

Warrington Borough Council

Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan

November 2017

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Abbreviations

AGP:	Artificial Grass Pitch
3G:	Third Generation (artificial grass pitch)
CFA:	County Football Association
CSP:	County Sport Partnership
DPA:	Dwellings Per Annum
ECB:	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH:	England Hockey
FA:	Football Association
FC:	Football Club
FTB:	Football Turf Pitches
MES:	Match Equivalent Sessions
NGB:	National Governing Body
NPPF:	National Planning Policy Framework
NTA:	None Technical Assessment
PPS:	Playing Pitch Strategy
RFL:	Rugby Football League
RFU:	Rugby Football Union
S106:	Section 106
TGR:	Team Generation Rate
U:	Under
WBC:	Warrington Borough Council
WLPF	Warrington Local Planning Framework
WLPCS:	Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy

Section 1: Introduction and Context

1.1 Introduction

This is the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) for Warrington Borough Council and its partners. The primary purpose of the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is to provide a strategic framework which ensures that the provision of outdoor playing pitches meet the local needs of existing and future residents across Warrington. The Strategy has been produced in accordance with Sport England Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance (October 2013 as updated in March 2014) and provides robust and objective justification for future playing pitch provision throughout the borough.

Building upon the preceding Assessment Report¹ it provides a robust strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing playing pitches and ancillary facilities, along with the provision of new playing pitches and ancillary facilities where required, to meet the needs of the existing and future population within the borough over the next ten years (i.e. 2017 to 2027).

This Playing Pitch Strategy and associated documents provide the evidence required to help protect playing fields to ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future pitch requirements. The strategy is capable of the following in Warrington:

- Providing a clear framework for all playing pitch providers, including the public, private and third sectors;
- Clearly addressing the needs of all identified sports within the local area, picking up particular local demand issues;
- Addressing issues of population growth, and or major growth/regeneration areas;
- Addressing issues of cross boundary facility provision;
- Addressing issues of accessibility, quality and management with regard to facility provision;
- Standing up to scrutiny at a public inquiry as a robust study;
- Providing realistic aspirations which are implementable within the local authority's budgetary position and procurement regime.

¹ The Non-Technical Assessment of pitches were carried out during the 2016 calendar year

1.2 Wider Warrington Context

1.2.1 Warrington Local Planning Framework

The Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS), which was adopted in July 2014, sets out how and where development will take place in Warrington up to 2027 and the character of the place that WBC and its partners are trying to create.

Warrington's Local Plan Core Strategy is the overarching strategic policy document at the heart of the Local Planning Framework. It sets out a planning framework for guiding the location and level of development in the borough up to 2027. In addition the document outlines a number of principles that will shape the way that Warrington will develop between now and then.

Whilst the LPCS is still currently the statutory Development Plan for the Borough it was subject to a High Court Challenge that resulted in two parts of the Plan being quashed. Despite the LPCS having only fairly recently been adopted, as a result of the High Court Challenge and emerging evidence that underpins the Borough's growth needs and economic development ambitions, it has been necessary to commence a review of the Local Plan.

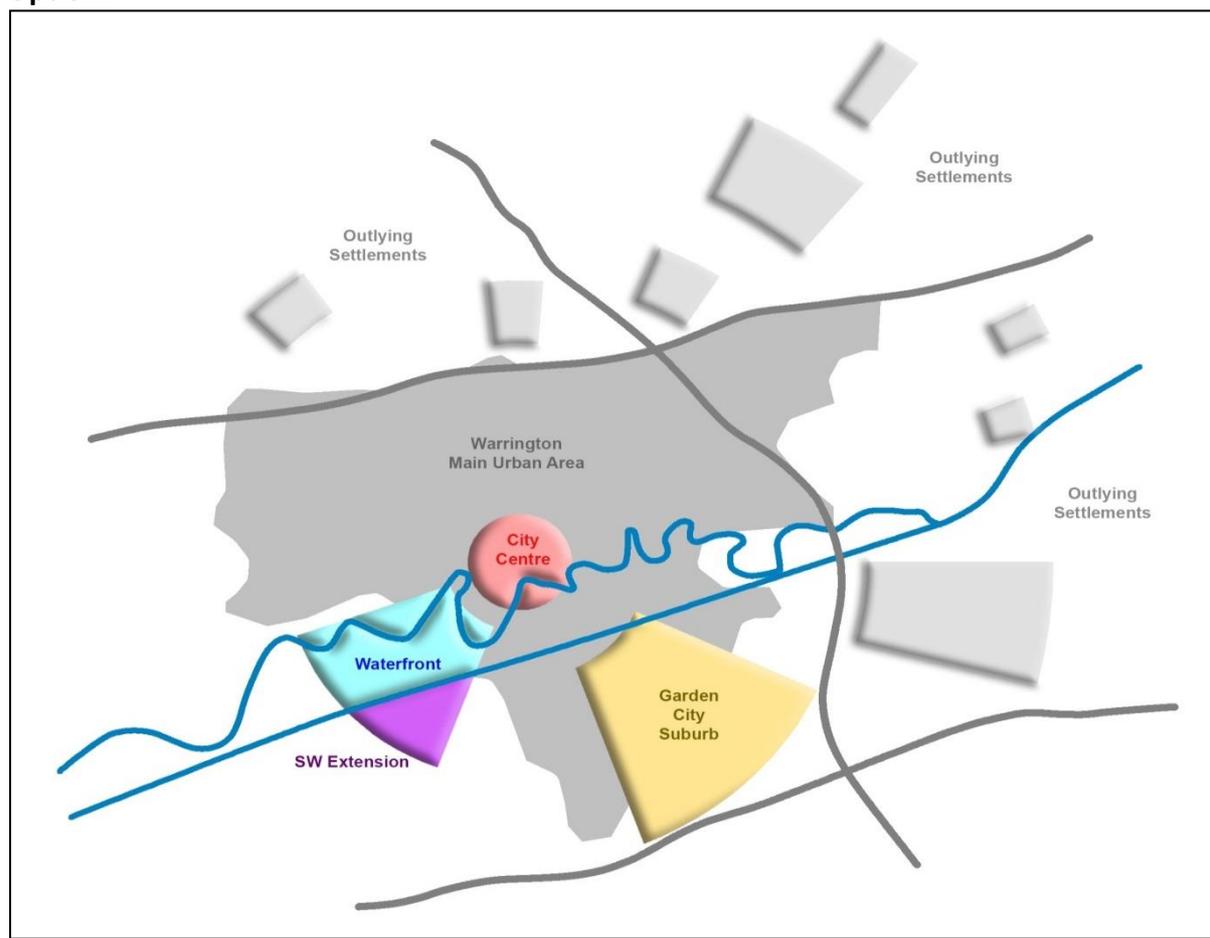
The LPCS was prepared to facilitate a much lower level of development than is now envisaged and therefore the Council has now concluded that the review will result in a new Local Plan, incorporating the elements of the existing plan that remain up to date and set out the strategic priorities for the area to deliver:

- the homes and jobs needed;
- the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
- the provision of health, security, community, cultural and other local facilities; and
- climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape
- To support the higher level of growth.

The new Local Plan Preferred Development Option provides an ambitious plan for the future growth of Warrington that requires the provision of 1,113 dpa over the Plan period. It aims to significantly boost development in the Town Centre and across Inner Warrington, complemented by the release of Green Belt land and supported by wide ranging infrastructure investment.

There are four main areas of growth identified – The City Centre, the Waterfront, the Garden City Suburb and the South West Urban Extension. These areas are complemented by the optimisation of development throughout the remaining neighbourhoods of the main urban area and incremental growth in Warrington's outlying settlements.

Figure 2: Illustration of the main areas of growth identified in the Preferred Development Option.



The Preferred Development option identifies sufficient land for new housing to meet Warrington’s development aspirations over the next 20 years, up to 2037. The table below demonstrates how these areas will deliver the required number of new homes over the plan period.

Table 2: Overall Housing Development Trajectory

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
City Centre	980	1,629	569	348	3,526
Wider Urban Area	1,560	2,271	1,038	0	4,869
Waterfront	728	795	1,790	719	4,032
Garden City Suburb	406	496	48	0	950
Garden City Suburb (GB)	0	2,114	2,096	2,114	6,324
South West Extension (GB)	0	610	610	611	1,831
Outlying Settlements	148	51	40	0	239
Outlying Settlements (GB)	340	850	0	0	1,190
Other	41	10	22	0	73
Small Sites Allowance	435	435	435	435	1,740
Sub Total (Urban)	4,298	5,687	3,942	1,502	15,429
Sub Total (GB)	340	3,574	2,706	2,725	9,345
TOTAL	4,638	9,261	6,648	4,227	24,774

1.2.2 Population growth

The Council's emerging Local Plan identifies a need for a significant amount of housing growth over the next 20 years (up to 2037) to accommodate the expected increase in population. The figure is currently 24,774 dwellings and is set out in Table 2. The current resident population in Warrington is 206,428². For the period that this PPS is intended to cover (i.e.2017 to 2027) the town's population is projected to increase to 223,227³ an increase of 16,799 according to ONS data. The impact of housing growth on the need for pitches is explored within this strategy document under the scenarios in Section 4 of this document.

Team generation rates were used to provide an indication of how many people it may take to generate a team (by gender and age group), in order to help estimate the change in demand for pitch sports that may arise from any population change in the study area and are set out in the Assessment Report.

It is acknowledged that the Local Plan Review is still at a fairly early stage of preparation and that the housing growth figures contained in the PDO may be subject to revision. Therefore, any changes will need to be reflected in future updates of the PPS. It is for this reason that the PPS does not look at future provision over the proposed full plan period

1.3 How Does the Playing Pitch Strategy Support the Local Planning Process?

One of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Section 8 of the NPPF deals specifically with the topic of healthy communities. Paragraph 73 discusses the importance of access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation that can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

The Warrington Local Plan needs to be based upon a robust evidence base. Paragraph 73 of the NPPF requires "planning policies to be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of needs. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required." Paragraph 74 of the NPPF require assessments to be used to inform the protection of "existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields."

The Playing Pitch strategy, action plan and needs assessment documents support the planning policy by providing such robust assessments and a framework for maintaining and updating these.

² Source: ONS Mid-2014 Population Estimates

³ Source: ONS 2014-based projections.

The key components of the PPS are:

Corporate and strategic:

- It ensures a strategic approach to playing pitch provision. The PPS will act as a tool for Warrington Borough Council and partner organisations to guide resource allocation and set priorities for pitch sports in the future.
- It provides robust evidence for capital funding. As well as proving the need for developer contributions towards pitches and facilities a playing pitch strategy can provide evidence of need for a range of capital grants. Current funding examples include the Sport England Funding Programmes, Heritage Lottery Fund (for park improvements), the Football Foundation and the Big Lottery. The site specific action plan that will form an integral part of this PPS will identify and prioritise sites that require improvements.

Planning:

- The Playing Pitch Strategy will provide important evidence to support the Warrington Local Plan.
- It will support strategic policies on green infrastructure, leisure, outdoor sports facilities and health and well-being in the emerging Warrington Local Plan.
- It will provide a methodology for calculating financial contributions when new development will generate a need that cannot be met by existing local facilities.
- Evidence for Section 106 agreements and Developer Contributions.

