



Northumberland  
County Council

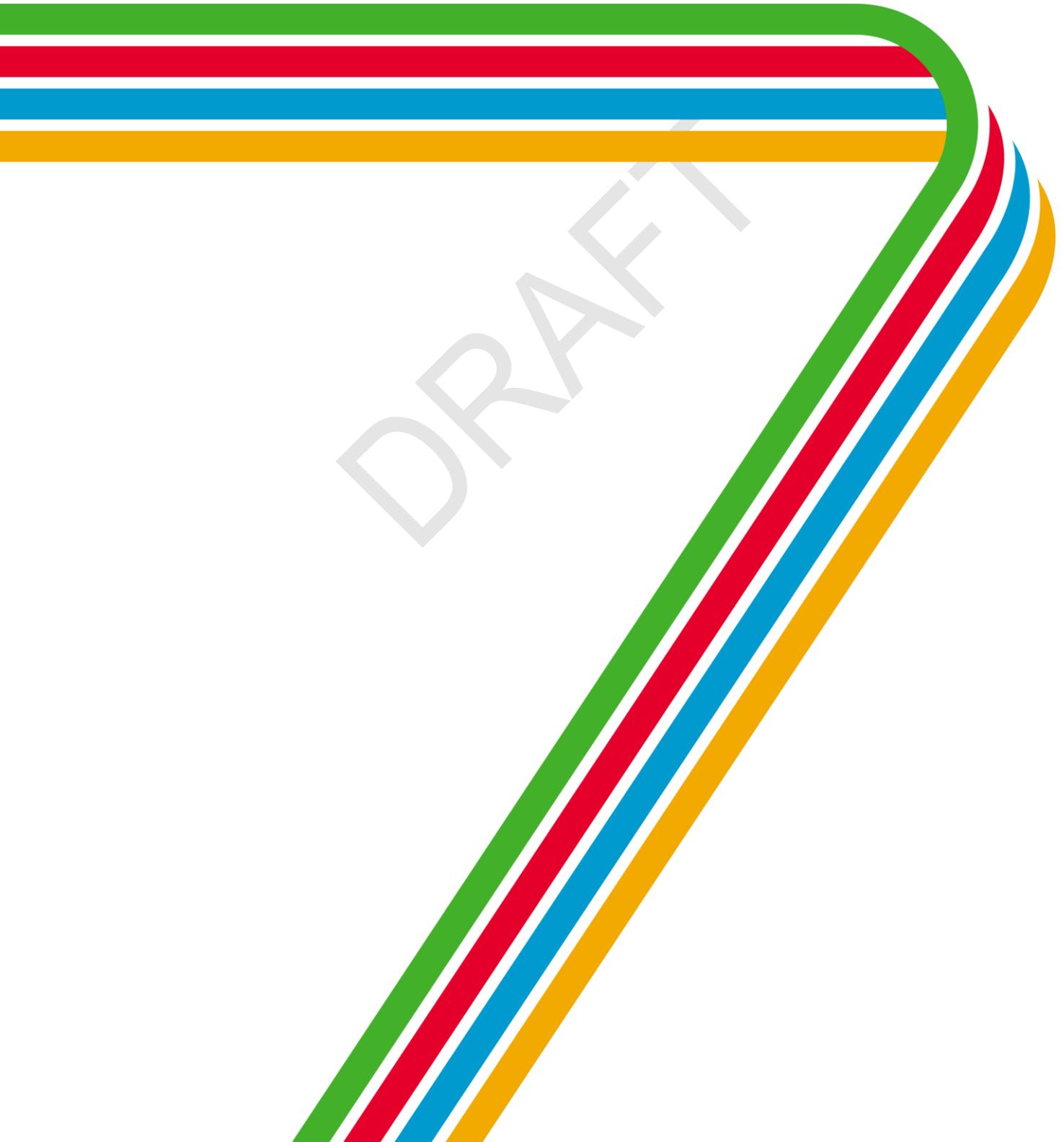
# Northumberland Playing Pitch Strategy

## Strategy and Action Plan

Date: April, 2020

Version: Final Draft

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**SHAPING THE FUTURE OF SPORT**



***4global Consulting Terms of Reference***

*Estimates and forecasts contained within this report are based on the data obtained at that time and the accuracy of resultant findings and recommendations is dependent on the quality of that data.*

*The author(s) will not be held liable for any data provided by third party organisations as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) delivery process. While the data and recommendations have been conscientiously reviewed through the PPS governance process followed throughout project delivery, it has not been possible for the author to independently review every element of data provided by third parties.*

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## Section 1: Introduction and scope



# 1 Introduction and scope

## 1.1 Project scope and objectives

- 1.1.1 Northumberland County Council (hereafter referred to as the Council or NCC) has commissioned 4global Consulting to prepare a Playing Pitch Strategy, to provide the Council with a clear evidence base and set of recommendations for future outdoor sports facility development across the study area.
- 1.1.2 A PPS is a strategic assessment that provides an up to date analysis of supply and demand for playing pitches (grass and artificial) in a local authority area. The strategy and the evidence base upon which it is based is delivered using national guidance and facility insight from specific Governing Bodies of Sport.
- 1.1.3 The assessment will focus on facilities used by the following sports as they were identified as the key sports which use facilities within Northumberland;
- Football;
  - Rugby Union;
  - Cricket;
  - Hockey;
  - Tennis;
  - Bowls; and
  - Athletics.
- 1.1.4 Within these sports, the strategy will seek as far as is practicable to include consideration of all forms of play, whether:
- Club and league based (formal) play and training;
  - Less formal programmed forms of the respective sports (e.g. turn up and play 'products' such as Rush Hockey, Mash-up Football, Last Man Stands Cricket, Cage Cricket and Touch Rugby); and
  - Informal and un-programmed play by groups of residents, workers, students, school friends (out of school).
- 1.1.5 The PPS provides a holistic analysis of outdoor sports facilities across the study area, leading to a comprehensive set of recommendations for the future development of facilities, in line with the needs of local residents and sports clubs.
- 1.1.6 The council is committed to providing sports provision that meets the needs of its residents and local clubs. The evidence collected as part of this study will inform the preparation of the new Northumberland Local Plan.
- 1.1.7 The objectives of the Northumberland PPS are to;
- Engage with Sport England and the relevant NGB's to use the national PPS methodology to provide a PPS consistent with the structure and process used across England;
  - Provide a robust evidence base that can be used by the Council and other stakeholders for a wide range of future projects;
  - Gather a representative evidence base, by achieving a high response rate from the surveys sent to clubs, schools and Parish Councils/community organisations;
  - Identify cross boundary NGB issues, the nature and location of any overuse,

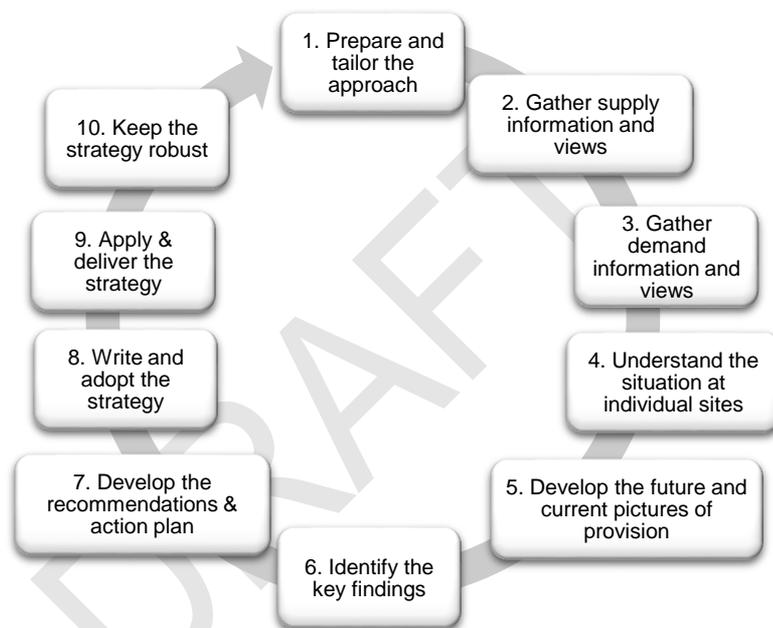
unmet demand and spare capacity for play across all pitch types and sports including all elements of current and future demand; and,

- Establish clear, prioritised, specific and achievable recommendations and actions to address the key issues around pitch provision and participation.

## 1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 The assessment methodology utilised for the PPS follows the published guidance from Sport England. The guidance used is the 2013 version, Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance – An Approach to Developing and Delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy<sup>1</sup>. Figure 1 summarises the approach proposed in this guidance and is broken down into 10 steps.

**Figure 1.1: Developing and Delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy – The 10 Step Approach (Sport England, 2013)**



1.2.2 The findings in this report are based on data collected from several credible sources, including but not limited to;

- Local authority and public policy strategic documentation;
- Sport England tools, including the Facility Planning Model (FPM), Active Places Power, the Active People Survey, Market Segmentation and the Sports Facility Calculator;
- Stakeholder consultation, including COUNCIL Officers and Members, Sport England, Relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport, key user clubs; and
- Site visits, undertaken at all sites across the Study Area.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/media/3522/pps-guidance-october-2013-updated.pdf>

1.2.3 To facilitate information gathering and help ensure PPS reports are based on a robust evidence base, 4global has developed an online data entry and assessment platform (see example below), which contains all site and club information. This will enable the Council to keep supply and demand information and the strategy up to date through to the end of the strategy and beyond.

Figure 1.2 - 4global's Online Playing Pitch Platform

Local Authority Name	Site Name	Site Address	Site Assessor Name	Scheduled At	Completed At	Responded	Confirmed
Merton	RAYNES PARK SPORTS GROUND	Taunton Avenue,London,	Brooke Butler	2018-06-12 16:20:00	2018-06-28	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Merton	WIMBLEDON PARK	Home Park Rd, Wimbledon, London	Sam James	2018-06-13 09:00:00	2018-06-13	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Merton	COTTENHAM PARK	Melbury Gardens,London,	Sam James	2018-06-13 15:40:00	2018-06-13	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Merton	JOHN INNES RECREATION GROUND	Mostyn Road,London,	Brooke Butler	2018-06-13 13:30:00	2018-06-28	✓ Yes	✓ Yes
Merton	MORDEN RECREATION GROUND	Farm Road,Morden	Sam James	2018-06-14 15:20:00	2018-06-14	✓ Yes	✓ Yes

1.2.4 A Project Steering Group comprising representation from the Council, Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) has guided the study from its commencement. At critical milestones, the Steering Group members have reviewed and verified the data and information collected to allow the work to proceed efficiently through each stage.

### 1.3 The structure of the Strategy Document

1.3.1 The structure of the strategy document is as follows;

- Section 1 - Introductory
- Section 2 – Strategic context
- Section 3 – Scenario testing
- Section 4 – Recommendation and action plan
- Section 5 - Delivering the PPS.

1.3.2 In addition to the Strategy, a detailed needs assessment has also been produced, which provides a full evidence base for the analysis and a clear methodology for the project. The needs assessment contains a detailed strategic review of relevant local regional and national policy.

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## Section 2: Strategic Context



## 2 Strategic context

- 2.1.1 Northumberland is a county in the north-east of England. It is England's northern most county with the Scottish Borders to the north, Carlisle and Eden (part of the County of Cumbria) to the west and borders with County Durham, Gateshead, North Tyneside and Newcastle Upon Tyne to the south. To the east is the North Sea and the county has a large coastline. It is the 6<sup>th</sup> largest county by area with a total of 5,014 sq. km. Roughly a quarter of this area (predominantly in the north and west) is covered by Northumberland National Park.
- 2.1.2 The geography of the county is diverse with relatively low-lying areas by the coast and the Cheviot Hills located in the National Park to the west. The park is also the largest Dark Sky Park in Europe, which means light pollution from artificial sources are restricted.

## 2.2 Planning Policy

- 2.2.1 There are a number of key national and local planning policies which are relevant to the Northumberland Playing Pitch Strategy. These policies inform the approach to current and future provision of sports facilities in the county through the need to link to the overall target of health improvement to improved participation in sport and ensuring the appropriate provision of facilities is available meet the needs of the local community.
- 2.2.2 From a planning perspective, the national agenda links the national planning policy, a Local Plan and population growth at local level and the need to plan for increased demands for infrastructure and provision for sport. This is linked to the key site-by-site recommendations of Protect, Enhance and Provide contained within this report which are the key elements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

## 2.3 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 2.3.1 The national planning policy framework (NPPF) sets out the requirement of local authorities to establish and provide adequate and proper leisure facilities to meet local needs. Paragraphs 96 and 97 outline the planning policies for the provision and protection of sport and recreation facilities:

**PAR 96:** "Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate."

**PAR 97:** "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."

### Protection, Enhancement and Provision of facilities

- 2.3.2 The department for culture, media and sport, following a consultation paper in 2015, launched the new strategy 'sporting future: a new strategy for an active nation' in 2016. The development of the new strategy reflects a need to re-invigorate the nation's appetite for participation in sport following what appears to be a significant reduction in participation (highest profile being swimming), following the upsurge after the 2012 London Olympics.
- 2.3.3 The sport strategy is targeting five outcomes which each sports organisation, public or private sector, will be measured against;
- physical wellbeing;
  - mental wellbeing;
  - individual development;
  - social and community development; and,
  - economic development.
- 2.3.4 Government funding will go toward organisations which can best demonstrate that they will deliver some or all of the five outcomes.
- 2.3.5 The delivery of the outcomes will be through three broad outputs:
- More people from every background regularly and meaningfully taking part in sport and physical activity, volunteering and experiencing live sport
  - A more productive, sustainable and responsible sports sector
  - Maximising international and domestic sporting success and the impact of major sporting events.

## 2.4 Local Planning Policy

- 2.4.1 At the time of writing Northumberland County Council are in the process of reviewing their Local Plan to comply with the NPPF. The most update to date information can be found at [www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk).
- 2.4.2 The Local Plan sets out a vision and framework for development in the County for the next 15 years (until 2036). It addresses the needs and opportunities across a number of themes, including housing, the economy, infrastructure, transport and sustainability. The Local Plan is due to be available for public reading between 30 January 2019 to March 2019 before submission in May 2019 and adoption in March 2020.

## 2.5 Physical Activity and Participation

### The Value of Participation

- 2.5.1 The value of participation in sport and physical activity is significant, and its contribution to individual and community quality of life should not be under estimated. This is true for both younger and older people; participation in sport and physical activity delivers:
- Opportunities for physical activity, and therefore more ‘active living’
  - Health benefits: cardio vascular, stronger bones, mobility
  - Health improvement
  - Mental health benefits
  - Social benefits: socialisation, communication, inter-action, regular contact, stimulation.
- 2.5.2 In addition, participation in sport and physical activity can facilitate the learning of new skills, development of individual and team ability/ performance, and provide a disciplined environment in which participants can ‘grow’ and develop.
- 2.5.3 The benefits of regular and active participation in sport and physical activity will be important to promote in relation to future sport, leisure and physical activity in Northumberland. There is an existing audience in the county, which already recognises the advantages of participation, and a latent community who are ready to take part. The sport, physical activity and leisure offer in the study area can support the delivery of the desired outcomes across a number of study area priorities and objectives.

### Current Participation Rates

- 2.5.4 The figures in Table 2.1 are taken from Sport England’s Active Lives Survey and provide a comparison for Northumberland to the wider region and national level. Active Lives defines physical activity in the following way: “Active” participants are defined as those completing at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week; ‘Fairly Active’ are those completing between 30-149 minutes per week, ‘Inactive’ participants have done less than 30 minutes of physical activity in the past week.

**Table 2.1: Comparison of Physically Active and Inactive Adults (Active Lives Survey May 2017/18)**

Rate	Northumberland	North East	England
Active %	60.1	60.1	62.3
Fairly Active %	12.0	11.7	12.5
Inactive%	27.8	28.2	25.2

- 2.5.5 The survey shows that Northumberland is highly comparable to the North East region and national picture in both measures although it is slightly lower in levels of activity and slightly higher levels of inactivity when compared to the national average.
- 2.5.6 These figures have stayed relatively stable with small fluctuations in levels of activity since the start of the survey. This can be seen in Table 2.2

**Table 2.2: Levels of Active Participation in Northumberland (Active Lives Survey)**

Survey Period	Rate %
November 2015/ 2016	61.3
May 2016/2017	62.9
November 2017/ 2018	62.2
May 2017/ 2018	60.1

## 2.6 Previous Northumberland PPS (2011)

- 2.6.1 Examining the findings of the previous PPS (published in 2011) help to understand the trend of outdoor provision in Northumberland. The following table details the number and type of playing pitch as well as the level of formal demand in the previous survey. As the survey before the production of Sport England's (2013) Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance, the reporting is different, and the following information is a translation into the terminology of the current guidance.

**Table 2.3 – Pitch and Club details from 2011 PPS**

Sport	Number of Pitches	Number of Securely Available Pitches	Number of Clubs	Number of Teams
Football	254	215	212	673
Cricket	49	48	50	225
Rugby Union	39	39	12	94
Hockey	4	4	4	24

- 2.6.2 The quality of pitches was another important assessment criteria when considering provision in a given area as it has an effect on the capacity of a site. Table 2.4 details the percentage of pitches at different quality levels, again because this was published before the 2013 guidance the rating scale is different to the one used in this report. Hockey is not included as no quality assessment was provided.

**Table 2.4 – Quality ratings for each sport in 2011 PPS**

Sport	Excellent/ Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Football*	49%	26%	11%	0%
Cricket	68%	16%	16%	0%
Rugby Union	62%	31%	7%	0%

- 2.6.3 It is important to understand the issues and recommendations made in the action plan of Northumberland's previous Playing Pitch Strategy (published 2011) to measure the progress and effectiveness of plan.

