

Darlington Playing Pitch and Sports Facility Strategy

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1: Introduction and Context

Introduction

- 1.1 In May 2014, Darlington Borough Council commissioned naa to produce a Sports Facilities Strategy. The strategy provides the updated evidence base to support the delivery of the *Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2013-18* and updates the 2009 Playing Pitch Strategy and 2009 Sport and Physical Activities Facility Strategy.
- 1.2 This document summarises the findings of the needs assessment, which can be found under separate cover. It sets out the strategic direction and site specific priorities for the future delivery of sports facilities across the borough until 2026.

Strategic vision

- 1.3 The existing Playing Pitch Strategy and Sports Facility Strategy have successfully driven significant improvement and investment into the sporting infrastructure across Darlington Borough. Successes include:
 - renovation of the Dolphin Centre, the flagship leisure centre located centrally within the town;
 - negotiation of formal community use agreements for several key sporting sites;
 - the development of new sporting hubs at Darlington Sports Arena and Blackwell Meadows;
 - provision of AGPs at Hummersknott School and Longfield Academy;
 - provision of new sports halls at Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, Longfield Academy, Darlington School of Mathematics and Science, Hurworth School and Kings Centre;
 - securing funding to upgrade playing fields at existing school sites; and
 - provision of several new MUGAs, including Red Hall, Heighington, Darlington College and St Aidans Academy.
- 1.4 This strategy seeks to build upon these successes and to deliver the sporting vision for the borough up to 2026. The vision for the strategy is therefore:

'to develop a comprehensive, robust, up to date and user friendly assessment of sports provision and need in Darlington to ensure that the right amount and type of sports facilities are protected, and where appropriate enhanced to provide a range of quality, accessible and safe facilities, in the right place at the right time to meet the needs of the community now and in 2026.'

Key drivers

- 1.5 To help achieve its planning aims Sport England has three planning objectives, which are to seek to protect sports facilities from loss as a result of redevelopment, to enhance existing facilities through improving their quality, accessibility and management and to provide new facilities that are fit for purpose to meet demands for participation now and in the future
- 1.6 The key drivers for updating the existing document can be related to these three tenets, as follows:

Protect:

- To deliver the requirements of the National planning Policy Framework in the borough, specifically paragraphs 73, 74 and 171
- To support the implementation and inform the ongoing development of the new Darlington Local Plan.

Enhance:

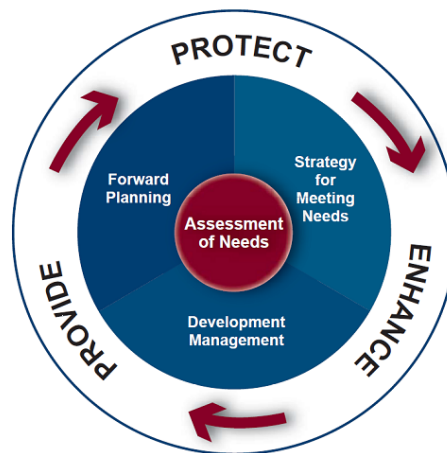
- To ensure that sports facilities are effectively managed and maintained and that best uses are made of existing resources - whether facilities, expertise and/or personnel to improve and enhance existing provision – particularly in the light of pressure on local authority budgets.
- To enable the prioritization of any available financial resources

Provide:

- To provide evidence upon which funding may be secured in the future
- To provide the evidence base for the provision of new sports facilities up to 2026
- To promote and facilitate cross sport working as part of the strategy development process.

1.7 Figure 1.1 illustrates how these components link together.

Figure 1.1



Structure

1.8 The strategy considers the adequacy of existing provision to meet current and projected future need and sets strategic and site specific priorities for a range of facilities, including:

- swimming pools
- sports halls and community halls
- playing pitches for football, cricket, rugby and hockey
- indoor and outdoor tennis
- indoor and outdoor bowls
- specialist provision; including golf courses, skateparks, athletics and climbing.

1.9 The remainder of the strategy summary is therefore set out as follows:

- Section 2 Methodology
- Section 3 Context
- Section 4 Action Plan, Implementation, Monitoring and Review

2: Methodology

Introduction

- 2.1 This assessment and strategy has been produced in line with guidance by Sport England (Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities; Consultation Draft; December 2013) and 'Playing Pitch Guidance, An approach to Developing and Delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy (Sport England 2013).
- 2.2 The key principles of each methodology, the sports that they cover and the tasks that have been undertaken are summarized in the remainder of this section. While set out as separate methodologies, in reality, many of the tasks have been undertaken as a coordinated and linked approach due to the cross-overs and interrelationships between the methodologies.
- 2.3 Further detail on the methodology can be found in the assessment report.

Playing Pitch Guidance – An Approach to Delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy

- 2.4 This methodology sets out a ten stage approach for the analysis of facilities for football, cricket, rugby union, rugby league and hockey. The ten stages are illustrated in Figure 2.1 and it is this approach that has been followed for the analysis of pitch sports.

Figure 2.1-: Developing and delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy – The 10 Step Approach



2.5 The key tasks undertaken to deliver the assessment for football, cricket, rugby and hockey are therefore summarised in brief below.

Steps 2 and 3 – Gather Supply and Demand Information and Views

Supply

2.6 The data collection process included a full audit of pitches and outdoor sports facilities across Darlington. For each site, the following information was collected:

- site name, location, ownership and management type;
- number and type of pitches / courts;
- accessibility of facilities to the local community;
- overall quality of pitches and ancillary facilities (including maintenance regimes);
- level of protection and security of tenure; and
- views of users and providers.

Demand

- 2.7 To evaluate the demand for playing pitches across Darlington, data was collated on:
- all sports clubs and teams and their match and training requirements;
 - casual and other demand;
 - educational demand;
 - displaced demand (i.e. teams wishing to play within the borough but unable to);
 - latent demand;
 - future demand (including club and team aspirations for development as well as National Governing Body priorities and targets); and
 - user views and experiences, including trends and changes in demand.
- 2.8 The following tasks were undertaken to compile the supply and demand information:
- analysis of existing information; including the previous PPS
 - interpretation of findings of Sport England tools, specifically Active Places, Active People and Market Segmentation;
 - a review of National Governing Body (NGB) data on pitches and local participation;
 - full review of local league websites, fixture lists and pitch booking records;
 - use of available technical quality assessment reports and non-technical site visits;
 - a detailed survey to schools (linked with the indoor assessment);
 - a full programme of consultation with sports clubs and league secretaries;
 - engagement with providers of playing pitches; and
 - face to face and telephone discussions with NGBs to discuss key issues and priorities.

Steps 4, 5 and 6 – Assessing the Supply and Demand Information and Views

- 2.9 The supply and demand information collated during Steps 2 and 3 has been used to:
- understand the situation at individual playing pitch sites;
 - develop the current and projected future pictures of provision across the borough; and
 - identify the key findings and issues that need to be addressed.

Steps 6 - 10 Develop the Strategy and Deliver the Strategy

- 2.10 Recommendations and strategy are developed to address the issues identified through the data collection and analysis undertaken in Steps 1 – 5.

Sport England (Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide for Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities; Consultation Draft; December 2013)

2.11 The stages of the Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guide (ANOG) approach are as follows:

A Undertaking an Assessment:

Stage 1 – Prepare and tailor your assessment

Stage 2 – Gather information on supply and demand

Stage 3 – Assessment, bring the information together

B Application of Assessment

A Undertaking an Assessment

2.12 As outlined earlier in this section, Stage 1 (prepare and tailor the assessment) was carried out through detailed discussions with the steering group.

Stage 2: Gather Information on Supply and Demand

2.13 To gather information on supply, visits were made to all the sports halls, pools, and indoor and outdoor specialist facilities within the borough, and assessments made of their quality, condition and maintenance and 'fit for purpose' rating. Discussions were held with operators, manager and users. All secondary schools and colleges were visited, and linked with the playing pitch assessment, all primary schools were contacted.

2.14 To gather information on demand, questionnaires were sent (many with follow up phone calls and/or visits) to all known sports clubs. Consultation took place with national and regional governing body of sport representatives.

2.15 An analysis of local population data was undertaken, and Sports England planning tools were used (including Active People, Sports Market Segmentation and the Facilities Planning Model) to estimate likely future demand for sports facilities in the borough.

Stage 3: Assessment – Bring the Information Together

2.16 The analysis seeks to bring together the evidence gathered to gain an understanding of the relationship between supply and demand. Key findings and issues to be addressed are set out for each of the sports / facilities covered.

B Application of Assessment – Strategy Development

2.17 Recommendations and strategy priorities are developed to address the issues identified through the data collection and analysis undertaken in Step A.

Introduction

- 3.1 This section provides a summary of the context for each sport considered within Darlington Borough and summarises the key issues that have been identified.
- 3.2 Full detail is found in the assessment report (under separate cover).
- 3.3 The recommendations and strategic priorities to address the identified issues are set out in Section 4.

Table 3.1: Sports Halls, Studios and Community Centres

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
<p>Quantity</p>	<p>Since the beginning of 2013 there has been 4 additional sport shall sites opened in Darlington. There are now 10 sports hall sites of which 8 are 4 badminton court size venues.</p> <p>The supply of sports halls is estimated to exceed demand in 2013 by 2.5 badminton courts and by 12.5 badminton courts in 2014, once access is factored in.</p> <p>In 2015 per capita level of provision rises to 0.437 courts which is above the national average. More significantly satisfied demand rises to 92.4% (from 91.1% in 2014) – a figure higher than both the national and regional averages (89.7% and 90.7% respectively).</p> <p>Darlington residents should by now be feeling that they have good access to sports hall provision, as relative share across the borough is 16% better than the national average. It was 1.2% lower in 2014. The analysis of relative share shows that better than average access pervades across most of the borough, with only Skerne Park, and Brankin Moor and the eastern part of Hurworth suffering negative relative share.</p> <p>Based on a population of 107,480 Darlington would require a theoretical provision of 29.56 courts according to the SfC. In 2015 the number of available courts adjusted for community use is 40.5 courts. The total number of courts will therefore also meet future needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect existing levels of sports hall provision • Partners seeking to develop future sports hall provision should set out a need based on sports development and NGB requirements as opposed to general community needs • Explore the potential to deliver more flexible activity spaces as opposed to formal sports hall provision part of new or refurbished developments
<p>Quality</p>	<p>The sports hall stock is very modern with six of the ten sites opened since 2006 and of good quality. The quality of facilities is therefore good and they are well located to meet resident needs. The issue for the Darlington strategy is not the quantity or quality of sports halls.</p> <p>NGB and club comments suggest the network is ‘fit for purpose.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to continue to support the enhancement of the current network of sports hall facilities on an on-going basis • Seek to ensure the enhancement of provision at key sports hall sites for indoor hall sports (flooring, size of run-off area

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
		<p>etc), ensuring they are 'fit for purpose' for community use as part of any refurbishment programme. This should include disability access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support upgrades to the community centre network to facilitate greater community use for sport and physical activity
Accessibility	<p>The effect of the additional sports halls at DSMS and Longfield School significantly enhances the network of halls in the urban area of Darlington with the effect that only the south-eastern part of the town is not within walking distance of a sports hall.</p> <p>Sports halls are well located to meet resident needs.</p>	
Availability	<p>Of the 8 sites with 4 badminton courts all of the sites are education sites - either schools of which some are academies or colleges with variable levels of community access.</p> <p>Pricing has also been raised as a barrier at certain sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the opportunities for enhanced community access at sports halls on school sites. Seek to enhance provision and access at key sites for community sport and club / NGB use • Focus on Hurworth School and Darlington College. Sites where community use is currently limited • Pricing is a barrier at certain sites • Provide support to the community centre network to maximize the use of facilities for sport and physical activity development

