

**Leicester City Council**

**Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plans**

**June 2017**

*Neil Allen Associates Registered Office:  
20 Brook Road, Lymm, Cheshire, WA139AH  
A limited company, registered in  
England and Wales no. 616528*



## **Purpose and Status of the Playing Pitch Strategy**

- The PPS is an assessment document jointly funded by Sport England, Leicestershire and Rutland Sport and the City Council.
- It is based upon collaboration with National Governing Bodies (NGB's) and clubs and is a basis for ongoing negotiation and discussion with Sport England, the NGBs and clubs on the provision of sports facilities.
- It is based on an assessment of the demand and supply of sports facilities and is presented as an assessment document and a series of action plans.
- It is intended as an agreed basis on which to consider potential sports investment.
- It does not represent either the City Council, Sport England's or the NGB's funding commitments.
- It is intended to provide a vehicle for ongoing discussion between the City Council, Sport England, NGBs and Sports Clubs through existing governance structures already in place to support the strategic planning of sport in the City.
- It will also help inform decision making on Planning Applications.

## **Introduction**

- 1.1 In April 2015 Neil Allen Associates (naa) was commissioned to produce a Sports Playing Pitch Strategy for Leicester City Council, to provide a framework for the future provision of facilities for football, cricket, rugby union and rugby league, hockey, tennis, and bowls up to 2030.
- 1.2 One of the Council's key corporate priorities is to increase the health and well-being of the city inhabitants. This has grown in significance since the elections in May 2015, where a Healthy Leicester is a key cornerstone of the manifesto. The strategy can therefore support the ambitions for developing existing and new sports facilities and establishing a direction for greater participation and improved pathways for sport and physical activity.
- 1.3 Added to this, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stresses the importance of access to opportunities for sport and recreation and the contribution this can make to the health and well-being of communities.
- 1.4 In response to the NPPF, Leicester City Council is preparing a development plan for the city. This plan, which is expected to be adopted in 2019, will set out a vision and objectives for the growth of the city over the next 15 years. It will replace the 2006 Local Plan and the 2014 Core Strategy and will outline how local priorities will be addressed, as well as how the social, economic and environmental challenges and opportunities that face the city will be met. It will identify broad locations, scale and type of development and supporting infrastructure that will be required in the city.

- 1.5 The sports playing pitch strategy will help inform the policies included within this plan, as well as the Development Management process, incorporating S106 and CIL contributions. The strategy will also help to inform the council's strategic spending priorities.
- 1.6 The outdoor sports playing pitch strategy will therefore identify core improvements that could be made to create a step change in provision. The Strategy should allow Leicester City Council to shape its core sport and physical activity offer both within its direct provision and that undertaken with partners in the education, voluntary and private sector.
- 1.7 At the strategic level it will underpin the contribution that sport and physical activity makes to the City's corporate objectives and approach towards fulfilling national and corporate targets, for example in contributing to the public health, children and young people and adult social care outcomes. It will also help provide a rationale to enable National Governing Bodies to further invest and deliver their working outcomes as outlined in their Whole Sport Plans.
- 1.8 It is also evident that the above must be achieved in the context of difficult financial times. The Sports Service has been set the challenge of significant budget reductions. The strategy will therefore use the evidence base collated to help set future priorities in the context of these financial pressures.

## **Key Drivers**

- 1.9 The key drivers for the production of the outdoor sports facility assessment and strategy can therefore be summarised as;

- To fully understand the current picture of supply and demand across the city;
  - i. understanding current participation patterns and the stock of facilities;
  - ii. exploring the role of education sites and identifying any opportunities to increase this;
  - iii. understanding of reasons behind current participation patterns; and
  - iv. understanding any issues with regards sustained access / security of tenure.
- the need to provide up to date evidence to inform infrastructure requirements in light of the significant population growth that is expected. In particular, information is required to inform the emerging local plan and to ensure that infrastructure requirements for sport and leisure are fully understood;
- the need to provide evidence to aid decision making in relation to specific sites;
- to help inform decision making in relation to CIL and S106;
- the opportunity to provide evidence to help both the Council and key partners secure external funding; and
- the need to inform the development of a clear SMART action plan which brings together the priorities of key stakeholders and supports the delivery of sport and health agendas.

1.10 This Playing Pitch Action Plan draws upon the issues identified within the Leicester City Council Playing Pitch Assessment Report, which evaluated the adequacy of provision for football, cricket, rugby union and rugby league, hockey, tennis and bowls across the city and surrounding areas. It sets out the potential priorities for the delivery of outdoor sports facilities and playing pitches in the district up to 2030.

### **Methodology**

1.11 This strategy has been developed in line with guidance set out in '*Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance – An Approach to Developing and Delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy*' (Sport England 2013).

1.12 The priorities have been established through the preparation of a full evidence based assessment which included extensive consultation and analysis. The key phases of the methodology and the consultation and engagement with key partners is summarised in the diagram overleaf;

**Figure: Developing and Delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy – The 10 Step Approach**



1.13 The assessment covers the area within the local authority boundaries of Leicester City. Reflecting the tight boundaries of the city council area however, consideration is also given to the role that facilities in close proximity (1km) to the boundary play.

1.14 To provide a further understanding of the spatial distribution of both supply and demand, as well as to add a geographical dimension to analysis, the city has been divided into sub areas. These divide the city into three geographical sections and follow the three parliamentary constituencies, which are made up of electoral wards.

### **Playing Pitch Strategy - Greater Leicester Area Context**

The demand for sports facilities crosses administrative boundaries and there is a complex interplay between sports facility distribution and usage in terms of 'push and pull' effects in a city such as Leicester with very tightly drawn boundaries. This means that users will travel across boundaries to access the best, or most affordable or appropriate sporting facilities, or those which cater to their particular demand.

The Government's planning process essentially requires each individual Local Planning authority to develop a Local Plan based upon a consistent evidence base (in the form of a Playing Pitch Assessment and Strategy- PPS) which meets national regulations and guidance for its administrative area. Sport England (SE) and the sporting National Governing Bodies (NGB's) play a central role in supporting the development of PPS's and they will use them as a key starting point in commenting on development proposals which may involve the loss or enhancement of sports pitch provision. The PPS will also provide a major piece of evidence for the Local Plan, allowing for an informed debate to be had about the scope, scale and

distribution of facilities to be planned for over the 15 year Plan period for the relevant local authority area.

The 'Duty to Co-operate' requires local councils to work together in preparing and adopting Local Plans, and if a Council planned to 'export' some of its demand and rely on an adjacent authority to accommodate this demand in the form of allocated pitch provision then written agreement would be required between the relevant Councils and commitments made in this respect at the relevant Local plan inquiry

### **PPS Methodology relating to Cross Boundary Issues**

A PPS is evidenced based and the audit and assessment process picks up cross boundary movements in the following way:

- All teams known to be based in Leicester City but travelling into other authorities to play are consulted and the issues raised considered
- All teams known to be based in other authorities but travelling into Leicester City are consulted and the issues raised considered
- Consultation is undertaken with local league representatives, the majority of which span across several local authority boundaries
- Consultation is undertaken with representatives of relevant National Governing Body of Sport in order to provide an overview of the situation in Leicestershire as a whole
- The provision within 1km of the Leicester City boundary has been reviewed and the impact on supply and demand in Leicester taken into account where relevant.

Consideration is given to issues raised in PPS belonging to adjacent local authorities (where available at the time of writing).

### **Current Conurbation Position**

The City is bounded by four districts/boroughs which are Charnwood, Harborough, Oadby and Wigston and Blaby. Hinckley and Bosworth's boundary is also very close to the north west part of the City. Each district has its own demand to cater for, as well as fulfilling some of the cities demand, in certain circumstances and each authority needs to produce and defend its own PPS as part of its Local Plan process.

It is open to each district to define a level of sporting provision via its Local Plan which it considers to be appropriate in the context of a range of issues such as housing and employment land pressures, which may or may not meet its own needs.

Unfortunately each authority is at a different stage in its plan making (and therefore PPS) process. Where issues in neighbouring authorities that impact on demand in Leicester have been identified, these are considered within the relevant sport specific sections. This primarily relates to cricket, where considerable cross boundary movement is currently evident and quantitative unmet demand exists.

The City Council is working with the adjoining authorities in the greater Leicester area to look at existing and future sports provision.

## Context

- 1.15 In addition to the achievement of specific objectives relating to playing pitches and sport and physical activity, the strategy contributes to the delivery of many other national, regional and local strategic targets as follows.

### **National Level**

- 1.16 At a national level, there are several key policies that impact upon the preparation of this Playing Pitch Strategy:

**The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** clearly establishes the requirement that local plans ensure that there is proper provision of community and cultural facilities to meet local needs. The NPPF's expectations for the development of local planning policy for sport and physical activity/recreation are set out in paragraphs 73 and 74 which require there to be a sound (i.e. up-to-date and verifiable) evidence base underpinning policy and its application.

