



WARRINGTON COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

UPDATED JANUARY 2020

QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third generation turf
AGP	Artificial grass pitch
ASC	All Stars Cricket
CC	Cricket Club
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EH	England Hockey
FA	Football Association
FC	Football Club
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HC	Hockey Club
IOG	Institute of Groundsmanship
JFC	Junior Football Club
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
NGB	National Governing Body of Sport
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NTP	Non-turf pitch
OAN	Objectively Assessed Need
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
PQS	Performance Quality Standard
PIP	Pitch Improvement Programme
RFU	Rugby Football Union
RUFC	Rugby Union Football Club
S106	Section 106
TGR	Team Generation Rate
U	Under
WR	World Rugby

PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

This is the updated 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.

The 2018 Warrington PPS was formally adopted by the Council in June 2019. However, the original supply and demand data was predominately collated in 2016/17 and as such it was recognised that there was a need to carry out a desk based refresh of the Study in 2019 before the need for a new PPS to be developed. One of the key drivers for the update has been to have an added focus on disability and women/girls playing pitch sports to reflect the increase in demand in participation since the previous PPS. Further, a Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) has also been prepared for the Borough which seeks to identify potential opportunities for new and improved football provision.

Building upon the preceding updated Assessment Report (September 2019)¹ it continues to provide 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 for the life of the current adopted Local Plan (the Local Plan Core Strategy) and the new Local Plan which will cover the period 2017 to 2037.

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 updated Assessment Report (September 2019) has refreshed the supply and demand information based on data provided by Council officers, LiveWire and NGBs.

1.2: Monitoring and updating

It is important to ensure there is regular annual monitoring and review of the actions identified in the Strategy. This 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.

Please note that 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. Given that the PPS was formally signed off by the Steering Group during 2018, there is an agreed need to fully update the PPS including new NTAs and sports club consultation during the 2020/21 seasons to ensure the PPS remains up to date.

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 built up when developing the PPS. Taking into account the time spent developing the PPS this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed. Part 8 of this strategy report contains a suggested process for undertaking the update and monitoring.

1.3: Wider Warrington Context

The Local Plan

The new Local Plan will set out the legal planning framework for Warrington's development for the period 2017 to 2037. This covers housing, business space, transport infrastructure and community facilities like schools and GPs. The new Local Plan will replace the existing adopted Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

In 2017, the Council undertook a consultation around our Preferred Development Option (PDO) which looked at Warrington's development needs for the future. This fed into preparing the Draft Local Plan.

The Local Plan sets out a vision and objectives for the Borough's future and will be used to guide decisions on planning applications and identify areas where investment and growth should be prioritised and those areas that need to be protected from development. The Local plan aims to deliver 18,900 new homes (or 945 a year, up to 2037) and will also support Warrington's ongoing economic growth by providing 362 hectares of employment land.

The Plan sets out and prioritises using urban capacity to create varied, vibrant neighbourhoods that are shared places to live, work and enjoy. Government guidelines determine the need to build at least 18,900 homes over the course of the plan, which exceeds the urban land available. Therefore, there is a need to consider other areas of land to develop on, including Green Belt, in order to meet our development obligations.

The projected housing figures aim to match Warrington's expected growth and ensure enough homes are provided to support the number of jobs that will be created from Warrington's future economic growth. The areas of Green Belt proposed for development would need to be released to meet Government figures and while our priority is to protect as much Green Belt as possible.

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Therefore, WBC needs to keep its PPS up to date in order to comply with the guidance from Sport England and take account of the higher level of growth now envisaged. The revised PPS will continue to provide a robust evidence base to inform statutory land use planning decisions and funding bids, which will involve the following:

- ◀ To provide updated information on Warrington's existing and future needs for playing pitches and its current ability to meet those needs in terms of quality, quantity and location.
- ◀ To provide evidence to inform wider Green Infrastructure Planning across the Borough.
- ◀ To provide background evidence to support Local Plan policies to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- ◀ To review the information to enable the Council to justify collecting developer contributions and inform the Council on the distribution of developer contributions to sports and open space in line with Section 106 regulations.

Warrington Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2018-2020

The Corporate Strategy describes both the Council's long term vision for Warrington and its priorities for the next two years which will help deliver this vision. In a period where the Council will continue to face significant cuts from central government, it has an ambition to become financially sustainable through longer term planning.

The Strategy vision is: *'We will work together with our residents, businesses and partners to create a place that works for all.'*

Through the strategy the Council makes four pledges and priorities to its residents that will be used as a basis for making future decisions:

1. Opportunities for the most vulnerable
2. Grow a strong economy for all
3. Build strong, active and resilient communities
4. Create a place to be proud of

The strategy identifies a number of priorities for each of the four pledges. The most relevant pledge is the 'Build strong, active and resilient communities'. The relevant priorities outlined are:

- ◀ Support our residents to be healthy taking responsibility for their lifestyle, health and wellbeing
- ◀ Raise young people's aspirations and enhance prospects (which specifically includes Development of the Youth Zone)

Well Warrington: Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Warrington 2019 – 2023

The Warrington Health and Wellbeing Strategy identifies the priority areas where resources and services should be targeted in order to promote, maintain and increase the overall health and wellbeing of people, communities and the borough as a whole during the next three years and into the future.

It sets out a vision for the Borough and identifies challenges, opportunities and priorities to be addressed by partners and outlines the outcomes for the strategy. The vision for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is

'Warrington is a place where we work together to create a borough with stronger neighbourhoods, healthier people and greater equality across all our communities.'

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The strategy identifies core ambitions that will help clearly focus how partners will work together to shape an approach to transforming health and wellbeing in the Borough. The four ambitions are:

1. People will live in healthy, safe and sustainable communities.
2. People will have the skills and resources needed to improve their life chances.
3. People will value being and feeling well and will live active, independent and fulfilled lives.
4. People's quality of life will be improved by the ability to access appropriate, quality care when and where they need it.

Active Warrington Strategy 2017 – 2020

The Active Warrington strategy core outcome is that in Warrington more people, move more, more often! The strategy has a number of supporting strategic aims as outlined below:

- ◀ People are proud to be part of an active town;
- ◀ Everyone understands the full benefits of physical activity;
- ◀ Without discrimination, everyone has the opportunity to try out and participation in a broad range of sports and physical activities;
- ◀ Those who are currently inactive are specifically supported with initiatives that encourages them to move more, in ways that suit them;
- ◀ There continue to be sporting opportunities for people of all levels;
- ◀ Inactivity is recognised by local policy makes and practitioners as a major cause of poor health and disabilities.

The Active Warrington strategy has a steering group which drives the strategy. Beneath the strategy is a delivery framework which includes six work streams:

1. Leisure industry, sport clubs and facilities
2. Children, young people and families
3. Third sector, community assets and small funding pots
4. Targeted input to health improvement and clinical programmes
5. Businesses, active workforce and mass participation
6. Communications and customer insight

Warrington Disability Partnership (WDP)

WDP is an internationally acclaimed user led charity. With over 26 years' experience of developing and delivering mobility and independent living services, its aim is to support disabled people and people living with long term health conditions.

It actively promotes independent living by providing information on peer counselling, housing, equipment, personal assistance, transport, access, employment, education, training and is often approached in relation to supporting and signposting disability sports activity across Warrington. One of its main aims in this respect, is encouraging all sports clubs to be accessible and encouraging inclusivity. WDP works closely, for example, with Warrington Wolves RLFC and helped with development of its new disability teams.

WDP reports that demand for disability sports in Warrington is high and there are some good examples in place in sports such as swimming, martial arts, tennis and now rugby league. However, barriers to participation are often higher and more acute. It is often not the playing facilities themselves which cause the biggest barriers but wider issues such as availability of transport, which can often be linked to timing of sessions, for example.

Accessibility in relation to ancillary facilities is also a common issue, including changing rooms, size of doors and car parking. The other key element relates to the availability of volunteers to support sports clubs to offer disability sports.

It has generally become standard that all new sports facilities have DDA compliance, however, this should also extend to the upgrading of sports facilities and in this context, for playing pitch facilities this should include changing rooms. One of the ways to help ensure new and refurbished facilities are accessible is to involve WDP in the early planning stages of projects.

1.4 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. Paragraph 96 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. Paragraphs 96 and 97 of the NPPF 2018 edition discuss assessments and the protection of “existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields”. The Playing Pitch Strategy will provide the evidence required to help protect playing fields to ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future pitch requirements.

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.

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.

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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.

1.5 Our approach

A Steering Group has continued 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:

- ◀ 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.

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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).

Please refer to Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms for detailed explanation of terms referred to within the Strategy.

The PPS covers the following playing pitches and facilities:

- ◀ 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 sub areas or 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.

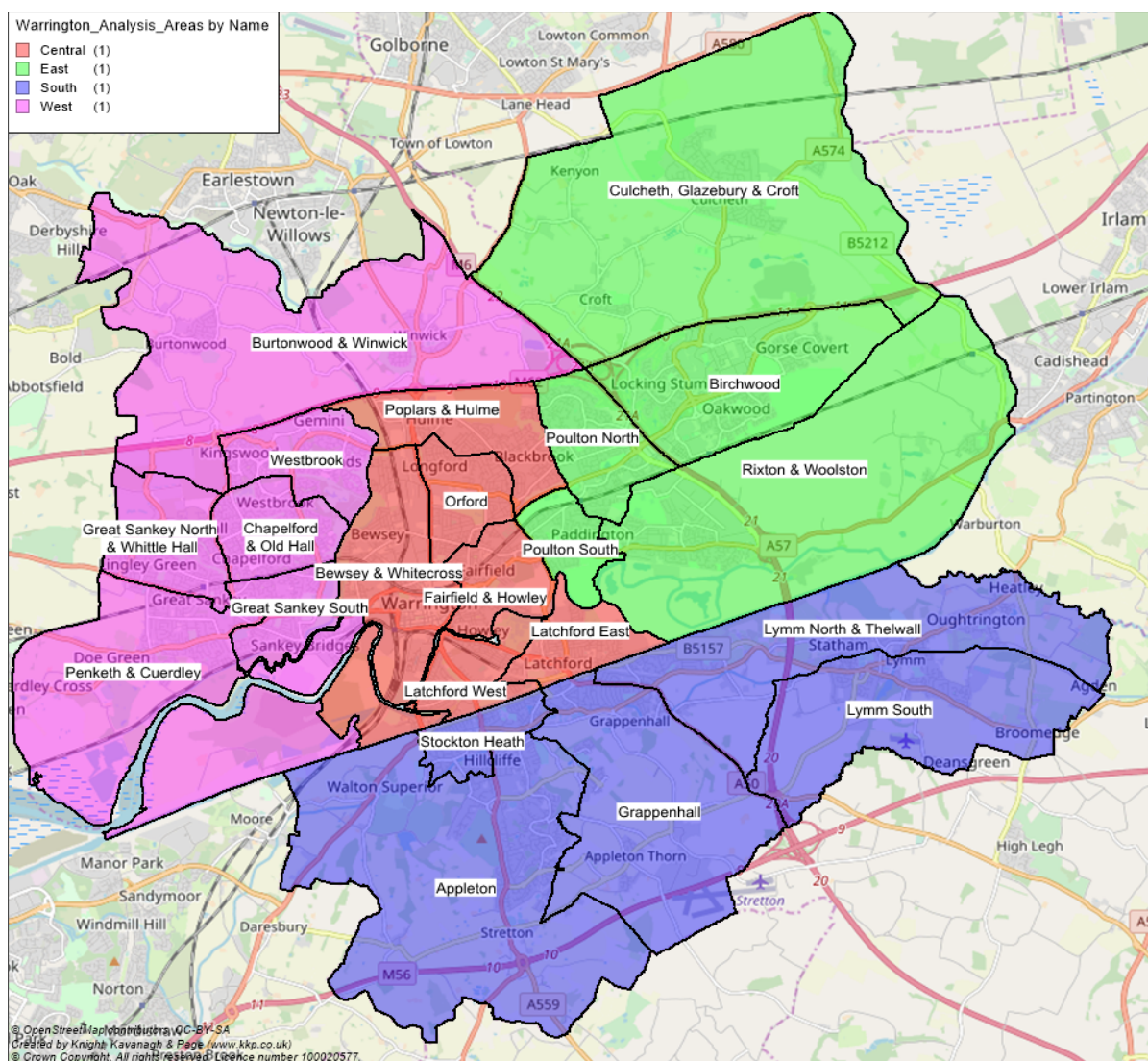
Warrington is currently split into four neighbourhood areas as shown below and these neighbourhood areas have been used as the analysis areas in the assessment. There have been some minor changes to the ward boundaries since 2017 and Latchford West Ward now falls within the Central Analysis Area as opposed to the South Analysis Area.

Analysis area	Ward
Central neighbourhood	Bewsey & Whitecross
	Poplars & Hulme
	Latchford West
	Latchford East
	Fairfield & Howley
	Orford

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Analysis area	Ward
East neighbourhood	Culcheth, Glazebury & Croft
	Rixton & Woolston
	Birchwood
	Poulton South
	Poulton North
South neighbourhood	Lymm North & Thelwall
	Appleton
	Grappenhall
	Lymm South
	Stockton Heath
West neighbourhood	Burtonwood & Winwick
	Penketh & Cuardley
	Great Sankey South
	Great Sankey North & Whittle Hall
	Chapelford & Old Hall
	Westbrook

Figure 1.1: Warrington analysis areas 2019



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1.6: Assessment Report headline findings

The original 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.

The updated Assessment Report (September 2019) has refreshed the supply and demand information based on data provided by Council officers, LiveWire and NGBs.

The table overleaf highlights the updated quantitative headline findings identified for all main sports included in the preceding Assessment Report.

For qualitative findings and site-specific findings, please see Part 4: Sport Specific Recommendations and Scenarios, and Part 6: Action Plan.

Table 1.2: Quantitative summary of capacity

Sport	Analysis area (Neighbourhood)	Current demand (2019)		Future demand (2037)
		Pitch type	Current capacity total in MES ²	Future capacity total in MES
Football (grass pitches)	Central	Adult	Spare capacity of 1.5	Spare capacity of 1
		Youth 11v11	Spare capacity of 0.5	Shortfall of 0.5
		Youth 9v9	Spare capacity of 0.5	Shortfall of 0.5
		Mini 7v7	Spare capacity of 4.5	Spare capacity of 4.5
		Mini 5v5	Spare capacity of 3	Spare capacity of 3
	East	Adult	Spare capacity of 0.5	Spare capacity of 0.5
		Youth 11v11	Spare capacity of 1	Shortfall of 1
		Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 0.5	Shortfall of 1
		Mini 7v7	Shortfall of 3.5	Shortfall of 3.5
		Mini 5v5	Spare capacity of 1	Spare capacity of 1
	South	Adult	Shortfall of 0.5	Shortfall of 0.5
		Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 3.5	Shortfall of 6
		Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 2.5	Shortfall of 3
		Mini 7v7	Shortfall of 2	Shortfall of 2
		Mini 5v5	Spare capacity of 1	Spare capacity of 1
	West	Adult	Shortfall of 1.5	Shortfall of 2
		Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 0.5	Shortfall of 3.5
		Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 2	Shortfall of 3
		Mini 7v7	Spare capacity of 1	Spare capacity of 0.5
		Mini 5v5	Spare capacity of 3	Spare capacity of 2.5
Football (3G pitches) ³	Central	Full size, floodlit	Shortfall of 1	Shortfall of 2
	East	Full size, floodlit	Shortfall of 1	Shortfall of 1
	South	Full size, floodlit	Shortfall of 3	Shortfall of 4
	West	Full size, floodlit	Shortfall of 3	Shortfall of 3

² MES – match equivalent sessions per week (per season for cricket)

³ Based on accommodating 38 football teams on one full size pitch for training

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Sport	Analysis area (Neighbourhood)	Current demand (2019)		Future demand (2037)
		Pitch type	Current capacity total in MES ⁴	Future capacity total in MES
Cricket	Central	Senior	At capacity	At capacity
	East	Senior	At capacity	Shortfall of 10
	South	Senior	Shortfall of 30	Shortfall of 30
	West	Senior	At capacity	At capacity
Rugby league	Central	Senior	Shortfall of 6.25	Shortfall of 10.5
	East	Senior	Shortfall of 4	Shortfall of 4
	South	Senior	At capacity	At capacity
	West	Senior	Shortfall of 3.5	Shortfall of 3.5
Rugby union	Central	Senior	At capacity	At capacity
	East	Senior	Shortfall of 0.5	Shortfall of 0.5
	South	Senior	Shortfall of 4.75	Shortfall of 11.25
	West	Senior	Shortfall of 0.5	Shortfall of 1.5
Hockey (sand AGPs)	Warrington	Full size, floodlit	Sufficient supply with some spare capacity. However, there is a shortfall in quality affecting access.	Sufficient supply with some spare capacity. However, there is a shortfall in quality affecting access.

Conclusions

From a quantitative perspective, the current position for all sports is either that demand is being met or that there is a shortfall. In the future, further shortfalls are created for some pitch types. There are current and future shortfalls across all grass pitch types and 3G pitches. Notwithstanding quality issues, for hockey AGPs, there is sufficient supply of provision both now and in the future.

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 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.

For the most part, shortfalls can be alleviated by better utilising current provision, primarily through improving quality but also by installing additional floodlighting, improving ancillary facilities and enabling access to existing unused provision, such as at unavailable school sites. Another example of how to develop existing provision and to overcome shortfalls is pitch re-configuration (or re-designation).

Notwithstanding the above, a shortfall of 3G pitches can only be met through creating new provision. With resources to improve the quality of grass pitches being limited, an increase in 3G provision could also help reduce grass pitch shortfalls through the transfer of play, thus reducing overplay, which in turn can aid pitch quality improvements. The Warrington Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) which is aligned to this PPS, identifies the sites/areas that should be prioritised for the creation of new 3G provision for football and as such these are included (as appropriate) within the scenarios and action plan.

⁴ MES – match equivalent sessions per week (per season for cricket)

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PART 2: VISION

2.1: 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 vision, the strategy seeks to deliver the following objectives:

- ◀ Ensure that all 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.

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PART 3: AIMS

The following overarching aims are based on the three Sport England themes. It is recommended that they are adopted by the Council and partners to enable delivery of the overall PPS vision and Sport England planning objectives.

AIM 1

To **protect** the existing supply of outdoor sports facilities where it is needed to meet current and future needs.

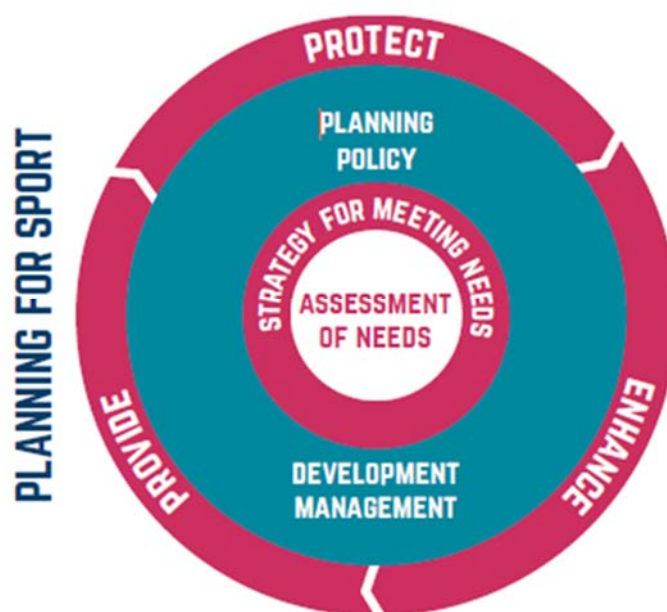
AIM 2

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

AIM 3

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

Figure 3.1: Sport England themes



Source: Sport England, Planning for Sport Guidance (June 2019)

PART 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 each playing pitch sport; resulting in sport specific recommendations.

