



SANDWELL COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

October 2014

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

Integrity, Innovation, Inspiration

1-2 Frecheville Court ◀ off Knowsley Street ◀ Bury BL9 0UF
T 0161 764 7040 ◀ F 0161 764 7490 ◀ E mail@kcp.co.uk ◀ www.kkp.co.uk



6543

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

CONTENTS

PART 1: INTRODUCTION	5
PART 2: KEY ISSUES TO ADDRESS	7
PART 3: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK.....	9
PART 4: AIMS	11
PART 5: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	12
PART 6: SPORT SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES.....	26
PART 7: ACTION PLAN	28
PART 8: CONCLUSIONS.....	67
PART 9: MONITORING AND REVIEW	68
APPENDIX ONE: STRATEGIC CONTEXT	69
APPENDIX TWO: FUNDING PLAN	75

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) for Sandwell. 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 2014 and 2019. The PPS covers the following playing pitches and outdoor pitch sports:

- ◀ Football pitches
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Rugby pitches
- ◀ Hockey/artificial grass pitches (AGPs)
- ◀ Golf courses
- ◀ Tennis courts
- ◀ Netball courts
- ◀ Athletics tracks
- ◀ Bowling greens

The Strategy is capable of:

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

1.1: Structure

The Strategy has been developed from research and analysis of playing pitch provision and usage within Sandwell to provide:

- ◀ A vision for the future improvement and prioritisation of playing pitches (including ancillary facilities).
- ◀ A series of strategic objectives which provide a strategic framework for the improvement, maintenance, development and, as appropriate, rationalisation of the playing pitch stock.
- ◀ A series of sport by sport objectives which provide a strategic framework for sport led improvements to provision.
- ◀ A prioritised area-by-area action plan (where action is deemed necessary).

The Strategy and Action Plan recommends a number of priority projects for Sandwell, which should be implemented from 2014 to 2019. It is outlined to provide a framework for improvement and, although resources may not currently be in place to implement it, potential partners and possible sources of external funding will be identified.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

There is a need to build key partnerships between the Council, 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 Borough Council to take a strategic lead is more limited (except in terms of Section 106 Agreements). 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.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

PART 2: KEY ISSUES TO ADDRESS

Using the key issues identified in the Assessment Report, the following priorities are identified for each sport and provide the context for the development of the aims and objectives within the Strategy.

2.1 Football pitches

- ◀ Drainage issues resulting in poor or standard quality pitches, particularly on popular and well used/overplayed sites.
- ◀ No dedicated youth 11v11 pitches in Sandwell (teams use adult size pitches).
- ◀ Inadequate changing provision at some sites.
- ◀ Imported and exported demand for youth and mini teams.
- ◀ An overall decline in adult 11v11 football which has resulted in a surplus of adult pitches across Sandwell.
- ◀ Future shortfall of youth 11v11 pitches (4.5 in total) and as such any current spare capacity should be retained on youth pitches.
- ◀ Future shortfall of 7v7 mini pitches (3 in total) and 5v5 mini pitches (2.5 in total) and as such any current spare capacity should be retained on youth pitches.

2.2 Cricket pitches

- ◀ Poor or standard quality pitches.
- ◀ Availability and quality of changing facilities, particularly on parks sites.
- ◀ Minimal spare pitch capacity and four sites are overplayed by a total of 59 match sessions per season. In addition, seven sites are played to capacity.
- ◀ Future (one square/ground), latent (two squares/grounds) and displaced (two squares/grounds) demand cannot be accommodated on the current supply of grass wickets.
- ◀ New pitches would therefore be required to accommodate displaced, latent and/or future demand.
- ◀ Further investigation is required with regards to Heathfield Close as a potential site to help meet demand expressed.

2.3 Rugby union pitches

- ◀ There is minimal spare capacity in Oldbury (Warley RFC) and Tipton (St John's Rec) to accommodate current demand.
- ◀ There is a deficit in Wednesbury to accommodate current demand due to poor pitch quality.
- ◀ There are shortfalls in Wednesbury (3.5 pitches) and Oldbury (0.5 pitches) to accommodate future demand.
- ◀ RSA Academy could potentially be accessed as a second site if future demand requires it.
- ◀ If both drainage and maintenance were improved to good quality at Wednesbury RFC there would be capacity for all current and future demand. Securing the site would prevent casual use and would also improve pitch quality.

2.4 AGPs

- ◀ Ormiston Forge AGP is not floodlit.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- ◀ Poor or standard quality AGPs where carpets will need replacing in the future: (Ormiston Sandwell Academy and Hadley Stadium).

Hockey

- ◀ Adequate current supply of AGPs to service current provision for hockey in Sandwell.
- ◀ The refurbishment of Ormiston Sandwell Academy sand based AGP could provide a home ground for West Bromwich Hockey Club if George Salter Academy was to become unplayable or converted to 3G.

Football

- ◀ The FA model suggests that there is a need for an additional two full size 3G pitches to service the number of football clubs in Sandwell.
- ◀ In addition, just under half of football clubs report demand for access to 3G pitches (albeit that cost is an inhibiting factor) and future demand to play competitively on 3G is likely to increase further.

2.5 Other sports

Golf

- ◀ Dudley Golf Club and Sandwell Park Golf Club report that investment to improve drainage is required in the future if course quality is to improve.
- ◀ All Sandwell residents are serviced by a golf course within a 20 minute drive time. There is spare capacity at all courses for current demand and furthermore any future demand.

Tennis

- ◀ Poor or standard quality courts. Priority for improvements should link to availability of courts for public/community use.

Netball

- ◀ All demand for matches is accommodated on the current supply of courts and this is supported by the Leagues which suggest that there are enough courts in Sandwell to satisfy demand.
- ◀ This however, is dependent on Phoenix Collegiate North remaining available. If this venue closed there would be a need to find an alternative six court floodlit site. Currently there are no others within Sandwell.

Athletics

- ◀ To retain and maintain current athletics facilities at Tipton Sports Academy and review options for in Sandwell Hadley Stadium.
- ◀ Tipton Academy meets the needs of Tipton Harriers and is well used but there is capacity to increase membership.

Bowling greens

- ◀ Addressing spare capacity and maximising use of bowling greens, particularly for pay and play opportunities.
- ◀ Lack of junior participation to sustain future demand.
- ◀ Where demand exists, ensuring that quality is sustained or improved.
- ◀ Notwithstanding that there may be additional demand for bowling greens in the future; there is an approximate current oversupply of seven greens in Sandwell based on a membership capacity analysis. Considering only council greens, there is a theoretical oversupply of one green.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

PART 3: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

3.1 Context

The Playing Pitch Strategy will provide a strategic approach to playing pitch provision in Sandwell. During times of change for local authorities, the Strategy will provide direction and set priorities for pitch sports. The Strategy sits within the context of the Sandwell Scorecard, which has identified four key priorities which include, Great people, Great Place, Great Prospects, Great Performance. Against this backdrop the rationale for producing the Strategy is that it will help to deliver on the broader agenda to increase participation in sport, which is key to improving health and wellbeing outcomes and which can also play an important role in the development of confidence and skills among individuals. The objects of the Strategy extend across multiple service areas and include:

- ◀ To help deliver the public health agenda
- ◀ To inform the investment strategy for sport initiatives
- ◀ To inform local plan policy and potential developer contributions
- ◀ To set the PPS within the context of the local plan and wider strategies for parks and green space, in particular the Green Space Strategy 2010.
- ◀ To inform sports development initiatives
- ◀ To reflect wider property services asset reviews
- ◀ To help facilitate community use of outdoor facilities on education sites
- ◀ The revised green Space Audit 2013

Sandwell has invested heavily in sports provisions in the past few years. The overall sport offer in the Borough is good with demand increasing. The recent winters has had an impact on grass pitch quality at some locations. Investment in changing rooms and new provision provides a positive picture for Sandwell. Those grass sports pitches identified as poor are primarily associated with localised flooding and drainage problems.

Sandwell's birth rate has increased significantly over a ten year period from a figure of 3,727 in 2002 to 5,063 in 2011/12. The increase has had a direct impact on admission to primary schools, with the LA taking action to increase reception capacity (first year entry to primary school), which at 2010 stood at 4236. A programme of expansion commencing from 2011 has seen the LA provide 535 new reception places up to September 2013. The new provision has been achieved by permanently expanding 17 existing maintained schools and has increased reception capacity up to 4771. The programme of expansion will continue with proposals to provide a further 16 forms of entry (480 reception places) by September 2016.

Whilst the LA's focus has been on providing significant additional primary provision since 2011 there will be an inevitable increase in demand in the secondary sector and this is projected to become apparent from 2015/16. Demand will peak for year 7 places (first year entry to secondary school) across Sandwell in 2019 and it is projected that an additional 30 forms of entry (4,500 secondary places) will be required across the secondary sector by 2024.

The LA's PPS will need to provide scope to assess the impact that this significant increase in school population will place upon current facilities, and how future capacity for community use of school sites will be affected. Sites identified through the Strategy as poor quality will require full consideration by the LA with a view to their recycling to support education

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

delivery, and to ease the resultant pressure on school sites that will arise from the statutory expansions of schools to provide additional places.