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
<p>Key Issues to Address Summary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the beginning of 2013 there has been 4 additional sport hall sites opened in Darlington. There are now 10 sports hall sites of which 8 are 4 badminton court size venues and all of these are education sites. The supply of sports halls is estimated to exceed demand in 2013 by 2.5 badminton courts and by 12.5 badminton courts in 2014, once access is factored in • Based on a population of 107,480 Darlington would require a theoretical provision of 29.56 courts according to the SfC. In 2015 the number of available courts adjusted for community use is 40.5 courts. The total number of courts will therefore also meet future needs • Carmel College sports hall is now over 40-years old and poor quality. Polam Hall School does not have a sports hall • The sports hall stock is very modern with six of the ten sites opened since 2006 and of good quality. The quality of facilities is therefore good and they are well located to meet resident needs. The issue for the Darlington strategy is not the quantity or quality of sports halls • There are no specific needs from NGBs. Clubs are generally well catered for but there appears potential for greater co-ordination to address the issue of consistency of access and cost • The focus for the Darlington strategy in relation to sports halls should therefore be to determine a collective and cohesive programme of community use at venues which deliver the sports development and physical activity objectives of the Council and the strategy. This may lead to more of the education sites being available for structured club use • As an example the new build at Longfield has focused on cricket and the school now has aspirations to develop as a centre for Futsal. There may be opportunities for other halls to specialize and provide long-term continuity of use for clubs and a more affordable pricing structure as a result of longer term agreements • The Community Centre network provides opportunities for the further development of health and physical activity programmes in local accessible locations, in line with the Community Strategy • In strategic terms consideration should be given to an enhanced role for the Dolphin Centre to provide for higher level activities and events 	

Table 3.2: Swimming Pools Context

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
Quantity	<p>There is enough quantity of swimming pool provision to meet demand. The total Darlington demand is for 1,076 sq metres of water and the total Darlington supply in 2013 is 1,425 sq metres of water. So there is a positive supply and demand balance of 349 sq metres of water (<i>Note a 25m x 4 lane pool is 212 sq metres of water</i>).</p> <p>Should any of the education based pools close then the positive supply and demand balance would move closer to balance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect all existing provision • Education based should be protected
Quality	<p>The pool stock is of reasonable quality the three centres are old but have been modernised. The Dolphin Centre opened in 1982 and was modernised in 2007; The Longfield Academy opened in 1968 and was modernised in 2013; The Darlington School of Maths and Science pool opened in 1972 and was modernised in 2012. Whilst the pools have been modernised they are however old.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to invest in the flagship facility at the Dolphin, which is well located to meet current and future needs and is crucial for swimming across the borough. The Council are committed to a £2.75m investment programme to address pool plant and infra-structure issues • Seek to invest in the school pool network to facilitate greater community use and access
Accessibility	<p>The Darlington pools are very accessible. The hard evidence data based on the location, catchment area of the pools and the capacity of the pools overlaid with the location of the Darlington demand for swimming shows the pools are very well located and accessible in relation to the Darlington demand. The findings are that:</p> <p>The pools are very accessible and there is enough capacity at the pools to absorb 94% of the Darlington demand for swimming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect all existing provision • Education based should be protected

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>- very high access to pools</p> <p>Of more importance the Sport England assessment is that of this 94% of satisfied demand, only 5% of the Darlington demand for swimming pools is being met by pools in neighbouring authorities. So the Darlington pool locations, their catchment area and location of the Darlington demand all interact very well, so much so that 89% of the Darlington demand is met at the pools in Darlington – again very high accessibility but this time to Darlington pools</p> <p>The Sport England assessment is also that 11% of the demand for pools in Darlington is imported based on the nearest pool to where residents outside the borough live is located in Darlington. So overall Darlington is a “net importer” of swimming demand with one in ten visits to Darlington pools being from outside the borough – quite a modest level of import/access to Darlington’s pools.</p> <p>In terms of travel patterns to pools car travel is the dominant travel mode with a Borough wide average of 72% of all visits to pools by car, 9% by public transport and 19% by walking. The Dolphin Centre mirrors almost exactly the Borough wide pattern but with just a 1% higher rate of car travel and 2% lower by walking</p> <p>The Longfield Academy site has a much higher walk to travel pattern at 32% of all visits and a lower 61% of visits by car. This is presumably based on its location and the high residential area immediately surrounding the pool location. Also it is possibly an area of low car ownership and access and residents having to walk more to the pool</p>	
Availability	Availability of pools for community use is possibly the biggest issue. With capacity in the system opportunity exists to develop a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is committed to working with

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>more co-ordinated approach</p> <p>There are issues of club access to the Dolphin Centre</p> <p>Overall there is enough capacity at the Darlington pools to meet the demand for swimming. The average used capacity of the pools across the Borough is only 59% of total capacity used in the weekly peak period in 2014 and so well within the Sport England pools full comfort level of 70% of capacity used – as a Borough average</p> <p>There is variation in the capacity used at individual sites, compared with the borough average. There are 3 sites where the average used capacity is above the pools full comfort level of 70%, these being Longfield Academy 82%, Darlington Education Village 80% and the Dolphin Centre at 72%.</p>	<p>the swimming clubs to make the waterspace work harder and increased time has already been allocated. These discussions should continue and look across the network as a whole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate usage and programming across pools and develop a joint approach to programming across the available waterspace – maximize effectiveness of waterspace for different aquatic disciplines • This may provide the opportunity to find enhanced time for Darlington Swimming Clubs by matching programmes more appropriately to pool provision as opposed to the current free market. Opportunities may exist to work with the ASA who can support Council's to address pool programming issues
<p>Key Issues to Address Summary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is sufficient quantity of waterspace to meet the needs of Darlington residents now and in the future. The Dolphin plays a key role in swimming provision and the size, quality and location means it is well placed to do so. • The pools have sufficient capacity and are also well located to meet resident need. Quality is an issue as the pools are ageing and therefore long-term sustainability of the network, particularly the school sites is a concern. If any of the education sites were to close this would reduce the supply and demand balance close to equilibrium. It is therefore important to seek to protect the education network as any reduction in the school network, which is ageing and under 'potential' threat would therefore impact on the supply and demand balance • NGB and clubs use across the pool network appears extensive. The Dolphin Centre is clearly a key facility for 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>the swimming club but it is also evident it provides the only facility for extensive community swimming. Given its importance the ASA would like to see investment in the Dolphin Centres to maintain and enhance its role in the long-term. Access to clubs at the Centre will also be important to address.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The club use across the pool network appears to be ad-hoc across the provision with clubs competing for time slots and facilities competing for business with little or no co-ordination. There appears to be capacity in the system and therefore an opportunity for developing joint programmes across the pools to maximise the use of available waterspace by all aquatic disciplines. 	

Table 3.3: Football (Playing Pitches) Context

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 43 individual sites containing football pitches across Darlington. Since 2009, the number of pitches secured for community use has increased, with more than 50% of type of pitch now formally secured. The FA youth review has also resulted in a much greater number of smaller sized pitches designed to meet the needs of players in specific age groups. There are also sites where unsecured access is currently available-, Heighington Primary School, Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, Gurney Pease School in particular are important sites for community play Glebe Road, McMullen Road and St George Playing Field have previously contained pitches but no longer do so. There is also evidence of reduced playing pitches at Middleton St George Cricket Club (no football pitch this season) and Tommy Crooks Park (two pitches marked out instead of 4). More than 75% of playing pitches are provided by academies or DBC and more than half of all pitches secured for community use are on academy sites. This demonstrates the role of these providers in offering 	<p>Carmel College– drainage issues (and wear and tear)</p> <p>Darlington RA – limited pitch quality and changing accommodation (influenced by overplay)</p> <p>Blackwell Meadows – requires works if to be used by Darlington 1883 including changing, pitch surface and structural works such as car parking</p> <p>South Park – drainage issues and lacks top dressing. Some wear and tear but poor pitches overall.</p> <p>Several other examples of</p>

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>opportunities for football.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vast majority of pitches in Darlington are rated as standard. Many of the poorer quality pitches identified in 2009 have either been improved (Longfield Academy / Hummersknott Academy) or are no longer available (Glebe Road, McMullen Road). 55% of clubs believe pitch quality has improved in recent years. Sites are predominantly flat with adequate grass cover although some issues with pitch surface remain. Many of the larger sites are now approaching a good rating and at Blackwell Meadows in particular (once pitches have bedded in) this is likely to be achieved - increasing the site capacity. There remain however some poorer quality facilities and many pitches still rated poorly Council maintained facilities are generally the poorest quality, with some pitches uneven with poor surfaces. Pitch surface is one of the key areas of concern for users. Quality of maintenance is considered directly attributable for improvements made on recent years. There are signs of wear and tear and overplay on some sites, reflecting pressures that are experienced. The lack of car parking is highlighted as a key issue across Darlington and dog fouling / litter is also an issue on open access sites. Several pitches managed by Darlington Borough Council do not include changing accommodation. These pitches are however offered for community use free of charge and most commenting clubs believe that this positively impacts on participation. It is also clear that the majority of primary schools that offer pitches are unable to provide changing accommodation. 	<p>pitches of limited quality:</p> <p>Tommy Crooks Park – poor drainage and no changing accommodation</p> <p>Springfield Park – uneven pitch surface</p> <p>Some clubs believe that there are insufficient pitches and that this is stifling demand</p> <p>Lack of spare capacity for junior and 9v 9 pitches. There is no room for larger clubs to grow. Taking into population growth therefore, there is a need to increase capacity by circa 3 adult pitches, 5 junior pitches and 1- 2 9v9 pitches (or the equivalent capacity). The requirement may increase if it is accepted that single pitch sites at small schools are not suitable for community use.</p> <p>Darlington RA are at capacity and have actively reduced the number of teams that they are running due to a lack of facilities</p>
Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 116 community football teams, meaning that participation has remained relatively static since 2009. Over 40% of teams required 	<p>Heighington Playing Fields also</p>

