protect	L
49	St Francis College, Letchworth	Tennis	Education	Five good quality macadam courts. Not floodlit.	Sustain quality and retain for college use.	Education LTA	Education	L	Protect	L
50	St John's Catholic Primary School,	Football	Education	One standard quality mini soccer (5v5) pitch with spare capacity of 1.5 matches per week.	Retain the quality for the school and ensure any community use at the school.	Education FA	Education	L	Protect	L

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	Baldock			One standard quality youth (11v11) youth pitch used to capacity.						
55	The Arena, Baldock	FTP	Club	One full size floodlit 3G football turf pitch built in 2007. Used extensively by Letchworth Eagles FC. Also has community use and other teams	Partners should ensure sinking funds are in place for the replacement of the pitch in 2017.	Club FA	Club	H	Enhance Protect	M
57	The Highfield School, Letchworth	Football	Education	One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of three matches per week. Not available for community use.	Retain the quality for the school and ensure any community use at the school.	Education FA	Education	L	Enhance Protect	M
		Tennis		Three tarmac courts assessed as poor quality. Not floodlit and not available to the community.	No local demand. Improve court quality and retain for school use. <i>Plans were agreed in February 2015 for the rebuilding of the School. The outdoor sports facilities will be replaced with a new multi use games area.</i>	Education LTA		S		
61	The Recreation Ground (SG4 7AA, Weston)	Football	Parish Council	One good quality adult pitch with spare capacity of three matches per week and one good quality youth (9v9) pitch with spare capacity of four matches per week.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality	Parish Council FA	Strategic	L	Protect Enhance	L
		Rugby union		One poor quality senior pitch with spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalents and no floodlights. The ground is home to Weston RUFC. Weston RUFC currently leases the ground from NHDC as an open ended lease with currently no fixed term.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality.	Parish Council RFU Club		M		M
		Tennis		Two macadam courts assessed as standard quality.	Improve and sustain quality.	Parish Council LTA		L		L
65	Weston Cricket Club	Cricket	Club	One pitch (8 grass wickets) assessed as standard quality. The pitches are overplayed by 37 matches per season. The Club express poor ancillary facilities and a need for more practice nets so that teams within the Club can train more often and for longer.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to maintain quality and sustain overplay. Overplay can be accommodated without the need for additional pitches/wickets. Support the Club to investigate funding opportunities in order to refurbish changing provision and install additional non turf practice facilities.	Education ECB	Education	S	Protect Enhance	H
73	Norton Bowling Club, Norton, Letchworth	Bowls	Club	A good quality green.	Sustain green quality.	Club	Club	L	Protect	L
74	Letchworth Garden City Bowls Club, Norton Common, Letchworth	Bowls	Club	A good quality green.	Sustain green quality.	Club	Club	L	Protect	L
75	William Bowls Club, Norton Common, Letchworth	Bowls	Club	A good quality green.	Sustain green quality.	Club District Council	Club	L	Protect	L
76	Avenue Park Bowls Club, Baldock	Bowls	Club	A good quality green.	Sustain green quality.	Club District Council	Club	L	Protect	L
83	Norton Common, Letchworth	Tennis	District Council	Seven macadam facilities (4 mini courts, 2 full size courts and a MUGA), floodlit and assessed as standard quality.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council LTA	Club	L	Protect Enhance	L

