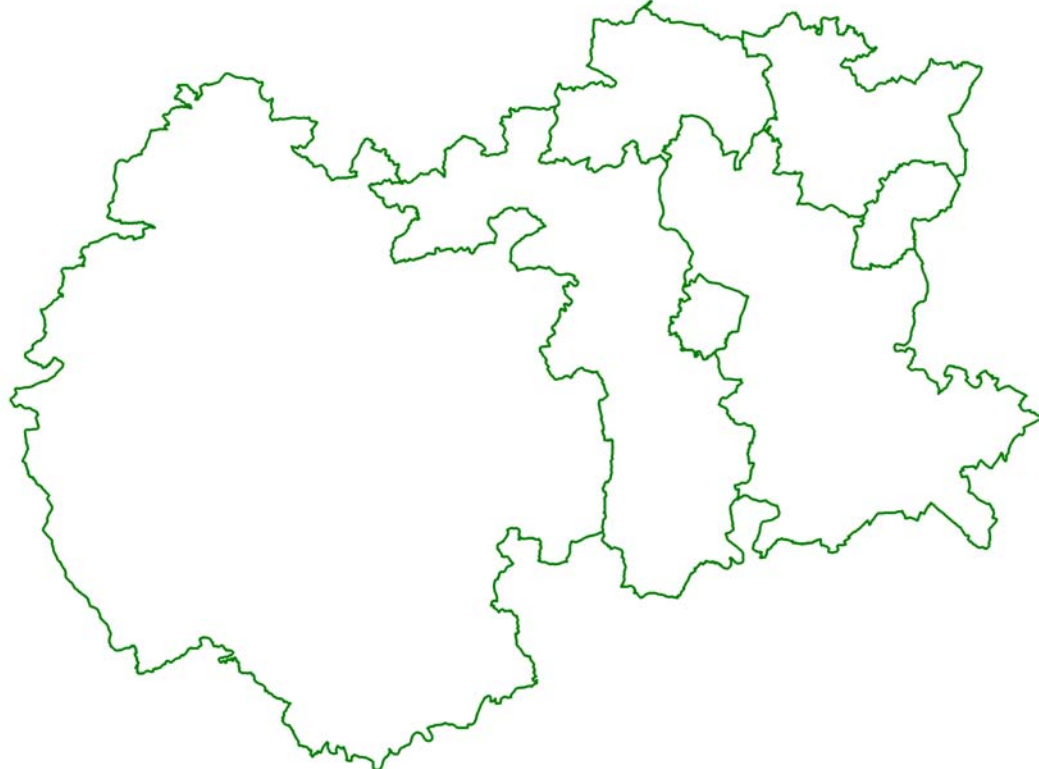




SPORTS PARTNERSHIP HEREFORDSHIRE AND WORCESTERSHIRE

Sports Facilities Framework

2010-2026



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY September 2010

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SPORTS PARTNERSHIP HEREFORDSHIRE AND WORCESTERSHIRE

SPORTS FACILITIES FRAMEWORK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

1. The Sports Facilities Framework was commissioned by the Sports Partnership Herefordshire and Worcestershire to provide a strategic link between the West Midlands' Regional Sports Facilities Framework published in 2007 and the strategies of the individual local authorities. It indicates the major built facilities which will be required to respond to changes across the sub-region in the period up to 2026, and provides a hierarchy of facilities of different sizes and functions. It is expected that this Framework will help to guide the facility priorities being determined at the individual local authority level.
2. The Framework focuses on specialist built facilities for sport, such as sports halls, swimming pools, athletics tracks, and synthetic turf pitches, and the potentially changing demand for grass playing fields within each local authority area. It identifies any current gaps in provision, and looks forwards to 2026 to assess what facilities are likely to be required by that date. In doing so, the Framework incorporates the aspiration of the Sports Partnership for increased participation across all sports and physical activities; it takes account of demographic changes over time, and the implications of the proposed new housing growth in the various locations across the sub-region.
3. Part of the Framework addresses the potential new housing growth, specifically the Sustainable Urban Extensions in Malvern Hills, Wychavon, Hereford and Bromsgrove-Redditch. In overall terms the impact of these proposed new populations at the whole authority level are not very significant on the authorities' total population figures, nor the expected changes in the demographic profiles. The main impact would be at the very local level where new housing would bring new pressures and new demand for sport facilities. The Framework therefore deals separately with the existing populations and the potential new demands arising specifically from the Sustainable Urban Extensions.