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>pitches for 9v9 or smaller. This correlates directly with the pitch stock.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most teams are under the umbrella of a large club with several teams. All junior teams are part of a larger club and many of these clubs also have at least one senior team, meaning that there are strong foundations for the growth of football. There are also a small number of single adult football teams, primarily playing in the Darlington Sunday Invitation league. Darlington Railway Athletic (Northern League) and Darlington 1883 FC – Evo Stick Northern League play in the higher echelons of the national football league pyramid. As a result, there are specific requirements that must be adhered to in relation to the facilities provided at the home ground. Darlington 1883 are currently displaced, using facilities at Bishop Auckland FC due to a lack of appropriate facilities (that comply with ground grading requirements) in Darlington. The clubs are in discussion with Darlington RFC with a view to playing at Blackwell Meadows in future seasons This will require improvements to the facilities at the Rugby Club. Darlington RA have their own facilities. The majority of football teams use AGPs to train. There is however evidence of training on grass pitches at Longfield Academy, South Park and Darlington RA, which places extra pressures on the grass pitches. Just under 50% of clubs are dissatisfied with existing levels of provision. The key barriers to growth are perceived to be a lack of AGPs for training (with some clubs still not able to access a pitch), a lack of pitches for of appropriate quality for junior football and a lack of coaches and volunteers. Many clubs believe that there are still not enough pitches of the right quality. 	<p>approaching capacity longer term, with the club working on a development plan to ensure that pitch provision is sufficient</p> <p>There is a high dependency on school sites and many are overplayed with no remaining capacity</p> <p>Poor quality pitches impacting on capacity - some are lower tier sites but others accommodate large amounts of football. South Park in particular is a poor quality second tier facility</p> <p>Lack of access to Hurworth School</p> <p>Importance of key primary school sites that are unsecured - Heighington PS</p> <p>While there are a number of primary school sites available for the community, they are less desirable due to their small size and have no toilets / changing.</p>
Adequacy of Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Across the week, there is a degree of spare capacity on most pitches. Some pitches at Longfield Academy, Carmel College, Hummersknott School and Language College, Heighington Playing Fields, and Darlington Railway Athletic Club re however overplayed. Many of these 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>accommodate larger clubs and are amongst the higher quality sites. All of the school sites that are considered to be overplayed are confirmed to be at capacity by the school, and most highlight the need to ensure that facilities are protected for curricular use as well as maximizing community use of the facilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While there is some minimal spare capacity at Eastbourne Sports Complex and Blackwell Meadows, these sites are also well used and are popular venues with clubs in the borough. Both of these sites are located in areas likely to experience population growth • There are several sites that receive little or no use – many of these are primary school sites that have formal lettings policies but do not necessarily have appropriate facilities to support activity. The other pitches that receive no use are single pitch sites which are of poorer quality, specifically Croft Working Mens and Hurworth Grange Community Centre. The pitch at Teesside Airport appears to be primarily used for training and is heavily used for summer and pre season training. • Reflecting the focus on Sunday football in Darlington, pitch capacity is also constrained at peak time and that outside of the sites that are not used, there are few pitches with much spare capacity for additional play at peak time. This means that most of the spare capacity is at sites that are less desirable to clubs. Scenario testing also demonstrates that the high peak time demand mean that improvements to quality to increase capacity would have little impact on the overall situation • It is notable that for almost all forms of football, capacity during the week is as closely balanced with demand as at peak time and in some cases, more closely balanced with demand. This can be attributed to reliance upon the school stock for community pitches, the poor quality of some pitch sites (which means limited capacity to sustain multiple matches across the week (although many of these pitches have lower levels of demand) and the use of grass pitches for training by a small 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>number of clubs, which adds to the wear and tear of pitches outside peak time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking more specifically at each type of pitch; For adult football, there is limited spare capacity, equivalent to -0.75 match equivalents across the week and 5.5 at peak time. Pitch provision is therefore limited and there is some use of adult pitches by junior teams. Overplay of adult football pitches is focused on Darlington RA, Longfield Academy, and Carmel Roman Catholic College and over a third of all activity on adult football is focused on these sites. Hummersknott School and Eastbourne Sports Complex offer the highest spare capacity and outside these sites there is limited capacity for further play. Heighington Playing Fields, North Park, Springfield, Teesside Airport and Tommy Crooks Park are currently being played to the level that they can sustain and cannot sustain any further play. All of these sites except Heighington Playing Fields are poor quality pitches, meaning that their capacity is restricted by the quality of the facility. Queen Elizabeth College is the only site allowing access to pitches on an unsecured basis. This site has become an important community venue as the college has developed a partnership with Darlington Spraire Lads and Lasses. The site offers 3 pitches with a total of 6 match equivalents per week (4 of which are college use). There is no remaining spare capacity on the site due to the college policy of retaining quality. If the site was no longer available for community use, 1.5 community match equivalents would need to be relocated as well as the college use. This would mean that overall, deficiencies would increase. This demonstrates therefore that the Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College site is an important facility, but also how closely supply is in balance with demand for adult football. Junior Football like for adult pitches, there are pressures on pitches both across the week (4) and 3 match equivalents available at peak time. The only spare capacity is at Eastbourne Sports Complex (1.5), 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>Heighington Playing Fields (1.5), Hurworth School (1) while the pitch at Hurworth School is believed to be open for use in principle, but not necessarily in practice. This means that supply is very closely matched with demand across the week. There are few sites with capacity at peak time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Like junior pitches, the supply of 9v9 pitches is relatively constrained. Spare capacity is equivalent to 2 match equivalents across the week and 4.5 at peak time. Added to the pressures on 9v9 pitches, the loss of unsecured sites would only displace 0.5 match equivalents, but would reduce spare capacity at peak time. Overplay is again concentrated on the larger school sites and no sites have more than 0.5 match equivalents spare capacity. Spare capacity for 7v7 and 5v5 football is greater, with 34 match equivalents across the week and 24.5 match equivalents available at peak time (7v7 pitches) and 11 match equivalents on 5v5 pitches, with 7 at peak time. Most pitches are busy however the higher number of smaller sized matches that can be accommodated (and the more flexible scheduling means supply is more easily able to meet demand. There is also a greater stock of pitches on smaller school sites for 7v7 and 5v5 play. While these are secured and available for the community, they are less desirable and have no toilets / changing. It should be noted that the amount of use made of 3g pitches in the borough for competitive fixtures is limited, and greater use of these pitches for match play would reduce pressures on grass pitches. Scenario modelling indicates that three pitches would be required to accommodate 7v7 and 5v5 games, but only if fixtures were reprogrammed to outside 9v9 peak time. If this did not occur an additional 3 pitches would be needed for each form of football, a level of provision that is unlikely to be sustainable in Darlington Borough. Population growth will have limited impact on participation in football, ensuring that current levels are maintained by negating the impact of 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>the ageing population and potentially generating up to 1 team per type of football. Club growth is likely however to have greater impact, with clubs aspiring to run an additional 38 teams in total. If these were to be achieved, the existing stock would be insufficient to meet the needs of adult, junior and 9v9 teams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking into population growth therefore, there is a need to increase capacity by circa 3 adult pitches, 5 junior pitches and 2 9v9 pitches (or the equivalent capacity). The requirement may increase if it is accepted that single pitch sites at small schools are not suitable for community use. This requirement will also depend upon the potential to increase use of 3g pitches for match play. This will be delivered through a combination of lapsed sites and allocations within major developments, as well as the provision of additional AGPs. Recommendations in Section 11 provide site specific detail on how this will be delivered. 	
<p>Key Issues to Address</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are high pressures on junior and 9v9 pitches (and subsequent heavy use of adult pitches) and a requirement for additional capacity (equivalent to 3 adult pitches, 5 junior pitches and 2 9v9 pitches (or the equivalent capacity) to ensure that pitch supply does not constrain demand. This takes into account the impact that population growth will have on demand (negating the impact of the ageing population as well as providing new participants). In some instances, the amount of pitches is now limiting participation. Additional capacity can be provided through increasing use of 3g pitches, as well as qualitative improvements and new facilities. • There is some site specific club based overplay, particularly at Darlington RA. This contributes to the need for additional facilities • The use of grass pitches for training is further impacting on the amount of pitches that are available and the overall levels of use that pitches are receiving during the course of the week. • The quality of some pitches is limited (changing and pitch quality) and may be impacted longer term if heavy use continues. There are also some pitches of very low quality with no changing or toilet facilities • Darlington 1883 are currently displaced and looking to relocate back to the borough. They are in 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>discussions with Darlington RFC to use pitches at Blackwell Meadows</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing 3g pitches have limited role to play currently in match play and there is significant scope to increase the usage of these facilities. 	

Table 3.4: AGPs and MUGAs

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are four full sized AGPs, of which 3 are accessible to the community. The facility at Rockcliffe Park (Middlesbrough FC training ground) is used primarily by the club although it is occasionally let out (for example for England training). Two of the full size pitches are 3g facilities while the remaining pitch at Eastbourne Sports Complex is sand based. All pitches are floodlit so they can be used evenings as well as weekends and the capacity of the facilities is therefore maximized. Both 3g pitches (Hummersknott School and Longfield Academy) are good quality and have been recently provided. Both are currently on the FA register of pitches meaning that they are approved for match use as well as training The sand based pitch surface at Eastbourne Sports Complex is poor (with rips) and requires replacement Provision is well distributed across Darlington Borough. While Longfield Academy is located to the north of the town, Hummersknott Academy is situated to the west. Eastbourne Sports Complex, the only sand based facility, is located to the east. 	<p>There is an overall requirement for 3 x 3g pitch (football and rugby) and 1 x hockey pitch. Additional 3g pitch required to meet this target. This is supported by minimal spare capacity remaining at existing pitches.</p> <p>The existing sand based facility is of insufficient quality to sustain hockey and requires refurbishment or replacement.</p> <p>A 3g pitch is also viewed as a potential opportunity to address capacity issues at Darlington Mowden Park RFC.</p>
Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are two hockey clubs playing in the borough at Eastbourne 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>Sports Complex (Darlington Hockey Club and Bishop Auckland Hockey Club). There is limited junior participation, but demand is equivalent to 2 matches at peak time (Saturday PM). England Hockey indicates that one pitch is able to sustain up to 4 matches in a day and therefore one pitch is required to meet peak time demand. Hockey usage is therefore equivalent to just over 7 hours per week, taking into account both matches and training. Population growth is unlikely to see this demand increase but club development may impact on requirements if the number of teams grows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3g pitches can be used for competitive fixtures, as well as for informal football and training. They can also be used for rugby if they are compliant with World Rugby specifications. The new FA strategy seeks to ensure that all clubs have access to a 3g pitch for training and they discourage the use of sand based facilities. Both 3g pitches in Darlington are used for training. • FA modelling indicates that there is a requirement for 3 pitches to meet current demand from football clubs. While many football clubs currently use one of the two existing 3g pitches for training, Middleton Rangers, Heighington Boys, Mount Pleasant JFC and Darlington TSC all currently train on either grass or sand based pitches. Football clubs are split with regards opinions on whether there are sufficient AGPs, with 43% believing that more 3g pitches are required. In general, the clubs that are satisfied with facilities are those that currently use either Longfield Academy or Hummersknott, while those that are dissatisfied either train on grass or the sand based pitch. Football clubs also raise concerns about the cost of 3g AGPs. • Darlington Mowden Park RFC are seeking to install a 3g pitch (World Rugby Compliant) inside the Darlington Arena to replace a grass pitch. They see this as a means of increasing the capacity 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>of the site (which has been identified as having a current deficiency in provision) to support the current playing programme as well as providing a high quality venue that can sustain more sports to maximize the potential of the arena. The club sees this as a community facility as well as a resource for the rugby club itself. Carmel College have also expressed an aspiration for a sand based pitch, indicating that this is required for curricular purposes.</p>	
<p>Adequacy of Provision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport England FPM modelling reveals that there is unmet demand for AGPs within the borough and that all existing facilities are used to capacity. It suggests that there is demand for one additional 3g pitch. • Reflecting the findings of the Sport England FPM, FA demand modelling also indicates that there is a shortfall of one 3g pitch in the borough. • There is a small amount of spare capacity at the existing sand based pitch, with 5.5 hours available midweek and 5.5 hours available at the weekend. 30% of midweek peak use is for hockey, and 100% at weekends. Outside of hockey, the remainder of use (70% of weekly peak time usage, as well as the majority of use outside peak hours) is football. • There is minimal spare capacity at the 3g pitches midweek with just a few slots vacant at Longfield School and very limited spare capacity at Hummersknott (4.5 hours vacant in total midweek). There is therefore limited opportunity to increase the use of these pitches for training and evidence of demand for existing facilities • There is however greater availability at weekends on 3g pitches, with spare capacity on a Saturday and a Sunday afternoon and scope to use both sites for match play. Future growth in football 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>(through club aspirations) may result in demand for an additional 0.5 pitches, generating an overall requirement for 1.5 additional 3g pitches. Of particular note, neither 3g pitch is currently used for football match play. These facilities represent a significant opportunity to increase capacity and reduce pressure on grass pitches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All hockey activity takes place on the sand based pitch at Eastbourne Sports Complex and clubs are able to access facilities at the time that they require. The Martin Gray Football Academy takes place on the sand based pitch at Eastbourne Sports Complex (and this site is now the formal home to this academy) as well as on the grass pitches at this site. The quality of this pitch is however poor and is unsuitable to sustain hockey. Resurface or replacement is required in the short term to ensure that the pitch remains suitable for use. • It is therefore clear that there is a requirement to provide an improved sand based facility as well as an additional 3g pitch. • There are several options for the delivery of these facilities, with Carmel College expressing demand for a sand based facility, as well as Darlington Mowden Park Rugby Club seeking a 3g pitch. The poor condition of the surface at Eastbourne Sports Complex also provides an opportunity to review the surface at this facility. As a football hub with an array of grass pitches, there is a strong justification for the provision of a 3g pitch at this site. This would however require careful relocation of the sand based pitch to ensure continuity for hockey. Relocation of the hockey club to the Carmel College School site would provide further developmental opportunities for hockey and enable the growth of school club links. 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
<p>Key Issues to Address Summary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for an additional 3g AGP in the borough and this is supported by theoretical modelling, as well as on the ground capacity analysis. • To support the needs of hockey, a sand based AGP is also required. The facility at Eastbourne Sports Complex needs a replacement surface and will shortly become unsuitable for club use until a replacement surface is provided. Although separate facilities, the needs of the hockey club are linked with the requirement for a new 3g AGP, as it is likely that this would displace demand from the sand based facility. Continuity in provision would also be essential to ensure that there is no short or long term impact on hockey. • There are several options for the delivery of this facility, with Darlington Mowden Park RFC keen to provide a facility on their site, Carmel College looking for a sand based pitch and the Council also keen to refurbish Eastbourne Sports Complex, potentially with a 3g AGP as opposed to a sand based surface. The delivery of facilities of each surface are therefore interrelated. • As a football hub with an array of grass pitches, there is a strong justification for the provision of a 3g pitch at Eastbourne Sports Complex. This would however require careful relocation of the sand based pitch to ensure continuity for hockey. Relocation of the hockey club to the Carmel College School site would however provide further developmental opportunities for hockey and enable the growth of school club links. Further work by the NGBs of sport suggest that this is the preferred solution • The proposed business model of Darlington Mowden Park RFC is thought to rely on the facility also hosting football clubs, although it will address capacity issues with grass pitches at Darlington 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
	<p>Mowden Park RFC. Depending upon rugby requirements, the provision of a pitch at this site may offer insufficient opportunities for football to meet the unmet demand, while a further pitch elsewhere in the borough is likely to reduce the number of football clubs using a facility at the rugby club and potentially make a facility at the rugby club unsustainable. The feasibility of provision of a new 3g AGP at this site would need to be considered in the context of other facilities.</p>	
MUGAs		
Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 8 MUGAs at community venues, and 9 at school sites that are used for formal sports activities. The remaining facilities are located on school sites and are primarily playgrounds rather than traditional MUGAs. • All facilities on public sites are accessible free of charge at all times. In contrast, school facilities must be paid for and therefore accommodate only formal sporting activities • The condition of MUGAs is generally good, with some sites particularly well maintained. There were however examples of litter and misuse, primarily on the open access facilities. Fewer issues were identified on school sites. • North Park, Redhall Community Centre and the Coleridge Centre are the only community sites to contain floodlights – a lack of floodlights limits the use of facilities (or potential use of facilities not currently available for the community), particularly during the winter months. Darlington College, West Park Academy, Rydal Academy and Darlington Education village also contained floodlights. 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Issues
Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no formal measures of demand for MUGAs. • The comprehensive stock of MUGAs means that there is a good level of access to facilities for residents across all areas of the borough. Most residents are within an appropriate catchment of facility, although some of these are school sites. 	
Adequacy of Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no supply and demand models available to measure the adequacy of MUGAs. • The comprehensive stock of MUGAs means that there is a good level of access to facilities for residents across all areas of the borough and there is little evidence of further requirement from a sporting perspective. The quality of facilities does however in some instances restrict the use of facilities. • Improvements to the existing stock of facilities may also be important to support ongoing curricular activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Park Academy – maintenance and improvements required • North Park – equipment missing
Key Issues to Address - Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no clear issues for MUGAs, with no evidence that additional facilities are required from a community benefit. MUGAs are however important facilities for curricular benefit at school sites. • Several sites in the borough would benefit from qualitative improvements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required qualitative improvements