4.1. Grass football pitches

Overall picture

- ◀ There is insufficient supply of all football pitch types in Warrington except for mini 5v5 pitches which have spare capacity at peak times both now and in the future. This is likely a reflection of an increase in mini play on 3G pitches within the Borough.

Supply

- ◀ The audit of pitches identifies a current total of 230 grass football pitches available for community use within Warrington across 116 sites during the 2019/20 season. This is an increase of eight pitches from 2016.
- ◀ Although there is an increase in adult and youth pitches, there has been a decrease in mini pitches being available. This is likely to reflect less demand for grass mini pitches due to an increase in use of 3G pitches for mini matches.
- ◀ There are 44.5 match equivalent sessions of actual spare (peak time) capacity across 28 sites in the Borough.

Quality

- ◀ Most pitches are assessed as 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.
- ◀ There are 44 pitches across 18 sites overplayed by a total of 43.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Of the pitches, 19 were assessed as poor quality across 15 sites, accounting for 16 match equivalent sessions of overplay.
- ◀ 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 quality ancillary facilities with 28% rated as having good quality ancillary facilities.

Demand

- ◀ A total of 456 teams were identified as playing football on pitches located within the Warrington local authority area, which is an increase of 11 teams since 2016. The number of female teams has increased in this time, with there now being five adult women's teams and 15 youth girls' teams in 2019.
- ◀ Through the audit in 2016, 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. However, this will change with the establishment of Warrington Girls League from the 2019/20 season.
- ◀ In 2019 team generation rates applied to population growth (to 2037) predict an increase of an adult male team, 15 youth 11v11 boys' teams, a youth 11v11 girls' team and four youth 9v9 boys' teams.

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- ◀ 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 three adult, 7.5 youth and 12.5 mini pitches.

Scenarios

Reconfiguring pitches

There is very little spare capacity in the pitch stock currently across all neighbourhood areas, for all pitch types. However, adult pitches that are available for community use but not currently used present the best opportunity for reconfiguration. A total of 13 adult pitches, across nine sites were identified as available for community use but did not have any recorded adult play. For example, if the 13 adult pitches (providing at least 13 match equivalent sessions per week) were reconfigured to youth pitches, it would eradicate current and future shortfalls on youth 11v11 (11 MES).

It should be noted, however, that most of these pitches are poor quality (10), 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.

There is a national trend for mini soccer to be accommodated on 3G pitches moving forward, with multiple matches able to be accommodated simultaneously; with leagues also able to have various kick off times meaning that a larger number of teams can be accommodated on a single site. If this trend continues and Warrington based clubs and leagues follow suit then it is likely that shortfalls on mini 7v7 pitches will be eliminated.

In addition to this, if fewer mini teams are playing on grass pitches there may be the potential to reconfigure some sites to address shortfalls of other football or sporting formats. Albeit as the smallest pitch type, it may be more difficult to convert mini pitches to youth or adult pitches.

Utilising spare capacity at educational sites

Education sites generally accommodate large areas of playing field and playing pitches. However, as tenure on these sites is generally considered to be unsecure, potential capacity is not captured, or it is discounted. Securing access to these sites can provide an opportunity to help address remaining shortfalls across the Borough.

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 is often 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 43.5 match equivalent sessions per week were identified as being available during the peak period at education sites with 24 MES being derived from standard quality pitches and the remaining 19.5 MES being on poor quality pitches. However, the vast majority of MES on standard quality pitches are mini 7v7 pitch types.

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PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Improving pitches at priority sites (LFFP)

The Local Football Facility Plan highlights ten priority projects for grass pitch improvements. Each of these sites has at least three grass pitches, totalling 50 full-size grass pitch equivalents. The sites highlighted for improvement are*:

- ◀ Appleton Thorn Playing Field
- ◀ Birchwood Forest Park
- ◀ Crab Lane Playing Field
- ◀ Hood Lane Recreational Ground
- ◀ Mary Ann Meadows
- ◀ Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub
- ◀ St Gregory's Catholic High School
- ◀ Thornton Road Recreation Ground
- ◀ Victoria Park
- ◀ Woolston Park

*Please note that whilst these sites have been identified, a review/refresh of the LFFP sites is needed to ensure they accurately reflect the needs of all CFAs covering Warrington.

Improving the quality of the pitches on the aforementioned sites to good quality would create 77 match equivalent sessions of additional capacity, whilst also removing overplay from six of the overplayed sites.

The improved quality affects capacity of all pitch types, with 18 match equivalent sessions of additional capacity created on adult pitches; one on youth 11v11 pitches; 18 on youth 9v9 pitches; 16 on mini 7v7 pitches; and 24 on youth 5v5 pitches.

For example, increasing the quality and, consequentially, the capacity of these pitch formats would address all current and future shortfalls on adult pitches (and provide significant spare capacity which could also be used to address shortfalls on 11v11 pitches), youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 pitches (there are no shortfalls of mini 5v5 pitches albeit there is overplay of four MES).

Summary

Based on the above, if all pitch quality improvements are made, pitch reconfiguration is carried out where appropriate, pitches not currently being used becoming active 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. This is due to this fact that demand will increase over time. It is therefore important that the action plan is implemented, and a progress reviewed is conducted annually to assess what the position is and how it has changed.

Recommendations

- ◀ Existing quantity of football pitches to be protected.
- ◀ In accordance with the Local Football Facility Plan, improve the quality of pitches at the priority sites to good quality; to increase capacity across the Borough.
- ◀ Linked to the above, explore opportunities to reduce the number of one pitch football sites which are unsustainable and seek to reinvest in the development of Hub and Key sites.
- ◀ Review maintenance regimes at Hub and Key sites 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.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

- ◀ Explore opportunities to reconfigure unused adult pitches to other pitch types to help cater for shortfalls expressed on youth and mini pitches, notwithstanding the need for improvement to quality.
- ◀ Work with educational establishments to maximise and secure access to pitches on sites which are available for community use but not used. This may require improvements to pitch quality and/ or close liaison with educational establishments regarding management issues which influence access.
- ◀ 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.

4.2. 3G Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs)

Overall picture

- ◀ Analysis of football training demand by analysis area shows a need for 12 full size 3G pitches. On the basis that there are currently four full size 3G pitches this leaves a shortfall of eight in Warrington.
- ◀ Once 3G pitches are provided at Broomfields Leisure Centre and Lymm High School, the current shortfall of 3G pitches in South Analysis Area will be reduced to one.
- ◀ When accounting for future demand of 21 teams (a total demand of 477 teams overall) the overall need across Warrington increases by two when analysed by analysis area.

Supply

- ◀ There are four full size 3G pitches across Warrington, all of which, are FIFA or FA approved and can therefore be used to host competitive football matches.
- ◀ Lymm Rugby Club now has a full size 3G pitch with the shock pad and certification required for rugby union purposes.
- ◀ There are currently no community available 3G pitches with the necessary certification required for rugby league purposes. However, funding is being sought for a new RFL 3G pitch at Victoria Park as part of the Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme.

Quality

- ◀ Of the four full size 3G pitches in Warrington, two are assessed as good quality (Birchwood Community High School and Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub), one as standard (Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub) and one as poor quality (Padgate Academy Warrington).

Demand

- ◀ There are 456 currently playing competitive home fixtures on grass pitches within Warrington, there is a recommended boroughwide need for 12 full size 3G pitches.
- ◀ There is demand for full size 3G pitches to be constructed to RFL specification to service rugby league training and match demand and to address capacity issues at Victoria Park.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Scenarios

Increasing football use of 3G pitches

During the last decade 3G pitches 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 understand what demand there may be for full sized floodlit 3G pitches in Warrington if increased amounts of play were to take place on them.

If all matches for teams playing mini soccer or 9v9 format football in Warrington were played on full sized floodlit 3G AGPs

- ◀ The FA is keen to work with local authorities to understand the potential demand for full sized floodlit 3G AGPs should all competitive matches, currently played on natural grass pitches be transferred to one.
- ◀ The table below takes information from the Assessment stage of this PPS to present the number of teams playing mini soccer and 9v9 football and the relevant peak periods.

Number of teams playing on natural grass pitches

Pitch type	Pitch size	Peak period	Number of teams
Youth	9v9	Saturday AM	85
Mini	7v7	Saturday AM	92
Mini	5v5	Saturday AM	87
Total			264

- ◀ The FA suggests an approach (see below) for estimating the number of full size floodlit 3G pitches that teams may demand for competitive matches. The table below presents the results of this approach in Warrington.

Number of 3G pitches that may be required

Format	Number of teams per time (x)	Number of matches at PEAK TIME (y)= x/2	3G units per match (z)	Total units required formats (A)=(y)*(z)	3G pitches required B= (A)/64
5v5	87	43.5	4	174	2.7
7v7	92	46	8	368	5.8
9v9	85	42.5	10	425	6.6

- ◀ Transferring all matches for teams currently playing mini and youth 9v9 competitive football on natural grass pitches may equate to a demand for 15 full size floodlit 3G pitches (rounded down from 15.1).
- ◀ To accommodate just mini soccer (both formats) on Saturday mornings there would be a need for 8.5 full size pitches.
- ◀ The FA approach for estimating the number of full size floodlit 3G pitches that teams may demand for competitive matches is based on:
 - ◀ A team playing a 'home' match every other week - therefore dividing the number of teams by two with the result rounded up to provide a figure for the number of matches a week during the peak period (Column y).

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- ◀ A 3G pitch being available for 4 hours⁵ a day during the peak period (e.g. 10am to 2pm). Therefore, all demand being programmed over the four hour period.
- ◀ Using a unit measure which can be applied to the different formats of the game to quantify how a pitch can be used during this four hour period (Column z). One unit is taken as equating to a quarter of a full size 3G pitch for 15 minutes. Therefore, a full size 3G pitch provides four units per 15 minutes and 16 units per hour. Across the four hour period this totals a capacity of 64 units (16 units per hour x four hours).
- ◀ As set out below, each format of the game will require a certain amount of units of a full size 3G pitch per match based on the required pitch size and match duration.

FA set units of a full size 3G pitch per match for each format

Format of the game	Number of pitches that fit on a full size 3G AGP	Number of matches per hour on a full size 3G AGP	Number of matches per 2 hour period on a full size 3G AGP	Number of units per match
5v5	4	4	8	4
7v7	2	2	4	8
9v9	2	2	2	10
11v11 Youth	1	0	1	32
11v11 Adult	1	0	1	32

- ◀ There are four full size 3G pitches in Warrington which meet the size guidelines to be considered a full size pitch.
- ◀ All are FIFA or FA approved and can therefore be used to host competitive football matches.
- ◀ Two 3G pitches are currently in the process of being provided; Broomfields Leisure Centre (conversion of a sand AGP) and Lymm High School (new pitch).
- ◀ Although Padgate Academy Warrington 3G pitch is identified in the PPS as poor quality it is currently on the FA Register, however, it is unlikely to regain this if it is not refurbished in the near future.

Summary

Once pitches are provided at Broomfields Leisure Centre and Lymm High School (total supply of six pitches that would provide enough extra weekend capacity to the existing supply across the Borough that together all 7v7 mini soccer play could be accommodated on 3G pitches at Saturday morning peak time.

Development of at least three more full size 3G pitches in Warrington would accommodate all mini soccer demand (i.e. both 5v5 and 7v7 formats).

Establishing 3G pitches at sites identified in the Local Football Facility Plan

The LFFP identifies potential projects to establish eight additional full size 3G pitches in Warrington. Creating these new (or refurbished) 3G pitches would address the current shortfall of 3G pitches to accommodate football training demand, based on one 3G pitch being able to accommodate 38 teams for training per week.

Current shortfalls would be addressed in the Central and East analysis areas, and the current shortfall in the South Area would be reduced to one full size 3G pitches.

⁵ The rationale for 4 hours is based on a standard approach for match programming nationally and the ability to facilitate 2 adult games.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

The table below identifies the 3G pitch projects identified in Warrington’s LFFP. It should be noted that whilst some sites are specifically named, other projects identify areas in which a pitch should be established, and further examination of the options would be required. Even though a project is listed in the LFFP it does not necessarily mean that it will come to fruition in the future as delivery is dependent on feasibility studies being undertaken that show the projects will be sustainable.

Priority full size 3G projects identified in Warrington’s LFFP

Analysis area	No. of AGPs proposed in LFFP ⁶	Proposed 3G site/s (or area)
Central	1	Options include Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub, Priestley College or Victoria Park
East	3	Woolston Park / Hillock Lane
		Culcheth Area
		Padgate Academy Warrington (refurbish)
South	3	Lymm High School (in progress)
		Broomfields Leisure Centre (in progress)
		Grappenhall Village Sports Club
West	1	Options include Penketh High School (conversion from sand AGP), Hood Lane Recreation Ground or Great Sankey Parish Council

RFL Community Standard and RFU World Rugby compliant AGPs

In addition to the significant demand for 3G pitches for football, the consultation carried out also identified demand for 3G pitches for rugby league, specifically for training but also to help address capacity issues at Victoria Park for matches. Notwithstanding the small size RFL 3G pitch at Warrington Wolves Training Dome which is unavailable for wider community use, there are currently no community available 3G pitches with the necessary certification required for rugby league purposes. The provision of rugby league compliant 3G pitches in the Area would also address levels of overplay currently recorded on grass pitches.

As part of the Rugby League World Cup ‘Inspired by 2021’ Legacy Programme, a bid for a new rugby league certified 3G pitch at Victoria Park has been proposed. A planning application has recently been submitted and it will be constructed, owned and managed by WBC. The proposal is to extend the fencing around the Arena pitch to incorporate the 3G pitch and to relocate the grass rugby pitch around to the side of the Arena. Provision of a 3G pitch specifically for rugby league will help to alleviate the significant overplay at Victoria Park and to better accommodate Warrington Wolves and Latchford Albion/Giants teams. Other community clubs will also be programmed into the usage for training.

Recommendations

- ◀ Work with the FA to increase provision of 3G pitches to meet football training demand and utilise these pitches to accommodate competitive demand for mini football.
- ◀ Carry out feasibility work at sites identified in the LFFP (and Action Plan) to deliver increased provision of full size 3G pitches to meet training and competitive demand.
- ◀ On a site by site basis, consider the feasibility of installing a shock pad to meet rugby league training needs on new 3G pitches being planned.

⁶ Please note a review/refresh of the number of 3G pitch projects in each analysis area in the LFFP is needed to ensure the shortfalls identified in this updated PPS are reflected.

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- ◀ Maximise use of new rugby compliant 3G pitches to accommodate training demand from grass pitches and competitive demand as appropriate.
- ◀ Work with Padgate Academy Warrington to improve the quality of provision to ensure long term use for competitive 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.

4.3. Hockey pitches

Overall picture

- ◀ The current quantitative level of suitable AGP provision for hockey is sufficient to meet current and future demand. However, there are quality issues at Lymm High School and Priestley College which have resulted in Lymm HC and Warrington HC having to find alternative venues including greater use of Culcheth Community Campus.
- ◀ There is a requirement for four sand based AGPs to meet demand for competitive match play, junior training and informal play.
- ◀ 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 protected; Culcheth Community Campus, Lymm High School, Priestley College and University of Chester (Warrington Campus).

Supply

- ◀ There is a total of six full size (sand filled/ dressed), floodlit AGPs in Warrington. This takes account of the conversion of the AGP at Broomfields Leisure Centre to a 3G surface which is currently in progress (2019). The AGP at Cardinal Newman is not available for community use and is not floodlit.

Quality

- ◀ All six AGPs are rated as standard quality. However, reports suggest that the AGP at Lymm High School has issues with floodlighting and has reduced to poor quality meaning that the Club is now using alternative venues. Further, the quality at Priestley College AGP is being monitored and maintenance work is being carried out.
- ◀ 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 at three AGPs; Cardinal Newman Catholic High School (1984), Culcheth Community Campus (2004), and Penketh High School (1995).

Availability

- ◀ The pitch at Priestley College is only available during term time which restricts pre-season training for Warrington Hockey Club.
- ◀ Lymm High School (notwithstanding current quality issues and reduced usage), and University of Chester (Warrington Campus) are all operating at capacity during the peak periods for hockey.
- ◀ Although Priestley College is at capacity, please note that it is not fully available during the peak period (only 16 hours compared to 34 hours at the other sites).

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- ◀ Culcheth Community Campus is generally unused for hockey (except occasional use by Lymm HC) and therefore has significant spare capacity. However, it is currently accommodating Lymm HC and Warrington HC whilst there are quality issues at their respective sites.
- ◀ There is significant use of sand based AGPs in Warrington for football training. The most significant being Culcheth Community Campus and Penketh High School (unused for hockey).

Demand

- ◀ There are three hockey clubs in Warrington with a total of 379 members, of which, 188 are senior members and 191 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% in Warrington (based on affiliation trends) which results in an overall increase of six adults and seven juniors.
- ◀ There is demand for additional access to sand based AGPs during weekday evenings for training purposes, specifically in the South Area. However, an increase in 3G pitch provision may create some spare capacity for further hockey training on the current AGPs.

Scenarios

Accommodating current and future demand

Based on there being 12 adult teams and three junior teams (this discounts the two University of Chester (Warrington Campus) teams as these play midweek) in Warrington requiring a pitch at peak time (Saturday) there is a requirement for four full size (rounded up from 3.75) floodlit hockey pitches based on teams playing home and away (and based on a floodlit AGP being able to accommodate a maximum of four matches on a Saturday and Sunday).

Due to availability on pitches for matches, training and the informal versions of the game, the current four pitches used for hockey need to be retained as hockey surfaces. Junior teams can play competitive fixtures on either Saturday's or Sundays, all current junior teams in Warrington currently play on a Sunday. Furthermore, a large proportion of junior members actually represent the senior teams competitively. Based on the information available there is sufficient supply to meet both current and future competitive match play requirements.

However, current availability is not sufficient to meet current and future training demand, and any additional growth in participation numbers at the hockey clubs achieved through any informal versions of the game. For example, the pitch at Priestley College is only available during term time which restricts pre-season training for Warrington Hockey Club.

Further, each of the sites has competing usage with football to varying degrees albeit with an increase in 3G pitches, it is likely that some of this usage will be reduced and therefore some capacity released for more hockey training.

Improving quality

Lymm High School's AGP was resurfaced in 2009 and was rated as standard quality through the NTA process although recent feedback from England Hockey following consultation with Lymm Hockey Club, which uses the AGP both for competitive match play and training, suggest there is a drainage issue with the pitch that impacts on the use of the AGP.