3.2 Links to other strategies

There are a number of related strategies developed by Sandwell Council which have been adopted or are in the process of being developed, which will inform or be informed by the Playing Pitch Strategy:

- ◀ Sandwell Scorecard
- ◀ Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- ◀ Corporate Asset management Plan and capital Strategy 2010-2015
- ◀ Sandwell Local Plan
- ◀ Green Space Strategy 2010
- ◀ Community Infrastructure Open Space Quality and Quantity
- ◀ Street scene Business Plan
- ◀ Sports Facilities Strategy

3.3 Vision

Therefore, this study has been developed on the basis of the above strategic drivers in order to ensure that it reflects the Council's wider ambitions. A vision has been set out to provide a clear focus with desired outcomes for the Sandwell Playing Pitch Strategy:

'To have an accessible range of outdoor sports facilities which offer opportunities for all sections of the community to participate in both formal and informal sport, contributing to a higher quality of life.'

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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 improving quality and management of sites

AIM 3

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

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

PART 5: STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The objectives for the 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.

AIM 1

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

Objectives:

- a. Enhance local planning policy and protect sports facilities.
- b. Secure tenure and access to sites for high quality, development minded clubs, through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.

Objective (a) – Enhance local planning policy and protect sports facilities

Based on the outcomes of the playing pitch strategy enhance local planning policy and emphasise the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF paragraph 74). 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.

Protect the existing supply of sports facilities where it is needed for meeting current or future needs. The majority of facilities from the assessment report justify protection. Local plan policies should protect facilities and the scope to legally safeguard long term use of strategically important sites to the community such as the strategic sites and key centres identified in objective (d) should be considered. For example, through the Fields in Trust programme (www.fieldsintrust.org).

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Where there is no need to protect facilities and the assessment shows scope for rationalisation, the following should be considered as a first stage when making any decisions about disposal:

- ◀ Is the facility surplus to requirements not only now but also in the future?
- ◀ Could the facility be used for another type of sport for which there is a deficit?
- ◀ Can current users be sufficiently accommodated at another appropriate site taking into consideration access, cost and locality?
- ◀ Consideration as to the quality of the facilities (including ancillary facilities).
- ◀ The long term sustainability of the facility.
- ◀ The level of current use and the impact on the spatial distribution of facilities across Sandwell of closing a facility.

It may be appropriate to dispose of some existing playing field sites (that are of low value i.e. one/two pitch sites with no changing provision) to generate investment towards creating bigger better quality sites (Strategic Sites) in order to meet the objectives of the Strategy and to develop the hierarchy of sites (see objective d).

The following criteria should be established as the basis for negotiations to mitigate the loss of playing field provision:

- ◀ Ensure that where playing fields are lost through alternative development or closure, that the type of provision of the same or improved standard is provided to meet demand identified.
- ◀ Where pitches are lost due to redevelopment of the site, compensatory re-provision or an equivalent contribution for re-investment into new pitches will be sought as appropriate in an alternative accessible location.
- ◀ Where opportunities exist to additionally increase pitch quality (and therefore pitch capacity to accommodate more matches) this should be a priority (please refer to the action plan to identify quality deficiencies in the appropriate area).
- ◀ All negotiations and mitigation packages should be raised and discussed in partnership with the relevant NGB and Sport England through the Playing Pitch Strategy Steering Group.

In terms of mitigation it is important, where possible and appropriate for a particular sport, that this takes place in an area that is accessible to the playing field that is lost to avoid a scenario where a redundant playing field is lost in an area of the District which has deficiencies and is replaced on the other side of the District.

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:

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

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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

Local sports clubs should be supported to achieve sustainability across a range of areas including management, membership, funding, facilities, volunteers and partnership working. For example, the Council should continue to 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)¹. Clubs should also be encouraged to work with partners locally whether volunteer support agencies or linking with local businesses.

As well as improving the quality of well-used, local authority sites, there are a number of sites which have poor quality (or no) ancillary facilities. It is recommended that security of tenure should 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.

There is potential for sites in Sandwell to be leased to sports clubs and/or organisations. Each club will be required to meet service and/or strategic objectives set out by the Council. However, an additional set of criteria should be considered, which takes into account the quality of the club, aligned to its long term development objectives and sustainability.

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

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' (objective 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>

¹ <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/cascbenefits>

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

The Council can further recognise the value of Clubmark/Charter Standard 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.

Club outcomes for lease agreements

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

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

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

Community Asset Transfer Policy

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.

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://assettoolkit.sportengland.org/>

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

AIM 2

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

Objectives:

- c. Seek to address overplay
- d. Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) to the management and improvement of sites.
- e. Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding
- f. Establish an approach to securing developer contributions.
- g. Establish a more coherent, structured relationship with schools to maximise community use of educational facilities.

Objective (c) – Seek to address overplay

Priority in the short term (given limited resources) should be directed to poor quality club sites with security of tenure. This standard, based on an achievable target using existing quality scoring to provide a baseline, should be used to identify deficiencies and hence investment should be prioritised to those sites which fail to meet the proposed quality standard (using the site audit database, provided in electronic format). The policy approach to these outdoor recreation facilities achieving these standards should be to enhance quality and therefore the planning system should seek to protect them.

‘Good’ quality refers to facilities that have, for example, good grass cover, an even surface, are free from vandalism, litter etc., have access for disabled people and are supported by good quality ancillary facilities including changing accommodation, toilets and car parking. While ‘standard’ quality refers to facilities that have, for example adequate grass cover, minimal signs of wear and tear, reasonable changing accommodation and the goalposts may be secure but in need of minor repair. Please refer to the Sport England quality assessments.

Improving pitch/surface quality as a priority

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:

Sport	Pitch type	Matches
Football	Adult pitches	3
	Youth pitches	4
	Mini pitches	6

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Sport	Pitch type	Matches
Rugby union	Pipe and Slit Drained and a good level of maintenance (D3/M2)	3.5
	Pipe drained and a good level of maintenance (D2/M2)	3.25
	Natural (adequate) drainage and a good level of maintenance (D1/M2)	3
Rugby league	Senior	3
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season

There are also a number of 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.

There is also a need to balance pitch improvements alongside the transfer of play to alternative pitch sites. Therefore, 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.

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

To allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach the Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of playing pitch sites and associated facilities. Please refer to Part 7: Action Plan for the proposed hierarchy.

Objective (e) – Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding

Partners, led by the Council, should ensure that appropriate funding secured for improved sports provision are directed to areas of need, underpinned by a robust strategy for improvement in 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 the Council should maintain a regular dialogue with local partners and through the Playing Pitch Steering Group.

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

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

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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

Sport England research suggests the following:

Economic impact:

- ◀ In 2010, sport and sport-related activity contributed £20.3 billion to the English economy – 1.9% of the England total.
- ◀ The contribution to employment is even greater – sport and sport-related activity is estimated to support over 400,000 full-time equivalent jobs, 2.3% of all jobs in England.

Health impact:

- ◀ Physical activity, including sport, is linked to reduced risk of over 20 illnesses, including cardiovascular disease and some cancers.
- ◀ Taking part in regular sport can save between £1,750 and £6,900 in healthcare costs per person.

Social and cultural impact:

- ◀ Published studies show the positive effects of sport on education include improved attainment, lower absenteeism and drop-out, and increased progression to higher education. For instance, young people's participation in sport improves their numeracy scores by 8 per cent on average above non-participants.
- ◀ Other studies have found that sport programmes aimed at youths at risk of criminal behaviour can enhance self-esteem and reduce reoffending.

Objective (f) – Establish an approach to securing developer contributions

It is important that this strategy informs policies and emerging supplementary planning documents by setting out the approach to securing sport and recreational facilities through new housing development. 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 or CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) 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 consent should include appropriate conditions and/or be subject to specific planning obligations. Where developer contributions are applicable, a Section 106 Agreement or equivalent must be completed 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.
- ◀ Some contributions may need to be ring fenced for use according to the particular terms of the Planning Obligation, where there is opportunity to improve the appropriate pitches within the local vicinity. However, for some sports such as for example cricket and rugby a "central pot" for developer contributions across the local authority area may be necessary for the particular sport.
- ◀ 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.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- 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/>
- Establish a formula for collating developer contributions for playing pitches which is demand based.

Objective (g) - Establish a more coherent, structured relationship with schools to maximise community use of educational facilities.

The ability to access good facilities within the local community is vital to any sports organisation, yet many clubs struggle to find good quality places to play and train. In Sandwell pricing policies at facilities can be barrier to access at some of the education sites but physical access and resistance from schools, especially academies, to open up 3G provision is also an issue.

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

It is not uncommon for school pitch stock not to be fully maximised for community use, especially in relation to 3G provision. Even on established community use sites, access to outdoor sports facilities to the community is limited. The Assessment Report identified several issues relating to the use of school facilities:

- Many sites are underutilised, especially for competitive play for football.
- Community use is limited and often based on informal agreements between individual schools and clubs.
- There is no strategic guidance as to which clubs are allocated the use of playing pitch facilities (i.e. in accordance with a strategic need).
- There are a number of school sites where a community use agreement is in place but it is not clear whether the agreement is being upheld.
- There are management issues inherent in developing, implementing and managing community use agreements. Advice and guidance can be obtained from Sport England's Schools toolkit and Sports organisations toolkit.
www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Where appropriate, it will be important for schools to negotiate and sign formal and long-term agreements that secure community use. This need to be examined against these issues:

- ◀ The analysis provides a clear indication of the future pitch requirements and provides a basis for partners to negotiate.
- ◀ Community use should not impact on the needs of schools to deliver curricular and extracurricular activities

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/>

It is recommended that a working group, led by a partner from the education sector but supported by a range of other sectors including sport and leisure is established to implement the strategic direction in relation to the increased/better use of school facilities.