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier (priority level)	Timescales ¹⁷	Aim	Cost ¹⁸
84	Letchworth Sports & Tennis Club	Tennis	Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation	One macadam court assessed as good, three polymeric courts assessed as standard and four artificial turf courts assessed as good. All courts are floodlit.	Sustain quality.	Club LTA	Club	L	Protect	L
85	Avenue Park, Baldock	Tennis	District Council	Two macadam courts assessed as standard quality. Floodlit.	Please refer to NHDCs Green Space Strategy for action plan recommendations. Click here for link. http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/parks-and-open-spaces/green-space-strategy-2014-2019	District Council Club LTA	Key centre	L	Protect	L
86	Ashwell Tennis Club	Tennis	Club	Two macadam courts assessed as standard quality. The courts are not floodlit. 210 members access the courts.	Improve and sustain court quality.	Club LTA	Club	L	Protect Enhance	L
89	Howard Garden, Letchworth	Bowls	Club	A standard quality green.	Improve and sustain green quality.	Club District Council	Club	L	Protect Enhance	L
9901	Smallgains (off Station Road, Ashwell.)	Football	Parish Council	One good quality mini soccer (7v7) with spare capacity of six matches per week and one good quality youth (9v9) pitch with spare capacity of two matches per week.	Retain spare capacity in order to sustain / protect pitch quality.	Parish Council FA	Key centre	L	Protect	L
9903	Brandles School, Baldock	Tennis	Education	Two tarmac courts assessed as poor quality and unavailable to the community.	No local demand. Retain and improve for school use.	Education LTA	Education	S	Protect	M
9906	Hartsfield Mixed Junior & Infant School, Baldock	Football	Education	One standard quality youth (11v11) pitch with spare capacity of one match per week. Two mini soccer (7v7) standard quality pitches with spare capacity of seven matches per week. All pitches are used by Baldock Town FC.	Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to sustain quality and current usage.	Education	Education	M	Protect	L
9952	Letchworth Golf Club	Golf	Club	An 18-hole golf course home to 850 members, making it the most popular course in North Hertfordshire.	Retain course.	Club	Club	L	Protect	L
9953	Letchworth Par 3 Family Golf Centre	Golf	Club	A nine-hole par 3 course which is leased until 2023. The Club has 44 members in total.	Retain course. Ensure quality continues to improve after previously being run down.	Club	Club	L	Protect Enhance	L
9919	Garden City Academy, Letchworth	Football	Education	One youth (11v11) standard quality pitch available for community use but not used.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provide	L
9922	Wilbury Junior School, Letchworth	Football	Education	One youth (11v11) standard quality pitch available for community use but not used.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provide	L
9930	Pixmore Junior School, Letchworth	Football	Education	One mini soccer (7v7) standard quality pitch not available for community use.	Explore opportunities to open up for community use to help meet shortfalls identified.	Education	Education (M)	M	Provide	L
	Lordship Primary School	Football	Education	New 5v5 3G FTP available for school and community use (opened 2016)	Ensure community use is maximised	Education	Education (L)	L	Provide	L

¹⁷ Timescales: (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years).

¹⁸ (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

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PART 7: DELIVER THE STRATEGY AND KEEP IT ROBUST AND UP TO DATE

Delivery

The Playing Pitch Strategy seeks to provide guidance for maintenance/management decisions and investment made across North Hertfordshire. By addressing the issues identified in the Assessment Report and using the strategic framework presented in this Strategy, the current and future sporting and recreational needs of North Hertfordshire can be satisfied. The Strategy identifies where there is a deficiency in provision and identifies how best to resolve this in the future.

It is important that this document is used in a practical manner, is engaged with partners and encourages partnerships to be developed, to ensure that outdoor sports facilities are regarded as a vital aspect of community life and which contribute towards the achievement of District Council, Parish Councils, NGB, Clubs and League priorities.

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

Each member of the steering group (see executive summary) 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 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 provision. It needs to be the document people regularly turn to for information on the how the current demand is met and what actions are required to improve the situation and meet future demand. In order for this to be achieved the steering group need to have a clear understanding of how the PPS can be applied and therefore delivered.

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

Monitoring and updating

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

As a guide, if no review and subsequent update has been carried out within three years of the PPS being signed off by the steering group, then Sport England and the NGBs would consider the PPS and the information on which it is based to be out of date.

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The nature of the supply and in particular the demand for playing pitches 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 action plan could 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 that would have been built up when developing the PPS. Taking into account the time to develop the PPS this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed.

