

Strategic Overview

**On Behalf of Herefordshire Council
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Herefordshire Playing Pitch Assessment

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Section 1: Introduction and methodology

1.1 Background and study objectives

1.1.1 The purpose of this study is to produce a strategic framework, audit and assessment and needs analysis of outdoor sports pitches and facilities for Herefordshire.

1.1.2 The study will:

- Corporate/Strategic:
 - Provide direction and help set priorities for pitch sports and guide future investment decisions.
 - Provide robust evidence for to support future funding applications.
 - Help to deliver the Government policies for social inclusion and community cohesion, health and well-being and promoting sustainable development.
 - Link to and inform some of the Council's Strategies and plans including the Localities Agenda, the Rising to the Challenge Transformation Programme and the Core Strategy.
- Planning:
 - Provide an evidence base for the Local Development Framework (LDF) and provide the basis for establishing pitch requirements arising from new housing.
 - The development of policy including new standards of provision and protection policies.
 - Help to develop an holistic approach to open space improvements.
- Operational:
 - Support more efficient use of resources.
 - Highlight where quality of provision can be enhanced.
- Sports Development:
 - Identify where community use of school sports pitches is most needed.
 - Promotes sports development and can help unlock any latent demand.

1.1.3 The Strategy will help to support the Council to achieve some of its local and national targets as set out in its' Corporate Plan 2011 – 2014 and "Rising to the Challenge Programmes" which aim to place "Communities First as one of its priorities, through, "better engagement and empowerment" which will deliver services to our residents at a time when we face significant cutbacks in funding and unprecedented challenges in the way that we spend money. Delivering efficient, excellent services will improve outcomes for the people of

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Herefordshire, therefore development of future policies need to ensure that they:

- Improve the localities where we live work and play;
- Are evidence based;
- Improve well-being in Herefordshire.

1.1.4 In particular this includes raising standards for children and young people, promoting self-reliant local communities: community engagement; ways of working that reflect the needs and priorities of people and place to meet residents' needs, creation of a resilient Herefordshire, protection of peoples' health and wellbeing, commissioning the right services and high quality assessments of need'

1.1.5 In response to the national development of the Big Society and the Localism Bill, which in a major shift aims to put the community at the heart of taking action in their local area it will also support the Council's Area Strategy which aims to strengthen local communities by increasing their choice and control over service delivery in their areas. Local communities will increasingly take responsibility for local issues and create opportunities to provide services that are both relevant and responsive to local needs. In support of developing "local services", the Council is looking to lessen the burden on diminishing resources through Community Asset Transfers. This approach is supported by Sport England and recommendations identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy will help to identify those communities where this may be possible for outdoor sports facilities.

1.1.6 The effective and appropriate provision of sport and recreation facilities can generate significant wider benefits. The strategy aims to provide direction in providing good quality accessible outdoor sports pitches and facilities. It will help ensure through the planning process communities benefit from being able to access good quality facilities which meet not only existing but future needs by providing significant local evidence in support of the Core Strategy up to 2031.

1.1.7 In recognising that the previous review of open space undertaken in the 2006 Open Space Assessment which is now over 3 years old, and which included the recommendation to undertake a playing pitch assessment, this assessment effectively will supersede this aspect of the old study and will provide the evidence required by planning.

1.2 SCOPE

1.2.1 The study is countywide and has been undertaken in house and in accordance with methodology established by Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A companion guide to PPG17 and Towards a Level Playing Field: A guide to Preparing Playing Pitch Assessments. The Assessment

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considers the Strategic Context; the Quantitative Assessment; the Qualitative Assessment; Future Actions and Conclusions.

1.2.2 In line with advice in Towards a Level Playing Field: A guide to the Production of Playing Pitch Strategies the assessment includes existing playing pitches in each area including those provided within schools and those in private ownership.