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Currently, these issues have resulted in all Lymm Hockey Club teams (eight senior and three junior teams) having to find alternative venues including greater use of Culcheth Community Campus (20 minute drive). Although please also note that the AGP at Culcheth Community Campus is assessed as standard quality and has not been refurbished in over 10 years.

Given the drive to use an alternative AGP, it is already proving difficult to sustain junior training and as such the impact of not addressing the flooding issues at Lymm High School are likely to be detrimental to hockey participation in the longer term. It is also preventing the Club to grow and to accommodate initiatives such as Hockey Heros.

Conversion of sand based to 3G pitches

Given the shortfall of full size 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.

Please note that although the AGP at Culcheth Community Campus is currently being used to accommodate teams from Lymm HC due to quality issues at Lymm High School, it generally accommodates little or no hockey use (overspill for Lymm HC on an adhoc basis).

Therefore, the only sand based AGP which is not currently being used for hockey is Penketh High School. Converting this to a 3G surface is not likely to have any impact on hockey. However, conversion should not take place unless consultation with England Hockey confirms 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.

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.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect the following AGPs for hockey use:
 - ◀ Culcheth Community Campus
 - ◀ Lymm High School
 - ◀ Priestley College
 - ◀ University of Chester (Warrington Campus)
- ◀ Work in partnership to establish an action plan to rectify the situation at Lymm High School in order to sustain the long term and continued use of the pitch.
- ◀ Explore opportunities to improve pitch quality in order to ensure continued hockey use at Culcheth Community Campus, at least in the short term.
- ◀ Monitor quality issues at Priestley College and work to improve quality and establish greater use of the site for Warrington Hockey Club.
- ◀ Ensure that future demand from new England Hockey initiative, Hockey Heroes (aimed at growing participation for under 10s) can be accommodated.
- ◀ 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 FF/CFAs and England Hockey should work together to identify the feasibility of converting AGPs currently unused for hockey to 3G surfaces.

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- ◀ 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.

4.4. 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 22.25 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ Overall in Warrington there is a predicted shortfall of 27 match equivalent sessions based on anticipated future demand.

Supply

- ◀ In 2019 there are 33 grass rugby league pitches within Warrington available for community use. Of these, 27 pitches are senior rugby league pitches, two is a junior pitch and four are primary pitches.
- ◀ Of the community available rugby league pitches, 22 are managed by Warrington Borough Council, three are managed by parish Councils, five are managed in house by schools/ colleges/ universities, one is managed privately by sports clubs, one by LiveWire; and one by the Church of England.
- ◀ As part of the Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme, a bid for a new rugby league certified 3G pitch at Victoria Park has been proposed.
- ◀ There is little actual spare capacity on pitches in Warrington with only 4.5 match equivalent sessions expressed in total. However, overplay amounts to 29.25 match equivalent sessions. The Central Area has the highest level of overplay (11 match equivalent sessions).

Quality

- ◀ The majority of pitches are either poor (27%) or standard quality (58%). Only 15% 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.
- ◀ One of the main reasons for overplay is training on match pitches coupled with poor quality pitches. In addition, primary and junior teams playing on senior pitches also contributes to the overplay.

Demand

- ◀ Ten clubs provide a total of 84 teams playing competitive rugby league on pitches located within Warrington during the 2019 season. This consists of 13 senior teams, 27 junior teams, 42 primary teams and two disability teams.
- ◀ The Central Area is where most teams have their match play pitch located (33).
- ◀ Since the previous PPS, there has been creation of women and girls' rugby league teams and disability teams now playing competitively in the Borough.
- ◀ There are also a range of rugby league initiatives and formats being played in Warrington including Masters rugby league, Touch Rugby and walking rugby.
- ◀ Rylands RLFC has been displaced from Rylands Sports and Social Club site which has now become a football only site (cricket was also previously displaced from the site). This has resulted in the Club losing teams as it does not currently have a home ground albeit it is in the process of establishing a home ground at Bennetts Recreation Ground.

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- Team generation rates applied to population growth (to 2037) predict an increase of three junior boys' teams and a primary team.
- A number of clubs report aspiration to increase the number of teams they provide. Of the clubs which quantify their potential increase, there is a predicated growth of one senior men's team, two junior teams and a primary team.

Scenarios

Improving pitch quality

If the overplayed pitches were improved to carry an additional match equivalent session per week, overplay would reduce from 18.25 MES to 8.75 with 0.5 of spare capacity being made at Dallam Recreation Ground.

Overplayed sites with improved pitch quality capacity table

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	No. of pitches	Current quality	Current usage (MES)	New capacity with quality increased (MES)	New capacity rating
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Central	Senior	2	Standard	5.5	6	0.5
61	Hood Lane Recreation Centre	West	Senior	4	Standard	13.5	12	1.5
95	Shaw Street Recreation Ground	East	Senior	2	Standard	9	6	3
131	Victoria Park	Central	Senior	3	1 x good 2 x poor	11.25	7	4.25

Transfer of training demand from match pitches

Across all sites present training demand on match pitches totals 28.75 match equivalent sessions per week, all on senior pitches. Removing all training demand off match pitches would fully address the Borough wide shortfall expressed and would also allow future demand to be accommodated.

Provision of a full size RFL compliant 3G pitch which can accommodate rugby league training would significantly help to alleviate overplay on grass pitches, if access can be secured for all clubs (as required).

As part of the Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme, a bid for a new rugby league certified 3G pitch at Victoria Park has been proposed. Provision of a 3G pitch specifically for rugby league will alleviate the overplay at Victoria Park equating to 6.25 MES per week and to better accommodate Warrington Wolves and Latchford Albion/Giants teams. Other community clubs will also be programmed into the usage for training.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

In addition, increasing floodlighting at some sites may help to spread usage across pitches and therefore help to reduce overplay. For example, the pitches at Hood Lane Recreation Centre (used by Crosfields RFC) are overplayed by a total of 5.5 MES per week. Installing floodlights coupled with pitch improvements will allow training to be focused on one pitch and reduce usage on the other pitches to address all the overplay. There is potential identified for floodlight at the site as part of the World Cup Legacy Programme.

Summary

Overplay can only be alleviated by carrying out a combination of improving pitch quality and creating more dedicated areas to be used for training. Further, this will create enough spare capacity to accommodate future demand.

It is more sustainable to provide at least one floodlit 3G pitch to accommodate rugby league training and address capacity issues at Victoria Park as opposed to creating new grass pitches.

Recommendations

- ◀ Existing quantity of rugby league pitches to be protected.
- ◀ Explore options to improve poor quality overplayed pitches in order to help alleviate overplay, and reduce some of the shortfalls.
- ◀ Explore options to encourage teams to utilise areas off match pitches for training demand; on some sites this may mean installing floodlighting to encourage use during pre-season in the winter months.
- ◀ Support provision of a full size RFL compliant 3G pitch and ensure this is programmed to overcome capacity issues at Victoria Park and to accommodate training demand from clubs across Warrington (as required).
- ◀ Ensure that Rylands RLFC can be fully accommodated at Bennetts Recreation Ground and that investment is sought to improve/increase provision at the site.
- ◀ Continue to support growth areas including women and girls' and disability rugby league teams and work to ensure appropriate facilities are provided to meet their needs.

4.5 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 5.75 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ Overall in Warrington there is a predicted shortfall of 13.25 match equivalent sessions based on anticipated future demand.

Supply

- ◀ There is a total of 17 grass rugby union pitches that are available for community use. The vast majority of these are located in the South neighbourhood area (88%). There is one pitch located in the East neighbourhood area, one in the West and none in Central.
- ◀ 14 of the pitches are senior size; with the remaining three pitches considered mini.
- ◀ There is no actual spare capacity for additional demand during the peak period in Warrington.
- ◀ In addition to the grass pitches there is a WR compliant 3G pitch now installed at Lymm Rugby Club as part of the RFU's Rugby Turf programme. The pitch will support rugby union activity in both Warrington and the surrounding areas.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Quality

- ◀ In total, five pitches are rated as good quality (15%), 15 as standard quality (45%) and 13 are deemed to be poor quality (39%).
- ◀ Overplay amounts to 5.75 match equivalent sessions. The South neighbourhood analysis area has the highest level of overplay (4.75 match equivalent sessions) and the West and East neighbourhoods have 0.5 match sessions of overplay each.
- ◀ One of the main reasons for overplay is training on match pitches.

Demand

- ◀ A total of 30 teams were identified as playing competitive teams from community clubs within Warrington. This consists of eight senior teams, four colt's teams, six junior teams and 12 mini teams.
- ◀ All but two of the teams in Warrington are based in the South neighbourhood area.
- ◀ Warrington RUFC identified significant displaced demand and also indicated it had unmet demand, although the latter was not quantified.
- ◀ Team generation rates predict an increase of one junior boys' team, specifically in the South Area.
- ◀ All three clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Based on this there is a predicated growth of four senior men's teams and four junior teams.

Scenarios

Addressing security of tenure

It should be noted that since the Assessment Report was updated (September 2019) Warrington RUFC has ceased to have access to pitch provision at Warrington Sports Club. This has meant that all match demand (14 teams or seven MES per week) is now being accommodated elsewhere.

Senior matches (three teams or 0.5 MES per week) are currently being played at Grappenhall Sports Club (on a converted football pitch) and mini and junior match demand (11 teams or 5.5 MES per week) is being played as either away games, at Lymm Rugby Club on the new WR compliant 3G pitch or at Grappenhall Sports Club. Most of the Club's training is split between Lymm Rugby Club and there is also some use of the Club's disused site, Bridge Lane.

This is clearly not ideal or sustainable and as such the Club is currently in talks with Grappenhall Sports Club about establishing a future permanent (and secure) home at the site, if pitches can be converted permanently or established at the site. Warrington RUFC would need access to two good quality (D1/M2) senior pitches to provide six MES per week of capacity and a floodlit training area. Although there would still be a need to accommodate training demand off the match pitches. Further there would also need to be secured access to a clubhouse facility with changing rooms and a car park.

In the short term, the RFU is keen for Warrington RUFC and Warrington Sports Club to come to an agreement for continued use of the Warrington Sports Club site up to the end of the claw-back period from previous grant funding (three years). This is subject to the cost for the rugby club being in line with market rate for pitch hire; negotiations are ongoing.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Improving pitch quality

As shown overleaf, improving maintenance from poor (M0) to standard (M1) or standard (M1) to good (M2) at sites where clubs have security of tenure would create additional capacity of 2.5 match equivalent sessions (MES) per week.⁷ This would create an additional two match equivalent sessions per week potential spare capacity for use, as well as removing overplay from Thornton Road Recreation Centre; and reducing accumulative shortfalls from 5.75 match equivalent sessions per week to 5.25 match equivalent sessions.

Of note, maintenance of the pitches at Lymm Rugby Club cannot be improved further with a current maintenance rating of M2 the maximum possible for a community club.

⁷ As per the above, pitches at Warrington Sports Club have been excluded from the current supply of rugby union pitches.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Table 4.4: Impact of improving maintenance

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Quality rating	Floodlit?	Usage (MES per week)	Site capacity (MES per week)	Capacity rating (MES per week)	Improved quality	Capacity effect (MES per week)
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	South	Senior	M0 / D0	No	0.5	0.5	-	M1/D0	-1
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	South	Senior	M0 / D0	No	0.5	0.5	-	M1/D0	-1
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Senior	M2 / D2	No	4.75	3.25	1.5	M2/D2	1.5
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Senior	M2 / D2	No	4.5	3.25	1.25	M2/D2	1.25
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Mini	M2 / D2	No	1.5	3.25	-1.75	M2/D2	-1.75
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Mini	M2 / D2	No	1.5	3.25	-1.75	M2/D2	-1.75
127	Thornton Road Recreation Centre	West	Senior	M0 / D1	No	2	1.5	0.5	M1/D1	-

Improving maintenance and drainage

Alternatively, improving both maintenance and drainage by one increment would increase capacity by five match equivalent sessions per week, 0.5 of which would be on mini pitches. This would eliminate overplay one site, Thornton Road Recreation Centre; whilst concurrently decreasing overplay and increasing potential spare capacity. The two senior pitches at Lymm Rugby Club would remain overplayed if patterns of use were to continue.

At Lymm Rugby Club RFC, also relocating training demand and some match demand to the new WR compliant 3G pitch would be enough to eradicate overplay.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Table 4.5: Improving maintenance and drainage

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Quality rating	Floodlit?	Usage (MES per week)	Site capacity (MES per week)	Capacity rating (MES per week)	Improved quality	Capacity effect (MES per week)
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	South	Senior	M0 / D0	No	0.5	0.5	-	M1/D1	-1.5
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane)	South	Senior	M0 / D0	No	0.5	0.5	-	M1/D1	-1.5
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Senior	M2 / D2	No	4.75	3.25	1.5	M2/D3	1.25
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Senior	M2 / D2	No	4.5	3.25	1.25	M2/D3	1
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Mini	M2 / D2	No	1.5	3.25	-1.75	M2/D3	-2
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Mini	M2 / D2	No	1.5	3.25	-1.75	M2/D3	-2
127	Thornton Road Recreation Centre	West	Senior	M0 / D1	No	2	1.5	0.5	M1/D2	-0.5

Utilising WR compliant 3G pitches

The World Rugby compliant pitch at Lymm Rugby Club has recently (October 2019) been completed and certified for rugby union use. It is understood that all midweek training demand from Lymm RUFC will be accommodated on the pitch (5.5 match equivalent sessions), in addition to some match demand on both Saturdays and Sundays.

Removing the training demand alone would be sufficient to eliminate overplay from the remaining senior pitches on the site; but also accommodating some match demand on the 3G pitch will increase the amount of potential capacity available.

It is understood that since Warrington RUFC has been unable to access pitch provision at Warrington Sports Club, teams are accessing the 3G pitch at Lymm Rugby Club for midweek training demand. It should be noted that this did not previously take place on a match pitch with the Club utilising a floodlit training area. Warrington RUFC is also accessing the pitch for some senior match play on Saturdays, whilst its mini and junior teams are currently having to play all fixtures away from home.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Summary

Most rugby union pitches in Warrington are poor quality. Despite this, improving pitch quality, through enhanced maintenance regimes and/ or improving pitch drainage, would not significantly address much of the current overplay. The scenarios show that any quality improvements would remove the small amount of overplay from Thornton Road Recreation Ground, the home venue of Eagle RFC; but would not significantly impact the overplay at Lymm Rugby Club with pitches on this site already subject to a high level of maintenance.

Access to the new WR compliant 3G pitch at Lymm Rugby Club will eliminate overplay from this site, with all midweek training and some match demand from Lymm RFC to be accommodated.

The issues surrounding Warrington RUFC and Warrington Sports Club need addressing as a priority, with the Club currently accessing the 3G pitch at Lymm Rugby Club for some demand; and the majority of fixtures away from home. There is the concern that unless the Club is able to return to Warrington Sports Club or an alternative, appropriate site, with supporting ancillary facilities, then participation will decrease.

Recommendations

- ◀ Existing quantity of rugby union pitches to be protected.
- ◀ In the short term, encourage Warrington RUFC and Warrington Sports Club to meet a solution for continued use of the Sports Club.
- ◀ In the longer term, support Warrington RUFC to establish pitches and long term security of tenure at Grappenhall Sports Club. Once achieved, there is a need for the Club to consider the long term future of its site at Bridge Lane.
- ◀ Improve poor quality overplayed pitches in order to help alleviate overplay and reduce some of the shortfalls.
- ◀ Providing training areas off match pitches and make clubs aware that this option is needed in order to address overplay and preserve pitch quality.
- ◀ Explore options for introducing floodlights at appropriate sites to enable training to take place on more suitable facilities.
- ◀ Support Lymm RFC as it continues its site/clubhouse development projects will allow the Club to grow its sustainability.
- ◀ Work in partnership to seek a longer term agreement for Eagle RFC to provide the Club with secure tenure, potentially allowing for investment in the site (in particular, ancillary 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.

4.6 Cricket pitches

Overall picture

- ◀ Overall in Warrington there is currently a shortfall of 30 match equivalent sessions per season on senior wickets.
- ◀ When accounting for future demand based on team generation rates and club aspirations the shortfall increases to 40 match equivalent sessions.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Supply

- ◀ In total, there are 20 cricket pitches identified in Warrington, of which 11 are available for community use. Six are not available for community use whilst three have become disused.
- ◀ Of the 11 pitches available for community use, 10 have grass cricket squares providing 100 natural grass wickets.
- ◀ There are a total four non-turf wickets available for community use across the Borough.
- ◀ Despite three pitches showing potential spare capacity there is no actual spare capacity available during the peak period.

Quality

- ◀ The audit of community use grass wicket cricket pitches found six pitches to be good quality and the remaining three to be standard quality.
- ◀ All of the non-turf wicket pitches were rated as poor quality.
- ◀ There is overplay of 30 match equivalent sessions per season on senior wickets; and 15 match equivalent sessions of overplay on junior wickets.

Demand

- ◀ In total there are six clubs in Warrington providing a total of 23 senior male teams, five senior female teams and 23 junior teams.
- ◀ 47 of these teams are based on the South neighbourhood analysis area, with both the East and Central areas accommodating two teams each.
- ◀ A number of clubs report aspirations to increase the number of teams they provide. Based on this & TGRs there is a predicated growth of one senior team and eight junior teams.
- ◀ Three of the five clubs reported a demand for additional training facilities, with a good quality non turf wicket being cited as a need.

Scenarios

Addressing overplay

Although a regular, sufficient maintenance regime is likely to sustain sites with minimal levels of overplay (e.g. Warrington Sports Club where the two squares are overplayed by seven MES and eight MES per season each), reducing play will ensure there is no detrimental impact on quality over time. Particularly in the case of Warrington Sports Club where the outfield is also overmarked with other pitch types i.e. rugby/football.

However, to address all overplay at Grappenhall CC (15 MES per season) and Lymm Oughtrington CC (15 MES per season), access to further provision is needed. On the basis that one good quality wicket can accommodate five matches per season. This equates to a need for each club to have access to at least an additional three grass wickets each at peak time.

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

Installing a non turf pitch *in situ* as this would also allow for the transfer of junior demand away from grass wickets.

As a caveat, whilst the inclusion of a non turf pitch for the management of fixtures would alleviate overplay issues, usage is subject to league rules and minimum pitch specifications.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Furthermore, this should not lead to undue pressure being placed on clubs and volunteers using the above sites to install self-funded NTPs.

Although attempts should be made to reduce identified overplay clubs do not necessarily accept that there is an issue and have managed in the past to accommodate such demand.

Security of tenure

Although no clubs identified issues with regards to security of tenure during the consultation process. Stretton Cricket Club's future at Pewterspear Sports Pavilion appears to be in doubt after their home matches (28 MES per season in total for two senior and one junior team) for the remainder of the 2019 season were moved to Chelford Cricket Club (in neighbouring Cheshire East) with the permission of the UK Fast Cheshire Cricket League.

As there is no peak time capacity at other cricket sites in Warrington, there is no capacity to accommodate this locally in the South Analysis Area or elsewhere. New provision would be required to re-accommodate this demand back in Warrington if access cannot be secured at Pewterspear Sports Pavilion.