Broadly speaking, its role should be to:

- ◀ To better understand current community use, practices and issues by 'auditing' schools.
- ◀ Ensure community use agreements are upheld
- ◀ Identify and pilot one school/club formal community use agreement with a view to rolling out the model across the area.
- ◀ Ensure that funding to improve the quality of the facilities is identified and secured.
- ◀ As part of any agreement secure a management arrangement for community access, which does not rely on existing school staff structures.
- ◀ Ensure that pitch provision at schools is sufficient in quality and quantity to be able to deliver its curriculum. Once this has been achieved provision could contribute to overcoming deficiencies in the area.

Although there are a growing number of academies and college sites in Sandwell, which the Council has no control over the running of, it is still important to understand the significance of such sites and attempt to work with the schools where there are opportunities for community use. In addition, the relevant NGB has a role to play in supporting the Council to deliver the strategy and communicating with schools where necessary.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

AIM 3

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

Objectives:

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

Objective (h) - Rectify quantitative shortfalls in the current pitch stock

The Council and its partners should work to rectify identified inadequacies and meet identified shortfalls as outlined in the Assessment Report and the sport by sport specific objectives (Part 2).

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

- ◀ 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.

While maximising the use of existing pitches offers scope to address the quantitative deficiencies for most sports, new or additional cricket squares on public or private fields, as well as improving existing wickets is required to meet the levels of demand identified for cricket both now and in the future.

There may be a requirement to protect some senior football pitches as this provides the flexibility to provide senior, junior or mini pitches (through different line markings/coning areas of the pitch). However, further work should be undertaken on this as an action for the Council/NGBs. Furthermore the re-designation of adult pitches that are not currently used may lead to a deficiency of adult pitches in the medium to longer term as younger players move up the ages. It is likely that for some sports, particularly football, that the provision of new pitches and facilities will be required in the future to support the predicted future demand.

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

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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

Likely future sport-by-sport demand trends

Sport	Future development trend	Strategy impact
Football	The needs of the game will change significantly from the 2013/14 season with the implementation of the FA Youth Development Review. As a result, pitch demands will change. This could also see changes in the seasonal demand of pitches (youth football).	Consider re-allocating leases to Charter Standard clubs with a large number of teams. Work with clubs to identify facility development opportunities. Work with clubs in relation to their pitch demands as a result of the FA Youth Development Review.
	Demand for senior football is likely to be sustained or decrease slightly based on current trends and the move to small sided football.	Sustain current stock but consideration given to reconfigure pitches.
	An increase in women and girls football following £2.4m investment over the next two years (2014-2016) from Sport England to increase the number of women and girls taking part in football sessions.	A need to provide segregated ancillary facilities and the potential need for more pitches.
Cricket	Demand for additional cricket pitches to accommodate unmet demand as well as club demand and midweek/weekend local leagues.	Access to additional cricket pitches will be required in Sandwell. Greater use/play on non turf wickets.
	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. Strong junior sections	Clubs are likely to field more teams in the future, and therefore have a demand for more pitches. It is important, therefore, to work with the clubs to maintain the current pitch stock and to support facility development where appropriate.
AGPs	Demand for 3G pitches for football continues to 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 IRB compliant will help to reduce overplay as a result of training on rugby pitches.	Ensure that access to new AGP 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

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Sport	Future development trend	Strategy impact
Golf	<p>Two key aims from the Strategic Plan for England Golf 2014-2017:</p> <p>To reverse the decline in club membership which has been occurring annually since 2005 and stabilise club membership.</p> <p>To 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</p>	<p>There is spare capacity at all courses in Sandwell to accommodate current and future demand.</p>
Tennis	<p>It is likely that future demand for access to tennis courts in Sandwell will remain reasonably static however quality could become an issue.</p>	<p>There are a large number of tennis courts in Sandwell which can accommodate current demand and anticipated future demand. However, the poorer quality courts, especially parks 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.</p>
Netball	<p>Key aim from the England Netball - Your Game, Your Way 2013-17 Whole Sport Plan is to increase the level of long-term participant retention through targeting programmes at known points of attrition and easy transition through the market segments, supported by an infrastructure that reflects the participant needs and improves their netball experience.</p> <p>Demand for Netball in Sandwell has remained relatively static over the previous three years and is likely to continue according to the League.</p>	<p>A need to continue to maintain the current stock of courts to a good standard to meet current and future demand.</p> <p>Phoenix Collegiate North closed there would be a need to find an alternative six court floodlit site. Currently there are no others within Sandwell.</p>
Athletics	<p>Nationally, there has been a significant increase in participation which has been evidenced in athletics over the last two years (Sport England Active People Survey APS4). Athletics clubs have generally seen a year on year growth in membership of 5%.</p>	<p>Tipton Academy Athletics track is able to accommodate increase in demand but the impact will be seen on maintenance and ancillary facilities which will need to be increased.</p>
Bowls	<p>General trend of demand for bowling greens remaining static or slightly decreasing.</p>	<p>Likely to result in the need for less outdoor bowling greens. However, this could link to demand increasing for short mat bowls and indoor green provision.</p>

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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

The Council should use, and regularly update, the Action Plan within this Strategy for improvements to its own 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.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

PART 6: SPORT SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Site specific actions falling out of the sport by sport objectives outlined below are detailed within the action plan.

FOOTBALL OBJECTIVE

Meet identified deficiencies at peak times and ensure there is a range of football facilities across the Borough to service *all* levels of the game.

- ◀ Protect the current level of playing pitches and seek to provide new youth pitches in areas of deficit.
- ◀ Improve the quality/drainage and therefore carrying capacity of existing pitch stock as a priority on sites that are overplayed.
- ◀ Transfer overplay to alternative venues which are not operating at capacity or are not currently available for community use. Geographical location is a determining factor for where people want to play and must be considered.
- ◀ Where necessary, reconfigure existing pitch provision with access to suitable pitches and facilities, to support and grow the game.
- ◀ Work with schools to secure tenure and access to primary and secondary schools to help address deficiencies. In particular target primary schools for access to mini/youth pitches and create better club school links.
- ◀ Where schools are available but unused ensure access arrangements are suitable for facilitating access to the whole community, particularly in relation to cost.
- ◀ Where necessary, increase the quality and standard of changing rooms, in particular to accommodate dual gender changing facilities (in line with The FA standards).
- ◀ Where appropriate, develop partnership and/or lease arrangements with large, sustainable, development-minded (i.e. FA Charter Standard Community) clubs to manage their own 'home' sites thus facilitating club development (as detailed in the management objectives).

3G pitches

- ◀ Look to provide at least one 3G pitch in every town (analysis area).
- ◀ Ensure that existing 3G pitches are being fully utilised and available for community use at peak times, including weekends.
- ◀ Seek to establish a strategic phased programme of 3G pitches, which will increase training slots and support back to back matches on Saturdays and Sundays.
- ◀ Ensure that sinking funds are in place to maintain 3G pitch quality in the long term.
- ◀ In partnership with the FA and league, seek to establish, in a phased approach, accommodating all mini soccer matches (both 5v5 and 7v7) on full size 3G pitches.

RUGBY OBJECTIVE

Work towards meeting identified current and future deficiencies and increase the quality of pitches and ancillary facilities as required.

- ◀ Address drainage and maintenance issues in order to address overplay of pitches at club sites.
- ◀ Upgrade changing facilities to support participation.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- ◀ Work with schools to maximise access to secondary schools and academies to address current and future demand and to develop school-club links.
- ◀ Ensure all clubs have access to training areas which are either dedicated floodlit grassed areas or through the provision of an International Rugby Board (IRB) AGP.

CRICKET OBJECTIVE

Meet unmet demand for access to additional pitches and work to increase the quality of existing provision.

- ◀ Meet deficiencies in cricket pitches and explore opportunities to develop/create new cricket pitches including investigation into Heathfield Close as a potential site.
- ◀ Protect current levels of provision and seek to provide new fine turf or artificial pitches to meet unmet demand.
- ◀ Provide dedicated artificial wickets to increase capacity at park sites.
- ◀ Ensure that any facilities developed support opportunities for women's and girl's competitive cricket.
- ◀ Support clubs to develop and improve 'off pitch' practice facilities.

HOCKEY OBJECTIVE

Maximise access to existing provision and work towards improving the quality of existing provision.

- ◀ Work with England Hockey to ensure priority hockey sites are protected and their quality is sustained/improved.
- ◀ Ensure that sinking funds are in place to maintain AGPs quality in the long term.
- ◀ Work with providers to maximise access to AGPs to accommodate both hockey training and competitive play.

OTHER SPORTS OBJECTIVE

Maximise access to existing provision and work towards improving the quality of provision.

Golf

- ◀ Where demand exists, seek to increase course quality in order to retain/increase membership levels.
- ◀ Maximise access to courses and ensure affordable, pay and play options are offered.