1.2.3 Those included are set out in the table below:

Outdoor Playing Pitches	Sport
Grass Pitches for:	Football Rugby Union Cricket Hockey
Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs) for:	Football Rugby Union Cricket Hockey
Other:	Bowling Greens Tennis Courts
Not part of the assessment but identified in each area:	Golf Courses

1.2.4 The study has been developed and managed by a Project Working Group which includes the following Council services: Parks, Countryside and Leisure Development, Sports Development, Education, Property Services and Planning. The working group reports to a Wider Steering Group which includes the County Sports Partnership and Sport England.

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 This section provides an overview of the methodology for carrying out the Assessment. In order to meet the study objectives, the work has involved detailed research and consultation, to ensure a robust and detailed evidence based assessment. The key elements of this work follow the five step approach recommended for PPG17 compliant studies which are set out below.

Step one - Identifying local needs

1.3.2 Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A companion guide to PPG17 states that it is impossible to identify local needs properly without involving communities. It is also important to obtain a statistical evidence base of

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local needs as well as carrying out consultations.

1.3.3 As such the study includes a desk research study and consultation with the local community, including both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

1.3.4 The desk research element of the study has involved undertaking:

- A socio-demographic analysis of the local population to help identify the existing and potential future needs for outdoor sports facilities in Herefordshire
- A strategic review of all relevant background policy documents including those of Sport England and the National Governing Bodies, that provide an indication of the priorities for the county.

The key findings of this desk research are set out later in the report.

1.3.5 The field research has involved undertaking consultation with the local community and key stakeholders as detailed below.

1.3.6 **Geographical Analysis** – The Strategy recognises that residents in rural areas cannot realistically expect to have the same level of access to facilities and that the needs of Hereford City may be different to those in the more rural parts of the county and residents in rural areas usually have to travel further. Future population growth will be centred around the strategic housing growth areas identified in the Core Strategy the plan period 2011 – 31, therefore, individual playing pitch assessments have been undertaken for the seven sub-market housing areas which have been determined by planning (study undertaken by G L Hearn, 2012) to take account of population projections.

1.3.7 Each sub area contains an individual assessment and recommendations. There is no county wide assessment. The maps in Appendix 1 show the seven sub-market areas for Bromyard, Golden Valley, Hereford, Kington, Leominster, Ledbury and Ross and playing pitches for the different sports.

1.3.8 **Sports Club Survey** - A survey of all pitch sports clubs, including football, cricket, rugby, hockey, tennis and bowling within the study area has also been undertaken to establish demand for pitches and opinions around quality for pitches within each area. Using the Council database, verified by each of the County Development Officers for each sport, each active club has been contacted via questionnaire (Sport England's template). The response rate initially was low so follow up phone calls were carried out to boost responses but not all wished to respond. Herefordshire Cricket Board, Herefordshire Football Association and Herefordshire Hockey Association chased up returns via reminders and through AGMs.

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The % rates for each sport are shown in individual areas which are presented later in the report. The consultation was carried out during the summer / autumn / winter months 2010.

1.3.9 Some further work has been carried out in 2011 in individual areas where local sports federations and focus groups have identified particular issues. The results of these are shown in the relevant area report.

1.3.10 Pitch Owners Survey - At the same time we also contacted all pitch owners, including Halo, Parish and Town Councils and Schools to help establish usage and quality issues. Each pitch owner was contacted via questionnaire and follow up telephone call but the response rate was very low. The % rates for each sport are shown in individual areas which are presented later in the report. The consultation was carried out during the summer / autumn / winter months 2010.

1.3.11 Key Stakeholders - Consultation was conducted with a range of key stakeholders including:

- Planning
- Property Services
- Sports Development
- Public Health
- School Sports Coordinators
- Local football, cricket, rugby, hockey, bowling and tennis development officers
- National Governing Bodies for sports (NGBs)
- County Sports Partnership

1.3.12 Consultation has been conducted via a range of methods, including face-to-face, questionnaires, telephone calls, email, websites and league books.

1.3.13 This has ensured that details of clubs within the study area, membership, teams, fixtures, training venues and home grounds is accurate. We have also been able to find out if there are any unmet needs in the catchment area or any opportunities to improve existing provision (for example, by providing pitches closer to where the majority of team's membership live).