Table 3.5: Indoor and Outdoor Tennis

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Requirements
<p>Supply</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 30 tennis courts with public access at 10 sites and a further 7 courts that do not offer public access. There has been a loss of three courts (South Park x 2 and one at Brinkburn Dene) since the previous strategy, all at Council managed sites. These facilities are no longer provided as tennis courts due to a lack of use. • There is significant variation in the quality of tennis courts, with provision at the club bases of much higher quality than at public venues, where the quality is generally poor (particularly the court surface). The standard of facilities at school sites is varying. The poor condition of public venues is particularly critical, as the LTA highlight improved use of park venues as a key priority moving forwards. • The key quality identified in the borough issues relate to the court surface and line markings. Many public venues also suffer from litter and misuse. • Public tennis courts are available free of charge, while there is a pay and play fee for all school sites and an annual membership for club bases. This means that there are a variety of opportunities available to play tennis. • Almost all tennis courts with community use available are located to the west of the town. Many residents in the east of the town therefore do not have local access to existing facilities. Only Darlington Education Village is situated in the east of the town centre and this is therefore an important site. The existing distribution of facilities does not correlate directly with areas of the borough where residents have the higher propensity to participate – provision is primarily located in the urban areas but 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential additional courts (or capacity through floodlighting) required for Wellfield Tennis Club / New Blackwell Tennis Club • Both Brinkburn Dene and Stanhope Park are relatively poor quality. There is a need to increase usage at park sites and qualitative improvements may be a key part of this • There are also site specific improvements required at Blackwell Lawn Tennis Club and Wellfield Tennis Club • Courts at Carmel College are poor • There is a highlighted lack of awareness of the location of tennis courts

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Requirements
	<p>residents in the more rural surrounds are more likely to play.</p>	
Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tennis is played across both sexes and that the age of participants is much more widespread than for most other sports considered. While the dominant participants are similar to those playing other sports, it is clear that tennis provides an effective way of engaging residents who do not enjoy other sports. • There are two tennis clubs (New Blackwell LTC and Wellfield LTC) that have a combined membership of 372 courts. These clubs offer a more formal type of participation. • Active People surveys reveal that 1581 people currently participate in tennis however a further 1828 people would like to play. This significant latent demand is spread across different population groups and both genders and therefore offers a strong opportunity to promote physical activity in the town. Active People therefore suggests that there is an overall potential tennis playing population of 3409. LTA research demonstrates that circa 40 – 50% of play takes place at community venues. • The Durham LTA also highlight the need to raise awareness of the availability of tennis courts, highlighting that research has demonstrated that 43% of residents in the north East do not know where local tennis facilities are located. This may be a contributing factor to the lower than average levels of participation recorded in some areas of Darlington. 	
Adequacy of Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LTA have derived indicative standards relating to the capacity of a court to provide an indication of the number of courts required. Based upon this assumed standard of 1 court per 45 participants (not floodlit) and 1 court per 60 players (floodlit), 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Requirements
	<p>the existing stock of active outdoor courts that are available for community use will serve 1590 players. According to Active People, there are 1580 existing players meaning that the stock of facilities is directly correlated with demand. If latent demand (according to Active People) was to be realized, provision would fall below the levels required. Population growth in addition to the realization of latent demand would also see the stock of facilities become insufficient using theoretical modelling as a basis for analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current clubs have capacity for 440 players and current membership equates to 372 again suggesting that the amount of facilities is sufficient. The facilities available are particularly restricting at Wellfield TC, where there is space for just 13 members. This is echoed by the club, who reveal that they have difficulties accommodating all players on club nights and that their facilities are becoming constrained (both court and ancillary facilities). While Blackwell LTC has a slightly greater level of spare capacity, this is also relatively limited. • Despite the close match between supply and demand, all schools indicate that they have capacity to increase the use of their courts and there is also some (albeit restricted) capacity at the clubs. Courts at park sites are also believed to be underused. Levels of use of existing facilities therefore indicate that there is no requirement for additional provision and instead that focus should be placed on improving use of existing courts. • More locally in the North East, the Durham Tennis Association emphasize the importance of community provision, highlighting that 40% of tennis now takes place in community places – parks, leisure centres etc. • The Durham LTA also highlight the need to raise awareness of the 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Requirements
	availability of tennis courts, highlighting that research has demonstrated that 43% of residents in the north East do not know where local tennis facilities are located.	
Key Issues to Address - Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are sufficient tennis courts overall offering a variety of access arrangements. There is however little remaining spare capacity at club venues, and scope to increase use of school facilities as well as courts in public parks. There is a need to improve facilities at the tennis clubs, with Wellfield LTC requiring improvement to both the pavilion and court surface. The condition of facilities in public parks is limited and the courts are underused. LTA research across the country however indicates that 40% of activities now take place in community places rather than clubs, meaning that these facilities are a key component of the overall tennis stock. Despite this, use of school facilities is also limited and there is significant scope to make better use of the stock of facilities. Tennis provides a strong opportunity to increase participation across the borough, with a high quantity of latent demand evident. To realize this however, the LTA prioritise the need to raise awareness of the availability of tennis courts. It is therefore essential that the future provision of tennis courts and qualitative improvements are linked with programmes of use and awareness raising. There are no indoor tennis courts in Darlington. Darlington is not a priority for indoor tennis development for the LTA. As set out the focus for development is on outdoor provision on park and community sites. 	

Table 3.6: Indoor and Outdoor Bowls

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Requirements
Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are seven active greens and 2 derelict sites – this is lower than provision in 2009 and demonstrates an evidence of decline. The quality of greens is good overall, with site visits identifying pathways and surrounds as a key area for improvement. Some 	<p>North Lodge Park – green quality improvements. Requires improved pavilion / toilets</p> <p>North Park - North Lodge Park – green</p>

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Requirements
	<p>sites also require improvements to the green surface.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clubs are however relatively negative about the quality and raise concerns about maintenance procedures and cost. They view quality as the key area for improvement and quality issues are highlighted as the key barrier to growth of bowls. Key concerns include the challenges of maintaining facilities, including obtaining appropriate equipment and funding and the importance of appropriate toilet and washing facilities. Clubs are either privately managed, or by the Darlington Parks Bowls Association. This is a recent arrangement which is still evolving in the borough. 	<p>quality improvements. Requires repair work to pavilion</p> <p>Other sites would also benefit from investment into maintenance and site surrounds.</p>
Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are active clubs on all current sites. All clubs have capacity for new members and are actively seeking new participants. Average membership is just 46(optimum levels are 80 – 100). Higher levels of membership help maximise sustainability through increased income, which will be required to support the management and maintenance of greens. 62% of bowlers travel 1 mile or less to a bowling green, suggesting that facilities are expected local to the home. The majority of residents living in Darlington town are within one mile of a bowling green as a result of the even distribution of facilities. All residents in the town, and the majority of residents in the borough are within three miles. The key gap in provision is Heighington - this is the only clear settlement where residents must travel more than 3 miles. There is no known unmet demand at this time. 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Requirements
Adequacy of Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is spare capacity at all greens and facilities are well distributed across the borough. All clubs are therefore currently accessible to residents. The spare capacity means that there is a focus on retention of existing facilities, rather than the provision of more greens. • There are some quality issues evident and the quality of facilities is a key concern for existing clubs. Clubs are keen to see increased support to ensure that facilities can be improved. • Population growth is likely to have a greater impact on the supply and demand for bowls than for other sports and based on existing membership, is likely to increase by 32 players as a direct result of population growth. Assuming that membership of all greens is even, this would mean a membership of circa 50 players at each bowling club by 2026, which is still sustainable within the existing stock. If higher participation rates were used (source: Active People), this growth would increase to 135 players per green and provision may be insufficient to meet demand (optimum membership 80 – 100). The location of housing growth and / or changing patterns of membership are unlikely to cause one club to reach capacity. • Bowling greens are perceived to be less accessible to younger residents. Along with enticing additional players to the facility, attracting younger players is also a key priority for both the NGB and the local clubs. 	
Key Issues to Address - Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to retain the existing indoor and outdoor bowling greens • There are several quality issues that need to be addressed - these include improvements to the green surface and the toilet wash facilities. Improvements to the maintenance regimes and purchase of equipment are also 	

Summary	Assessment Findings	Specific Facility Requirements
	<p>required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance the current indoor bowls centre. The current requires some refurbishment, with a need to incorporate new disability provision and improvements to changing and toilet provision. • To maximize sustainability of the sport, there is a need to increase participation and to raise awareness of opportunities that are available. Clubs have asked for support and guidance in doing this. 	

Specialist provision

Of the specialist provision included in the scope of the study there are no significant needs. Darlington is not a priority location in a sub-regional / regional context.

The existing provision should be protected and enhanced:

- Eastbourne Athletics Track
- West Park Cycling facility
- Golf provision in line with national and local needs; prioritising practice facilities for beginners and learners to introduce people to the game
- Squash provision at the Dolphin Centre and Darlington Squash Club
- Gymnastics at Faverdale
- Boxing club provision

The development of further specialist provision, which clearly meets a local need and where opportunity exists to develop a sustainable facility, should be supported by the Council. The example of 4Motion provides a model of what can be achieved.

4: Action Plans, Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Introduction

- 4.1 This section sets out the priority site specific recommendations that will be undertaken to support the delivery of indoor and outdoor sports facilities across the borough.
- 4.2 Recommendations are derived from a detailed programme of analysis of the existing situation and consultations. Together, these policies and recommendations guide decision making on the future delivery of indoor and outdoor sports facilities across the borough.

Strategic objectives

- 4.3 Reflecting this, the strategy is based on the following principles:
- **Ensure any new or re-developed provision in the borough is developed in-line with the Sports Facility and PPS Strategy priorities and the needs and evidence set out** - Ensure planners adopt the evidence base as appropriate and the work directs funding
 - **The strategy will focus on a hierarchy of facilities – prioritising strategic hub sites and supporting links between sports** – recognising the benefits and long term sustainability of larger sites and of those providing for multiple sports, the strategy will promote the use of larger facilities and the co-location of facilities
 - **Focus will be placed on maximising resources** – the strategy will seek to maximise the capacity and function of facilities and to ensure that provision is adapted to meet with future requirements. This will include the continued use of school sites, which play a critical role in the provision of sports facilities in Darlington Borough
 - **Sustainability is a key focus** – all recommendations seek to deliver new and improved facilities in a sustainable manner, focusing on large sites that are efficient and effective to maintain, maximising the capacity of sites, supporting well established clubs and promoting good practice
 - **Quality of facilities is as important as the amount of provision** – the strategy seeks to ensure that the borough contains the right amount of facilities, of the right quality and in the right place. While it promotes protection of current provision, it recognises the need to improve the quality of existing facilities and the subsequent investment required
 - **Investment will focus upon interventions that will have the greatest impact** – the strategy seeks to prioritise investment into sites where the highest impact will be felt and where high numbers of users will benefit. It will seek to increase participation in sport and activity in terms of both numbers and standards.