Operational:

- It can help improve management of assets, which should result in more efficient use of resources and reduced overheads.
- The Action Plan will identify sites where the quality of provision can be enhanced.
- An assessment of all pitches (in use and lapsed) has been undertaken to understand how pitches are used and whether the current maintenance and management regimes are appropriate or require change.

Sports development:

- It helps identify which sites have community use and whether that use is secure or not.
- It helps identify where community use of school sports pitches is most needed to address any identified deficits in pitch provision.
- It provides better information to residents and other users of sports pitches available for use. This includes information about both pitches and sports teams / user groups.
- It promotes sports development and can help unlock latent demand by identifying where the lack of facilities might be suppressing the formation of teams / community needs.

1.4 Our Approach

A Steering Group has led and will continue to lead the PPS to ensure the delivery and implementation of its recommendations and actions. It is made up of representatives from Warrington Borough Council Environment Services and Planning Policy, Sport England, the five pitch sport National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs), including the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), England Hockey (EH), the Football Association (FA), relevant County Football Association's (CFA), the Rugby Football League (RFL), the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and LiveWire, the leisure operator on behalf of WBC and also commissioned to deliver sport development, lifestyle and library services.

The following objectives were set by the Steering Group, when preparing to oversee the assessment and develop the strategy:

- To provide a carefully quantified and documented assessment of current and future needs for playing pitches and non-pitch sports within the borough focusing on quantity and quality issues within the supply and demand equation.
- To provide information to assist asset management planning of council owned playing fields and the associated buildings.
- To provide information to assist in decisions associated with the provision of public playing pitches.
- To provide information to underpin the protection, enhancement and quality improvement of the existing pitch stock and ancillary facilities.
- To map out a process for improvements in community access to educational and non-local authority pitches to achieve an understanding on the nature of ownership of existing provision.
- To develop specific action plans of sites to be improved from developer contributions. It will identify areas of search for new playing pitch provision associated with the sport and locality of the area of need.
- To review the quantity and quality of changing room and ancillary support facilities on pitch sites and make recommendations to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- To establish and review ownership of playing pitch sites (e.g. potential for transfer of ownership and/or management to user groups/community organisations).
- To review and identify lapsed/disused sites and assess what their future role should be.
- The Steering Group will use a number of scenarios to test the adequacy of current secure pitch provision to meet existing and future demand
- Develop a process for regular updating and monitoring of the PPS

The Strategy has been developed from research and analysis of playing pitch provision and usage within Warrington. Pitch sports were assessed using the guidance set out in Sport England's 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy' (2013). The PPS covers the following playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities:

Playing pitches:

- Cricket pitches
- Football pitches (including 3G AGPs)
- Hockey/ artificial grass pitches (AGPs)
- Rugby league pitches (including 3G AGPs)
- Rugby union pitches (including 3G AGPs)

To provide:

- A range of sport by sport and local authority wide scenarios to help inform policy recommendations and prioritisation of actions.
- A vision for the future improvement and prioritisation of playing pitches.
- A series of strategic recommendations which provide a strategic framework for the improvement, maintenance, development and, as appropriate, rationalisation of the playing pitch stock.
- A series of sport by sport recommendations which provide a strategic framework for sport led improvements to provision.
- A prioritised area-by-area action plan to address key issues.

The Strategy and Action Plan recommends a number of priority projects for Warrington. It provides a framework for improvement and, although resources may not currently be in place to implement it, potential partners and possible sources of external funding should be explored by the PPS Steering Group.

Study area

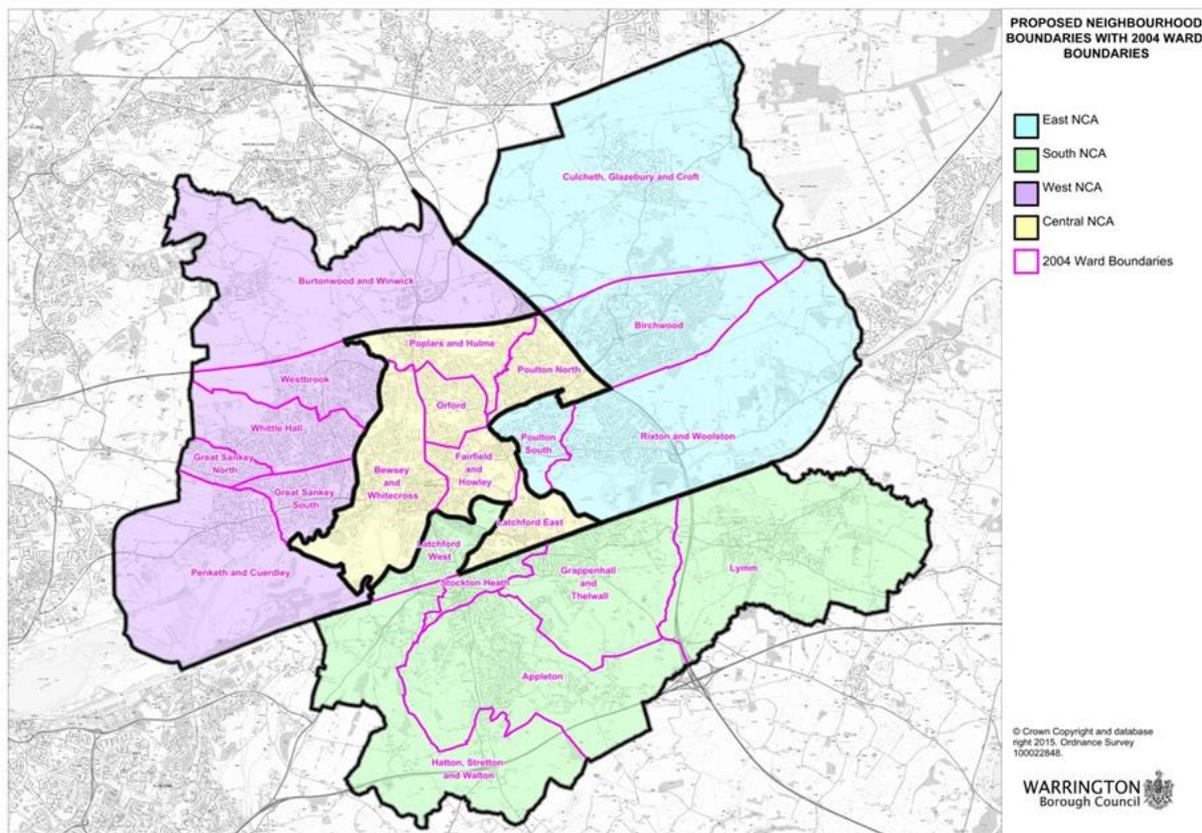
As a borough wide assessment the study area reflects the Warrington borough boundaries. Further to this analysis areas have been created to allow a more localised assessment of provision and examination of playing pitch supply and demand at a local level. Use of analysis areas also allows local circumstances and issues to be taken into account.

Warrington is currently split into four neighbourhood areas as shown in figure 1 (page 6) and these neighbourhood areas have been used as the analysis areas in the assessment.

Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report

The Playing Pitch Strategy Assessment Report was signed off by the PPS Steering Group in July 2017. In terms of the main supply and demand analysis information that was collected as part of the Assessment Report, the non-technical assessment of pitches (NTAs) were carried out during the 2016 calendar year and the sports club consultation during late 2016 and early 2017.

Figure 1: Warrington Analysis Areas



The table below indicates the breakdown in pitch supply identified across the town.

Table 1: Pitch supply across Warrington by ownership

Pitch type	Warrington Borough Council	Education	Sports Club/ Community organisation ⁴	Commercial ⁵
Cricket	1	2	4	5
Football	74	83	40	57
Hockey (Sand based AGP)	-	3	2	1
Rugby League	17	3	7	3
Rugby Union	3	3	5	2
Full size 3G AGP	2	1	-	-

1.5 Headline Findings

4 This category includes Parish Councils, LiveWire, Trusts and Amateur Sports Club managed pitches

5 Includes providers which specialise in managing education based facilities and private sports clubs

The table below highlights the combined shortfalls in each of the sports across the borough as a whole. The future shortfalls include demand generated via TGRs as well as individual club growth. For individual analysis area summaries see action plans in Part 6 of the document.

Table 3: Headline findings from Assessment Report

Sport	Current picture of shortfalls	Future demand (2027)⁶
Cricket	Currently enough cricket pitches across Warrington to cater for demand.	Future demand can be met on current supply of pitches.
Hockey (Sand AGPs)	Current demand is being met.	Future demand can be met on current supply of pitches.
Football (grass pitches)	Shortfall of 9.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week. Shortfall of 1 youth match equivalent sessions per week.	Shortfall of 14.5 adult 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week. Shortfall of 22 youth match equivalent sessions per week. Shortfall of 15.5 mini match equivalent sessions per week.
Football (3G pitches) ⁷	Shortfall of 8 full size 3G pitches based on training demand.	Increase in population may lead to further shortfalls.
Rugby League	Shortfall of 30.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Shortfall of 36.75 match equivalent sessions per week.
Rugby Union	Shortfall of 10 match equivalent sessions per week.	Shortfall of 21 match equivalent sessions per week.

1.6 Conclusions

The existing position for all pitch sports is either demand is being met or there is a shortfall. The future position shows exacerbation of current shortfalls.

As such, there is a need to protect all existing playing pitch provision until demand is met.

A good proportion of shortfalls expressed could be met by improving pitch quality but in some instances this may also require access to existing unused pitches such as at school sites and new provision. It is anticipated a combination of all three will be required and this is set out in the Action Plan.

The PPS does not identify an oversupply of playing field land and as such existing playing field land must be protected. As there is no oversupply, any proposed loss of playing field land would need to be mitigated through re-provision in full, in accordance with paragraph

⁶ Future demand based on ONS calculations and club consultation which also includes latent and displaced demand identified.

⁷ Based on accommodating 42 teams to one full size pitch for training there is a total need for 11 pitches in Warrington. There are currently 3 x full size 3G pitches leaving a requirement for an additional 8 pitches.

74 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Sport England's Policy Exception 4 (E4). The role of lapsed and disused sites in helping to address deficiencies is also explored within the Strategy and Action Plan.

1.7 Monitoring and updating

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

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

In addition, the PPS will need to take account of any potential changes to planned future housing growth that might result from the emerging Local Plan consultation process and these will need to be built into the monitoring and updating process.

Section 7 of this strategy report contains a suggested process for carrying out the update and monitoring. The Steering Group will need to agree the process prior to adoption of this strategy.

Section 2: Playing Pitch Strategy Vision

The Warrington Playing Pitch Strategy seeks to support the Council and its partners in the creation of:

'An accessible, high quality and sustainable network of sports pitches that provides and promotes local opportunities for all Warrington residents to be physically active, irrespective of the level of play

To achieve this strategic vision, the strategy seeks to deliver the following aims;

- Ensure that all valuable facilities are protected for the long term benefit of sport.
- Promote a sustainable approach to the provision of playing pitches and management of sports clubs.
- Ensure that there are enough facilities in the right place to meet current and projected future demand.
- Ensure that all clubs have access to facilities of appropriate quality to meet current needs and longer term aspirations.