1.3.14 It is recognised that sports clubs are only one source of demand for sports pitches and that, in some instances, demand can come from other sources for example, schools, informal groups and individuals. Having contacted all the school sports coordinators, information on any extra curricula school games on grass pitches and Synthetic Turf Pitches is provided in each area report.

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Step two – auditing local provision

- 1.3.15 Desk based Audit** - A comprehensive desktop audit has been carried out to identify all relevant outdoor sports pitches and facilities across the county. Herefordshire Council's GIS mapping, Sport England's Active Places and information from the Governing bodies for Football, Cricket and Rugby has been used to compile the schedule of playing pitches in the study area. Full schedules of the pitch and facility audit are provided with each area report and can be found as appendices for each of them.
- 1.3.16 Site Visits** - Site assessments of grass pitches were carried out using a non technical assessment (using Sport England's methodology's scoring system) for each site, taking into consideration aspects such as grass coverage/length, drainage, size, evenness, equipment provided and ancillary facilities. The same person undertook each non school site and the same person undertook each school site to ensure consistency in the assessment process. The assessments were undertaken during summer/autumn 2010. Each area report provides more details of results.

Step three – setting local standards

- 1.3.17** The National Planning Policy Framework and the companion guide to PPG17 say that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessment of the needs for sport and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. This information should be used to determine what provision is required. Once the assessment of local needs and audit of provision are in place it is possible to set locally-determined standards which should include a quantitative component, a qualitative component and an accessibility component.
- 1.3.18** Therefore the key themes emerging from consultations, findings of the audit and site visits will be used as a basis to determine provision standards for each type of facility in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility – to directly represent the local needs and expectations of the residents in each area. The application of the local standards will form the basis for addressing quantitative and qualitative needs through the planning process.
- 1.3.19 Quantity** - The audit enables an understanding of the quantity of provision for each type of sports across each area and enables the calculation of the provision of each type of facility to meet the needs of the population. It thus helps to:
- identify any surpluses or deficiencies across each area,
 - assess the amount of provision required in each area,

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- assess the quantity of provision which a developer might be required to make as part of a proposed development (on-site) or amount of funding for off-site provision, usually made through a planning obligation or Section 106 agreement

1.3.20 **Quality** - Through analysis of the site visit templates, desk research and consultation, a qualitative assessment and vision has been established for each area. It provides:

- an overall quality standard
- an aspiration for existing facilities to achieve
- a quality standard for newly developed facilities
- benchmarks against which to measure and determine priorities for enhancements.

1.3.21 **Accessibility** - Through analysis of National Benchmarks (such as Sport England guidance) and the survey results, accessibility standards can be set in terms of distance thresholds (time and distance). This assessment helps identify:

- areas that lie outside the catchment of each type of pitch facility
- those areas lacking ready access to various forms of provision
- The use of the survey results to determine local standards ensures that they are directly reflective of local need.

Step four – Applying Local Standards

1.3.22 In order to apply the standards to the local areas, the following has been done:

- quantity – calculated the levels of “over” or “under supply” now and in the future using strategic planning tools including Sport England’s Team Generation Rates methodology
- quality – used information gathered from site visits and consultation feedback to appraise the quality of facilities
- accessibility – applied the accessibility standards to identify areas of each area that lie outside the expected mapping through use of geographical mapping.

Step five – Strategy Development

1.3.23 This strategy outlines the research and consultation findings and summarises the key issues and priorities for each of the seven areas. It also identifies surpluses and shortfalls and highlights opportunities/actions for new or improved outdoor pitch and facilities

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provision.

- 1.3.24** The playing pitch strategy has been developed following the methodology set out in *“Towards a Level Playing Field: A manual for the production of a playing pitch strategy”*.

2 Section 2: Strategic Context

- 2.1** To ensure that the study has been based upon a sound understanding of the local context, a detailed desk research exercise has been undertaken, to analyse local demographics, participation rates in sport and physical activity and to also review key existing strategies, policy documents and studies. This section provides a summary of the key findings of this work.