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

- ◀ How the delivery of the recommendations and action plan has progressed and any changes required to the priority afforded to each action (e.g. the priority of some may increase following the delivery of others)
- ◀ How the 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 playing pitch provision in the area
- ◀ Monitors, evaluates and reviews progress with the delivery of the recommendations and action plan
- ◀ Shares lessons learnt from how the PPS has been used and how it has been applied to a variety of circumstances
- ◀ Ensures the PPS is used effectively to input into any new opportunities to secure improved provision and influence relevant programmes and initiatives
- ◀ Maintains links between all relevant parties with an interest in playing pitch provision in the area;
- ◀ Reviews the need to update the PPS along with the supply and demand information and assessment work on which it is based. Further to review the group should either:
 - ◀ Provide a short annual progress and update paper;
 - ◀ 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).

Alongside the regular steering group meetings a good way to keep the strategy up to date and maintain relationships may be to hold annual sport specific meetings with the pitch sport NGBs and other relevant parties. These meetings could look to update the key supply and demand information, if necessary amend the assessment work, track progress with implementing the recommendations and action plan and highlight any new issues and opportunities.

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

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 steering group 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 working, including for example, grounds maintenance and sports development departments, to ensure that this is achieved and that results are used to inform subsequent annual sports facility development plans. Results should be shared with partners via a consultative mechanism.

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Checklist

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

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

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

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APPENDIX ONE: STRATEGIC CONTEXT

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

National context

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

Sport England: A Sporting Habit for Life (2012-2017)

****a new strategy is currently being developed by Sport England for release in 2016.***

In 2017, five years after the Olympic Games, Sport England aspires to transforming sport in England so that it is a habit for life for more people and a regular choice for the majority. Launched in January 2012 the strategy sets out how Sport England will invest over one billion pounds of National Lottery and Exchequer funding during the five year plan period. The investment will be used to create a lasting community sport legacy by growing sports participation at the grassroots level following the 2012 London Olympics. The strategy will:

- ◀ See more people starting and keeping a sporting habit for life
- ◀ Create more opportunities for young people
- ◀ Nurture and develop talent
- ◀ Provide the right facilities in the right places
- ◀ Support local authorities and unlock local funding
- ◀ Ensure real opportunities for communities

The vision is for England to be a world leading sporting nation where many more people choose to play sport. There are five strategic themes including:

- ◀ Maximise value from current NGB investment
- ◀ Places, People, Play
- ◀ Strategic direction and market intelligence
- ◀ Set criteria and support system for NGB 2013-17 investment
- ◀ Market development

A specific target is to increase the number of 14 to 25 year olds playing sport. To accomplish these aims the strategy sets out a number of outcomes:

- ◀ 4,000 secondary schools in England will be offered a community sport club on its site with a direct link to one or more NGBs, depending on the local clubs in a school's area.
- ◀ County sports partnerships will be given new resources to create effective links locally between schools and sport in the community.
- ◀ All secondary schools that wish to do so, will be supported to open up, or keep open, their sports facilities for local community use and at least a third of these will receive additional funding to make this happen.

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- ◀ At least 150 further educational colleges will benefit from a full time sports professional who will act as a College Sport Maker.
- ◀ Three quarters of university students aged 18-24 will get the chance to take up a new sport or continue playing a sport they played at school or college.
- ◀ A thousand of our most disadvantaged local communities will get a Door Step Club.
- ◀ Two thousand young people on the margins of society will be supported by the Dame Kelly Holmes Legacy Trust into sport and to gain new life skills.
- ◀ Building on the success of the Places People Play, a further £100 million will be invested in facilities for the most popular sports.
- ◀ A minimum of 30 sports will have enhanced England Talent Pathways to ensure young people and others fulfil their potential.