**Sport England** has been a statutory consultee on planning applications affecting playing pitches since 1996 and has a long established policy of retention, which is the precursor to the National Planning Policy Framework guidance above. Sport England also advises that informed decisions on playing pitch matters require all local authorities to have an up to date assessment of need and a strategy emanating from this. Sport England recommend that a strategy is monitored and updated annually and refreshed every three years. This assessment will support the Council in implementing a robust strategic approach to the delivery of pitches across the district.

**National Governing Body Facility Strategies:** The Football Association (FA), England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), Rugby Football Union (RFU), Rugby Football League (RFL) and England Hockey all set out strategies guiding the provision of facilities for their specific sport as follows;

- The Football Association - National Game Strategy
  - Grounds to Play – England and Wales Cricket Board Strategic Plan (2010 – 2013)
  - The Rugby Football Union National Facilities Strategy
  - Community Rugby League Facilities Strategy
  - The National Hockey Facility Strategy – The Right Facilities in the Right Places (2012)
  - Places to Play – The Lawn Tennis Association.
- 1.17 The strategy builds upon the priorities set out in these national documents and seeks to help understand how they can be applied to Leicester City.

### **Local Context**

- 1.18 More locally in Leicester City, the preparation of this Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Facility Strategy impacts upon, or is informed by, a number of key documents. As set out in the table below.

<b>City Mayor's Delivery Plan Leicester City Council 2013 – 14 (May 2011)</b>
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<b>Leicester City Insight report sport and physical activity participation (March 2013)</b>
<b>Closing the Gap Leicester's Joint Health and Well Being Strategy 2013 – 16 (April 2013)</b>
<b>Leicester City Council Scrutiny Review – Sports Engagement in Leicester March 2013</b>
<b>Sports Facilities Strategic Framework 2010 – 2013 (Leicestershire and Rutland Sport)</b>
<b>Leicester City Council Local Plan (adopted January 2006)</b>
<b>Leicester City Core Strategy (adopted November 2014)</b>
<b>Leicester City Council emerging New (new) Local Plan</b>
<b>The Leicester Sports Partnership Trust Plan for Physical Education, Sport and Physical Activity (2014 to 2017)</b>
<b>Report to Scrutiny Commission – Asset Transfer Policy, 27th March 2014</b>

### **Role of the Playing Pitch Strategy**

- 1.19 The end goal of this strategy is to deliver the overarching vision and achieve the specific aims and objectives set out on the previous page. To do this, it is essential that provision for each sport continues to evolve and improve to meet with changing needs and aspirations, and within an affordable budget.
- 1.20 The principles and findings of the Playing Pitch Strategy can be applied to support a variety of different outcomes, including;
- Sports development planning;
    - highlight, justify and make the case for sports development activities with particular sports, groups and clubs and in particular areas;
    - identify current and future trends and changes in the demand for sports and how they are played;
    - inform the work, strategies and plans of sporting organisations active in the area including NGBs;
    - identifying facilities where there is scope to increase usage;
    - informing planning policy
    - outline facilities that are to be protected and inform site allocations;
    - inform contributions and facilities required as part of new development;
    - develop new and review existing policies within local planning frameworks;
    - inform planning applications;
    - inform the development of planning applications which affect existing and/or propose new pitch provision;
    - inform pre-application discussions to ensure any subsequent planning applications maximise their benefit to pitch sports and are developed in line with national (e.g. NPPF paragraph 74) and local planning policy;
    - enable Local Planning Authorities and others to assess planning applications affecting existing and/or proposing new playing pitch provision
  - Supporting funding bids;
    - this document and accompanying assessment report provide evidence of strategic need for facilities and facility improvements



- Facilitating decision making relating to facility and asset management;
  - ensure a strategic approach is taken to the provision and management of pitches and outdoor sports facilities;
  - inform the current management, strategies and plans of providers
  - share knowledge and good practice
  - ensure any proposed asset transfers are beneficial to all parties
- Informing capital programmes and related investment;
  - provide the evidence base to justify the protection and investment in playing pitch and outdoor sports facilities provision;
  - influence the development and implementation of relevant capital programmes
  - ensure that there is no duplication in provision and maximise the benefits of investment.
- Informing the role of facilities and participation in associated sports on public health and contributing towards the achievement of wider aims and objectives;
  - the strategy provides an understanding of how the community currently participates in pitch sports and the need for playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities
  - raise awareness of barriers to maintaining and increasing participation, particularly in relation to facilities
  - address any inequalities of access, where possible, to playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities
- Provide evidence to help support wider health and well-being initiatives.

1.21 The Council and Sport England are facing increased pressures across all service areas including those anticipated to arise from changes to welfare benefits, greater need for social care and a new duty to improve public health, as well as considerable constraints on local authority budgets. The strategy therefore seeks to promote the provision of appropriate accessible community infrastructure and to deliver on the aspirations of the local sporting community within this context.

1.22 As such, it has been developed with the following principles in mind;

- **The strategy seeks to promote and facilitate participation in pitch and outdoor sports** – it is important to ensure that the types of facilities provided are those that are needed to both sustain existing participation and to encourage new participants into the game. This will mean enhancing existing pitches as well as providing new.
- **Quality of facilities is as important as the amount of provision** – the strategy seeks to ensure that Leicester city contains the right amount of facilities, of the right quality and type and in the right place. It promotes the protection of existing provision, the disposal of surplus sites and need to improve the quality of existing facilities and the impact that qualitative improvements can have on capacity, as well as the long term sustainability of the facility stock.
- **The strategy will seek to maximise sustainability** – it will seek to build relationships between partners, promote good practice and deliver sustainable solutions for sport and recreation across the borough taking into account the challenging financial context in which facilities must be provided. It will promote investment on larger hub sites which often provide a more effective and long term solution

than the creation of new/additional small sites and will seek to maximise the use of existing resources.

- **Pitch provision will be delivered in partnership.** The strategy seeks to bring together key partners in the delivery of playing fields and to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and effectively aligned to maximise the value of assets to the community. Sustainable robust business cases, along with junior development programmes, will be required to ensure that any facilities can continue to be provided in the future.
- **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. Disposal of sites can help deliver this.

1.23 An overall framework is provided for provision across the city as a whole and then building upon this framework, key priorities are explored on a sport by sport basis. These priorities have been developed following a series of scenario testing, which included;

- The impact of population growth
- The impact of growth aspirations of clubs
- The impact of improving the quality of existing sites
- The impact of securing community use to key sites that are currently unsecured or unavailable.

1.24 The results of this scenario testing are incorporated into the justifications for the recommendations where relevant.

1.25 The framework for the strategy seeks to deliver upon five key strategic objectives. These are to;

- Seek to ensure that valuable playing fields are protected for the long term benefit of sport;
- seek to release sites that are deemed surplus to requirements based on the application of the assessment report;
- sustain enough facilities in the right place to meet current and projected future demand;
- enhance existing facilities to ensure that they are *fit for purpose* and promote participation in pitch sports; and
- promote sustainable sport and club development and maximise participation across Leicester City.

### Summary

1.26 To achieve its planning aims, Sport England have established a number of planning objectives, which are to seek to **protect** sports pitches 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.

1.27 'Protect, provide and enhance' provides a framework for developing the city-wide priorities for Leicester.

1.28 Set out below are the summaries of the individual sport provision needs from the assessment report.

### **Rugby League**

#### **Wider area context**

Rugby is a club based sport and teams attract players from across the conurbation and beyond as travel is of limited impact to players. Issues impacting clubs in Leicester or providing opportunities for clubs in Leicester in neighbouring authorities have been explored where relevant.

#### **City Administrative Area facilities**

- There are no existing rugby league pitches within Leicester City. New College, Saffron Lane and Aylestone Playing Fields have all been previously used as rugby league pitches but are no longer marked for the sport
- There is therefore a lack of rugby league pitches in city to meet demands of Leicester Storm who are keen to move back into the city and are actively seeking a new venue
- Seek to **provide** a new venue for Leicester Storm with a sustainable long term business plan.

### **Cricket**

#### **Wider area context**

With regards to the wider conurbation cricket provision as assessed to date, the following is understood to be the latest position:

- In Oadby and Wigston there is a flow of players between the borough and the city and the open space assessment reveals that there is considered to be a requirement for more and improved cricket pitches. A PPS is being worked on and should be complete by the end of the summer. In Blaby, there is an overall provision that is adequate to meet existing, although possible population growth could require additional provision. There is potential for new provision at Lubbersthorpe Sustainable Urban Extension.
- In Harborough, a new PPS is underway and should be complete in summer 2017. It will consider the cross boundary issues within the city.
- In Charnwood, there is an undersupply of cricket pitches, particularly in settlements, however quality is seen as more of an issue by clubs. New sporting provision could be delivered by the north east of Leicester Sustainable Urban Extension, and the Broadnook development to the north of the city. Many clubs originating from Leicester City are currently using cricket pitches in Charnwood Borough and are contributing to the pressures identified on cricket pitches. A

new PPS for Charnwood is being undertaken and should be complete by the end of summer 2017. It will consider cross boundary issues within the city.