Tennis

- ◀ Improve court quality and prioritise investment in poor quality sites.
- ◀ Ensure clubs can access the appropriate standard of courts to allow LTA competitions to be played.
- ◀ Where demand exists seek to increase court capacity through installation of floodlighting.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Netball

- ◀ Retain current usage of outdoor netball courts and increase the quality of key sites for competitive netball.

Athletics

- ◀ Retain and maintain current athletics facilities in Sandwell.
- ◀ Work with clubs to increase membership and maximise access to facilities.

Bowls

- ◀ 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 and girl guides.
- ◀ Where demand exists, ensure that quality is sustained or improved.

PART 7: ACTION PLAN

7.1 Introduction

The site-by-site action plan list 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. Objective e below explains 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.

The Council should make it a high priority to work with NGBs and other partners to comprise a priority list of actions based on local priorities, NGB priorities and available funding.

7.2 Justification of sites within the prioritisation list

The list details policy options relating to individual sites and the need to enhance and develop new sporting provision. The following criteria have been used to identify priorities and justify the inclusion of sites within the list. Just one of the following may apply:

- ◀ A project is currently underway to enhance the existing site and/or funding has been secured.
- ◀ An evaluation of site use is required as it is of poor quality and is reportedly underused.
- ◀ The desired action is small scale, short term and will enhance the quality of current provision, whilst aiding community use.
- ◀ The importance of the site is identified in other strategies.

Sites included within the action plan have been tiered based on criteria set below:

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

To allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach the Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of playing pitch sites and associated facilities.

Sandwell 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, the Council should extend this provision model 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 Borough-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 split-level ancillary facilities, in order to maximise their usage at all times.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

In the context of developing a tiered model approach to the management of sports facilities Sandwell has a large number of multi-team junior clubs which place a great demand on the pitch stock. There are therefore a number of sites which are still owned and maintained by the local authority, but are actually booked by the clubs for the entire season. The sites are then recognised as the 'home ground' of the club. Such sites are fundamentally different from those which can be hired on a regular basis because they are in effect, 'allocated' to a certain club and management responsibility, in terms of allocating teams to pitches, is transferred to the individual club.

Proposed tiered site criteria

Strategic sites	Key centres	Club or education sites	Reserve sites
Strategically placed in the Borough. Priority sites for NGB.	Strategically placed in the local authority context.	Strategically placed in the local context.	Strategically placed in the local context.
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 with limited demand.
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.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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

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://www.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.

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 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 for summer matches/competitions, training or informal play. They could be single-pitch sites with limited usage, or have no recognised current usage.

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

7.3 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.

7.4 Area by area specific actions

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. It is not feasible to include all sites with identified development issues. Only sites, which meet the criteria listed above, have therefore been included. 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).

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Rowley Regis

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Ashtree Playing Field	3	Council	Football	One standard adult football pitch used only for 11v11 youth. Issue with dog foul. Spare capacity for one match per week. No changing rooms on site.		Remark to youth 11v11 size and use as a youth football only site. Consider all options for offsite changing. Focus on reducing dog fouling through signage and warden patrols.	Council	Club Site	S
Bearmore Playing Field	5	Council	Football	Two standard adult football pitches located in far south of Rowley Regis, also used for youth 11v11. Dog foul major issue. Users report that maintenance needs to be improved. Imported demand at site from Forest Falcons (1 st team), FTK Juniors (U13) and Oldwinsford Youth (U15). Good changing rooms. No spare capacity. Issues with off roaders cutting up the pitch.		Retain site as an adult site and transfer youth play to Britannia Park. Target dog fouling problems with better signage and red bins. Improve maintenance and deal with off road problems.	Council	Club Site	S
Brickhouse Farm	8	Council	Football	Poor quality site, no changing rooms. One adult football pitch unused – posts in place but no markings. Dog foul issues.	-	Consider other potential uses for the site but investment would be required. Retain as strategic reserve. Target dog foul problems with better signage and red	Council	Strategic Reserve	S

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
						bins.			
Britannia High School (Closed)	10								
Britannia Park	11	Council	Football	Two standard adult football pitches also used for youth 11v11. One standard mini pitch unused competitively but recreational demand. Users report poor quality changing rooms. Spare capacity of 0.5 on adult pitches.		Remark as youth 11v11 pitches and use as a youth football site. Transfer adult play to Bearmore. Seek to improve changing rooms. Consider converting 7v7 pitch to a 9v9 pitch. Improve quality of pitches.	Council	Club site	S
Haden Hill Park	35	Council	Bowls	Two bowling greens on site well used. Talboats Bowling Club would like to self-manage/maintain the site. Issues with public playing but not paying as site is open access-pay & play is therefore difficult to control. Club uses Old Hill CC (ID 55) for pavilion. Public toilets are in the park.		In order to protect both greens, site should be considered for self-management (including maintenance) in partnership with the Council.	Bowls Club/ Council	Club Site	M
Old Hill Cricket And Tennis Club	55	Private Club	Cricket	Standard quality cricket pitch. Poor drainage on outfield. Club requires more training facilities, e.g. non-turf practice nets. Displaced demand outside Sandwell as square is at capacity.		Work with the Club to identify opportunities to gain funding to provide training facility.	ECB	Club Site	S-M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
			Tennis	Four good quality tennis courts not available for pay and play but adequate to meet the club's needs. Club hope to resurface courts in the next three years if funding can be secured.		Continue to work with the Club and sustain current participation.	LTA	Club Site	M-L
Ormiston Forge Academy	59	Academy	Football	One poor adult football pitch and one poor 11v11 youth pitch. Available for community use and played to capacity.		Work with school to continue community use and consider ways to improve quality of pitches.	FA	Education Site	M
			Sand AGP	Good quality full size sand AGP but not floodlit. Imported hockey demand from Old Halesonians, however, there is no local hockey demand for the pitch. At capacity on Saturdays but some spare capacity at other times.	Matches Training	Continue community use.	EHB	Education Site	M-L
Ormiston Forge Academy Main Site	60	Academy	Netball	Three good netball courts on site currently not accessed for community use.		No current community demand for netball courts in the Rowley Regis area. Consider site as a potential if demand increases.	England Netball	Education Site	M-L
Rowley Labour Club	71	Private Club	Bowls	One good bowling green on site with spare capacity.		Support club to increase/sustain participation.	CSP/ England Bowls	Club Site	M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Timbertree Primary School (Closed)	86								
Tividale Football Club	89	Private Club	Football	The Club plays at Step 4 in the football pyramid. The stand at the ground requires seats rather than benches. The changing rooms are good quality but the pitch suffers from water logging. The Club has aspirations to improve the ground to Step 3. Pitch at capacity.		Support the Club to improve the ground to Step 3 standard.	FA Council Tividale FC	Club Site	M-L
St Michael's CE College	113	Academy	Football	The site has one good adult football and one good 11v11 youth football pitch. It is reported that under PFI contract costs are too high for users due to maintenance and operating costs for the school.		Maximise access to the AGP and work with the School in order to develop and secure community use. Cost is the biggest inhibitor for community use and site should be benchmarked against other similar facilities in the Area. Based on a shortfall of good cricket pitches for the Sandwell League, the artificial wicket at the	Council/ Sport England (access to schools)	Education Site	S-M
			Sand AGP	72x35 yards the AGP is currently only used by the School as again operating costs are too high under PFI contract.					
			Cricket	One artificial cricket wicket on site unused for					

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				community use.		College could provide an additional ground if community use can be secured.			
			Netball	5 good quality netball courts are also unused for community use.					

[IL0: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Oldbury

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Barnford Park	4	Council	Football	There are four, adult size, poor quality (poor drainage) football pitches also used for 11v11 youth. Pitches are rotated and rested each week so there is no spare capacity on site. Good changing facility. Dog foul a problem.		Sand slitting to improve the drainage and increase carrying capacity. Reduce dog fouling through signage & wardens patrols.	Friends of Group	Club Site	L
			Cricket	One standard quality square with five wickets. Played to capacity and used by the Sandwell Cricket League.		Continue to maintain quality. Site used to capacity, consider artificial wicket as a way to increase capacity.	ECB	Club Site	S
Brandhall Primary School	7	School	Football	There are two youth 11v11 pitches, a 5v5 pitch and a 7v7 pitch, all standard quality. Site is home to Brandhall Colts. Pitches heavily played due to number of teams and little time to recover. Club would like to start an adult team but do not have a pitch available. Site has no changing		Consider moving some play to Cakemore (ID: 15) in order to give pitches chance to rest. Also consider Cakemore as a site to develop an adult team.	Brandhall Colts/ Council	Education/Club Site	S-M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				rooms.					
Bristnall Hall Academy	9	Academy	Football	One poor quality adult pitch not available for community use due to concerns about over play.	-	Establish relationship with the School in order to encourage community use in the future.	Council	Education Site	M
			Netball	Two poor quality netball courts not available for community use.	-				
Cakemore Playing Field	15	Council	Football	Three standard quality adult pitches currently unused. Improve drainage and changing rooms on site.	-	Consider transferring some play from Brandhall Primary School and use site to develop club, in particular an adult team. Promotion of facilities. Sand slitting/verti draining.	Brandhall Colts/ Council	Club Site	S-M
Langley Bowling Club	45	Private	Bowls	One well used private green with some spare capacity for additional members		Support club to maintain participation and increase where possible.	Bowls England	Club Site	S
Lion Farm Playing Fields	48	Council	Football	There are 11 adult poor quality pitches also used as youth 11v11 pitches. Pitches prone to water logging, changing facilities are poor and toilets are kept locked due to vandalism. Well used		Consider sand slitting as a way of improving drainage. Reduce dog fouling through signage & wardens patrols. Explore options for letting pavilion in order to improve	FA/ Council	Key Centre	S-M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				but over played due to poor quality. Fly tipping and car parking issues.		quality.			
Old Cross Pub	54	Private	Bowls	Private bowls green, very well used. Some spare capacity for additional members.		Support club to maintain participation and increase where possible.	Bowls England	Club Site	S
Oldbury Academy	58	Academy	Football	Two standard quality adult pitches available for community use and used, however, pitches have poor drainage and can be unplayable in winter. Accommodates imported demand.		Consider site as potential future capacity if required.	FA	Education Site	L
			Cricket	One artificial wicket of good quality. Outfield would only be big enough for junior games.		Consider site as potential future capacity if required.	ECB	Education Site	L
			Tennis/Netball	Three tennis and netball over marked, good quality. Not currently used for community use.		Consider site as potential future capacity if required.	LTA/ England Netball	Education Site	L
			Netball	Two netball courts good quality.		Consider site as potential future capacity if required.	England Netball	Education Site	L
			3G AGP	Academy has planning permission for 5 aside 3G pitch which will be	-	Work with school to utilise pitch for community use when	FA/ Council	Education Site	M-L