Many of the objectives and actions will need to be delivered and implemented by sports organisations and education establishments in addition to the Council. These partner organisations have a vested interest in ensuring existing playing fields, pitches and ancillary facilities can be protected and enhanced, and help implement new provision where evidence suggests it is required.

Section 3: Objectives

The overarching objectives of the strategy are based on the three Sport England themes (see Figure 3 below). Delivery of the Strategy is the responsibility of, and relies on, the Steering Group.

Figure 3: Sport England planning objectives - Protect, Enhance and Provide



It is recommended that the following are adopted by the Council and its partners to enable it to achieve the overall vision of the Playing Pitch Strategy and Sport England's requirements.

Aim 1

To **protect** the existing supply of playing pitches where it is needed for meeting current and future needs.

Aim 2

To **enhance** playing fields, pitches and ancillary facilities through improving quality and management of sites.

Aim 3

To **provide** new playing pitches where there is current or future demand to do so.



Section 4: Sport specific issues, scenarios and recommendations

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

4.1. Grass Football pitches

Overall picture

- There is insufficient supply of football pitches in Warrington to meet demand.⁸
- Overall in Warrington there is a current shortfall of 9.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week and a future shortfall of 14.5 match equivalent sessions per week.⁹
- Overall in Warrington there is a current shortfall of 1 youth match equivalent session per week and a future shortfall of 22 match equivalent sessions per week.
- Overall in Warrington there is currently a small amount of spare capacity of mini pitches (4 match equivalent sessions per week¹⁰) but there is a future shortfall of 15.5 match equivalent sessions per week.

Supply

- There are a total of 222 grass football pitches that are available for community use.
- The East neighbourhood area has the highest total number of grass football pitches (79), followed by the South neighbourhood area (67) and then the West neighbourhood area (51). The Central neighbourhood area has the lowest total number of grass football pitches (26).
- There is a total of 15.5 match equivalent sessions (MES) per week of actual spare capacity across Warrington with most (6.5) expressed on adult pitches and in the East (7.5) neighbourhood analysis area.

Demand

- A total of 445 teams were identified as playing football on pitches located within the Warrington boundary. This consists of 82 adult male teams, 1 adult female team, 206 youth teams and 156 mini soccer teams.
- The South (146) neighbourhood analysis areas is where most teams have their match play pitch located, closely followed by the East (136) neighbourhood area and West

⁸ The following figures are the total sums across the Borough. Some pitches will be overlapped and some will have a surplus.

⁹ It should be noted that 59.5 youth match equivalent sessions per week and 14.5 mini match equivalent sessions per week are recorded as playing on adult pitches per week in Warrington.

¹⁰ During the needs assessment 4 match equivalent sessions per week are cited as being available on mini pitches at Dallam Recreation Ground. This availability has yet to be confirmed by Warrington Borough Council as the pitches may not be made available for football hire.

(115) neighbourhood. There are a low number of teams in the Central (47) neighbourhood analysis area.

- Through the audit there were 21 teams identified as being displaced. Of these, 81% of the teams (17) are girls' teams that compete in a central venue league that takes place outside of Warrington.
- Through the consultation process no clubs reported any unmet demand.¹¹
- Team generation rates predict an increase of 1 adult male team, 24 youth boys' teams, 1 youth girls' team and 12 mini teams.
- A number of clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Of the clubs which quantify their potential increase, there is a predicated growth of 49 teams, equating to a demand for 3 adult, 7.5 youth and 12.5 mini pitches.
- There are 35 pitches that are overplayed across 18 sites by a total of 22.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Several of these pitches are at schools, where the main reasons for overplay are a culmination of curriculum use, extra-curricular use including school fixtures and any additional use by the community.

Quality

- The majority of pitches are either poor or standard quality. Almost half of the grass football pitches are deemed to be poor quality.
- Warrington Borough Council's Environment Service deliver a basic level of sportsground maintenance on the majority of its sites that is restricted to grass cutting, topdressing and seeding, with no further budgets available for any further level of upkeep or for improvement works.
- Maintenance regimes within school grounds, private sports clubs and LiveWire sites, which is carried out by WBC, varies and is dependent upon individual client budgets and requirements.
- Of the overplayed pitches, 19 are assessed as poor across 15 sites, accounting for 16 match equivalent sessions per week of overplay.

Accessibility

- Management:
 - Of the community available football pitches, 83 are managed in house by schools/ colleges/ universities, 74 are managed by Warrington Borough Council, 15 are managed by LiveWire (a Community Interest Company), 13 are managed by sports clubs, 12 are managed by a bespoke school lettings service and another 12 managed by Parish Council's. The remaining pitches are managed by Trusts or are privately or commercially managed.
- Ancillary:
 - Of the sites where a full check of ancillary facilities took place nearly half were assessed as being poor (49%). 23% of the sites were rated as having standard

¹¹ Unmet demand is defined as the number of additional teams that could be fielded if access to a sufficient number of pitches (and ancillary facilities) was available

quality ancillary facilities with 28% rated as having good quality ancillary facilities.

- Of the football clubs that engaged in the consultation 40% rated the ancillary facilities at the sites they use as being good quality. 38% rated ancillary facilities as being standard quality with 22% rating ancillary facilities as being poor.

- Pricing:
 - In terms of pitch hire charges, Warrington charge less than the average prices charged for each pitch type compared to neighbouring authority areas.

4.2. Football Pitch Scenarios

Scenario 1: Housing Growth

Using the Sport England’s ‘New Development Calculator for Pitch Sports’ the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions per week (rounded up) that would be required to meet demand ‘**If 13,899 new homes are built across Warrington during the PPS period (2027)**’:

Pitch type	Number of MES
Football - Adult Pitches	5
Football - Youth Pitches	13
Football - Mini	11

Scenario 2: Reconfiguring pitches

There is very little spare capacity in the pitch stock currently across all neighbourhood areas, for all pitch types. Adult pitches that are not currently used present the best opportunity for reconfiguration; however there were only a total of 6 pitches, across 4 sites that were identified as available for community use but did not have any recorded community use.

It should be noted however that all 6 of the pitches are poor quality pitches, which is the reason why a number are not used for community use and so whilst the sites could be reconfigured they would need investment to improve the pitch quality before they could be considered as an option for additional capacity.

Scenario 3: Utilising spare capacity at educational sites indicating community use pitches but with no recorded community use

As part of the Assessment Report there were a large number of pitches on educational sites, where the operator indicated that the pitches were available for hire, but there was no recorded community use. The lack of community use could be due to a range of factors e.g. poor quality or issues in facilitating access for community use at weekends.

Increased utilisation of sites could help to address overplay and prevent predicted future overplay. A total of 45 match equivalent sessions per week were identified as being

available during the peak periods with 20 MES being derived from standard quality pitches and the remaining 25 MES being on poor quality pitches. The majority of MES are mini pitch types (13 MES), with 5 MES on adult pitches and 2 MES on youth pitches.

Scenario 4: Improving pitch quality on pitches available for community use

The total amount of overplay on sites is 22.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Given the overplay identified any spare capacity should initially be used to address overplay if it's in the right location and accessible to teams.

If each over played poor quality pitch was increased to standard quality and each over played standard pitch was improved to good there would only be 1 remaining site over played by 1 match equivalent session. With this scenario whilst there would be a total of 12 sites, with a total of number of 22 pitches, that would have spare capacity, actual spare capacity which takes into account peak period availability would only be 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week which would cater for 1 adult team. See table below:

In conclusion whilst this scenario would address current overplay it would not deliver any spare capacity either for strategic reserve or to accommodate future increased demand. Therefore, new provision would still be required.

Table 4: Overplayed sites with improved pitch quality capacity table

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating	Quality	Additional capacity (MES) if quality increased	Spare capacity/ Short-fall	MES available in peak period
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	South	Adult (11v11)	3	2.5	Poor	3	0.5	0.5
12	Birchwood Forest Park	East	Youth (9v9)	1	1	Poor	1	0	-
20	Callands Primary School	West	Mini (5v5)	1	0.5	Poor	2	1.5	0
25	Carlsberg Tetley Sports & Social Club	Central	Adult (11v11)	1	0.5	Standard	1	1.5	0
28	Cherry Tree Primary School	South	Mini (7v7)	2	2	Poor	2	0	-
47	Gorsey Recreation Ground	West	Adult (11v11)	1	0.5	Poor	1	0.5	0
48	Grange Sports & Social Club	South	Adult (11v11)	2	1	Good	n/a	-	-
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	East	Adult (11v11)	2	0.5	Poor	2	1.5	0
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	South	Adult (11v11)	3	1.5	Poor	3	1.5	0
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	South	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5	Poor	1	0.5	0
72	Monks Sports & Social Club	East	Adult (11v11)	1	1	Good	n/a	-	-
85	Penketh South Primary School	West	Youth (9v9)	1	1	Poor	1	0	-
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	South	Adult (11v11)	1	0.5	Standard	1	0.5	0

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating	Quality	Additional capacity (MES) if quality increased	Spare capacity/ Short-fall	MES available in peak period
93	Sandy Lane Recreation Ground	South	Adult (11v11)	1	2	Poor	1	1	-
106	St Gregory's High School	West	Adult (11v11)	5	3	Standard	5	2	-
121	Stocks Lane Playing Field	West	Youth (11v11)	1	0.5	Poor	1	0.5	0
127	Thornton Road Recreation Ground	West	Adult (11v11)	2	1.5	Poor	2	0.5	0
143	Woolston Park	East	Adult (11v11)	1	1	Poor	1	0	-
146	Tim Parry Community Centre	West	Youth (9v9)	1	0.5	Poor	2	1.5	0

4.2.1. Summary

If all pitch quality improvements are made, pitch reconfiguration carried out where appropriate, pitches not currently being used becoming used and access to unavailable pitches is made available there would be no requirement for new grass football pitches to be sought in Warrington to meet current demand. **It is however unrealistic for all these elements to be delivered in the short term.** Due to this fact and the fact that demand will increase over time, it is important that the action plan is implemented and progress reviewed annually to assess what the position is and how it has changed.

4.2.2. Recommendations

- Existing quantity of football pitches to be protected.
- Where pitches are overplayed and assessed as standard or poor quality, prioritise investment and review maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to, as a minimum, sustain but preferably improve pitch quality and link to the use of the FA Pitch Improvement Programme.
- Retain spare capacity on pitches which are currently poor quality to protect/ improve pitch quality.
- Explore opportunities to reconfigure spare capacity on adult pitches in the East neighbourhood analysis area to help cater for shortfalls expressed on youth and mini pitches.
- Work with educational establishments to maximise and secure access to pitches on sites which are either available for community use but not used, or are currently unavailable for community use. This may require improvements to pitch quality and/ or close liaison with educational establishments regarding management issues which influence access. This is explored on a site by site basis within the accompanying action plan.
- Where appropriate, develop partnerships and/or lease arrangements with large, sustainable, development-minded clubs to manage their own 'home' sites thus facilitating club development.
- Ensure that wherever new housing developments of eleven dwellings or more occur, contributions are sought to contribute to either enhancement of existing playing pitches and ancillary provision within the locality or create new playing pitch and ancillary provision as required to meet increased demand in sustainable locations (see appendix two).