### **City Administrative Area Facilities**

- There are 13 sites containing grass facilities for cricket in Leicester City, with a total of 19 pitches.
- There are 25 adult male teams currently playing in Leicester City. The majority of these play in the Leicestershire and Rutland Cricket League (which serves the whole of Leicestershire) and offers formal cricket on a Saturday afternoon.
- The quality of existing pitches is poor and many are unsuitable for play in the Leicestershire and Rutland Cricket League. Quality is also thought to be inhibiting club development, with players joining clubs with better facilities and junior development limited to a lack of facilities. Quality issues are varying and include the maintenance of existing provision, the condition of the square and the outfield and the appropriateness of clubhouses and pavilions.
- Although in quantitative terms, there are sufficient facilities to meet demand across the season, with spare capacity for circa 21 teams (quality permitting), there are insufficient grass squares to accommodate demand at peak time, with no spare capacity.
- 14 teams are travelling outside of the administrative area to play (of which 9 have a strong desire to be located in the city. This equates to a desired requirement for 6 additional pitches (or the use of non turf wickets where teams are in the lower levels of the Leicestershire and Rutland league).
- In order to address this, discussions have taken place between the Council and Leicestershire Cricket Board and Sport England to address the site issues. Two new sites which can provide three squares are proposed at New College and Westgate School. The city council has worked with partners and secured £150,000 from the Blackbird Road development, payable on commencement, for a new cricket facility at New College. The long term maintenance and sustainability of the facilities will also need to be considered carefully along with any asset transfer agreements. This is an example of partners working together to **provide** facilities.
- There is also potential for the Cricket Development Group and the ECB to bring pitches back into use. There is potential provision at: Samworth academy, Babbington College and Crown Hills.
- In the longer term the City Council will continue to work with schools to bring former pitches back into use and with the adjoining districts to bring forward sites in their Local Plans, consented sustainable urban extensions and other developments.
- Population growth will have further impact, requiring an additional pitch. This could be delivered through new grass pitches and / or non turf wickets and potentially linked to future development sites on the edge of the built up urban area.

- The availability of outdoor training facilities is also poor which further limits club development and in particular the retention of junior players. Club and development structures for juniors are particularly poor across the city.
- The City Council are working with the ECB on developing the potential of licence agreement with cricket clubs. The existence of licence agreements has already been established with city based football clubs. A licence agreement between the Council and a cricket club would allow the cricket club to undertake enhanced grounds maintenance on a designated parks site that would improve the quality of the wicket to meet the higher specification required to meet the higher level of competitive cricket.
- Under a licence agreement a cricket club would be able to have their own grounds maintenance equipment on site in a secure accessible store. Whilst Parks would provide the basic grounds maintenance the licenced cricket club would provide the additional grounds maintenance to ensure long term sustainability.
- The City Council will continue to work with adjoining districts to consider further provision of new facilities in the medium term. This will take into account the location of players, the accessibility to existing facilities and options for provision of new facilities. This will be based upon criteria such as travel times, ability to run, manage and maintain a facility, location of existing team members, and club and junior development plans.
- The Local Plan can help safeguard land but the provision of new facilities is a joint responsibility between Sport England, the ECB, Leicestershire County Cricket, the City Council and local cricket clubs.

## **Hockey**

### **Wider area context**

Hockey teams typically travel significant distances due to the technical specification of the facilities that they require and attract players from a wide catchment. Leicester HC (Leicester Ladies) are currently using facilities outside of the city but wish to relocate back in order to benefit from the high population base.

### **City Administrative Area Facilities**

- Of the nine full sized artificial grass pitches available in the city, four have a surface suitable for hockey. Of these, three can be used for competitive play.
- There are nine hockey clubs running 19 senior teams. Leicester Westleigh are the only club with a separate junior section playing within the city, suggesting that junior hockey is relatively underdeveloped. Almost all of the clubs are single / two team clubs with limited pathways for junior development.
- There is spare capacity at sites that are suitable for hockey across the week and at weekends. In particular, this is influenced by the introduction of the new pitch at English Martyrs for 2015 / 2016 season, which has seen usage moved from St Margaret's. There is spare capacity at both St Margaret's and English Martyrs, and hockey usage is prioritised at both of these sites.
- Population growth will have limited impact upon the demand for hockey with less than one team generated overall (mixed hockey). This means that

population growth would result in demands for pitches increasing by 0.5 match equivalents per week, which can be accommodated within the existing pitch stock.

- Although there is spare capacity, Leicester Ladies, the largest club and club playing at the highest standard are travelling outside of the administrative area to be accommodated.. They require one pitch of a good standard to relocate back to the city. There are no existing pitches with both availability and appropriate quality. There is however spare capacity within the city if relocation and reprogramming of other teams was to take place, although there remain no facilities of sufficient quality. Longer term, the existing infrastructure may constrain opportunities for participation growth as spare capacity will be minimal without existing facilities
- The condition and long term sustainability of the hockey surface at St Margaret's Pastures is questioned, with the site already displaying some wear and tear, including rips to the surface
- There is a need to address the issue of Leicester Ladies and seek to **provide** a new or existing site for the club to move back into the city
- Until the future of Leicester Ladies is resolved there is a need to **protect** and retain the existing sand based AGP provision across the city.
- **Enhance** the condition and long term sustainability of the hockey surface at St Margaret's Pastures, with the site already displaying some wear and tear, including rips to the surface.

## **Bowls**

### **Wider area context**

Bowls facilities are expected near to where players live as players have limited ability / desire to travel. Where facilities are located close to the Leicester City boundaries and may impact on supply and demand, this has been taken into account in the development of recommendations and actions.

### **City Administrative Area Facilities**

- There are 18 active greens containing 23 greens in total. This represents a decline in recent years, with former greens at Leicester Electric, Tower Gardens and Rushey Fields all no longer existing. Abbey Park Bowls club have now also given up their lease.
- There are active clubs on all current sites and on some, more than one club share a green.
- There is a desire from the bowling community to retain the existing sites containing outdoor bowling greens, as all have active clubs on site. For this to be sustainable however there is a need to maximise participation and maximise awareness of opportunities that are available. This is key to the future of all clubs, but in particular those clubs using Council facilities where numbers are lower. There are sectors of the population where there is currently minimal engagement with bowls and an ageing profile of participants, meaning that there are opportunities to engage new sectors of the population

- There is no requirement for new bowling greens at the current time and there is not projected to be in future years unless initiatives to increase participation are successful. If initiatives to increase bowling are not successful, then the number of greens currently provided is likely to be above recommended levels
- There are several quality issues that need to be addressed - these include improvements to the green surface and maintenance procedures. Some sites would also benefit from enhanced ancillary facilities.
- Increasing participation is a key priority to ensure that the current network of facilities remains sustainable
- **Protect** and retain the most popular/highest quality existing sites containing outdoor bowling greens
- **Enhance** the current network. There are several quality issues that could be addressed - these include improvements to the green surface and maintenance procedures. Some sites would also benefit from enhanced ancillary facilities.
- There is no demand for additional bowling greens currently and if participation does not increase, the existing network of facilities may become unsustainable. Any future green closures should be considered on a case by case basis at the time.

## **Tennis**

### **Wider area context**

Tennis facilities are expected near to where players live as players have limited ability / desire to travel. Where facilities are located close to the Leicester City boundaries and may impact on supply and demand, this has been taken into account in the development of recommendations and actions.

### **City Administrative Area Facilities**

- There are 117 active tennis courts with community use. These courts are split between public (park) sites, schools and private clubs and school sites make up more than a third of courts available.
- There are sufficient tennis courts overall offering a variety of access arrangements and no evidence of a requirement for additional facilities. There is however insufficient awareness, promotion and use of many of these facilities and a need to drive tennis participation to ensure that facilities remain sustainable and that all sites within the existing infrastructure are valuable. Local and national insight demonstrates that key barriers must be removed if participation increases are to be successfully achieved. The quality of existing public courts was highlighted as a key area for improvement and poor quality facilities are known to act as a deterrent for the use of facilities. LTA research suggests that play is usually split between public tennis courts and private club membership and effective provision of public facilities may drive participation increases
- Some quality issues have been identified with existing club based facilities, some of which are believed to inhibit the attraction of new members. None of the

existing clubs are currently at capacity (or likely to reach capacity without significant participation increases) but qualitative improvements will be required to ensure that courts remain attractive to users.