Strategy objectives

4.4 Based on the needs and evidence set out, for all sports, Darlington Borough Council and its partners will seek to:

Protect

- **SO1:** Safeguard all existing sports facilities in line with Paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework, irrespective of ownership and the degree of access and use. This strategy will clearly define any facilities that are not required to meet current or projected future needs
- **SO2:** Protect access to sports facilities by promoting long term agreements with schools and other landowners to facilitate ongoing investment and improvement
- **SO3:** Maximise community use of indoor and outdoor sports facilities where this will benefit the overall facility stock.

Enhance

- **SO4:** Ensure that the quality of facilities provided is appropriate to the level and standard of play that is sustained and that it promotes participation in sport
- **SO5:** Ensure that sports facilities are accompanied by appropriate ancillary facilities (e.g. sports lighting and changing provision)
- **SO6:** Ensure that facilities are maintained appropriately for the activities that they are sustaining and to maximise long term capacity
- **SO7:** Work in partnership with key stakeholders and voluntary organisations to secure funding.

Provide

- **SO8:** Address existing deficiencies in provision
- **SO9:** Ensure that new developments contribute towards the provision of new sports facilities and the enhancement of existing facilities
- **SO10:** Support clubs in the management and development of facilities.

4.5 The sport specific recommendations are set out in the sections that follow. They link to the above strategic objectives and outline the key priorities for each sport. Action plans to facilitate the delivery of these recommendations are included below and in the separate Strategy document.

4.6 For outdoor sports facilities, a site specific list of actions and priorities is also provided at the end of this section.

Sport Specific Recommendations

Sports Halls and Community Halls

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
<p>Protect</p> <p>SO1</p>	<p>Protect existing levels of sports hall provision</p>	<p>Since the beginning of 2013 there has been 4 additional sport shall sites opened in Darlington. There are now 10 sports hall sites of which 8 are 4 badminton court size venues and all of these are education sites. The supply of sports halls is estimated to exceed demand in 2013 by 2.5 badminton courts and by 12.5 badminton courts in 2014, once access is factored in</p> <p>Based on a population of 107,480 Darlington would require a theoretical provision of 29.56 courts according to the SfC. In 2015 the number of available courts adjusted for community use is 40.5 courts.</p> <p>Darlington does not need additional provision the total number of courts will meet future needs.</p>	<p>All sports hall sites</p>
<p>Enhance</p> <p>SO4-SO7</p>	<p>Determine a collective and cohesive programme of community use at venues which deliver the sports development and physical activity objectives of the Council and the strategy. This may lead to more of the education sites being available for structured club use and community</p>	<p>Darlington has a good network of sports hall with capacity to increase usage. The Community Centre network provides opportunities for the further development of health and physical activity programmes in local accessible locations, in line with the Community Strategy</p>	<p>All schools with a focus on Hurworth School and Darlington College. Sites where community use is currently limited</p> <p>All community centres with capacity to increase usage</p>

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
	<p>centres for physical activity programmes</p> <p>Explore the opportunities for enhanced community access at sports halls on school sites. Seek to enhance provision and access at key sites for community sport and club / NGB use.</p> <p>Support the community centre network to facilitate greater community use for sport and physical activity</p> <p>Seek to continue to support the enhancement of the current network of sports hall facilities on an on-going basis</p> <p>Seek to ensure the enhancement of provision at key sports hall sites for indoor hall sports (flooring, size of run-off area etc), ensuring they are 'fit for purpose' for community use as part of any refurbishment programme. This should include disability access</p>		
<p>Provide SO9</p>	<p>Partners seeking to develop future sports hall provision should set out a need based on sports development and NGB requirements as opposed to general community needs</p> <p>Explore the potential to deliver more</p>	<p>Carmel College sports hall is now over 40-years old and poor quality. Polam Hall School does not have a sports hall</p> <p>Flexible indoor spaces provide opportunities different opportunities to</p>	<p>Carmel College and Pollam Hall</p> <p>Any opening up of facilities for wider community use should seek to include flexible indoor space as</p>

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
	flexible activity spaces as opposed to formal sports hall provision part of new or refurbished developments	drive participation as opposed to traditional sports hall provision	appropriate

Swimming Pools

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
Protect SO1	Protect all existing provision particularly education based swimming pools	There is sufficient quantity of waterspace to meet the needs of Darlington residents now and in the future. The pools have sufficient capacity and are also well located to meet resident need. Quality is an issue as the pools are ageing and therefore long-term sustainability of the network, particularly the school sites is a concern. If any of the education sites were to close this would reduce the supply and demand balance close to equilibrium.	All swimming pool sites
Enhance SO4-SO7	Continue to invest in the flagship facility at the Dolphin. The Council are committed to a £2.75m investment programme to address pool plant and infra-structure issues. Seek to invest in the school pool network to facilitate greater community	Dolphin Centre is well located to meet current and future needs and is crucial for swimming across the borough The school network is important to the supply and demand balance across Darlington. It is therefore important to	Dolphin Leisure Centre All education sites

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
	use and access	seek to protect the education network as any reduction in the school network, which is ageing and under 'potential' threat would therefore impact on the supply and demand balance.	
<p>Provide</p> <p>SO10</p>	<p>The Council is committed to working with the swimming clubs to make the waterspace work harder and increased time has already been allocated. These discussions should continue and look across the network as a whole</p> <p>Co-ordinate usage and programming across pools and develop a joint approach to programming across the available waterspace – maximize effectiveness of waterspace for different aquatic disciplines</p> <p>This may provide the opportunity to find enhanced time for Darlington Swimming Clubs by matching programmes more appropriately to pool provision as opposed to the current free market. Opportunities may exist to work with the ASA who can support Council's to address pool programming issues</p>	<p>The club use across the pool network appears to be ad-hoc across the provision with clubs competing for time slots and facilities competing for business with no co-ordination. There appears to be capacity in the system and therefore an opportunity for developing joint programmes across the pools to maximise the use of available waterspace by all aquatic disciplines</p>	<p>All sites with ASA support</p>

Playing Pitches

- 4.7 While the amount of pitches has increased, and pitch provision is now more tailored to demand, there remain pressures on pitches in the borough and a need to ensure that existing quantities of pitches are protected.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites and Key Actions
<p>Protect</p> <p>SO1</p>	<p>Ensure that the Local Plan and subsequent DPDs contain policies protecting sites containing playing pitches, building upon the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF paragraph 74) and Sport England's¹ statutory consultee role on planning applications affecting playing field land.</p> <p>Sport England Policy indicates that Sport England will not object to the loss of playing fields where one or more of the following exception criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an assessment of current and future needs has demonstrated that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport; • the proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as a playing field or playing 	<p>The number of pitches provided overall is insufficient to meet demand from teams in Darlington Borough and there are shortfalls of provision. Existing provision should therefore be retained and new facilities will be required.</p>	<p>A full list of sites is provided in the appendices. This outlines the key action for each site including which sites should be protected, enhanced and any sites that are no longer required to meet current or projected future need. The loss of any site not required should result in replacement provision and the list should be regularly updated in line with strategy monitoring processes.</p>

¹ Sport England Policy on Playing Fields is set out in A Sporting Future for the Playing Fields of England – Policy on Planning Applications for development on playing fields

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites and Key Actions
	<p>fields, and does not affect the quantity or quality of pitches or adversely affect their use;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the proposed development affects only land incapable of forming, or forming part of, a playing pitch, and does not result in the loss of or inability to make use of any playing pitch; lost playing fields would be replaced by a playing field or playing fields of an equivalent or better quality and of equivalent or greater quantity, in a suitable location and subject to equivalent or better management arrangements, prior to the commencement of development; and the proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor sports facility, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss of the playing field or playing fields. 		

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites and Key Actions
<p>Protect</p> <p>SO2</p> <p>SO3</p>	<p>Protect existing security of access with timely negotiation of community use agreements with schools and with landowners where appropriate.</p> <p>Ensure that existing community use agreements are delivered and renewed.</p>	<p>The number of pitches provided overall is insufficient to meet demand from teams in Darlington Borough and there are shortfalls of provision.</p> <p>There is a particularly reliance on the school stock, meaning that sustained long term access to these sites is critical to the future of pitch provision in the borough.</p> <p>Lack of spare capacity at sites for football, cricket and rugby means that access to existing facilities should be protected and retained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darlington RA –ongoing lease negotiations • Haughton CC - issues with existing security of tenure • Hurworth School – follow up of community access agreements. Agreements are in place but there is no existing access • All schools with existing community access agreements - key priorities are Longfield Academy, The Education Village, Hummersknott School and Language College and Darlington School of Maths and Science. These schools are essential to the ongoing provision of sports facilities in Darlington Borough.

4.8 The current Darlington Borough Playing Pitch Strategy sets out a hub approach where pitches are concentrated on fewer sites with a greater number of facilities at each site. The hierarchy of facilities comprises:

- **Flagship sites** – multi pitch and multi sport sites with adequate changing, car parking and high quality maintenance (current sites Eastbourne Sports Complex and Blackwell Meadows)
- **Satellite sites** – multi pitch sites with at least 2 pitches and adequate changing accommodation (sites include South Park, Education Village, Longfield School, Darlington School of Maths and Science, Hummersknott School, Heighington Playing Fields). Carmel School should also be included within this category
- **Single pitch sites** – provides for more casual play and training, no changing accommodation required. Sites include Tommy Crooks Park Springfield Park, North Park.

4.9 This approach has proved successful and provision in Darlington Borough has improved as a result.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites and Key Actions
Protect / Provide / Enhance SO4 SO5 SO6	<p>Continue to operate the strategic hierarchy of pitch provision across the borough and use this to guide prioritization for pitch improvements.</p> <p>The principles of the hierarchy should also continue to be adopted - the focus on large multi pitch sites and maximizing partnership working across all key providers.</p>	<p>The strategic hierarchy adopted following the development of the previous strategy has proved successful and therefore provides strong foundations for the ongoing provision of playing fields in the borough.</p> <p>As is currently the case, the pricing structure should remain tailored to the quality of facility that is provided.</p>	<p>All sites.</p> <p>All subsequent recommendations are undertaken with this strategic hierarchy in mind.</p>

Football

4.10 The capacity of existing football pitches is constrained for a variety of reasons and as a result, there are insufficient pitches of the right type to meet projected demand. This is largely due to the recent growth in junior and 9v9 football and the overall pressures on the pitch stock, but is also influenced by the use of school sites (which must also accommodate curricular use) and a reliance on grass pitches for training. For adult pitches, the poor quality of facilities also restricts usage. There is a need to provide additional capacity in order to better the

needs of existing clubs, but also to future proof the stock in the event of population growth and participation increases and also to ensure that demand is not constrained by supply.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites and Key Actions
<p>Provide</p> <p>S03</p> <p>S08</p> <p>S09</p>	<p>Provide additional capacity in the pitch stock by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting use of the existing 3g AGPs in the borough for competitive fixtures Providing one additional 3g pitch in the borough to accommodate both matches and training. Securing community use of key community venues currently offering unsecured access Supporting proposals by Darlington 1883 to relocate to the Blackwell Meadows site Identifying an opportunity to provide an additional youth pitches and 9v9 grass pitches (ideally at one or two multi pitch sites) to ensure that current, as well as future needs are met. New provision required equates to circa 5 pitches. 	<p>Taking into account current and projected future demand, there are shortfalls in capacity equivalent to 5 junior pitches and 2 – 3 9v9 pitches, as well as 3 adult pitches. On grass pitches, there are limited opportunities to provide these facilities through increased community use, as most sites with such facilities are already open to the community. There are however opportunities to increase capacity through the provision of additional AGPs (and the use of existing facilities for match play). In particular, there is capacity for the additional AGPs to add 4 match equivalents for 9v9 as well as 2 for junior football. Scenario testing demonstrates that the provision of a further AGP would ensure that all 9v9 can be accommodated on 3g pitches. 2 youth matches could also be accommodated. Reprogramming of fixtures would be needed to facilitate further use of AGPs for 5v5 and 7v7.</p> <p>The remainder of additional required capacity should be delivered in conjunction with key clubs.</p> <p>Darlington 1883 are currently displaced</p>	<p>AGPS</p> <p>Promote use of 3g AGPs for competitive fixtures - both Longfield and Hummersknott have capacity. This is a key priority and will deliver significant additional capacity. To make best use of AGPs to address existing deficiencies, this should be targeted at 9v9 (Sunday morning) and Junior football (Sunday afternoon). Scenario testing reveals 3 AGPs are required to meet all demand for 9v9.</p> <p>One additional 3g AGP (priority location is Eastbourne Sports Complex) - as well as improving access for training, this should also be used to reduce unmet demand at peak time match play for junior and 9v9.</p> <p>Explore the potential to reprogramme other local league fixtures (7v7 and 5v5) to also use AGPs by working with leagues to</p>