Local Demographics

- 2.1.1 Sparsity of Population** - Herefordshire is a predominately rural county of 842 square miles situated in the south-west corner of the West Midlands region bordering Wales. The city of Hereford, in the middle of the county, is the centre for most facilities; other principal locations are the five market towns of Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury, Bromyard and Kington. A particular challenge for service delivery is how scattered the population is. With 179,100 residents, at 80 persons per square kilometre (or 0.8 per hectare), Herefordshire has the 9th lowest overall population density of all counties and unitary authorities in England & Wales; the 4th lowest in England. *Source: 2009 mid-year estimates of population, ONS. [p.15]* Of the 179,100 people living in Herefordshire, 97,200 (54%) live in rural areas, and 76,700 of these (43% of the total) live in „rural village or dispersed“ areas. *Source: Mid-2009 small area population estimates, ONS (and Defra’s rural-urban classifications, 2004). [p.13]*
- 2.1.2 Existing Population**- Herefordshire’s resident population grew by 2% between 2001 and 2009 – which is a similar rate of growth as that of the West Midlands region overall (+3%), but slightly lower than England & Wales (+5%). As there have been fewer births than deaths over the period, this growth in Herefordshire’s population has been entirely due to net in-migration (i.e. more people moving into the county than moving out). *Sources: ONS population estimates (Crown copyright) and Herefordshire Council Research Team’s 2006-based population forecasts.*
- 2.1.3** The current proportion of Herefordshire’s population aged under 16 (17%) is similar to England & Wales (19%), but numbers have fallen from 34,000 in

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2001 to 31,000 in 2009. This decline is expected to continue and then stabilise from 2016; around 6% below 2009 levels (29,000 children) *Sources: ONS population estimates (Crown copyright) and Herefordshire Council Research Team's 2006-based population forecasts.*

- 2.1.4** Just over a fifth (22%) of Herefordshire's population is aged 65 and over (38,800 people), compared to 17% regionally and 16% nationally. Numbers of older people have grown more rapidly locally than nationally: there are 15% more people aged 65+ living in Herefordshire in 2009 than in 2001, compared to 8% more in England & Wales. *Sources: 2006-based Herefordshire population forecasts, HCRT & 2006-based national population projections, ONS. [p.32-35]*
- 2.1.5 Forecast Population** The number of **under 16s** in Herefordshire is forecast to continue to fall until 2031, although at a slightly slower rate than in recent years. Numbers are then expected to stabilise at around 29,000 (6% below 2009 levels).
- 2.1.6** "Herefordshire's population of **16-64 year-olds** is expected to fall steadily as the postwar baby-boomers" move into retirement age. There are forecast to be 5% fewer people aged 16-64 in the county by 2026 than in 2009.
- 2.1.7** The number of people **aged 65+** in Herefordshire is forecast to continue to increase, but more rapidly than in recent years, and is expected to be 57% higher in 2031 than in 2009. In particular, the number of people aged 85+ is expected to almost double, from 5,400 in 2009 to 10,200 in 2026. *Source: ONS population estimates (Crown copyright) and Herefordshire Council Research Team's 2006-based population forecasts.*
- 2.1.8 Deprivation** - Herefordshire as a whole experiences relatively low levels of deprivation compared to some urban counterparts. Pockets of deprivation are concentrated in urban areas of Herefordshire, but smaller pockets also occur in more rural areas. The proportion of people experiencing income deprivation in all of these areas have increased from 2004.
- 2.1.9** There are two areas Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that have particularly high levels of income deprivation. In the Leominster Ridgemoor area, 41% of individuals live in income deprived households and Golden Post – Newton Farm area in Hereford City had 37%. These areas also both experience high levels of health and employment deprivation.
- 2.1.10** Using these measures of deprivation at this geographical level can hide deprivation that can occur for smaller groups of households or even on a household level in rural areas. Looking at smaller areas of deprivation from the 2004 indices of deprivation, also identifies areas of income deprivation within the villages of Whitcurch, Kingstone, Peterchurch, Weobley, and