4.3. 3G Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs)

Overall picture

- There is a shortfall of between 8-10 full sized 3G AGPs to meet current football training demand.
- There is a shortfall of 7 full sized 3G AGPs to meet current demand for competitive football match play.
- There are two full sized 3G AGPs that are currently registered to support competitive football match play.
- There is demand for full sized 3G AGPs to be constructed to Rugby Football League specification to service Rugby League training demand.
- There is demand for a full sized 3G AGP to be constructed to Rugby Football Union specification to service Rugby Union training demand and some junior competitive match play.

Supply

- There are a total of 9 full size AGPs in Warrington that are floodlit and available for community use.
- The most common type of surface is Sand Dressed AGPs (four). There are three 3G AGPs and two Sand Filled AGPs.
- The East and South neighbourhood analysis areas have the highest number of AGPs (three each). There are two AGPs in the West analysis area and one in the Central analysis area.
- In addition there are 17 smaller sized floodlit AGPs in Warrington.
- There are three 3G AGPs that meet the Football Association criteria of a full sized pitch.
- Two of the three 3G AGPs have the necessary certification to host competitive football.
- All of the full size AGPs are available for community use. Seven of these pitches are available for 25 hours or more a week during the peak period.
- No AGPs suitable for rugby?
- Current hockey demand being met

Demand

- Hockey demand for AGPs is expressed on Sand Based or Sand Filled AGPs, and further information in relation to Hockey is outlined in the relevant section.
- Consultation revealed Rugby League demand for 3G AGP provision for training purposes.
- Consultation revealed Rugby Union demand for 3G AGP provision for training and junior match play.
- In order to satisfy current football training demand for the borough as a whole there is a need for 11 full size 3G AGPs.
- In order to satisfy current football training demand by analysis area there is a need for 13 full size 3G AGPs. Four 3G AGPs are identified as needed in both the East and South neighbourhood analysis areas, three in the West neighbourhood and two in the Central neighbourhood.

- Based on FA modelling of moving all mini competitive match play demand to 3G AGPs, the number of full size 3G AGPs required is nine.

Quality

- There are no 3G AGPs in Warrington with the shock pad or certification required for rugby purposes.
- There are two 3G AGPs in Warrington with the certification required to host competitive football.

Developments of note

- Lymm Rugby Club have recently gained planning permission for significant development that would include the provision of a 3G AGP.

4.4. 3G AGP Scenario

PPS Scenario: Increasing the use of 3G Football Turf Pitches (FTPs)

During the last decade 3G FTPs have played an increasing role within the national game. They are regarded by the Football Association (FA) as the optimum facility for training by clubs. In recent seasons they have also become more popular for competitive matches. With this in mind, before developing the recommendations and action plan for this PPS, two scenarios have been looked at to help with understanding what demand there may be for full size¹² floodlit 3G FTPs in Warrington, if increased amounts of play were to take place on them.

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

- How many full size floodlit 3G FTPs may be required to meet demand within Warrington if:
 - All teams playing competitive football had access to a full size floodlit 3G FTP to train on once a week?
 - All matches for teams currently playing competitive 5v5, 7v7 and 9v9 formats of football in Warrington were played on full size floodlit 3G FTPs?

Scenario Results

- If all teams playing competitive football had access to a full size floodlit 3G FTP to train on once a week.
- The information from the Assessment Report of this PPS indicates that there are 445 teams playing competitive football in Warrington.
- Using the FA's 1:42 ratio suggests that 11 full size floodlit 3G FTPs would be required to meet this increased training use within Warrington.

¹² A full size 3G FTP measuring 106m x 70m including run off/safety margins.

- If all matches for teams playing competitive 5v5, 7v7 and 9v9 formats of football in Warrington were played on full size floodlit 3G FTPs.
- The table below demonstrates the number of full size floodlit 3G FTPs that would be required to accommodate all competitive 5v5, 7v7 and 9v9 football across Warrington.

Table 5: Number of 3G AGPs that may be required

Format	No Teams per time	No matches at PEAK TIME	3G units per match	Total units required formats	3G pitches required
5v5	71	35.5	4	142	2.2
7v7	85	42.5	8	340	5.3
9v9	78	39	10	390	6.1
				Total:	13.6

4.4.1. What this may mean for 3G FTP provision in Warrington

The level of 3G FTPs currently in Warrington does not meet demand. All existing pitches are at capacity during weekday evenings for the purpose of training.

In terms of competitive match play, the introduction of a new 3G FTP as part of the Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub, designed and built based on recommended specification to accommodate competitive match play, has been extremely successful and resulted in increased demand for 3G FTP pitches for match play purposes.

Discussions with County FA representatives have indicated a desire to increase 3G FTP within the borough on the premise that it is utilised to accommodate both training and competitive match play. The key focus for this is to support the mini 5v5 and 7v7 and youth 9v9 game formats. As shown in Table 5 above, 1413 3G FTP's would be required during the peak period (Saturday AM).

Of the three 3G FTPs currently available, only the pitch at Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub is currently used on a regular basis. The pitch at Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub has the necessary certification to host competitive match play but would require re-marking and the purchase of goal posts to be suitable for mini football which should be considered. The third pitch at University Academy (Warrington) would require testing and possible investment to get the certification required, along with pitch re-marking and new goal posts to be suitable for mini football. However even with these pitches, there would be a short fall of five 3G FTPs to meet demand for mini competitive football and a short fall of eight 3G FTPs to meet training demand.

Whilst there is potential to convert other types of full size artificial grass pitches to a 3G surface, this is limited as many of these pitches are required to meet existing and future demand for hockey and conversion of these pitches could have an adverse effect. The sites that could be considered for conversion are highlighted in the action plan.

There are a number of sites, either already identified as a Hub Site or as a Key Centre in the Action Plan, that have been identified in consultation with The FA and WBC and require further feasibility studies to determine whether or not they are viable sites for new or additional 3G FTP provision.

It is important to acknowledge that if all competitive mini 5v5, 7v7 and youth 9v9 match play was moved onto 3G FPT, the sites with grass mini 5v5, 7v7 and youth 9v9 pitches could possibly be reconfigured to address current and future deficit of provision for youth and adult formats of the game.

The Parklife Programme

The aim of the Parklife Programme is to create a sustainable model for football facilities based around artificial grass pitches on hub sites.

The fund will provide significant new investment into local, accessible facilities. It differs from traditional football investment streams as the funding partners are keen to see a portfolio approach that provides an area-wide solution, rather than a one-off site investment. The main focus of delivery will be around increasing the number of 3G pitches available for competitive play. To be eligible for the project local authorities must have a population of at least 200,000 people.

Given the size of Warrington, its lack of 3G pitches and its need for improved facilities for mini and youth football **it is recommended that strong consideration is given to looking at the Parklife Programme in Warrington should future opportunities arise.**

RFL Community Standard and RFU World Rugby compliant AGPs

In addition to the significant demand for 3G AGP provision for football, the consultation carried out also identified demand for 3G AGP provision for both Rugby League and Rugby Union, specifically for training. There are currently no rugby compliant 3G pitches in Warrington. The provision of rugby compliant AGPs in the Area would address levels of overplay currently recorded on grass pitches.

Unfortunately the RFU or RFL do not currently have recommended scenarios to use to calculate the specific number of 3G AGPs required to meet current or future training demand.

It is the intention of the RFU investment strategy into AGPs to invest in communities across the country where grass rugby pitches in the local community are over capacity and where the installation of an AGP would support the growth of the game at the host site and for the local rugby partnership, including local rugby clubs and other organisations within the Local

Authority. The RFU is keen to work with partners such as the Council and the FA to look at sites of mutual interest for future AGP provision. Also, the Warrington Rugby League Management Board have identified the need for winter training facilities across all clubs as a priority within their vision statement provided as part of the consultation process (see section 4.6.1).

4.4.2. Recommendations

- Work with the FA to increase provision of 3G pitches to meet football training demand (total 11 full size pitches required) and utilise these pitches to accommodate competitive demand for mini football.
- Carry out feasibility work at sites identified in the Action Plan to deliver increased provision of full size 3G pitches to meet training and competitive demand and consider the FA's Parklife model as a means of doing this.
- Work with partners to determine the level of 3G provision required to meet rugby league and rugby union training demand.
- Work with partners to introduce rugby compliant 3G provision to meet rugby league and rugby union training demand.
- Encourage providers to have a mechanism in place which ensures the long term sustainability of provision.
- Ensure that wherever new housing developments of eleven dwellings or more occur, contributions are sought to contribute to either enhance existing playing pitch and ancillary provision or to create new playing pitch and ancillary provision as required to meet increased demand.

4.5. Hockey pitches

Overall picture

- The current level of suitable AGP provision for hockey is sufficient to meet current and future demand.
- There is a requirement for four sand based AGPs to meet demand for competitive match play, junior training and informal play.
- There is demand for additional access to sand based AGP during weekday evenings for training purposes, specifically in the South neighbourhood analysis area.
- The AGP provision currently utilised for hockey is strategically well positioned within the borough currently.
- The four AGPs that have recorded hockey use and need to be retained are located at Culcheth Community Campus, Lymm High School, Priestley College and University of Chester (Warrington Campus).
- Any conversion of sand based AGP surface to 3G will not be supported by EH or Sport England unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the sand based AGP is surplus to requirement to hockey. Any proposals to convert a sand based AGP must be discussed with England Hockey and Sport England.

Supply

- There are a total of six full size (sand filled/ dressed), floodlit AGPs in Warrington.
- All of the six full size AGPs have football use as well as hockey use.
- Only two of the full size AGPs has a higher percentage of hockey use during peak periods. The remaining four have a higher percentage of football use, with two pitches having 100% football use during peak periods.
- The three main AGPs used for hockey are all operating at 100% capacity during the peak periods available.

Demand

- There are three hockey clubs in Warrington with a total of 400 members, of which 199 are senior members and 201 junior members.
- One of the clubs highlighted that they had existing unmet demand due to the unavailability of additional AGP provision during weekday evenings.
- Two clubs indicated plans to increase their membership numbers in the coming years, specifically by introducing new and additional junior sections with the club.
- England Hockey predicts there to be a growth in membership of 4%¹⁴ in Warrington (based on affiliation trends) which results in an overall increase of 10 adults and 9 juniors.

¹⁴ This growth rate was calculated prior to the Rio Olympics. Actual participation increase has been around 11% which is in line with the national rate. This equates to 22 adults and 22 juniors.

Quality

- Of the six AGPs, one is poor quality; one is good quality with the remaining four rated as standard quality.
- It is considered that the carpet of an AGP usually lasts for approximately ten years (depending on level of use and maintenance regimes). Due to this, resurfacing is recommended for three of the six, floodlit AGPs in Warrington.

Accessibility

- Availability during peak periods:
 - The pitch at Priestley College is only available during Term Time.
 - Cardinal Newman is unavailable. The school has aspirations to replace with a 3G surface and floodlights for community use
 - Penketh and Broomfield's are not used by hockey with 100% of slots taken up by football
 - Culcheth has some spare capacity but competes with football usage
 - Priestley, University of Chester and Lymm are all at capacity

Scenario 1: Housing Growth

Using Sport England's Sports Facilities Calculator the table below indicates the number of AGPs (rounded up) that would be required to meet demand **'If 13,899 new homes are built across Warrington during the PPS period (2027)'**:

Pitch type	Number of pitches
Sand based artificial grass pitches	115

Scenario 2: Retaining currently used sites

Future demand for hockey is relatively small and theoretically could be accommodated if four sand based AGPs remain available for hockey usage, but with additional access provided for hockey use. Each of the sites have competing usage with football to varying degrees.

