



# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

## STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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## PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) for Wigan Borough Council (WBC) and its partners. Building upon the preceding Assessment Report it provides a clear, strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing outdoor sports pitches and ancillary facilities between 2017 and 2026.

A Steering Group has led and will continue to lead the PPS to ensure the delivery and implementation of its recommendations and actions. It is made up of representatives from the Council, Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles Trust, Leigh Sports Village, Sport England, Greater Sport, pitch sport National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs), namely the Football Association (FA), Lancashire County Football Association (LFA), England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), Lancashire County Cricket Board (LCCB), the Rugby Football League (RFL), the Rugby Football Union (RFU) and England Hockey (EH).

The following types of outdoor sports facilities were agreed by the steering group for inclusion in the Assessment and Strategy.

### *Pitch sports*

- ◀ Football pitches
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Rugby league pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches
- ◀ Hockey/artificial grass pitches (AGPs)
- ◀ Third generation turf pitches (3G pitches)
- ◀ American football and Touch (rugby)

Pitch sports have been assessed using the guidance set out in Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance: An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy.

A Playing Pitch Strategy will provide the evidence required to help protect playing fields to ensure sufficient land is available to meet existing and projected future pitch requirements. Planning Policy and other relevant sport related corporate strategies must be based upon a robust evidence base in order to ensure planning, local policies and sport development criteria can be implemented efficiently and effectively. The strategy is capable of the following in Wigan Borough:

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

The partner organisations have a vested interest in ensuring existing playing fields, pitches and ancillary facilities can be protected and enhanced. Many of the objectives and actions will need to be delivered and implemented by sports organisations and education establishments in addition to the Council.

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## Strategy structure

The Strategy has been developed from research and analysis of playing pitch provision and usage within Wigan Borough to provide:

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

The Strategy and Action Plan recommends a number of priority projects for Wigan Borough which should be implemented over the next ten years. It provides a framework for improvement and, although resources may not currently be in place to implement it, potential partners and possible sources of external funding (see Appendix Four: Funding Plan<sup>1</sup>).

## Monitoring and updating

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

The PPS should be reviewed on an annual basis from the date it is formally signed off by the Steering Group. This will help to maintain the momentum and commitment that would have been built up when developing the PPS. Taking into account the time to develop the PPS this should also help to ensure that the original supply and demand information is no more than two years old without being reviewed. Part 8 of this strategy report contains a suggested process for carrying out the update and monitoring. The Steering Group will need to agree the process prior to adoption of this strategy.

## Study area

The strategy covers the Borough boundary area of Wigan; however, the data gathered has been presented in such a way as to be further analysed by smaller analysis areas. There are also a number of sports teams from outside the specified area that use pitches within Wigan and sports teams from inside Wigan that use facilities outside of the Borough. This cross-boundary movement has been taken into consideration when producing this assessment report.

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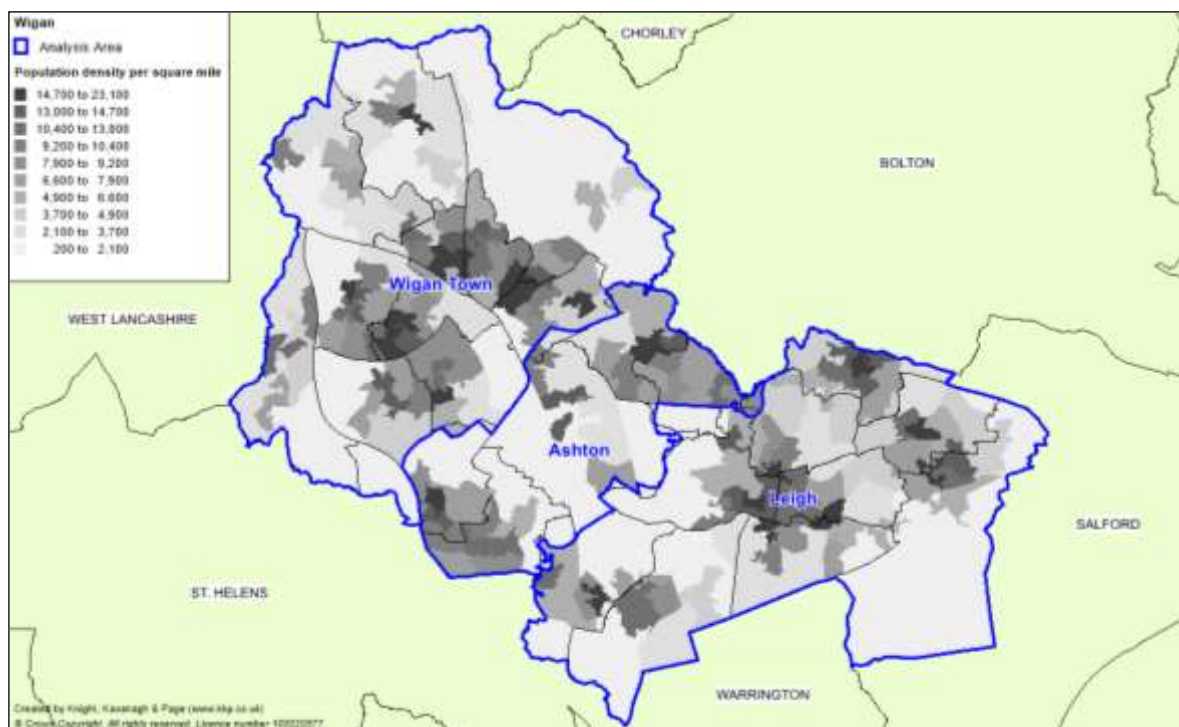
<sup>1</sup> Please note that Sport England funding streams will be subject to change throughout 2016/17.