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Bartestree and in the other market towns of Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury and Kington. *Source: Indices of Deprivation 2004 & 2007*

2.1.11 Health Issues- Health expectancy gives a prediction of how many healthy and disability free years of life can be expected. Herefordshire compares well, with a higher numbers of years that are healthy and disability free than the West Midlands region and across England as a whole. Both males and females have higher life expectancies in Herefordshire than regionally and nationally. Across all areas, females are still expected to live longer than males. *Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Crown copyright*

2.1.12 However, those living in deprived areas have a number of challenges associated with living in deprivation, and there are some specific health issues that have been highlighted. Compared to the least deprived neighbourhoods in Herefordshire, people in the most deprived neighbourhoods are:

- 68% more likely to die of chronic lower respiratory diseases.
- 60% more likely to die from coronary heart disease.
- 26% more likely to die from cancers.

2.1.13 Similar patterns are also seen with hospital admissions. Significantly higher rates for **alcohol-specific** admissions are observed in the most deprived quartile of the county – 90% greater than admission levels across all of Herefordshire. *Source: Public Health Department, Herefordshire PCT*

2.1.14 Over the last few years there has been a slight increase in the percentage of numbers of children who are overweight and obese. The 2008-09 school year measuring found 14.7% of pupils were overweight and 9% were obese, compared to 2007-08 when 13.2% of Reception year children were overweight and 8.9% obese. The latest data recorded in 2008-09 showed 18.9% of Year 6 pupils were obese and a further 13.7% were overweight. *Source: Herefordshire PCT*

2.1.15 Participation in Sport and Physical Activity - The health benefits of taking part in physical/sport activity on a regular basis have long been recognised.

2.1.16 The national survey (Active People) undertaken by Sport England which captures data relating to participation levels in sport and physical activity and which is presented in their local sports profile data for Herefordshire shows comparisons at both a regional and national level.

2.1.17 It shows that in general participation rates and the proportion of adults that take part in sporting activity or organised sport is generally higher than that of the West Midlands and England as a whole.

2.1.18 Of particular note, is the fact that since 2005/6

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- Participation in 3 x 30 mins per week has increased in Herefordshire and the West Midlands and England as a whole
- Volunteering has fallen slightly in Herefordshire and the West Midlands and England as a whole
- Club membership has increased in Herefordshire but has fallen in the West Midlands and England as a whole
- Organised competitive sport has fallen slightly in Herefordshire and the West Midlands and England as a whole
- Satisfaction with local provision has increased in Herefordshire but has fallen in the West Midlands and England as a whole

Measure	Herefordshire	WM Region	England
Adult 16+ Participation in Sport & Active Recreation 3 x 30 mins per week 2008/10 male and female	23.9%	20.4%	22%
Volunteering at least one hour per week 2009/10	4.6%	4.1%	4.5%
Club membership 2009/10	26.5%	22.3%	23.9%
Organised Competitive sport 2009/10	15.6%	13.5%	14.4%
Satisfaction with local sports provision 2009/10	71.4%	67.3%	69%

Source Active Peoples Survey, Year 2009/10 Sport England. Key Performance Indicators.

2.1.19 Market Segmentation - Using data from the Active People's surveys, together with information from other national surveys and data sources including census data, health data, the "Taking Part" and "British Crime" surveys and information from Experian lifestyle databases, Sport England has developed a market segmentation model. The model is made up of 19 different sporting segments to help understand the attitudes, motivations and perceived barriers to sports participation. This is particularly important to understand in order to ensure that the facilities in Herefordshire and the nine localities cater for the needs and expectations of local residents.

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2.1.20 Residents are classified according to their key characteristics and analysis of the dominant market segments provides an indication as to the type of facilities that may be required if certain groups are to become active. The key characteristics of some of the dominant population groups in Herefordshire and the nine localities are illustrated below.