Impact of All Stars future growth

In partnership with the ECB and Chance to Shine, All Stars Cricket delivers cricket programmes aimed at introducing cricket to children aged from five to eight. It is predicted that this will subsequently lead to increased participation in junior cricket at clubs. Given the target age demographic of All Stars participants, it should be considered that much future demand will be generated in more than five years, when participants will then be aged between ten and 13 years old.

Since its launch in 2017, the number of All Stars Cricket centres in Warrington has increased on an annual basis. Predominantly located at club sites, these sessions provide introductory opportunities for 5-8 year olds. With the continual growth of the programme, it is expected that this will eventually result in the formation of additional junior teams (both male and female); and as such increase the amount of activity taking place on pitches.

It should be noted that although All Stars Cricket sessions do not take place on match squares, they do take place on outfield areas meaning that no match play is able to take place on the site concurrently. This may cause an issue as junior participation grows, as a longer term consequence of All Stars Cricket; and the continued operation of existing, and potentially new, All Stars sessions.

Some clubs may need to access secondary venues to accommodate All Stars Cricket in the future; and may opt to utilise school playing fields that are often unused during the summer months. Currently, only two education providers (Lymm High School and Bridgewater High School) have grass cricket squares, with a further three having NTPs (St Gregory's High School, Padgate Academy Warrington and Cardinal Newman High School).

As mentioned, not all current All Stars Cricket centres are based at club sites, with some located at education sites that do not currently have formal cricket provision.

This supports the idea that a formal cricket pitch is not required to accommodate All Stars Cricket, meaning that forging potential links between clubs and local schools (both primary and secondary) could be an option to ensure that club sites remain available for use with the increased level of demand. Security of tenure at these sites should be obtained with formal, long term community use agreements.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Impact of growth in female participation

The ECB, along with Cricket Boards/Foundations, is focusing developing female participation at both senior and junior levels. Currently there are five senior women's teams but no junior girls' teams playing within Warrington, with further junior female participation accommodated within some junior boys' squads.

As part of the ECB's Inspiring Generations Strategy, that was announced in January 2019, two of the six key priorities focus on increasing participation by girls. Investing in girls' county age group cricket and delivering a girls' secondary school programme should both aid an increase in participation. Should this happen then clubs will need to be able to accommodate female teams in relation to having pitch capacity available as well as appropriate supporting ancillary facilities, particularly changing provision.

Initially, this may mean that the clubs that currently support female teams strengthen player pools, but over the time it is expected that the overall number of female teams in Warrington will increase; and with it clubs will seek to modify and invest in ancillary facilities. This should be supported to improve the sustainability of any participation increases.

Summary

There is a need to look at access to appropriate educational sites where cricket pitches are of standard or good quality to help deliver future programmes. Furthermore, access to additional provision and/or the introduction of non-turf wickets at sites where pitches are at capacity or overplayed could address overplay.

Recommendations

- ◀ Existing quantity of cricket pitches to be protected.
- ◀ Explore options to introduce non-turf wickets at overplayed pitches, which could also support with club training requirements.
- ◀ Further investigate issues with regards to securing long term tenure at Pewterspear Sports Pavilion for Stretton CC and retaining the Club playing in Warrington.
- ◀ 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.
- ◀ It should be noted that the ECB states that where there is either new cricket provision being put in place or more commonly development which may prejudice the use of the sporting facility there would be a requirement for a full ball strike risk assessment to be undertaken and appropriate mitigation put in place as part of the development.
- ◀ As such the ECB recommends that the clubs/organisations seek to have a ball strike risk assessment undertaken. Further information can be provided by the ECB.
- ◀ 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.

PART 5: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategic recommendations for the Strategy have been developed via a combination of information gathered during consultation, site visits and analysis which culminated in the production of an assessment report, as well as key drivers identified for the Strategy. They reflect overarching and common areas to be addressed, which apply across pitch sports and ancillary facilities and may not be specific to just one sport.

OBJECTIVE 1

To **protect** the existing supply of pitches and ancillary facilities where it is needed to meet 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 PPS Assessment 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 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 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.

- ◀ **Disused** – sites that are not being used at all by any users and are not available for community hire either. Once these sites are disused for five or more years they will then be categorised as 'lapsed sites'.
- ◀ **Lapsed** - last known use was as a playing field more than five years ago. These sites fall outside of Sport England's statutory remit but still have to be assessed using the criteria in paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Sport England would nonetheless challenge a proposed loss of playing pitches/playing field which fails to meet such criteria. It should be emphasised that the lawful planning use of a lapsed site is still that of a playing field.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

List of football pitch sites identified as lapsed or disused

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Lapsed or disused site	Pitch types	Comments
50	Grappenhall Hall School	South neighbourhood	Disused (2015)	1 x youth pitch	School closed. No community use has ever been recorded for this site.
67	Lymm May Queen Field	South neighbourhood	Disused	1 x adult pitch 1 x mini 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 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 pitch 1 x mini 7v7 pitch	Closed for more than 5 years. Could be brought back into use subject to improvements being made.
124	Sycamore Lane Primary School	West neighbourhood	Disused (2016)	2 x mini pitches	School closed. Current planning application for this site.
153	St Werbergh's CofE Primary School	South neighbourhood	Lapsed (2001)	2 x youth pitches	School closed
-	Foxwood School (Chatfield Drive, Birchwood)	East neighbourhood	Lapsed	Small pitch	School closed

The PPS Assessment 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 or be replaced in accordance with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy Exception E4 and paragraph 97 of the NPPF, as there is potential need for playing field land to accommodate more pitches to meet the identified shortfalls now and in the future.

It is recommended that the Council adopts the following priority order of options with regards to addressing any disused/lapsed playing field sites that may be identified for disposal:

- 1) Firstly, explore the feasibility of bringing the site back into use. A feasibility study may show either:
 - a) The site can be brought back into sustainable use where funding is available, and use is secured by the Council and relevant NGBs/Community Groups; or
 - b) The site is not in a sustainable location and in which case no amount of money will make it desirable and an alternative use can be considered in accordance with priority option (3)
- 2) The site could become public open space to meet an identified need; or
- 3) Redevelop the site for an alternative use but use the capital receipt or mitigation contribution to invest in existing sites in the locality

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

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 for and capacity of existing sites, and whether improvement to increase capacity or new provision is required. The starting point for this is through utilisation of Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) which is provided separately but is shown within Part 7: Housing Growth Scenario. It is likely that during the life span of the PPS that the contributions towards the improvement of existing sites will adequately meet the new demand from housing developments in Warrington.

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 a playing field will use the PPS to help assess relevant planning applications against paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and their 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 robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, 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 area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field':

- ◀ of equivalent or better quality, and
- ◀ of equivalent or greater quantity, and
- ◀ in a suitable location, and
- ◀ subject to equivalent or better accessibility and 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.

However, as detailed in the football scenarios, it may be appropriate to consider decommissioning some existing outdoor sport sites (that are of low value i.e. one/two pitch sites with no changing provision) to generate investment in creating bigger, better quality sites and creating capacity.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

In relation to schools, 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.

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 97 of the 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 through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.

A number of education sites are being used in Warrington for competitive play, predominately for football. In some cases, use of pitches has been classified as secure, however, use is not necessarily formalised and further work should be carried out to ensure an appropriate community use agreement is in place (including access to changing provision where required).

For the remaining providers, NGBs, Sport England and other appropriate bodies such as Active Cheshire Partnership and the Football Foundation can often help to negotiate and engage with providers where the local authority may not have direct influence. This is particularly the case at sites that have received funding from these bodies or are going to receive funding in the future as community access can be a condition of the agreement.

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 to enable them to take greater levels of ownership and support the wider development and maintenance of facilities. To facilitate this, where practical, it should support and enable clubs to generate sufficient funds, providing that this is to the benefit of sport.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

The Council should also further explore opportunities where security of tenure could be granted via lease agreements (minimum 25 years as recommended by Sport England and NGBs) so clubs are in a position to apply for external funding. This is particularly the case at poor quality local authority sites, possibly with inadequate ancillary facilities, so that quality can be improved and sites developed.

Local sports clubs should be supported by partners including the Council and NGBs to achieve sustainability across a range of areas including management, membership, funding, facilities, volunteers and partnership work. For example, support club development and encourage clubs to develop evidence of business and sports development plans to generate income via their facilities. All clubs could be encouraged to look at different management models such as registering as Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC)⁸. They should also be encouraged to work with partners locally – such as volunteer support agencies or local businesses.

For clubs with lease arrangements already in place, these should be reviewed on a case by case basis, when fewer than 25 years remain on existing agreements to secure extensions, thus improving security of tenure and helping them attract funding for site developments. Any club with less than 25 years remaining on an agreement is less likely to obtain any external funding. It should be noted that the Council is may only be able to offer a licence for a site, as opposed to a lease, due to requirements for public access.

Each club interested in leasing a site should be required to meet service and/or strategic recommendations. An additional set of criteria should also be considered, which takes into account club quality, aligned to its long-term development objectives and sustainability, as seen in the table below.

Table 5.1: Recommended criteria for lease of sport sites to clubs/organisations

Club	Site
<p>Clubs should have NGB 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>For established clubs which have proven success in terms of self-management sites identified as 'Key' or 'Local' within the action plan hierarchy may be appropriate to consider.</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>

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

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

⁸ <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/cascbenefits>

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

In addition, clubs should be made fully aware of the associated responsibilities/liabilities when considering leases of multi-use public playing fields. It is important in these instances that the site, to some degree, remains available for other purposes or for other users.

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 facilities where there is a need to do so

Given the mix of providers in Warrington, there is a need for the Council and NGBs to work with other partners to help maximise the 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:

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

OBJECTIVE 2

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

Recommendations:

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

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 of 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

Quality in Warrington is variable but generally pitches are assessed as standard quality. Where facilities are assessed as standard or poor quality and/or overplayed, maintenance regimes should be reviewed and, where possible, improved to ensure that what is being done is of an appropriate standard to sustain/improve pitch quality. Ensuring continuance of existing maintenance of good quality sites is also essential.

It is also important to note the impact the weather has on quality. The worse the weather, the poorer facilities tend to become, especially if no drainage systems are in place or if existing drainage systems are inadequate. This also means that quality can vary, year on year, dependent upon the weather and levels of rainfall.

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

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For the purposes of quality assessments, the Strategy refers to outdoor sports facilities and ancillary facilities separately as being of 'Good', 'Standard' or 'Poor' quality. For example, some good quality sites have poor quality elements and vice versa (e.g. a good quality pitch may be serviced by poor quality changing facilities).

Good quality refers to pitches that have, for example, good grass cover, an even surface, are free from vandalism and litter. For rugby, a good quality pitch is also pipe and/or slit drained. 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.

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

Poor quality refers to provision with, for example, inadequate grass cover, uneven surfaces and poor drainage. For rugby, pitches will have inadequate natural drainage. In terms of ancillary facilities, poor quality refers to inappropriate changing rooms with no showers, no running water and/or old, dated interiors. If a poor quality site receives little or no usage that is not to say that no improvement is needed, it may instead be the case that it receives no demand because of its quality, thus an improvement in said quality will attract demand to the site, potentially from overplayed standard or good quality sites.

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 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 Borough, 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, 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 outdoor facility stock; it is necessary to ensure that provision is not overplayed beyond recommended carrying capacity. This is determined by assessing quality (via a non-technical site assessment) and allocating a match limit to each (daily for hockey, weekly for football and rugby union and seasonal for cricket).

The FA, the RFU, the ECB and EH all recommend a number of matches that pitches should take based on quality, as seen in the table below. For other grass pitch sports, no guidelines are set by the NGBs although it can be assumed that a similar trend should be followed.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Table 5.2: Capacity of pitches

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	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	4 per season	0 per season
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season		

It is imperative to engage with clubs to ensure that sites are not played beyond their capacity. Play should therefore be encouraged, where possible, to be transferred to alternative venues that are not operating at capacity. This may include transferring play to 3G pitches or to sites not currently available for community use but which may be in the future.

A cost-effective way to reduce unofficial use (and therefore overplay), particularly for football, could be to remove goalposts in between match days, principally at open access, high traffic sites that are managed by clubs. This will, however, require adequate, secured storage to be provided.

For cricket, an increase in the usage of NTPs is key to alleviating overplay as this allows for the transfer of junior demand from grass wickets, this should be undertaken in situ of quality improvements to a cricket square to improve the quality which in turn will increase carrying capacity.

For rugby union, additional floodlighting can mitigate some of the overplay as it allows training demand to be spread across a greater number of pitches or unmarked areas. However, this is on the basis that there are enough pitches on a site to make this feasible. Alternatively, access to a World Rugby compliant 3G pitch will help the transfer of midweek training demand and competitive match play which in turn will reduce the pressure on grass pitches.

Increasing 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.

The FA has a Pitch Improvement Programme (PIP) which has been developed in partnership with Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) to develop a grass pitch maintenance service that can be utilised by grassroots clubs with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and therefore the quality of pitches. The key principles behind the service are to provide clubs with advice/practical solutions in a range of areas, with the simple aim of improving playing surfaces. The programme is designed to help clubs on sites that they themselves manage and maintain but can also be used to advise council-maintained sites.

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In addition, PIP also aims to focus on developing an improved maintenance programmes with local authorities that can be utilised at local authority maintained sites.

For cricket and the ECB, the equivalent is the Grounds and Natural Turf Improvement Programme (GaNTIP), which is jointly funded by the ECB, FA, Football Foundation and the IOG. Its aim is to raise the standards of sports surfaces as well as the understanding of sports turf management practices among grassroots sports clubs across England Wales.

In relation to cricket specifically, maintaining high pitch quality is the most important aspect of the sport. If the wicket is poor, it can affect the quality of the game and, 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 it meets the standards that are benchmarked by the IOG.

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.

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. Where there is limited scope for full refurbishment, it is recommended that provision is updated to provide unisex changing rooms and to programme use of facilities accordingly.

Sites which predominantly accommodate adult and/or older junior age group sports should be prioritised for improvements, whilst there is a trend for younger junior age groups (particularly for football) not to require use of changing provision, with suitable male and female toilet provision for players and spectators considered to be of greater importance.

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

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

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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.

Recommendation (g) – Secure developer contributions

It is important that this strategy informs policies and supplementary planning documents by setting out the approach to securing sport and recreational facilities through new housing development.

For playing pitches, the Council should use Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator as a tool for helping to determine developer contributions linking to sites within the locality.

This uses team generation rates (TGRs) from the Assessment Report to determine how many new teams would be generated from an increase in population derived from housing growth. It then converts this into match equivalent sessions and pitch requirements and gives the associated costs (both for providing the provision and for its life cycle). It should be noted this is a starting point to determine whether there will be an increase in demand. The PPS should be used to establish whether playing fields within the locality:

- ◀ Have sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional demand for those sports; or
- ◀ Improvements are required to build in capacity; or
- ◀ New pitches are required

Where a development is located within access of existing high-quality provision, this does not necessarily mean that there is no need for further provision or improvement to existing provision, as additional demand arising from the development is likely to result in increased usage (which can result in overplay or quality deterioration).

Where it is determined that new provision is required to accompany a development, priority should be placed on providing facilities that contribute towards alleviating existing shortfalls within the locality. To determine what supply of provision is provided, it is imperative that the PPS findings are taken into consideration and that consultation takes place with the relevant NGBs. This is due to the importance of ensuring that the stock of facilities provided is correct to avoid provision becoming unsustainable and unused, such as single grass pitch football sites without adequate ancillary facilities or new cricket/rugby grounds located away from existing clubs. Instead, multi-pitch and multi-sport sites should be developed, supported by a clubhouse and adequate parking facilities which consider the potential for future AGP development.

The guidance should form the basis for negotiation with developers to secure contributions to include provision and/or enhancement of appropriate playing fields and subsequent maintenance. Section 106 contributions could also be used to improve the condition and maintenance regimes of the pitches in order to increase pitch capacity to accommodate more matches. Securing contributions to the improvement of supporting ancillary facilities at sites could also be an option.

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A number of planning policy objectives could be implemented to enable the above to be delivered:

- ◀ Planning consent should include appropriate conditions and/or be subject to specific planning obligations. Where developer contributions are applicable, a Section 106/CIL Agreement or equivalent must be completed that should specify, when applied, the amount that will be linked to Sport England's Building Cost Information Service from the date of the permission and timing of the contribution/s to be made.
- ◀ Contributions should also be secured towards the first ten years of maintenance on new pitches. NGBs and Sport England can provide further and up to date information on the associated costs.
- ◀ External funding should be sought/secured to achieve maximum benefit from the investment into appropriate playing pitch facility enhancement and its subsequent maintenance. In some cases a s106 contribution could be used towards match funding.
- ◀ Where new multiple pitches are provided, appropriate changing rooms and associated car parking should be located on site.
- ◀ All new or improved outdoor sports facilities on school sites should be subject to community use agreements.

OBJECTIVE 3

To **provide** new pitches and ancillary facilities where feasible and there is current or future demand to do so.

Recommendations:

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

Recommendation (h) - Identify opportunities to add to the overall 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.

Recommendation (i) - Rectify quantitative shortfalls through the current stock

The Council and its partners should work to rectify identified inadequacies and meet identified shortfalls as outlined in the preceding Assessment Report and the sport by sport specific recommendations (Part 3) as well as the following Action Plan (Part 6).

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

- ◀ Improving quality in order to improve the capacity to accommodate more demand.
- ◀ Transferring demand from overplayed sites to sites with spare capacity.
- ◀ The re-designation of facilities.
- ◀ Securing long term community use at school sites including those currently unavailable.
- ◀ Working with commercial and private providers to increase usage.
- ◀ Work with local leagues/clubs to stagger start times to enable demand from overplayed sites to be transferred to sites with spare capacity.

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.

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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.

Table 5.3: Likely future sport-by-sport demand trends

Sport	Future sports development trend	Strategy impact
Football	Demand for adult football is likely to be sustained with the FA focusing on retention. There is also likely to be some continued movement towards small sided football for adults.	Additional need for 3G pitches. Sustain current pitch stock but give consideration to pitch reconfiguration to accommodate youth 11v11 football, this may be possible at some sites with multiple smaller format pitches, or adult pitches that are solely utilised by youth 11v11 teams. Qualitative improvements.
	Demand for mini and youth football is likely to increase and the FA has a key objective to deliver 50% of mini and youth football on 3G pitches.	Increase provision of 3G pitches in line with the Warrington LFFP. Where possible utilise new or existing 3G pitches to further accommodate this demand and ensure FA testing.
	The FA's strategy for Women's and Girls' football: One of the major goals of the new strategy will be to double participation.	Demand for grass pitches and 3G pitches is likely to increase.
3G pitches	Demand for 3G pitches for football is high and will continue to increase as currently there is a shortfall of full size pitches. It is likely that future demand for the use of 3G pitches will increase for both training and match play purposes.	Requirement for new 3G pitches to be provided and a need for community use agreements to be in place for any new pitches as well as sinking funds. Requirement for 3G pitches to be FA/FIFA tested to host competitive matches. Utilise Sport England/NGB guidance on choosing the correct surface.
Rugby league	RFL is working towards growing rugby league participation including through growth at junior clubs, Play Touch RL and 9 aside RL.	A need to improve pitch quality and address overplay. Seek 3G pitch venues for training, Play Touch and grass pitches for 9 aside.
Cricket	Demand is likely to remain static for grass wickets for both junior and adult participation.	Sustain current pitch stock. Isolated pockets of demand for access to additional facilities where pitches are operating at/over capacity. A need to install NTPs and encourage greater use for junior cricket.
	An increase in non-club based play, especially from South Asian communities.	Develop cricket within communities that more commonly play informal formats of the game.
	Women's and girls' cricket is a national priority and there is a target to establish more female teams in every local authority.	Support clubs to ensure access to segregated changing and toilet provision and access to good quality cricket pitches to support growth.
	All Stars Cricket initiative is likely to result in increased junior demand.	An increase stock of NTPs required to accommodate demand.