- While there is an even distribution of parks facilities, club courts are primarily focused in the south of the city, meaning that there is a gap in access to this type of facility for residents in other areas. Community use of courts at school sites would provide an opportunity to address these gaps.
- **Protect** and **enhance** the current court network across the city.

## **Rugby Union**

### **Wider area context**

Rugby is a club based sport and teams attract players from across the conurbation and beyond and the need to travel is accepted. Issues impacting clubs in Leicester or providing opportunities for clubs in Leicester in neighbouring authorities have been explored where relevant.

### **City Administrative Area facilities**

- There are 13 sites containing rugby union pitches in Leicester City (containing a total of 19 pitches). Almost half of the pitches are located in the south of the city. Provision in the west is particularly low, with just 2 pitches.
- There are four community rugby clubs in Leicester City running a total of 11 adult teams and 9 age group teams. Belgrave RUFC are the only club offering junior rugby - all of the remaining clubs accommodate senior teams only meaning that there are relatively few opportunities for junior development.
- There is a demand for additional pitches to support clubs within the city. Some clubs are travelling outside of the administrative area due to a lack of pitches. There is also a desire to improve the quality of provision for two clubs and there is scope to improve the capacity of some pitches through enhanced maintenance procedures.
- There is a requirement for additional pitches to support Belgrave RUFC (land currently secured but no funding). De Montfort University RFC are travelling outside of the administrative area due to a lack of facilities. At least two grass pitches (or access to appropriate AGP) are required to meet club needs and ensure that club development is not inhibited.
- There are limited training opportunities for Aylestone Athletic and Old Aylestonians also have poor floodlighting, restricting their training opportunities. There is a need to improve access to training facilities for both clubs through either the provision of floodlighting or alternative venues. There is scope to improve the capacity of some pitches through enhanced maintenance procedures.
- All rugby sites should be **protected** and **enhanced** to increase capacity.



- Investigate the **provision** of additional pitches for Belgrave RUFC subject to funding considerations.
- Explore the opportunity of the 3g at Beaumont Park **providing** opportunities for DMU teams. If appropriate access cannot be developed seek to **provide** alternative solutions for DMU.
- **Protect** Nelson Mandela Park for training for Aylestone Athletic.

## **Football**

### **Wider area context**

For football, there are few issues in neighbouring authorities that impact in Leicester City as on the whole there is sufficient provision within the city and this is primarily being used by city residents.

There is however some degree of cross boundary movement between clubs from Oadby and Wigston who are travelling into the city to use facilities. If these teams were relocated into Oadby and Wigston, there would be greater spare capacity within Leicester. This would primarily impact on facilities at Judgemeanow Community College and Welford Road (Wigston United).

### **City Administrative Area Facilities**

- There are 152 individual formal football pitches currently available for community use across Leicester.
- There are a total of 360 teams (including Disability teams but excluding those associated with Leicester City FC) who play across the city.
- Overall analysis has demonstrated that there is some spare capacity across the city, particularly for 5v5, 7v7 and adult football. There is however a lack of spare capacity for youth and 9v9 games. Access is particularly pressured on a Sunday morning, which is when the majority of activity takes place for all age groups.
- It is also evident that the majority of instances of overplay / pitches approaching capacity are associated with larger (and often FIS) clubs, while the spare capacity is located at Council pitches serving single clubs (adult pitches) and school sites (all sizes of pitch).
- The high levels of use at many of the FIS sites and other club bases in particular places great pressures on the quality of pitches, as it is pitch quality that dictates capacity. Any deterioration in quality will see pitches become more inadequate, but similarly, improvements to maintenance and quality will see pitches able to sustain further play. Many FIS clubs are now working to improve maintenance and quality and this should see capacity improve. Other smaller clubs are however experiencing capacity issues but are seeing quality deteriorate due to overplay and a lack of finances to invest in maintenance (often due to a loss of players and therefore income streams to other clubs). Friar Lane and Epworth and The Emerald Centre are examples of this.

- Some of the overuse is caused by training on grass pitches (on a Saturday morning) and this doubles the amount of activity that pitches are required to sustain. Training was identified as a key concern for many of the clubs in the city and if this was to be addressed, greater capacity for competitive football may be realised.
- While on some sites therefore capacity is constrained due to a requirement to accommodate play in several time slots, for many sites, peak time demand is the only use and there is a lower emphasis on quality. This may also help to maintain the quality of sites where it may otherwise be lower, for example where drainage issues are experienced.
- The role of unsecured pitches is also evident and this represents a key threat to the city in future years. Much of the spare capacity is currently provided by school sites and the loss of access to these facilities would see supply precariously balanced with demand. Several smaller clubs are also reliant upon these sites for facilities. The recent closure of Rushey Mead School to the community is an example of this, as the relocation of a club has caused overplay at the nearest available site (Rushey Fields).
- Pitch provision is most closely matched with demand in the east of the city, where there are shortages of some types of provision.
- FA data modelling evaluates the baseline requirement for 3g pitches taking into account the training requirements of clubs. It assumes that one 3g pitch is required per 42 teams and that based on FA policy, all football training should take place on 3g pitches (as opposed to grass).
- Assuming that there are a total of 360 teams (including Disability teams but excluding those associated with Leicester City FC, who have their own private AGP), this would mean that there is a requirement for at least 8.6 full size AGPs in the city.
- There are currently 6 full size pitches that are accessible and these are supplemented by smaller sized facilities at St Margaret's Pastures and Gateway College.
- This would therefore suggest that in broad terms, there is a theoretical requirement for a further 2 x 3g pitches across the city. While this presents a theoretical perspective, it is however important to look at the use of facilities on the ground to determine the need for further AGP provision, particularly given the issues that were raised through consultation.
- This is also supported by club consultation, which indicates that there is a belief that there remain insufficient 3g AGPs in the city. In terms of both theoretical position and reality on the ground there therefore appears the need for additional 3g provision.
- FIS sites with no artificial 3g pitches are under particular pressures with clubs training on grass pitches e.g. Rushey Fields and Hamilton Park.
- Clubs not benefitting from the FIS are also struggling to access appropriate facilities, particularly for training.
- There is a need to review the current model of delivery at FIS sites to make them less club dominated and work better for football, to strike a better balance between club development and football development

- Management of the 3g stock to be part of the above. One option would be to seek to develop club nights on the FIS sites.
- Address peak time issues by looking at kick-off times and seeking to utilise 3g infra-structure more for matchplay.
- Support recreational football across the city; volunteers, disability and woman and girls football.
- Football pitches across the city are at capacity particularly for youth football and 9v9. The unmet demand is primarily focussed around clubs rather than single adult teams. Look to **protect** and **enhance** current pitch sites in use and those not currently marked but which provide active playing fields
- Larger clubs on the larger FIS sites are particularly struggling and club growth will exacerbate this. **Enhancement** is important for these clubs to increase site capacity.
- **Look to protect** all existing sites accommodating larger clubs. Equivalent replacement provision should be made for any loss.
- Access to training by non FIS clubs is difficult and there is a need for further 3g **provision**, circa 2-3 full-size 3g pitches
- Quality **enhancements** could help however the capacity issues are at peak times when all play takes place so quality improvements will only have limited impact.
- Second tier club sites e.g. Friar Lane and Epworth are seeing facilities decline and members being lost to the larger clubs. Some Sites require quality **enhancements** and help with management and maintenance.
- The key issue on Council pitches is the quality of changing accommodation e.g. Braunstone Park. Pitch quality is also limited and focus should be on improving quality at the larger sites, particularly in terms of drainage. There could be a consideration to **Enhance** key Council sites.
- **Enhance** access to school pitches some of which are not secured for community use.

### Action Plans

- 1.29 To support the implementation of the key issues and priorities set out, the tables overleaf set out a suggested action plan for delivery of the recommendations and form the basis of an ongoing dialogue. It briefly summarises the recommendation, identifies the sites that should be considered for the delivery of the recommendation (where appropriate) and provides an indication of the timeframe and the lead responsibility. This action plan has been developed in conjunction with key partners and therefore represents a joined up approach to the delivery of an improved stock of playing fields across the City. Actions require either immediate, short term (1 – 2 years) medium term (3 years+) or long term action.
- 1.30 Set out overleaf are the individual action plans which are all subject to funding.