**Table 2.5 – Recommendations from Northumberland PPS 2011**

Type	Recommendation*
MO1	Given the findings of the assessment and the reliance on non-Council facilities there is a need to strengthen and develop partnership working with parish councils, private providers, Governing Bodies and neighbouring authorities. Given that in many of Northumberland's towns and villages playing pitch provision is made through the town/parish council, it will be vital to involve these bodies in any forward planning. It is recommended that some form of Playing Pitch Strategy Group should be developed and used to facilitate this. The Group

Type	Recommendation*
	should also take ownership of the Action Plan and should work with partners towards implementation of its recommendations.
MO2	Update the supply and demand information collated as part of the study on a regular basis as part of evaluating action and delivery. A full playing pitch assessment should be repeated every 5 years or as near as possible to fit in with area planning processes.
MO3	Subject to resources continue to develop regular consultation with pitch users to establish trend data in relation to satisfaction, ratings of quality and common pitch issues. This is partially undertaken via the pitch booking forms administered by the Council to users of public football pitches, and through the proposed Playing Pitch Strategy Group.
MO4	Use the Sport England Market Segmentation toolkit on an ongoing basis to ensure changes in demographics and participation are monitored and can then be reflected in the type of playing pitches provided, and where this provision is made.
M1	Explore with the relevant Governing Bodies and clubs the potential to play some fixtures on Synthetic Pitches – particularly mini and youth football. This recommendation is dependent on the future development of appropriate 3G AGP facilities. Greater use of AGPs could reduce the demand for natural turf pitches and help address future deficiencies. It may also release some football only sites which could be explored for development as cricket facilities. Use of MUGAs should be optimised for training. Appropriate management arrangements with schools would need to be implemented to effect the development of community use – preferably a formal dual-use arrangement.
M2	Community use agreements, to an agreed specification should be required from future school redevelopment schemes (this is also an objective of the Northumberland Facilities Strategy). This is particularly important for any facilities developed under externally funded programmes. However, it is important that future access arrangements consider affordable pricing and priority access to those local clubs most in need of facilities and most impacted by current and projected future deficiencies.
M3	<p>Given the low levels of engagement with schools and limited information about the availability of some facilities it is recommended that closer partnership working with key Schools is explored and developed. Schools have an increasingly important role to support mini and junior sport and potentially provide additional community accessible facilities. High Schools are priorities, but there are a number of Independent schools with high quality facilities that are not currently available to the community. Key schools that do not currently facilitate community use and have substantial provision include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bedlingtonshire Community School (4 pitches)</li> <li>● King Edward VI School (8 pitches)</li> <li>● Queen Elizabeth High School (3 pitches) (poor quality AGP and grass pitches currently prevent external use – barely good enough to support curriculum usage)</li> </ul> <p>There is a possible need for this recommendation to be supported by revenue funding to support additional maintenance costs and administration relating to pitch booking.</p>
M4	Condition surveys on changing facilities should be undertaken at regular intervals to identify any remedial work that may be required, identify any additional disability access requirements and provide an estimated lifespan for the building. This should be used in conjunction with the outcome of recommendation I1 below. These surveys should cover the extent and nature of investment needed, to inform development of a detailed specification for each site. Given that NGBs and the FA in particular are now considering more flexible provision for e.g. toilets and changing facilities, providers should make reference to the latest guidance from these bodies. It is also important to stress that each site will need to be provided with fit for purpose ancillary facilities catering for the specific type of pitch use on site.
M5	Continue to work with local clubs, NGBs and other partners to develop training facilities for all sports and/or ensure better use for training purposes of the facilities currently available.
M6	Provide appropriate support to clubs and community organisations taking local responsibility for the operation of a playing pitch under community asset transfer initiatives. This should be

Type	Recommendation*
	to ensure playing pitch quality is maintained and preferably improved, and to ensure current levels of provision and accessibility are maintained as a minimum.
M7	Develop a rolling programme of site specific technical inspections, targeted at Low Quality/High Value sites, to try and improve the quality e.g. drainage schemes, of the poorer pitches, linked to funding opportunities.
P1	The recommendations from the PPS should be further assessed through the LDF process moving forward to optimise opportunity for investment in improved quality of playing pitch provision - the development of multi-pitch sites, improved partnership working and/or the development of new pitches where appropriate. Supplementary Planning Guidance may need to be developed to assist in this process and policy implementation.
P2	Use the Quality/Value matrix and the priority sites for investment identified in the survey as part of the LDF process to inform decisions about investment in/ development of/ rationalisation of playing pitches across Northumberland.
P3	Use the playing pitch hierarchy and the priority sites for investment identified to inform the LDF process, particularly in relation to the development of guidance on developer contributions.
P4	It should be clearly stated in planning guidance that every community accessible site, and particularly those providing for juniors, women and girls, should at minimum have toilet provision, even if it is a portaloos.
I1	Use the consultation findings of the assessment together with the Quality / Value matrix, and NGB data to prioritise identified investment to deliver a hierarchy of facilities, so that opportunities for capital/revenue funding to address and deliver on identified Northumberland PPS priorities and recommendations can be optimised. The priority sites for investment are identified and priorities include additional provision at existing sites, investment in community access at school facilities, improvements to the quality at some sites and new AGP provision. Specific improvements need to be guided by the results of the quality audit completed.
I2	Explore additional AGP provision in the North and West areas of the County. These should complement existing provision to provide an adequate network of facilities with maximum coverage across the County, which includes small AGPs provided for training, coaching and small sided competitive games. Planning and delivery should consider the guidance detailed in Sport England's Selecting the Right Artificial Surface.
I3	Identify potential sites for additional pitch developments. This will need to be guided by the data collected as part of the PPG17 audits and should include any known disused sites. Priority should be given to additional facilities for existing Cricket and Football Clubs. The sub-area analysis results should be used to prioritise areas and clubs should be involved in this process.  The Northumberland PPG17 Study (2010) should be used to inform identification of potential sites at a local level, given that it highlights the availability of existing recreational land which could be developed as pitches, if appropriate.

## 2.7 Population and Demographic Analysis

2.7.1 The current and future population profile within Northumberland and the locations of population growth are important to understand how best to plan for the future provision of sport and physical activity.

### Population Projections

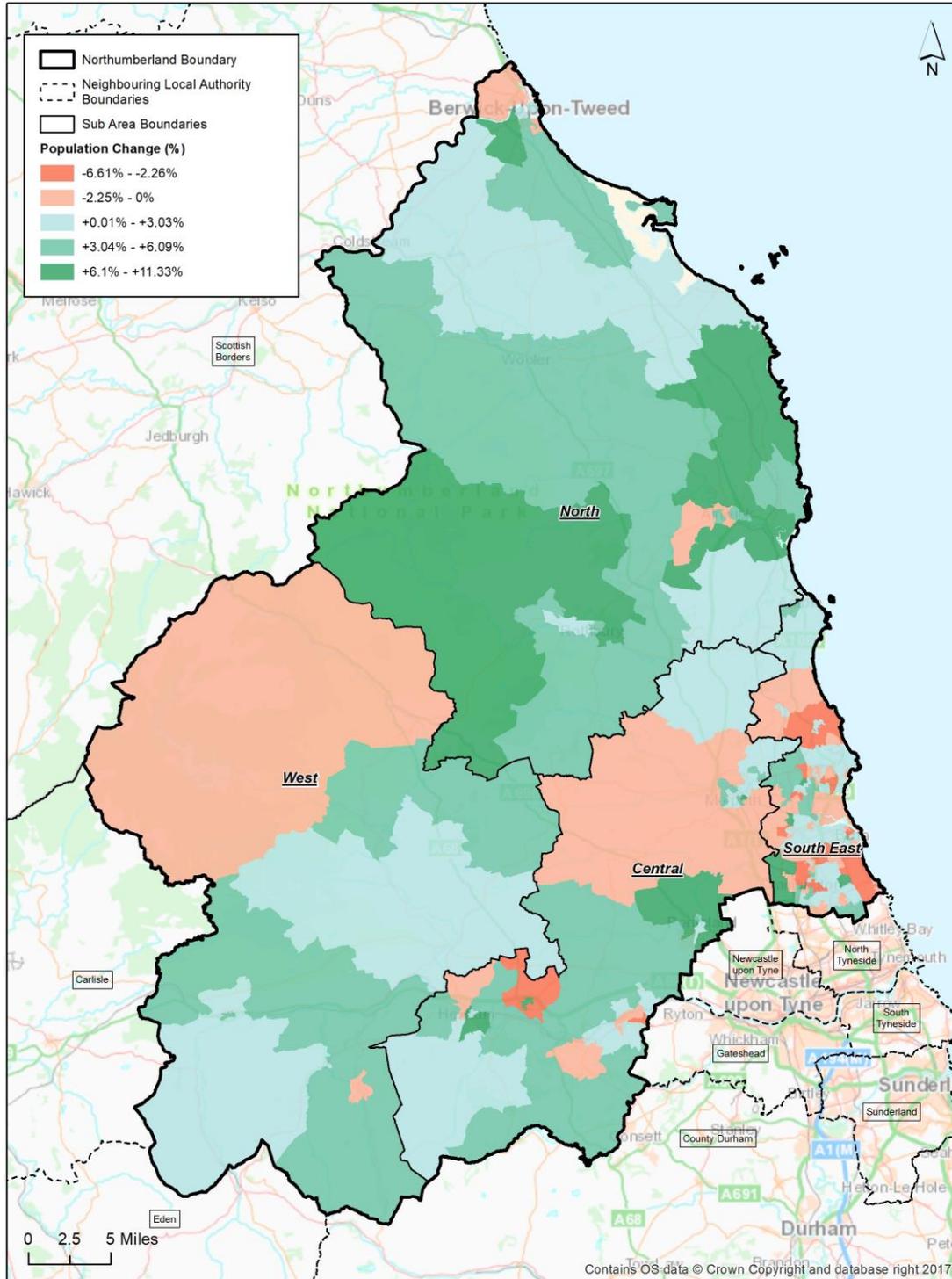
2.7.2 Table 2.6 below provides a summary of the key population and demographic trends for Northumberland. It should be noted that this data is consistent with that used across the Open Spaces Strategy (including Indoor Sports Facilities), as well as the wider strategic planning work currently being undertaken by the council for the Local Plan.

**Table 2.6: Population and demographics analysis for Northumberland**

Current and Future Population	Data
Current population	317,400 (Office of National Statistics 2016 Sub-national Population Projections - 2017 estimate).
Future population- 2031	318,100 (Office of National Statistics (ONS) 2016 Sub-national Population Projections - 2031 estimate).
Notes on population figures	The population growth figures predict an 0.2% increase over the lifetime of the strategy. This should have an impact on the level of demand the County is facing.
Age profile	There are not huge projected increases within specific age groups across Northumberland however, the number of residents over 55 is projected to increase while those between 0 and 40 years old are projected to have periods of population decrease throughout the lifetime of the strategy.

2.7.3 Figure 2.4 overleaf shows the percentage population change by sub area by lower super output area in Northumberland by 2031.

Figure 2.4 Population change by sub area



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## Section 3: Key supply and demand findings



### 3 Key supply and demand findings

- 3.1.1 This section summarises the key findings identified within the needs assessment, which should be used as the evidence base for this strategy. A comprehensive supply and demand analysis has been undertaken for all sports across the study area, with the project steering group engaged at all stages of the process.
- 3.1.2 The following section provides a summary of the key findings for each of the sports analysed within the main report. The format of these tables follows the five key questions that are asked as part of the PPS Guidance Document for Stages A – C of the process.

#### 3.2 Football key findings

**Table 3.1 – Key PPS findings for football in Northumberland**

Key Question	Analysis
What are the main characteristics of the current supply and demand for provision?	<p>There is available supply for 653 pitches match equivalents across all pitch types in the County. The greatest level of supply is for adult football pitches and Mini 7v7 pitches, together these make up 66% of the total supply capacity across the County. Northumberland County Council owns 65% of all football sites in the County. The NCC is only responsible for managing 25% of these however, as most are managed by educational establishments such as colleges, schools and academies.</p> <p>There is demand for 286.5 match equivalents per week. Youth 11v11 teams place the largest demand of any pitch type, demanding 88.5 match equivalents per week.</p> <p>Supply and demand are concentrated in the South East and Central sub areas. Together, these two sub areas represent 80% of available supply and demand in the County.</p> <p>74% of available supply is on sites that are currently utilised by community sites. The West has the highest level of utilisation of available pitches, at 90%. The South East has the poorest at 64%.</p> <p>Many sites, predominantly parks and playing fields, are used by the community for informal use. Consultation with the Council and Active Northumberland reveals that in the majority of cases, this has limited impact on the quality or condition of these sites save for some damage to goal mouth areas.</p>
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet current demand	<p>In looking at all available football sites in Northumberland there is spare capacity in all pitch typologies, with adult 11v11 pitches having the highest surplus of 163.5 MES. The mini 5v5 pitch typology has the lowest level of spare capacity in the current position, with only 2 MES.</p> <p>Currently, there is little exported demand outside of the area, with this being limited to a small proportion of mini soccer demand which is required to use a central venue in Newcastle as a condition of playing in their league.</p> <p>Peak time analysis shows that in general there is a fair amount of spare peak time capacity across most pitch types in most sub areas. The exceptions to this are in the West sub area, where both Youth football pitch types are at capacity at peak times, with limited adult capacity at peak time also. There is also limited peak time capacity for Youth 9v9 pitches, with just 7.5 match slot available across the entire County.</p>

Key Question	Analysis
Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?	<p>The quality of provision is considered to be acceptable but below other local authorities audited by 4global with 19% of pitches rated as 'Poor' compared with 7.5% in other areas. Issues with poor drainage are very common across all sub areas and are reported to be responsible for the majority of cancellations in the area.</p> <p>It is expected that increased maintenance programmes, especially regarding the regular aeration and sand dressing of pitches will significantly improve drainage on many sites.</p>
What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?	<p>The future demand analysis shows a mixed picture. Across the County, clubs have reported significant levels of latent demand across all pitch types. In total, the clubs reported sufficient latent demand to produce 55 new teams.</p> <p>The largest area of latent demand is for Youth 11v11, with clubs reporting enough demand to fill 18 teams, equivalent to 9 match equivalents per week. Latent demand is concentrated in the Central sub area (accounting for 50% of latent demand). This primarily due to the levels of latent demand reported by Morpeth Juniors and Seniors who together reported sufficient demand for up to 20 teams.</p> <p>Conversely, the TGR analysis shows that, due to the changing nature of the age profile of the population in Northumberland, there is a projected reduction of 24 teams across the County. Mini soccer 7v7 is the pitch demand projected to be affected the most, with 10 teams projected to be lost by 2031.</p> <p>If the TGR analysis is proved accurate but the barriers creating the high levels of latent demand are removed, then there is a projected increase of 31 teams across the County, this equates to 15.5 match equivalents per week. The greatest increase in demand is expected to be in Youth 11v11 football, where there is an overall projection for 16 additional teams across the County.</p>

### 3.3 Cricket key findings

3.3.1 This section summarises the findings from the cricket analysis, which will form the basis of the recommendation and action plan section for Northumberland.

**Table 3.2 – Key PPS findings for cricket in Northumberland**

Key Question	Analysis
What are the main characteristics of the current supply and demand for provision?	<p>There are 46 cricket sites in Northumberland containing 48 squares, 423 grass wickets and 11 NTPs. This equates to an overall capacity of 2,311 matches per season, 2,011 of which is from grass wickets. The Central sub area has the most supply with 39% of all supply in Northumberland.</p> <p>The study has captured demand for a total of 1,665 matches per season from 41 clubs across the County. 1,139 of these matches are for senior games (68%). 42% of this demand is concentrated in the Central sub area. Demand is typically traditional village and town clubs playing in local leagues. 10 sites are recognised as being over capacity.</p> <p>The key issues with the supply of the area is the quality of pavilions and practice</p>

Key Question	Analysis
	<p>facilities is particularly poor. Where the ECB and NCC consider sites to be a priority, it is recommended that these facility elements be prioritised for improvement in the short to medium term.</p> <p>16 of the 41 clubs reported a total of 20 unrealised teams in latent demand. This equates to 160 matches. Key reasons for this are considered to be a lack of NTP and fixed net practice facilities at clubs as well as a lack of volunteer capacity to help run and administer these teams.</p>
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet current demand?	<p>All available sites are considered to be secured for continued use for cricket.</p> <p>When all available facilities are factored into the supply, Northumberland is estimated to have a total spare capacity of 405 MES per season when looking at grass wicket provision only. When including artificial wicket provision into the supply, this level of spare capacity increases to 705 MES.</p> <p>There is a notable lack of NTP provision across the County. NTPs are considered to be beneficial for the development of younger aged-junior cricket due to the increased bounce they can produce over grass wickets. Both the Central and North sub areas are at deficit for these wickets.</p> <p>Having a deficit of NTP provision, plus the lack NTPs at key sites where multiple junior teams play, means that there are fewer opportunities for young cricketers to benefit from playing on NTPs as well as and increased strain on the grass wickets.</p> <p>Peak time analysis shows that there is limited spare capacity during Saturday afternoons, with only 9 match slots available across the entire County. The lack of peak time capacity is felt most in the South East sub area, where there are no match slots available. This means that any new teams in the sub area that want to play on Saturday afternoons are likely to need to travel out of the County (most likely to Newcastle) or to neighbouring sub areas.</p>
Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?	<p>58% of pitches are considered to be good, with a further 35% of pitches being recorded as standard across the entire county.</p> <p>The reason for the fair quality of pitches is thought to be down to the fact that many clubs play an active role in the maintenance and management of the facility. This results in a strong volunteer workforce producing good or standard quality grass pitches across the County at large or medium sized clubs.</p> <p>The volunteer workforce tends to be good at delivering fair quality outfielders and grass wickets however, the study has identified common short comings across multiple sites. The study highlights that many sites identify as having poor quality NTPs, practice nets or changing facilities; with several having more than one of these facility elements in a poor or inadequate condition.</p> <p>Enhancing the support to clubs to better maintain these facilities will be key in ensuring that aging facilities of this kind are maintained to the best possible level to sustain a better quality of supply across the county.</p>
What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision	<p>Future supply is not expected to alter very much between 2017-2031 as few sites are considered to be 'at risk'</p> <p>The future picture of demand is a mixed. Due to the changing demographics of the area, the TGR analysis identifies that demand is expected to decline in the County. The TGR analysis projects a decline of 10 adult teams and 4 junior teams in total. However, latent demand analysis shows that many clubs in the area have identified that there is sufficient demand in the area to add to the number of</p>

Key Question	Analysis
	<p>teams. This is especially prominent amongst junior teams and to a lesser extent, ladies' teams.</p> <p>Overall, the future demand analysis shows that should the TGR analysis be accurate and all latent demand realised, there will be an additional 16 junior teams and 4 fewer adult teams.</p> <p>The projected and high latent demand to increase the number of junior teams in Northumberland reinforces the need to improve practice and NTP facilities at key sites across the County.</p>
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet future demand?	<p>There is enough supply to meet projected future demand. Taken together, if all future teams are realised, the supply and demand balance for Northumberland in 2031 will be 393 spare match equivalents per week if all demand was to be placed on grass wickets.</p> <p>It is important to note that, in order to enable large clubs to continue progress and increase the number of teams they field additional capacity will be needed at sites. This includes the need for additional NTPs and practice facilities to accommodate coaching and junior match play.</p>

### 3.4 Rugby key findings

3.4.1 This section summarises the findings from the rugby analysis, which will form the basis of the recommendation and action plan section for Northumberland.