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Sport	Future sports development trend	Strategy impact
Rugby union	Locally, the RFU want to ensure access to pitches to satisfy existing demand and predicted growth. It is also an aim to protect and improve pitch quality, as well as ancillary facilities.	Clubs are likely to field more teams in the future. It is important, therefore, to work with the clubs to maintain the current pitch stock and support facility development. In particular, capital improvements are required to the existing natural turf pitches as is improvements to the quality of changing rooms, where appropriate. All clubs should have access to high quality floodlit pitches to support training and match play demand.
		Maximise use of new 3G World Rugby Reg 22 pitch at Lymm RFC to address grass pitch shortfalls due to training demand on grass pitches.
Hockey	Current playing level is likely to increase with a 15% growth rate predicted by England Hockey.	Ensure continued use of at least one full size, sand-based AGP to accommodate current demand and ensure sinking funds are in place for long-term sustainability. Explore access and/or creation of additional sand-based AGPs to meet future and/or school demand. Ensure that no 3G pitch conversions take place that are detrimental to hockey and revisit hockey demand when and if a conversion is proposed to ensure the subjected pitch is not required.
	High profile events (Hockey World Cup 2018 Legacy)	These high profile events aim to raise the profile of the game within England and there will be community events in the build-up within clubs and a promotional programme through clubs and local schools. This will inevitably raise the profile of the game with the aim to increase participation.
	Play Hockey	The launch of Play Hockey and its subsequent website ensures that those wishing to play the game are able to find their local facility and club.

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PART 6: ACTION PLAN

The site-by-site action plan seeks to address key issues identified in the preceding Assessment Report. It provides recommendations based on current levels of usage, quality and future demand, as well as the potential of each site for enhancement. It should be reviewed in the light of staff and financial resources in order to prioritise support for strategically significant provision and provision that other providers are less likely to make. The Action Plan is separated by analysis area.

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. 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 outdoor facility sites and associated provision.

The identification of sites is based on their strategic importance within the Borough 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 Council area as a whole.

Table 6.1: Tiered site criteria

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

Key centres although these sites are more community focused, some are still likely to service a wider analysis area. There may be more of a focus on a specific sport.

Additionally, it is considered that some financial investment may be necessary to improve the ancillary facilities at both hub sites and key centre sites to complement the pitches in terms of access, flexibility (i.e. single-sex changing if necessary), quality and that they meet the rules and regulations of local competitions.

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Local sites refer to those sites offering minimal provision or that are of minimal value to the wider community. Primarily they are sites with one facility or a low number of facilities that service just one or two sports. The level of priority attached to them for external investment may be relatively low.

For local authority sites, consideration should be given, on a site-by-site basis, to the feasibility of a club taking on a long-term lease (if not already present), in order that external funding can be sought. Such sites will require some level of investment, either to the outdoor sport facilities or ancillary facilities and it is anticipated that one of the conditions of offering a hire/lease is that the Club would be in a position to source external funding to improve/extend the provision.

Other sites considered in this tier may be primary school sites or secondary school sites that are not widely used by the community or that do not offer community availability.

Some local sites are suitable for rationalisation providing that capital receipts are allocated to replace the lost provision at larger, multi-pitch sites. Some sites may not currently be required to accommodate demand, but should be retained as strategic reserve for future growth. This will ensure that future demand can be sufficiently met by existing supply.

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 hub sites.
- ◀ Football investment programme/3G pitch development with the FA and Football Foundation

Partners

The column indicating partners refers to the main organisations that the Council would look to work with to support delivery of the actions. Given the extent of potential actions it is reasonable to assume that partners will not necessarily be able to support all of the actions identified but where the action is a priority and resource is available the partner will endeavour to provide support. It may also be appropriate to agree a lead partner to ensure delivery of the action.

Priority

Although hub sites are most likely to have a **high** priority level as they have 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. Therefore, some key centres and local sites are also identified as having a high priority level. It is these projects/sites which should generally, if possible, be addressed within the short term (1-2 years).

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The majority of key centres are a **medium** priority, 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.

The **low** priority sites tend to be single pitch or single sport sites and often club or education sites with local specific importance but that may also contribute to addressing the issues identified in the assessment for specific users.

Costs

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

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

These are based on Sport England's estimated facility costs which can be found at:
<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>

Timescales

The Action Plan has been created to be delivered over a ten-year period. The information within the Assessment Report, Strategy and Action Plan will require updating as developments occur.

The indicative timescales relate to delivery times and are not priority based:

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

Aim

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

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South neighbourhood action plan

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ⁹	Cost ¹⁰	Aim
1	Appleton Cricket Club	South	Cricket	Sports Club	Existing	1 pitch, 10 grass wickets of good quality. Is overplayed by 1 match per season. The outfield is undulating and the pitch can suffer from waterlogging.	Ensure appropriate maintenance in order to maintain pitch quality. Explore opportunities to introduce an artificial pitch wicket to increase the capacity.	ECB	Local Site	Low	M	M	Protect Enhance
2	Appleton Thorn Playing Fields (New Lane Playing Fields)	South	Football	Local Authority	Existing	2 adult pitches, both poor quality and overplayed. Poor quality changing rooms and limited access	Investigate options to improve quality in order to address overplay and build future capacity. Identified for grass pitch improvements in LFFP.	FA WBC	Key Centre	High	S	M	Protect Enhance
			Rugby union			Two senior pitches of poor (M0/D0) quality. Ad hoc use only by Warrington RUFC. Poor quality changing rooms and limited access.	Investigate options to improve quality.			RFU WBC	Low	M	
3	Appleton Thorn Primary School	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7 v 7 pitch of standard quality and although available for community use there is no recorded use	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for potential community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
13	Bridgewater High School (Lower)	South	Cricket	School	Existing	1 senior pitch of standard quality with no recorded community use.	Ensure quality of wicket is maintained for current use.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
			Football			1 adults and 1 youth 9v9 pitch of poor quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.						
			Rugby union			One senior pitch of poor (M0/D0) quality currently played to capacity with no recorded community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.						
14	Bridgewater High School (Upper)	South	Football	School	Existing	2 adult and 1 youth 11v11 pitches of standard quality. Not available for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	FA School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
			Rugby union			Two senior pitches and one mini pitch of poor (M0/D0) quality used to capacity by the school.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School					
16	Broomfields Junior School	South	Football	School/College/University	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	FA School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
17	Broomfields Leisure Centre	South	Football	Community Interest Company	Existing	Full size, sand dressed floodlit AGP of poor quality currently in the process of being converted to a full size 3G pitch (FA Registered) with partner club Appleton AFC.	Ensure pitch is maximised for competitive use and high level maintenance is applied to sustain quality.	FA, FF LiveWire	Key Centre	High	S	H	Protect Provide

⁹ Timescales: (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years).

¹⁰ (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above.

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ⁹	Cost ¹⁰	Aim
21	Cantilever Park	South	Football	Sports Club	Existing	1 adult pitch of good quality. Not available for community use as used by semi-professional club. Warrington Town also has long term aspiration to relocate away from its current home ground to a larger, more sustainable site. However, its existing site is in need of some	Notwithstanding long term club aspirations, there is a short term investment need in the existing site, particularly if the Club was to progress to Step 2.	Club FA, FF	Local Site	Medium	S	M	Enhance
			AGP			Half size, floodlit 3G pitch of standard quality.	Maximise use for small sided social football and to accommodate training demand. Ensure sinking fund is in place for future refurbishment.	Commercial Manager		Low	L	M	Protect Enhance
24	Cardinal Newman High School	South	Cricket	School	Existing	Standalone non-turf pitch located between grass pitches. Poor quality due to damage caused by improper use/ lack of maintenance	Seek to repair and resurface the non-turf pitch to cater for school use if needed.	ECB School	Local Site	Medium	M	H	Protect Enhance Provide
			AGP			1 full size AGP sand filled pitch of standard quality but not floodlit. Not available for community use.	If floodlighting can be installed, explore opportunities to convert to a 3G pitch in line with need in the Area and other options outlined in the LFFP.	EH FA School					
			Football			2 adult pitches of standard quality. Unavailable for community use	Maintain pitch for school use, potential site for future community use if needed.	FA School					
			Rugby league			One senior pitch of standard quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for potential community use if needed.	RFL School					
26	Chaigley School	South	Football	School	Existing	1 adult standard quality. Currently played to capacity. Recorded community use.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site. Ensure community user agreement is in place for future use.	School	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect
28	Cherry Tree Primary School	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Currently overplayed by 2 MES per week.	Investigate options to improve quality to address overplay. Ensure community use agreement is in place for future use.	School	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
40	Elizabeth Park	South	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 adult pitch and 2 mini 5v5 pitches of poor quality. Adult pitch has 0.5 MES spare capacity and mini 5v5 pitches have 2 MES capacity.	Investigate options to improve quality. Retain spare capacity on mini pitches until quality can be improved. If pitch quality improved, potential site to meet future increased demand.	WBC	Local Site	Medium	M	M	Protect Enhance
41	Euclid Avenue Playing Field	South	-	Parish Council	Existing	Playing field used for informal recreational use only.	Retain site for informal recreational use.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
44	Glazebury C of E Primary School	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
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Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ⁹	Cost ¹⁰	Aim
48	Grange Sports & Social Club	South	Cricket	Sports Club	Existing	Standard quality square with eight wickets, located between grass football pitches. Can accommodate an additional 16 matches per season but no peak time availability due to dual use with football.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through rigorous maintenance and preparatory work as required.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Low	M	L	Protect
						1 adult pitch of good quality. Overplayed by 1 MES.	Review current levels of play to maintain pitch quality.	Sports Club					
49	Grappenhall Cricket Club	South	Cricket	Sports Club	Existing	One senior, good quality pitch with 13 adult grass wickets and 6 junior wickets. Senior wickets overplayed by 15 matches per season.	Continue with existing maintenance to maintain quality. Investigate options to increase capacity to address overplay, including increasing the number of wickets on the square and introducing a non-turf wicket. Also explore options to utilise spare capacity at other local sites	Cricket Club ECB	Local Site	High	S	M	Protect Enhance Provide
50	Grappenhall Hall School	South	Cricket Football	Local Authority	Disused	Became disused in 2015 upon school closure.	Future priority order of options: 1. Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2. Explore if site could become public open space to meet an identified need. 3. Redevelop the site for an alternative use but use the capital receipt or mitigation contribution to invest in existing sites in the locality.	WBC	Local Site	Low	M	H	Protect
51	Grappenhall Heys Primary School	South	Football	School	Existing	2 mini 7v7 pitches of poor quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
52	Grappenhall Village Sports Club	South	Football Rugby union	Sports Club	Existing	3 adult pitches, 2 youth 9v9 pitches and 1 mini 7v7 pitch all of good quality. Only 0.5 MES per week capacity on youth 9v9 pitches, all other pitches played to capacity.	Ensure maintenance of pitch continues in order that pitch can sustain play. In the longer term, explore feasibility of a 3G pitch on the site. However, access to the site would need to be improved. Warrington RUFC is currently in talks about establishing a permanent home at the site, if pitches can be converted or established at the site.	FA RFU Sports Club	Key Centre	High	M	H	Protect Provide
60	HM Prison (Thorn Cross)	South	Cricket Football Rugby league	HM Prison	Existing	Pitches not assessed due to the secure nature of site.	Retain pitches for prison use.	HM Prison	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
2	Latchford St James Primary	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

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Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ⁹	Cost ¹⁰	Aim
65	Loushers Lane Recreation Ground	South	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 adult pitch, 1 youth 9v9 pitch and 2 mini 7v7 pitches all of poor quality. Adult and youth pitches overplayed and some spare capacity on mini pitches. No changing room provision. Limited car parking. Car parking surface very poor condition.	Investigate options to improve quality to address overplay. If pitch quality improved, potential site to meet future increased demand. Investigate options for access to changing provision and/or toilet facilities.	FA WBC	Local Site	Medium	M	M	Protect Enhance
			Rugby league			One senior pitch of poor quality. Currently played to capacity. No changing room provision. Limited car parking. Car parking surface very poor condition.	Investigate options to improve quality to create capacity. Investigate options for access to changing provision and/or toilet facilities.	WBC RFL			M	M	
66	Lymm High School	South	Cricket	School	Existing	Standard quality square with five grass wickets and one non-turf wicket, not available for community use.	Continue with existing maintenance to maintain quality. Investigate options for community use.	ECB School	Hub Site	High	L	L	Protect Enhance Provide
			Football			2 adult pitches, 2 youth 11v11 pitches and 2 youth 9v9 pitches all of good quality. Adult pitches have 0.5 MES spare capacity, remaining pitches played to capacity. School use and community use.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site. Ensure community user agreement is in place for future use. Provision of a new full size 3G pitch has been approved for funding from Football Foundation. It is hoped this pitch will be available in 2020 with partner clubs Lymm Piranhas (28 teams) and Lymm Rovers (41 teams) women and girls focus club at a national level.	FA, FF School			S	H	
			AGP			Full size, sand dressed floodlit AGP now of poor quality with flooding issues which has resulted in Lymm HC relocating to use other sites.	Protect AGP for hockey and ensure quality issues are resolved. Maintenance work required and an exploration of drainage issues due to flooding of the pitch.	EH School			S	H	
			Rugby union			Three senior pitches of poor (M0/D1) quality. Not available for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School			L	L	
67	Lymm May Queen Field	South	Football	Local Authority	Disused	Currently open space, with no playing pitch provision.	Future priority order of options: 1. Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2. Explore if site could become public open space to meet an identified need. 3. Redevelop the site for an alternative use but use the capital receipt or mitigation	WBC	Local Site	Low	M	H	Protect

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ⁹	Cost ¹⁰	Aim
							contribution to invest in existing sites in the locality.						
68	Lymm Oughtrington Park Cricket Club	South	Cricket	Sports Club	Existing	One senior, good quality pitch with 11 adult grass wickets and 2 junior wickets. Adult wickets overplayed by 15 matches per season.	Continue with existing maintenance to maintain quality. Investigate options to increase capacity to address overplay, including increasing the number of wickets on the square and introducing a non-turf wicket. Also explore options to utilise spare capacity at other local sites	Cricket Club ECB	Local Site	High	S	M	Protect Enhance Provide
69	Lymm Rugby Club	South	Rugby union	Sports Club	Existing	Three senior pitches, two of which are good (M2/D2) quality and one which is of standard (M2/D1) quality. The standard quality pitch is floodlit and used for training resulting in overplay of 4.5 matches per week. Two mini pitches of good (M2/D2) quality. The mini pitches have no actual spare capacity whilst the senior pitches have 1 match equivalent session of spare capacity. New 3G pitch now provided.	Maximise 3G pitch to accommodate training needs and help address overplay. Support continued development of the site including ancillary facilities and introduce floodlights to a second pitch to reduce reliance on existing floodlit pitch which is heavily overplayed.	Sports Club RFU	Key Centre	Medium	M	H	Protect Provide
74	Morley Common	South	Football	Local Authority	Existing	4 adult pitches all of poor quality with minimal peak time capacity. Limited car parking provision. Car parking surface very poor condition. Changing rooms recently refurbished.	There is a need to improve quality. However, the Western Link Road development is proposed to go through part of Morley Common Recreation Ground which would result in the loss of one adult football pitch together with the changing rooms and car park. The Council is currently considering where and how best these could be mitigated.	FA, FF WBC	Local Site	Medium	M	H	Protect Enhance
78	Our Lady's Primary	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini pitch of poor quality. School and community use. 0.5 MES capacity during peak periods.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
79	Outhrington Primary School	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ⁹	Cost ¹⁰	Aim
86	Pewterspear Sports Pavilion	South	Cricket	Trust	Existing	One senior, good quality pitch with seven adult grass wickets. Can accommodate an additional 12 matches per season with peak time availability. Outfield used for football during off-season. Stretton Cricket Club played home matches for the 2019 season at Chelford Cricket Club with the permission of the UK Fast Cheshire Cricket League.	Further investigate the issues for the Club and work to find a solution to secure the Club's future use of the site.	ECB Trust	Local Site	High	S	L	Protect
			Football			1 adult pitch, 2 youth 11v11 pitches, 2 mini 7v7 pitches and 1 mini 5v5 pitches all of standard quality. Mostly overplayed.	Improve pitch quality to address overplay. Ensure community use agreement is in place for future use.	FA Trust		Medium	S	M	
						There is a planning application in for proposed single storey extension to create a larger function room and new indoor exercise/studio room, conversion of redundant existing rooms into a new dance studio and remodel and refurbish of existing changing rooms and shower facilities.	This will result in the current four changing rooms will be reduced to two. However, ECB and FF have indicated they are satisfied with the reduction.	ECB FF		Low		H	
87	Priestley College	South	Football	College	Existing	1 adult pitch of standard quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for college use, potential site for community use if needed.	College FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
			Hockey			Full size, sand dressed floodlit AGP of good quality. Hockey use by Warrington HC. Also used for football training. Some capacity at weekends if pitch availability was extended.	Protect pitch as sand dressed AGP to support development of hockey. Investigate potential issues currently inhibiting hockey use and work to secure long term use for Warrington HC with additional use. Ensure a mechanism is in place for future sustainability, such as sinking fund.	College EH		High	S	M	
89	Ravenbank Primary	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
90	Ridgeway Grundy Park	South	Football	Local Authority	Existing	2 adult pitches of poor quality. 1.5 MES capacity during peak period.	Investigate options to improve quality to provide useable capacity in the area. Changing facilities require replacement.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Enhance
93	Sandy Lane Recreation Ground	South	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 adult pitch of poor quality. Overplayed by 2 MES per week.	Investigate options to improve quality in order to address overplay, replacement changing rooms and build future capacity.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Enhance
96	Sir Thomas Boteler High School	South	Football	School	Existing	2 adult pitches, 1 youth 9v9 pitch and 3 mini 7v7 pitches all of good quality. 1 MES spare capacity on each pitch type	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site.	FA RFL School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