4. Following the production of the Consultation Draft of the Framework the Regional Spatial Strategy and its housing targets were officially abandoned. However it is likely that some housing growth will still be required in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire. It is assumed for the purposes of the Framework that the preferred locations identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy will largely remain. The actual numbers of houses built and their phasing will probably change, but no revised figures are yet available. Given this, the Framework is a valuable evidence base to guide the likely strategic sports facility requirements for the specific SUEs across the Partnership area. There will however be a need to revisit the phasing of the proposed facilities and their size once the housing details are better known.
5. In relation to the wider strategic assessment of need across each of the authorities and the Partnership area as a whole, the Framework is unaffected by the abandonment of the Regional Spatial Strategy and all of the assessments and recommendations remain valid.

The Case for Sport

6. Sport is important in its own right but even more important is the role of sport in the wider social agenda. On-going investment in sport and physical activity is important in order to underpin the long term future of the sub-region, whether this is in a city, town or rural area.
7. It is known that more active people have much healthier lives, both physically and mentally. Getting more people, more active, more often, is a central target for each of the local authorities in the Partnership and is one of the key indicators measured by Government. The long term savings in the health budgets linked to improved health is a key factor in the consideration of the importance of sport and physical activity, and the associated facilities and opportunities. The Worcestershire PCT's Health Improvement Fund has put these links into practice, with financial backing for sports and physical activity schemes.
8. Sport has a strong role in supporting educational achievements and Government policy has been to strengthen sport within schools, and between schools and local clubs and their local communities. Although the Building Schools for the Future programme has now closed the principals of investing in better sports facilities which benefit both school children and the wider community remain valid. When changes to schools or new schools are developed in association with housing growth, the needs of the community should be considered from the outset of the discussions. Running in parallel to the facility improvements on school sites are the sports development programmes driven by the Physical Education and Sport Strategy for Young People.

9. Sport is a major provider of jobs both directly and indirectly. Jobs linked with sport include, as would be expected; coaches, lifeguards, leisure centre receptionists and in specialist retailers. However less direct but just as important are the jobs created by the improved environment, both social and physical, that sport and physical activity can be responsible for. Many major cities and towns have used sports facilities as a catalyst for regeneration, and the importance of tourism linked to outdoor activities in rural areas such as on the Malvern Hills and in the Wye valley is well known.
10. Sport and the opportunities it offers to young people in particular, is important factor in reducing crime in many areas. Research has shown that where time and resources are invested in providing young people with interesting, physically challenging, diversionary activities, the crime rates fall and the benefits are economic as well as social.
11. The sub-region will faces changes and challenges over the next few years but the case for sport is strong. However it is essential to address now the long term options and aspirations for the sports facility network. Larger built facilities are expensive to build and maintain, and green space areas with sports pitches need to be planned in and also protected. Where new housing sites are proposed, the planning regulations mean that the case for sport needs to be made from the outset, together with the list of facilities and spaces that will be required. Only by making the case at the earliest master-planning stages, will it be possible to guarantee sufficient facilities and opportunities for the communities which will be living there in the future.
12. It is recognised that the current economic and political climate may mean that the proposed housing growth slows down, but the main elements seem likely to remain in some form. Even if the progress is slower than anticipated in terms of the rate at which houses are built, the early planning for sport and physical activity is still crucial, and the case for provision is as strong as ever.

How the Framework has been developed

13. The Sports Facilities Framework for Herefordshire and Worcestershire has been developed from a combination of local consultation, consideration of the current networks of facilities and their condition, theoretical modelling (using a number of tools), social marketing information, and consultation with national governing bodies of sport and key clubs. It builds on existing local facility and playing pitch strategies and takes account of the aspirations of each authority and the issues faced at the local level.
14. The proposals are presented by authority, but a number of them should be considered together. For example the growth in and around Worcester within the Worcester-Wychavon-Malvern Hills Growth Area (WWM-GA) will require one new

rugby club site, which can only be developed in a cost effective manner if there is cross-border co-operation between the authorities.