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites and Key Actions
		<p>from the borough due to a lack of appropriate facilities.</p>	<p>adjust times of games.</p> <p>New Pitch Provision</p> <p>Extension for Darlington RA (land adjacent to DSMS - land South of Cocker Beck, offers potential for investigation - 2 to 3 pitches).</p> <p>Additional new site. Darlington 21st Allstars FC have expressed an interest in managing and maintaining their own facility and are currently in talks with Darlington Mowden RFC. New facilities for the club would free up access to other sites and alleviate issues with a lack of spare capacity.</p> <p>Heighington Boys are also seeking additional land to accommodate club growth. Land at Cumby Arms provides potential to accommodate this.</p> <p>If the current preferred site is not possible, then provision on one of the new strategic Housing Sites – North West Urban Fringe and Eastern Urban should be considered. Likely requirement is 1x7v7, 1 x 5v, 1 x9v9 (if not all</p>

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites and Key Actions
			<p>accommodated on AGPs) and 2 x youth. New pitches should include changing and ancillary provision and meet with NGB standards and should be developed in conjunction with existing clubs. This requirement should be reviewed, as successful implementation of policies to increase use of 3g pitches will reduce the need for new pitch provision.</p> <p>Darlington 1883</p> <p>Relocation of Darlington 1883 to Blackwell Meadows.</p> <p>Secure Community Use</p> <p>Secure use of key unsecured sites – Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, Mount Pleasant School, Heighington Primary School.</p>

4.11 The quality of pitches in Darlington has improved recently however there remain some sites where pitch quality is poor and improvements are required to improve capacity or to meet the aspirations of the pitch hierarchy that is in operation.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
<p>Enhance</p> <p>SO4 SO5 SO6 SO7</p>	<p>Address current and potential longer term issues with the quality of football provision by initially improving the existing pitch stock as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investing capital in improving existing poor quality football pitch sites. This may include facilities in all ownership. Given the interrelationship between quality and capacity, improvements should focus firstly on sites sustaining higher levels of usage (to ensure that benefits to capacity are felt) and multi pitch sites. Football pitches should be fit for the standard of play that they accommodate. Where clubs require higher grade facilities to enable them to play within a specific league, the requirements associated with this should be facilitated. 	<p>Pitch improvements will have a positive impact upon pitch capacity but will also improve player experience. Some quality issues identified in Darlington are impacting larger clubs which may have a particular impact on participation longer term.</p>	<p>Key Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pitch quality improvements at Darlington RFC to accommodate Darlington 1883 - these include pitch surface agronomy works, changing pavilion and structural requirements including car parking Carmel College (drainage and pitch surface) - requires improvement to ensure it fits within proposed hierarchy Darlington RA (changing) South Park (pitch surface, drainage) - requires improvement to ensure it fits within proposed hierarchy

4.12 Facilities for football in the borough have improved but participation has remained relatively static. Issues relating to facility provision are evolving and constant dialogue is required to ensure that facilities meet need and are tailored to club requirements.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
<p>Enhance</p> <p>SO7</p> <p>Provide</p> <p>SO10</p>	<p>In order to drive forward football development in the borough, the Council should work alongside clubs to implement the football recommendations in the PPS and contribute to the regular updates of the document. This will also include Durham FA and the local leagues.</p> <p>The focus of this work should be on the delivery of FA priorities in the context of the local needs and evidence set out in the PPS.</p>	<p>Knowledge sharing will ensure a coordinated approach to football across the borough and will support in the delivery of this strategy.</p>	<p>All users</p>

Rugby

4.13 While there are enough rugby pitches in the borough as a whole, the stock of facilities at both club sites is insufficient to meet current and projected future needs. The nature of rugby means that satellite facilities have a limited role to play and that capacity at club grounds is a key priority.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
<p>Provide</p> <p>SO8</p>	<p>Ensure that both clubs have sufficient access to pitches at their home ground to meet current and future demand by creating additional capacity at both sites through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to drainage works (Darlington RFC) and provision of additional 1 – 2 pitches • Provision of additional capacity at 	<p>Both clubs are over capacity based on current levels of activity and have insufficient provision to meet demand both at the current time and in future years.</p> <p>Drainage improvements will improve capacity at Darlington RFC but both sites require additional pitches.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darlington RFC (drainage and new pitches). Work to facilitate move of Darlington 1883. Note floodlighting (see below) will be key priority. • Darlington Mowden Park RFC (new pitches x 2 or 3g).

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
	Darlington Mowden Park through either new pitches and / or the equivalent capacity (3g pitch linking with recommendations in AGP section)	The impact of the relocation of Darlington 1883 will further impact on the use of pitches at Darlington RFC, meaning that new pitches will be essential for the club.	
Provide SO8 Enhance SO6 SO4 SO5	Ensure that clubs have access to appropriate training facilities through the provision of at least two floodlit pitches on each site.	<p>The provision of additional floodlights ensures that the impact of training can be spread across several pitches rather than focused on one pitch.</p> <p>There are already 2 floodlit training pitches at Darlington Mowden Park (as well as the floodlit arena pitch) but additional provision will be required at Darlington RFC, particularly in the event of the relocation of Darlington 1883 FC, who will use the existing full floodlit pitch meaning it would be unavailable for use by the rugby club. This will leave the club with just 0.5 floodlit pitches and additional lighting will therefore be required.</p>	Darlington RFC
Enhance SO6	Ensure that pitch quality at rugby clubs is sustained through appropriate management and maintenance procedures.	Management and maintenance of pitches is directly linked to site capacity.	Darlington RFC

Cricket

4.14 While each club manages their own facilities currently, there is little spare capacity at peak times and only limited scope to accommodate additional teams across the season.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
Protect SO2 Provide SO8	<p>Ensure that clubs have access to the facilities required to sustain current and projected future activity by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting Haughton CC and Darlington RA to secure long term access to their grounds Working with Darlington RA (or another club longer term) if additional facilities are required to meet current and / or projected future need. 	<p>Both Darlington RA and Haughton CC are using grounds that are unsecured for long term use. Loss of these facilities will see facilities for cricket in the borough become insufficient.</p> <p>Cricket in the borough is becoming constrained by facilities. Darlington RA are close to capacity at the current time and their aspirations for growth cannot be met within the confines of existing provision.</p>	<p>Haughton CC</p> <p>Darlington RA</p> <p>New provision could be delivered through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New pitch (linked with existing club) on urban extension the provision of facilities at a school site reinstatement of facilities at former cricket ground (Cumby Arms Playing Field /Hurworth House School). <p>Any new site, however delivered, should link with an existing club and function as a satellite facility. The club should be involved in the development of the site.</p>

4.15 Linking to the limited amount of facilities for cricket in Darlington Borough, a lack of facilities for training arose as an issue for almost every club. This can generate additional wear and tear on the grass wicket (which are all approaching capacity) as well as limit the training experience that the club can offer.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
Enhance SO4 SO5 SO6	<p>Support cricket clubs in the improvement of training facilities to enhance club sustainability and improve overall performance.</p> <p>This should include improvements (or provision of) both appropriate training nets and artificial wickets for all clubs. The aspiration is for all clubs to have;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one artificial wicket • Access to appropriate training nets 	<p>The provision of inappropriate training facilities negatively impacts upon the overall capacity of a club, the attractiveness of a club and the quality of cricket that can be played. Artificial wickets can be used for both training and junior match play, meaning that they improve match capacity as well as training opportunities. Artificial wickets provide an effective way of more easily and cost effectively managing junior fixtures.</p>	<p>Non turf wickets required;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cockerton CC • Darlington CC • Darlington RA • Haughton CC • Middleton St George CC • Rockcliffe Park CC

4.16 Quality concerns relating to cricket pitches in Darlington Borough arose as one of the key issues for clubs and a key priority to address. Pitch quality impacts on both player experience and site capacity.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
Enhance SO4	<p>Work with clubs to prioritise improvements to the quality of existing cricket club bases. Key areas for improvement relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance procedures • Wicket and outfield condition (including drainage) • surface levelling • changing pavilions. 	<p>The need for pitches to sustain high levels of use means that quality is essential if resources are to be maximised. This will be particularly important if aspirations to increase participation are achieved.</p> <p>ECB Research demonstrates that ancillary facilities are as important as the actual pitch in attracting new players and retaining existing facilities.</p> <p>Maintenance procedures are an essential component of quality and in</p>	<p>All - maintenance issues as documented in technical assessments</p> <p>Cockerton CC - Improvement to outfield – drainage issues, pavilion</p> <p>Darlington CC - Changing facilities, Consolidation of maintenance procedure</p> <p>Darlington RA - Improvement to</p>

	<p>All pitches should be fit for the purposes they are intended and club bases should meet with NGB specifications.</p> <p>All sites for cricket should include full changing accommodation and shelter as well as appropriate parking.</p> <p>Technical reports have been prepared to support this assessment. This details the improvements required to the maintenance procedure at each site are documented in these reports.</p>	<p>many ways, influence the overall quality of the site.</p>	<p>outfield, non-turf wicket, Consolidation of maintenance procedure</p> <p>Haughton CC - Improvement to outfield, Consolidation of maintenance procedure</p> <p>Middleton St George CC - Improvement to outfield, Consolidation of maintenance procedure, Improved pavilion</p> <p>Rockcliffe Park - Consolidation of maintenance procedure, drainage issue.</p>
<p>Enhance</p> <p>SO4</p>	<p>Support clubs to obtain appropriate maintenance equipment to enable the improvement of quality issues and ensure the ongoing sustainability of cricket in the borough.</p>	<p>Maintenance of pitches is a key component of quality. Without effective maintenance, capital investment is futile and pitches are unsustainable long term. Cricket in particular requires dedicated maintenance and technical competence.</p> <p>Technical reports have been prepared to support this assessment. This details the improvements required to the maintenance procedure at each site are documented in these reports. They highlight required maintenance equipment as well as opportunities for</p>	<p>Support all clubs in training volunteers through provision of IOG pitch preparation courses</p> <p>Provision of equipment - support all clubs linked to findings of technical assessments.</p>

AGPs and MUGAs

4.17 There are currently three AGPs across the borough (two 3g and one sand based pitch). Modelling indicates that an additional pitch is required to meet demand. There are several options for the delivery of this facility and an overall financial viability modelling exercise is required to determine the most appropriate solution.

Link to Strategic Objective	Recommendation	Justification	Site Specific Priorities
<p>Provide</p> <p>SO8</p>	<p>Linking with recommendations in football, to improve capacity for training and match play for football, provide an additional 3g pitch within Darlington Borough. This pitch should meet with FA specifications to ensure it can be used for both match play and training needs.</p>	<p>Evidence suggests that there is a need for three 3G AGPs, meaning that there is a requirement for one additional AGP. This is further evidenced by the lack of access to 3g pitches for some football clubs for training and the need to increase capacity for match play.</p> <p>Provision of a new facility at Eastbourne Sports Complex will enable links with the existing football hub and provide a central venue for football in the borough.</p>	<p>Priority location - Eastbourne Sports Complex.</p> <p>Note - the delivery of this recommendation depends upon alternative hockey provision for the clubs based at Eastbourne Sports Complex.</p>
<p>Provide</p> <p>SO8</p> <p>Enhance</p> <p>SO4</p> <p>SO5</p> <p>SO6</p>	<p>Ensure that hockey clubs still have access to sand based hockey provision to meet their needs and requirements and pursue the development of a sand based artificial pitch at Carmel College.</p>	<p>Hockey clubs require access to one sand based facility in order to sustain current activity and projected demand.</p> <p>The proposed location of a new pitch at Carmel College would secure the future of the two hockey clubs and would also address concerns about the adequacy of existing facilities for curricular need. The location of the facility on a school site would also enable the club to build relationships</p>	<p>Pursue the development of a new sand base pitch at Carmel College.</p> <p>Ensure that the two Hockey clubs have a workable interim alternative for fixtures and training during any capital development at Eastbourne Sports Complex. In the event that a pitch at Carmel College is not provided, a workable solution for hockey will be required.</p>

Link to Strategic Objective	Recommendation	Justification	Site Specific Priorities
		with the school which will facilitate participation increases.	
Provide SO8	Linking with recommendations relating to rugby (above) regularly review requirement for additional 3g AGP	Potential football growth would create demand for additional 0.5 3g AGP. The provision of rugby AGP for Darlington Mowden Park RFC is reliant upon some football income and could therefore offer a solution if demand continues to increase.	Darlington Mowden Park RFC.