**Table 3.3 – Key PPS findings for rugby in Northumberland**

Key Question	Analysis
What are the main characteristics of the current supply and demand for provision?	<p>There is a supply of 105.25 match equivalents across the entire County. 50% of this supply is located in the Central sub area. However, much of this supply is located on schools and other sites that are either unavailable or unutilised by community rugby clubs.</p> <p>There is demand from 79.5 matches per week across the county. 37% of this demand is produced by adults and the remaining 63% by junior teams. 45% of demand is generated by the Central sub area.</p> <p>There are 10 community clubs in Northumberland.</p>
Is there enough accessible provision to meet current demand?	<p>As with most rugby clubs in England, most clubs in Northumberland have a longstanding home ground where all of their matches take place. Some clubs are travelling to train on AGPs, in particular the pitch at Ashington. Ponteland RFC have lost access to their pitches whilst the redevelopment on Ponteland Leisure Centre is ongoing.</p> <p>The current level of provision of adult match provision is able to accommodate current demand placed upon it. There is 56.25 MES of spare capacity when looking at Northumberland as a whole, with all sub areas carrying spare capacity, with exception of the West. Despite this, in both the current position and the future position, there is deficit in training pitches and junior match pitches.</p> <p>It should also be noted that 6 of the 10 clubs are operating at capacity during the Sunday AM peak period (usually used by junior sections for training and matches).</p>

Key Question	Analysis
	<p>This lack of capacity means there is limited scope to increase the number of junior teams in the area. A consequence of this is that clubs will struggle to grow, and the game cannot expand given the current level of supply being used by clubs.</p> <p>There is also a lack of floodlit capacity on most club sites. 4 clubs are thought to be operating above their floodlit capacity with a further 4 operating with just one additional training sessions worth of spare capacity</p>
Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?	<p>The majority of sites are not considered to be maintained to an adequate level. If all pitches used by the community were maintained to a 'good' level then across the County, the deficit in capacity would decrease by 90%, leaving just a small under supply.</p> <p>Poor quality drainage has been a constant issue across most clubs. It is thought that increasing levels of maintenance across all sites will also help to reduce the issues around drainage, however, there are some circumstances in which adding artificial drainage has been recommended to address specific problems.</p>
What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?	<p>Analysis shows there is latent demand for an estimated 19 additional teams in Northumberland; 11 junior teams and 8 adult teams.</p> <p>However, the TGR analysis shows that due to the changing age profile of the area, there will be a reduction of 4 teams across the County; 1 adult team and 3 junior teams, should current participation rates remain the same between 2017 and 2031.</p> <p>Should all latent demand be realised this growth be balanced out by a reduction in the playing age population as projected in the TGR analysis, then future demand of an additional teams in Northumberland can be projected to be 15 additional teams. 7 of these teams are adult teams and 8 are junior teams.</p> <p>Replacement pitches have been added at The Duchess High School but are not available to either the school or local club in their current state. There is also projected to be a further pitch added at Blyth RUFC. However, this has not yet been realised or secured for future use at the time of writing. Work at Queen Elizabeth High School will provide a full sized WR22 AGP.</p>
Is there enough community use provision to meet future demand?	<p>There are enough available community facilities to meet current adult match demand in the County. If all projected teams are realised, then the County is forecasted to be operating 52.75 MES of spare capacity by 2031.</p> <p>Nevertheless, this is not the case when it comes to training provision and junior match pitches. There is a projected deficit for rugby training pitches of 22 MES and an even greater deficit of 35 MES for junior match pitches. The level of provision of these facilities is not sufficient to meet current demand and this is made worse by future demand growth.</p> <p>It should be noted that as most sites are operating at capacity during junior rugby's peak period (Sunday AM), there is very little possibility of adding 8 new teams without needing to provide additional pitches.</p> <p>Whilst there is thought to be enough supply to meet 7 new adult teams at peak periods, new demand is unlikely to be spread even throughout the County. The Central sub area, where demand is already centralised, is likely to see a significant amount of this increased adult demand but has capacity for 7 new adult teams at peak times, should most of the projected new demand be distributed in the Central sub area, then rugby is likely to be operating very close to capacity during the peak period. This means that clubs would have no opportunity to grow</p>

Key Question	Analysis
	<p>and develop either themselves or rugby further.</p> <p>There is also a concern at the lack of spare floodlit capacity to accommodate additional training sessions with just 2 clubs able to accommodate more than one new training session per week.</p> <p>Along with the addition of some pitches in the area, the study has recommended that the NRFU and clubs seek to add peak time capacity by accessing nearby school or academy pitches. This should be considered vital to the future success of rugby in Northumberland as most sites do not have the spare room to accommodate new pitches and a failure to add peak time capacity to key sites will mean a severe stagnation in the growth of the game across the entire of Northumberland.</p>

### 3.5 Hockey key findings

3.5.1 This section summarises the findings from the hockey analysis, which will form the basis of the recommendation and action plan section for Northumberland.

**Table 3.4 – Key PPS findings for hockey in Northumberland**

Key Question	Analysis
<p>What are the main characteristics of the current supply and demand for provision?</p>	<p>There are 6 hockey appropriate AGPs in Northumberland. 4 of these 6 pitches are located in the Central sub area. Only 3 pitches in total are used by the community for hockey (Berwick Academy, Morpeth Hockey Club and Queen Elizabeth High School). Of these three facilities, only Berwick Academy has floodlighting suitable for competitive match play (although Morpeth HC does have lighting sufficient for training and friendly matches).</p> <p>The pitch stock is ageing across the County. Although none of the pitches currently in use are deemed inappropriate for use, several pitches are projected to require surface replacements in the next 3-7 years. Sites such as Berwick Academy requires more immediate improvements. Work is required on these pitches in order to ensure the quality of pitches reflect the quality of pitches in other areas in the North of England.</p> <p>There are 4 clubs operating in Northumberland; Alnwick HC, Berwick HC, Morpeth HC and Tynedale HC. These clubs' field a total of 32 teams including 18 junior teams. Most demand is concentrated in the Central sub area with 30 of the 32 teams located here. However, it should be noted that Alnwick HC would prefer to be located in their home town and therefore can be said to be based in the north along with Berwick HC.</p>
<p>Is there enough accessible community use provision to meet current demand?</p>	<p>Morpeth, the largest club in the County with 18 teams, and Tynedale (10 teams) both reported a lack of spare capacity on sites limiting their capacity for growth. Furthermore, Tynedale reported latent demand for a further 3 teams which is currently unfulfilled due to a lack of available capacity.</p> <p>A major issue for the area is a lack of floodlighting, Morpeth HC has floodlighting but it is considered inadequate for the hosting of competitive matches whilst Tynedale HC's home ground, Queen Elizabeth High School does not have any floodlighting at all. This means Morpeth HC are limited in the number of competitive matches they can play on Saturdays. The club is considered to be at capacity during this time slot.</p>

Key Question	Analysis
	<p>Similarly, Tynedale are considered to be at capacity during both Saturdays and Sundays. Furthermore, the lack of floodlighting means the club has to train at facilities in Newcastle, estimated to be around 30-40 minutes' drive at peak times.</p>
<p>Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?</p>	<p>At present, all of the AGPs used by the community are considered to be of standard quality. However, all 3 of these surfaces are over 5 years old and all are projected to require replacement within the next 3-7 years. The only club to report a deficiency in the maintenance of their pitches was Berwick HC. It has been recommended that England Hockey consult with the school as to how best to improve the maintenance programme on the pitches. The pitch at King Edwards VI School is considered to be Poor quality. If this were upgraded there is a possibility that these pitches could be brought into the community supply, helping to solve capacity issues at other sites in the County.</p>
<p>What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?</p>	<p>Unless each of surfaces for the 3 facilities currently used by the community for hockey are upgraded, then teams are likely to be playing on surfaces of inadequate quality within the near future.</p> <p>The number of teams in the County is projected to decline slightly by 1 adult and 1 junior. However, the lack of spare capacity for the two largest clubs, and the lack of a facility in the home town of Alnwick HC can be considered to be suppressing the number of teams in the area. Tynedale HC noted that they consider there to be latent demand for a further 3 teams at their club which cannot be realised due to a lack of capacity.</p> <p>Should no further floodlit provision be established in the area then there is likely to be further export of demand to facilities Newcastle. This will further suppress the demand for hockey in the area and limit the ability of clubs to grow.</p>
<p>Is there enough accessible community use provision to meet future demand?</p>	<p>Given that there are no current projects reported by any club, or by England Hockey regarding the resurfacing of pitches, it is considered likely that all 3 pitches will be considered to be of inadequate quality in the next couple of years.</p> <p>If another facility cannot be brought into the community supply to support Alnwick HC and reduce demand on Morpeth HC's pitch, then community facilities in the Central sub area will continue to operate at capacity during peak periods, giving clubs limited opportunity to grow. King Edward VI School, Morpeth, is considered the best candidate for this.</p> <p>The situation at Berwick Academy and Morpeth Hockey Club should also be noted. Berwick Academies change in affiliation to Scottish hockey affiliation, removes the protection from England Hockey with regards to 3G conversion. Additionally, the current state of Morpeth and the safety hazard for which the floodlighting presents, means that Berwick is under threat from being lost and Morpeth from being out of action. This potential problem is exacerbated by the lack of spare capacity that Queen Elizabeth High School currently presents, meaning that if provision at the two sites mentioned were to be lost then there may be a lack of available supply to meet hockey demand. This will be explored further in Stage D of the strategy.</p>

## 3.6 Artificial Grass Pitches key findings

3.6.1 This section summarises the findings from the artificial grass pitch analysis, which will form the basis of the recommendation and action plan section for Northumberland.

**Table 3.5 – Key PPS findings for AGP’s in Northumberland**

Key Question	Analysis
What are the main characteristics of the current supply and demand for provision?	<p>The quality of AGP provision across the Study Area is primarily of standard/good quality. There are only two facilities that are of poor quality - The King Edward VI School and Alnwick Community Centre. The first of which is not available to community use. 22 out of the 23 AGP’s in the area floodlit, allowing for maximum utilisation of available hours.</p> <p>There is just one WR22 complaint pitch for rugby, located at Northumberland CofE Academy (Josephine Butler Campus). This facility services three clubs within a 20minute drive time and a further three within a 30minute catchment. This leaves 4 clubs outside of the catchment for a WR22 complaint 3G AGP.</p> <p>There are three hockey pitches used by community clubs in the County. Each of these is in need of facility enhancement, see hockey chapter for more details.</p>
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet current demand?	<p>There is a significant deficit of full-sized, floodlit 3G AGP provision. The FA’s desired standard of 1 3G AGP to every 38 teams means that Northumberland would ideally have 14 full-sized, floodlit 3G pitches available for hire to meet midweek training demand. At present, the County has 5 pitches in total, with 4 located in the South East and 1 in the Central sub area.</p> <p>According to the distribution of demand in the area, 4 pitches further would each be distributed to the Central and South East sub areas. A further 2 would be located in the north of the County, with just one required in the west.</p> <p>The consultation with the FA reveals there are currently plans to install new AGP provision in the area but that these are at differing levels of development.</p> <p>If small-sided 3G AGPs are considered as part of the supply to meet midweek training demand, then Northumberland can be considered to have a total supply equivalent to 9 full-sized 3G AGPs. This leaves a deficit of 5 full sized AGPs across the County. It should be noted however, that this is not the FA’s preferred strategic approach to meeting midweek training demand.</p> <p>All rugby clubs in Northumberland are overplayed during the midweek period. At present, 4 of the ten clubs within the county would not be able to access a WR22 compliant pitch to off-set training within a reasonable drive-time. At present, it is understood that WR22 pitches located in Newcastle (Kingston Park) and Tyneside (Whitely Bay, Rockcliff) are being used by NCC clubs for midweek training demand.</p> <p>The provision of hockey pitches is adequate to meet demand but the quality and the access to floodlit provision is a greater issue.</p>
Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?	<p>While several clubs and sites have identified issues regarding surface condition, the overall quality of facilities and the robustness of maintenance regimes is standard. There are a small number of poor quality artificial pitches.</p> <p>For rugby, the quality of the only WR22 in the County is not considered a deterrent from use.</p>

Key Question	Analysis
	<p>For hockey, poor pitch a facility issues are creating issues for clubs. This includes the age of surface at Berwick and Queen Elizabeth's School, Hexham and the lack of adequate floodlighting at Queen Elizabeth's School, Hexham and Morpeth Hockey Club.</p>
<p>What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?</p>	<p>There is expected to be a need for 1 additional full sized 3G AGP within Northumberland to meet football demand, in addition to the current deficit of 5 3G AGPs currently required. In line with the strategic objectives of the Football Foundation, FA, Sport England, RFU and, it is expected that the demand for 3G AGP provision will increase over the period of the local plan, as there is an ambition to improve the overall playing experience of participants by moving more grass-roots participation onto artificial surfaces.</p> <p>For rugby, demand for facilities is expected to remain relatively stable across the County and therefore, there is expected to be limited additional demand above that which currently exists.</p> <p>For hockey, retaining all current facilities is seen as a major priority. Given latent demand and population reports there is not thought to be a dramatic increase in demand forecast, however, England Hockey has a target of doubling participation by 2028. The impact of meeting this will be modelled in the Strategy document accompanying this report.</p>
<p>Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet future demand?</p>	<p>For football, the future supply and demand analysis for secured and accessible pitch provision shows there is a significant total deficit for secured provision equivalents across all AGPs, equating to 9 full sized AGPs. This is paired down to 5 AGPs to account for the contribution of small-sided facilities to help meet some of the demand.</p> <p>There are initial plans for the creation of new AGP facilities in Northumberland. This will have an impact on the current imbalance. However, there are no plans to add facilities to the South East sub-area which currently has a deficit of 2AGP's. For rugby, there is not currently sufficient supply to meet any demand for WR22 AGPs for the clubs that are not within an acceptable commute of such a facility. There are presently 4 such clubs in this situation.</p> <p>For hockey, if all pitches are retained and adequate floodlighting and surface replacement carried out then there is considered to be sufficient supply to meet projected future demand. It should be noted that this does not include England Hockey's plans to increase participation in the sport by 100% by 2028.</p>

## 3.7 Non-core PPS key findings

### Tennis key findings

3.7.1 This section summarises the findings from the tennis analysis, which will form the basis of the recommendation and action plan section for Northumberland.

**Table 3.6 – Key PPS findings for tennis in Northumberland**

Key Question	Analysis
What are the main characteristics of the current supply and demand for provision?	<p>The study has identified that there are currently 99 outdoor courts across 31 sites in Northumberland. There is floodlit provision present at 12 of these sites. A large proportion of tennis sites are available to the community with 28 out of 30 sites (90%) being seen as available for community use.</p> <p>There are 15 affiliated community tennis clubs, with a combined membership number of 1,370 members. The club with the largest membership base is at Ponteland Lawn Tennis Club, making up 16% of total membership in the study area.</p>
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet current demand?	<p>When analysing the capacity balance of community tennis club courts in Northumberland, it was identified that there is a 47% utilisation of courts, 53% below their operational capacity. This shows that there is a large amount of spare capacity for community tennis clubs and enough supply to accommodate demand.</p> <p>The situation for public courts is very much the same. Using active lives data and analysing supply of public courts in the study area, it can be seen that only 43.4% of public courts capacity is being utilised in Northumberland. According to data provided by the LTA's online booking system (Clubspark) with court access technology, the average level of utilisation in venues (UK wide) is 53%. By this barometer, Northumberland is operating below average in terms of its utilisation of public courts.</p>
Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?	<p>Out of the 31 outdoor tennis sites in Northumberland, 42% are of good quality and 29% being rated as standard and poor. Out of the 13 sites that are rated as having good quality tennis courts, 11 of these are located at club sites. This shows that although there are more sites rated as good than standard or poor, these are mostly found at club sites. Due to this, the sites that are of lower quality are predominantly managed by the council.</p>
What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?	<p>When analysing the future capacity balance of community tennis club courts in Northumberland, it was projected that the utilisation of these courts is expected to decrease from 47% to 45% by 2031. This is down to reductions in the population within the study area, meaning that clubs will be 55% below their operational capacity. This means that there is an even greater level of spare capacity in the future to accommodate demand.</p>
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet future demand?	<p>The analysis demonstrates that there is enough accessible tennis provision to meet future demand on both public courts and also community tennis club courts. Decreases in population is expected to reduce demand pressures on these court, adding to the already large amount of spare capacity that is present in the current position.</p>

## Bowls key findings

3.7.2 This section summarises the findings from the bowls analysis, which will form the basis of the recommendation and action plan section for Northumberland

**Table 3.7 – Key PPS findings for bowls in Northumberland**

Key Question	Analysis
What are the main characteristics of the current supply and demand for provision?	<p>The Northumberland study area has a large amount of provision of bowls facilities. There are a total of 28 bowling greens, spread over 25 separate sites. The bowls provision present is predominantly secured for community use, with only one site at St George's Hospital Bowls Club identified as being unsecured for community use.</p> <p>Upon consultation with various bowls clubs, a common theme emerged with regards to decreasing membership numbers. Rothbury Bowls Club, Alnwick Bowls Club, Haltwhistle Bowls Club and Wooler Bowls Club all stated that membership numbers had fallen in recent years.</p>
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet current demand?	With membership numbers falling at many bowls clubs and with there being a relatively large amount of provision in Northumberland, it can be seen that there is enough supply of bowls facilities to meet current demand.
Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately maintained?	There are 25 bowls sites that have been identified in the study area. Of these 25 sites, 15 were rated as being of good quality, with only 4 greens being of poor quality. This shows that the current quality of bowls provision in Northumberland is sufficient and that maintenance procedures are of a good standard. During consultation with bowls clubs it was evident that the majority of clubs have an extensive maintenance regime, and this translates into the high quality of provision that is seen.
What are the main characteristics of the future supply and demand for provision?	The large amount of secured provision of bowls facilities in Northumberland suggests that in terms of supply there is expected to be little change. However, the declining membership that is being experienced by a number of clubs is compounded by falling population projections, meaning future demand for bowls is expected to decline further.
Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet future demand?	The current level of supply of bowls provision is able to accommodate current demand. Thus, the projected decrease in demand for bowls in the future would suggest that there is more than enough provision to accommodate future demand. Using Active Lives Data and applying population projections, it is predicted that demand from bowls will fall from 1,068 residents to 1030 residents. This shows that demand pressures on bowls facilities is expected to drop by 2031.

## Athletics key findings

- There are two tracks located in the study area; Morpeth Athletics Track and Wentworth Athletics track.
- The club consultations and input from England Athletics indicated general satisfaction with the quality of the facilities.
- In utilising Sport England Active Lives Data, it was found that there are

approximately 39,783 potential users in the County but just 1,335 people regularly use a track as part of their training. Based on two sessions per month this equates to on average 2,670 uses per month.

- If the estimated uses of the track per month were to increase in line with the population, then monthly track uses may decrease to 2,577 sessions per month.
- The analysis shows a justification for an additional track within the study area. This calculation is supported by consultation summaries from clubs, stating that a lack of available facilities is leading to a large amount of unmet demand.

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## Section 4: Scenario testing and options appraisal

## 4 Scenario testing and options appraisal

- 4.1.1 The supply and demand analysis undertaken in each of the previous sections provides a clear view of the capacity for sports facilities across Northumberland, based on the existing supply of facilities and the demand for these facilities from residents, both now and in the future.
- 4.1.2 This data provides an accurate evidence base, on which future planning and investment decisions can be made, using the guidelines outlines in the 'Delivering the Strategy' chapter of the strategy.
- 4.1.3 To complement the analysis that has been undertaken in each of the sport-specific sections, this chapter contains detailed further analysis on a small number of key scenarios, which have been identified by the project steering group throughout the development of the PPS.
- 4.1.4 For each of the scenarios identified below, a short summary is provided to explain why the scenario needs to be tested. Following this, a needs assessment for each of the relevant facility types is undertaken and explained.