National Planning Policy Framework

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

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

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

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

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

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

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The FA National Game Strategy (2015 – 2019)

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

The Football Association (FA)	<p>Working to deliver the FA National Facilities Strategy (2015 – 2019)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Sustain and Increase Participation ◀ Ensure access to education sites to accommodate the game. ◀ Help players to be the best that they can be and provide opportunities for them to progress from grassroots to elite ◀ Recruit, retain and develop a network of qualified referees ◀ Support clubs, leagues and other competition providers to develop a safe, inclusive and positive football experience for everyone. ◀ Support Clubs and Leagues to become sustainable businesses, understanding and serving the needs of players and customers. ◀ Improve grass pitches through the pitch improvement programme to improve existing facilities and changing rooms ◀ Deliver new and improved facilities including new Football Turf Pitches. ◀ Work with priority Local Authorities enabling 50% of mini-soccer and youth matched to be played on high quality artificial grass pitches
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Champion Counties – England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Strategic Plan (2013 – 2017)

“Champion Counties” - continues to focus on the four pillars, as identified in the ECB’s previous strategy: “Grounds to Play”. The pillars are:

- ◀ Energising people and partnerships through effective leadership and governance
- ◀ Building a **Vibrant** domestic game through operational excellence and delivering a competition structure with appointment to view
- ◀ **Engaging** participants through the maintenance of existing facilities, supporting club/school links , supporting volunteers and expanding women’s and disabilities cricket
- ◀ Delivering **Successful** England teams and world class global events

The key measures for the life span of the plan are as follows:-

- ◀ Increase the subset of participation measured by Sport England’s Active People Survey from 183,400 to 197,500.
- ◀ Increase attendances at LV= CC, YB50 and FLT20 by 200,000.
- ◀ Complete sponsorship and broadcasting agreements through 2019.
- ◀ Win the World Test Championship and Women’s
- ◀ World Cup in 2017.
- ◀ Win The Ashes and World Cup in 2015.
- ◀ Expand the number of clubs participating in NatWest Cricket Force from 2,000 to 2,200.
- ◀ Complete co-operation agreements for each of the 39 County Boards with their First Class County or Minor County partner.
- ◀ Deliver two world class global events in 2017 which exceed budget and exceed customer satisfaction targets.
- ◀ Increase the number of cricket’s volunteers to 80,000 by 2017.

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- ◀ Expand the number of participants in women's and disabilities cricket by 10% by 2017.
- ◀ Award all Major Matches through 2019 by December 2014.
- ◀ To increase the number of TwelfthMan members from 220,000 to 250,000 by 2017.
- ◀ Complete an approved Community Engagement programme with all 18 First Class Counties and MCC.
- ◀ Provide First Class Counties with total fee payments of £144m between 2014 and 2017.
- ◀ For each £1 provided in facility grants through the Sport England Whole Sport Plan grant programme ensure a multiplier of 3 with other funding partners.
- ◀ Provide a fund of £8.1m of capital investment to enhance floodlights, sightscreens, replay screens, power sub-stations and broadcasting facilities at First Class County venues.
- ◀ Provide an interest-free loan fund to community clubs of £10 million.
- ◀ Leverage the 2014 tour by India to engage with a minimum of 10,000 cricket supporters of Asian origin. Qualify and engage 50 Level 4 coaches to support the development of professional cricketers.
- ◀ Expand the number of coaches who have received teacher level 1, 2 or 3 qualifications to 50,000.
- ◀ Deliver an annual fixture for the Unicorns against a touring (Full, A or U19) ICC member nation.
- ◀ Provide a fund of £2 million for community clubs to combat the impact of climate change.
- ◀ Introduce a youth T20 competition engaging 500 teams by 2017.