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
C1	Cricket	Retain the existing quantity of grass cricket pitches in the city.	All sites.	<p>Ensure that the list set out reflecting sites to protect in this strategy is up to date.</p> <p>Consider incorporating policy within the emerging local plan protecting valuable cricket pitches. This should link with the priorities of this document and take into account the monitoring and review process which may see updates occur.</p> <p>The findings of this assessment are considered when making decisions relating to playing fields.</p>	Short Term	LCC
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soar Valley College</li> <li>Queen Elizabeth and Wyggeston College.</li> </ul>	Work with the two schools / colleges currently providing community facilities to ensure that a secure agreement for use of cricket facilities exists on site, ensuring long term access to these facilities.	Short - Term	LCC
C2	Cricket	<p>Look to provide sufficient pitches to meet current and projected future demand by providing up to 6 new grass cricket pitches across the city.</p> <p>If opportunity allows, this could be increased to 8 pitches in order to allow all teams to relocate back to the city, as well as to accommodate projected population growth and rises in participation.</p> <p>Linking with recommendation C3, these facilities should be of appropriate standard to sustain play in the Leicestershire and Rutland League and should enable teams to sustain play in the higher echelons of the league.</p> <p>Continue to work with the adjoining District and Borough Councils in the</p>	<p>Potential Opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New College (1 -2 pitches)</li> <li>Westgate School (1 pitch)</li> <li>Samworth Enterprise Academy (1 pitch)</li> <li>Belgrave RUFC</li> <li>Babington Community College.</li> <li>Crown Hills Community College (linking with indoor training centre)</li> </ul>	<p>Undertake detailed technical feasibility assessments on named sites to identify scope to provide cricket provision that meets with league regulations.</p>	Short Term	LRCB / potential providers
				<p>Work with providers to negotiate formal community access agreements to ensure long term committed access to the site. This should also include agreement of management and maintenance operations, which may be best delivered in a partnership approach between club and provided.</p>	Short Term	LRCB / potential providers
				<p>Work with Cricket Development Organisation to agree programming (and key users) for each site. The provision of new facilities provides the opportunity to reconfigure pitch provision and decision making should focus on development potential, as well as ensuring that clubs have access to facilities of appropriate quality. It may be necessary to relocate</p>	Medium Term	LRCB / LCCDO

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
		<p>greater Leicester area to explore further provision.</p> <p>It should be noted that non turf wickets could be provided to support the needs of clubs in Division 9 and below instead of grass. This would currently equate to 2 pitches (out of the target 8). Many of these clubs are in line for promotion however and would then require grass pitches.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of non turf wickets at Rushey Mead Park / Humberstone Park (may require improvements in line with C3)</li> <li>New provision at Welford Road / Knighton Park</li> <li>Address existing issues at Western Park, where there is some spare capacity at peak time</li> <li>New ground for YMA.</li> </ul>	<p>some clubs using existing poor pitches in the city onto new sites (freeing up other pitches for clubs in lower divisions to return). All sites should however be of appropriate quality (linking with C3).</p> <p>Support YMA in their search for a new ground. The composition and ambitions of this club mean that there are key criteria that must be met. In particular a closed ground is required to enable the club to develop female participation.</p> <p>Work with the Cricket Development Organisation to agree targets to be achieved linking with the new grounds that are provided and the best way to achieve the growth objectives (C5). Clubs should seek to achieve clubmark.</p>		
<b>C3</b>		<p>Improve the quality of existing cricket pitches within the city so that they meet with standards required for the Leicestershire and Rutland Cricket League. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with the Leicestershire and Rutland Cricket Board to determine an effective means of providing cricket pitches on public parks. This may include providing and promoting the use of non turf wickets on public parks for clubs playing in the lower echelons of the Leicestershire and Rutland league.</li> <li>Ensuring that grounds maintenance schedules meet with ECB guidance and learning from best practice examples</li> </ul>	Groundstaff on all pitches including LCC sites and club bases.	<p>Undertake a pilot to evaluate the success of protecting grass squares on Council facilities and roll out across all grounds if successful.</p> <p>Work with ECB/ LRCB to review existing grounds maintenance procedures at LCC sites against ECB Best Practice Specifications and update to ensure that pitches are receiving appropriate maintenance and that best use is made of available budget.</p> <p>Support clubs to regularly review their maintenance schedules in line with best practice.</p> <p>Ensure that all groundsmen within the city (including Council staff maintaining cricket pitches and club groundsmen) receive appropriate training and have ongoing input from IOG. This should include attendance at training sessions and support from ECB specialist pitch advisors. This</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>LCC</p> <p>LCC / LRCB</p> <p>LRCB</p> <p>LCC / Clubs / LRCB</p>

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
		elsewhere in the county		should provide an important support and mentoring network that will be beneficial to the clubs and to the long term quality of cricket pitches across the City.		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carrying out required groundworks to improve quality of existing squares and outfield where issues are identified. This is likely to include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outfield levelling</li> <li>Work to improve condition of square</li> <li>Ongoing maintenance of non turf wickets, including required renovations.</li> <li>Improvements to the standard of club pavilions</li> <li>Ensure that all clubs have facilities appropriate to the standard that they play at in line with league regulations (sight screens etc).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Pitch (outfield and square) improvements at: Aylestone Recreation Ground - uneven outfield  Highfield Rangers - levelling of outfield  Humberstone Park - levelling of outfield  Mowmacre Sports Ground - uneven outfield and ongoing concerns about quality of square, despite recent investment  Soar Valley College - improvements to square and outfield  Western Park - weed infestation, lack of preparation and rabbit holes on squares.	Work in partnership with providers to identify the detailed improvements required through the use of detailed professional quality assessments.  Provide ongoing support to improve quality of existing facilities. This should include support to identify opportunities for capital investment to address existing identified issues and then ongoing appropriate maintenance techniques.	LRCB /LCC / Clubs	
			Clubhouse Facilities:  Ethel Road - facilities require modernisation  Leicester Electricity - refurbishment of 1 <sup>st</sup> floor rooms, as well as replacement of heating and	Support improvements to clubhouses where these are required through the provision of capital funding and / or preparing / supporting external funding bids to facilitate qualitative improvements.	Short Term and Ongoing	LRCB / LCC / Clubs
						LRCB

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
			electricity  Soar Valley College - provision of basic changing / ancillary facilities.			
C4		Support 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;  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least one artificial wicket</li> <li>Access to appropriate training nets</li> </ul>	Leicester Banks (no existing facilities)  Ethel Road - existing nets in poor condition	Support improvements to training facilities where need is identified through the provision of capital funding and / or preparing / supporting external funding bids to facilitate qualitative improvements.	Short Term	LCCB / LCC /Clubs
			Highfield Rangers - no existing facilities  Soar Valley College - require mobile net cage  QE and Wyggeston College - no mobile training nets  Davenport Road - mobile training net is key priority.	Due to the lack of ability to provide nets on public sites, identify an alternative means of providing access to training facilities for clubs playing on public sites.	Medium Term	LCC / LCCB
C5		Continue to support the growth of cricket across Leicester through ongoing support for development opportunities, including the facilitation of appropriate forums and networking opportunities, as well as the provision of facilities to enable new forms of the game to continue to grow. This should include;  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing support for the Cricket Development Organisation (LCCDO). Interaction should include clubs, Leicestershire and Rutland Cricket Board and</li> </ul>	Citywide	Continue the Cricket Development Organisation and ensure that this includes regular engagement with all clubs, cricket board, the Council.	Ongoing	LCCDO / LCCB
				As a group, set targets for the cricket development group to achieve and monitor progress and challenges arising. This should link with the development of new sites (C2) and the objectives to be achieved through the delivery of new sites.	Short Term and Ongoing	LCCDO / LCCB
				Support the promotion of cricket across the city, particularly with regards the creation of an improved online presence. Access to information on clubs across the city is currently relatively limited and there is scope to improve this significantly through improved website usage, SEO and social media usage. Focus should also be given	Short Term	LCCB / LCCDO

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
		<p>Leicester City Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support for the growth of cricket in schools and in local faith and community centres.</li> </ul> <p>The provision of effective facilities to enable the ongoing growth and development of The Mutual Cricket League and the Last Man Stands Initiative.</p> <p>Explore the potential of licence agreements by working in conjunction with the ECB and internal Council Departments</p>		<p>on attracting new participants to the game through effective marketing, particularly online which is currently lacking.</p> <p>Through the Cricket Development Group group, as well as the work of Leicestershire and Rutland Cricket Board, continue to monitor and promote cricket across the city including the development of improved school club links and links with faith communities, as well as the continued operation of alternative forms of the game (eg Last Man Stands).</p>		
			Initial assessment has identified the potential of Western Park as suitable venue to pilot this approach.		Medium - Long Term	LCCDO / LRCB
					Short/medium/long terms	LCC/LRCB
<b>RL1</b>	<b>Rugby League</b>	Look to secure a venue for Leicester Storm RFL to play within City Boundaries. Requirements are a minimum of one rugby league pitch that meets Tier 3 RFL requirements. To facilitate club growth, a second pitch for training (or access to a 3g pitch) will also be required. Longer term, a third pitch may be needed if all to enable club growth aspirations to be realised.	<p>Saffron Lane (club preference)</p> <p>Old Aylestonians (a rugby union club which is currently struggling for player numbers and has access to two pitches)</p> <p>Victoria Park.</p>	Work with Leicester Storm Rugby Club to identify an appropriate site and arrange access (for the club).	Short Term	RFL / LCC
<b>RL2</b>		Support Leicester Storm RFL with development initiatives to rebuild the club base and re-establish rugby league in Leicester City.	City wide, but particularly in close proximity to identified new site.	Identify opportunities for rugby league development particularly within the greater Leicester area, secondary schools and FE colleges.	Short - Medium Term	RFL / Club
				Support the club with marketing and promotional initiatives.	Short - Medium Term	RFL / Club
<b>H1</b>	<b>Hockey</b>	Work to retain sufficient sand based facilities to fulfil hockey need at both the current time and in the future by retaining the AGPs that are valuable	<p>English Martyrs</p> <p>St Margaret's Pastures</p>	Ensure full consultation is carried out with providers and NGBs prior to the change of any existing surfaces - all named facilities should be retained as sand based.	Ongoing	LCC / EH



Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
		for hockey as sand based facilities;  Hockey clubs are currently given priority access to all sand based facilities and this policy should be retained.	Soar Valley College	Build a relationship with schools and ensure that appropriate agreements are in place to maximise the likelihood of continuity of community use, particularly in the event of a school transition to academy.  Continue to monitor the adequacy of pitches to meet the needs of hockey clubs. In the event of an unforeseen change of surface on one of the named sites (or change of community use arrangements).	Short Term  Ongoing	LCC / EH  EH
H2		Support the relocation of Leicester Ladies Hockey Club through either;  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The refurbishment of an existing site to a higher specification (potentially water based). Ancillary facilities should also meet with England Hockey guidance and facility specifications.</li> <li>The provision of a new site - if discussions reveal that participation will be compromised by any relocation of existing clubs, new provision would be required for Leicester Ladies.</li> </ul>	Relocation within existing infrastructure - Refurbishment of St Margaret's Pastures  New site	Undertake detailed discussions with other providers and users of existing facilities (including EH affiliated clubs, Mixed Hockey Clubs and the JAC / JDC) to evaluate the feasibility of the relocation of clubs using the existing facility infrastructure in order to accommodate Leicester Ladies all on one pitch. This should include consultation with clubs that would ideally like to be relocated following any potential move, as well as consultation with existing providers to facilitate reprogramming of existing facilities. It should be ensured that current participation in the city was not negatively impacted.  Following the outcome of above discussions, determine the feasibility of relocating Leicester Ladies within the existing infrastructure and the key actions to deliver the project. The preferred site will require qualitative improvements to ensure that the required specification is met.  If relocation of other teams and reprogramming is not successful, work with Leicester Ladies HC to identify an appropriate site for the creation of a new water based / sand based facility meeting	Short Term  Short Term	LCC / EH  LCC / EH

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
				premier league requirements.		
				Linking with H4, set targets for participation increases and growth to be delivered following the relocation and ensure success is regularly monitored and reviewed.	Short Term and Ongoing	LCC / EH
				Following relocation, monitor growth of the club and the impact upon demand for additional facilities. Investigate the requirement for a further pitch to meet the needs of the club (and the wider hockey community) in the longer term if participation increases exceed 4 teams. This should also be reviewed in the context of the emerging England Hockey Strategy which will be released in 2016.	Medium - Long Term	LCC / EH
H3		<p>Look to address quality issues identified at St Margaret's Pastures and work with providers to ensure the timely refurbishment of the pitch surface at other sites across the city.</p> <p>This could potentially link with H2 the relocation of Leicester ladies if this site is identified as the priority for relocation.</p>	<p>St Margaret's Pastures</p> <p>All sites</p>	Review existing maintenance procedures in conjunction with England Hockey and ensure appropriate routine maintenance procedures and sinking funds are in place to enable timely replacement of the surface. The need for this will be dependent upon the outcome of feasibility assessments re. H2.	Short Term	EH / LCC
				Address quality issues in existing surface through repair and rejuvenation of surface. If this site is to be used to Leicester Ladies, full short term surface replacement will be required as well as improvement to ancillary facilities and specifications to meet league requirements.	Short - Medium Term	LCC / EH
				Work with Mixed Hockey Association and England Hockey (including JDC / JAC Coordinators) to ensure that the quality of facilities provided better meets needs and aspirations - this may include the provision of storage at the site (or at an alternative site if this use is to be relocated).	Short Term	LCC / EH
H4		Work with the two large clubs (Leicester Westleigh and Leicester	Leicester Westleigh HC	Support clubs in the engagement with the local community to increase the number of	Short - Medium Term	EH

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
		<p>Hockey Club) as well as the Mixed Hockey Association to improve player pathways from junior to adult participation.</p> <p>Support initiatives to introduce new participants to the game and to raise awareness of the sport.</p> <p>This may include rush hockey and sports development initiatives to introduce more people to the game.</p>	Leicester Ladies HC	<p>hockey participants. This could involve provision of coaching, as well as the introduction of Back to Hockey Sessions and other new forms of the game. This could take place in the city prior to relocation of Leicester hockey Club.</p>		
				Engage with clubs to provide sports development support and advice on promotion and marketing.	Short - Medium Term	EH / LCC
				Support the clubs in engaging with local schools to promote growth in participation in hockey at an early age. Initial focus should be placed on the schools with AGPs (English Martyrs / Soar Valley College / Moat Community College) as well as those that have entered county hockey competitions.	Short - Medium Term	EH / L&R Sport
			Mixed Hockey Association	Support the Mixed Hockey Association in their development activities.	Ongoing	L&R Sport
<b>T1</b>	<b>Tennis</b>	Provide a hierarchy of facilities that effectively serves all types of tennis participants through the retention and protection of all existing public, school based and private tennis courts to maximise opportunities to increase the amount of tennis played in the city.	All existing sites. The baseline requirement for public / school courts to meet current and projected future demand is 52 courts, with additional needed to ensure capacity for growth and to ensure even distribution across the city. The existing stock of 36 public courts + 25 readily accessible school courts are therefore all valuable. ???	<p>Work to ensure that all existing facilities remain as tennis courts and are maintained to a standard that ensure that they are fit for purpose.</p>	Ongoing	LCC / Clubs
				Ensure that the list set out reflecting sites to protect in this strategy is up to date.	Ongoing	LCC
					Short Term	LCC
				<p>Linking with T2, T3 and T4, regularly review use of tennis courts and ensure that the list of sites to be protected remains updated. This should take into account progress with promoting tennis and encouraging activity in new venues, as well as increases in participation.</p> <p>Significant increases in availability of school facilities may offer the opportunity to reduce Council provision longer term.</p>	Ongoing	LCC

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
T2		Support initiatives to increase awareness of opportunities to play tennis across the city.	City Wide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key schools include Judgemeadow Community College, Soar Valley College, Crown Hills Community College, English Martyrs College and Babington Community College.</li> </ul>	Engage with clubs to provide sports development support and advice on promotion and marketing.	Short Term	LTA
				Support the clubs in engaging with local schools.	Short Term and Ongoing	LTA / L&R Sport
				Support clubs to proactively increase participation and membership through the creation of a Leicester City Tennis Development Forum. This should link with the existing forum set up incorporating the FE colleges. Engagement should also extend to secondary schools involved in tennis in the city (T4).	Short Term	LTA,
				Maximise promotion of existing public tennis courts by enhancing awareness of facilities in existing parks through effective signage (at edge of parks, providing full details of opportunities available) as well as an effective online presence.	Short term	LCC
				Work with schools currently offering pay and play tennis to promote the opportunities available and make better use of the existing facilities.		
T3		To maximise the use of the existing infrastructure, create a sustainable means of providing public tennis courts by evaluating innovative means of providing access to these facilities linking with the new LTA strategy. Use the current pilot project at Victoria Park as a basis for a rollout of future improvements to parks tennis courts.  Using the principles applied at this site, qualitative improvements should take place in conjunction with initiatives designed to increase participation (T2) and activity at the site. Learning from this project should	Victoria Park	Complete existing pilot initiative at Victoria Park including refurbishment of existing poor quality courts and creation of new provision, alongside development activities to increase usage on this site.	Short Term	LCC / LTA
			Evington Park Humberstone Park Western Park Abbey Park Monks Rest These sites have been	Undertake a review of the pilot initiative at Victoria Park, evaluating strengths and weaknesses and use this as a basis for roll out of similar schemes across the city.  This should eventually extend to all larger sites across the city, as parks courts are well distributed and offer alternative opportunities to club and school based opportunities.	Medium Term	LCC / LTA