Football

### 4.2 Scenario 1: Updated demand figures

- 4.2.1 As identified through stakeholder consultation, reflecting the change of demand since that modelled at stage C is important. The County FA have provided the most recent demand data available from the Whole Game System data for the 2018/19 season.
- 4.2.2 The tables below show how the change in team numbers from the 2016/17 season to the 2018/19 season affects the balance position for football provision. This has been broken down for all pitch typologies, presenting both the position for all available sites and also for all available and secured sites.
- 4.2.3 When the total number of teams in Northumberland captured in 2016/17 is compared to the number of teams playing now, there is no change.
- 4.2.4 Closer inspection of the data sets reveals that where there has been a significant decline in the number of adult 11v11 and youth 11v11 teams in Northumberland. This has been compensated for by the large increase in youth 9v9 and mini teams. Women/girls' teams have also been shown to have increased in number, whereas male participation has dropped.
- 4.2.5 The effect of these changes have had on the overall capacity balances for the site is evidenced in table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1 – Analysis for ALL AVAILABLE SITES – all data in Match Equivalent Sessions (MES)**

All Available Sites	Northumberland Pitch Typology	Team Numbers (2016/17)	Current position	Team Numbers (2018/19)	Updated position
	Adult 11v11	154	163.5	128 (-26)	176.5 (+13)
	Youth 11v11	118	8	91 (-27)	21.5 (+13.5)
	Youth 9v9	100	51.5	111 (+11)	46 (-5.5)
	Mini 7v7	113	155	105 (-8)	159 (+4)
	Mini 5v5	82	2	132 (+50)	-23 (-25)
Available & Secured	Northumberland Pitch Typology	Team Numbers (2016/17)	Current position	Team Numbers (2018/19)	Updated position
	Adult 11v11	154	127.5	128 (-26)	140.5 (+13)
	Youth 11v11	118	-26	91 (-27)	-12.5 (+13.5)
	Youth 9v9	100	20	111 (+11)	14.5 (-5.5)
	Mini 7v7	113	92	105 (-8)	96 (+4)
	Mini 5v5	82	-4	132 (+50)	-29 (-25)

- 4.2.6 Table 4.1 above shows the current position for football carrying capacity on all pitch typologies in Northumberland as a whole, taking into account the updated team demand numbers. The change in team numbers has been presented in brackets in the 'Team Numbers (2018/19)' column, with the change in current position also presented in brackets in the 'current position' column.
- 4.2.7 This table shows that for all available sites, there is an increase in the adult 11v11, youth 11v11 and mini 7v7 pitch typologies. This has been brought about by a decrease in team numbers playing on these pitch typologies. The largest increase in spare capacity is in the youth 11v11 provision, increasing by 13.5 MES.
- 4.2.8 The largest increase in team figures has been seen age groups playing on mini 5v5 pitch typologies. This has led to an increase in demand of 25 MES, leading to a current position deficit of 23 MES for all available sites and 29 MES for sites that are available and secured for community use.
- 4.2.9 Scenario 1 shows that when considering future demand, current provision is suitable on all pitch typologies, with the exception of Mini Soccer 5v5. When considering only secured provision, deficits occur in Youth 11v11 also.
- 4.2.10 Referencing recommendations F1 and F3, it is crucial that a more robust maintenance regime is established on poor condition Mini Soccer and Youth 11v11 sites, such as Northumberland C of E Academy and St Benet Biscop High School<sup>2</sup>, and that sites are reconfigured from adult provision to support youth and mini soccer, such as South Newsham Park<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 3.13 (Page 57)

<sup>3</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 3.16 (Page 92)

### 4.3 Scenario 2: Impact of improving all pitches rated as 'poor' quality to 'standard'.

4.3.1 This scenario is investigating the impact that improving all football pitches currently rated as 'poor' quality to 'standard' would have on the balance position. In doing this, the carrying capacity of these pitches is increased. The tables below present how this would affect the overall current and future position for Northumberland as a whole, broken down by the pitch typologies. Table 4.2 presents the change on all available sites, with table 4.3 showing the change that would occur on sites that are available and secured for community use in Northumberland.

**Table 4.2 – Analysis for ALL AVAILABLE SITES – all data in Match Equivalent Sessions (MES)**

Northumberland Pitch Typology	Current position (2016/17)	Updated Position (poor pitches changed to standard)	Change in capacity
Adult 11v11	163.5	183.5	+20
Youth 11v11	8	11	+3
Youth 9v9	51.5	61.5	+10
Mini 7v7	155	171	+16
Mini 5v5	2	4	+2

4.3.2 Improving the quality of all available 'poor' pitches in Northumberland to 'standard' leads to an overall increase of 51 MES across all pitch typologies. The pitch typology that will see the largest increase in carrying capacity is in adult 11v11 provision, increasing by 20 MES, with the smallest increase of 2 MES seen in mini 5v5 provision. Despite the increase in the quality of pitches, there is only a small amount of spare capacity seen in the current position for both youth 11v11 and mini 5v5 pitch typologies.

4.3.3 Table 4.3 shows the impact this change would have on the capacity balances for the county.

**Table 4.3 – Analysis for ALL AVAILABLE AND SECURED SITES – all data in Match Equivalent Sessions (MES)**

Northumberland Pitch Typology	Current position (2016/17)	Updated Current Position (2018/19)	Change
Adult 11v11	127.5	138.5	+11
Youth 11v11	-26	-24	+2
Youth 9v9	20	27	+7
Mini 7v7	92	100	+8
Mini 5v5	-4	-4	0

- 4.3.4 As is shown in table 4.3 above, the increase in pitch quality on all available and secured sites is not sufficient to remove the deficit seen in the youth 11v11 and mini 5v5 pitch typologies. The largest deficit is seen in youth 11v11 provision which has a current and future position deficit of 24 MES and 32 MES respectively.
- 4.3.5 Scenario 2 shows that increasing the quality of pitch provision, from 'poor' to 'standard' is not sufficient to provide Northumberland with enough capacity to meet demand across all formats. However, as mentioned in Scenario 1, the change in maintenance could go some way to reducing the deficit on Youth 11v11 and Mini 5v5 typologies.
- 4.3.6 It is therefore suggested, referencing recommendation F5, that pitch enhancements should be made on a site by site basis, as 65% of provision across the study area is of 'standard' condition and 15% is of 'poor' condition<sup>4</sup>, and artificial provision should be considered as shown in Scenario 3 below.

#### 4.4 Scenario 3: The number of full sized 3G AGP's required for all teams playing competitive football to train once a week – Updated demand figures.

- 4.4.1 Using the updated demand figures from the 2018/19 season presented in scenario 1, this scenario explores the requirement of 3G AGP's to allow all teams to train once per week. Table 4.4 below shows the updated demand figures, broken down by the number of teams playing each format.

**Table 4.4 – Updated demand figures**

Format	Number of Teams
Mini 5v5	132
Mini 7v7	105
Youth 9v9	111
Youth 11v11	91
Adult 11v11	128
<b>Total</b>	<b>567</b>

- 4.4.2 Although the number of teams presented in each format has changed, the overall number of teams has remained the same at 567.
- 4.4.3 According to the FA's desired standard of one 3G AGP to every 38 teams, this would mean that Northumberland would require 14.9 full sized 3G AGPs to accommodate demand in the study area. At present there are 6 such facilities, meaning an overall current deficit of 8 full sized 3G AGPs. If small sided 3G AGP's are considered as part of the supply to meet midweek training demand, then Northumberland can be considered to have a total supply equivalent to 10.7 full-sized 3G AGPs, meaning there is a shortfall of 4.3 full sized 3G AGPs under this analysis.
- 4.4.4 Scenario 3 shows that when considering current training demand, current artificial provision is not suitable and significant increases are required. Referencing recommendation F4, potential sites for artificial provision have been identified and it is recommended that these are acquired in order to meet the deficits present. These recommendations are in line with the Northumberland Local Football Facility Plan;
  - **Ponteland Leisure Centre, Ponteland**<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Page 27

<sup>5</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 3.14 (Page 67)

- Queen Elizabeth High School, Hexham<sup>6</sup>
- The Swan Centre, Berwick<sup>7</sup>
- The Alnwick locality (pitch in process of being constructed at Alnwick Town FC)
- The Cramlington locality
- The Blyth locality
- The Morpeth locality
- The Hexham locality (should the Queen Elizabeth High School project not be successful)

#### 4.5 Scenario 4: The number of full sized 3G AGP's required to accommodate all mini 5v5, mini 7v7 and youth 9v9 teams currently playing on NCC managed grass pitches.

4.5.1 As shown in scenarios 1 and 2, there are areas of deficit for grass provision in the study area. This is particularly prevalent for available and secured youth 11v11 provision which has a deficit of 34 MES. This, combined with the current deficit of full sized 3G AGP's, means that it is preferable to explore the possibility of moving demand from grass pitch provision, onto artificial pitches.

4.5.2 During the last decade, 3G AGPs have played an increasing role within the national game. In recent seasons, they have also become more popular for competitive matches. With this in mind, this scenario models the number of 3G AGP's that would be required to meet demand if all mini and youth 9v9 match play that is currently taking place on NCC managed pitches, was moved to 3G AGP's.

4.5.3 Table 4.5 takes information from the assessment stage of this PPS to present the number of youth 9v9 and mini teams playing on natural grass pitches during the relevant peak periods. This then calculates an estimated number of matches at peak time and associated 3G AGP requirement.

**Table 4.5: Number of 3G AGP's that would be required to meet demand if selected mini 5v5, mini 7v7 and youth 9v9 match play was moved to AGP**

Format	Number of teams playing on NCC pitches	Number of matches at peak-time	3G Units per Match	Total Units required formats	3G Pitches Required
	(x)	(y)= x/2	(z)	(A)= (y)*(z)	B= (A)/64
5v5	26	13	4	52	0.8
7v7	21	10.5	8	84	1.3
9v9	13	6.5	10	65	1.0
					<b>3.1</b>

<sup>6</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 3.14 (Page 67)

<sup>7</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 3.15 (Page 76)

4.5.4 Table 4.5 illustrates that if all mini and junior (7v7 and 9v9) football match play that is currently being played on NCC managed pitches, was to be moved to 3G AGP, then there is a need for 3 (rounded from 3.1) full sized facilities in order to meet demand.

4.5.5 Scenario 4 shows that when considering current demand on 5v5, 7v7 and 9v9 grass pitches, a further three 3G pitches would be required in order to move this grass pitch demand to artificial. When considering Scenario 3, the recommendations are;

- **Ponteland Leisure Centre, Ponteland<sup>8</sup>**
- **Queen Elizabeth High School, Hexham<sup>9</sup>**
- **The Swan Centre, Berwick<sup>10</sup>**
- **The Alnwick locality (pitch in process of being constructed at Alnwick Town FC)**
- **The Cramlington locality**
- **The Blyth locality**
- **The Morpeth locality**
- **The Hexham locality (should the Queen Elizabeth High School project not be successful)**

Cricket

## 4.6 Scenario 1: Updated demand figures

4.6.1 As identified through stakeholder consultation there is a need to reflect the change in demand between the time of the stage B data being collected and the current picture. Table 4.6 below shows the change in demand figures between the 2016 season and the latest team numbers collected by Northumberland County Cricket Board, in 2018. The table shows only the clubs where a change in team numbers has been recorded.

**Table 4.6: Changes in team figures between 2016 and 2018.**

Club Name	2016 Demand Figures			Updated Demand Figures		
	Men	Women	Juniors	Men	Women	Juniors
Alendale CC	2	1	3	2	0 (-1)	3
Alnmouth & Lesbury CC	7	1	6	4 (-3)	1	9 (+3)
Hexham Leazes CC	3	1	0	3	2 (+1)	0
Stocksfield CC	5	2	6	5	2	7 (+1)
Tynedale CC	3	0	10	2 (-1)	0	11 (+1)
Warkworth CC	3	0	3	2 (-1)	0	2 (-1)
<b>Net change</b>				<b>-5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+4</b>

<sup>8</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 3.14 (Page 67)

<sup>9</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 3.14 (Page 67)

<sup>10</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 3.15 (Page 76)

- 4.6.2 The table below show how the change in team numbers from the 2016 season to the 2018 season affects the balance position for cricket provision. This has been broken down by sub area, presenting both the position for grass wickets and also presents the picture when including artificial wickets to the supply in table 4.7.

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**Table 4.7: Overall cricket supply and demand balances in Northumberland – Updated demand figures**

Grass Wickets Only	Sub Area	Actual capacity balance (2016)	Change in Junior Teams	Change in Senior Teams	Updated actual capacity balance (2018)
	Central	-9	+2	0	-25
	North	80	+2	-4	104
	South East	199	0	0	199
	West	135	0	-1	145
	<b>Northumberland</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>+4</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>423</b>
Grass & Artificial	Sub Area	Actual capacity balance (2016)	Change in Junior Teams	Change in Senior Teams	Updated actual capacity balance (2018)
	Central	171	+2	0	155
	North	140	+2	-4	164
	South East	259	0	0	259
	West	135	0	-1	145
	<b>Northumberland</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>+4</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>723</b>

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- 4.6.3 Table 4.7 above shows the current capacity balance for grass cricket provision in each of the four sub areas, taking into account the updated team demand numbers. The updated cricket demand figures do not significantly change the overall picture for cricket in Northumberland. The actual capacity balance increases by 18 MES on the analysis presented in Stage C of the strategy. This occurs due to a relatively large decrease in senior teams, despite an increase in the number of junior teams.
- 4.6.4 There remains a large level of spare capacity in the current position with spare capacity of 423 MES. The Central sub area is the only sub area presenting a deficit in both the current position. This deficit, after incorporating the updated demand figures increased by 16 MES in the current position.
- 4.6.5 Table 4.7 above also shows the current capacity balance for cricket provision in each of the four sub areas, taking into account the updated team demand numbers and incorporating the supply provided by artificial cricket provision.
- 4.6.6 The inclusion of artificial wickets improves the actual capacity balance position and shows spare capacity of 723 MES for the study area as a whole. It should be noted that artificial provision does not resolve all issues regarding capacity, however, and grass pitch provision is preferred. All sub areas show a large level of spare capacity, with the Central sub area experiencing the greatest increase due to its relatively large provision of artificial cricket provision compared to the other three sub areas. The Central sub area, when including artificial provision, went from a position of deficit of 25 MES to a position of spare capacity of 155 MES.
- 4.6.7 Scenario 1 shows, in relation to recommendation C4, that when considering both current and future demand, there is a deficit of grass pitch provision within the central study area. It is crucial that artificial provision is utilised appropriately, however should this not be realistic then it is recommended that Stocksfield Sports Field is supported in improving maintenance on site, currently scoring standard, to increase the carrying capacity<sup>11</sup>.
- 4.6.8 For central sub area sites such as Hexham Leazes CC, Morpeth Cricket, Hockey & Tennis Club and Tynedale Sports Club, where provision is considered 'good', work with the sites individually to accommodate further carrying capacity<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 4.10 (Page 130)

<sup>12</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 4.10 (Page 130)

## Rugby Union

### 4.7 Scenario 1: Updated demand figures

- 4.7.1 Reflecting the change in demand above that modelled at stage C is important in enabling the strategy to remain up-to-date. This section shows the change to rugby team numbers since the stage B audit. The updated rugby team figures have been provided by the RFU from their affiliated data sources.
- 4.7.2 Table 4.8 below shows the balance after 2016/17 team data was modelled, the change in team number since this date, and the impact this has had on the balance figures. Table 4.8 shows that growth is focused particularly youth teams and women/girls' teams.
- 4.7.3 The updated demand figures have been provided by the county RFU. The table below show how the change in team numbers from the 2016/17 season to the 2018/19 season affects the balance position for rugby provision. This has been broken down by sub area and presents the overall capacity the position across total pitch provision.

**Table 4.8: Current capacity balance of rugby sites in Northumberland – Updated demand figures**

Sub Area	2016/17 balance	Change in Team Numbers		2018/19 Balance
		Senior	Junior	
Central	5.75	2	5	-3.25
North	-3.25	3	0	-7.75
South East	5.5	-1	4	2.5
West	0.75	0	0	0.75
<b>Northumberland</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>-7.75</b>

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- 4.7.4 Table 4.8 above shows that when using the updated demand figures, there is a large deficit in the current training and junior match provision of 26.5 MES and 35 MES respectively. The deficit of both training and junior match provision increased when comparing to the analysis presented in stage C of the strategy. The primary reason for this is the large increase in junior demand, with a growth of 9 teams, followed by mini/midi teams with a growth of 5 teams and 4 adult teams.
- 4.7.5 There remains a large level of spare capacity for senior match provision with 53.75 MES in the current position; however, the table demonstrates that the picture for training and junior match provision is worsening and this is primarily due to a lack of available provision to accommodate the increase in junior demand.
- 4.7.6 In relation to recommendation R1, Scenario 1 highlights the need for an additional WR22 compliant artificial rugby pitch to meet the large amount of deficit in the Central, Northern and South Eastern sub areas. Scenario 2 beneath, will highlight potential sites for this.

#### 4.8 Scenario 2: The construction of an additional WR22 compliant artificial pitch in the Central Sub Area.

- 4.8.1 The data gathered in this strategy shows that there is a relatively large deficit for training provision in the study area. Upon consultation with the RFU, it was made clear that the existence of a World Rugby Compliant AGP would reduce overplay and enable a large amount of training and match demand to be accommodated. The deficit for training provision is the highest in the Central sub area, with a deficit seen in all other sub areas also. There is already a WR22 AGP in the study area, located at Northumberland C of E Academy; however, this is used regularly by Morpeth RFC who are based in the Central sub area. It is estimated that the club are located between 20 and 30 minutes from this facility. This scenario will model the impact of an additional WR22 AGP being located in the Central sub area.
- 4.8.2 For the purposes of supply and demand modelling these pitches are calculated as having 10 match equivalent sessions of supply during the mid-week period and 1 match equivalent session of supply on both Saturdays and Sundays. This is because although the pitch does not deteriorate under high levels of usage, the pitch can only accommodate 1 match of demand during the peak-period for either day. Therefore, by attributing a supply of 1 per peak-time period, this provides a balanced view of the amount of demand the pitch can host during the peak period.
- 4.8.3 The assumptions above gives the WR22 pitches a capacity of 12 match equivalent sessions per week. 10 of these sessions are attributed to the mid-week training slots and 2 are attributed to senior match pitch supply.
- 4.8.4 Table 4.9 presents the current and future balance for rugby provision after incorporating the supply provided by a WR22 AGP in the Central sub area.