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				available for community use. Timescales unknown.		complete.			

[IL0: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy	61	Academy	Football	Two poor quality adult pitches not available for community to use to avoid over play.	-	Retain for school use.	-	Education Site	-
			Cricket	Artificial wicket unsafe and therefore not currently used.	-	Decommission	-	Education Site	-
			3G AGP	Full size 3G AGP (40mm) resurfaced April 2014. Tividale currently using the pitch for training. No other use except for school use currently.		Work with school to maximise use of the 3G pitch, especially for club training.	FA	Education Site	S
			Tennis/Netball	Three good quality tennis and netball courts over marked. Not currently used for community use.	-	Consider site as potential capacity if required.	LTA/ England Netball	Education Site	L
Perryfields High School	62	School	Football	One 9v9, one 7v7 and one 5v5 pitch, all standard quality, used exclusively by Perrywoods United. Pitches are played to capacity. The Club requires additional space and has aspirations		Consider 3G pitch as a way to increase capacity at the Site. Also look at the potential of developing Pitfields Close (ID: 117) to provide additional capacity.	FA/ Perrywoods United	Education/Club Site	S

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				to provide a full size 3G pitch in partnership with the School.					
			Tennis/Netball	Two standard quality tennis and netball courts over marked. Not currently used for community use.	-	Consider site as potential capacity if required.	LTA/ England Netball	Education Site	L
The George Public House	82	Private	Bowls	One green on site, well used but with some spare capacity for additional members.		Support club to maintain participation and increase where possible.	Bowls England	Club Site	S
Tividale Park	90	Council	-	No evidence of current pitches but has previously had football at the Site. Drainage has been an issue and signs of dog fouling.	-	Consider sand slitting/verti draining as a way of improving drainage. Dog fouling signs and wardens patrols to reduce dog fouling.	FA/ Friends of Group/ Council	Strategic Reserve	S-M
Brades Lodge School	91	School	Football	Two standard quality adult pitches used by Tipton Town FC youth and ladies team. Spare capacity at peak time.		Use spare capacity as a way to retain quality at the Site.	Club	Education/Club Site	S

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Warley RFC	96	Private	Football	Two good quality football pitches overplayed by 1.5 matches. Changing rooms, showers and parking is poor.		Explore options for improving changing facilities. Consider reducing play in order to maintain good quality.	Warley RFC	Club Site	S
			Rugby	One good quality pitch at the Site well used. Some spare capacity (-1) for junior play (Sunday). Changing facilities are in need of upgrading as it is a barrier to participation.		Explore options for improving changing facilities.	Warley RFC	Club Site	S
Wernley Public House	101	Private	Bowls	One green on site, well used but with some spare capacity for additional members.		Support club to maintain participation and increase where possible.	Bowls England	Club Site	S
York Road Social And Sports Club	107	Private	Football	One standard adult pitch with spare capacity for 0.5 matches per week Sat pm or Sunday.		Use spare capacity as a way to retain quality at the Site.	Club	Education/Club Site	S
Portway Lifestyle Centre	116	Sandwell Leisure Trust	3G AGP	Full size 3G pitch on site of good quality. Well used with some ad hoc		Continue to maintain current participation and look to make use of	Sandwell Leisure Trust	Club Site	S

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				peak time spare capacity.		spare capacity. Ensure sinking fund is in place in order to resurface pitch when required.			
Pitfields Close	117	Sandwell Leisure Trust	Football	Playing Fields 150m from Perryfields High School main building. Two poor quality adult pitches with poor drainage. Occasionally accessed by school for curriculum and Perrywoods United when required. No spare capacity due to poor quality.		Increase pitch quality in order to increase school use as well as Perrywoods United use.	FA/ Perrywoods United/ School	Education/Club Site	S

[IL0: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Smethwick

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Hadley Stadium	34	Sandwell Leisure Trust	Football	One standard adult pitch within the athletics track. Over played by 0.5 matches per week.		Increase quality in order to reduce overplay. To include possible conversion to 3G pitch.	SLT	Club Site	M
			Sand AGP	Full size poor quality pitch in need of refurbishment. The Site is a football site (Skorz) and is used predominantly for 5aside football and for training. Due partly to deteriorating quality there is some spare capacity at peak time.		Pitch is in need of resurfacing. Currently there is no hockey demand for the Site and so should be considered for 3G resurfacing.	SLT	Club Site	S
			Athletics	Hadley Stadium has an eight lane track and throws facility. It is not maintained as a competition venue and as such its quality and associated level of facilities reflects this. In particular the throw facilities are poor. There is little demand for the venue for athletics due to the good quality facility at Tipton Sports Academy.	-	Review options for provision.	SLT	Club Site	S

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Holly Lodge High School College Of Science	38	School	Football	Two adult, standard quality pitches but standing water in bad weather. 0.5 spare capacity at peak time. Pitches used by Smethwick Raiders.		Continue to support the Club to play at the Site. Ensure use is secured.	School/ Club	Education/Club Site	S
			Netball	Four good netball courts currently not used for community use.	-	Consider site as potential future capacity if required.	England Netball	Education Site	L
Lewisham Park	47	Council	Football	Two mini pitches (1x 5v5 and 1x 7v7) of standard quality. Currently unused, pitches used for recreational football. No current demand for the pitches in this area. Site used as overspill car park for West Bromwich Albion.	-	Use site as strategic reserve and to be used for recreational football.	Council	Strategic Reserve	S-M
Londonderry Playing Fields	49	Council	Football	Two standard quality adult pitches also used for youth 11v11. Also 7v7 pitch and 9v9 pitch. 9v9 is at capacity, as are adult. Spare capacity for 1 match each week on 7v7 pitch. Poor changing facilities. Car parking issues.		Explore funding options to improve changing rooms. Sand slitting/verti draining and improve car parking facilities.	Council/ FA	Club Site	M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Pheasant Public House	63	Private	Bowls	One bowling green on site. Significant spare capacity for additional members.		Support the Club to increase/sustain membership.	Bowls England	Club Site	L
Sandwell Academy	74	Academy	Football	Two good quality adult pitches not available for community use in order to retain quality.	-	Retain for school use.	-	Education Site	S
			Sand AGP	Full size standard quality pitch. Site used by both football and hockey. Hockey matches at the Site are ad hoc until March due to the car park being used by West Bromwich fans on alternate Saturdays. Site can be considered as at capacity as Academy will not allow further community use. Unsecured site for hockey.		Consider alternatives for car parking in order to maximise use of the pitch for hockey. Explore community use.	School/ EHB	Education Site	S
			Netball	Three good netball courts not currently used for community use.	-	Consider site as potential future capacity if required.	England Netball	Education Site	L
Smethwick Cricket Club	77	Private	Cricket	Standard quality wicket but with uneven outfield. The pavilion is also described as poor quality. The Club		Explore funding opportunities to improve outfield as well as the pavilion.	Club/ ECB	Club Site	S-M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				reports the need for non-turf practice nets. The 15 wickets at the site are over played and the Club accesses a second ground for the third XI.					