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
		inform the plans for improvement at sites.	recommended on the basis of their size (number of courts), current location and distribution across the city in relation to other opportunities and potential links with clubs and schools.	<p>This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linking with the LTA strategy, identify appropriate access and management solutions for the successful delivery of the facility</li> <li>Undertake relevant marketing and promotion to increase awareness of the facility</li> <li>Implement sports development initiatives to encourage take up of tennis and use of the new facility. This should include a range of targeted development opportunities as well as links with schools. This should link with the activities of the tennis development forum and should occur at the same time as the new facility is introduced to maximise chances of success.</li> </ul>		
T4		Develop new or satellite clubs outside the south of the city to address the lack of access to a club base.	<p>Key Priorities may include use of school sites which have floodlights, and where schools are already engaged with tennis in the city, but are located some distance from existing clubs. These include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crown Hills Community College</li> <li>Judgemeadow Community College,</li> <li>Rushey Mead,</li> <li>Soar Valley</li> <li>New College</li> </ul>	<p>Work with schools to identify potential opportunities to develop satellite clubs at their site.</p> <p>Engage with schools / Schools Letting Agents with a view to opening a tennis facility for public use. Agree management arrangements.</p>	Medium term	LTA / LCC/Provider
				<p>Linking with the LTA strategy, identify appropriate access and management solutions for the successful delivery of the facility.</p>	Medium term	LTA / LCC/Provider
				<p>Undertake relevant marketing and promotion to increase awareness of the facility.</p>	Medium term	LTA / LCC/Provider
				<p>Implement sports development initiatives to encourage take up of tennis and use of the new facility both for pupils within the school and the surrounding community.</p>	Medium term	LTA / LCC/Provider

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
<b>T5</b>		<p>Support clubs in the improvement of facilities where issues have been identified. Club should have access to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>courts of an appropriate standard</li> <li>Adequate pavilion (including toilets) and shelter</li> </ul>	<p>Carisbrooke – new airdome, develop clubhouse</p> <p>Leicestershire LTC – expansion and resurface of car parking, internal clubhouse renovations and membership controlled access system</p> <p>Victoria Tennis Club - new clubhouse</p> <p>Westfield – further floodlighting.</p>	<p>Undertake detailed professional quality assessments / masterplanning to establish works required.</p> <p>Support improvements to courts where these are required through the provision of capital funding and / or preparing / supporting external funding bids to facilitate qualitative improvements.</p>	Short - Medium Term	LTA/Club
<b>BG1</b>	<b>Bowls</b>	<p>To ensure the existing facility infrastructure remains sustainable, support initiatives to increase participation in bowls across the city. This could include work to remove several key barriers to participation in the sport including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor marketing and promotion and lack of awareness</li> <li>The lack of online presence of the sport</li> <li>Rigorous competition structures</li> <li>perceptions and connotations of bowling.</li> </ul>	<p>All sites, but focusing particularly on those that are identified as having low levels of membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Old Humberstone Bowls Club</li> <li>Spinney Hill Park Bowls Club</li> <li>Rushey Mead Bowls Club</li> <li>Mowmacre Bowls Club</li> <li>Western Park Bowls Club</li> </ul>	<p>Form a bowls delivery group to work with bowls communities across the city to increase participation. Set realistic and achievable targets for the increase of bowls participation across the city.</p> <p>Support Bowls Leicestershire to undertake relevant marketing and promotion to increase awareness of bowls. This should Leicestershire wide initiatives; as well club based support including arranging training and discussion forums in relation to direct marketing and the creation of an online presence.</p> <p>Work with clubs and providers to improve signage to existing facilities, ensuring that all facilities are well signed by both road and for pedestrians. Signage should also include information about the club, appropriate contact details and provide an open invitation to attend sessions to sample bowls.</p> <p>Support Bowls Leicestershire in the implementation of other initiatives to further develop bowls. This may include</p>	<p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p> <p>Short Term</p>	<p>LCC / Bowls Leicestershire</p> <p>Bowls Leicestershire / Bowls Delivery Group</p> <p>LCC/ Bowls Leicestershire / Bowls Delivery Group</p> <p>LCC/ Bowls Leicestershire / Bowls</p>

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
				engagement with GP referral schemes and other community establishments.		Delivery Group
				Linking with Bowls England reviews of the sport, provide greater flexibility within competition structures across Leicestershire, ensuring that a wider range of residents are able to access bowling greens.	Medium Term	Bowls England / Bowls Leicestershire
				Support Bowls Leicestershire in the introduction of targeted development activities to introduce bowls to new sectors of the community.	Short - Medium Term	Bowls Delivery Group
				Support clubs in engaging with junior schools to stimulate interest in the sport at a younger level.	Medium Term	Bowls Leicestershire / L and R Sport, Bowls Delivery Group
				As a delivery group, regularly monitor participation increases achieved by the above and set ongoing goals to further support the development of bowls.	Ongoing	Bowls Delivery Group
<b>BG2</b>		<p>Consider the sustainability of all existing bowling locations to support the implementation of BG1, as well as to ensure that there are sufficient greens to accommodate future demand.</p> <p>To maximise sustainability and better balance income with expenditure the potential to close one green on sites containing two should be investigated.</p> <p>The financial benefits of any closures achieved should be reinvested back into improving the quality of bowls greens (BG3).</p> <p>If increases in membership are not achieved(BG1), then closure of further greens and / or mergers of</p>	<p>Retention - at least one green in all existing locations.</p> <p>Potential closure - one green at Monks Rest, Western Park, Evington Park, Brookfield Electric.</p>	<p>Ensure that the list set out reflecting sites to protect in this strategy is up to date.</p> <p>Work with clubs at named sites to identify and understand the impact of potential closures of second greens and determine the benefits that will be achieved against the potential impact on participation.</p> <p>Linking with BG1, regularly review the success of initiatives to drive participation increases in bowls. If these are not delivered successfully, undertake a programme of rationalisation based upon;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of members at each club (clubs with 20 or less members should</li> </ul>	<p>Short Term</p> <p>Short - Medium Term</p> <p>Medium - Long Term</p>	<p>LCC</p> <p>LCC / Bowls Delivery Group / Bowls Leicestershire</p> <p>LCC / Bowls Delivery Group</p>

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
		clubs may need to be considered.		<p>be considered initially for rationalisation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The condition of the facility.</li> </ul>		
<b>BG3</b>		<p>Support clubs in the improvement of existing bowling greens where issues have been identified. All bowling greens should include access to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A green of appropriate standard</li> <li>Adequate pavilion (including toilets) and shelter</li> </ul>	<p>Improvements to playing surface - Evington Park, Rushey Fields, Western Park, Monks Rest, Mowmacre Sports Ground.</p>	<p>Undertake detailed professional quality assessments / masterplanning to establish works required.</p>	Medium Term	LCC / Bowling Clubs
			<p>Leicester Bowls Club - watering system (club of high playing standard)</p>	<p>Work with other sports to explore opportunities for facility sharing (For example the bowling club to share with the FIS football pavilion which includes full clubhouse at Rushey Fields). This should be undertaken prior to any improvements taking place in existing pavilions (see below).</p>	Short Term	LCC / Bowls Leicestershire / FA / ECB
			<p>Pavilion works - Evington Park (toilets), Humberstone Park (upgrades and improvement to toilets and kitchen), Spinney Hills Park (disabled toilets) and size of pavilion, Victoria Park (potential to convert existing unused facilities), Brookfield Bowls Club (ageing clubhouse), Rushey Fields (poor condition and asbestos).</p>	<p>Support improvements to facilities where these are required through the provision of capital funding and / or preparing / supporting external funding bids to facilitate qualitative improvements. This may also be funded through the closure of some second greens).</p>	Ongoing	LCC / Bowls Leicestershire / L&R Sport
			<p>All parks sites, but potential opportunities to combine with other sports (for example where a FIS strategy exists on the same site as a bowling green, such as Rushey Fields).</p>	<p>Provide support and guidance for clubs in the compilation of funding bids to support required improvement work for existing greens.</p>	Ongoing	LCC / Bowls Leicestershire / L&R Sport
				<p>Undertake a review of opportunities to support further social opportunities for parks clubs to address a key barrier to joining parks clubs. This should include evaluation of best practice elsewhere, as well as an assessment of opportunities to provide social facilities for existing parks clubs. It should be noted that this will not be possible for every site and that opportunities to provide a city wide solution should be considered.</p>	Medium Term	LCC



Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
R1	Rugby Union	Work to ensure that all clubs have secured access to sufficient pitches and ancillary facilities initially through the protection and retention of the existing sites	All existing rugby pitches	<p>Ensure that the list set out reflecting sites to protect in this strategy is up to date. Incorporate policy within the emerging local plan protecting valuable rugby pitches This should link with the priorities of this document and take into account the monitoring and review process which may see updates occur.</p> <p>Ensure that the findings of this assessment are considered when making decisions relating to playing fields.</p>	Short Term and Ongoing	LCC
R2	Rugby Union	Explore opportunities to develop a World Rugby Compliant 3g pitch to improve access to match and training facilities for clubs in Leicester City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aylestone Athletic</li> <li>• Belgrave RUFC</li> <li>• De Montfort University</li> <li>• Old Aylestonians</li> </ul>	Explore opportunities for the creation of a new AGP linking with the principles of the new RFU Strategy. Provision is required in the city to support access to facilities for competitive matches for De Montfort University (currently travelling outside the administrative boundary) and Belgrave RFC (over capacity requiring 2 pitches) as well as improved training facilities for Old Aylestonians and Aylestone Athletic.	Short Term	RFU and De Montfort University.
				Following evaluation of opportunities, identify potential benefits to clubs in city and review relevance of recommendations R3 - R6 in the context of decisions made.	Medium Term	RFU / Clubs