Scenario 3: Conversion of sand based to 3G pitches

Given the shortfall of full sized 3G pitches in Warrington and use of some sand AGPs for football training, it is important to consider any likely impact on the future sustainability of hockey suitable AGPs as some football demand is likely to transfer onto 3G pitches. If sites currently unused for hockey were converted to 3G there would be no impact on clubs in Warrington. However, the impact from a school point of view would need to be further investigated. **NB: Conversion should not take place unless consultation with England**

15 Rounded up to the nearest whole number

Hockey identifies the AGP is not required to meet existing or future predicted demand. Warrington Borough Council should consider removing Permitted Development Rights of any new Artificial Grass Pitches to prevent inappropriate conversion that has a detrimental impact on the existing sport.

4.5.1. Summary

Priority should be placed on ensuring the sustainability of the currently used pitches as it is unrealistic to assume that clubs would travel across Warrington to access pitches that are located away from the local area.

4.5.2. Recommendations

- Protect the following AGPs for hockey use:
 - Culcheth Community Campus
 - Lymm High School
 - Priestly College
 - University of Chester (Warrington Campus)
- Review the requirement for AGPs for hockey use alongside 3G AGP developments, as through the introduction of 3G pitches additional capacity could be released at sand-based AGPs to support hockey development.
- Priority should be placed on ensuring the sustainability of the current pitch stock used for hockey (identified above).
- Explore opportunities to improve pitch quality in order to ensure continued hockey use.
- Encourage providers to put sinking funds (formed by periodically setting aside money over time ready for surface replacement when required) in place to maintain AGP pitch quality in the long term.
- The FA and England Hockey should work together to identify the feasibility of converting AGPs currently unused for hockey to 3G surfaces.
- Warrington Borough Council should consider removing Permitted Development Rights of any new Artificial Grass Pitches to prevent inappropriate conversion that has detrimental impact on the existing sport.
- Ensure that wherever new housing developments of eleven dwellings or more occur, contributions are sought to contribute to either enhance existing playing pitch and ancillary provision or to create new playing pitch and ancillary provision as required to meet increased demand.

4.6. Grass Rugby League pitches

Overall picture

- There is insufficient supply of rugby league pitches in Warrington to meet demand.
- Overall in Warrington there is a current shortfall of 30.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
- Overall in Warrington there is a predicted shortfall of 36.75 match equivalent sessions per week based on anticipated future demand.

Supply

- There are a total of 31 grass rugby league pitches that are available for community use. The West neighbourhood area has the highest total number of grass football pitches (9), followed by the East neighbourhood area (8). The Central and South neighbourhood areas both have seven pitches.
- 28 of these pitches are senior rugby league pitches, one is a junior pitch and two are primary pitches.
- There is a total of 4.5 match equivalent sessions per week of actual spare capacity across Warrington with half (2.25) expressed in the West neighbourhood analysis area.

Demand

- A total of 88 teams were identified as playing competitive rugby league on pitches located within the Warrington boundary. This consists of 15 senior men teams, 28 junior teams and 44 primary teams.
- The East (26) neighbourhood analysis areas is where most teams have their match play pitch located, closely followed by the Central (25) neighbourhood area and West (21) neighbourhood. The lowest number of teams is in the South (15) neighbourhood analysis area.
- Through the consultation process no clubs reported any unmet demand.
- Team generation rates predict an increase of 3 junior teams and 5 primary teams.
- A number of clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Of the clubs which quantify their potential increase, there is a predicted growth of 1 senior men team, 2 junior teams and 1 primary team.
- Overplay amounts to 33 match equivalent sessions per week. The East neighbourhood analysis area has the highest level of overplay (12 match equivalent sessions per week), followed by Central (10.75 match equivalent sessions per week), then the West (7.75 match equivalent sessions per week). The South neighbourhood analysis area has 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week of overplay.
- One of the main reasons for overplay is training on match pitches. However, another reason for overplay is mini teams playing on senior pitches.

Quality

- The majority of pitches are either poor (30%) or standard quality (57%). Only 13% of pitches are rated as good quality.
- Warrington Borough Council's Environment Service deliver a basic level of sportsground maintenance on the majority of its sites that is restricted to grass cutting, topdressing and seeding, with no ring fenced budgets available for any further level of upkeep or for improvement works.

Management:

- Of the community available rugby league pitches, 17 are managed by Warrington Borough Council, 5 are managed by Parish Councils, 4 are managed in house by schools/ colleges/ universities, 3 are managed privately by sports clubs and 3 are managed by LiveWire (a Community Interest Company).

Scenario 1: Housing Growth

Using the 'New Development Calculator for Pitch Sports' the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions per week (rounded up) that would be required to meet demand '**if 13,899 new homes are built across Warrington during the PPS period (2027)**':

Pitch type	Number of MES
Rugby League - Adult Pitches	5

Scenario 2: Improving pitch quality

If the overplayed pitches were improved to carry an additional match equivalent session per week, overplay would reduce from 35 MES to 17.75 with 2.25 of spare capacity being made available across 2 sites (see table 6 below).

Scenario 3: Moving training off match pitches

38.25 match equivalent sessions per week of training currently take place on match pitches. If this training was moved elsewhere it could potential address the overplay, currently at 35 MES.

Table 6: Overplayed sites with improved pitch quality capacity table

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Capacity rating	Quality	Additional capacity (MES) if quality increased	Surplus/ Short-fall
7	Beamont Collegiate Academy	Central	Senior	2	0.5	Poor	2	1.5
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Central	Senior	2	1.25	Standard	2	0.75
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	East	Senior	3	7	Poor	3	4
61	Hood Lane Recreation Centre	West	Senior	4	7.75	Standard	4	3.75
72	Monks Sports & Social Club	East	Senior	1	0.5	Good	n/a	-
91	Rylands Recreation Ground	Central	Primary	1	1	Standard	1	0
91	Rylands Recreation Ground	Central	Senior	1	6	Standard	1	5
95	Shaw Street Recreation Ground	East	Senior	2	4.5	Standard	2	2.5
102	St Benedict's Primary School	Central	Junior	1	2	Standard	1	1
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	East	Senior	1	2	Standard	1	1
131	Victoria Park	South	Senior	3	2.5	Good & Poor mix	2	0.5

4.6.1. Warrington Rugby League Management Board

Rugby League in Warrington is supported by a Management Board which consists of all interested groups from the Local Authority, the professional club to the community clubs and schools.

It is led by an Active strategy called "The Big Hit" with a clear vision of increasing participation. The vision matches its endeavour to improve and develop facilities and pitches within the town.

With current statistics showing increased growth in participation pitch and facilities are under more pressure. Therefore this strategy will drive the approach to sustain and develop training facilities. There is a priority need for winter training facilities across all clubs.

There are aspirations to provide a Community Hub for all clubs to access and work in line with the growth of participation. The Big Hit strategy highlights the need for growth in South Warrington and to provide support to existing and new developments and is in line

with what has been established as part of the Needs Assessment Report. There is also an appetite to work with schools to open up facilities.

4.6.2. Summary

Overplay can only be alleviated by carrying out a combination of improving pitch quality, providing more pitches or creating more areas to be used for rugby league training; there is not enough spare capacity expressed in areas of overplay to meet this level of demand.

There is demand for floodlit 3G AGP provision to accommodate rugby league training which could remove much of the recorded overplay.

4.6.3. Recommendations

- As a priority, improve poor quality overplayed pitches in order to help alleviate overplay, and reduce shortfalls.
- Explore options for providing training away from match pitches and make clubs aware that this option is needed in order to address overplay and preserve pitch quality. This may include creating dedicated training areas, including AGPs.
- Ensure that wherever new housing developments of eleven dwellings or more occur, contributions are sought to contribute to either enhance existing playing pitch and ancillary provision or to create new playing pitch and ancillary provision as required to meet increased demand.

4.7. Grass Rugby Union pitches

Overall picture

- There is insufficient supply of rugby union pitches in Warrington to meet demand.
- Overall in Warrington there is a current shortfall of 10 match equivalent sessions per week.
- Overall in Warrington there is a predicted shortfall of 21 match equivalent sessions per week based on anticipated future demand.

Supply

- There are a total of 13 grass rugby union pitches that are available for community use. The vast majority of these are located in the south neighbourhood area (85%). There is one pitch located in the East neighbourhood area, one in the West and none in Central.
- Eleven of these pitches are senior pitches and two are mini pitches.
- There is a total of 1 match equivalent session of actual spare capacity across Warrington expressed in the South neighbourhood analysis area.

Demand

- A total of 37 teams were identified as playing competitive rugby union on pitches located within the Warrington boundary. This consists of 12 senior teams, 4 colt's teams, 8 junior teams and 12 mini teams.

- 35 of these teams are based in the South neighbourhood analysis area. The remaining 2 are based in the West neighbourhood analysis area.
- Warrington RUFC identified significant displaced demand and also indicated they had unmet demand.
- Team generation rates predict an increase of 1 senior men’s team, 2 junior boys team and 2 mixed mini rugby teams.
- All three clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Based on this there is a predicated growth of 4 senior men’s teams and 4 junior teams.
- Overplay amounts to 7 match equivalent sessions per week. The South neighbourhood analysis area has the highest level of overplay (6 match equivalent sessions per week) and the West neighbourhood has 1 match session of overplay per week.
- One of the main reasons for the level of overplay is because of the amount of training that takes place on one of Lymm RUFC’s grass pitches, which is overplayed by 4.5 MES.
- Other reasons include lack of floodlit pitches (neither Warrington RUFC nor Eagle RUFC have access to a floodlit pitch and Lymm RUFC only have one floodlit pitch).
- Other reasons include the poor quality of the majority of the pitches. If quality was improved alongside maintenance improvements then capacity would increase.

Quality

- The two mini pitches located at Lymm Rugby Club are rated as good quality (M2/D2).
- The majority of adult pitches are either poor (55%) or standard quality (18%). Only 27% of pitches are rated as good quality.

Scenario 1: Housing Growth

Using the ‘New Development Calculator for Pitch Sports’ the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions per week (rounded up) that would be required to meet demand ‘**If 13,899 new homes are built across Warrington during the PPS period (2027)**’:

Pitch type	Number of MES
Rugby Union - Adult Pitches	3

Scenario 2: Improving pitch quality

There are a total of 11 senior rugby union pitches in Warrington, of which 6 pitches across 4 sites are overplayed to a total of 8 match equivalent sessions per week.

Pitch quality can be improved either by enhancing the maintenance regime on the pitch and/or by improving the pitch drainage.

Improving pitch quality by enhancing pitch maintenance

The most overplayed pitch already has a good maintenance regime. If the remaining overplayed pitches were improved in quality by enhancing their maintenance regime from

poor to standard or standard to good then there would be no overplay on those sites and the total overplay would reduce to from 8 to 4.5 MES per week.