15. Another example is the need for a single 25 m x 8 lane competition pool in Worcestershire. If located within Worcester City, the water space can be justified to meet the local community needs but the competition elements i.e. spectator seating and timing equipment would not be considered essential. However a pool of this type could potentially provide for swimmers from across Worcestershire for training and competition. Ideally some form of cross-boundary mechanism should be developed which can support the competition elements of the proposed new pool over and above the simple provision of this area of water space. It is however outside the scope of this report to determine how this can be achieved.

The key findings

16. At the present time there is generally a good spread of facilities across the sub-region which means that most people have access to a range of different sports opportunities. There are however some issues with aging facilities which need to be addressed within the lifetime of the Framework, and there are some issues with accessibility (both in relation to distance to facilities, and in terms of availability during the school day).
17. The population of the sub-region is expected to age generally, despite the new housing growth being proposed in some locations. This means that there is a need to consider the long-term requirements for sport and physical activity for the existing population as people's participation patterns and interests change with age. The new housing areas will have a much younger population which will require facilities and opportunities close to or within each housing development area. There is therefore an opportunity to consider the networks of provision as a whole, and to develop new facilities in the new growth locations as partial replacements for some of the existing, aging stock, or in part to meet existing lack of provision where there are "gaps".
18. There is significant cross-boundary movement between authorities, in particular between Worcester, Wychavon and Malvern Hills, and between Redditch and Bromsgrove. There is also some movement across the boundaries of the sub-region, with the Black Country, Birmingham, Stratford and Gloucestershire. This movement reflects the nature and availability of facilities and opportunities within the authorities. For example there are no community rugby pitches within Worcester and too little space for cricket, so players are migrating over the boundaries to play. At the same time, people are coming into Worcester to make use of facilities such as the athletics track.
19. The recommendations include identified sports specific aspirations. However most of the national governing bodies of sport are still at an early stage in identifying their facility needs and any specific projects. It is expected that this part of the

Framework will need to be regularly updated as the national governing body decisions are made.

20. The recommendations contained within the Framework reflect these key findings and also take account of local variations. However, they should still be seen as the starting point for more local facility and playing pitch assessments which are able to take account of the very local issues and opportunities.

The recommendations

21. The following table at the end of this Summary provides a synopsis of the facility recommendations by local authority area. It is notable that in several of the authorities there are few new facility proposals, unless connected with the proposed housing growth, or arising from a specific need for a replacement facility.
22. Some of the facilities may be provided as a “traditional leisure centre”, such as the proposed 25m x 8 lane pool at Worcester, but many other built facilities could be located on or adjacent to school sites, providing both for education and for community use. This follows well-established principles and is likely to be the case with most of the sports hall proposals.
23. Some of the facilities are expected to be provided primarily by the commercial sector, such as indoor tennis courts and driving ranges. Others may have wider partnerships in their development and management, for example for indoor bowls centres.
24. The specialist provision sought for cricket (indoor centres), badminton, and archery might be provided by a new centre, but are probably more likely to be provided via refurbishment programmes, often on school sites.

Delivering the facility network

25. The long time scale of the Framework means that it is difficult to determine the likely sources of funding for facilities planned for the future. However it is likely that all facilities will need to draw on a range of funding opportunities and where new or improved facilities are directly linked to new housing growth, some (or if appropriate all) of the funding should be drawn from developers’ contributions.
26. Given the costs of developing new facilities and maintaining existing ones, it will be essential to ensure that the networks are the most cost effective possible. This is likely to place increasing pressure on the individual authorities to identify innovative arrangements which can deliver the various aspects of the sports facility network.

Reviewing and updating the Framework

27. It will be essential to keep the Framework updated to reflect the rapidly changing background pressures to sport and physical activity provision, including changes in the speed and numbers of houses proposed to be developed. An interim review is therefore proposed at 2012, and a full review at 2015. However an annual update of the sports specific recommendations is recommended to take account of the national governing body proposals as they come forwards.