Indoor and Outdoor Tennis

4.18 The existing stock of tennis courts is almost directly matched with demand. While club sites are at capacity, public and pay and play facilities at school sites have capacity to accommodate additional play.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
Protect SO1	Retain existing club based tennis courts and support activity to increase participation and membership at both club sites.	Existing club based tennis courts are almost at capacity and are valuable sites for the local community. They deliver at least 50% of tennis in the borough and are therefore valuable to current and projected future participation.	Wellfield TC New Blackwell LTC
Enhance SO4 SO5 SO6 SO7	Support clubs in the improvement of facilities where issues have been identified. Both clubs should include access to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> courts of an appropriate standard; and adequate pavilion (including toilets) and 	Circa half of all activity takes place at club bases and consultation reveals that clubs are approaching capacity in terms of the number of courts that they have and the number of members that they are sustaining.	Wellfield TC Improve pavilion / changing accommodation Resurface courts

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
	shelter.	Quality of facilities is essential if tennis activity is to be sustained, while floodlighting of courts will provide extra capacity due to the additional hours that facilities will be available.	Installation of floodlights to increase capacity at the site.
Protect Enhance / Provide SO9 SO10	<p>Protect public and school courts and ensure that they offer a clear prospect for community use through qualitative improvements. These should include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improvements (i.e. floodlighting) to increase the hours of community use, including those on school sites; quality improvements to tennis courts to enhance the quality of play and skill development (e.g. resurfacing, deep cleaning); and provision of improved changing and ancillary facilities. 	<p>Public tennis courts accommodate more informal play and are thought to host circa 50% of all activity.</p> <p>LTA research demonstrates that the most successful community tennis schemes are those that take place on facilities of adequate quality and that are supported by good marketing and promotion to maximize awareness.</p> <p>The emerging LTA strategy recognises the importance of tennis provision on public sites, but also highlights the challenges of providing these facilities and in particular of maintaining the quality of key sites. It presents a series of alternative solutions for the This may include key fob access to public facilities.</p>	<p>All existing courts.</p> <p>In line with the emerging LTA strategy, seek to revitalize public tennis provision through the introduction of innovative schemes to increase the use of public sites. This should link with investment into court quality.</p>
Enhance / Provide SO9 SO10	<p>Linking with improvements to public and school tennis courts, work in partnership with the LTA to promote opportunities for tennis (casual and formal) in the borough. School facilities are currently available but promotion is required to raise awareness.</p>	<p>LTA research demonstrates that the most successful community tennis schemes are those that take place on facilities of adequate quality and that are supported by good marketing and promotion to maximize awareness.</p>	<p>Increase promotional activity for tennis across the borough linking with school sites and promoting the availability of the public venues that are accessible free of charge.</p> <p>Seek to establish The Education</p>

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Relevant Sites
		Recent research demonstrated a significant lack of awareness in tennis in the North East. Outside of the club bases, all courts in Darlington have scope to accommodate additional activity.	Village as an important venue for tennis, due to the location of the site on the other side of the town to the majority of courts. This may include detailed promotion and the introduction of coach led introductory sessions, linking with the LTA.
Provide SO8	No additional public tennis courts are required to support current or future population growth.	Existing sites have capacity to accommodate additional play	n/a

Indoor and Outdoor Bowls

4.19 There are enough bowling greens to meet current and projected future demand and all greens have capacity to accommodate additional play. Quality arose as the key issue for clubs to address and the retention of existing facilities is equally as important.

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Site Specific Priorities
Protect SO1	Resist the loss of any club based facilities unless replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location. Former bowling greens that are now redundant are not required to meet current or projected future need.	Current membership of bowling clubs is lower than average levels and all clubs have capacity to accommodate additional members. All current sites are however well used and the ageing population is likely to positively impact on demand for bowls. There is therefore a need to retain existing facilities and to promote access to these sites.	All clubs

Link to Strategic Objectives	Recommendation	Justification	Site Specific Priorities
Enhance SO4 SO5 SO6 SO7	<p>Support enhancements/upgrades to existing greens where there is evidence that the playing experience is currently impacted and where improvements would lead to increased community use and help to achieve financial sustainability by increasing membership. All bowling greens should include access to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A green of appropriate standard • Adequate pavilion (including toilets) and shelter 	<p>The quality of bowling greens was highlighted as the key concern by clubs and clubs with poorer quality facilities struggle to attract new members.</p>	<p>North Lodge Park – green quality improvements. Requires improved pavilion / toilets</p> <p>North Park - North Lodge Park – green quality improvements. Requires repair work to pavilion</p> <p>Other sites would also benefit from investment into maintenance and site surrounds</p>
Provide SO10	<p>Support clubs to proactively increase participation and membership. To maximise the sustainability of bowls as a sport, efforts should focus on recruitment of junior players as well as adult and veterans. This is important for the sustainability of existing clubs as well as the growth of bowls as a sport.</p>	<p>With low membership, there are concerns about the sustainability of bowling clubs and income is insufficient to meet the costs of maintenance. Consultation with clubs highlights support and guidance in club development of being central to the overall future of the club.</p>	<p>All bowls clubs</p>
Provide SO8	<p>There is no requirement for the creation of additional indoor or outdoor greens, although all current functioning greens are considered valuable resources.</p>	<p>Existing clubs have capacity for additional bowling greens and would benefit from higher memberships.</p>	<p>All bowls clubs</p>

Implementation

- 4.20 The Council has developed the broad actions into a SMART prioritized action plan that shows how the action will be achieved, by when and by whom. This is now being implemented. The plan is set out in the following pages. For the purposes of this action plan, short term is equal to 0-1 year, medium is 1-3 years and long term is 3-5 years.
- 4.21 Further information relating to the action plan can be obtained from Mike Crawshaw at Darlington Borough Council (01325 406980).

Proposed Action		Lead	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Measure of Success
Sports Halls and Community Halls					
S01	Protect existing levels of sports hall provision and seek to continue to support the enhancement of the current network of sports hall facilities	DBC - Planning	DBC - Leisure	Short	Specific reference to the protection of sports facilities within the LDF
S04 S07	Determine a collective and cohesive programme of community use at all sporting venues in Darlington.	DBC Planning	DBC – Leisure Local Academies and schools. Children’s Services Capital Project team	Short Medium -	More of the education sites being available for structured club use and community.
S04 S07	Support the community center network to facilitate greater community use for sport and physical activity	DBC Planning	DBC – Leisure Community associations and partners.	Long Term	All community centres with capacity to increase community usage are open for sport and physical activity
S04 S07	Seek to ensure the enhancement of provision at key sports hall sites for indoor hall sports (flooring, size of run-off area etc), ensuring they are ‘fit for purpose’ for community use as part of any refurbishment programme. This should include disability access	DBC Planning	Local Academies and schools. DBC Leisure, Children’s Services Capital Project team.	Ongoing	Any new sports halls support Sport England Guidelines and DDA regulations Improved quality of facilities
S09	Support partners seeking to develop future sports hall provision should set out a need based on sports development and NGB requirements as opposed to general community needs	DBC Planning	Local Academies and schools. DBC Leisure, Children’s Services Capital Project team.	Short medium -	Improved quality of facilities Improved disabled access

	Proposed Action	Lead	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Measure of Success
S09	Explore the potential to deliver more flexible activity spaces as opposed to formal sports hall provision part of new or refurbished developments	DBC Leisure	Schools & other community groups	Long Term	Potential new development at Polam Hall and Carmel College

Swimming Pools

S01	Protect all existing provision particularly education based swimming pools	DBC Leisure & Children's Services Academy Schools	Swimming clubs/ASA & user groups	Medium/ Long Term	More community use hours available at school pools Improved quality where necessary. Hummersknott, Longfield and the Education Village remain open for community use
S04 S07	Continue to invest in the flagship facility at the Dolphin. The Council are committed to a £2.75m investment programme to address pool plant and infra-structure issues	DBC Leisure	ASA	Short Term	Improved Facilities at the Dolphin Centre Long term sustainability of the Dolphin Centre
S04 S07	Seek to invest in the school pool network to facilitate greater community use and access	DBC Leisure Academy Schools	Local Academies and schools ASA	Long Term	More community use hours available at school pools Improve the quality Hummersknott, Longfield and the Education Village remain open for community use
S10	Co-ordinate usage and programming across pools and develop a joint approach to programming across the	DBC Leisure, ASA, Schools	Swimming Clubs Local Academies and schools	Medium	A greater range of aquatic activities taking place in the borough. This may provide the opportunity to find enhanced time for Darlington

Proposed Action	Lead	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Measure of Success
available water space – maximize effectiveness of water space for different aquatic disciplines.		ASA		Swimming Clubs by matching programmes more appropriately to pool provision as opposed to the current free market. Opportunities may exist to work with the ASA who can support Council's to address pool programming issues

Playing Pitches

S01	Ensure that the Local Plan and subsequent DPDs contain policies protecting sites containing playing pitches, building upon the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF paragraph 74) and Sport England's ² statutory consultee role on planning applications affecting playing field land.	DBC Planning DBC Leisure	NGBs, Sport England	Ongoing	Sites should be protected, enhanced and any sites that are no longer required to meet current or projected future need. The loss of any site not required should result in replacement provision and the list should be regularly updated in line with strategy monitoring processes.
S02 S03	Protect existing security of access with timely negotiation of community use agreements with schools and with landowners where appropriate. Ensure that existing community use agreements are delivered and renewed.	DBC Planning	DBC Leisure Children Services Sport England	Short	CUAs are in place, kept up to date, and are enforced through planning conditions.
S04 S05	Continue to operate the strategic hierarchy of pitch provision across the	DBC Planning	DBC Leisure & Children's Services,	Medium - long	All sites.