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For the purpose of this analysis, Wigan Borough has been broken down into three analysis areas. They are: Ashton, Wigan (town) and Leigh. The analysis areas fit in line with the Council's new community strategy and ward based plans to support the Council's ambition to provide Wigan residents with access to high quality sport facilities at a neighbourhood level. The study area is aligned with police boundaries and the National Health Service, clinical commissioning groups in Wigan and illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Whilst the Analysis Areas should be used for the basis of reporting, the strategy also addresses the sport specific geography of the Borough. Many sports and leagues cross these boundaries and pitch facilities in one area may also be suitable for clubs in another area. This cross-boundary movement has therefore been taken into consideration when producing this strategy.

Figure 1.1: Analysis area map



## Population growth

The current resident population in Wigan is 322,022<sup>2</sup>. By 2026 (to reflect the Strategy timeframe, in line with the Wigan Local Plan) the Borough's population is projected to increase to 335,255 representing an increase of 13,233 (or equivalent to a percentage increase of 4.1%) according to ONS data.

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

<sup>2</sup>Source: ONS Mid-2015 Population Estimates for Lower Layer Super Output Areas in England and Wales by Single Year of Age and Sex

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## *Housing growth*

The draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) is proposing 55,300 new homes between 2015-2035.

## *High Speed 2*

High Speed 2 (HS2) is a new high-speed railway proposed by the Government to connect major cities in Britain. It will be built in phases.

Phase Two of HS2 will be from the West Midlands to Leeds and Manchester. Phase Two forms a 'Y' shape from the West Midlands up towards Manchester and the North West with proposed stations at Manchester Airport and Manchester Piccadilly. It is anticipated that Phase Two of HS2 will begin operating trains around 2033.

Should the rail scheme go ahead, initial plans show that Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields in Leigh Analysis Area would be affected as part of the proposed route. The site is presently used for football, has six pitches of various sizes and presently caters for 25 teams at differing formats.

*Table 1.1: Breakdown of playing pitches across Wigan Borough*

Sport	Pitch type	Management				
		Borough Council/ Trust	Education	Sports Club/ Community organisation	Private/ other	Parish Council
Football	Adult	36	23	38	5	1
	Youth 11v11	11	9	5	-	-
	Youth 9v9	15	18	10	-	-
	Mini 7v7	4	39	17	-	-
	Mini 5v5	-	18	2	-	-
Cricket	Natural turf	-	-	14	1	-
	Non-turf	-	3	5	1	-
Rugby Union	Senior	-	3	12	-	-
	Junior	-	-	2	-	-
	Mini	-	-	4	-	-
Rugby League	Senior	9	17	27	-	-
	Junior	2	3	11	-	-
	Primary	2	11	8	-	-
3G pitch	Full sized	4	3	-	-	-
	Small sized	14	1	3	5	-
Sand based AGP	Full sized	-	2	1	-	-
	Small sized	-	13	-	-	-