2.1.21 Market segmentation shows that “Tim” and “Philip” are the most dominant market segment type across Herefordshire and their typical characteristics are outlined below as well as the others in the top “6”.

Segment	Typical Age	Description
Tim (segment 6) 10.5%	26 – 35	Settling down males: very active enjoying high intensity activity; enjoys technical sports as well as team games and individual activity
Philip (segment 11) 10%	46 – 55	Comfortable mid-life males: Most active type within this peer group participating in a number of activities including team sports, racquet games and technical sports
Ralph and Phylis (segment 17) 9.3%	66+	Comfortable retired couple: generally less active than the average adult population, but their activity levels are higher than others in their age range: activities include swimming, the gym, bowls and golf.
Elaine (segment 12) 7.9%	46 – 55	Empty nest career ladies, married: average levels of activity and likely to be a member of a gym or

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Roger and Joy (segment 13) 7.7%	56 - 65	fitness club Early retired couple: slightly less active than average enjoying keep fit and swimming, bowls, golf and angling
Elsie and Arnold (segment 19) 6.9%	66+	Retirement home singles: much less active than others in their group: activities include walking, swimming and bowls

Sport England and Experian Ltd. 2010, Measure: Sport Market Segmentation

2.1.22 Whilst these are the average across the county, there are “Hotspots” where there are different combinations of the dominant market segment types and these are particularly important to recognise in the seven areas. These are included in the individual area assessments.

2.1.23 Participation In Sport : *Active Peoples Survey Sport England* - The Sport England Active People Survey 2008/9 (Active People Survey 3) and 2009/10 (Active People Survey 4) indicate that for three of the sports included in this survey (cricket, football and rugby union) there has been no significant change in participation levels in cricket and decreases in football and rugby.

2.1.24 The breakdown of participation by sports affecting this study, and the change in participation is shown in the table below.

Sport	% of the adult population (16+) taking part at least once a week - 2008/9	% of the adult population (16+) taking part at least once a week - 2009/10	% change in population
Football	5.08%	4.96%	Decrease
Cricket	0.49%	0.41%	No Change (not statistically significant)
Rugby	0.50%	0.46%	Decrease

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2.2 Document Review

A number of policies, strategies, key actions and activities from a range of cross cutting services and organisations at a local, county, regional and national level that have an influence of sports and physical activity provision in Herefordshire have been identified and reviewed as part of this study. They are outlined below:

National

National Framework For Sport – A Vision for 2020, Sport England 2004

- 2.2.1** Key Points: Making England and active and sporting nation. The aim of the strategy (published in 2004) is to change the culture of sport and physical activity in England in order to increase participation across all social groups. This will lead to improvements in health and other social and economic benefits and provide the basis for progression into higher levels of performance. One of the six priority areas is strategic planning. For planning the national strategy says: “... improvements should be made to planning frameworks, to ensure that provision for sport is included. The new planning system should recognise the importance of sport helping to deliver sustainable communities and in particular money is secured from new housing development for investments in sport”

Be Active, Be Healthy – A Plan for getting the Nation Moving (Department of Health 2009)

- 2.2.2** Key Points: This plan sets out the Government’s framework for the delivery of physical activity for adults alongside sport, based on local needs, with particular emphasis upon the physical activity legacy of the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games. It recognises that the environment has an important influence on our levels of activity. Currently 90% of the population in England is within a 20 minute travel time of at least two different facilities that are most in demand by the public including swimming pools, playing fields, synthetic turf pitches, health and fitness centres and sports halls. It emphasises the importance of planning policy for open space, sport and recreation in helping to tackle obesity and supporting healthier communities. It supports the need for master planning for major new housing developments and mixed use development schemes to have a vital role in providing easy access to a choice of opportunities for sport and physical activity. It identifies the aim of the Government to work with Sport England, National Governing Bodies of Sport and others on proposals that include improving the quality of playing pitches.