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Thimblemill Recreation Centre	84	Private	Football	Four standard quality adult football pitches on site also used for 11v11 youth. Spare capacity of 2.5 matches at peak time.		Retain spare capacity as a way to retain quality at the Site.	Thimblemill Rec	Club Site	S
			Cricket	Standard quality square with eight wickets. Spare capacity for 14 matches on Sundays. Good quality changing and pavilion.		Support the Club to maintain current levels of participation and expand where possible.	ECB/ Club	Club Site	M
			Bowls	Two greens on site, one good quality, one standard quality. The Club is one of the smallest in the area with 21 members and		Support the Club to increase membership.	Bowls England	Club Site	L

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				therefore has significant spare capacity.					
Victoria Park (Smethwick)	93	Council	Football	Two standard quality adult pitches also used for youth 11v11. Currently only one adult pitch being used. Also standard quality unused 5v5 pitch.		Remark as youth 11v11 and use site as dedicated youth site. Transfer youth play from West Smethwick Park. Transfer adult play from here to West Smethwick Park.	Council	Strategic Reserve	
			Cricket	Poor quality cricket square with one wicket. Used sporadically by the Sandwell Cricket League.		Consolidate play onto better quality council sites such as sites 4, 92 and 103, and use site as strategic reserve.	Council	Strategic Reserve	S
			Tennis	One court of standard quality used for recreational tennis.		Maintain quality for recreational users.	Council	Strategic Reserve	L
West Smethwick Park	103	Council	Football	Five adult pitches standard quality, also used for 11v11 youth. Spare capacity for 1.5 matches per week. Changing facilities require major refurbishment. Dog fouling is also an issue. The pitches are often of a lower		Transfer youth 11v11 play from this site to Victoria Park and use site only for adult play. Explore options to refurbish changing rooms. Better signage for dog walkers. Consider converting one pitch to a 9v9 youth pitch.	Council	Key Centre	S

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				quality for matches on Sunday afternoons following heavy use throughout the weekend.					
			Cricket	There are two cricket squares on site with two wickets per square. Played to capacity by the Sandwell Cricket League. One of the squares also has an artificial wicket used recreationally.		Maintain quality of cricket square in order to retain participation. Consider second artificial wicket as a way to increase capacity.	Council	Key Centre	S
The Collegiate Academy Trust	112	Academy	Tennis/Netball	Three tennis and two netball courts over marked. Not used for community use.	-	Consider site as potential future capacity if required.	England Netball	Education Site	L

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Tipton

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Ace Academy	1	Academy	Football	One adult pitch standard quality. Not available for community use to prevent overplay.	-	Retain for school use.	-	-	-
			Rugby Union	One senior pitch poor quality. Not available for community use to prevent overplay.	-	Retain for school use.	-	-	-
Coneygre Arts Centre Pitches	20	Private	Football	Two standard quality adult pitches. Spare capacity for 1.5 matches per week. Majority of play at site is youth 11v11		Work with the Club to explore options of remarking one adult pitch as youth 11v11 size.	FA	Club Site	S
Farley Park	25	Council	Football	One standard adult pitch also used for youth 11v11. Pitch played to capacity. One 7v7 pitch. No changing rooms. Dog foul is an issue. Lack of car parking.		Maintain quality of pitch and improve where possible. Explore options for grass car parking. Warden action to reduce dog and horse fouling.	Council	Club Site	S
			Bowls	There is one good quality green on a site and a second green that is used as a practice green (formerly grass tennis courts). Well used green with some spare capacity.		In order to protect both greens, site should be considered, where possible, as a self-managed/maintained site in partnership with the Council.	Greets Green BC/ Council	Club Site	M
Jubilee Park	42	Council	Football	Two standard quality adult football pitches used only		Explore options for additional 'portacabin'	Council	Club Site	M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				for adults. Minimal spare capacity (0.5) each week. Lack of changing rooms restricts matches and there is a lack of provision. Dog and horse foul a problem. Room for two additional pitches.		style changing. Warden action to reduce dog and horse fouling. Consider marking two new pitches.			
RSA Academy	73	Academy	Football	One good adult pitch not available for community use and a second pitch of standard quality available for community use. The second pitch has minimal spare capacity (0.5) each week.		Continue relationship with school and seek to secure community use.	NGBs/ Academy	Key Centre	L
			Rugby Union	One good quality senior pitch with minimum school use. Currently available for community use but unused. Spare capacity of 3 matches per week. The Site is closed so there is no unofficial use and maintenance is carried out externally.		Clubs generally unwilling to travel to access pitches on a regular basis. Continue relationship with school and use pitch as overspill for clubs.	NGBs/ Academy	Key Centre	L
			Cricket	One grass wicket and one artificial wicket on site. Grass wicket used to capacity by the Sandwell Cricket League.		Continue relationship with school and seek to secure community use.	NGBs/ Academy	Key Centre	L
			3G	Full size good quality 3G		Maintain current level of	NGBs/	Key	S

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
			AGP	pitch well used during the week and at the weekend. Pitch has a valid FA performance test and can be used for competitive matches. Some spare capacity.		use and look to accommodate competitive matches on the pitch, especially mini and youth. Explore options of transferring mini play from Sandwell Minor League to the AGP. Ensure sinking fund is in place for future replacement.	Academy	Centre	

[IL0: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Tipton Sports Academy	88	Sandwell Leisure Trust	Football	Two adult pitches on site. The second pitch is over marked with one 9v9 and one 7v7 pitch. The first pitch is located within the athletics track and is floodlit; maintenance is adequate although work needs doing as the pitch is uneven. Changing facilities meet Step 5 League requirements. Second pitch has drainage issues. There is some spare capacity on all pitches. The main user is Tipton Town FC.		Improve level/evenness of main pitch and improve drainage on second pitch if funding available.	SLT	Key Centre	S
			Sand AGP	2x 5aside cages (Skorz) used for training and 5 aside matches. Spare capacity.		Consider resurfacing to 3G as only football demand.	SLT	Key Centre	S
			Tennis	Four good quality tennis courts available on a pay and play basis for casual use only. Some spare capacity.		Maintain court quality.	SLT	Key Centre	S
			Athletics	The Site is the main athletics facility in Sandwell. There is an 8 lane, floodlit track constructed to international standards		Maximise use of the track and support the Club to attract new members.			

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				with all-weather surfaces and provision for all track and field disciplines. Used by Tipton Harriers and is sufficient to meet needs. Could accept more members.					
Victoria Park	92	Council	Football	Two adult pitches standard quality currently unused due to lack of changing facility.	-	Explore options for future changing provision possible 'portacabin' style changing.	Council/ FA	Strategic Reserve	M-L
			Cricket	Two cricket wickets of standard quality played to capacity by Sandwell Cricket League. No pavilion.		Explore options for future changing provision possible 'portacabin' style changing. Consider option of artificial wicket to increase capacity.	Council/ ECB	Club Site	M-L
Powis Avenue	104	Council	Football	One youth 11v11 pitch with room for two. No changing provision.	-	Explore options for changing provision.	Council	Strategic Reserve	M-L
St. John's Rec	115	Private (Licence agreement with Warley RFC)	Football	One poor quality adult pitch with poor changing rooms. Poor drainage and litter a problem. Pitch played to capacity. Site in ownership of charitable trust, club would need long lease to develop site.		Explore options and funding for pitch and changing room improvements. Negotiate long term lease.	Warley RFC/ RFU	Club Site	S-M
			Rugby Union	One senior pitch with some spare capacity,		Explore options and funding for pitch and	Warley RFC/	Club Site	S-M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

**SANDWELL COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				however pitch improvements would be required to ensure quality did not decline further. Poor changing facility joint with football. Site in ownership of charitable trust, club would need long lease to develop site.		changing room improvements. Negotiate long term lease.	RFU		

[IL0: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

West Bromwich

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Charlemont Farm	17	Bustleholme FC	Football	Two standard adult pitches also used for 11v11 youth with 1.5 matches of spare capacity. Three standard 9v9 pitches currently unused. Club is responsible for maintenance and management at the site. Recent investment into changing rooms. Club would like to erect fence around changing rooms to prevent vandalism.		Consider remarking 9v9 pitch to 11v11 youth in order to accommodate youth 11v11 play on appropriate size pitch. Seek funds to erect fencing.	Bustleholme FC/ FA	Club Site	M
Churchfield Tavern	19	-	-	Disused bowling green.	-	Decommission as there is spare capacity at other greens in the area.	-	-	-
Dartmouth Bowling Club	21	Private	Bowls	One good quality green well used but with some spare capacity.		Support the Club to maintain participation and increase where possible.	Bowls England	Club Site	S
Dartmouth High School (Closed)	22								
George	29	Academy	Football	One adult pitch	-	Ensure that pitch			