Improving pitch quality by improving pitch drainage

All of the overplayed pitches have the scope to improve their drainage systems. If all the overplayed pitches had their drainage systems improved by one category then the total overplay would reduce from 8 to 4.25.

Scenario 3: Moving training off match pitches

There is not a significant amount of training which takes place on match pitches, with the exception of a floodlit pitch at Lymm Rugby Club.

4.7.1. Summary

The majority of rugby union pitches in Warrington are either poor or standard quality. Therefore improving pitch quality, through enhanced maintenance regimes and/ or improving pitch drainage, will address much of the current overplay. Even with pitch improvements there remains one heavily overplayed pitch, this is the floodlit pitch at Lymm RUFC. This overplay would be addressed if the proposed AGP at Lymm RUFC is built and/or if additional floodlit provision was provided on another pitch.

There is demand for floodlit 3G AGP provision to accommodate rugby union training which could remove much of the recorded overplay at Lymm Rugby Club. The AGP may also be able to address some issues with quality/ suitability of training areas used by Eagle and Warrington Rugby Clubs but this would depend on what and when their demand is, and whether this pitch could actually accommodate this demand alongside the demand from Lymm RUFC.

4.7.2. Recommendations

- Explore options to improve poor quality overplayed pitches in order to help alleviate overplay, and reduce some of the shortfalls.
- Explore options for providing training away from match pitches and make clubs aware that this option is needed in order to address overplay and preserve pitch quality. This may include creating dedicated training areas, including AGPs.
- Explore options for introducing floodlights at appropriate sites to enable training to take place on more suitable facilities.
- Explore options to improve ancillary facilities at sites.
- Ensure that wherever new housing developments of eleven dwellings or more occur, contributions are sought to contribute to either enhance existing playing pitch and ancillary provision or to create new playing pitch and ancillary provision as required to meet increased demand.

4.8. Cricket pitches

Overall picture

- Overall in Warrington, there is insufficient supply of cricket pitches in Warrington to meet current demand.
- Overall in Warrington there is a current shortfall of 16 match equivalent sessions per season.
- Overall in Warrington there is a predicted shortfall of 68 match equivalent sessions per season based on anticipated future demand.

Supply

- In total, there are 21 cricket pitches identified in Warrington, of which 12 are available for community use. Six are not available for community use whilst three have become disused.
- Of the 12 pitches available for community use, 10 have grass cricket squares providing 85 natural grass wickets.
- There are a total 4 non-turf wickets available for community use across the borough.
- Despite seven pitches showing spare capacity there are only three of these pitches (one in the Central, East and South Neighbourhood analysis areas) that are of suitable standard and have capacity, of 43 match equivalent sessions per season, during the peak periods.

Demand

- In total there are seven clubs in Warrington providing a total of 56 teams. These are broken down as follows; 26 senior male teams, two senior female teams and 28 junior teams.
- 26 of the 28 (93%) junior teams in Warrington are based on the South neighbourhood analysis area, with the remaining two being based in the West neighbourhood.
- Team generation rates predict a decrease of 1 senior men's team, but an increase of 3 junior boy's teams and 1 junior girl's team.
- Through consultation, a number of clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Based on this there is a predicted growth of 1 senior team and 7 junior teams.
- Three of the six clubs reported a demand for additional training facilities, with a good quality non turf wicket being cited as a need.
- There is overplay of 60 matches per season recorded in the South neighbourhood analysis area across two pitches.

Quality

- The audit of community use grass wicket cricket pitches found six pitches to be good quality and the remaining four to be standard quality.
- All 4 of the non-turf wicket pitches available for community use were rated as poor quality.

Accessibility

- **Security of Tenure:**
 - During the consultation process there were no issues highlighted with regards to security of tenure. However during the Assessment Report there have been issues highlighted with regards to security of tenure and/ or lease arrangements at Rylands Recreation Ground and Pewterspear Sports Pavilion.

Scenario 1: Housing Growth

Using the 'New Development Calculator for Pitch Sports' the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions per season (rounded up) that would be required 'if **13,899 new homes are built across Warrington during the PPS period (2027)**':

Pitch type	Match equivalent sessions ¹⁶
Cricket - Adult Pitches	79

Scenario 2: Additional pitches

Due to overplay at Grappenhall CC and Lymm Oughtrington CC if access to an additional pitch was available demand would be met

In the case of Lymm Oughtrington, their 'home' pitch is located within the grounds of Lymm High School. The school have a grass cricket pitch that is not currently available for community use, but if it were it could accommodate the clubs current overplay.

Scenario 3: Utilising spare capacity

There are 44 match equivalent sessions per season available across Warrington, the majority of which is available during mid-week and Sundays.

4.8.1. Summary

There is a need to look at access to appropriate educational sites where cricket pitches of standard or good quality are available. Furthermore the introduction of non-turf wickets at sites where pitches are at capacity or overplayed could address overplay.

¹⁶ Rounded up to the nearest whole number

4.8.2. Recommendations

- Priority is to protect and sustain current provision and participation in Warrington.
- Explore options to introduce non-turf wickets at overplayed pitches, which could also support with club training requirements.
- Ensure security of tenure is secure for all clubs.
- Explore ways in which to maximise informal opportunity and participation.
- Work with educational establishments, specifically Lymm High School, to secure access to pitches which are currently unavailable for community use. Such options require consideration in terms of pitch maintenance and associated costs due to increased use.
- Ensure that wherever new housing developments of eleven dwellings or more occur, contributions are sought to contribute to either enhance existing playing pitch and ancillary provision or to create new playing pitch and ancillary provision as required to meet increased demand.

Section 5: Strategic Recommendations

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

Aim 1

To **protect** the existing supply of playing pitches where it is needed for meeting current and future needs.

Recommendations:

- a. Protect playing field sites through local planning policy
- b. Secure tenure and access to sites for high quality, development minded clubs, through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.
- c. Maximise community use of education facilities where there is a need to do so.

Recommendation A – Protect playing field sites through local planning policy

The Assessment Report shows that all currently used playing field sites require protection and therefore cannot be deemed surplus to requirements because of shortfalls now and in the future. Therefore, based on the outcomes of the PPS, local planning policy should reflect this situation.

Paragraph 74 of the Framework states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

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

Lapsed and disused – playing field sites that formerly accommodated playing pitches but are no longer used for formal or informal sports use within the last five years (disused) or longer (lapsed). The following is a list of identified lapsed/disused sites:

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Lapsed or disused site	Pitch types	Comments
4	Bank Park	Central neighbourhood	Lapsed	1 x junior rugby league pitch.	
50	Grappenhall Hall School	South neighbourhood	Disused (2015)	1 x youth football pitch	School closed
63	Lockers Playing Field	Central neighbourhood	Lapsed	2 x senior rugby league pitches.	Privately owned and closed when associated business closed.
67	Lymm May Queen Field	South neighbourhood	Disused	1 x adult football pitch 1 x mini football pitch	Closed for more than 5 years. Could be brought back into use subject to improvements being made
88	Radley Common	Central neighbourhood	Disused	1 x adult football pitch	Closed for more than 5 years. Could be brought back into use subject to improvements being made
105	St Elphins	East neighbourhood	Disused	1 x adult football pitch 1 x mini football 7v7 pitch	Closed for more than 5 years. Could be brought back into use subject to improvements being made
111	St Oliver Plunket Primary School	East neighbourhood	Lapsed (2002)	1 x youth football pitch	School closed
124	Sycamore Lane Primary School	West neighbourhood	Disused (2016)	1 x mini football pitch	School closed
135	Westy Park	South neighbourhood	Lapsed	3 x adult football pitches	Closed more than 5 years ago due to concerns about levels of gas from landfill. Plans to bring back into use for pitch sports.
137	Wilderspool Stadium	South neighbourhood	Disused	1 x senior rugby league pitch.	Associated stadium demolished in 2014. The pitch at Victoria Park Stadium was the replacement for this pitch.
152	Bridge Lane	South neighbourhood	Lapsed		became disused in 2004 following a fire which destroyed the club house at the site
153	St Werbergh's CofE Primary School	South neighbourhood	Lapsed (2001)	2 x youth football pitches	School closed

The Assessment Report shows that all currently used playing field sites require protection and therefore cannot be deemed surplus to requirements because of shortfalls now and in the future. Lapsed, disused, underused and poor quality sites should also be protected from development; replaced; or contributions sought to improve other sites as there is potential need for playing field land to accommodate more pitches to meet the identified shortfalls.

Each currently disused/lapsed site is included within the action plan together with a recommendation in relation to the need to bring the site back into use or mitigate the loss on a replacement site to address the shortfalls identified with the Assessment Report.

New housing development - where proposed housing development is located within access of a high quality playing pitch, this does not necessarily mean that there is no need for further pitch provision or improvements to existing pitches in that area in order to accommodate additional demand arising from that development. The PPS should be used to help determine what impact the new development will have on the demand and capacity of existing sites in the area, and whether there is a need for improvements to increase capacity or if new provision is required.

Using the 'New Development Calculator for Pitch Sports' the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required if 13,899 new homes are built across Warrington during the PPS period (first 10 years of the new Local Plan):

Pitch type	Match equivalent sessions
Football - Adult Pitches	5
Football - Youth Pitches	13
Football - Mini	11
Cricket	79
Rugby Union	23
Rugby League	5
Hockey Sand Based AGP	2

The methodology outlined in Appendix 2 for calculating financial contributions when new development will generate a need that cannot be met by existing local facilities should be used to determine the value of developer contributions that should be sought towards playing pitch provision from housing developments.

Development Management - the PPS should be used to help inform Development Management decisions that affect existing or new playing fields, pitches and ancillary facilities. All applications are assessed by the Local Planning Authority on a case by case basis taking into account site specific factors. In addition, Sport England as statutory consultee on planning applications that affect or prejudice the use of playing field will use the PPS to help assess that planning application against paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and their¹⁷ Playing Fields Policy.

Sport England's playing field policy exception E1 only allows for development of lapsed or disused playing fields if a PPS shows a clear excess in the quantity of playing pitch provision at present and in the future across all playing pitch sports types and sizes.

Policy Exception E1:

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

Where the PPS cannot demonstrate the site, or part of a site, is clearly surplus to requirements then replacement of the site, or part of a site, will be required to comply with Sport England policy exception E4.

Policy Exception E4:

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

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

Further to this, all playing fields should be protected or replaced up until the point where all satisfied demand has been met within the study area or each individual sports catchment areas within a sub area.

Local authorities wanting to dispose of school playing field land need consent under Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, but consent is now also required for disposal of any land used by a school or academy under Schedule 1 to the Academies Act 2010.

¹⁷ <http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/development-management/planning-applications/playing-field-land/>

It should be noted that consent under Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act does not necessarily mean subsequent planning approval will be granted. Therefore, any application for planning permission must meet the requirements of the relevant policy, in this case paragraph 74 of Framework, Local Plan Policy and Sport England policy. Indeed, applicants are advised to engage Sport England before submitting applications. Robust implementation of the statutory obligation will ensure protection of school playing fields for use by pupils (and sometimes the community as a whole) to ensure receipt is ploughed back into sports education.