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Healthy Lives, Healthy People, Our Strategy for Public Health in England – Government White Paper 2010

- 2.2.3** **Key Points:** ... Health and wellbeing throughout life”. The Government is radically shifting power to local communities, enabling them to improve health throughout people’s lives, reduce inequalities and focus on the needs of the local population. The White Paper highlights local innovation and outlines the cross government framework that will enable local communities to improve health at key stages of people’s lives. Included in this, is the protection of green spaces and launching physical activity initiatives, some of which will build on the 2012 Olympic legacy, therefore, from the young to the old, opportunities will be provide for every child in every community with the best start in life and communities will be designed for active aging and sustainability.

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

- 2.2.4** **Key Points:** Access to opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessments which identify specific needs and qualitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses in the local area.

- 2.2.5** **Links to Playing Pitch Strategy:** This strategy sets out the out the needs of the local populations, as identified through a robust consultation exercise, including local clubs and governing body representatives and has had Sport England involvement throughout. The evidence will be used to inform future development and enhancement of facility provision. The provision of high quality sports facilities in the right location is clearly an important component in driving forward the health and physical activity agenda and increasing participation nationally. This strategy will guide the effective distribution of facilities across the county and in doing so seek to maximise opportunities to meet local, regional and national objectives. In detail it will be used to inform the Local Development Framework This will enable the development of a quality facility infrastructure across the county that is accessible to all, which will be extremely important in helping to increase participation levels of physical activity.

Regional

West Midlands Regional Sports Framework 2007

- 2.2.6** Currently under review.

Sub Regional

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Sports Facilities Framework 2010 – 2026, Sports Partnership Herefordshire and Worcestershire

2.2.7 Key Points: This framework provides the strategic and coherent link between the West Midlands Regional Sports Facilities Framework (2007) and the relevant existing or emerging strategies of the individual local authorities and other key partners. It recommends the use of local detailed facility strategies for Rugby, Cricket and Football to help guide future investment in these sports and identifies the following key facts:

Football: key findings from the Local Area Data (LADS report (demand only) indicate that in Herefordshire the overall rates for participation for senior football is higher than the national or regional average but for juniors it is lower and for minis it is much higher suggesting a significant drop off rate in the junior game.

Cricket: across two counties, cricket is most popular in Herefordshire particularly among men but has a lower rate of junior participation. Looking at “demand” only, even though Herefordshire has an aging population, around the “growth” areas of Hereford and Leominster it is anticipated new playing field space will be needed.

Rugby: Herefordshire has the highest participation rates in all age groups in the two counties. The sport is predominantly male. Out of 6 clubs in Herefordshire there is only one women’s team. Looking at “demand” only, even though Herefordshire has an aging population, around the “growth” areas of Hereford and Leominster it is anticipated new playing field space will be needed.

No reference is made to Hockey, Tennis, Bowls, Golf in the Herefordshire report.

However, the study acknowledges that in all instances, a more detailed local playing pitch assessment is essential to confirm the issues and priorities and to determine the requirements arising from the Sustainable urban extensions (Strategic Housing Sites) and other growth and that proposals contained within the Cricket National Governing Body strategy and Rugby Football Union National Governing Body strategies will help guide future investment priorities.

Links to Playing Pitch Strategy: This strategy has been developed in the context of the sub-regional strategy and builds on its recommendations to prepare a playing pitch assessment for the county and in doing so provides a more localised assessment of provision within Herefordshire. The level of provision within the county has been compared against sub-regional averages and will enable the analysis of up to date evidence on a site by site basis to determine local needs and priorities for specific developments.

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Local

Herefordshire Cricket Board (HCB) Facility Strategy 2009 -2013

- 2.2.8** Key Points: The facility strategy provides clear evidence of existing facility provision, its quality and its ability to sustain and allow for the development of the game and participation. Generally the HCB would wish to expand the number of available grounds for use through improvements and possibly seek out a central facility.