[IL0: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Salter Academy				currently poor quality and unavailable for community use due to building work. Will be available for community use and improved once building work is complete.		becomes available for community use when building work is complete.			
			Sand AGP	One standard full size AGP sand based pitch refurbished in 2006, used for community use. Line marking needs to be improved. Pitch is at capacity for hockey on Saturday pm and also has significant football usage. Also a half size sand AGP on site refurbished in 2011 and used for football.		Work with the school to improve line marking and retain pitch as sand based.			
			Tennis/Netball	Four good quality tennis and netball courts over marked not currently used for community use.	-	Consider site as potential future capacity if required.	LTA/ England Netball	Education Site	L
Greets Green	32	Council	Football	Six poor quality, (poor drainage) adult		Explore options to refurbish changing	Council	Key Centre	S-M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Playing Fields				pitches played to capacity. Poor changing rooms on site and dog foul an issue. Three youth 11v11 teams use the site.		rooms and improve pitch drainage by sand slitting. Increase security/warden patrol to reduce dog foul.			
			Bowls	Green well used by Greets Green BC and close to capacity.		Support the Club to maintain participation and increase where possible.	Council/ Bowls England	Key Centre	S-M
Jesson Playing Fields	41	Council	Football	Poor adult pitch and poor youth 11v11 pitch, (poor drainage and waterlogging). Pitches currently unused. No changing rooms. No car parking.	-	Retain pitch as strategic reserve and consider sand slitting/verti drainage.	Council	Strategic Reserve	L
Kenrick Park	43	Council	Football	One adult pitch standard quality with spare capacity for one match per week. No changing rooms and no parking. Maintenance needs to be improved.		Consider grasscrete car parking at the site in order to support provision of pitches. Explore options for portacabin style changing as part of an investment programme for the site along with sand slitting/verti drainage.	Council	Club Site	M
King	44	Council	Football	12x 9v9 and 8x 7v7		Improve drainage by	FA/	Club Site	S-M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
George Playing Field				pitches prone to water logging in bad weather. Pitches normally used by the Sandwell Minors League, however 7v7 matches were moved to 3G in 2014 due to poor weather/water logging. Spare capacity if drainage improved.		sand slitting/verti draining. Also consider using 3G as a way to provide better quality pitches for mini football.	Council		
Phoenix Collegiate (South Campus)	65	College	Football	One adult pitch poor quality and one poor 9v9 pitch. Not available for community use due to concerns over overplay.		If pitch quality improves work with school to make pitches available for community use.	Council/ FA	Education Site	S
Q3 Academy	67	Academy	Football	Two adult and two 11v11 youth standard quality with spare capacity for two matches and one match respectively for community use.		Establish relationship with the school. Currently spare capacity to in the area but consider school site as strategic reserve.	Council/ FA	Education Site	M-L
			Rugby Union	Pitch marked around the outside of one adult football pitch. Currently not used but available for	-	No current demand for rugby union in West Bromwich. Consider pitch if demand increases.	RFU	Education Site	M-L

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				community use.					
			3G AGP	Half size 3G pitch of good quality. At capacity Monday to Thursday at peak time. Spare capacity Friday evening and Saturday/Sunday.		Maintain current usage and increase where possible. Ensure sinking fund is in place.	FA	Education Site	M-L
			Tennis/Netball	Three good quality tennis and netball courts over marked. Not currently used for community use.	-	Consider site as potential capacity if required.	LTA/ England Netball	Education Site	L
Redhouse Park	69	Council	Football	Four standard quality adult pitches, also used for youth 11v11 with spare capacity of 0.5. There are also two unused 5v5 pitches. Not enough changing provision on site if all pitches are used at once.		Explore options to provide additional changing facilities such as portacabin changing.	FA	Key Centre	M
			Cricket	One grass wicket on site of poor quality. Used to capacity by the Sandwell Cricket League.		Consider artificial wicket as a way to increase capacity.	ECB	Key Centre	M
			Tennis	Five standard quality tennis courts available for pay and	-	Retain quality for recreational tennis.	LTA	Key Centre	M

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				play.					
Sandwell District Football League	75	Private	Football	One good quality adult pitch used for county standard games.	-	Retain quality.	Sandwell District FL	Club Site	L
County FA (Walter Goodman Stadium)	95	Private	Football	One good quality adult pitch used for county standard games, however, no floodlights at the Site.	-	Retain quality. Explore options to install floodlighting. Site has planning permission but needs extending in order to get the true value from the asset.	County FA	Club Site	L
West Bromwich Dartmouth Cricket Club	102	Private	Cricket	Two good quality squares, each with 10 wickets, played to capacity. Good quality pavilion.		Retain quality of squares and pavilion and support the Club to maintain participation.	Club/ ECB	Club Site	M-L
Churchfields Playing Fields	109	Council	Football	Three standard quality adult pitches also used for some youth 11v11 play. Site has had investment over the last two years and the changing rooms and car parking is excellent. Some users report that drainage has worsened over the previous 12 months.		Transfer youth (11v11) play to Redhouse Park in order to reduce overplay. Ensure maintenance is good quality in order to stop any further reduction in quality.	Council	Club Site	S

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
				Pitches are over played by two matches per week.					
FC Premier	114	Private	Football	One good quality adult pitch also used for youth 11v11. Spare capacity of 0.5. Club reports the need for additional pitches in order to expand youth.		Work with the Club to explore options for securing additional pitches.	Club/ FA	Club Site	M
			Bowls	Great Barr BC. Bowls green well used and is over capacity. Club has ten junior members.		Maintain participation at the Club.	Club	Club Site	M

[IL0: UNCLASSIFIED]

**SANDWELL COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Wednesbury

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Elwells	24	Park Hill Boys FC	Football	One poor quality adult pitch unused and one standard youth 11v11 pitch with spare capacity of 0.5 matches per week. Only youth play currently at the Site. No changing rooms. Dog fouling an issue and occasional drainage problems.		If funding is available consider options for portacabin style changing facilities. Maintain site as a youth site and consider remarking adult pitch to youth 11v11 pitch and improving drainage in order to allow for growth.	Club	Club Site	L
Holyhead Primary School	39	School	Football	One standard quality youth 11v11 pitch used by Greets Green Albion U12. Spare capacity of 0.5 per week.		Maintain relationship with the school and ensure continued community use.	Club	Education Site	M
Hydes Road Playing Fields	40	Council	Football	There eight standard quality adult pitches which are also used for youth 11v11 matches. Dog foul is a big issue. Poor changing rooms. Adult games in the mornings can churn up the pitch for the youth games in the afternoon. Spare capacity of 2 matches per week.		Improve changing facilities. Better signage for dog walkers and increase number of bins. Where possible attempt to programme youth games on pitches not used in the morning. Resurface car park.	Council	Key Centre	S
			Cricket	Square with two poor quality wickets. Used sporadically during the 2013 season and removed for the 2014 season.	-	Use site as strategic reserve and if required consider artificial wicket in the future as a way to provide cricket facilities.	Council	Key Centre	L
			Bowls	Reasonably well used green, spare capacity for approximately 30 members. Club reports that grass is not cut often enough and that there is no water supply to water the green or access to toilets (despite onsite pavilion).		Work with the Club to increase participation and ensure toilets are available when bowling green is open. Consider self-management of the site.	Bowls England/ Council/ Club	Key Centre	M
Pulse Soccer And Fitness Wednesbury	66	Private	Football	Two standard adult pitches with spare capacity for one match per week.		Establish relationship with Soccer Centre and look at ways to increase use.	Council	Club Site	M
			3G AGP	8x 5v5 cages and one 9v9 pitch used for small sided games.	-	Ensure sinking fund in place in order to replace carpets in the future.	Pulse	Club Site	L
			Netball	Six standard quality floodlit netball courts formerly part of the closed Phoenix Collegiate South Campus. The courts are now operated by Pulse Soccer and it is reported by users that quality of courts has deteriorated with car parking and some lighting also less well maintained. Site is a key netball site for the League.	-	Consider options of self-management by the League and explore options to improve courts and lighting.	League/ England Netball	Key Centre	S
Stuart Bathurst B.C. High School	81	School	Football	One poor quality adult football pitch unavailable for community use – School decision.	-	Establish relationship with school to look at the potential for community use in the future.	Council	Education Site	S
			Tennis/Netball	Two good quality tennis and netball courts over marked unavailable for community use.	-	Establish relationship with school to look at the potential for community use in the future.	Council	Education Site	S
Wednesbury RFC	99	Club	Rugby Union	Site has two poor quality (M1/D0) pitches (one match pitch and one floodlit pitch used only for training). Drainage is poor as pitches are built over hard courts. Site is open access and evidence of glass and dog foul. Good changing facilities. Pitches are already over played and the club is growing and expected to expand further.		Explore options for floodlighting the first pitch in order to spread training across both pitches. Better signage and warden patrol for dog foul.	Club/ RFU	Club Site	S
			3G AGP	Half size 3G pitch used by the club for training (not tackling as it is not IRB compliant).	-	Explore options to upgrade to IRB standard in order to accommodate more training and reduce play on grass pitches. Ensure sinking fund is in place to replace carpet in the future.	Club/ RFU	Club Site	S

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

**SANDWELL COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site	ID	Management	Sport	Current Status	Capacity	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Timescale
Wednesbury Sports Union	100	Private	Football	One standard adult pitch currently unused. Reason unknown.		Establish relationship with the Club to increase participation.	FA	Club Site	S
			Cricket	Good quality square with 12 wickets over played by 31 matches per season. One artificial wicket on site.		Ensure quality of square is maintained in order to continue to accommodate overplay without impacting on quality.	Club	Club Site	L
			Tennis	Four standard quality tennis courts which the Club report to be deteriorating quickly and in need of resurfacing. Spare capacity for members if quality was improved.	-	Explore options to support the Club to resurface courts to ensure they are playable. Work to increase the number of members.	Club/ LTA	Club Site	S
Wodensborough Ormiston Academy	105	Academy	Football	Standard quality adult pitch not available for community use.	-	No current demand for use of the pitch. Establish relationship with the school to accommodate potential future demand.	Council/ FA	Education Site	S
			Rugby Union	One standard senior pitch with reasonable drainage unavailable for community use.	-	No current community demand for use of the pitch. Establish relationship with the school for any potential future demand.	Council/ RFU	Education Site	S
			Tennis/Netball	Three good quality tennis courts over marked with two netball courts. Not available for community use.	-	No current demand for use of the courts. Establish relationship with the school for any potential future demand.	Council/ LTA	Education Site	S
Wood Green Academy	106	Academy	Football	Four standard adult pitches with spare capacity for two matches. School reports a need to expand changing rooms in order to accommodate additional community use.		Explore options with the school to increase changing capacity. Maintain quality of pitches.	Academy/ FA	Education Site	S
			Rugby Union	One standard quality (M1/D1) senior pitch over marked around the outside of one of the football pitches. Ad hoc use from Wednesbury RFC. Pitch at capacity due to football usage.		Ensure appropriate pitch maintenance is applied in order to improve/sustain quality.	Academy	Education Site	S
			Cricket	One artificial wicket and outdoor net facilities away from the pitch. Nets used by Wednesbury CC for training (Thursdays). Spare capacity for match play and training.		Maintain relationship with the Club and maintain net quality.	Academy/ ECB	Education Site	S

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

PART 8: CONCLUSIONS

The Playing Pitch Strategy seeks to provide guidance for planning decisions made across Sandwell in the seven years up to 2021. 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 Sandwell 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 to the achievement of Council 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. The Strategy is intended to be flexible and regularly updated using the accompanying database tools provided.