	Proposed Action	Lead	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Measure of Success
S06	borough and use this to guide prioritization for pitch improvements. The principles of the hierarchy should also continue to be adopted - the focus on large multi pitch sites and maximizing partnership working across all key providers.		NGBs		All subsequent recommendations are undertaken with this strategic hierarchy in mind.
S03 S08 S09	Promoting use of the existing 3g AGPs in the borough for competitive fixtures	DBC Leisure, Schools, NGB's Durham FA	Local Clubs	Short	Undertake meeting the FA and the local schools
S03 S08 S09	Providing one additional 3g pitch in the borough to accommodate both matches and training.	DBC Leisure & Football Foundation	FA, DBC planning	Short	Successful Football Foundation Application New 3G at Eastbourne Sports Complex
S03 S08 S09	Explore the potential to reprogramme other local league fixtures (7v7 and 5v5) to also use AGPs by working with leagues to adjust times of games.	DBC Leisure	League Secretaries, Clubs	Short	Fixtures changed to suit demand Improved quality of pitches Meeting with League Secretaries
S03 S08 S09	Supporting proposals by Darlington 1883 to relocate to the Blackwell Meadows site by January 2016	DBC Planning, DFC, DRFC	DBC Leisure, NGB's, Football Foundation	Ongoing	Improved quality of facilities and pitches Economic impact for the town Increase in Participation Club has moved in by January 2016
S03 S08 S09	Support Darlington RA to develop the land adjacent to DSMS - to 3 junior and 1 adult pitch	DSMS DBC Leisure & Planning	Darlington RA	Short	3 new junior pitches and 1 adult Sustainable sports club

	Proposed Action	Lead	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Measure of Success
S03 S08 S09	Support Darlington 21 st Allstars FC in managing and maintaining their own facility in partnership with Darlington Mowden RFC	DBC Leisure & Clubs	FA and RFU	Long Term	21 st All Stars have a new home for competitive matches Demand met for junior football development at the club
S03 S08 S09	Support Heighington Boys with developing the additional land at the Cumby Arms for pitch usage If the current preferred site is not possible, then provision on one of the new strategic Housing Sites – North West Urban Fringe and Eastern Urban should be considered.	DBC Leisure, Club, Planning	FA, Sport England	Long Term	New pitches Support Club Development
S04 S05 S06 S07	Address current and potential longer term issues with the quality of football provision by initially improving the existing pitch stock as follows; Investing capital in improving existing poor quality football pitch sites. This may include facilities in all ownership. Given the interrelationship between quality and capacity, improvements should focus firstly on sites sustaining higher levels of usage (to ensure that benefits to capacity are felt) and multi pitch sites. Football pitches should be fit for the standard of play that they accommodate. Pitch quality improvements at	DBC Planning DBC Leisure	Individual schools, NGBs, Local clubs	Medium - Long	Improved quality pitches Increase in participation Successful funding applications

	Proposed Action	Lead	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Measure of Success
	<p>Darlington RFC to accommodate Darlington 1883 - these include pitch surface agronomy works, changing pavilion and structural requirements including car parking</p> <p>Carmel College (drainage and pitch surface) - requires improvement to ensure it fits within proposed hierarchy</p> <p>Darlington RA (changing)</p> <p>South Park (pitch surface, drainage) - requires improvement to ensure it fits within proposed hierarchy</p>				
S08	<p>Ensure that both Rugby clubs have sufficient access to pitches at their home ground to meet current and future demand by creating additional capacity at both sites through;</p> <p>Improvements to drainage works (Darlington RFC) and provision of additional 1 – 2 pitches</p> <p>Provision of additional capacity at Darlington Mowden Park through either new pitches and / or the equivalent capacity (3g pitch linking with recommendations in AGP section)</p>	DBC Leisure Local Clubs Planning	NGBs and Sport England	Long Term	<p>Improved quality pitches</p> <p>Increase in participation</p> <p>Successful funding applications</p>
S02 S08	Ensure that all cricket clubs have access to the facilities required to	DBC Leisure Local Clubs	NGBs and Sport England	Long Term	Improved Facilities

Proposed Action	Lead	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Measure of Success
<p>sustain current and projected future activity by;</p> <p>Supporting Haughton CC and Darlington RA to secure long term access to their grounds</p> <p>Working with Darlington RA (or another club longer term) if additional facilities are required to meet current and / or projected future need.</p> <p>New pitch (linked with existing club) on urban extension at Faverdale</p>	DBC Planning			<p>Increase in participation</p> <p>Successful funding applications</p>
<p>SO4 SO5 SO6</p> <p>Support all cricket clubs in the improvement of training facilities to enhance club sustainability and improve overall performance. This should include improvements (or provision of) both appropriate training nets and artificial wickets for all clubs. The aspiration is for all clubs to have;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one artificial wicket • Access to appropriate training nets 	DBC Leisure DBC Planning ECB	Clubs	Medium – Long Term	<p>Improved quality pitches</p> <p>Increase in participation</p> <p>Successful funding applications</p>
<p>SO4</p> <p>Work with all Cricket clubs to prioritise improvements to the quality of existing cricket club bases. Key areas for improvement relate to:</p>	DBC Leisure DBC Planning ECB	Clubs	Medium – Long Term	<p>Improved facilities</p> <p>Increase in participation</p> <p>Successful funding applications</p>

	Proposed Action	Lead	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Measure of Success
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance procedures Wicket and outfield condition (including drainage) Surface levelling Changing pavilions. 				
SO8 SO4 SO5 SO6	Pursue the development of a new sand base pitch at Carmel College.	Carmel College DBC Planning DBC Leisure	England Hockey	Short	New sand based artificial Hockey Pitch Improved facilities Increase in participation Successful funding applications Secure future of Hockey Clubs

Tennis

SO4 SO5 SO6 SO7	<p>Support the tennis clubs in the improvement of facilities where issues have been identified. Both clubs should include access to;</p> <p>Ensure courts are of an appropriate standard; and adequate pavilion (including toilets) and the Installation of floodlights to increase capacity at the site.</p>	DBC Leisure DBC Planning	Local clubs & schools, LTA	Long	Improved facilities Increase in participation Successful funding applications
SO9 SO1	Protect public and school tennis courts and ensure that they offer a clear prospect for community use through qualitative improvements. These should	DBC Leisure Parks and Open Spaces	NGBs & Clubs, Schools, LTA	Medium - Long	Improved facilities Increase in participation

	Proposed Action	Lead	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Measure of Success
	include; improvements (i.e. floodlighting) to increase the hours of community use, including those on school sites; quality improvements to tennis courts to enhance the quality of play and skill development (e.g. resurfacing, deep cleaning); and provision of improved changing and ancillary facilities.	DBC Planning			Successful funding applications
SO9 SO1	In line with the emerging LTA strategy, seek to revitalize public tennis provision through the introduction of innovative schemes to increase the use of public sites. This should link with investment into court quality.	DBC Leisure Parks and Open Spaces DBC Planning	NGBs & Clubs, Schools, LTA	Medium - Long	Increase in Participation
Bowls					
SO1	Resist the loss of any club based bowls facilities unless replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location. Former bowling greens that are now redundant are not required to meet current or projected future need.	DBC Leisure Bowls Association	NGB	Short term	Sustainable Bowls provision
SO4 SO5	Support enhancements/upgrades to existing bowls greens where there is	DBC Leisure	NGB	Short term	Sustainable Bowls provision

	Proposed Action	Lead	Partner Agencies	Timescale	Measure of Success
SO6 SO7	<p>evidence that the playing experience is currently impacted and where improvements would lead to increased community use and help to achieve financial sustainability by increasing membership. All bowling greens should include access to;</p> <p>A green of appropriate standard</p> <p>Adequate pavilion (including toilets) and shelter</p> <p>Link with all local clubs</p> <p>Priorities are:</p> <p>North Lodge Park – green quality improvements. Requires improved pavilion / toilets</p> <p>North Park - North Lodge Park – green quality improvements. Requires repair work to pavilion</p>	Bowls Association			Improved facilities
SO4 SO5 SO6 SO7	<p>Ensure that bowling greens are maintained in line with clubs needs (provide an integrated approach to grounds maintenance in association with the leisure team) and consider where possible to provide safe storage facilities on site.</p>	DBC Street Scene Bowls Clubs	DBC Leisure, Bowls forum	Ongoing	Higher quality greens & more storage facilities on sites.

Delivery

- 4.22 Given the potential level of funding required, it is likely that investment will only be achieved through a combination of opportunities and funding sources as well as partnership opportunities.
- 4.23 Local authority finances are currently under pressure and previous major national funding programmes are no longer available. Some funding opportunities, however, still remain; for example, individual school capital grants have replaced BSF and Sport England now has more clearly defined capital available through its Places People Play Legacy funding programme. While the education capital funding programmes will continue to change over time, there will still be a need for investment to take place on school sites during the strategy period and opportunities for joint projects may arise.
- 4.24 The council will seek to use assets innovatively and work on a multi-agency approach to address the facility requirements in the strategy.
- 4.25 The main funding delivery mechanisms for Darlington Borough Council and others in delivering this strategy are:
- Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 developer contributions – new development and population growth will generate demand for additional indoor and outdoor sports facilities. ***All new developments should contribute towards the provision of outdoor and indoor sports, whether through the provision of new facilities or the improvement of existing***
 - Capital Grant funding: From schools and national agencies such as Sport England, including its Iconic Facilities, Improvement Fund and Inspired Facilities programmes as well as Protection of Playing Fields Funds
 - National Governing Body (NGB) support
 - Council funding: capital funding allocated to deliver facilities within the council's ownership, and potentially the use of capital receipts from the sale of existing assets
 - Education and Further Education sector: while the previous sources of funding (including BSF and Primary Schools Programme) have changed and the scale of the education capital programmes have been reduced, the education sector is still likely to be a key funding stream.

CIL and S106

- 4.26 This strategy forms site and project specific evidence to underpin the CIL and S106 requirements for the sports included within its scope. With Regards CIL, key points are acknowledged and reinforced:
- CIL will fund only a proportion of strategic infrastructure, and spending will have to balance a number of competing priorities. Other priorities may outweigh sport. CIL will be only one of the ways in which new infrastructure is paid for and other funding streams will need to be sought and considered, under the auspices of the delivery plan. The rate of CIL must be based on the evidence of viability.
 - Whilst the strategy sets out there is already a good supply of indoor sports facilities, and a need to enhance the existing outdoor sports facility stock, as well as provide new, this does not mean that developer contributions should not be

sought. New development and the associated population growth will place pressures on the existing facility stock and generate new participants across all ages. Increased use of these venues places greater importance on their quality and capacity and as a consequence, it is concluded that contributions towards indoor and outdoor sports facilities should be required from all new developments. Contributions should therefore be made towards the delivery of the strategy objectives in line with the needs and evidence base. This should be tempered with appropriate consideration around sustainability delivery assessment.

- 4.27 The strategy sets out key projects and priorities based on the needs and evidence, to deliver now and in the future. Delivery through the planning system and future grant-aid, using the strategy recommendations, can help to deliver the priorities set out.

New facilities

- 4.28 In addition to the overarching strategy principles outlined earlier in this section, the following should be considered when providing any new facilities (or new sites to facilitate club relocation).

- Location - When planning new facilities, the existing sporting infrastructure should be taken into account. In particular, club bases for cricket and rugby should be retained and the provision of single pitch sites with limited facilities should be avoided
- Quality - Any new pitch provision should meet with the design and quality standards guidance provided by Sport England and/or the relevant NGB (detailed below). The following general criteria must also be met:
- A high standard of design, construction and maintenance appropriate to the standard of play
- Adequate changing facilities that:
 - are flexible, fit for a variety of purposes;
 - fully comply with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act;
 - provide for a number of different groups to use the facility at the same time, in safety and comfort; and
 - meet current standards - Sport England & NGB guidelines
- Managed community access
- Accessible by public transport and by car
- Sufficient car parking
- Size of pitches and run offs complies with NGB specification
- Security of tenure (at least 20 years) if a club is to be based at the site.

- 4.29 All new and enhanced sports facilities must be designed in accordance with the relevant Sport England and (where applicable) National Governing Body (NGB) design guidance in order to ensure that the facilities are fit for purpose and of a suitable quality.

- 4.30 To ensure sustainability, new sites should include a minimum of two pitches. New single pitch sites will not be supported and new provision associated with any development of insufficient size to warrant more than one pitch should be located off site as part of a multi pitch development.

4.31 Sport England's web site www.sportengland.org contains a range of current guidance documents which provide detailed specifications and information regarding the design of sporting and ancillary facilities.

4.32 This provides a link to the NGB's supported by Sport England, and to the guidance on the respective NGB websites:

<http://www.sportengland.org/our-work/national-work/national-governing-bodies/sports-we-invest-in/>.

Monitoring and review

4.33 The evolving context of participation in sport and active recreation means that monitoring and review of the strategy is as important as the initial preparation of the document to ensure it remains sufficiently robust.

4.34 Reflecting the importance of this phase of work, monitoring of the strategy is a key component of both the Assessing Needs and Opportunities guidance (ANOG) and the Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance (Sport England).

4.35 The steering group are therefore committed to keeping the strategy alive through;

- monitoring the delivery of the recommendations and actions and identifying any changes that are required to the priority afforded to each action;
- recording changes to the facility stock and evaluating the impact of this on the supply and demand information;
- assessing the impact of changes to participation and changing trends on the amount and type of facilities required;
- assessing the impact of demographic changes and any changes to forecasted plans for housing growth;
- ongoing consultation to understand the evolving needs of clubs and governing bodies, and any requirements for new or improved facilities in the area;
- analysis of funding sources and new funding opportunities for the provision/improvement of sports facilities;
- reviewing growth of emerging sports, their participation rates, facilities available for them and likely facilities necessary for their support and development; and
- ensuring that the strategy continues to provide an up to date and robust evidence base to underpin CIL / S106 obligations.

4.36 The ongoing monitoring of the strategy will be led by Darlington Borough Council through establishment of a working group that meets twice annually to review progress by all key partners on the strategy delivery and to discuss any issues arising.

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