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

The recently launched RFU National Facility Strategy 2013-2017 provides a framework for development of high-quality, well-managed facilities that will help to strengthen member clubs and grow the game in communities around them. In conjunction with partners, this strategy will assist and support clubs and other organisations, so that they can continue to provide quality opportunities for all sections of the community to enjoy the game. It sets out the broad facility needs of the sport and identifies investment priorities to the game and its key partners. It identifies that with 470 grass root clubs and 1500 players there is a continuing need to invest in community club facilities in order to:

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

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

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

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

- ◀ Upgrade and transform social, community and catering facilities, which can support the generation of additional revenues

PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

- ◀ Facility upgrades, which result in an increase in energy-efficiency, in order to reduce the running costs of clubs
- ◀ Pitch furniture, including rugby posts and pads, pitch side spectator rails and grounds maintenance equipment

England Hockey (EH)

'The right pitches in the right places'¹⁹

In 2012, EH released its facility guidance which is intended to assist organisations wishing to build or protect hockey pitches for hockey. It identifies that many existing hockey AGPs are nearing the end of their useful life as a result of the installation boom of the 90's. Significant investment is needed to update the playing stock and protect the sport against inappropriate surfaces for hockey as a result of the rising popularity of AGPs for a number of sports. EH is seeking to invest in, and endorse clubs and hockey providers which have a sound understanding of the following:

- ◀ Single System – clubs and providers which have a good understanding of the Single System and its principles and are appropriately placed to support the delivery.
- ◀ ClubsFirst accreditation – clubs with the accreditation are recognised as producing a safe effective and child friendly hockey environment
- ◀ Sustainability – hockey providers and clubs will have an approved development plan in place showing their commitment to developing hockey, retaining members and providing an insight into longer term goals. They will also need to have secured appropriate tenure.

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

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

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

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

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

¹⁹

<http://englandhockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=1143§ionTitle=The+Right+Pitches+in+the+Right+Places>

PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

- ◀ Grow our Participation
- ◀ Deliver International Success
- ◀ Increase our Visibility
- ◀ Enhance our Infrastructure
- ◀ Be a strong and respected Governing Body

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

‘The right pitches in the right places’²⁰

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England Hockey Strategy

EH’s new Club Strategy will assist hockey clubs to retain more players and recruit new members to ultimately grow their club membership. EH will be focusing on participation growth through this strategy for the next two years. The EH Strategy is based on seven core themes. These are:

- 1 Having great leadership
- 2 Having Appropriate and Sustainable Facilities
- 3 Inspired and Effective People
- 4 Different Ways to Play
- 5 Staying Friendly, Social and Welcoming
- 6 Being Local with Strong Community Connections

²⁰

<http://englandhockey.co.uk/page.asp?section=1143§ionTitle=The+Right+Pitches+in+the+Right+Places>

PLAYING PITCH ASSESSMENT

7 Stretching and developing those who want it

Raising Our Game: The Strategic Plan for England Golf (2014-2017)

The recently launched England Golf Strategy 2014-2017 focuses on preventing the continued decline of people participating in golf. Since 2004, membership at clubs has declined by around 180,000 members, which is seriously challenging the economy and culture of the sport within England. Active People Survey data shows a current latent demand of 830,000 adults, with a further 2 million golfers playing independently.

The ambition of the strategy is to:

- ◀ Reverse the decline in club membership which has been occurring annually since 2005 and stabilise club membership at the July 2014 level of 675,000 members
- ◀ Increase the number of people who play golf at least once a week from the baseline of 750,000 in 2014 to 910,000 by March 2017.
- ◀ Strengthen the talent development pathway from club to national level, leading to even more international success for English players.
- ◀ Improve communications, governance and partnerships at all levels within England Golf.

There are a number of measurable performance indicators within this strategic plan, with progress tracked and reported on a regular basis. There will be an annual review of progress in April each year, commencing in April 2015 and this will be reported as part of the Annual Report of England Golf. To achieve its aims, England Golf will concentrate on seven key themes:

- ◀ More players - Increasing the number of players who play golf regularly.
- ◀ More members - Increasing the number of players in club membership.
- ◀ Stronger clubs - Supporting clubs to attract and retain members and to achieve a sustainable business model.
- ◀ Winning golfers - Identifying and developing talented golfers at every level, leading to international amateur success.
- ◀ Outstanding championships - Providing excellent championships and competitions for golfers of all levels.
- ◀ Improved image - Changing the perception of golf and improving communications within the sport.
- ◀ Excellent governance - Improving the governance, building the infrastructure and strengthening the partnerships to develop golf in England.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

2015-2018 British Tennis Strategy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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England Athletics: Whole Sport Plan 2013-2017

The England Athletics plan outlines a strategy to attract and retain 3 million athletics participants by 2017, from a current base of 1.9 million as measured by Active People, whilst cementing athletics as the most popular individual sporting activity in England.