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## Context

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

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

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

Planning Policy and other relevant sport related corporate strategies must be based upon a robust evidence base in order to ensure planning and sports development policy can be implemented efficiently and effectively. The Council is currently preparing a Facility Strategy. This assesses current and future need for built sports facilities. A Playing Pitch Strategy will complement the objectives and action plan associated with the Facility Strategy and other corporate strategies:

### Corporate and strategic:

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

### Planning:

- ◀ The Playing Pitch Strategy will provide important evidence to support the Wigan Local Plan.
- ◀ It will support strategic policies on green infrastructure, leisure, outdoor sports facilities and health and well-being.
- ◀ Evidence for Community Infrastructure Levy and Developer Contributions

### Operational:

- ◀ It can help improve management of assets management, which should result in more efficient use of resources and reduced overheads.
- ◀ The Action Plan will identify sites where quality of provision can be enhanced.

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- ◀ An assessment of all pitches (in use and lapsed) will be undertaken to understand how pitches are used and whether the current maintenance and management regimes are appropriate or require change.

## Sports development:

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

## Headline findings

Sport	Analysis area	Current picture	Future picture (2026) <sup>3</sup>
Football (grass pitches)	Ashton	<i>Actual spare capacity:</i> One youth 11v11 match equivalent session per week available at peak time. <i>Capacity at all other pitch formats is balanced</i>	<i>Actual spare capacity:</i> One youth 11v11 match equivalent session per week available at peak time. <i>Youth 9v9 and mini capacity at both pitch formats is balanced</i> <b>Shortfalls:</b> <b>1.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
	Leigh	<i>Actual spare capacity:</i> 17 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time. 4.5 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time. <i>Capacity at both mini pitch formats is balanced</i> <b>Shortfalls:</b> <b>0.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<i>Actual spare capacity:</i> 15 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time. <b>Shortfalls:</b> <b>Three youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>5.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>One mini 7v7 match equivalent session per week.</b> <b>Six mini 5v5 match equivalent session per week.</b>

<sup>3</sup> Future demand based on ONS calculations and club consultation which also includes any latent and displaced demand identified.



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Sport	Analysis area	Current picture	Future picture (2026) <sup>4</sup>
Football (grass pitches)	Wigan Town	<p><b>Shortfalls:</b></p> <p>1.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>Five youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>4.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>0.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>One mini 5v5 match equivalent session per week.</p>	<p><b>Shortfalls:</b></p> <p>Five adult match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>13 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>6.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>1.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>Five mini 5v5 match equivalent session per week.</p>
	Wigan Borough	<p><i>Actual spare capacity:</i></p> <p>15.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time.</p> <p>0.5 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time.</p> <p><b>Shortfalls:</b></p> <p>Five youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>0.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>One mini 5v5 match equivalent session per week.</p>	<p><i>Actual spare capacity:</i></p> <p>8.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time.</p> <p><b>Shortfalls:</b></p> <p>15 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>12 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>2.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>11 mini 5v5 match equivalent sessions per week.</p>
Football (3G pitches) <sup>5</sup>	Ashton	Shortfall of two full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand	Shortfall of two full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand
	Leigh	Shortfall of one full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand	Shortfall of two full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand
	Wigan Town	Shortfall of two full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand	Shortfall of two full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand
	Wigan Borough	Shortfall of five full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand	Shortfall of six full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand

<sup>4</sup> Future demand based on ONS calculations and club consultation which also includes any latent and displaced demand identified.

<sup>5</sup> Based on accommodating 42 teams to one full size pitch for affiliated team training.

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Sport	Analysis area	Current picture	Future picture (2026) <sup>4</sup>
Rugby union	Ashton	Capacity is balanced.	Capacity will be balanced.
	Leigh	<b>Shortfall of one senior match equivalent session per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 2.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
	Wigan Town	<b>Shortfall of 4.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of six senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of 5.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 8.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
Rugby league (senior pitches)	Ashton	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.	<b>Shortfall of one senior match equivalent session per week.</b>
	Leigh	Actual spare capacity of four senior match equivalent sessions per week.	Actual spare capacity of four senior match equivalent sessions per week.
	Wigan Town	<b>Shortfall of 32.25 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 35 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of 27.75 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 32 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
Cricket	Ashton	Total capacity of 43 match equivalent sessions per season available,	Total capacity of 43 match equivalent sessions per season available,
	Leigh	<b>Capacity shortfall of 17 match equivalent sessions per season.</b>	<b>Capacity shortfall of 17 match equivalent sessions per season.</b>
	Wigan Town	Total capacity of 15 match equivalent sessions per season available,	Total capacity of five match equivalent sessions per season available,
	Wigan Borough	Total capacity of 41 match equivalent sessions per season available, <i>however no peak time capacity to accommodate any future senior growth on natural turf squares.</i>	Total capacity of 31 match equivalent sessions per season available, <i>however no peak time capacity to accommodate any future senior growth on natural turf squares.</i>
Hockey (Sand/water AGPs)	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of one full sized AGP with floodlighting in the Leigh Area to accommodate unsuitable use of Westleigh High School.</b> <b><i>Critical need for qualitative improvements at The Deanery C of E High School</i></b>	<b>Shortfall of one full sized AGP with floodlighting in the Leigh Area to accommodate unsuitable use of Westleigh High School.</b> <b><i>Critical need for qualitative improvements at The Deanery C of E High School</i></b>