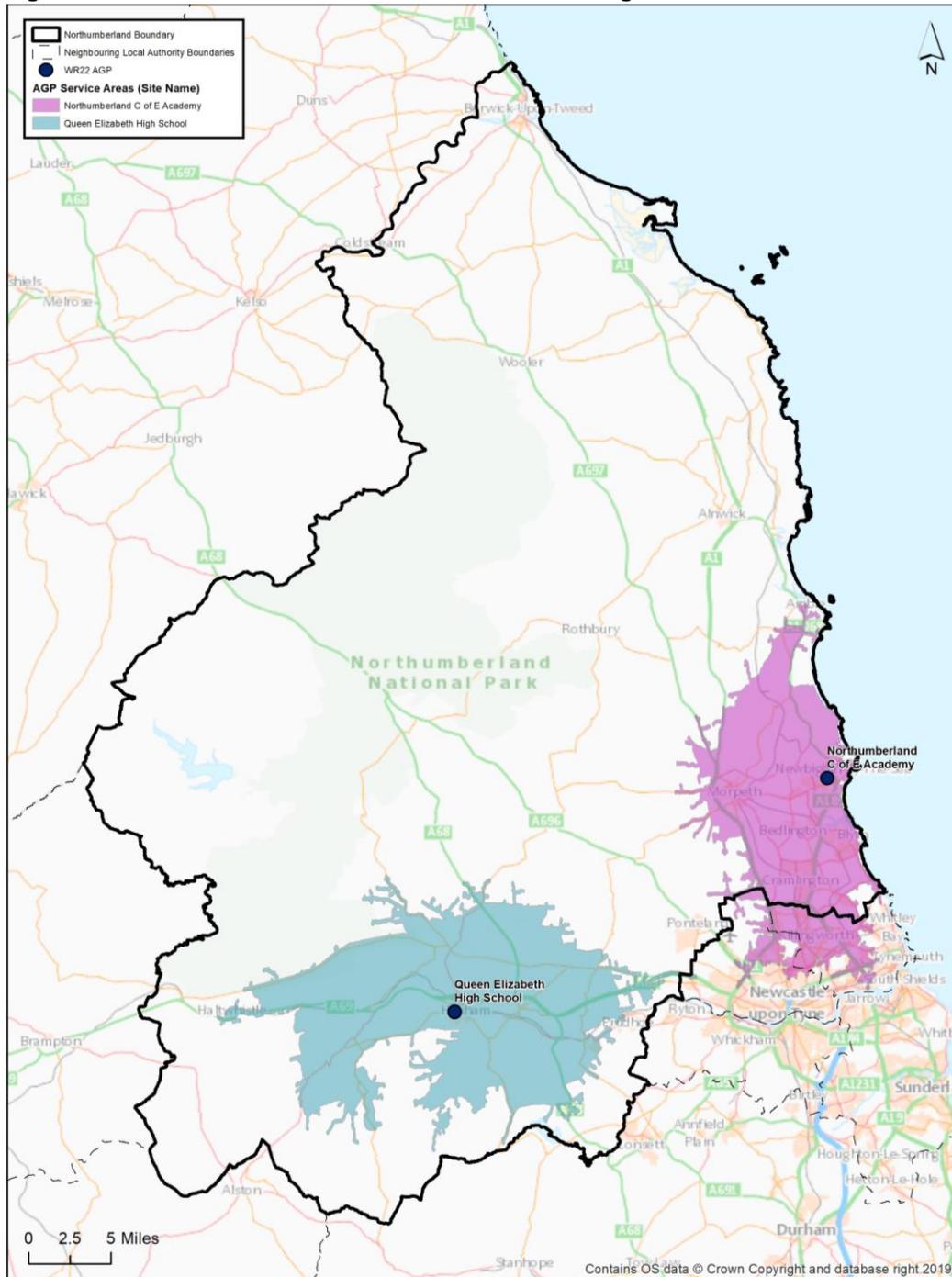
**Table 4.9: Impact of a WR22 3G AGP being added in Northumberland on the capacity balance of rugby sites**

Sub Area	2016/17 balance	Projected balance with an additional WR22
Central	5.75	17.75
North	-3.25	-3.25
South East	5.5	5.5
West	0.75	0.75
<b>Northumberland</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20.75</b>

4.8.5 The updated demand figures presented in the table 4.8 scenario, demonstrate that particularly in the Central sub area, junior demand is increasing. As shown in the table above, the addition of a WR22 will be able to accommodate a large proportion of training demand.

4.8.6 Although the existence of a new WR22 artificial rugby pitch in the Central sub area does not remove a deficit position, it is recommended that this facility is required and that further work be undertaken to determine the feasibility of adding a pitch. The reason for the choice of subarea is that it is centrally located and would therefore maximise the catchment of the pitches across a number of rugby clubs in Northumberland. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 overleaf show the impact of artificial provision being acquired at Queen Elizabeth High School and Ponteland Leisure Centre.

Figure 4.2: WR22 AGP service areas at Queen Elizabeth High School



4.8.7 WR22 provision is particularly relevant when considering table 4.10 below. As shown, even when all current provision is improved to good maintenance, increasing the sites capacity greatly, large overplay is still present throughout the County.

**Table 4.10 – Rugby balance figures if all pitch maintenance was ‘Good’**

Site Name	Sub area	Demand (matches + training in match equivalents)		Supply (Pitch Capacity)	Current Balance	Potential Supply (All pitches receive good maintenance)	Potential Balance
		SNR	JNR				
Alnwick RFC	North	3	3	6	-3.5	9.75	0.25
Ashington Rugby Club	South East	3.5	3.5	4.5	-3	8.25	0.75
Berwick Rugby Football Club	North	3	3	11	-3.5	13.25	-1.25
Blyth Cricket & Rugby Club	South East	4	4	1.75	7.75	3.25	-6.25
Border Park Rugby Club	West	0.5	0.5	1.75	1.25	3.25	2.75
Morpeth Rugby Football Club	Central	4	4	7	-5	9.5	-2.5
Ponteland Leisure Centre	Central	5	5	5.5	-7	9	-3
Stocksfield Sports Field	Central	1	1	0.5	-0.5	2	1
Seghill Welfare Park	South East	2	2	3.5	1.5	6.5	4.5
Tynedale Rugby Football Club	Central	3.5	3.5	9	-2	12	1

## 4.9

4.9.1 In support of recommendation R5 , Scenario 2 highlights the need for investment into more robust maintenance regimes on rugby sites within Northumberland in order to reduce over play present. Sites that require such support for improvement are; Berwick Rugby Club, Blyth Cricket & Rugby Club, Morpeth Rugby Football Club and Ponteland Leisure Centre <sup>13</sup>.

4.9.2 As shown in Table 4.10, this increase in maintenance will still leave Northumberland with pockets of deficit throughout. This therefore shows a potential need for additional WR22 artificial provision to meet the large amount of deficit in the Central, Northern and South Eastern sub areas. Two sites have been identified for such development;

- **Queen Elizabeth High School<sup>14</sup>**
- **Ponteland Leisure Centre<sup>15</sup>**

<sup>13</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 5.11 (Page 193 onwards)

<sup>14</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 5.11 (Page 199)

<sup>15</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 5.11 (Page 199)

Northumberland County Council

#### 4.10 Scenario: The redevelopment of Ponteland Leisure Centre

- 4.10.1 The Ponteland Leisure centre, which caters for a wide range of community sport, is currently under redevelopment and is due to be complete by September 2020. This scenario will explore the effect that this redevelopment will have on the sporting provision provided at the site. Figure 4.1 below provides a visual representation of the outcome of the redevelopment.

**Figure 4.1: Ponteland Leisure Centre's redevelopment – pitch layout**

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**Football**

4.10.2 Under the plans for the leisure centre, there is expected to be no change in the quantity or quality of grass provision for football; however, there is going to be a new full sized 3G AGP built on site. This additional 3G AGP will change the overall requirement for full sized 3G AGP's in Northumberland and for the Central sub area, according to the FA's 1:38 standard.

**Table 4.11: Change in football grass pitch provision at Ponteland Leisure Centre**

Provision 2016/17			Provision 2020/21		
Pitch Typology	Number of pitches	Carrying Capacity (MES)	Pitch Typology	Number of pitches	Carrying Capacity (MES)

Adult 11v11	2	6	Adult 11v11	2	6
Youth 11v11	-	-	Youth 11v11	-	-
Youth 9v9	1	4	Youth 9v9	1	4
Mini 7v7	1	6	Mini 7v7	1	6
Mini 5v5	-	-	Mini 5v5	-	-

- 4.10.3 There is currently only 1 full sized 3G AGP in the Central sub area, which according to the FA's requirement is able to accommodate only 38 out of the 158 teams. The new 3G AGP at Ponteland Leisure Centre will mean that 76 teams can be accommodated in total. It is important to note that the AGP on site will be WR22 approved but will not have heavy Rugby use present. Table 4.12 below show the change in requirement for full sized 3G AGP's in the Central sub area once the AGP is completed at Ponteland Leisure Centre.

**Table 4.12: Revised requirement for full sized 3G AGP in the Central sub area**

Current Teams	FA's Preferred Number of AGP's (based on 1:38 team ratio)	Current Number of AGP's	Number of teams serviced by 3G AGP's	Balance
158	4	1	38	-3
158	4	2	76	-2

### Cricket

- 4.10.4 Under the original plans for the leisure centre, there was expected to be no change to the current 15 grass wicket square on site; however, there is going to be an additional artificial strip added to the square. The cricket square, prior to redevelopment, was considered to be of a 'good' quality and so had a carrying capacity of 75 matches per season. During the redevelopment, there is going to be minor upgrades to the existing drainage, yet this will not have any impact on carrying capacity presented in this strategy.
- 4.10.5 Consultation with Ponteland CC has indicated that this original plan has changed slightly. Under the updated proposal, the square will effectively be shifted east, losing three grass wickets on the western side and adding two grass wickets to the eastern side plus an NTP itch. The impact of this change has been modelled below.

**Table 4.13: Change in cricket provision at Ponteland Leisure Centre**

Provision 2016/17		Carrying Capacity (MES)	Total Capacity	Demand	Balance
Grass Wickets	15	75	75	77	-2
Artificial Wickets	0	0			
Provision 2020/21		Carrying Capacity (MES)	Total Capacity	Demand	Balance
Grass Wickets	14	70	130	77	53
Artificial Wickets	1	60			

4.10.6 The additional artificial wicket will have an impact on the capacity balance for cricket provision in the study area. This has been presented below in table 4.13.

4.10.7 When incorporating artificial wicket supply, the new artificial strip at Ponteland Leisure Centre will remove overplay at the site and increase capacity balance surplus to 231 MES.

**Table 4.14: Change in actual capacity balance when incorporating additional supply from Ponteland Leisure Centre redevelopment**

Sub Area	Actual capacity balance	Actual capacity balance (including additional supply from redevelopment)
Central	171	231
North	140	140
South East	259	259
West	135	135
<b>Northumberland</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>765</b>

### Rugby Union

4.10.8 Under the plans for the leisure centre, there is expected to be a reconfiguration of the rugby pitches on site; however, there will remain to be 3 pitches in total. These will include an adult match pitch and two training pitches with one being floodlit.

4.10.9 It has recently been identified that Ponteland RFC are based at Ponteland Middle School during this transitional period.

4.10.10 It is assumed that along with the redevelopment of the sporting provision at Ponteland Leisure Centre, there will also be an improvement to the maintenance regime implemented once the works have been completed. In doing so, these improved procedures can increase the carrying capacity of the pitches by 3.0 MES per week.

4.10.11 The assumption in this scenario has increased maintenance to 'standard' for all three pitches on site.

4.10.12 Along with the improvement in maintenance procedures, it is also assumed that the inadequate natural drainage (D0) on one of the senior pitches shown in table 4.14 below, will be improved to natural adequate drainage (D1), as a result of the redevelopment works. This will improve the carrying capacity at the site by a further 0.5 MES.

4.10.13 Table 4.14 presents the current balance position for rugby at Ponteland Leisure Centre, prior to redevelopment works.

**Table 4.15: Ponteland Leisure Centre's Rugby Provision**

Pitch typology	Drainage	Maintenance	Capacity for community use/balance
Senior Rugby Pitch	D3	M1	-7
Senior Rugby Pitch	D3	M0	
Senior Rugby Pitch	D0	M0	

4.10.14 Table 4.15 presents the balance position for rugby at Ponteland Leisure Centre, post redevelopment works, assuming maintenance procedures are improved. Despite this improvement, this would still leave the site operating 3.5 match equivalents over capacity per week.

**Table 4.16: Ponteland Leisure Centre's Rugby Provision (improved maintenance)**

Pitch typology	Drainage	Maintenance	Capacity for community use/balance
Senior Rugby Pitch	D3	M1	-3.5
Senior Rugby Pitch	D3	M1	
Senior Rugby Pitch	D1	M1	

4.10.15 This demonstrates that the maintenance should be improved further to 'Good', along with pipe and slit draining all three pitches in order to increase the carrying capacity of the rugby provision present on site after the redevelopment. This will further reduce the deficit balance.

4.10.16 Scenario 1 above details the proposed developments at Ponteland Leisure Centre;

- **The proposed 3G AGP will help reduce football overplay, by 38 teams, as well as helping to address the 3.5ME deficit in Rugby, as the AGP will be WR22 approved<sup>16</sup>.**
- **The additional artificial cricket wicket present will remove overplay at the site and increase capacity balance surplus to 231 MES<sup>17</sup>.**
- **The increased drainage placed across the grass pitches on site, coupled with a suitable maintenance regime, will increase carrying capacity of the pitches by 3.0 MES per week. When considering an improvement of the senior grass pitches to natural adequate drainage, the site will increase by a further 0.5MES<sup>18</sup>.**

<sup>16</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 3.14 (Page 66)

<sup>17</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 4.10 (Page 162)

<sup>18</sup> Northumberland PPS Needs Assessment- Table 5.11 (Page 199)

## 4.11 Disused sites

- 4.11.1 As part of delivering the action plan, it is crucial that the steering group has a clear process for planning the future use of disused sites. A disused site is defined as a site that is no longer used for formal sport
- 4.11.2 Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, which the organisation updated in 2018 to reflect the changes in the National Planning Policy Framework, states that unless the development meets one of the five specific exceptions, Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of;
- all or any part of a playing field;
  - land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped; or,
  - land allocated for use as a playing field.
- 4.11.3 Sport England is a statutory consultee on any site that has been used within the last 5 years, whereas it is a non-statutory consultee on any site that has not been used for more than 5 years.
- 4.11.4 The sites identified as part of the Northumberland PPS are detailed below. These are sites identified at Stage B, that could be reintroduced to supplement current provision, and where no formal demand was identified. The tables below provide insight on the maximum configuration of pitches available, taken from the sites square meterage.

**Table 4.17: Disused Sites identified during the site assessments**

Site Name	Sub Area	Previous Provision stated on APP	Details from 4global site assessor notes	Playing field space (m <sup>2</sup> )	Maximum Pitch Configuration
Belsay First School	Central	1x Youth Football 11v11	No official provision marked out, only two plastic nets present.	3,027.67	1x 7v7 Football 1x 5v5 Football
Blanchland Sports Club	Central	1x Adult Football	Blanchland sports club has two goal posts but no pitch marked out. The grass is in very poor condition and the distance between goalposts is too great to be used. The goalposts are bent and are in need of replacement. They have a bar area that I was unable to gain access to.	9,489.01	1x A11v11 Football 1x 7v7 Football 1x 5v5 Football
Corbridge Church of England Aided First School	Central	1x Youth Football 11v11	Site has space for two small sided pitches although not formal provision. One pitch would be dangerous due to big dip in the goalmouth.	7,174.97	1x Y11v11 Football 1x 7v7 Football
Darras Hall First School	Central	1x Mini Soccer	The school is being rebuilt and changing from three tier to two tier education. There are no formal pitches, and no community use on the site. Recently converted to an academy, forming part of the Pele Trust.	0	0
Eastwood Park	Central	1x Mini Soccer 1x Youth Football 11v11 1x Adult Football 11v11	The site has a moderate slope all over and is known to struggle with drainage issues. The site assessment reported poor grass coverage and that the pitches appeared overused. There is currently no security between the pitch users for leasing the pitches but in general the site has a good relationship with the council. Further development of changing room facilities is planned for 2018. The Council are trying to make improvements to the whole park.	28,533	4x A11v11 1x Y11v11
Heddon on the Wall St Andrews CE Primary School	Central	1x Mini Soccer	No formal pitch markings present.	3,436.84	1x 9v9 Football
Hexham First School	Central	1x Mini Soccer	No formal pitch markings present.	3,928.42	1x 9v9 Football
Maften Hall Cricket Club	Central	1x Mini Soccer	No formal pitch provision identified through site visit or satellite audit.	6,252.87	2x 7v7 Football 2x 5v5 Football
Morpeth All Saints Church of England Aided First School	Central	1x Youth Football 11v11	No formal pitch provision identified through site visit or satellite audit.	338.35	0
Morpeth Stobhillgate First School	Central	1x Youth Football 11v11	No pitches currently marked out. Work is carried out by outside contractor. Ground is soaking wet and on a slope. No changing rooms, would like plastic goalposts in the future. Site changed name to Stobhill County First School and Nursery Unit.	2731.88	1x 7v7 Football
Northgate Hospital	Central	1x Mini Soccer	No formal pitch provision identified at site visit or through satellite check.	1,367.85	1x 5v5 Football
Richard Coates C of E School	Central	1x Youth Football 11v11	No formal pitch provision identified through site visit or satellite audit.	19,365.53	3x A11v11 Football

Site Name	Sub Area	Previous Provision stated on APP	Details from 4global site assessor notes	Playing field space (m <sup>2</sup> )	Maximum Pitch Configuration
St Joseph's RC Middle School	Central	1x Adult Football 1x Hockey	School currently has no pitches. This is due to very poor drainage and very wet pitches, meaning the fields are out of use all of the winter. Both causing a problem for the school, as they aren't using their facilities well, but also would offer these facilities to the community, but can't.	8,316.92	4x 7v7 Football
St Roberts Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided First School	Central	1x Youth Football 11v11	No pitches currently marked out, could be used for small junior pitches. Small grass area. Site renamed to St Robert's Roman Catholic First School.	1,405.43	1x 5v5 Football
Whittonstall First School	Central	1x Youth Football 11v11	Unable to gain access or view the school as it is currently having some building work carried out on the field.	1,508.30	1x 5v5 Football
Alwynside Ground	North	1x Adult Football	Two football pitches that have clearly not been used for a long time, no changing/parking, pitches very overgrown.	22,938	3x A11v11 Football
Ellingham C of E Primary School	North	1x Mini Soccer	No provision on site when visited. Majorly sloping, no drainage and maintained by contractor.	1,539.21	1x 5v5 Football
Lindisfarne Middle School	North	1x Adult Football 1x Hockey	No formal pitch provision identified through site visit or satellite audit.	29,811	4x A11v11 Football 1x 7v7 Football
Longridge Towers School	North	1x Youth Football 11v11 2x Hockey 2x Senior Rugby	No formal pitch provision identified through site visit or satellite audit.	12,099.40	2x Junior Rugby 1x 7v7 Football
Newfields Park (Spital Rovers FC)	North	1x Adult Football	The site is currently unused, although goals were still in place at time of visit. After consultation with Spital Rovers, who previously had used the site as their home ground, they would like to use the site again for their base, although the clubhouse is in very poor condition, derelict. The club are currently in the process of agreeing a long term lease on the site with the council. The club currently use the leisure centre but is unsuitable for their future development plans.	32,935.82	4x A11v11 Football 1x Y11v11 Football
Spittal First School	North	1x Mini Football	No official provision marked out on site but potentially could be used for mini or youth soccer. Well maintained area. Site renamed to Spittal County First School.	2,931.23	1x 7v7 Football
Whittingham Church of England Primary School	North	1x Youth Football 11v11	No formal pitch provision identified through site visit or satellite audit.	6,042.20	3x 7v7 Football
Amble Links First School	South East	1x Youth Football 11v11	There was no pitches marked out at the time of assessment. There is room for a number of junior pitches on the site although it may need levelled out. Full perimeter fencing built on the site.	6,210.44	1x Y11v11 Football 1x 5v5 Football
Amble Welfare	South East	1x Adult Football	The site is owned by the Amble Development Trust. The pitch is currently been dug up so that drainage can be inserted and the field levelled. The pitch won't be ready until the 2017/18 season at the earliest. The field is wide open for the community and	9,504.14	1x A11v11 Football 1x 5v5 Football