“The ambition is to make England an athletic nation. Traditional athletics for some, running for many, fitness for all”.

In order to achieve this, the goals of the strategic plan are:

- ◀ To grow and sustain participation levels in the sport.
- ◀ To improve the experiences of every participant in the sport.
- ◀ To improve performance levels and to grow the next generation of senior athletic champions.

The plan also reflects a total commitment to delivering an inclusive sport, setting specific disability targets that are woven into the core measures for growth and retention of participation. Key personnel within the England Athletics staffing structure will now lead this area of work, focusing on:

- ◀ Delivering inclusive formats of the sport.
- ◀ National policy and programme development.
- ◀ Coaching and teaching resources.

UK Athletics Facilities Strategy (2014-2019)

Facilities are essential to attracting, retaining and developing athletes of the future. Having the right facilities in the right place will be crucial in meeting growing demand, increasing participation in physical activity and athletics, improving the health of the

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

nation and supporting a new generation of athletes in clubs and schools through to national and world class level.

UKA and the Home Country Athletics Federations (HCAFs) recognise the challenges faced by facility owners and venue operators, and our 5 year Facility Strategy (2014-2019) uses a Track & Field facility model designed to support a sustainable UK network of development, training and competition venues that meet Home Country needs aligned to UKA's Athlete/Participant Development Model. In addition to Track and Field provision, UKA recognises the huge amount of club activity that takes place on roads, paths and trails and the strategy also maps out a plan for future "running" facilities.

The strategy does not seek to identify priority facilities, clubs or geographical areas. Instead, it provides the direction and guidance that will enable the four Home Country Athletics Federations (England Athletics, Athletics Northern Ireland, Scottish Athletics and Welsh Athletics) to establish their own priorities and deliver the principles of the UKA Facilities Strategy within their own national context.

UKA's 2014-19 Facilities Strategy key outcomes:

- ◀ Increased participation across all athletics disciplines
- ◀ Increased club membership by providing facilities that support a participation pathway from novice through to club member
- ◀ Increased talent pool
- ◀ Long term improvement in the development of athletes of all ages and abilities
- ◀ Securing the long term future of existing facilities
- ◀ More attractive and inspiring facilities for existing and potential athletes
- ◀ Improving the athletics experience for all participants
- ◀ Improved relationships and interactions between stakeholders, particularly clubs and facility operators

British Crown Green Bowling Association

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

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

Bowls England: Strategic Plan 2014-2017

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 31st March 2017.

- ◀ 115,000 individual affiliated members.

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- ◀ 1,500 registered coaches.
- ◀ Increase total National Championship entries by 10%.
- ◀ Increase total national competition entries by 10%.
- ◀ 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.

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APPENDIX TWO: FUNDING PLAN

Funding opportunities

In addition to using the planning system to lever in contributions through Section 106 or CIL, it is recognised that external partner funding will need to be sought to deliver much of the action plan. Although seeking developer contributions in applicable situations and other local funding/community schemes could go some way towards meeting deficiencies and/or improving provision, other potential/match sources of funding should be investigated. Below is a list of current funding sources that are relevant for community improvement projects involving sports facilities.