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
<b>R3</b>		<p>Explore the feasibility of supporting Belgrave RUFC in providing additional capacity. This should be delivered through improved maintenance practices as well as new pitches (at least two) on the land recently secured adjacent to their existing site.</p> <p>Additional floodlights should also be provided at the existing site to spread the impact of training.</p>	Belgrave RUFC	Work with Belgrave RUFC to improve maintenance practices across the club base	Short Term	RFU/ Belgrave RUFC /
				Support Belgrave RUFC in the delivery of proposals to extend the current boundaries of the rugby club to provide at least 2 additional pitches. This should include support with finalising lease and access arrangements as well as funding applications.	Short - Medium Term	RFU/ Belgrave RUFC / LCC
				Once agreement has been reached, work with Belgrave RUFC to develop and deliver an appropriate pitch specification to meet club needs.	Short - Medium Term	RFU/ Belgrave RUFC / LCC
				Work with Belgrave RUFC to secure additional floodlights.	Short - Medium Term	RFU/ Belgrave RUFC / LCC
<b>R4</b>		<p>Seek to secure access to at least two rugby pitches to support the needs of De Montfort University.</p> <p>This could be delivered via access to the world rugby compliant 3g at Beaumont Park. Explore potential</p>	Beaumont Park	Work with De Montfort University to ensure that future phases of the Beaumont Park scheme include access to at least two rugby pitches, including a 3G World Rugby Compliant facility. Once agreement has been reached, work with Belgrave RUFC to develop and deliver an appropriate	Short Term	RFU / DMU

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
		access.		pitch specification to meet club needs.		
<b>R5</b>		<p>Seek to enhance the sustainability of Old Aylestonians by improving the club base, as well as investigating opportunities for shared facilities. This should include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting a review of grounds maintenance procedures to ensure that pitch quality is sufficient to meet club needs as well as to ensure long term sustainability of the pitch</li> <li>Exploring opportunities to locate an additional club at the site</li> <li>Providing new floodlights at the ground to enhance opportunities for the rugby club as well as any other clubs sharing the facility</li> </ul>	Aylestone Recreation Ground	Work with LCC to undertake a review of grounds maintenance procedures to ensure that pitch capacity is maximised and procedures are tailored to club needs and ground conditions.	Short Term	RFU / LCC
				Support improvements to pitches where these are required through the provision of capital funding and / or preparing / supporting external funding bids to facilitate qualitative improvements	Ongoing	RFU / LCC
				Explore opportunities to locate Leicester Storm RFL with Old Aylestonians in order to increase sustainability and ensure year round usage of facilities.	Short Term	RFU / RFL / LCC
				Support the club in applications for funding for new floodlights	Short Term	RFU
<b>R6</b>		Protect Nelson Mandela Park for training for Aylestone Athletic.	Mandela Park	Ensure that the findings of this assessment are considered when making decisions relating to playing fields.	Short Term and Ongoing	LCC
<b>R7</b>		Review grounds maintenance procedures at Victoria Park to ensure that pitch quality is sufficient to meet club needs as well as to ensure long term sustainability of the pitch	Victoria Park	Work with LCC to undertake a review of grounds maintenance procedures to ensure that pitch capacity is maximised and procedures are tailored to club needs and ground conditions	Medium Term	LCC / RFU
<b>R8</b>		Support ongoing activities for rugby development, including the creation of links between local clubs and schools and the delivery of the targeted growth plan for	All Clubs	Continue to support Belgrave RUFC in the delivery of their development plan, as well as rugby in schools and work to improve the transition between introductory sessions and club membership.	Ongoing	RFU / Club

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
		Belgrave RUFC.		Work with other clubs as opportunities arise to develop rugby and increase sustainability across the city.	Medium Term	RFU
Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
<b>F1</b>	<b>Football</b>	<p>Review the current model of delivery at FIS sites to make them less club dominated and work better for football, to strike a better balance between club development and football development</p> <p>Management of the 3g stock to be part of the above. Seek to develop club nights on the FIS sites.</p>	FIS sites	Council to lead review process with FA and clubs. This might involve working smarter on maintenance regimes, draining and playability, within agreed budget consideration.s	Short Term	FA / LCC
<b>F2</b>		Address peak time issues by looking at kick-off times and seeking to utilise 3g infra-structure more for matchplay	3G sites	Council to lead review process with FA and clubs.	Medium Term	FA / LCC
<b>F3</b>		Support recreational football across the city; volunteers, disability and woman and girls football.	N/A	FA to work with Council and clubs	On-going	FA / LCC

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
F4		<p>Football pitches across the city are at capacity particularly for youth football and 9v9. The unmet demand is primarily focussed around clubs rather than single adult teams. Protect and enhance current pitch sites in use and those not currently marked but which provide active playing fields.</p> <p>Larger clubs on the larger FIS sites are particularly struggling and club growth will exacerbate this. Enhancement is important for these clubs to increase site capacity.</p> <p>Protect all existing sites accommodating larger clubs. Equivalent replacement provision should be made for any loss.</p>	FIS sites and larger clubs.	Ensure that the findings of this assessment are considered when making decisions relating to playing fields.	Short Term and Ongoing	LCC
F5		Seek to provide for further 3g provision; circa 2-3 full-size 3g pitches	FIS sites with not current 3g provision and larger clubs.	Review use of 3g pitches and develop business case for further provision.	Medium Term	Sport England and the FA, in conjunction with local clubs and operators.
F6		<p>Improve quality at other sites across the city.</p> <p>Second tier club sites e.g. Friar Lane and Epworth are seeing facilities decline and members being lost to the larger clubs. Sites require quality enhancements and help with management and maintenance</p> <p>The key issue on Council pitches is</p>	Key sites which are deemed below the quality standard	<p>Work with LCC to undertake a review of grounds maintenance procedures to ensure that pitch capacity is maximised and procedures are tailored to club needs and ground conditions.</p> <p>Invest in key sites to improve pitch quality and infra-structure, such as drainage, subject to budget considerations.</p>	Short Term	FA / LCC

Recommendation	Sport	Strategic Recommendation	Priority Sites / Areas / Clubs	Action	Timescales	Responsibilities
		the quality of changing accommodation e.g. Braunstone Park. Pitch quality is also limited and focus should be on improving quality at the larger sites, particularly in terms of drainage. Enhance key Council sites.				
F7		Enhance access to school pitches some of which are not secured for community use.	Key school sites.		On-going	LCC

## Monitoring and Review

- 1.22 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 to fulfil the above roles.
- 1.23 Reflecting the importance of this phase of work, monitoring of the strategy represents Step 10 of the approach to the production of a playing pitch strategy set out in the guidance for the delivery of a playing pitch Strategy (Sport England 2013).
- 1.24 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 pitch stock in the district and evaluating the impact of this on the supply and demand information;
  - assessing the impact of changes to participation, including changing trends and the development of new formats of the game as well as affiliation data for each of the National Governing Bodies of Sport;
  - assessing the impact of demographic changes and new population estimates / 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.
- 1.25 The ongoing monitoring of the strategy will be led by Leicester City Council and it is anticipated that it will constitute;
- support for existing sport specific forums – the council will seek to ensure involvement in these forums to discuss issues arising and to lead the delivery of the strategy in conjunction with key partners;
  - 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;
  - production of an annual progress summary on the delivery of the PPS. This will include;
    - a review of participation with support from National Governing Bodies, to identify any key changes to participation trends in the Borough, and the likely implications of these changes for the strategy;
    - an assessment of changes to the pitch stock (including a full review of Active Places Power); and

- review of sites identified for improvement / disposal / other key actions.
  - an overall summary appraisal of progress made in the delivery of the strategy
  - a full annual steering group meeting, or individual annual meetings with National Governing Bodies of Sport to inform and discuss the annual progress summary and agree next steps; and
  - a review of the effectiveness of CIL / S106 arrangements in supporting implementation of the strategy and consideration of any need to prepare further guidance to secure delivery against objectives.
- 1.26 The steering group will also be responsible for agreement of the requirement for a full update of this playing pitch assessment.

*Neil Allen Associates Registered Office:  
20 Brook Road, Lymm, Cheshire, WA13 9AH*

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