Site Name	Sub Area	Previous Provision stated on APP	Details from 4global site assessor notes	Playing field space (m <sup>2</sup> )	Maximum Pitch Configuration
			will suffer from anti-social use. The changing room is also very run down and they are looking to develop the building.		
Bedlington Whitley Memorial C of E First School	South East	1x Youth Football 11v11	Site renamed to Whitley Memorial C of E First School.	2054.42	1x 7v7 Football
Central Park	South East	1x Adult Football	No pitches marked out. Large green field. Land isn't very flat. Poor drainage. Looks like work is currently been carried out on the site.	45,638	7x A11v11 Football
East Hartford Recreation Ground	South East	1x Youth Football 11v11 1x Adult Football 11v11	No pitch markings present.	20,688.58	3x A11v11 Football 1x 5v5 Football
Ellington Primary School	South East	1x Youth Football 11v11	Grass condition is okay and flat. Pay for a contractor to maintain site. They also have a MUGA with floodlights.	2,710.56	1x 7v7 Football
James Calvert Spence College (South Avenue)	South East	2x Youth Football 11v11 1x Senior Rugby	The site currently has no pitches marked out.	10,412.20	1x A11v11 Football 1x 9v9 Football
Josephine Butler Campus Primary	South East	1x Youth Football 11v11	This site is within the same grounds as the Church of England Academy. There is no official provision on the primary school site. Potential usage for 7v7 but no markings upon visit. The grass area was to a good standard and does have underground drainage. Now forms part of Dukes Secondary School.	52,810.82	10x Y11v11 Football
Newbiggin Colliery Welfare	South East	1x Adult Football	No pitch currently on site. Big Grass area which has a railing around it where the pitch use to be. Pitch was used by a senior team but site fell into disrepute. Suffers mainly with bad drainage.	18,204	2x A11v11 1x Y11v11
Northburn Primary School	South East	1x Youth Football 11v11	Unable to gain access to site, no pitches on site.	3,387.20	1x 5v5 Football 1x 7v7 Football
Seaton Sluice First School	South East	1x Mini Soccer 1x Senior Rugby	No formal pitch provision identified through site visit or satellite audit.	2,233.43	1x 7v7 Football
Allendale Primary School	West	1x Youth Football	They have two large fields that could be utilised for sports pitches. There is major drainage issues on the field closest to the school and would need sorting if it was to be used. They currently have no special grass care. They have a changing block on the school grounds. They currently have no pitches marked out.	3,674.00 5806.83	1x 9v9 Football 1x Y11v11 Football
Haltwhistle Burn Football Pitch	West	1x Adult Football	No pitches, large grassed area likely to have had pitches in the past.	5102.81	1x Y11v11 Football

Site Name	Sub Area	Previous Provision stated on APP	Details from 4global site assessor notes	Playing field space (m <sup>2</sup> )	Maximum Pitch Configuration
Humshaugh Church of England Aided First School	West	1x Youth Football	No pitches on the site, Humshaugh Playing Fields situated next door.	14,397.77	1x A11v11 Football 1x Y11v11 Football 1x 7v7 Football
Humshaugh Playing Field	West	1x Adult Football	Humshaugh Playing Field is situated next to the first school and has two goalposts set up. It currently doesn't get used by any community sports clubs. There are no markings on the site. There are no changing rooms on the site.	8768.64	1x A11v11 Football 1x 7v7 Football
Newborough Church of England First School	West	2x Youth Football 11v11	No pitches at time of visit, currently in the transition from first school to a primary school and might have a pitch in the future. Site renamed Newborough C of E Primary School.	1,748.29	1x 5v5 Football
Shaftoe Trust Academy	West	1x Youth Football	No formal pitch provision identified through site visit or satellite audit.	1,434.69	1x 5v5 Football
<b>Totals</b>				<b>401,756.72</b>	<b>Equivalent of 85x Adult 11v11 Football</b>

4.11.5 As identified from consultation with Northumberland County Council, due to a restructuring of the educational system, from 3 tier to 2 tier, there has been a large amount of changes to educational pitch provision. All of the lapsed sites are shown in table 4.18 below, all sites were deemed lapsed before 4global site assessments and therefore were not consulted with. The sites previous provision is not present on Active Places Power either.

Table 4.18: Educational sites lost through re-structure.

Establishment Name	Reason Establishment Closed	Close Date	Notes on Site Availability
Allendale Primary - Shilburn Road site (school relocated to middle school building)	N/A - relocation	31-08-2013	In the process of being sold
Blyth Plessey Road First School	Closure	31-08-2008	Disposed of
Blyth Tynedale Middle School	Closure	31-08-2010	School closed, now housing. Land still NCC freehold
Byrness First School	Closure	31-03-2005	Disposed of - Lease surrendered
Cavendish County First School	Not applicable	01-09-1996	No record. Presumably closed/disposed.
Chatton Church of England Aided First School	Closure	31-08-2008	School closed - NCC surrendered field lease
Cornhill First School	Closure	31-08-2012	Current discussions with PC on Community Asset Transfer of whole site. If the PC is unable to take the whole site then they will take the playing field only.

Establishment Name	Reason Establishment Closed	Close Date	Notes on Site Availability
Crofton First School	Result of Amalgamation/Merger	31-08-2003	Closed. Merged with Kingsway to form Croftway Primary School
Delaval Community Middle School	Closure	31-08-2010	Merged to form Bede Academy
Eglington Church of England First School	Closure	31-08-2010	School was CE owned and now closed. NCC owned playing field transferred to Eglington Parish Council
Mowbray Primary School - Stakeford Lane site (relocated to Guidepost Middle site on same road)	Relocation	31-08-2014	Yes. Interest from parish Council in taking a lease for management but not progressed
Herdley Bank Church of England Aided Primary School	Closure	30-04-2016	Buildings owned by CofE diocese, which they have let out on a licence. Playing field owned by NCC
Hexham Hackwood Park School	Closure	31-07-2004	Disposed of
Horncliffe First School	Closure	31-12-2005	Disposed of
Kirknewton Church of England Aided First School	Closure	31-08-2003	Disposed of
Lowgate First School	Closure	31-08-2005	School disposed of, field remains NCC.
Milfield Community First School	Closure	31-08-2009	Milfield - whole site sold
Netherton Northside First School	Closure	31-08-2018	Is in the process of being sold - NCC Owned. Field leasehold
Prudhoe Eastwood Middle School	Closure	31-08-2006	No - lease to be agreed to local football club for use as playing facilities
Seahouses Primary School - first school site in Seahouses (Relocated to Seahouses MS site at James St)	Relocation	31-08-2017	NCC Owned
Cragside CE Primary School - first school site at	Closure	31-08-2008	School disposed of. Field NCC owned.
St Aidan's RC Primary School - first school site at Norham Rod (relocated to St Benedict's MS site at Moorhouse Lane)	Relocation		Site and building owned by RC Diocese
St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided First School, Amble	Closure	31-08-2014	Site and building owned by RC Diocese
St Mary's Church of England Middle School, Belford	Result of Amalgamation/Merger	31-08-2018	Building owned by C of E diocese, progressing sale. Playing field owned by NCC, likely to be a Community Asset Transfer to Parish.
The Duchess High School (Howling Lane site vacant as school relocated to Greensfield)	Relocation	01-09-2016	NCC owned
Wensleydale Middle School	Result of Amalgamation/Merger	31-08-2009	Partially disposed of, playing field remains.

### Disused Playing Fields – future considerations

- 4.11.6 The issue of disused sites should be picked up by the 'implementation group' (see section 6, below) established following the publication of the PPS.
- 4.11.7 The following section of the report provides a short synopsis of how disused sites may be considered over the next ten years.

### Current Situation Synopsis

- 4.11.8 PPS shows some pitch capacity shortfalls across most sports in each sub area. The PPS identifies measures to eradicate the shortfall, but at present disused playing fields sites offer, in theory, a resource that could help eliminate pitch shortfalls.
- 4.11.9 Where NCC wishes to see development of disused playing field sites playing fields policy (exception E4) requires that this playing field resource be replaced by playing field provision of an equivalent or better quantity and quality in a suitable location.
- 4.11.10 This does not mean that disused sites should be preserved in aspic. It requires NCC to work proactively with Sport England to agree replacing sites with new, usable playing fields on the condition such changes provide pitches of the right type, in the right location they would help progress towards eliminating pitch capacity shortfalls.

### Medium Term Synopsis (2-5 years)

- 4.11.11 During this time frame, the NCC and partners should have made progress in addressing capacity shortfalls across sports / age groups / sub-areas through the action plan (provided in section 5 of this report). However, some capacity shortfalls are likely to remain for sports such as cricket and rugby and rugby, whilst elsewhere individual football sites remain overplayed.
- 4.11.12 As a result, it is not possible to show that exception E1 (surplus playing fields) pertains to development which involve complete playing field loss.
- 4.11.13 Notwithstanding the above, there is may by this point be some 'breathing space' in terms of pitch capacity and as a result there is the opportunity for Sport England and NCC to agree upon a more flexible interpretation of playing field policy exception E4. Dependant on the sport involved this might mean;
- Not fully meeting the quantitative element of E4 where the expansion of an existing site brings required capacity benefits to a site identified in the PPS Action Plan
  - Qualitative improvements to a site which tackle long-standing capacity constraints in a way which is sustainable in the long term
  - Investment in artificial surfaces which offer significant capacity benefits and reduce overplaying of grass pitches
- 4.11.14 The above are examples rather than a definitive list of measures. The key test is that they are demonstrable benefit to sport which can be articulated through changes to the assessment data to the PPS.

### Long Term Synopsis (5-10 years)

- 4.11.15 Over the period of 5-10 years, the NCC and partners should have followed through the PPS and Action Plan to eliminate shortfalls in pitch capacity across all sports and in all geographical areas. The PPS shows that it is prudent to retain existing levels of pitch capacity, but it is no longer necessary to protect unused resources such as disused sites.
- 4.11.16 In such circumstances Sport England would seek a financial sum from the disused playing field's disposal to invest in identified qualitative improvements to the retained stock of pitches. Such qualitative improvements might include;
- Provision of pavilions / clubhouses and car parks at existing playing field hub sites
  - Provision of infrastructure which allows practice and training to take place off match pitches
- 4.11.17 The aim of such works is to tackle deficiencies which exist in the quality and/or accessibility of playing pitches which may discourage their use

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## Section 5: Strategic Recommendations and Action Plan



## 5 Strategic recommendations and action plan

- 5.1.1 To facilitate the development of sport and physical activity across Northumberland, it is advised that the Steering Group, set up as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy project, continues to work together to deliver the recommendations defined as part of this strategy.
- 5.1.2 This section of the report provides a set of strategic recommendations, to guide future governance and investment into pitch sport provision across the study area.

### 5.2 Strategic recommendations

- 5.2.1 This section brings together the complete evidence base and analysis that has been developed as part of the PPS and provides a clear strategy for the future delivery of sports provision in Northumberland.
- 5.2.2 At a strategic level, the following key recommendations have been identified for each of the sport typologies, as well as for general sports provision.

#### General recommendations

**Recommendation G0:** Protect all current sports pitch sites from loss due to re-designation or development unless stated otherwise in this report.

**Recommendation G1:** Utilising the planning system to ensure provision is added and updated in line with population growth.

**Recommendation G2:** Address the issue of poor ancillary and changing pavilion quality through the refurbishment and replacement of existing ancillary facilities, prioritising those on multi-pitch sites that are currently well used. Utilise the action plan to identify specific sites for development.

**Recommendation G3:** Work with well-run sports clubs to utilise the existing volunteer network across Northumberland and providing more autonomy for clubs, allowing those organisations that have adequate governance and financial stability to develop facilities and participation.

**Recommendation G4:** Enhance the drainage and maintenance of both natural turf and artificial pitches that are currently operating over-capacity, to increase the pitch capacity to accommodate demand of current user clubs, especially on council-maintained pitches. Utilise the action plan to identify specific sites for development.

**Recommendation G5:** Work with educational establishments that provide playing pitches for use by community teams to secure formal community use of pitches and ancillary facilities through a Community Use Agreement. Where these community use agreements currently exist, work with education establishments and users to ensure that requirements for community use are being enforced

**Recommendation G6:** Work with clubs based at council owned sites, to establish long-term security use agreements, ensuring that clubs and participants have security of tenure and are able to grow and develop through grant funding wider investment.

**Recommendation G7:** Work with clubs to address site specific needs as identified in the action plan below.

## Football

**Recommendation F1:** Continue to invest in the grass pitches across the study area, to improve the quality and reduce the amount of cancelled games during periods of poor weather.

**Recommendation F2:** Ensure sites that have community use available also have security of tenure to protect the future provision of football, allowing clubs based on council sites to apply for grants and investments from various governing bodies.

**Recommendation F3:** Provide sites where there is significant use of adult pitches to meet youth pitch demand with mobile goal posts to ensure the appropriate sized goals and pitches are being used for these age-groups.

**Recommendation F4:** Northumberland currently has a deficit of community available AGP provision within the study area. Identify 8 sites to develop full sized 3G AGP provision, to meet the growing demand for this pitch type and meet the needs of local clubs and residents, in line with the Northumberland Local Football Facility Plan;

- Ponteland Leisure Centre
- The Swan Centre
- Queen Elizabeth High School
- The Alnwick locality
- The Cramlington locality
- The Blyth locality
- The Morpeth locality
- The Hexham locality

**Recommendation F5:** Increase the level of maintenance at sites identified as being close to the poor rating, in order to mitigate the risk of pitches falling into disuse and lowering the carrying capacity of pitch provision in the study area.

**Recommendation F6:** Focus on the development of ancillary facilities located at local authority sites in terms of changing room provision. This should be in conjunction with the Football Foundation.

## Cricket

**Recommendation C1:** Protect all sites that currently have cricket pitches and are therefore defined as playing fields.

**Recommendation C2:** Work with the NCCB and the ECB to support the development of female cricket. Softball Cricket is a key NCCB and ECB's initiative to make these targets a reality.

**Recommendation C3:** Invest in ancillary facilities and the use of better security systems in order to decrease the amount of anti-social behaviour. Utilise the action plan to identify the specific sites where this should be a priority.

**Recommendation C4:** Increase the capacity of sites. This can be achieved through enhanced maintenance or, where necessary, invest in artificial provision to offset demand on grass pitches. Utilise the action plan to identify the specific sites where this should be a priority. It should be noted, the preference of most teams and clubs is to play on grass wickets where possible and many of the local competitions mandate that these be used for matches.

## Rugby Union

**Recommendation R1:** Identify at least one site to develop a WR22 compliant pitch in the Central sub area, specific to Morpeth, with a view to meet reducing overplay on pitches.

**Recommendation R2:** Monitor the growth of women's and girls' rugby to ensure there is sufficient capacity to allow clubs to develop these sections.

**Recommendation R3:** Work with clubs to upgrade facilities to ensure they are appropriate for hosting matches for both genders at the same time.

**Recommendation R4:** Installing permanent or demountable floodlighting to increase training capacity.

**Recommendation R5:** Pitch maintenance and improvement.

## Hockey

**Recommendation H1:** Ensure long term community use agreements are in place, especially at educational sites, to further develop hockey within the area. This will allow for great club growth and facility development. Discuss with education sites the possibility of allowing community access to facilities. This is particularly important with the uncertainty surrounding Berwick Academy and Morpeth Hockey Club.

**Recommendation H2:** Safeguard sand based AGP provision for future use and not allow the conversion from sand based to 3G AGP's to occur unless offset with new development.

**Recommendation H3:** To work with England Hockey and The Queen Elizabeth High School to identify potential sites to replace the current AGP present on site.

## Tennis

**Recommendation T1:** Utilise an excellent working relationship with the LTA, developed through previous capital investment projects, to invest in further local authority facilities.

**Recommendation T2:** Work in conjunction with England Hockey around 'hockey plus' when applying for new sand AGP surfaces. Tennis courts can be added onto such applications and better serve a wider aspect of the community.

## Bowls

**Recommendation B1:** Work with the bowls clubs to promote the presence of bowls in the Borough through signage and other elements.

**Recommendation B2:** Continue to monitor the quality of surface provided by Council contractors to ensure the good quality service provided is maintained.

### Athletics

**Recommendation A1:** Protect the existing synthetic athletics facilities at Morpeth Athletics Track and Wentworth Leisure Centre and continue to work with the resident clubs to increase usage throughout peak and off-peak times.

**Recommendation A2:** An additional synthetic track facility should be considered, particularly if Lindisfarne Middle School Sports Hall is to be lost.

## 5.3 Action plan

- 5.3.1 Through a detailed supply and demand analysis of the sports included in the scope of the strategy, as well as stakeholder consultations across the study area, an action plan has been created, which will guide the steering group in their delivery of sports provision and facility decisions over the next 10 years. The action plan is broken down by site with clear owners, timescales and expected resources. This is shown Table 5.1.
- 5.3.2 The table identifies potential sources of external funding. It should be noted that funding for the actions below could come from one, or a combination, of funding sources shown below. This is not an exhaustive list and could be extended to other sources, depending on availability.
- CIL monies
  - Section 106 funding
  - Community Grant Schemes
- 5.3.3 The Action Plan does not identify all those clubs that may be partners or provide resources in relation to its delivery. It is assumed that where clubs have a long-standing interest in a specific site that they will be a partner in delivering the actions and contribute financially or in-kind where appropriate.
- 5.3.4 The Action Plan does not identify Northumberland Council as a key resource either in terms of officer time or finance, except for those sites owned and/or managed by the Council. However, the Council has an interest in all those projects delivered within the local authority area and may contribute towards them either financially or in-kind, as appropriate and subject to available resources. It should be noted that not all sites have actions allocated to them, as it is unrealistic to expect funding partners to contribute to improvements at all facilities across a local authority.

### Action plan terminology

- Issue/ opportunity: The issue or opportunity that can be addressed
- Key Actions: Numbering indicates order of preference
- Partners: Top listed partner is identified as lead partner
- Resources: Key resource implications (time and money)
- Timescale: Short: 0–2 yrs. Medium: 2-5 yrs. Long 5-10 yrs.
- Priority: Low, Medium and High, depending on overall impact for sports participation
- Acronyms: NCC (Northumberland Council), FA (Football Association), FF (Football Foundation), ECB (England & Wales Cricket Board), Lawn Tennis

Association (LTA), EH (England Hockey), RFU (Rugby Football Union), CC (cricket club), HC (hockey club), FC (football club).