Summary of facility proposals by local authority

Bromsgrove	Sports Halls	No additional provision Specialist archery nets in Bromsgrove (or Redditch or Wyre Forest) 4 court hall designed and timetabled for local badminton needs. Site should be low intensity management as large amount of time for club/NGB training Indoor cricket training centre (or in Redditch)- 5 court hall with suitable flooring and lighting		
	Swimming Pools	Retain access to commercial and independent pools and maintain		
	STPs	Support development of an additional sand-based pitch at Bromsgrove Hockey Club if local demand can be identified Encourage community use if schools want an STP		
	Athletics Tracks	Consider indoor training linked to existing track (or in Redditch)		
	Indoor Bowls	None		
	Indoor Tennis	None		
	Driving Ranges	None		
	Playing Fields	Football	Cricket	Rugby
	Address imbalance in pitch stock and improve sites	None	Possibly one additional club site to address deficit of pitch space, or explore opportunities to expand existing clubs and also support training needs. To also address SUE needs.	
Bromsgrove- Redditch SUE	Sports Halls	4 court sports hall		
	Swimming Pools	2 lanes of a 25 m pool (99 sq m of water space)		
	STPs	0.3 of large size pitch		
	Athletics Tracks	None		
	Indoor Bowls	None		
	Indoor Tennis	None		
	Driving Ranges	None		
	Playing Fields	Football	Cricket	Rugby
	6 ha of playing field space	2 ha of playing field space	See above in relation to Bromsgrove	

Malvern Hills	Sports Halls	<p><u>Outside the WWM-GA</u> Retain access to private and independent school halls. 4 court hall designed and timetabled for local badminton needs. Site should be low intensity management as large amount of time for club/NGB training.</p> <p><u>Within the WWM-GA</u> 4 court hall in Worcester West as part of leisure centre but adjacent to school site to enable dual use. 4 court hall in Worcester South/Norton as dual use facility on school site.</p>
	Swimming Pools	<p><u>Outside the WWM-GA</u> Retain access to private pools and maintain.</p> <p><u>Within the WWM-GA</u> 25m x 4 lane pool plus teaching as part of leisure centre but adjacent to school site to enable dual use</p>
	STPs	<p><u>Outside the WWM-GA</u> Encourage new pitches on school sites outside of Malvern town.</p> <p><u>Within the WWM-GA</u> 1 full-size 3G STP as part of leisure centre but adjacent to school site to enable dual use.</p>
	Athletics Tracks	<p><u>Outside the WWM-GA</u> Support development of Malvern College track 1 or 2 outdoor training facilities linked to school(s) in the rural area</p>
	Indoor Bowls	None
	Indoor Tennis	None
	Driving Ranges	None

Malvern Hills (cont)	Playing Fields	Football	Cricket	Rugby
		<p>Outside the WWM-GA</p> <p>4 ha extra to address Malvern Town growth. Replace single poor quality pitches by development of larger multi-pitch accessible sites particularly in Malvern Town.</p> <p>Within the WWM-GA</p> <p>6.5 ha of playing field space in Worcester West</p> <p>6 ha of playing field space in Worcester South/Norton (shared with Wychavon)</p>	<p>Outside the WWM-GA</p> <p>2 ha site for Malvern Town, linked to growth and improvements to existing pitches.</p> <p>Within the WWM-GA</p> <p>2 ha site in Worcester West</p> <p>2 ha site in Worcester South/Norton (shared with Wychavon)</p>	<p>Outside the WWM-GA</p> <p>Relocation of Malvern Town, or improved grounds.</p> <p>Expanded sites and improved quality at Upton and Tenbury.</p> <p>Within the WWM-GA</p> <p>One club site shared between WWM-GA.</p>

Redditch	Sports Halls	1 x 8 court hall in Central/ Western area Specialist archery nets in Redditch (or Bromsgrove or Wyre Forest) 4 court hall designed and timetabled for local badminton needs. Site should be low intensity management as large amount of time for club/NGB training Indoor cricket training centre (or in Bromsgrove)- 5 court hall with suitable flooring and lighting		
	Swimming Pools	Replace Hewell Road pool at Abbey Stadium 25m x 6 lane and teaching pool in central/south of town Maintain Kingsley Sport and Leisure Centre pool to keep high quality		
	STPs	Explore opportunities linked to new secondary school provision		
	Athletics Tracks	Consider indoor training linked to existing track (or in Bromsgrove)		
	Indoor Bowls	6 rink centre in an accessible location		
	Indoor Tennis	3 courts linked to an active club		
	Driving Ranges	14 bays in the south of Redditch town		
	Playing Fields (based on changing demand only)	Football	Cricket	Rugby
	Address current deficits and imbalance in pitch stoke	Develop more sites to decrease export of players	Union – improve/expand additional site. League- larger site	