Awarding body	Description
Big Lottery Fund http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/	Big invests in community groups and to projects that improve health, education and the environment
Sport England : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement Fund • Sportsmatch • Small Grants • Protecting Playing Fields • Inspired Facilities • Strategic Facilities Fund http://www.sportengland.org/funding.aspx http://www.sportengland.org/funding/our-different-funds/strategic-facilities/	Sport England is keen to marry funding with other organisations that provide financial support to create and strengthen the best sports projects. Applicants are encouraged to maximise the levels of other sources of funding, and projects that secure higher levels of partnership funding are more likely to be successful.
Football Foundation http://www.footballfoundation.org.uk/	This trust provides financial help for football at all levels, from national stadia and FA Premier League clubs down to grass-roots local development.
Rugby Football Foundation - The Grant Match Scheme www.rugbyfootballfoundation.org	The Grant Match Scheme provides easy-to-access grant funding for playing projects that contribute to the recruitment and retention of community rugby players. Grants are available on a 'match funding' 50:50 basis to support a proposed project. Projects eligible for funding include: 1. Pitch Facilities – Playing surface improvement, pitch improvement, rugby posts, floodlights. 2. Club House Facilities – Changing rooms, shower facilities, washroom/lavatory, and measures to facilitate segregation (e.g. women, juniors). 3. Equipment – Large capital equipment, pitch maintenance capital equipment (e.g. mowers).
EU Life Fund http://ec.europa.eu/environment/funding/intro_en.htm	LIFE is the EU's financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU.
EH Capital Investment Programme (CIP)	The CIP fund is for the provision of new pitches and re-surfacing of old AGPs. It forms part of EH's 4 year Whole Sport's Plan.

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Awarding body	Description
National Hockey Foundation http://www.thenationalhockeyfoundation.com/	The Foundation primarily makes grants to a wide range of organisations that meet one of our chosen areas of focus: Young people and hockey. Enabling the development of hockey at youth or community level. Smaller Charities.
Lawn Tennis Association http://www.lta.org.uk/venue-management/	Applying for facility funding British Tennis has £5.125m million pounds of new funding per annum to enhance tennis facilities, with the aim of getting more people playing more often. The LTA have three funding streams available to support clubs and community projects. Easy Access Loan Funding Any LTA registered club that can demonstrate that the facility development will retain or grow membership can apply for this funding at any time. Growing the Game – now closed Any LTA registered venue that can demonstrate sustainable growth through facility development and a tennis development plan can apply for this funding. The Community Tennis Fund Any registered venue that can demonstrate the ability to grow community participation through tennis facility development. This fund will be allocated throughout the year.

Inspired Facilities

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

The programmes three priorities are:

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

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

Strategic Facilities Fund

Facilities are fundamental in providing more people with the opportunity to play sport. The supply of the right facilities in the right areas is key to getting more people to play sport. Sport England recognises the considerable financial pressures that local authorities

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are currently under and the need to strategically review and rationalise leisure stock so that cost effective and financially sustainable provision is available in the long-term. Sport England has a key role to play in the sector, from influencing the local strategic planning and review of sports facility provision to investing in major capital projects of strategic importance.

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

Key features which applications must demonstrate are:

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

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

The Strategic Facilities Fund will prioritise projects that:

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

Projects will need to demonstrate how the grant will deliver against Sport England's strategic priorities. The funding available is for the development of the capital infrastructure, which can contribute to the costs of new build, modernisation or

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

refurbishment and purchasing of major fixed equipment as part of the facility development.

Funder's requirements

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

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

Indicative costs

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

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

These costs are broken down into two areas:

- ◀ Facility capital costs
- ◀ Lifecycle costs

Facility capital costs

Facility capital costs are calculated using estimates of what it typically costs to build modern sports facilities, including fees and external works.

Costs are updated regularly in conjunction with information provided by the BCIS (Building Cost Information Service) and other Quantity Surveyors.

The document is often referred to as the Planning Kitbag costs as the figures are often used by Planners and Developers when reviewing potential Planning Contributions to site developments.

Facility life cycle costs

Life cycle costs are how much it costs to keep a facility open and fit-for-purpose during its lifetime.

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It includes costs for major replacement and planned preventative maintenance (day to day repairs).

The costs are expressed as a percentage of the capital cost.

The importance of regular maintenance and the expense in maintaining a facility throughout its life should not be underestimated.