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PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ⁹	Cost ¹⁰	Aim
			Rugby league			during peak periods. Recorded community use.							
						One senior pitch of standard quality. Identified as having potential for an additional rugby league pitch should funds be available. No recorded community use.	Retain pitches for school use, but explore opportunity to establish community use, if needed.						
97	Sow Brook Playing Fields	South	Football	Local Authority	Existing	2 adult pitches of poor quality resulting in no community use. Pitches unusable for majority of season.	Support and consider proposals to install drainage solution and site facilities to provide useable facilities in the area.	FA WBC	Local Site	Medium	M	M	Enhance
117	St Thomas Primary School	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
119	St Wilfred's Primary School	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
120	Statham Primary School	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
122	Stockton Heath Primary School	South	AGP	School	Existing	Half size, sand dressed AGP of standard quality. Not floodlit. No community use.	Retain pitch for school use.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
123	Stretton St Matthews	South	Football	School	Existing	1 adult pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
126	Thelwall Junior School	South	Football	School	Existing	2 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
133	Warrington Sports Club	South	Cricket	Sports Club	Existing	Two senior, good quality pitches each with ten grass wickets. Currently played to capacity. However, outfield overmarked with rugby pitches.	Ensure quality of pitch is maintained for current and future use.	ECB RFU Sports Club	Local Site	High	M	L	Protect Enhance
			Rugby union			Two senior pitches of standard (M1/D2) quality both overplayed by 1.5 matches per week. Overmarked on cricket outfield. Warrington RUFC has ceased to have access to pitch provision at Warrington Sports Club (September 2019) it is thought that these will be converted into football pitches).	In the short term, encourage Warrington RUFC and Warrington Sports Club to meet a solution for continued use of the Sports Club. In the longer term, support Warrington RUFC to establish pitches and long term security of tenure at Grappenhall Sports Club. Once achieved, there is a need for the Club to consider the long term future of its site at Bridge Lane.				S	L	
135	Westy Park	South	Football/ Rugby league	Local Authority	Existing	Previously a site which provided football provision, the site was previously closed as it	The site has now been declared safe and WBC has determined that one senior rugby league	WBC FA, FF RFL	Local Site	Medium	S	H	Provide

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
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Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ⁹	Cost ¹⁰	Aim
						was deemed unsafe due to the ground being contaminated as the playing fields are located on a previous landfill site. However, WBC has funding confirmed to re-introduce playing pitches.	pitch and one senior football pitch are to be provided in 2019. The current site provides ancillary facilities with changing rooms available in the community centre located at the site.						
147	Bradshaw Community Primary School	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of Standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
149	St Monica's Catholic Primary School	South	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 5v5 pitch of standard quality. No MES spare capacity during peak period. Recorded community use.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
152	Bridge Lane	South	Rugby union	Sports Club	Lapsed	Owned by Warrington Borough Council, and the former home of Warrington RUFC, the site became disused in 2004 following a fire which destroyed the club house at the site. Warrington RUFC continues to lease the site under terms dating back to 1959, however, the condition of the site and the associated pitches has deteriorated significantly. The current lease has around 40 years still to run. The site previously provided two pitches (1 senior / 1 junior), one of which was floodlit. Warrington RUFC has been using the site for training recently due to moving off Warrington Sports Club.	Future priority order of options: 1. Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2. Explore if site could become public open space to meet an identified need. 3. Redevelop the site for an alternative use but use the capital receipt or mitigation contribution to invest in existing sites in the locality.	WBC RFU	Local Site	Medium	M	H	Protect
153	St Werbergh's CofE Primary School	South			Lapsed	School closed and no current playing pitch provision on site.	Future priority order of options: 1. Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2. Explore if site could become public open space to meet an identified need. 3. Redevelop the site for an alternative use but use the capital receipt or mitigation contribution to invest in existing sites in the locality.	WBC	Local Site	Low	M	H	Protect

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Central neighbourhood action plan

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹¹	Cost ¹²	Aim
4	Bank Park	Central	Rugby league	Local Authority	Disused	Currently open space, with no playing pitch provision. Previously accommodated a junior pitch. Due to its location and lack of ancillary facilities, it became disused during late 2000 and has not been used as a playing pitch site since.	Retain as open space and an informal pitch as required.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
5	Bank Quay Sports Club	Central	AGP	Commercial Management	Existing	Half size, floodlit 3G pitch of standard quality.	Maximise use for small sided social football and to accommodate training demand. Encourage provider to have a sinking fund in place to service and upgrade pitch.	Commercial Manager	Local Site	Low	L	M	Protect Enhance
7	Beamont Academy	Central	Football & Rugby league	School	Existing	2 adult/senior pitches, dual marked for both football and rugby league use. Rated standard quality for football and poor quality for rugby league.	Retain pitches for school use. Investigate options to improve quality and support club development.	FA Orford FC School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
23	Poplars Park	Central	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 youth 11v11 pitch of poor quality, with no recorded community use. Peak time capacity of 1 MES per week. No ancillary facilities.	Future priority order of options: 1. Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2. Explore if site could become public open space to meet an identified need. 3. Redevelop the site for an alternative use but use the capital receipt or mitigation contribution to invest in existing sites in the locality.	WBC	Local Site	Low	M	H	Protect
25	Carlsberg Tetley Sports and Social Club	Central	Football	Commercial Management	Existing	1 adult pitch - access to carry out NTA was not provided. Therefore, pitch quality assumed as standard. Overplayed by 0.5 MES.	Further assess pitch quality to ascertain the need for pitch improvements.	Commercial Manager	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
37	Dallam Primary School	Central	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

¹¹ Timescales: (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years).

¹² (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above.

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹¹	Cost ¹²	Aim
38	Dallam Recreation Ground	Central	Rugby league	Local Authority	Existing	Two senior pitches of standard quality. The pitches are currently being overused by 1.25 matches per week in total.	Investigate options to improve quality in order to address overplay and build future capacity. Also consider transferring training to alternative venues to address overplay. Increase car park capacity. Explore feasibility of introducing AGP provision to the site.	WBC RFL	Local Site	Medium	M	M	Protect Enhance
58	Halliwell Jones Stadium	Central	Rugby league	Sports Club	Existing	One senior pitch of good quality. Used by Warrington Wolves, professional rugby league team.	Retain pitch for use by professional club and representative as required.	Warrington Wolves	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
63	Lockers Playing Field	Central	Rugby league	Private	Lapsed	Two senior pitches. Privately owned and closed when associated business closed in early 2000. Site submitted into the Local Plan Process as a potential site for use as a Gypsy & Traveller site.	Site proposed for alternative development. Mitigate loss of provision to meet SE Playing Field Policy requirements.	WBC SE	Lapsed site	Low	L	H	Provide
77	Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub	Central	Football	Community Interest Company	Existing	4 adult pitches, 1 of good quality and 3 of standard quality. 1 youth 9v9 pitch, 2 mini 7v7 pitch and 1 mini 5v5 pitch all of standard quality. No available capacity during peak periods.	Identified for grass pitch improvements in LFFP.	FA LiveWire	Hub Site	Medium	S	M	Protect Enhance Provide
			AGP			Standard quality full sized 3G pitch. On FA Pitch Register. Considered to be operating at capacity during weekday evenings but with capacity at weekends.	Maximise capacity for match play at weekends created through achieving certification, to address current and future Area shortfalls. Ensure rigorous and regular maintenance as required to sustain pitch quality. Ensure a mechanism is in place for future sustainability, such as a sinking fund. Potential site for 3G pitch identified in LFFP in the Central Area.				M	H	
						Ten half size 5v5 3G pitches, all floodlit of standard quality. Limited capacity during weekday evenings but capacity at weekends.	Ensure sinking fund is in place to service and upgrade pitches. Explore feasibility of introducing second full size AGP provision to the site.				S	H	
88	Radley Common	Central	Football	Local Authority	Disused	Currently open space, with no playing pitch provision.	Potential relocation site for site ID 82, if appeal successful.	WBC	Local Site	Medium	M	M	Protect
91	Rylands Recreation Club	Central	Football	Sports Club	Existing	3 adult pitches of good quality. Site previously contained a cricket square, 1 senior and 1 primary	Maintain pitches to a good standard and maximise use. Continue to develop the site as a football specific site.	Sports Club FA, FF	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹¹	Cost ¹²	Aim	
			Football			rugby league pitch which have now become football pitches. Rylands CC has folded having been moved off the site. Rylands RFC was served notice in early 2019 and has recently agreed a lease with the Parish Council to secure use of Bennetts Recreation Ground. Half size, sand dressed floodlit AGP of standard quality.	Consider converting to a 3G surface.	Sports Club FA, FF		Medium	M	M		
98	St Albans Primary School	Central	Football	School	Existing	1 adult pitch and 1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality, with overplay recorded on both. Recorded community use.	Investigate options to improve quality in order that pitch can sustain existing play.	FA School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect	
99	St Andrews Primary School	Central	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect	
100	St Ann's Primary School	Central	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect	
101	St Barnabas Primary School	Central	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect	
102	St Benedict's Primary School	Central	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	FA RFL School WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect	
			Rugby league			One junior pitch of standard quality overused by 2 match per week. Recorded community use.								Investigate options to improve quality and help address overplay.
110	St Margaret's Primary School	Central	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect	
116	St Stephens Primary School	Central	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect	
131	Victoria Park	Central	Football	Local Authority	Existing	4 adult pitches, 3 of standard quality and 1 of poor quality. Spare capacity of 2.5 MES per week.	Consider upgrade to changing facilities. Identified for grass pitch improvements in LFFP and potential 3G pitch.	FA RFL WBC	Hub Site	High	S	M	M	Protect Enhance Provide
			Rugby league			Three senior pitches, one of good quality and two of poor quality. Currently overplayed by 2 matches per week.	Investigate options to improve quality of poor pitches and help address overplay.							
			Rugby league			One senior pitch of good quality with limited spare capacity (0.5 matches per week).	Ensure maintenance of pitch continues in order that pitch can sustain play. Retain spare capacity to maintain quality.							
132	Victoria Park Stadium		Rugby league			One senior pitch of good quality with 2.5 matches per week of spare capacity. The pitch is dual use with football and is located within an athletics track.	As part of the Rugby League World Cup 'Inspired by 2021' Legacy Programme, a bid for a new rugby league certified 3G pitch at the site has been			S	H			

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹¹	Cost ¹²	Aim
							proposed. A planning application has been submitted. It will be constructed, owned and managed by WBC. The proposal is to extend the fencing around the Arena pitch to incorporate a 3G pitch and to relocate the grass rugby pitch around to the side of the Arena.						
136	Whitecross Community Centre	Central	AGP	Local Authority	Existing	Half size, floodlit 3G pitch of standard quality. Open access pitch.	Review access/ management arrangements to protect pitch and maximise its impact. Ensure sinking fund is in place for future refurbishment.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	M	Protect

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

West neighbourhood action plan

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹³	Cost ¹⁴	Aim
6	Barrow Hall Lane Primary School	West	Football	School	Disused	Old school site closed in August 2016 with school relocating to new premises and replacement pitch provision provided. Site being transferred to Great Sankey High School/ Omega MAAT. See site ID 22 for more information.	No actions	School	Local Site	Low	M	M	Protect
9	Bewsey Lodge Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
19	Burtonwood Primary School	West	Football	School/College/University	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
20	Callands Primary School	West	Football	School/College/University	Existing	1 mini 5v5 and 1 mini 7v7, both of poor quality. Mini 5v5 is overplayed by 1.5 MES per week. 7v7v has spare capacity of 1 MES per week.	Retain pitches for school use and explore options to improve pitch quality to address overplay. Site reconfiguration may be appropriate.	School WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
22	Barrow Hall Primary School	West	Football	School	New	New school site development includes provision of 2 junior grass football pitches, provided to accommodate loss of pitches as part of school expansion across West Warrington.	Ensure pitches provided are of agreed quality before handover. Ensure appropriate maintenance in order to maintain pitch quality. Establish community use and ensure community use agreement is in place.	School WBC	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect
27	Chapelford Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. No peak time capacity. Community use of changing facilities was established for Chapelford FC (open age) using Dakota Park which has now folded. Only junior and mini football now takes place at Dakota Park with no requirement for changing access.	Upgrade pitch to agreed standard following building work on site and then ensure adequate maintenance so play can continue at current site. Reinstate access to changing rooms if required in the future to meet demand.	School	Local Site	Medium	M	M	Protect
36	Dakota Park	West	Cricket	Local Authority	Existing	Standalone non-turf pitch located between grass football pitches in public park. Recently refurbished following damage caused by anti-social behaviour.	Ensure appropriate maintenance in order to maintain pitch for informal recreational community play.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
			Football			1 adult pitch and 1 mini 5v5 pitch of standard quality. Played to capacity. Community use of Chapelford Primary School changing facilities was established for Chapelford FC (open age) which has now folded. Only junior and mini football now	Ensure maintenance of pitch continues in order that pitch can sustain play. Reinstate access to changing rooms if required in the future to meet demand.				M	L	

¹³ Timescales: (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years).

¹⁴ (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above.

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹³	Cost ¹⁴	Aim
						takes place at the site with no requirement for changing access.							
39	Doe Green Recreation Ground	West	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 adult pitch and 1 mini 5v5 pitch of poor quality. Adult pitch played to capacity during peak periods. Mini 5v5 pitch has 1 MES during peak period.	Investigate options to improve quality. Retain spare capacity on mini pitches until quality can be improved. If pitch quality improved, potential site to meet future increased demand.	WBC	Local Site	Medium	M	L	Protect Enhance
42	Evelyn St Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
43	Fir Tree Lane	West	Rugby league	Parish Council	Existing	Two senior pitches and one junior pitch of standard quality. The pitch types have spare capacity for matches of 1.75 and 0.5 per week respectively.	Review how spare capacity can be utilised to address current overplay and/ or provide for future demand.	Burtonwood Parish Council RFL	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect
47	Gorseley Recreation Ground	West	Football	Parish Council	Existing	1 adult pitch and 1 youth 9v9 pitch of poor quality. Adult pitch overplayed by 0.5 MES. Youth 9v9 pitch has 1 MES spare capacity.	Investigate options to improve quality to address overplay on adult pitch. Retain spare capacity on youth pitch until quality can be improved. If pitch quality improved, potential site to meet future increased demand.	Burtonwood Parish Council	Local Site	Low	M	L	Protect Enhance
53	Great Sankey High School	West	Cricket	School	Existing	Standalone non-turf pitch located between grass pitches. Poor quality due to damage caused by improper use/ lack of maintenance.	Seek to repair and resurface the non-turf pitch to cater for school use if needed.	ECB School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
			Football			2 adult pitches of poor quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed. Consider site developments alongside Site ID 54 & 55.	School					
54	Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub	West	AGP	Community Interest Company	Existing	Good quality full size 3G pitch with floodlighting. FIFA one star certified and on FA Pitch Register. Considered to be operating at capacity.	Need for refurbishment identified in next 3 years. Ensure a mechanism is in place for future sustainability, such as a sinking fund. Consider site developments alongside Site ID 53 & 55. Explore feasibility of introducing a second 3G pitch.	FA LiveWire	Key Centre	Low	S	H	Protect
55	Great Sankey Parish Playing Fields	West	Football	Parish Council	Existing	1 adult pitch of poor quality. No recorded community use. No ancillary facilities.	Investigate options to improve quality and increase use. There is now an agreement in place between LiveWire and Great Sankey Parish Council that users of the site can use Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub (GSNH) car park (as Parish Fields can be directly accessed from GSNH car park).	Great Sankey Parish Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	M	Protect Enhance
			Rugby league			1 senior pitch of poor quality. No recorded community use. No ancillary facilities.		Great Sankey Parish Council RFL					

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹³	Cost ¹⁴	Aim
							Explore opportunities to access ancillary facilities at adjacent Great Sankey Neighbourhood Hub project to improve access to provision.						
61	Hood Lane Recreation Ground	West	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 adult pitch of standard quality. Pitch played to capacity. Main users Cromwell FC.	Identified for grass pitch improvements in LFFP. Explore feasibility of introducing 3G provision to the site (as identified in LFFP). Consider the need for a shock pad to accommodate rugby training.	WBC	Local Site	Medium	S	M-H	Protect, Enhance Provide
			Rugby league			4 senior pitches all of standard quality that are currently being overused by 5.5 matches per week. Home to Crosfield RFC. Changing rooms in need of some updating.	Investigate options to improve quality and install floodlights to spread training demand and address overplay. Potential for Rugby World Cup funding.	WBC RFL			S	M	
70	Mary Ann Meadows	West	Football	Local Authority	Existing	4 adult pitches, 2 youth 9v9 pitches and 1 mini 7v7 pitch all of poor quality. Mini 7v7 pitch has capacity of 1 MES per week. Remaining pitches played to capacity.	Investigate options to improve quality pitch and changing facilities to increase capacity, in partnership with Cromwell Athletic JFC. Identified for grass pitch improvements in LFFP.	FA WBC	Key Centre	Medium	S	M-H	Enhance Provide
81	Park Road Primary	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
83	Penketh Community Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	2 mini 7v7 pitches of poor quality. School and community use. 0.5 MES capacity during peak period.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed. Ensure community user agreement is in place for any future use.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
84	Penketh High School	West	Football	Private	Existing	3 adult pitches of standard quality. School and community use. 0.5 MES spare capacity.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed. Ensure community use agreement is in place for any future use.	FA School	Local Site	Medium	L	L	Protect Enhance
			AGP			Full size, sand dressed floodlit AGP of standard quality with community use. No hockey use or demand at site. All usage football training related.	Explore feasibility of replacing current sand AGP provision with 3G pitch.	EH FA School			M	H	
85	Penketh South Primary	West	Football	School	Existing	1 youth 9v9 pitch of poor quality. School and community use. Overplayed by 2 MES per week.	Retain pitches for school use and explore options to improve pitch quality to address overplay. Site reconfiguration may be appropriate.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
92	Sacred Heart Primary	West		School	Existing	Playing field used for informal recreational use only.	Retain for school use.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
94	Sankey Valley St James Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹³	Cost ¹⁴	Aim
106	St Gregory's High School	West	Cricket	Private	Existing	Standalone non-turf pitch located between grass pitches. Poor quality due to damage caused by improper use/ lack of maintenance	Seek to repair and resurface the non-turf pitch to cater for school use if needed.	ECB School	Local Site	Medium	L	L	Protect Enhance Provide
			Football			5 adult pitches and 4 mini 7v7 pitches of standard quality. Adult pitches overplayed by 8 MES. No spare capacity during peak periods. Recorded community use.	Investigate options to improve quality to increase capacity, in partnership with Crosfields JFC. Identified for grass pitch improvements in LFFP.	FA, FF School			S	M	
108	St Joseph's Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
109	St Lewis Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
113	St Paul of the Cross Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
115	St Philip Westbrook Church of England Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality and played to capacity. Recorded community use.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
118	St Vincents Catholic Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 5v5 pitch of poor quality. Overplayed by 1 MES per week. Recorded community use.	Review current levels of play to address overplay.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
121	Stocks Lane Playing Field	West	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 youth 11v11 pitch of poor quality. Overplayed by 0.5 MES per week. No ancillary facilities available at site.	Retain pitch for community use	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
124	Sycamore Lane Primary School	West	Football	Local Authority	Disused	Last used by Whittle Hall JFC in 2016. Previously accommodated 2 mini pitches. Replacement pitch provision provided at new Chapelford Primary School site. Linked to West Warrington school expansion plan.	Site proposed for alternative development. Mitigate loss to meet Sport England Playing Field Policy requirements.	WBC SE	Local Site	Low	M	H	Protect
127	Thornton Road Recreation Centre	West	Football	Local Authority	Existing	2 adult pitches of poor quality. Overplayed by 1.5 MES per week.	Investigate options to improve pitch quality and changing facilities to increase capacity and address overplay. Identified for grass pitch improvements in LFFP.	FA	Local Site	High	S	M-H	Protect Enhance
			Rugby union			One senior pitch of poor (M0/D1) quality overplayed by 0.5 matches per week.	Work in partnership to seek a longer term agreement for Eagle RFC to provide the Club with secure tenure, potentially allowing for investment in the site (ancillary provision).	RFU WBC			S	L-M	