- 5.3.5 All costs are estimated, based on 4global desktop research and consultation with industry experts. These are not based on firm pricing or quotes from reputable contractors, unless stated otherwise.
- 5.3.6 All maintenance costs represent the full cost for maintaining the pitches. They do not, therefore, reflect any maintenance that is currently being undertaken at the site and the cost incurred for these services. In reality, the cost for additional maintenance would be reflected by an increase of the current maintenance cost, rather than the full price stated as part of this action plan
- 5.3.7 There is not unlimited funding to invest in sports facilities, for any of the identified partners. As a result, actions have been prioritised on sites that are currently either not fit-for-purpose, showing a deficit of provision, or those that represent a viable investment opportunity that will significantly increase the quality, quantity or accessibility of sports provision in Northumberland.
- 5.3.8 To provide the Council and Steering Group with a clear identification of 'strategic' investment priorities across the study area, high profile strategic investment projects have been identified overleaf in bold. These projects are likely to be limited in number due to their size but will deliver a significant level of benefit for grass-roots sport and physical activity. These projects are likely to cost approximately £250,000 or more and will include a number of different stakeholders and funding partners.

**Table 5.1: Northumberland's PPS Action Plan (2019-2031)**

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
Alnmouth and Lesbury Cricket Club	North	Cricket - Provide	The sight screens and outdoor net facilities on site are of poor quality on site and they now require replacement.	Support the club in sourcing funding for this provision.	Alnmouth and Lesbury Cricket Club / ECB	£240 p/screen+ Cost following feasibility work.	G7+ C4	Medium	Medium
Alnwick RFC	North	Rugby - Enhance	There are 3 adult pitches present on site, with maintenance rated as poor on one and adequate on the other two pitches. The site is currently being played over its capacity.	Subject to a technical assessment with a view to recommending detailed improvements to the maintenance on the site.	RFU / NCC	Cost of assessment estimate c.£2k	G4 - R5	Medium	Medium
Alnwick Tennis Club	North	Tennis - Enhance	Two of the tennis courts on site are not flat and are slightly dome in shape.	The club should be supported in raising funds to flatten and re-surface the two courts.	Alnwick Tennis Club / LTA	Approx. 30-45k (subject to specialist assessment).	G7	Medium	Medium
			The clubhouse on site is in very poor condition and has not been refurbished since 1996. This site is used extensively by the community and due to child safeguarding issues, the clubhouse needs to be upgraded.	The club should be supported in raising funds to refurbish/upgrade the clubhouse.	Alnwick Tennis Club / LTA	Officer time + (estimate c.£30-70k - subject to specialist review).	G2-G7	Medium	Medium
Ann Welfare Playing Fields	South East	Football - Enhance	Potentially collapsed drains on site that means there is poor drainage and games cancelled as a result. This issue is	Subject to a technical assessment with a view to recommending detailed	FF / NCC	Cost of assessment estimate c.£2k	G4-F1	Medium	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
			particularly prevalent on the top field.	improvements to the maintenance on the site.					
Ashington Cricket Club	South East	Cricket - Enhance	The changing facilities are inadequate for the club's needs.	Support the club in sourcing funding for refurbishment/upgrade of the clubhouse facility. They need to be extended, improved and disability access added.	Ashington Cricket Club / NCC / ECB	Officer time + (estimate c.£30-60k - subject to specialist review).	G2-C3	Medium	Medium
Ashington Rugby Club	South East	Rugby - Enhance	There are 3 adult pitches present on site, with maintenance rated as poor on two pitches and adequate on the other pitch. The site is currently over capacity.	Improved maintenance would increase the carrying capacity at the site which is either at or over capacity.	RFU / NCC	Work required to be established through IOG assessment.	G7	Medium	Medium
Bedlington Terriers FC Ground	South East	Football - Enhance	The ancillary buildings are in poor condition and in need of investment and improvement. In particular the roof is not weather proof.	Support the club in sourcing funding for refurbishment/upgrade of the clubhouse facility.	FF / NFA / NCC	Officer time + (estimate c.£80-160k for refurbishment works - subject to specialist assessment).	G2	Medium	Medium
Berwick Academy (The Swan Centre)*	North	Hockey - Enhance	The surface of the facility is adequate but will require resurfacing in the next 3-5 years to ensure it remains suitable for competitive hockey use.	Prior to resurfacing the AGP, a deep clean of the surface should take place.	NCC / Berwick Academy/ EH	Approx. 16k	H3-F4	Short	High

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
		Football - Provide	Current deficit of full sized 3G AGP's in the study area. The scheme has been granted planning permission and is in the process of liaising with the Football Foundation regarding funds.	Conduct a feasibility report on the possibility of constructing a 3G AGP on site.	NCC / Berwick Academy / FA / FF	Cost of feasibility report estimate c.£2.5k	G7-F4	Short	Medium
Berwick Cricket Club	North	Tennis - Provide	There is no floodlighting present on site.	The club should be supported with potential fundraising to add floodlighting to the tennis provision.	Berwick Cricket Club / LTA / NCC	Approx. 25-35k	G7	High	Medium
		Cricket- Enhance	The ancillary facility on site is not of suitable provision, as well as refurbishments to the outdoor net being required.	The club should be supported with identifying funding for the renovation works on site.	Berwick Cricket Club/NCC	Cost of renovations subject to specialist assessment	G7-C4	Medium	Medium
Berwick Rugby Club	North	Rugby - Enhance	There are 4 adult pitches present on site, with maintenance rated as good on one and adequate on the other three pitches. The site is currently being played over its capacity.	Subject to a technical assessment with a view to recommending detailed improvements to the maintenance on the site.	RFU / NCC	Cost of assessment estimate c.£2k	G4 - R5	Medium	Medium
Blyth Academy	South East	Football - Provide	The 3G pitch present on site has issues with anti-social behaviour, with damage to nets, a penalty spot removed and a large burn mark above the penalty box.	It is recommended that the site is supported in establishing anti-vandalism fencing surrounding the 3G and to fit	Blyth Academy / FF / NFA / NCC	Officer time (estimate c.£40-80k - subject to specialist review).	G7	Medium	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
				CCTV and alarm systems.					
Blyth Cricket & Rugby Club	South East	Rugby - Enhance	There are 1 adult pitches present on site, with maintenance rated as poor. The site is currently being played over its capacity.	Subject to a technical assessment with a view to recommending detailed improvements to the maintenance on the site.	RFU / NCC	Cost of assessment estimate c.£2k	G4 - R5	Medium	High
		Cricket- Provide	The site is currently operating over capacity. Artificial provision could offset some of this training from the grass wickets.	It is recommended that the club be supported in establishing funds for artificial training provision on site.	Blyth CC/NCC	Cost of provision subject to technical assessment.	G7-C4	Medium	Medium
Cattonlea Haugh	West	Football - Enhance	The adult pitch present on site is in poor condition, requiring improvement. The poor quality of the pitch means that for large parts of the season it is unplayable.	Subject to a technical assessment with a view to recommending detailed improvements to the maintenance on the site. Artificial drainage may also be considered as a potential action on this site.	FA/ NCC	Cost of assessment estimate c.£2k	G4-F1	Medium	Medium
Chatton Cricket Club	North	Cricket - Enhance	The ancillary facility on site is in a poor condition.	Support the club in sourcing funding for refurbishment/upg	Chatton Cricket Club / NCC / ECB	Officer time + (estimate c.£50-100k for refurbishment works -	G7-C3	Medium	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
				rade of the clubhouse facility.		subject to specialist assessment).			
Corbridge Cricket Club	North	Cricket - Enhance	The site has issues with flooding which leads to the loss of fixtures. The club has had a flooding assessment.	Subject to a technical assessment with a view to recommending detailed improvements to the maintenance on the site. Artificial drainage may also be considered as a potential action on this site.	Sport England / ECB / Corbridge Cricket Club	Cost of assessment estimate c.£2k	G4	Medium	Medium
The Duchess Community High School	North	Rugby- Provide	Due to overplay within the study area, it is recommended that the two rugby pitches lost in the school developments, be reinstated and the previous club users, Alnwick RFC, are liaised with.  At present, the capacity for Rugby on site is being reduced due to school demand, The need to provide this provision is becoming a more pressing priority.	It is recommended that the site is supported in re-establishing the two senior rugby pitches on site.	RFU/ Sport England/ Alnwick RFC	Work required to be established through IOG assessment.	G7	Medium	Medium
Eastwoods Park	Central	Football - Enhance	The land at the site has drainage issues and	Improved maintenance at	FF / NCC	Work required to be	G4-F5	Medium	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
			suffers from anti-social behaviour.	the site would increasing the carrying capacity at the site which is either at or over capacity at the site.		established through IOG assessment.			
Five Arches	North	Football - Provide	The site is overcapacity for football at this present time.	It is recommended that the club is supported in the reconfiguration of the current adult 11v11 pitch, allowing space for an additional adult 11v11 pitch.	FA / NCC/ FF	Work required to be established through IOG assessment.	G7	Medium	Medium
Greenfield	North	Football - Protect	The site recently lost 4 pitches and there is currently no long-term lease for Alnwick FC who use the site	Support the club in establishing a 25year lease on site.	NCC	NCC officer time.	G0-F2	Short	High
Hexham Leazes Cricket Club	Central	Cricket- Provide	The grass pitch provision on site is currently operating over capacity, despite a 'good' maintenance score.	It is recommended that the club are supported in acquiring suitable artificial match/training provision.	NCC/ECB	Cost dependant on the scope of works	G7- C4	Medium	Medium
Hotspur Park	North	Football - Enhance	The pitches on site are in poor condition, with no work being undertaken on the drainage in 9 years. There is also a big issue with dog fouling on site which is particularly hazardous.	Subject to a technical assessment with a view to recommending detailed improvements to the maintenance on the site.	NCC	Cost of assessment estimate c.£2k.	G4-F1	Medium	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
				Artificial drainage may also be considered as a potential action on this site.					
Howick Alnmouth and Lesbury Cricket Club	North	Cricket - Enhance/Provide	The pavilion on site is in a very poor condition and requires refurbishment to bring this up to an acceptable condition.	Support the club in sourcing funding for refurbishment/upgrade of the clubhouse facility.	Howick Alnmouth and Lesbury Cricket Club / NCC / ECB	Officer time + (estimate c.£40-70k for refurbishment works - subject to specialist assessment).	G2	Medium	Medium
Jubilee Field	Central	Cricket - Enhance	The need to improve the maintenance equipment (in order to improve the quality of the grass wickets) on site has been identified. The ground is susceptible to waterlogging with can impact the beginning and end of the season.	Improved maintenance at the site would increase the carrying capacity at the site which is either at or over capacity at the site.	NCC / ECB	Further investigation required to establish the maintenance equipment required.	G4	Medium	Medium
Lowhall Park	West	Football - Provide	There are currently significant issues with waterlogging and poor drainage on site, particularly serious when the nearby river floods. This leads to match cancellations during periods of poor weather.	Subject to a technical assessment with a view to recommending detailed improvements to the maintenance on the site.	FF / NCC	Work required to be established through IOG assessment.	G4-F1	Medium	Medium
Morpeth Cricket Hockey & Tennis Club	Central	Hockey - Enhance	The ancillary facilities have been identified as poor. In addition, the lack of adequate floodlighting	The club should be supported in renovating the floodlights on the AGP.	Morpeth Cricket Hockey & Tennis Club / EH/ ECB	Cost dependant on the scope of works	H3	Medium	High

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
			reduces the number of competitive matches the site can host on Saturdays. The age and condition of the floodlighting is understood have resulted in two fires at the site recently.						
		Cricket- Provide	The NTP on the main pitch (east of the site) is poor which discourages use by junior teams. The grass provision on the site is currently far from capable of meeting the demand from the teams.	The club should be supported in renovating the NTP on site.			G7-C4	Medium	Medium
Morpeth Rugby Football club Limited	Central	Rugby - Enhance	This site is very well utilised by Morpeth RFC and is currently over capacity. The quality of maintenance for all 3 pitches is adequate.	It is recommended that improved maintenance provision occurs at the site, with a specific focus on the floodlit pitches. Adding slit drainage to the pipe drained pitches will add a further 0.75 match equivalents per week to the site's capacity, enough to meet current demand. Additionally, by displacing some of the club's	Morpeth Rugby Football club Limited / RFU	Cost of assessment estimate c.£2k	G4-R5	Medium	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
				demand to Morpeth Common, this should help to reduce overplay.					
Ponteland Leisure Centre*	Central	Rugby - Enhance	The site is significantly overcapacity for junior and senior rugby pitch provision.	It is recommended that the pitch maintenance should be improved to 'good' and artificial drainage should be added to the pitch. It is recommended that the senior pitch also increase drainage to adequate (D1).	NCC	Work required to be established through IOG assessment.	G4-R5	Short	Medium
		Football - Provide	The FA/FF is exploring the possibility of adding a 3G AGP to the site to help meet demand in the study area.	Look into the feasibility of adding 3G provision to the site, that is also WR22 approved.	Ponteland Leisure Centre / NCC / FA / FF / Local football clubs/RFU	Cost of feasibility report estimate c.£2.5k	G7-F4-R1	Medium	Medium
		Cricket - Provide	Due to the reduction of 3 wickets on the square, lost through reconfiguration, it is recommended that an artificial wicket be sourced to increase capacity on site.	Look into the feasibility of adding artificial provision to the site.	NCC/ECB	Cost dependant on the scope of works	G7	Medium	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
Queen Elizabeth High School*	Central	Hockey - Provide	The AGP present at this site is rated the lowest of all AGP's used by community hockey clubs. There is no floodlighting present on site due to the proximity of residential housing; however, the club and school want to find a solution. Due to the lack of floodlighting, there is a significant amount of exported demand.	Look into the feasibility of potential sites to replace the current AGP, to build a sand based AGP, 3G AGP and WR22 approved AGP. Master planning the site will be crucial to ensure all provision is catered for fully.	Queen Elizabeth High School / EH / NCC / FA /FF / Local football clubs/RFU/Local Rugby Clubs**	Cost of feasibility report estimate c.£2.5k	G7-H3	Medium	Medium
		Football - Provide	The FA/FF is exploring the possibility of adding a 3G AGP to the school to help meet demand for such a facility in the town. The site already has issues with its hockey AGP (as floodlighting is not possible due to planning constraints).				G7-F4		
		Rugby- Provide	The site has been identified as being a potential site for a WR22 approved AGP. This site would help to meet significant overplay in the study area. The site does already has issues with its hockey AGP (as floodlighting is not possible due to planning constraints).				G7-R1		

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
Seafield Sports Park	North	Football - Provide	The drainage system on site is inadequate and this leads to 50-60% of games in the Winter being called off.	It is recommended that the club are supported in establishing artificial drainage on site.	FF / NCC	Work required to be established through IOG assessment.	G4-F0	Medium	High
Shielfield Park	North	Football - Provide	There are currently significant issues with waterlogging and poor drainage on site, leading to match cancellations during periods of poor weather. Both pitches on site suffer from drainage issues.	It is recommended that the club are supported in establishing artificial drainage on site.	FF / NCC	Work required to be established through IOG assessment.	G4-F0	Medium	Medium
South Newsham Park	South East	Football - Enhance	The site is overcapacity for football at this present time.	It is recommended that the club is supported in the reconfiguration of the current adult 11v11 pitch, allowing space for an additional adult 11v11 pitch.	FA / NCC/ FF	Cost dependant on the scope of works	G7	Medium	Medium
St James Park	North	Football - Enhance	The clubhouse facility is not adequate to the club's requirements.	Support the club in sourcing funding for refurbishment/upgrate of the clubhouse facility.	FF / FA / NCC	Officer time + (estimate c.£30-55k for refurbishment/ upgrade works - subject to specialist assessment).	G7-F6	Medium	Medium
St Joseph's Middle School	Central	Football - Provide	Current deficit of full sized 3G AGP's in the study area.	Conduct a feasibility report on the possibility	NCC / St Joseph's Middle School / FA / FF	Cost of feasibility report	G7-F4	Short	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
				of constructing a 3G AGP on site.		estimate c.£2.5k			
Stocksfield Sports Field	South East	Football - Enhance	The clubhouse on site is in very poor condition and has not been refurbished since 1996. This site is used extensively by the community and due to child safeguarding issues, the clubhouse has to be upgraded. The grass pitch provision requires improvements also.	The site has been identified by the FF as a priority site for grass pitch and changing provision improvements. Supporting the club in sourcing funding for these improvements is crucial.	FF / FA / NCC	Officer time + IOG Assessment+ (estimate c.£30-60k for refurbishment/ upgrade works - subject to specialist assessment).	G7-F6	High	High
		Rugby - Enhance	The rugby provision on site is overcapacity. The current level of maintenance on the pitch present is 'poor'.	Subject to a technical assessment with a view to recommending detailed improvements to the maintenance on the site.	Allendale Estates / RFU	Cost of assessment estimate c.£2k.	G4- R5	Short	Medium
		Cricket - Enhance	The cricket provision on site is overcapacity. The current level of maintenance on the pitch present is 'standard'.	Improved maintenance at the site would increase the carrying capacity at the site which is either at or over capacity at the site. Refurbishments to the outdoor net facilities are also required.	NCC / ECB	Further investigation required to establish the maintenance equipment and refurbishments required.	G4	Medium	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
Sporting Club Cramlington	South East	Cricket- Provide	The site is currently operating over capacity. Artificial provision could offset some of this training from the grass wickets.	It is recommended that the club be supported in establishing funds for artificial training provision on site.	Cramlington CC/ Sporting Club Cramlington/ NCC	Cost of provision subject to technical assessment.	G7-C4	Medium	Medium
The Swan Centre for Leisure*	North	Football - Provide	The FA/FF is exploring the possibility of adding a 11v11 3G AGP to the site to help meet demand for such a facility in the study area. The site already has artificial provision however this is of standard condition.	It is recommended that the site is supported in establishing full sized artificial provision on site.	NCC / FA /FF / Local football clubs	Cost of feasibility report estimate c.£2.5k + Officer Time	G7-F4	Long	Medium
Tweedmouth Bowling Club	North	Bowls - Enhance	The old clubhouse on site was built in 1934 and is now in disrepair, requiring refurbishment.	The club should be supported in raising funds to refurbish the old clubhouse.	Tweedmouth Bowling Club / NCC / BE	Officer time + (estimate c.£30-60k for refurbishment works - subject to specialist assessment).	G7	Medium	Medium
Tynedale Rugby Football Club Ltd	Central	Football - Enhance	Part of the clubhouse containing changing rooms hasn't been renovated since 1975 and are in need of some improvement.	Support the club in sourcing funding for refurbishment/upg grade of the clubhouse facility.	FA / NCC/ FF	Officer time + (estimate c.£20-40k for refurbishment works - subject to specialist assessment).	G7-R3	Medium	Medium
		Rugby - Enhance	The site is situated on a floodplain and during periods of heavy rainfall there are many fixtures	It is recommended that the pitch maintenance should be	Tynedale Rugby Football Club Ltd / RFU	Work required to be established	G4-R5	Short	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
			cancelled. There are also problems with anti-social behaviour.	improved to 'good'.		through IOG assessment.			
Tynedale Sports Club	Central	Cricket - Provide	There is considerable overplay of the grass wicket provision at this site. There is also a large amount of latent demand identified for women's golf at this club, yet there is no spare capacity to accommodate additional teams on a Sunday.	It is recommended that the club is supported in raising funds to install a mobile net facility to allow for more training and reduce the use of the grass wicket provision. If this is not feasible, it is recommended the club are supported in maintaining their new junior practice area, formerly a tennis court.	Tynedale Sports Club / NCC / ECB	£21,000 Built net facility+ Cost of maintenance equipment required.	G7	Medium	Medium
Wentworth Leisure Centre	Central	Football - Enhance	The one pitch present on site is very well used; however, it has drainage issues which leads to matches and training being cancelled.	Subject to a technical assessment with a view to recommending detailed improvements to the maintenance on the site. Artificial drainage may also be considered as a potential action on this site.	FA/ NCC	Cost of assessment estimate c.£2k.	G7-F1, F5	Medium	Medium

Site	Sub Area	Action ID/Ref	Issue / opportunity	Key Action(s)	Partners	Resources/ Costs	Strategic Link	Timescale	Priority
Wooler Bowls Club	North	Bowls - Enhance	There are issues with maintenance on site, with the green having areas of moss growth in the winter.	The club should be supported in improving their maintenance regime on site. In addition, there should be better communication from Bowls England with regards to potential funding cycles.	Wooler Bowls Club / Bowls England / NCC	Further investigation required to establish the maintenance equipment required.	G4-B2	Short	Medium
Wooler Cricket Club	North	Cricket- Provide	The club are currently seeking improved maintenance equipment in order to maintain the good condition of grass wicket provision.	It is recommended that the club are supported in establishing a new outfield mower.	Wooler CC/NCC	Further investigation required to establish the maintenance equipment required	G7	Short	Medium

Sites with \* marked are present in the Northumberland LFFP.