PART 9: MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is important that once the strategy is adopted that the plan becomes a live document so that progress against the actions can be reviewed and monitored. We recommend that there is regular monitoring (i.e. quarterly).

The Council should ensure that a process is put in place to track progress with implementing the recommendations and action plan. This process should involve regular liaison with the pitch sport NGBs.

A PPS should be subject to a full review every three years. However, regular monitoring and updating of key supply and demand data could extend its life to five years and limit the resource needed to carry out a full review. Keeping the supply and demand information up to date annually will reduce the amount of work required in the long term. Demand for pitches is often subject to change and even a three year period will see changes in both the supply of and demand for provision.

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.

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 Council maintains the data contained with the accompanying Playing Pitch Database. This will enable it to refresh and update area by area plans on a regular basis. The accompanying databases are intended to be refreshed on a season by season basis and it is important that there is cross-departmental 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.

APPENDIX ONE: STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The objectives 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)

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

The aim by 2017 is to ensure that playing sport is a lifelong habit for more people and a regular choice for the majority. 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.
- ◀ At least 150 further educational colleagues will benefit from a full time sports professional who will act as a College Sport Maker.

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- ◀ 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.

SANDWELL COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

The FA National Game Strategy (2011 – 2015)

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:

- ◀ Growth and retention (young and adult players)
- ◀ Raising standards and behaviour
- ◀ Better players
- ◀ Running the game
- ◀ Workforce
- ◀ Facilities

'The National Game Strategy' reinforces the urgent need to provide affordable, new and improved facilities in schools, clubs and on local authority sites. Over 75% of football is played on public sector facilities. The leisure budgets of most local authorities have been reduced over recent years, resulting in decaying facilities that do not serve the community and act as a disincentive to play football. The loss of playing fields has also been well documented and adds to the pressure on the remaining facilities to cope with the demand, especially in inner city and urban areas.

The growth of the commercial sector in developing custom built five-a-side facilities has changed the overall environment. High quality, modern facilities provided by Powerleague, Goals and playfootball.net for example, have added new opportunities to participate and prompted a significant growth in the number of five-a-side teams in recent years.

The FA National Facilities Strategy (2013 – 2015)

The recently launched National Facilities Strategy sets out the FA's long term vision for development of facilities to support the National Game. It aims to address and reflect the facility needs of football within the National Game. The National Game is defined as all non-professional football from Steps 1-7 of the National League System down to recreational football played on open public space. The role of facilities will be crucial in developing the game in England. One of the biggest issues raised from 'the Big Grassroots Football Survey' by that of 84% respondents, was 'poor facilities'.

The FA's vision for the future of facilities in England is to build, protect and enhance sustainable football facilities to improve the experience of the nation's favourite game. It aims to do this by:

- ◀ Building - Provide new facilities and pitches in key locations to FA standards in order to sustain existing participation and support new participation.
- ◀ Protecting - Ensure that playing pitches and facilities are protected for the benefit of current and future participants.
- ◀ Enhancing - Invest in existing facilities and pitches, ensuring that participation in the game is sustained as well as expanded.

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

The Strategy commits to delivering in excess of £150m (through Football Foundation) into facility improvements across the National Game in line with identified priorities:

- ◀ Natural grass pitches improved – target: 100
- ◀ A network of new AGPs built – target 100
- ◀ A network of refurbished AGPs – target 150
- ◀ On selected sites, new and improved changing facilities and toilets
- ◀ Continue a small grants programme designed to address modest facility needs of clubs
- ◀ Ongoing support with the purchase and replacement of goalposts

It also commits to:

- ◀ Direct other sources of investment into FA facility priorities
- ◀ Communicate priorities for investment across the grassroots game on a regular basis
- ◀ Work closely with Sport England, the Premier League and other partners to ensure that investment is co-ordinated and targeted

Grounds to Play – England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Strategic Plan (2010 – 2013)

'Grounds to Play' continues to focus on the four pillars, as identified in the ECB's previous strategy: Building Partnerships. The pillars are:

- ◀ Energising people and partnerships to deliver national goals at local level:
 - ◀ Having streamlined the management of ECB and established County Cricket Boards, where feasible, services currently provided from the centre will be transferred to County Boards;
 - ◀ Enhance asset growth through continuing interest free loans to community clubs, expanding NatWest Cricket Force, seeking to support corporate or public sector cricket grounds under threat of closure through the England and Wales Cricket Trust, and seeking to expand partnerships for Indoor Cricket.
- ◀ Vibrant domestic game.
- ◀ Enhancing facilities, environments and participation:
 - ◀ The focus of this plan is on providing facilities to sustain participation levels rather than increasing participation;
 - ◀ The Cricket Foundation's 'Chance to Shine' programme has been an outstanding success in reintroducing cricket into state schools. ECB will prioritise investment in the programme;
 - ◀ To further expand club/ school links and position a cricket club at the heart of a community, ECB will provide £1.5 million per annum capital improvement grants to local clubs that make their club facilities available to its local community and to local schools.
- ◀ Successful England teams.

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

The following actions executed during the duration of Building Partnerships provide a strong base for this plan. Actions include:

- ◀ Streamlining ECB governance
- ◀ Building participation by more than 20% per annum (as measured through ECB focus clubs and County Cricket Boards)
- ◀ Developing women's cricket
- ◀ Attracting volunteers
- ◀ Expanding cricket's spectator base
- ◀ Introducing grants and loans to clubs
- ◀ Developing disabilities cricket

This plan therefore influences 'Grounds to Play' in the areas of facilities and coaches, which is where ECB investment will be focussed. Partnership funding and support will play a key role in the delivery of actions and maintaining the strength of the pillars.

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
- ◀ 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

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

England Hockey (EH)

'The right pitches in the right places'²

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 places 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.

2

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

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

APPENDIX TWO: FUNDING PLAN

Funding opportunities

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

Awarding body	Description
Big Lottery Fund http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/	Big invests in community groups and to projects that improve health, education and the environment
Sport England : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Facilities 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 Loans Scheme http://www.rfu.com/microsites/rff/index.cfm?fuseaction=loans.home	The Loans Scheme helps finance projects that contribute to the retention and recruitment of rugby players. Projects eligible for loans include: 1. Club House Facilities: General structural improvements, general refurbishment, storerooms and offices, kitchen facilities, training areas. 2. Grounds (other than pitches): Car parking facilities, ground access improvements, fencing, security measures.
Rugby Football Foundation - The Grant Match Scheme http://www.rfu.com/microsites/rff/index.cfm?fuseaction=groundmatch.home	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).

[ILO: UNCLASSIFIED]

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Awarding body	Description
EU Life Fund http://ec.europa.eu/environment/funding/intro_en.htm	LIFE is the EU's financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU.
EH Capital Investment Programme (CIP)	The CIP fund is for the provision of new pitches and re-surfacing of old AGPs. It forms part of EH's 4 year Whole Sport's Plan.
National Hockey Foundation http://www.thenationalhockeyfoundation.com/	The Foundation primarily makes grants to a wide range of organisations that meet one of our chosen areas of focus: Young people and hockey. Enabling the development of hockey at youth or community level. Smaller Charities.

Protecting Playing Fields

SE launched a funding programme; Protecting Playing Fields (PPF) as part of its Places People Play Olympic legacy mass participation programme and is investing £10 million of National Lottery funding in community sports projects over the next three years (2011-2014).

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

Sport England's 'Inspired Facilities' funding programme will be delivered via five funding rounds and is due to launch in Summer 2011 where clubs, community and voluntary sector groups and local authorities can apply for grants of between £25k and £150k where there is a proven local need for a facility to be modernised, extended or modified to open up new sporting opportunities.

The programmes three priorities are:

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

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

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Strategic Facilities Fund

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

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.

SANDWELL COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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

Funder's requirements

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

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

<http://www.sportengland.org/media/198443/facility-costs-4q13.pdf>

The costs are for the development of community sports facilities and are based on providing good quality sports facility for the for the 4th Quarter 2013. These rounded costs are based on typical schemes funded through the Lottery and CAD layouts developed in accordance with Sport England DGNs current at 4th Quarter 2013.

It is anticipated that construction output and activity will rise by 2% in 2014 and that tender prices are forecast to rise by 3% to December 2014.