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹³	Cost ¹⁴	Aim
							Explore the possibility of introducing floodlights to RFU pitch to provide more appropriate facility for training.						
134	Westbrook Old Hall Primary School	West	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
146	Tim Parry Community Centre	West	Football	Parish Council	Existing	1 youth 9v9 pitch and 1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Youth 9v9 pitch overplayed by 0.5 MES per week. No spare capacity during peak periods.	Investigate options to improve quality in order to address overplay and build future capacity.	FA Great Sankey Parish Council	Local Site	Low	S	M	Protect Enhance
148	Fiddlers Ferry Power Station	West	Football	Commercial Management	Existing	1 adult pitch of good quality currently played to capacity.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site.	Commercial Manager	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

East neighbourhood action plan

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹⁵	Cost ¹⁶	Aim
8	Bennetts Recreation Ground	East	Football	Parish Council	Existing	4 adult pitches of standard quality with the potential to accommodate additional capacity of 1.5 MES per week.	Ensure quality of pitches in maintained for current use.	WBC FA, FF	Key Centre	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance provide
			Rugby league			This site previously contained rugby league pitches; however, the site is now utilised for football. An opportunity has been identified to re-accommodate two rugby pitches at the site and this could provide an opportunity to accommodate Rylands Sharks ARLFC (requires two pitches). Although one pitch could just be marked out, accommodating a second pitch will be more costly as pitch improvement works would be required.	Rylands Sharks ARLFC has recently agreed a lease with the Parish Council to secure the site for some rugby league use moving forward. Further investigate the feasibility/cost of bringing back into use the second pitch.	WBC RFL		High	S	M	
10	Birchwood C of E Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
11	Birchwood Community High School	East	Cricket	School	Existing	Standalone non-turf pitch located between grass pitches. Poor quality due to damage caused by improper use/ lack of maintenance	Seek to repair and resurface the non-turf pitch to cater for school use if needed.	ECB School	Local Site	Medium	L	L	Protect Enhance
			Football			3 adult pitches of standard quality with no recorded community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for potential community use if needed.	FA School			L	L	
			Rugby league			1 senior pitch of standard quality with no recorded community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for potential community use if needed.	RFL School			L	L	
			AGP			Full size 3G pitch with floodlights. FIFA Approved and well used.	Maximise to accommodate competitive use and ensure sinking fund is in place for future refurbishment.	FA LiveWire School			M	M	
12	Birchwood Forest Park	East	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 adult pitch, 1 youth 9v9 pitch, 2 x mini 7v7 and 2 mini 5v5 pitches. All of poor quality. Adult pitch currently played to capacity. Youth pitch overplayed by 1 match session per week. Whilst mini 7v7 pitch has peak time availability of 1 match session and mini 5v5 has peak time availability of 0.5 MES. Changing rooms require upgrading	Investigate options to improve quality. Retain spare capacity on mini pitches until quality can be improved. If pitch quality improved, potential site to meet future increased demand. Identified for grass pitch improvements in LFFP.	WBC	Key Centre	High	S	M	Protect Enhance
15	Brook Acre Primary School	East	Football	School/College/University	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	FA WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

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

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

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹⁵	Cost ¹⁶	Aim
18	Bruche Primary School	East	Football	School/College/University	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. School and community use. Potential spare capacity for 0.5 MES per week.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
29	Christ Church Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	3 mini 7v7 pitches of poor quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
30	Cinnamon Brow Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
31	Crab Lane Playing Field	East	Football	Local Authority	Existing	2 mini 5v5, 2 mini 7v7, 2 youth 9v9 and 1 youth 11v11. All of poor quality. Mini 5v5 pitches and mini 7v7 pitches have capacity of 2.5 MES. The Youth 9v9 has 0.5 MES per week capacity and the youth 11v11 is played to capacity. Recorded community use. Limited car parking and changing rooms coming to the end of their lifespan.	Retain spare capacity and explore options to improve maintenance in order to help increase quality of provision. Explore options to improve ancillary facilities. Identified for grass pitch improvements in LFFP.	FA WBC	Key Centre	High	S	M-H	Protect Enhance
32	Croft Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
33	Culcheth Community Campus	East	Cricket	School	Existing	School have previously had cricket pitch marked out on school playing fields. They did not however during the assessment period.	Re-introduce pitch for school use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
			Football	Community Interest Company		2 adult pitches, 2 youth 9v9 pitches and 1 mini 7v7 pitches all of good quality. Recorded community use. Some spare capacity available for greater use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for greater community use if needed.	LiveWire School			S	L	
			AGP			Full size, sand filled floodlit AGP of standard quality. Predominantly used for football training. However, there has been an increased use for hockey recently due to pitch issues at other sites. Now accommodates use by Lymm HC and Warrington HC.	Protect pitch as sand filled AGP to support development of hockey until such time as not needed to accommodate hockey demand. Ensure a mechanism is in place for future sustainability, such as a sinking fund.				M	M	
			Rugby league	School		One senior pitch of standard quality with limited capacity (0.25 matches per week). Recorded community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for potential community use if needed.	RFL School			L	L	
34	Culcheth Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹⁵	Cost ¹⁶	Aim
35	Culcheth Sports Club	East	Cricket	Sports Club	Existing	Standalone non-turf pitch located between grass football pitches. Poor quality due to damage caused by improper use/ lack of maintenance. No community use.	No local demand identified for continued provision of the non-turf pitch.	Sports Club	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect
			Football			2 adult pitches of good quality. 0.5 MES per week capacity. Recorded community use.	Ensure maintenance of pitch continues in order that pitch can sustain play.						
45	Glazebury Cricket Club	East	Cricket	Trust	Existing	Standard quality square with senior eight wickets. Condition of outfield is reported as deteriorating. Can accommodate an additional 16 matches per season with availability on Sundays and weekday evenings to support junior cricket.	Improve square quality through increased maintenance, repair and preparatory work. Maximise use of capacity available at non-peak times to accommodate additional short format or junior cricket.	ECB	Local Site	Low	S	M	Protect Enhance
46	Gorse Covert Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	2 mini 7v7 pitches of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
59	Hillock Lane Playing Fields	East	Football	Local Authority	Existing	2 adult 11v11 pitches, 2 youth 9v9 pitches and 1 mini 5v5 pitch all of poor quality. Youth 9v9 pitches played to capacity with 0.5 MES of overplay recorded on adult and mini 5v5 pitches.	Investigate options to improve quality to address overplay on pitches. Site is located next to Woolston Park (site ID 143) and whole site needs to be considered in terms of development. No pitch drainage installed. Pitches currently have unrecorded use from adjacent high school which will increase overplay. Explore feasibility of introducing 3G provision to the site in line with the LFFP.	FA RFL SE WBC Woolston Parish Council	Key Centre	High	M	H	Enhance Provide
			Rugby league			Three senior pitches all of poor quality that are currently being overused by 7 matches per week.							
64	Locking Stumps Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
71	Meadowside Primary	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
72	Monks Sports & Social Club	East	Football	Sports Club	Existing	1 adult pitch of good quality. Currently overplayed by MES.	Review current levels of play to maintain pitch quality.	Sports Club	Local Site	Low	M	L	Protect
			Rugby league			One senior pitch of good quality currently overused by 0.5 matches per week.	Maintain pitches to current standards. Review current usage to address overplay.						
75	Newchurch Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
76	Oakwood Avenue Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
80	Padgate Hall (Green Lane Playing Fields)	East	Football	Local Authority	Existing	2 adult pitches of poor quality. 2 MES capacity during peak periods.	Retain pitches to meet current and future demand.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹⁵	Cost ¹⁶	Aim
82	Peel Hall Playing Fields (Ballater Drive Recreation Ground / Millhouse Site)	East	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 adult pitch, 1 youth 9v9 pitch and 1 mini 7v7 pitch all of poor quality. No changing facilities. No drainage system. Limited car parking.	Site currently subject to development proposal, therefore actions are separated into two parts 1) what you want to happen if the site is not developed and 2) what will happen if planning permission is granted. Option 1. Ensure maintenance of pitch continues in order that the level of play can be sustained. Car park provision requires extension and upgrade. Option 2. Ensure developer contributions are sought to replace existing provision, and cater for additional demand created by development, both in terms of pitch provision and ancillary facilities. Explore feasibility of introducing AGP provision to the site.	WBC	Local Site	High	M	H	Protect
95	Shaw St Recreation Ground	East	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 adult pitch of standard quality. 0.5 MES spare capacity during peak period.	Ensure maintenance of pitch continues in order that pitch can sustain play.	FA RFL WBC	Local Site	Medium	L	L	Protect Enhance
			Rugby league			Two senior pitches of standard quality. The pitches are currently being overused by 4.5 matches per week in total.	Investigate options to improve quality and help address overplay. Access to a 3G pitch for training could help to reduce overplay.				S	M	
103	St Bridget's Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
104	St Elphin's Park	East	Football	Local Authority	Disused	Currently open space, with no playing pitch provision.	Future priority order of options: 1. Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 2. Explore if site could become public open space to meet an identified need. 3. Redevelop the site for an alternative use but use the capital receipt or mitigation contribution to invest in existing sites in the locality.	WBC	Local Site	Low	M	H	Protect
105	St Elphin's Primary	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of poor quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
107	Hollins Green St Helen's C of E Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of Standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
112	St Oswalds Primary	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
114	St Peter's Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. 0.5 MES spare capacity during peak period. Recorded community use.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

**WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹⁵	Cost ¹⁶	Aim
128	Twiss Green Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of Standard quality. Available for community use but unused.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	WBC	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
129	Padgate Academy Warrington	East	Cricket	School	Existing	Standalone non-turf pitch located between grass pitches. Poor quality due to damage caused by improper use/ lack of maintenance	Seek to repair and resurface the non-turf pitch to cater for school use if needed.	ECB School	Local Site	High	L	L	Protect Enhance
			Football			2 adult pitches and 2 youth 9v9 pitches of standard quality. Adult pitches have 1 MES spare capacity during peak period. Youth 9v9 pitches are overplayed by 0.5 MES per week. Recorded community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School			L	L	
			AGP			Although identified in the PPS as poor quality it is currently on the FA Register, however, it is unlikely to regain this if it is not refurbished in the near future. Considered to be operating near capacity during weekday evenings but with capacity at weekends.	Improve the quality of provision to ensure long term use for competitive demand. Ensure a mechanism is in place for future sustainability, such as a sinking fund.	FA, FF School			S	M	
130	University of Chester (Warrington Campus)	East	Football	University	Existing	1 adult pitch of good quality currently played to capacity. Recorded community use.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site.	FA University	Key Centre	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
			AGP			Full size, sand filled floodlit AGP of standard quality with community use. Limited community availability during weekday evenings. Considered to be operating at capacity.	Protect pitch as sand dressed AGP to support development of hockey. Encourage a mechanism being in place for future sustainability, such as sinking fund. Work with the provider to ensure that pricing does not inhibit continued use of the site for hockey.	EH			S	M	
			Rugby league			One senior pitch of standard quality overused by 2 matches per week. Recorded community use.	Investigate options to improve quality and help address overplay.	RFL			S	M	
			Rugby union			One senior pitch of poor (M0/D0) quality overplayed by 0.75 matches per week. Pitches used by University.	Investigate options to improve quality to address overplay.	RFU			M	M	
138	Winwick Recreation Ground	East	Football	Local Authority	Existing	2 adult pitches and 1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. No spare capacity during peak periods.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site.	Parish Council	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
139	Woolston C of E Primary School	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. 0.5 MES spare capacity during peak period.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
140	Woolston Community Primary	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini 7v7 pitch of standard quality. 0.5 MES spare capacity during peak period.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

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Site ID	Site name	Area	Sport	Management	Type	Current status	Recommended actions	Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales ¹⁵	Cost ¹⁶	Aim
141	Woolston Learning Village	East	Football	School	Existing	1 mini pitch of standard quality. Unavailable for community use.	Retain pitches for school use, potential site for community use if needed.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
142	Woolston Neighbourhood Hub	East	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 youth 11v11 pitch of poor quality, currently played to capacity.	Investigate options to improve quality to provide useable capacity in the area.	FA WBC	Local Site	Low	M	L	Enhance
143	Woolston Park	East	Football	Local Authority	Existing	1 adult pitch, 1 youth 9v9 pitch, 3 mini 7v7 pitches and 1 mini 5v5 pitch all of poor quality. Adult pitch overplayed by 1 MES. No MES capacity in the peak periods.	Investigate options to improve quality to address overplay on adult pitch. Support and consider upgraded site changing / community facilities. Site is located next to Hillock Lane (site ID 59) and whole site needs to be considered in terms of development.	FA WBC	Key Centre	High	S	M-H	Protect Enhance
145	The Oaks Playing Fields	East	Football	Sports Club	Existing	2 youth 11v11 pitches, 2 youth 9v9 pitches, 2 mini 7v7 pitches and 2 mini 5v5 pitches all of good quality. No MES capacity during peak periods.	Maintain pitches to current standards to ensure play can continue at current site.	Sports Club	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
150	Kings Leadership Academy	East	AGP	School	Existing	Half size 3G pitch not floodlit.	Retain pitch for school use.	School	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
151	Warrington Wolves Training Dome	East	AGP	Sports Club	Existing	Half size 3G pitch within a dome. Used by Warrington Wolves first team and academy for training. Limited community use.	Retain pitch for use by professional club. Review community use to establish spare capacity available to address overplay due to training taking place on grass pitches.	Warrington Wolves	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect
154	Christ Church CofE Playing Field	East	Rugby league	Private	Existing	Rylands Sharks have worked with Poulton-with-Fearnhead Parish Council to carry out work on a playing field located opposite to Bennett's Recreation Ground in the east neighbourhood analysis area to introduce a senior rugby league pitch. The pitch measures 100 x 68 metre with a 6 metre dead balls and full size posts	Retain pitch for community use	WBC RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

PART 7: HOUSING GROWTH SCENARIOS

The PPS provides an estimate of demand for pitch sport based on population forecasts and club consultation to 2037 (in line with the Local Plan period). This future demand is translated into teams likely to be generated, rather than actual pitch provision required. The Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator (PPC) adds to this, updating the likely demand generated for pitch sports based on housing increases and converts the demand into match equivalent sessions and the number of pitches required. This is achieved via team generation rates (TGRs) in the Assessment Report to determine how many new teams would be generated from an increase in population derived from housing growth and gives the associated costs of supplying the increased pitch provision.

The Warrington Local Plan sets out a vision for the Borough's future, which determines what will be built, where and when but also sets out what areas need to be protected from development. It aims to deliver 18,900 new homes (or 945 a year, up to 2037) and will also support Warrington's ongoing economic growth by providing 362 hectares of employment land.

The Plan sets out and prioritises using urban capacity to create varied, vibrant neighbourhoods that are shared places to live, work and enjoy. Government guidelines determine the need to build at least 18,900 homes over the course of the plan, which exceeds the urban land available. Therefore, there is a need to consider other areas of land to develop on, including Green Belt, in order to meet our development obligations.

The projected housing figures aim to match Warrington's expected growth and ensure enough homes are provided to support the number of jobs that will be created from Warrington's future economic growth. The areas of Green Belt proposed for development would need to be released to meet Government figures and while our priority is to protect as much Green Belt as possible.

Taking the above into account, below is an example of how the PPC can be used to show the additional demand for pitch sports generated from future housing growth. For the purposes of this demonstration, it uses the Local Plan figures from 2020 to 2037 to deliver a total of 16,065 dwellings.

The demand is shown in match equivalent sessions per week for the majority of sports, with the exception of cricket, where match equivalent sessions are by season. This is also equated to pitches required at peak time for each sport rounded up or down to the nearest whole pitch.

The indicative figures are based on the assumption of a per dwelling occupancy rate of 2.3¹⁷.

The number of pitches required in the following tables has been rounded up or down accordingly, however capital and revenue costs are based on indicative pitch costs, proportionate to the total match equivalent sessions required rather than just whole pitches required. Though increases in match sessions for some sports are not sufficient to warrant the creation of new pitches, the associated costs have been incorporated and investment into alternative sites could instead be considered to increase capacity to accommodate this new demand.

¹⁷ It should be noted that all of WBC previous public open space calculations and advice provided on playing pitch/sports facilities provision have been based on an average household size of 2.3.

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Example scenario

The estimated additional population derived from housing growth from 16,065 dwellings is 36,950 people.

This population increase equates to 45.93 match equivalent sessions of demand per week for grass pitch sports, 1.39 match equivalent sessions of demand per week on AGPs for hockey and 80.85 match equivalent sessions of demand per season for cricket.

Training demand equates to 79.45 hours of use per week for football on 3G pitches and hockey equates to 4.65 hours of use per week on AGPs. There are also 7.36 match equivalent sessions per week of training for rugby league and union on a floodlit grass pitch.

Table 7.1: Likely demand for grass pitch sports generated from 16,065 dwellings

Pitch sport	Estimated demand by sport	
	Match demand (MES) per week ¹⁸	Training demand ¹⁹
Adult football	6.36	79.45
Youth football	17.77	
Mini soccer	15.59	
Rugby union	1.81	2.05
Rugby league	4.40	5.31
Adult hockey	1.13	3.40
Junior & mixed hockey	0.26	1.25
Cricket	80.85 per season	N/A

The table below translates estimated demand into new pitch provision with associated capital and lifestyle costs.

Table 7.2: Estimated demand and costs for new pitch provision from 16,065 dwellings

Pitch type	Estimated demand and costs for new pitches		
	Number of pitches to meet demand	Capital cost ²⁰	Lifecycle Cost (per annum) ²¹
Adult football	6.36	£616,899	£130,166
Youth football	17.77	£1,292,953	£271,520
Mini soccer	15.59	£378,168	£79,415
Rugby union	1.81	£245,492	£52,535
Rugby league	4.40	£469,435	£103,745
Cricket	1.79	£512,835	£103,593
Sand based AGPs	0.39	£312,523	£9,688
3G pitches	2.09	£2,007,880	£76,589

¹⁸ As per the PPS Guidance, demand for cricket is considered in terms of match equivalent sessions per season rather than per week.

¹⁹ Hours equate to access to a full size floodlit 3G pitch or hockey suitable AGP

²⁰ Sport England Facilities Costs Second Quarter 2019 – (<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>)

²¹ Lifecycle costs are based on the % of the total project cost per annum as set out in Sport England's Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces documents (2012)

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Further to the above, the PPC also estimates that there will be a need to provide 54.42 changing rooms to support new pitch provision which is identified in the table above. The total capital cost to deliver this level of provision is £8,973,996.

Conclusions

The tables above show that through housing growth, demand will be generated for each pitch sport to a lesser or greater extent. That being said, it must be noted that not all developments will require new on site provision, with the capacity of existing sites in the locality needing to be assessed to understand if they can accommodate increased usage. The PPS should be used as a guide to inform this.