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## Section 6: Delivering the Playing Pitch Strategy



## 6 Delivering the Playing Pitch Strategy

- 6.1.1 To facilitate the development of sport and physical activity across Northumberland, it is advised that the Steering Group, set up as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy project, continues to work together to deliver the recommendations defined as part of this strategy.
- 6.1.2 The success of a PPS will be determined by how it is used. It is recommended that the delivery of the strategy is led by the Council, with close support by the steering group that has been developed as part of this project. Further guidance is provided in Sport England’s PPS Guidance in the form of the Stage E commentary and associated checklist. Further detail on how a PPS can be used is included in Technical Appendix G – Applying the Playing Pitch Strategy.

### 6.2 Keeping the PPS relevant and up-to-date

- 6.2.1 To ensure that the Playing Pitch Strategy stays relevant and continues to support stakeholders in the delivery of sport and physical activity facility investment and development, an annual review should be undertaken. This review, which if undertaken regularly will have a reduced scope than the full PPS, will allow the steering group to review progress against the PPS recommendations and action plan. The review will also identify any emerging issues and apply any lessons learnt through recent development or investment projects.
- 6.2.2 Through the development of the PPS, data has been stored and analysed on the 4 global Playing Pitch Strategy Platform, which has up to date supply and demand data for pitch sports across the County. This data is available to Northumberland County Council and it is recommended that this is used as the starting point for future strategy refresh projects.

Figure 6.1: Northumberland Council Playing Pitch Platform

Site Name	Site Address	Site Assessor Name	Scheduled At	Completed At	Responded	Confirmed	Time to visit	Actions
BELLINGHAM LEISURE & LIFESTYLE CENTRE	Talbot Place, London, SE3 0TZ	Brooke Butler	2018-01-29 09:40:00	2018-11-20	Yes	Yes	0 Data passed	View Edit
DOWNHAM HEALTH & LEISURE CENTRE	Glenbow Road, Bromley, BR1 4RL	Sam James	2018-01-29 12:20:00	2018-11-20	Yes	Yes	0 Data passed	View Edit
ST DUNSTONS COLLEGE SPORTS CENTRE	Canadian Avenue, London, SE8 4SW	Brooke Butler	2018-06-19 11:20:00	2018-11-08	Yes	Yes	0 Data passed	View Edit
THE HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CENTRE (ABBOTSHALL ROAD)	Whitefoot Lane, Bromley, BR1 3SQ	Brooke Butler	2018-06-18 10:30:00	2018-09-25	Yes	Yes	0 Data passed	View Edit
TEN-EM-BEE SPORTS DEVELOPMENT CENTRE	Kingsley Bridge Road, London, SE26 5WQ	Sam James	2018-01-29 12:00:00	2018-09-25	Yes	Yes	0 Data passed	View Edit
DEPTFORD GREEN SCHOOL	Evelyn Street, London, SE8 5WJ	Sam James	2018-01-25 10:30:00	2018-08-19	Yes	Yes	0 Data passed	View Edit
THE BRIDGE LEISURE CENTRE	Abbotshall Road, London, SE8 1SQ	Sam James	2018-01-26 11:20:00	2018-07-24	Yes	Yes	0 Data passed	View Edit
CATFORD WANDERERS SPORTS CLUB	Amblecote Road, London, SE12 8TN	Sam James	2018-01-26 13:00:00	2018-07-24	Yes	Yes	0 Data passed	View Edit
Penny Mount Primary School	BR1 5LL	Brooke Butler	2018-01-26 09:00:00	2018-07-12	Yes	Yes	0 Data passed	View Edit
Warren Avenue Playing Fields	97 Downberry Rd, Bromley BR1 3QR	Brooke Butler	2018-06-19 13:00:00	2018-07-12	Yes	Yes	0 Data passed	View Edit

6.2.3 The phase following the finalisation of the PPS process is referred to as ‘Stage E’. Stage E is the phase in which the Strategy and Action Plan is delivered. In addition to its delivery, stage E is also intended to continually review the monitoring and reviewing the impact of those changes. The PPS guidance advises that 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 playing pitch provision in the area
- Monitors, evaluates and reviews progress with the delivery of the recommendations and action plan

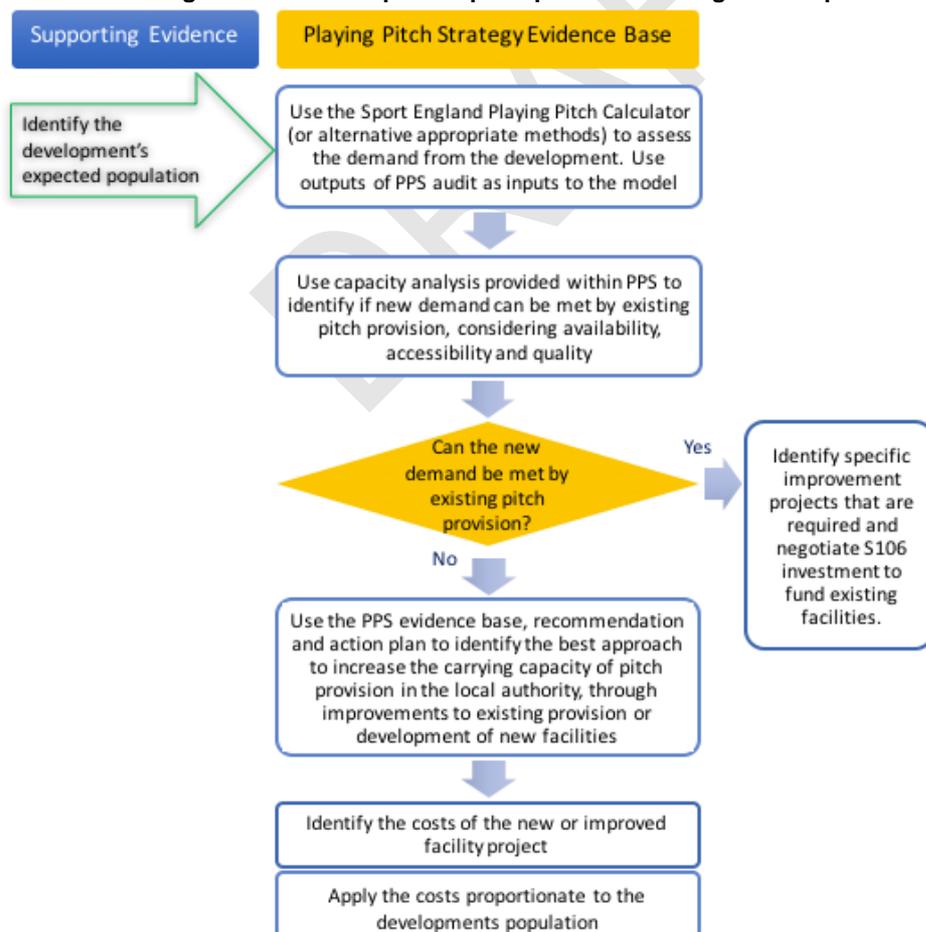
- Shares lessons learnt from how the PPS has been used and how it has been applied to a variety of circumstances.
- Ensures the PPS is used effectively to input into any new opportunities to secure improved provision and influence relevant programmes and initiatives
- Maintains links between all relevant parties with an interest in playing pitch provision in the area
- 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:
  - 1) Provide a short annual progress and update paper;
  - 2) Provide a partial review focussing on particular sport, pitch type and/or sub area; or
  - 3) Lead a full review and update of the PPS document (including the supply and demand information and assessment details).

- 6.2.4 The steering group should meet at relevant points throughout the year to ensure that this role is progressed. This could be at six months and a year on from when they signed off the PPS and/or arranged to tie in with the different seasons of the sports and any meetings with the NGBs.
- 6.2.5 In the short term, it is advised that the Council sets up a Stage E meeting where an implementation group is established (which should be a continuation of steering group set up as part of the PPS), to co-ordinate preparation of a short-term action plan, as well as undertaking further sub-regional needs assessment for major cross-boundary development projects.
- 6.2.6 The PPS has identified, on a site by site and sub-area level, the needs for pitch and ancillary provision across Northumberland. Where the current level of supply does not meet the current or future needs of residents for specific sports, pitch typologies and ancillaries have been identified as requiring further capacity to meet demand.
- 6.2.7 In order to provide this additional capacity, guidance has been provided as to whether the steering group and partner organisations should look to;
- Enhance existing pitches to increase their capacity and ensure adequate maintenance to maintain the higher use, and/or
  - Secure greater community access to sites and undertake necessary works to allow for such use to occur, and/or
  - Provide new playing pitches on new sites (natural or artificial grass pitches).
- 6.2.8 Where the third option has been recommended, further guidance is available from Sport England and National Governing Bodies to advise on the best course of action for local authorities and delivery organisations.

### 6.3 Securing additional or improved pitch provision through development

- 6.3.1 In addition to the specific site by site recommendations identified throughout needs assessment, it is also key that the strategy provides a clear approach to securing playing pitch provision in the case new development, or utilising Section 106 (S106) of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions to improve the quantity or accessibility of existing provision.
- 6.3.2 It is important to note that for any contribution secured through S106, a clear and tailored approach is required, to demonstrate how the contribution will be used to benefit residents. Specifically, the Playing Pitch Strategy’s evidence base and action plan should be used to justify the need arising from the specific development and how these are to be met.
- 6.3.3 While S106 investment should typically be used for improvement projects nearby new development, or for developing new provision on new sites, CIL contributions are typically more appropriate for key strategic investment projects.
- 6.3.4 It should be noted the LB Northumberland Council’s Regulation 123 list (available on the Council’s website) assumes all publicly owned leisure facilities will be supported through CIL rather than S106.
- 6.3.5 The graphic overleaf and associated commentary identifies the stages that should be followed, when utilising the Playing Pitch Strategy to secure additional or improved pitch provision through development.

**Figure 6.2: Securing additional or improved pitch provision through development**



6.3.6 Although the population of a single development may not in itself generate the demand for a full pitch, it will still generate additional demand which should be quantified and be met. An example of how the Playing Pitch New Development Calculator can be used to calculate the need for new pitch provision arising from new development is included within the scenario testing section of this strategy,

## 6.4 Using the Community Infrastructure Levy to invest in pitch sport provision

6.4.1 If a Local Authority uses CIL to invest in community projects, there are a range of resources available to support the development of these investment cases, alongside the evidence from this Playing Pitch Strategy.

6.4.2 Sport England continue to keep the advice note for CIL and Planning Obligations updated<sup>19</sup>, with the latest version found on the organisation's website. The following key points have been updated and are particularly relevant to the outcomes of this PPS.

### Top tips for using CIL

- Develop and maintain a robust and up to date evidence base for sporting provision.
- Use the evidence base to:
- Estimate the nature and level of needs that may be generated from new development(s) for sporting provision;
- establish clear deliverable actions (with associated costs) that have the potential to help meet the needs that will be generated from new development in the area.
- Based on the nature of the actions, the level of new development in an area, and the realistic ability to secure investment into sport through CIL or planning obligations, decide how best to use CIL and planning obligations alongside one another to deliver sporting infrastructure and to support development.
- Where CIL is in place ensure any sporting provision to be placed on the Reg 123 list is:
- Project specific so it does not unnecessarily restrict the use of planning obligations;
- focused on high level priority projects of a strategic nature that CIL has potential to deliver rather than a long list of projects that CIL will never be able to fund. This will allow the potential for other projects to be funded by planning obligations;
- backed by strong high level officer and political support within the LA so that there is some confidence that CIL funds will be directed to the sporting provision.
- Where CIL is not in place, or where the wording of a Reg 123 list allows for the use of planning obligations, ensure that:
- any obligations sought are based on a tailored approach to each development, using the robust evidence base to help with clearly justifying the needs arising and how they are to be met;

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/planning-tools-and-guidance/community-infrastructure-levy-and-planning-obligations-advice-note/>

- a proactive approach is taken to planning for the use of planning obligations in the context of the current pooling restrictions (i.e. as far as is practical matching specific developments to identified projects). This could be through the use of a Planning Obligations SPD which identifies potential projects from a playing pitch strategy or sports facility strategy that could help meet the need arising from planned developments in a Local Plan.

6.4.3 Further information is available as part of Sport England's CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note, however it is key to note that in relation to the 1<sup>st</sup> top tip identified above, the development and delivery of this PPS is the first stage in utilising CIL to leverage grass roots sport investment.

## 6.5 Securing additional or improved pitch provision through development

6.5.1 In addition to the new or improved pitch provision that is identified in line with the process demonstrated above, the cost for maintenance of new facilities should also be sought for both on-site and off-site provision. For example, where 3G facilities are installed, the carpet will require replacement (approximately every 10 years depending on level of usage and maintenance) and costs towards a sinking fund should also be sought.

6.5.2 Where a pitch or pitches are required on-site, this may include requiring delivery through a planning policy and a masterplan approach for the whole area. This can ensure that enough suitable land is planned from the outset and provided at no cost. This is particularly important where there is a need for a large land-take associated with pitches.

6.5.3 Planning policy should seek to ensure that where sites are developed in phases or through multiple applications, and where the pitch provision is required on-site, that this provision is coordinated and delivered by the landowners/developers. In some circumstances, a single site for pitches serving all the development or all its phases can be required.

6.5.4 The timing and delivery of the pitches and related changing and parking facilities should be considered in relation to development phasing to achieve a balance between ensuring provision is in place in time to meet the needs of the residents, avoiding pressure being placed on existing facilities, and the financial viability of the development.

6.5.5 Where there are separate developments in close proximity that taken together generate a need for a whole pitch, contributions need to be made towards new provision or improving, existing pitches. For new pitches, the planning policy therefore also needs to identify where that pitch and related changing and parking facilities are to be located, how sufficient land is to be secured, and (where known) the individual developments that need to contribute to it. This also applies to where there is a need for a larger strategic site serving a large catchment. This may require the developers to provide the land on-site or for the local planning authority to identify the land through the Local Plan process.

## 6.6 Securing appropriate land provision from new development

6.6.1 Suitable land needs to be provided by developments, in line with the guidelines below;

- Where the investment need is for a new pitch and related changing and parking facilities to meet the demand directly generated by the population of the new development(s), then the developer is expected to meet all these costs. These include provision, maintenance and land costs

- Where the demand is for the majority (50% or more) of a pitch and related changing and parking facilities, that is to be provided on site, suitable land will be provided by the developer at no cost, as well as the population-related proportion of the cost of the pitch
- Where the demand is for less than 50% of a pitch and related changing and parking facilities, that is to be provided on-site, then suitable land needs to be planned into the development, however only a proportionate amount of this land will be provided for free and the remainder will need to be funded from other sources (e.g. from pooled contributions from other developments, from grants or other sources)
- Where the land cannot be provided for on-site because of proven master-planning constraints, financial viability or other relevant reasons, then the local authority may negotiate an appropriate alternative contribution, where this is S106 compliant.

## 6.7 Identifying the appropriate provision for contribution

6.7.1 As identified in the policy context for this document, the Council will secure developer contributions where appropriate towards future sports infrastructure to support future development in accordance with Local Plan policies and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Developer contributions will primarily be sought through S106 agreements, but other funding sources may also be secured where possible. The Council will continue to work with partners and infrastructure providers in order to secure improvements to sport infrastructure to meet the future needs of the County.

6.7.2 In the case of S106 contributions, the following should be noted;

- No more than five contributions may be pooled towards the provision of any single infrastructure project or type of infrastructure
- Section 106 contributions must be directly related to the development in question; however the impact of any development can affect the wider community. This means that S106 contributions can be used to deliver improvements to facilities that are located some distance away from the development, such as a local town centre or major sports facility hub site
- Development that is funded through S106 contribution should be focussed on specific projects, identified through the strategic need's assessments (such as this Playing Pitch Strategy) that have been issued by the Council.

## 6.8 Calculating contributions

6.8.1 To calculate the scale of a developer's financial contributions for the provision of pitches and related facilities, the following should be used;

- Sport England's Playing Pitch New Development Calculator should be used to assess pitch and related facilities arising from specific developments. This can be supported and evidenced by Sport England's latest facility costs for pitches and

related facilities, as well as detailed feasibility work and support from qualified cost consultants. The latest version of this calculator can be found here:

<https://www.activeplacespower.com/reports/playing-pitch-calculator>

- The cost of maintenance and sinking funds, where justified, should be calculated using Sport England or NGB advice and supporting documents, however local knowledge and previous costs from similar maintenance contracts should be considered. Maintenance and sinking costs can also be provided by Sport England's 'Lifecycle Costs' (2017) however where specific and robust knowledge is available it is recommended that this is used
- Where a land cost is justified this cost will be based on the local market cost for the relevant sport/leisure land use. There may also be a need to add the cost of other local and site-specific costs (e.g. abnormal ground conditions, site access needs etc.)
- All costs should date related and inflation needs to be considered (e.g. if a facility is to be delivered in 3 years' time the planning condition must apply an appropriate inflation index).

6.8.2 If the PPNC is to be used, the Council should ensure that the most recent template is used, as financial data changes regularly. Further support is available from Sport England as required.

DRAFT

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*4global Consulting*

*Building 3, Chiswick Business Park*

*566 Chiswick High Road*

*London, W4 5YA*