Worcester	Sports Halls	1 x 6 court hall (or min 4 courts) designed and timetabled for badminton as performance centre. Low intensity management as large amount of time for club/NGB training. Indoor cricket training centre (or in Wychavon or Wyre Forest)- 5 court hall with suitable flooring and lighting		
	Swimming Pools	25m x 8 lane competition pool plus 10 x 15 m teaching pool and diving in city centre (replacement pool) Possible longer term refurbishment / replacement of Worcester Citizens pool		
	STPs	A minimum of 1 large 3G-STP possibly linked to a school site If local demand can be demonstrated, additional community provision should be encouraged		
	Athletics Tracks	None		
	Indoor Bowls	6 rink centre in an accessible location		
	Indoor Tennis	4 courts linked to an active club		
	Driving Ranges	None		
	Playing Fields	Football	Cricket	Rugby
	6 ha additional required to meet growth up to 2026. Need to address general lack of pitch provision especially for minis and juniors. Replace sites which flood regularly.	4 ha new plus need to improve community use security on other sites	One club site shared between WWM-GA.	

Wychavon	Sports Halls	<u>Outside the WWM-GA</u> 8 court hall in Evesham or Droitwich 4 court as opportunity arises 4 court hall designed and timetabled for local badminton needs. Site should be low intensity management as large amount of time for club/NGB training (refurbishment of existing hall) Indoor cricket training centre in north (or in Worcester or Wyre Forest) 5 court hall with suitable flooring and lighting		
	Swimming Pools	<u>Outside the WWM-GA</u> 1 or 2 x 25m pools provided by the private sector		
	STPs	<u>Outside the WWM-GA</u> Explore opportunities as they arise but particularly those linked to new school provision		
	Athletics Tracks	<u>Outside the WWM-GA</u> Possible upgrade/replacement of Droitwich track 2 outdoor training sites linked to schools in Evesham and Pershore		
	Indoor Bowls	<u>Outside the WWM-GA</u> 6 rink centre in an accessible location		
	Indoor Tennis	<u>Outside the WWM-GA</u> Minimum 3 courts linked to an active club		
	Driving Ranges	None		
	Playing Fields	Football	Cricket	Rugby
	2.5 ha across the three WWM-GA SUEs Improve network of mini and junior pitches	6 ha for Evesham Town 2 ha Droitwich 2 ha Pershore Possibly additional pitch at Pershore to support club development 0.7 ha for WWM-GA SUEs	Relocation of Pershore club. Improve/expand sites to cater for training. One club site shared between WWM-GA.	

Wyre Forest	Sports Halls	1 x 4 court hall at Stourport High School Specialist archery nets in Wyre Forest (or Bromsgrove or Redditch) 4 court hall designed and timetabled for local badminton needs. Site should be low intensity management as large amount of time for club/NGB training Indoor cricket training centre in Bewdley (or in Worcester or Wychavon)- 5 court hall with suitable flooring and lighting		
	Swimming Pools	None		
	STPs	None		
	Athletics Tracks	None		
	Indoor Bowls	6 rink centre in an accessible location		
	Indoor Tennis	3 courts linked to an active club in Kidderminster		
	Driving Ranges	None		
	Playing Fields (based on changing demand only)	Football	Cricket	Rugby
	Improve existing stock.	None	None	

Herefordshire	Sports Halls	1 x 4 court hall at new leisure centre in SUE (dual use or adjacent to school site)		
		1 x 4 court hall elsewhere in Hereford in area of growth		
		4 court hall designed and timetabled for local badminton needs. Site should be low intensity management as large amount of time for club/NGB training		
	Swimming Pools	25m x 6 lane pool at new leisure centre in SUE		
		Replace/refurbish Hereford Leisure Centre pool		
	STPs	1 pitch at new leisure centre in SUE		
		60m x 40m training pitches at Kington and Bromyard on school sites		
	Athletics Tracks	Indoor training linked to existing track		
		2 x outdoor training linked to school site(s) in market towns		
Indoor Bowls	6 rink centre in Hereford			
Indoor Tennis	5 courts in Hereford			
Driving Ranges	5 bays- consider extension to an existing range			
Playing Fields (based on changing demand only)	Football	Cricket	Rugby	
	14 ha to meet needs of Hereford housing growth.	6 ha connected to growth of Hereford SUEs	Relocation of Hereford RFC to Bulmers Orchard One club site close to Hereford SUEs.	