Experience shows that only significantly large housing sites are likely to generate demand in their own right; however, the cumulative impact of housing across the local authority will result in substantial demand generated across the local authority and in each analysis area. For developments not requiring on site provision, contributions should be focused on improving existing sites. The preceding Action Plan and future consultation with NGBs should inform the playing fields that most require investment.

PART 8: DELIVER THE STRATEGY AND KEEP IT ROBUST AND UP TO DATE

Delivery

The PPS provides guidance for maintenance/management decisions and investment made across Warrington. By addressing 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 met. The Strategy identifies where there is a deficiency in provision and identifies how best to resolve this in the future.

Production of this Strategy is the start of the planning process. Successful Strategy implementation and the benefits to be gained depend upon regular engagement between all partners involved and the adoption of a mutually bought into, strategic approach. It is important that this document is used in a practical manner, supports engagement 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.

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 that 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 to which people and agencies regularly turn to for information in respect of how current demand should be met and what actions are required to improve the situation and meet future demand. To ensure that this is achieved the Steering Group need to have a clear understanding of how the PPS can be applied and therefore delivered.

The process of PPS development has already led to a number of benefits that assist its application and delivery. These include enhanced partnership work across different agendas and organisations, pooling of resources along with strengthened relationships and understanding between stakeholders, members of the Steering Group and the sporting community. The drivers behind the PPS and the work to develop the recommendations and action plan will have also highlighted, and helped the Steering Group to understand, the key areas to which its influence should be applied and strategy delivered enhanced.

Following sign off of the PPS, a short-term Action Plan should be prepared by the Council, in consultation with relevant partners, in order to distil the existing Action Plan and to give the Steering Group a short-term focus. This would then need to be revised through regular meetings.

Monitoring and updating

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

KKP will provide the tools used to produce the PPS to the Council as well as training on how to use such tools, such as the PPS database used to hold all information gathered. This will enable the monitoring and updating process to be carried out.

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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, Sport England and the NGBs will consider the PPS and the information on which it is based to be out of date.

The nature of the supply and in particular the demand for outdoor sports facilities will likely to have changed over the three years. Therefore, without any form of review and update within this time period it would be difficult to make the case that the supply and demand information and assessment work is sufficiently robust.

Ideally the 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 built up during its development. Taking into account the time to develop the PPS this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed.

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

- ◀ How delivery of the recommendations and action plan has progressed and any changes required to the priority afforded to each action (e.g. the priority of some may increase or reduce following the delivery of others)
- ◀ How the PPS has been applied and the lessons learnt
- ◀ Any changes to particularly important sites and/or clubs in the area (e.g. the most used or high quality sites for a particular sport) and other supply and demand information, what this may mean for the overall assessment work and the key findings and issues
- ◀ Any development of a specific sport or particular format of a sport
- ◀ Any new or emerging issues and opportunities.

Once the PPS is complete the role of the Steering Group should evolve so that it:

- ◀ Acts as a focal point for promoting the value and importance of the PPS and outdoor sports provision in the area
- ◀ Monitors, evaluates and reviews progress with the delivery of the recommendations and action plan
- ◀ Shares lessons learnt from how the PPS has been used and how it has been applied to a variety of circumstances
- ◀ Ensures that the PPS is used effectively to input into any new opportunities to secure improved provision and influence relevant programmes and initiatives
- ◀ Maintains links between relevant parties with an interest in local outdoor sports provision;
- ◀ Reviews the need to update the PPS along with the supply and demand information and assessment work on which it is based. Further to review the group should either:
 - ◀ Provide a short annual progress and update paper;
 - ◀ Provide a partial review focussing on particular sport, pitch type and/or sub area; or
 - ◀ Lead a full review and update of the PPS document (including the supply and demand information and assessment details).

Alongside regular Steering Group meetings a good way to keep the PPS up to date and maintain relationships is to hold annual sport specific meetings with pitch sport NGBs and other relevant parties; and/or establish Working Groups to address key PPS issues. These could be part of a process of updating key supply and demand information plus, if necessary, amending assessment work, tracking progress in respect of implementing action plan recommendations and highlighting new issues and opportunities.

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Meetings could be timed to coincide with annual NGB affiliation processes. This would help to signal changes in the number and nature of sports clubs in the area. Other information that is already collected on a regular basis such as pitch booking records for local authority and other sites should also feed into these meetings.

NGBs will also be able to confirm any further performance quality assessments undertaken within the study area. Discussion with league secretaries may also indicate annual league meetings may be useful to attend to pick up on specific issues and/or enable a review of the relevant club details to be undertaken.


The Steering Group should regularly review and refresh area by area plans taking account of any improvements in pitch quality (and hence increases in pitch capacity) and also any new negotiations for community use of education sites in the future.

It is important that the Council maintains the data contained with the accompanying Playing Pitch Database. This will enable it to refresh and update area by area plans on a regular basis. The accompanying databases are intended to be refreshed on a season by season basis and it is important that there is cross-departmental work encompassing, for example, grounds maintenance and sports development departments, to ensure that this is achieved and that results inform subsequent annual sports facility development plans. Results should be shared with partners via a consultative mechanism.

Checklist

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

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

Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date	Tick 	
	Yes	Requires Attention
Step 9: Apply & deliver the strategy		
1. Are steering group members clear on how the PPS can be applied across a range of relevant areas?		
2. Is each member of the steering group committed to taking the lead to help ensure the PPS is used and applied appropriately within their area of work and influence?		
3. Has a process been put in place to ensure regular monitoring of how the recommendations and action plan are being delivered and the PPS is being applied?		
Step 10: Keep the strategy robust & up to date		
1. Has a process been put in place to ensure the PPS is kept robust and up to date?		
2. Does the process involve an annual update of the PPS?		
3. Is the steering group to be maintained and is it clear of its on-going role?		
4. Is regular liaison with the NGBs and other parties planned?		

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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?		

APPENDIX 1: SPORTING CONTEXT

The following section outlines a series of national, regional and local policies pertaining to the study and which will have an important influence on the Strategy.

National context

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

Department of Media Culture and Sport Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation (2015)

The Government published its strategy for sport in December 2015. This strategy confirms the recognition and understanding that sport makes a positive difference through broader means and that it will help the sector to deliver five simple but fundamental outcomes: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development. In order to measure its success in producing outputs which accord with these aims it has also adopted a series of 23 performance indicators under nine key headings, as follows:

- ◀ More people taking part in sport and physical activity.
- ◀ More people volunteering in sport.
- ◀ More people experiencing live sport.
- ◀ Maximising international sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ Maximising domestic sporting success.
- ◀ A more productive sport sector.
- ◀ A more financially and organisationally sustainable sport sector.
- ◀ A more responsible sport sector.

Sport England: Towards an Active Nation (2016-2021)

Sport England has recently released its new five year strategy 'Towards an Active Nation'. The aim is to target the 28% of people who do less than 30 minutes of exercise each week and will focus on the least active groups; typically women, the disabled and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Sport England will invest up to £30m on a plan to increase the number of volunteers in grassroots sport. Emphasis will be on working with a larger range of partners with less money being directed towards National Governing Bodies.

The Strategy will help deliver against the five health, social and economic outcomes set out in the Government's Sporting Future strategy.

- ◀ Physical Wellbeing
- ◀ Mental Wellbeing
- ◀ Individual Development
- ◀ Social & Community Development
- ◀ Economic Development

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National Planning Policy Framework

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

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

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

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

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

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

The FA National Football Facilities Strategy (2018-28)

The Football Association's (FA) National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a ten-year period. The Strategy is presently in draft and is due for publication in 2018.

The Strategy sets out shared aims and objectives it aims to deliver on in conjunction with The Premier League, Sport England and the Government, to be delivered with support of the Football Foundation.

These stakeholders have clearly identified the aspirations for football to contribute directly to nationally important social and health priorities. Alongside this, the strategy is clear that traditional, affiliated football remains an important priority and a core component of the game, whilst recognising and supporting the more informal environments used for the community and recreational game.

Its vision is: *"Within 10 years we aim to deliver great football facilities, wherever they are needed"*

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£1.3 billion has been spent by football and Government since 2000 to enhance existing football facilities and build new ones. However, more is needed if football and Government's shared objectives for participation, individual well-being and community cohesion are to be achieved. Nationally, direct investment will be increased – initially to £69 million per annum from football and Government (a 15% increase on recent years).

The NFFS investment priorities can be broadly grouped into six areas, recognising the need to grow the game, support existing players and better understand the different football environments:

- ◀ **Improve 20,000 Natural Turf pitches**, with a focus on addressing drop off due to a poor playing experience;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 3G AGP 'equivalents'** (mix of full size and small sided provision, including MUGAs - small sided facilities are likely to have a key role in smaller / rural communities and encouraging multi-sport offers), enhancing the quality of playing experience and supporting a sustainable approach to grass roots provision;
- ◀ **Deliver 1,000 changing pavilions/clubhouses**, linked to multi-pitch or hub sites, supporting growth (particularly in women and girls football), sustainability and providing a facility infrastructure to underpin investment in coaching, officials and football development;
Support access to flexible indoor spaces, including equipment and court markings, to support growth in futsal, walking football and to support the education and skills outcomes, exploiting opportunities for football to positively impact on personal and social outcomes for young people in particular;
- ◀ **Refurbish existing stock to maintain current provision**, recognising the need to address historic under-investment and issues with refurbishment of existing facilities;
- ◀ **Support testing of technology and innovation**, building on customer insight to deliver hubs for innovation, testing and development of the game.

Local Football Facility Plans

To support in delivery of the NFFS, The FA has commissioned a national project. Over the next two years to 2020, a Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) will be produced for every local authority across England. Each plan will be unique to its area as well as being diverse in its representation, including currently underrepresented communities.

Identifying strategic priorities for football facilities across the formal, recreational and informal game, LFFPs will establish a ten-year vision for football facilities that aims to transform the playing pitch stock in a sustainable way. They will identify key projects to be delivered and act as an investment portfolio for projects that require funding. As such, around 90% of all will be identified via LFFPs. LFFPs will guide the allocation of 90% of national football investment (The FA, Premier League and DCMS) and forge stronger partnerships with local stakeholders to develop key sites. This, together with local match-funding will deliver over one billion pounds of investment into football facilities over the next 10-years.

It is important to recognise that a LFFP is an investment portfolio of priority projects for potential investment - it is not a detailed supply and demand analysis of all pitch provision in a local area. Therefore, it cannot be used as a replacement for a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and it will not be accepted as an evidence base for site change of use or disposal.

A LFFP will; however, build on available/existing local evidence and strategic plans and may adopt relevant actions from a PPS and/or complement these with additional investment priorities.

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The FA: National Game Strategy (2018-2021)

The FA launched its new National Game Strategy in July 2018 which aims to inspire a life-long journey in football for all. To achieve this, the strategy will focus on five key aspects of the game:

- ◀ A high quality introduction to football
- ◀ Developing clubs and leagues
- ◀ Embrace all formats of football and engage all participants
- ◀ Recruit, develop and support the workforce
- ◀ Develop sustainable facilities

Through these five pillars, The FA's objectives are to:

- ◀ Increase the number of male affiliated and recreational players by 10%.
- ◀ Double the number of female affiliated and recreational players via a growth of 75%.
- ◀ Increase the number of disability affiliated and recreational players by 30%.
- ◀ Ensure affiliated Futsal is available across the country in order to increase the number of Futsal affiliated and recreational players.

The sustainable football facilities should provide support to an agreed portfolio of priority projects that meet National Football Facility Strategy (NFFS) investment priorities.

The Rugby Football League Facility Strategy

The RFL's Facilities Strategy was published in 2011. The following themes have been prioritised:

- ◀ Clean, Dry, Safe & Playable
- ◀ Sustainable clubs
- ◀ Environmental Sustainability
- ◀ Geographical Spread
- ◀ Non-club Facilities

The RFL Facilities Trust website www.rflfacilitiestrust.co.uk provides further information on:

- ◀ The RFL Community Facility Strategy
- ◀ Clean, Dry, Safe and Playable Programme
- ◀ Pitch Size Guidance
- ◀ The RFL Performance Standard for Artificial Grass Pitches
- ◀ Club guidance on the Annual Preparation and Maintenance of the Rugby League Pitch

Further to the 2011 Strategy detail on the following specific programmes of particular relevance to pitches and facility planning are listed below and can be found via the trust link (see above):

- ◀ The RFL Pitch Improvement Programme 2013 – 2017
- ◀ Clean, Dry and Safe programmes 2013 - 2017

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Rugby League World Cup ‘Inspired by 2021’ Legacy Programme

The Rugby League World Cup 2021 will develop a £10 million legacy programme with funds driven into local clubs and community projects. The government investment, delivered by Sport England, is part of RLWC 2021’s ambitious plan to grow the sport and make it more visible, engaging and welcoming to current and potential participants.

The funding will be split into large transformational community projects, such as changing room improvements and new artificial grass pitches with the remaining funding used for smaller scale initiatives such as supplying new kit and equipment to promote club and community development. The investment will focus on the following four key areas:

- ◀ Creating welcoming environments
- ◀ Encouraging participation growth
- ◀ Building community engagement
- ◀ Cultivating further investment

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Cricket Unleashed 5 Year Plan (2016-2021)

The England and Wales Cricket Board unveiled a new strategic five-year plan in 2016 (available at <http://www.cricketunleashed.com>). Its success will be measured by the number of people who play, follow or support the whole game. The plan sets out five important headline elements and each of their key focuses, these are:

- ◀ ***More Play*** – make the game more accessible and inspire the next generation of players, coaches, officials and volunteers. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Clubs and leagues*
 - ◀ *Kids*
 - ◀ *Communities*
 - ◀ *Casual*
- ◀ ***Great Teams*** – deliver winning teams who inspire and excite through on-field performance and off-field behaviour. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Pathway*
 - ◀ *Support*
 - ◀ *Elite Teams*
 - ◀ *England Teams*
- ◀ ***Inspired Fans*** – put the fan at the heart of our game to improve and personalise the cricket experience for all. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Fan focus*
 - ◀ *New audiences*
 - ◀ *Global stage*
 - ◀ *Broadcast and digital*
- ◀ ***Good Governance and Social Responsibility*** – make decisions in the best interests of the game and use the power of cricket to make a positive difference. Focus on:
 - ◀ *Integrity*
 - ◀ *Community programmes*
 - ◀ *Our environments*
 - ◀ *One plan*
- ◀ ***Strong Finance and Operations*** – increase the game’s revenues, invest our resources wisely and administer responsibly to secure the growth of the game. Focus on:
 - ◀ *People*
 - ◀ *Revenue and reach*
 - ◀ *Insight*
 - ◀ *Operations*

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

The Rugby Football Union Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

The RFU has released its new strategic vision for rugby in England. The strategy is based on four main elements which are; Protect, Engage, Grow and Win. It covers all elements of rugby union ranging from elite rugby to grassroots, although the general relevancy to the PPS is centred around growing the game.

The RFU exists to promote and develop rugby union in England and ensure the long-term sustainability of clubs by growing player numbers and retaining them across all age groups. Responding to wider market influences, work will continue on developing new ways to take part in all forms of the game, without comprising the sports traditions. This will ensure a lasting legacy from elite success by attracting new players and encouraging current male and female adult players to play.

The four key aims to ensure long term sustainability are to:

- ◀ Improve player transition from age grade to adult 15-a-side rugby
- ◀ Expand places to play through Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs)
- ◀ Engage new communities in rugby
- ◀ Create a community 7's offering

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

The vision is for England to be a 'Nation Where Hockey Matters'.

We know that delivering success on the international stage stimulates the nation's pride in their hockey team and, with the right events in place, we will attract interest from spectators, sponsors and broadcasters alike. The visibility that comes from our success and our occasions will inspire young people and adults to follow in the footsteps of their heroes and, if the right opportunities are there to meet their needs, they will play hockey and enjoy wonderful experiences.

Underpinning all this is the infrastructure which makes our sport function. We know the importance of our volunteers, coaches, officials, clubs and facilities. The more inspirational our people can be, the more progressive we can be and the more befitting our facilities can be, the more we will achieve for our sport. England Hockey will enable this to happen and we are passionate about our role within the sport. We will lead, support, counsel, focus and motivate the Hockey Nation and work tirelessly towards our vision.

As a governing body, we want to have a recognisable presence to participants of the game, be that through club or association website or their communications, or through the work of the many outstanding coaches in our game, so that players understand that their club is part of a wider team working together to a common goal.

The core objectives are as follows:

1. Grow our Participation
2. Deliver International Success
3. Increase our Visibility
4. Enhance our Infrastructure
5. For England Hockey to be proud and respected custodians of the sport

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Club participation

Our club market is well structured and clubs are required to affiliate to England Hockey to play in community leagues. As a result only relatively few occasional teams lie outside our affiliation structure. Schools and Universities are the other two areas where significant hockey is played.

Hockey is clearly benefiting from a double Olympic legacy. After Great Britain's women won bronze in front of a home crowd in London in 2012 the numbers of young girls playing the sport doubled and a historic gold in Rio 2016 saw more than 10,000 players promptly joining clubs. These triumphs have inspired the nation to get active and play hockey. Thanks to the outstanding work of the network of clubs across the country, England Hockey has seen unprecedented growth at both ends of the age range. There has been an 80% increase in the number of boys and girls in clubs, as well as a 54% increase in players over the age of 46.

Hockey clubs have reaped the rewards of the improved profile of the sport, focussing on a link with schools to provide excellent opportunities for young players. Programmes such as Quick sticks – a small-sided version of hockey for 7-11 year olds – in Primary Schools have been hugely successful in allowing new players to take part in the sport from an early age. The growth in the sport since the eve of London 2012 has been seen across the country, examples being a 110% increase in under 16s club participation in London, and a 111% growth in the North West in the same age bracket.

England Hockey Strategy

England Hockey's Facilities Strategy can be found [here](#).

Vision: For every hockey club in England to have appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players.

Mission: More, Better, Happier Players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

1. PROTECT: To conserve the existing hockey provision

- There are currently over 800 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (club, school, universities) across the country. It is important to retain the current provision where appropriate to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country.

2. IMPROVE: To improve the existing facilities stock (physically and administratively)

- The current facilities stock is ageing and there needs to be strategic investment into refurbishing the pitches and ancillary facilities. England Hockey works to provide more support for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers & education around owning an asset.

3. DEVELOP: To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain. This might include consolidating hockey provision in a local area where appropriate.

England Hockey has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches, suitable for hockey. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site.

APPENDIX 2: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Exported 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**.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

Match equivalent sessions is an appropriate comparable unit for pitch usage. For football, 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). Please note that a match equivalent session can also refer to a training session or education use. If the usage takes place every week the total number of match equivalent sessions will equal one.

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.

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

Key centres although these sites are more community focused, some are still likely to service a wider analysis area. There may be more of a focus on a specific sport.

Additionally, it is considered that some financial investment may be necessary to improve the ancillary facilities at both hub sites and key centre sites to complement the pitches in terms of access, flexibility (i.e. single-sex changing if necessary), quality and that they meet the rules and regulations of local competitions.

Local sites refer to those sites offering minimal provision or that are of minimal value to the wider community. Primarily they are sites with one facility or a low number of facilities that service just one or two sports. The level of priority attached to them for external investment may be relatively low.