North Midland Rugby Football Union (RFU) County Facility Plan 2008 – 2011

- 2.2.9** Key Points: The plan builds upon the RFU National Facility Strategy and provides a framework for the sustainable development of facilities for rugby union in the North Midland area including Herefordshire. The framework identifies what facilities are required to meet these needs, supports prioritisation of investments and funding through a detailed set of development criteria, technical requirements, management and operational structures and potential financial viability. It therefore ensures that the right facilities are provided in the right locations for the right reasons.

2.2.10 Football Association National Game Strategy 2012 – 2015

Key Points: The Key priorities for the Herefordshire FA from 2012-2015 are focussed around 6 Key Areas of the FA National Game Strategy;

- Growth and Retention
- Raising Standards
- Better Players
- Workforce Development
- Running the Game
- Facilities

The Hereford Football Associations focus is around the growth and retention of the game in line the FA's whole sport plan vision. The FA acknowledge the current financial challenges and key role of the public sector in providing the facilities for the game and are launching an FA facilities strategy late in 2012. The strategy is made up of 3 strands, building, sustaining and enhancement, at the heart of which its key focus is the support of its FA Charter Standard community clubs. Furthermore 2013/14 will see mandatory changes to the youth game and revised pitch sizes which should be factored into the future playing pitch needs of Hereford.

Herefordshire Playing Pitch Assessment

2.2.11 Football Participation reports

Herefordshire FA track data on an annual basis, the previous four years show significant growth from 2009/10, growth appears to then plateau showing slight signs of increase on an annual basis in line with the FAs National Game Strategy which is delivered on a local level through the Herefordshire County FA.

Season	Adult male 11v11	Adult female 11v11	Youth Male	Youth female	Mini Soccer - mixed	Total
2009-10	99	7	97	2	57	262
2010-11	108	4	126	21	63	322
2011-12	96	4	125	23	62	310
2012-13	109	4	122	29	68	332

Links to Playing Pitch Strategy: This strategy includes the aspirations of the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) to deliver sport and increase participation. There is an identified need for new thinking in developing opportunities for all. All young people should be given a range of opportunities. Developing the girls and women's game, disability sport and reaching out to diverse communities is a vital part of what NGBs will be required to do. The provision of high quality sports facilities in the right location will help to achieve the key aims and outcomes set out within this document

Hereford and Worcester County Sports Partnership (CSP)

2.2.12 The partnership's vision is to deliver the national targets set by Sport England of increasing participation in sport and active recreation by 1% year on year. Their commitment and priorities includes:

- Raise awareness of opportunities for sport and active recreation
- Build a strong safe network of effective and friendly clubs
- Strengthen partnerships to ensure effective and efficient delivery of organised sport and active recreation

They actively work with Local Authorities across the 2 counties, clubs, schools, coaches, national organisations and communities to create more opportunities for everyone to get more active.

Herefordshire Council Sports Development

2.2.13 Work to develop an extensive programme of sports and physical activity programmes for the people of Herefordshire to engage people of all ages in sport and physical activity. Priorities include:

Herefordshire Playing Pitch Assessment

- Lift Exercise Referral scheme
- Sports specific development as part of the CSP work closely with local and regional sports clubs, national governing bodies to increase participation in sport and physical activity
- Physical Activity Programmes to encourage members of the community to meet the recommended target of participating in 30 minutes of moderate physical exercise at least 3 days a week.
- Education Sports and PE programmes which seek to widen opportunities, develop links and provide training.

Links to Playing Pitch Strategy: This strategy provides rationale for the needs analysis and the needs of local communities to help develop the participation standards offer locally. A quality facility infrastructure that is affordable and accessible to all will be extremely important in helping to increase participation levels of physical activity.

3 Playing Pitch Assessment for each Area

- 3.1 Individual Assessments have been undertaken for the seven areas and can be viewed as separate documents.

4 Next Steps Development of an Investment strategy

- 4.1 An “investment strategy” will be prepared for each area in the strategy, to take the Playing Pitch Strategy forward (from Assessment to Strategy) with key partners including Sport England and the National Governing Bodies for football, cricket, rugby and hockey. This will provide a list of key projects and recommendations which link to the key findings of the Playing Pitch Assessment.