Prejudicial Impact of Development on Playing Field

Sport England is a statutory consultee on all applications that either result in the loss of playing field or result in prejudicing the use of a playing field. The most common prejudicial impact is the proximity of housing to cricket fields with the risk of ball strike on adjacent houses. The onus is on the developer to carry out a Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategy to ensure the incidence of ball strike is properly mitigated and those measures are included within the planning application. Planning conditions would not be appropriate because if, for instance, ball stop netting was required, there is a possibility it would not be granted planning consent on visual amenity grounds. The housing development would have been constructed but the mitigation not put in place, thus prejudicing the use of the playing field.

Other examples include:

- Development cutting off the access to playing fields
- Houses being built adjacent to existing floodlit AGP's without Noise and Light Assessments being undertaken leading to complaints from new residents and subsequent Abatement Notices being issued.

Recommendation B – Secure tenure and access to sites for high quality, development minded clubs through a range of solutions and partnership agreements

A number of school sites are being used in Warrington for competitive play, predominately for football. In all cases use of pitches has been classified as unsecure. In some instances formalised agreements may be in place but further work should be carried out to ensure an appropriate Community Use Agreement (CUA) is in place (including access to changing provision where required).

NGBs can often help to negotiate and engage with schools where the local authority may not have direct influence.

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

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/use-our-school/>

Local sports clubs should be supported by partners including the Council, NGBs or the County Sports Partnership (CSP) to achieve sustainability across a range of areas including management, membership, funding, facilities, volunteers and partnership working. For example, support club development and encourage clubs to develop evidence of business and sports development plans to generate an income through their facilities. All clubs could be encouraged to look at different management models such as registering as Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC)¹⁸. Clubs should also be encouraged to work with partners locally whether volunteer support agencies or linking with local businesses.

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

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

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

To facilitate this, the Council should support and enable clubs to generate sufficient funds to allow this.

Recommended criteria for lease of sport sites to clubs/organisations is below. This should be amended if required in order to better suit the needs of Warrington.

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

¹⁸ <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/cascbenefits>

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

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

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

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

Community asset transfer

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

The Sport England Community Sport Asset Transfer Toolkit is a bespoke, interactive web based tool that provides a step by step guide through each stage of the asset transfer process:

<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/asset-transfer/>

Recommendation C – Maximise community use of education sites where there is a need to do so

Given the mix of provider in Warrington, there is a need for the Council and NGBs to work with other partners to help maximise use of outdoor sports facilities and in particular grass pitches and AGPs.

In order to maximise community use of educational facilities it is recommended to establish a more coherent, structured relationship with schools. The ability to access good facilities within the local community is vital to any sports organisation, yet many clubs struggle to find good quality places to play and train.

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

Where appropriate, it will be important for schools to negotiate and sign formal and long-term agreements that secure community use.

It is not uncommon for school pitch stock not to be fully maximised for community use. Even on established community use sites, access to grass pitches for community use is limited.

In some instances grass pitches are unavailable for community use due to poor quality and therefore remedial works will be required before community use can be established.

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

Community use: <http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/accessing-schools/>
Use our schools toolkit: <http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/use-our-school/>

Aim 2

To **enhance** playing fields, pitches and ancillary facilities through improving quality and management of sites.

Recommendations:

- d. Improve quality
- e. Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) for the management and improvement of sites.
- f. Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding

Recommendation D – Improve quality

There are a number of ways in which it is possible to increase pitch quality and these are explored below. One way for improving quality on football sites is via the FA's pitch improvement programme.

The FA Pitch Improvement Programme (PIP)

The key principles behind the service are to provide football clubs with advice/practical solutions on a number of areas and discounts on machinery and materials to support improving the clubs' playing surface. The programme should be utilised in order to help any clubs that take on the management and maintenance of sites or which are currently managing and maintaining their own pitch site.

As subsidy is removed for pitch maintenance the PIP is an essential toolkit in supporting self-management/maintenance of sites, particularly on adult sites that have historically been maintained by the Council.

Addressing quality issues

Generally, where pitches are assessed as standard or poor quality and/or overplayed, there is a need to review/improve maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain/improve pitch quality. Ensuring existing maintenance of good quality pitches continues is also important.

Based on an achievable target using existing quality scoring to provide a baseline, a standard should be used to identify deficiencies and investment should be focused on those sites which fail to meet the proposed quality standard (using the site audit database, provided in electronic format). The Strategy approach to these outdoor sports facilities achieving these standards should be to enhance quality and therefore the planning system should seek to protect them.

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

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

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

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

Please refer to the Sport England/NGB quality assessments. Sites played beyond capacity may require remedial action to help reduce this.

Without appropriate, fit for purpose ancillary facilities, good quality pitches may be underutilised. Changing facilities form the most essential part of this offer and therefore key sites such as those mentioned above should be given priority for improvement.

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

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

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

Addressing overplay

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

Sport	Pitch type	No. of matches		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week
Rugby union ¹⁹	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Rugby league	Senior	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	N/A	N/A
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season		

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

Whilst it works both ways in so much as poor pitch condition is a symptom of pitches being over played, potential improvements may make sites more attractive and therefore more popular.

There is also a need to balance pitch improvements alongside the transfer of play to alternative pitch sites. Therefore, work with clubs to ensure that sites are not played beyond

¹⁹ Please note that the RFU believes that it is most appropriate to base the calculation of pitch capacity upon an assessment of the drainage system and maintenance programme afforded to a site.

their capacity and encourage play, where possible, to be transferred to alternative venues which are not operating at capacity.

Increasing pitch maintenance

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

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

At sites in Warrington which are maintained by WBC, maintenance of grass pitches is deemed to be basic and for football covers grass cutting and seeding only, resulting in many pitches being assessed as poor quality. Where local authority pitches are recommended for improvement within the action plan, carrying out additional regular work such as aerating, sand dressing, fertilising and/or weed killing will all improve quality. An improvement in post season remedial work is also recommended. It is recommended that the Council works with users and the County FA's to fully determine the most appropriate pitch improvements on a site by site basis.

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

Improving changing provision

There is a clear need to address changing provision across the whole of Warrington, particularly on local authority sites. It is recommended that a holistic view is taken in regard to improvements and provision on site. Sites which predominantly accommodate adult football should be prioritised for improvements.

Recommendation E – Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) for the management and improvement of sites

To allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach the Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of playing pitch sites and associated facilities. Please refer to Section 6: Action Plan for the proposed hierarchy.

Recommendation F – Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding

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

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

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

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

Aim 3

To **provide** new playing pitches where there is current or future demand to do so.

Recommendations:

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

Recommendation G - Rectify quantitative shortfalls in the current pitch stock

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

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

- Improving pitch quality in order to improve the capacity of pitches to accommodate more matches.
- The re-designation of pitches for which there is an oversupply.
- Securing long term community use at school sites.
- The provision of additional 3G AGP provision that can cater for competitive football and training for football, rugby league and rugby union.

This however is not the case in all instances and it is not realistic to rely on all or any of these measures to address deficiencies. In some case new provision is required and that needs to be identified from the sport specific summaries and through the PPS action plan.

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

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

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

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

The Council should use, and regularly update, the Action Plan within this Strategy for improvements to its own pitches whilst recognising the need to support partners. The Action Plan lists improvements to be made to each site focused upon both qualitative and quantitative improvements as appropriate for each area.

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

Some sites (or adjacent land) in Warrington also have the potential to accommodate more pitches which may be a solution to meeting shortfalls identified.

Section 6: Action Plan Overview

6.1. Introduction

The site-by-site action plan²⁰ list seeks to address key issues identified in the accompanying Assessment Report. It provides recommendations based on current levels of usage, quality and future demand, as well as the potential of each site for enhancement. The Action Plan can be found in Appendix 3 of this document.

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

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

6.2. hierarchy of provision

To allow for facility developments to be prioritised and programmed within a phased approach a tiered model for the improvement of playing pitch sites and associated facilities is useful.

The identification of sites is based on their strategic importance in a Borough wide context i.e. they accommodate the majority of demand or the recommended action has the greatest impact on addressing shortfalls identified either on a sport by sport basis or across the Borough as a whole.

NB: Where education sites are identified as (or part of) hub sites or key centres, further investigation and clarification on accessibility, security of tenure and community use agreements will be required as part of the wider 'access to schools' recommendation. Where community use of a site is not guaranteed the education site should be reclassified within the hierarchy.

²⁰ Please note that the action plan has been developed since the sign off of the Assessment Report and therefore there may be minor differences between the Assessment Report and action plan on the current status of some sites.

Recommended tiered site criteria²¹

Hub sites	Key centres	Local sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically well located. • Priority site for NGBs. • Accommodates three or more standard and/or good quality grass pitches. • Includes (or could include) provision of at least one AGP. • Single or multi-sport provision. • Has potential to operate as a central venue. • Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines. • Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically well located within the analysis area. • Accommodates two or more standard and/or good quality grass pitches or includes (or could include) provision of at least one AGP. • Single or multi-sport provision. • Has potential to operate as a central venue. • Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines. • Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services the local community. • Likely to include education sites. • Accommodates one or more pitch. • Single or multi-sport provision. • Standard maintenance regime either by the club or in house maintenance contract. • Appropriate access changing to accommodate both senior and junior use concurrently (if required).

Hub sites

These sites are of Borough wide importance where users are willing to travel to access the range and high quality of facilities offered and are likely to be multi-sport. These have been identified on the basis of high impact on addressing the issues identified in the Assessment Report.

Where development of Hub Sites includes provision of 3G pitches for football it is recommended that further modelling/feasibility work is carried out to ensure sustainability of new 3G pitches to accommodate competitive fixtures. However, as a priority consultation should be carried out with leagues/clubs to gauge acceptance/buy in of moving competitive play to 3G pitches in the future.

Key centres

Although these sites are more community focused, some are still likely to service a wider analysis area. However, there may be more of a focus on a specific sport.

It is considered that some financial investment will be necessary to improve the ancillary facilities at both Hub sites and Key Centres to complement the pitches in terms of access, flexibility (i.e. single-sex changing if necessary), quality and that they meet the rules and regulations of local competitions.

²¹ These are criteria required for each tier. Sites may not yet meet all the criteria specified, but the aspirations are that they can and will.

Local sites

This category refers to those sites which are generally one and two pitch sites and may be Council owned hired to clubs for a season or are sites which have been leased on a long-term basis. However, they are also likely to be private club sites serving one particular sport.

The level of priority attached to them for Council-generated investment may be relatively low and consideration should be given, on a site-by-site basis, to the feasibility of a club taking a long-term lease on the site (if not already present), in order that external funding can be sought.

It is possible that sites could be included in this tier which are not currently hired or leased to a club, but have the potential to be leased to a suitable club. NGBs would expect the facility to be transferred in adequate condition that the club can maintain. In the longer term, the Club should be in a position to source external funding to improve/extend the facilities.

6.3. Management and development

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

- Financial viability.
- Security of tenure.
- Planning permission requirements and any foreseen difficulties in securing permission.
- Adequacy of existing finances to maintain existing sites.
- Business Plan/Masterplan – including financial package for creation of new provision where need has been identified.
- Analysis of the possibility of shared site management opportunities.
- The availability of opportunities to lease sites to external organisations.
- Options to assist community groups to gain funding to enhance existing provision.
- Negotiation with landowners to increase access to private strategic sites.
- Availability of funding for hub site development.
- Impact on all sports that use a site regardless of the sport that is the subject of enhancements.

6.4. Action plan columns

6.4.1. Partners

The column indicating Partners refers to the main organisation that the Council will liaise with in helping to deliver the actions. The next stage in the development of the action plan will be to agree a Lead Partner to help deliver the actions.

6.4.2. Site hierarchy tier and priority level

Although Hub Sites are mostly likely to have a high priority level as they have Borough wide importance, high priority sites have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the key issues identified in the Assessment Report and therefore some Key Centres are also identified as having a high priority level. It is these projects/sites which should generally be addressed within the short term (1-2 years).

It is recommended that as the Steering Group reviews and updates the action plan that medium and low priority sites are then identified as the next level of sites for attention. As a guide it is recommended that:

- Key centres are a medium priority and have analysis area importance and have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the issues identified in the Assessment Report.
- Local sites Low priority sites are club or education sites with local specific importance and have been identified on a site by site basis as issues appertaining to individual sites but that may also contribute to addressing the issues identified in the Assessment Report.

SECTION 7: KEEP THE STRATEGY ROBUST AND UP TO DATE

Delivery

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

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

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

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

To help ensure the PPS is well used it should be regarded as the key document within the study area guiding the improvement and protection of playing pitch provision. It needs to be the document people regularly turn to for information on how the current demand is met and what actions are required to improve the situation and meet future demand. In order for this to be achieved the steering group need to have a clear understanding of how the PPS can be applied and therefore delivered. Key uses for the PPS include evidence for supporting funding bids, guidance to inform planning decisions and planning applications and decision making for capital investment.

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

Monitoring and updating

It is important that there is regular annual monitoring and review against the actions identified in the Strategy. This monitoring should be led by the local authority and supported by the Steering Group. Understanding and learning lessons from how the PPS has been applied should also form a key component of monitoring its delivery. This should form an on-going role of the steering group. It is possible that in the interim between annual reviews the steering group could operate as a 'virtual' group; prepared to comment on suggestions and updates electronically when relevant.

As a guide, if no review and subsequent update has been carried out within three years of the PPS being signed off by the Steering Group, then Sport England and the NGBs would consider the PPS and the information on which it is based to be out of date. If the PPS is used as a 'live' document, and kept up to date, the time frame can be extended to five years.

Furthermore, the process of refreshing the PPS would be much less resource intensive if changes and updates have been made throughout the five years. If there are no updates to the document within the period the nature of the supply and in particular the demand for playing pitches is likely to have changed. Therefore, without any form of review and update within this time period it would be difficult to make the case that the supply and demand information and assessment work is sufficiently robust.

The PPS should be reviewed on an annual basis from the date it is formally signed off by the Steering Group. This will help to maintain the momentum and commitment that would have been built up when developing the PPS.

The table below provides a monitoring and review process for the Steering Group to follow:

What?	Who?	When?
<p>1. Internal Steering Group Meeting</p> <p>Meeting between WBC internal Steering Group members to discuss and log key changes in playing pitch and facility provision, covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New pitch provision; • Pitch improvements; • Pitch re-configuration; • Pitch loss/threat; • Community Access agreements (e.g. education or private sites); • Plans for future provision. <p>Outcome of meeting and updates to documents recorded.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Warrington Leisure Sub-Group 	<p>Bi-Annually</p>
<p>2. Sport England and NGB Update Meetings</p> <p>WBC Steering Group Chair to hold series of update meetings with individual sports NGBs to discuss and log:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any changes in club and team details; • Any changes in sport format; • Any site specific updates; • Changes to supply and demand data; • The application and use of the PPS e.g. in delivery of new or improved provision, funding opportunities, programmes and initiatives; • Any new issues and opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBC Steering Group Chair • Sports NGBs 	<p>Annually for each sport:</p> <p>Football – October Rugby League – May Rugby Union – October Cricket – May Hockey – October Tennis – May</p>

<p>3. Prepare Annual PPS Progress Paper</p> <p>Based on the outcome of actions above, prepare a short Annual PPS Progress and Update paper highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delivery of PPS recommendations and any changes in priority; • Changes to particularly important sites and/or clubs in the area and other supply and demand information with implications for PPS's key findings; • Details of any developments of a specific sport or particular format; • Details of any new or emerging issues and opportunities; • Any issues with the application of the PPS and lessons learnt; • Actions needed to keep the PPS 'live' and up to date. <p>Based on the above, the Annual Progress Paper will also consider if a partial or full update of the PPS is required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPS Steering Group 	<p>Annually</p>
<p>4. Circulation and Agreement</p> <p>Circulate Annual Progress Paper to Steering Group for comment and agreement with opportunity to hold Steering Group Meeting to discuss findings and issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPS Steering Group 	<p>Annually</p>
<p>5. Publish Paper</p> <p>Make Annual Progress paper available online. Report any significant findings to appropriate committee if considered necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBC 	<p>Annually – following Steering Group agreement on progress paper</p>

Checklist

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

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

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

GLOSSARY

Displaced demand generally relates to play by teams or other users of playing pitches from within the study area (i.e. from residents of the study area) which takes place outside of the area. This may be due to issues with the provision of pitches and ancillary facilities in the study area, just reflective of how the sports are played (e.g. at a central venue for the wider area) or due to the most convenient site for the respective users just falling outside of the local authority/study area.

Unmet demand is demand that is known to exist but unable to be accommodated on current supply of pitches. This could be in the form of a team with access to a pitch for matches but nowhere to train or vice versa. This could also be due to the poor quality and therefore limited capacity of pitches in the area and/or a lack of provision and ancillary facilities which meet a certain standard of play/league requirement. League secretaries may be aware of some unmet demand as they may have declined applications from teams wishing to enter their competitions due to a lack of pitch provision which in turn is hindering the growth of the league.

Latent demand is demand that evidence suggests may be generated from the current population should they have access to more or better provision. This could include feedback from a sports club who may feel that they could set up and run an additional team if they had access to better provision.

Future demand is an informed estimate made of the likely future demand for pitches in the study area. This is generally based on the most appropriate current and future population projections for the relevant age and gender groupings for each sport. Key trends, local objectives and targets and consultation also inform this figure.

Casual use or other use could take place on natural grass pitches or AGPs and include:

- ◀ Regular play from non-sports club sources (e.g. companies, schools, fitness classes)
- ◀ Infrequent informal/friendly matches
- ◀ Informal training sessions
- ◀ More casual forms of a particular sport organised by sports clubs or other parties
- ◀ Significant public use and informal play, particularly where pitches are located in parks/recreation grounds.

Carrying capacity is the amount of play a site can regularly accommodate (in the relevant comparable unit) for community use without adversely affecting its quality and use. This is typically outlined by the NGB

Overplay is when a pitch is used over the amount that the carrying capacity will allow, (i.e. more than the site can accommodate). Pitches have a limit of how much play they can accommodate over a certain period of time before their quality, and in turn their use, is adversely affected.

Spare capacity is the amount of additional play that a pitch could potentially accommodate in addition to current activity. There may be reasons why this potential to accommodate additional play should not automatically be regarded as actual spare capacity, for example, a site may be managed to regularly operate slightly below its carrying capacity to ensure that it can cater for a number of friendly matches and training activity. This needs to be investigated before the capacity is deemed **actual spare capacity**.

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

For football, rugby union and rugby league, pitches should relate to a typical week within the season and one match = one match equivalent session if it occurs every week or 0.5 match equivalent sessions if it occurs every other week (i.e. reflecting home and away fixtures). For cricket pitches it is appropriate to look at the number of match equivalent sessions over the course of a season and one match = one match equivalent session.

For AGP's match equivalent sessions are not appropriate, instead the number of hours a pitch is available assessed against the number actually used gives an indication of the capacity.

Pitch capacity

The capacity for pitches to regularly provide for competitive play, training and other activity over a season is most often determined by quality. As a minimum, the quality and therefore the capacity of a pitch affects the playing experience and people's enjoyment of playing football. In extreme circumstances it can result in the inability of the pitch to cater for all or certain types of play during peak and off peak times. Pitch quality is often influenced by weather conditions and drainage.

As a guide, each NGB has set a standard number of matches that each grass pitch type should be able to accommodate without adversely affecting its current quality (pitch capacity):

Sport	Pitch type	No. of matches per week		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	N/A	N/A
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	N/A	N/A
Football	Adult pitches	3	2	1
	Youth pitches	4	2	1
	Mini pitches	6	4	2
Rugby league	Senior	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Rugby union*	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2	1.5	0.5
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3	2	1.5
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25	2.5	1.75
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5	3	2

Shortfalls

Please note that shortfalls are expressed in match equivalent sessions rather than pitches as it is possible that shortfalls could be accommodated in various ways (e.g. through pitch improvements) and not just by providing more pitches.



DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTION FORMULA

The Steering Group have developed a formula to be used to determine the value of developer contributions that should be sought towards playing pitch provision from housing developments.

The current Planning Practice Guidance²² advises that there are specific circumstances where contributions for affordable housing and tariff style planning obligations (Section 106 planning obligations) should not be sought from small scale and self-build development.

The Steering Group therefore recommends that contributions should only be sought from developments of 11 units or more (or smaller schemes that have a maximum combined gross internal floor space of over 1,000sqm) towards playing pitch provision.

The agreed amount per dwelling developer contribution has been established at £238.00.

The formula is outlined below:

The number of houses in the housing development

X (multiplied by)

The average household size in Warrington (currently 2.3 persons)

= Forecasted population increase based on the proposed housing development.

The 'forecasted population increase based on the proposed housing development' figure is then inputted into the Sport England's New Development Pitch Demand Calculator, which is pre-populated with Warrington specific data for population and team generation rates taken from the most up to date Playing Pitch Assessment Report. The additional demand generated from the new development is converted into match equivalent sessions by pitch type. This gives the evidence required to show if new development generates new demand and quantifies that demand.

The Sport England New Development Pitch Demand Calculator will then generate an indicative financial value based on Sport England's latest information with regards to playing pitch developments. This figure is made up of the capital cost required to introduce the pitch + lifecycle costs to adequately maintain the pitch²³.

22 Paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 23b-031-20161116.

23 Please refer to the New Development Calculator for a full explanation of the workings.

This formula was tested across four different scenarios, based on the current Overall Housing Development Trajectory for Warrington²⁴ for 5 years, 10 years, 15 years and 20 years as shown in the table below.

Scenario	No. of houses x	2.3 (Ave. household size) =	PPS Dev Calculator			No. of houses =	Per dwelling developer contribution
			Capital cost +	Lifecycle cost =	Total cost /		
5 year	4,638	10,667	£911,546	£192,274	£1,103,820	4,638	£237.99
10 year	13,899	31,968	£2,731,819	£576,228	£3,308,047	13,899	£238.00
15 year	20,547	47,258	£4,038,423	£851,832	£4,890,255	20,547	£238.00
20 year	24,774	55,980	£4,869,215	£1,027,072	£5,896,287	24,774	£238.00

Using the evidence of demand from the Calculator the PPS Action Plan is then used to establish which sites within the locality of the new housing developments should benefit from the contribution obtained

²⁴ These figures have come from – ‘Preferred Development Option – Regulation 18 Consultation (WBC, July 2017)’

Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan - See separate document