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Sport	Analysis area	Current picture	Future picture (2026) <sup>4</sup>
Touch	Wigan Borough	<b>Demand for formally marked touch pitch provision in the Wigan Town Area.</b>	<b>Demand for formally marked touch pitch provision in the Wigan Town Area.</b>
American football	Wigan Borough	Level of demand is able to be met by existing playing field provision.	Level of demand is able to be met by existing playing field provision.

## Conclusions

The existing position for all pitch sports is either demand is currently being met or there is a shortfall. For football, there is evidence of current spare capacity, however, when factoring future demand this becomes a position of shortfall for all pitch formats except adult football. The future position for other sports including rugby union and rugby league shows exacerbation of current shortfalls.

As such, there is a need to protect all existing playing pitch provision until demand is met. Some shortfalls can be reduced through increased access to existing provision, for example, increased certification and use of 3G pitches for competitive football, rugby union or rugby league match play would create new capacity to reduce future grass pitch shortfalls currently unavailable due to compliancy.

## Recommended short term actions (12-18 months)

Site ID	Site/organisation name	Analysis area	Action	Indicative cost <sup>6</sup>
Various		All	Identify and establish feasibility of potential strategic hub sites as candidates for development as Parklife football hubs.	High
Various		All	LFA to work with the Bolton & Bury District Junior Football League and Wigan based member clubs to encourage greater summer use of certified 3G pitches for match play, in order to reduce impact on and allow for remediation of grass pitches.	Low
NEW	Winstanley Community Sports Centre	Wigan Town	Support Winstanley Park CC and Orrell RUFC to deliver new playing field and ancillary provision to NGB specifications where possible.	High
129	The Deanery C of E High School	Wigan Town	Seek urgent resurfacing of the AGP in order to improve quality and prevent against it becoming unsafe for school and community use. Capital funding required as the established sinking fund is not sufficient.	High
NEW	Vicarage Lane	Wigan Town	Support Shevington Sharks ARLFC and Shevington FC with development of new playing pitch provision to NGB specifications where possible.	Low/Medium

<sup>6</sup> Low - less than £50k; Medium - £50k-£250k; High £250k and above

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Site ID	Site/organisation name	Analysis area	Action	Indicative cost <sup>6</sup>
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Improve pitch quality through more regular and better standard of maintenance. Support Wigan Football Association to ensure access to maintenance equipment required and consider feasibility to install drainage system through funding from appropriate sources.	Medium
20	Cansfield High School (Ashton Leisure Centre)	Ashton	Deliver the planned development of small sized floodlit 3G pitches and link local community clubs to service football training demand.	Medium
69	Lowton Church of England High School	Leigh		
92	Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre	Wigan Town	Ensure 3G pitches are of required quality to pass performance standard testing and renew FIFA and World Rugby certifications to retain and increase capacity available for competitive and contact use. Seek to make pitches RFL Community Standard certified through the re-testing process, especially to provide usable capacity to alleviate overplay in the Wigan Town Area.	Low
163	Leigh Sports Village	Leigh		

## Definitions

### Match equivalent sessions

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

Based on how they tend to be played this unit for football, rugby union and rugby league pitches relate to a typical week within the season for each sport. For cricket pitches it is appropriate to look at the number of match equivalent sessions (MES) over the course of a season.

### Pitch capacity

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

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

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Sport	Pitch type	Number of matches per week		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Football	Adult pitches	3	2	1
	Youth pitches	4	2	1
	Mini pitches	6	4	2
Rugby league	Senior pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	N/A	N/A
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season	N/A	N/A

Rugby union pitches		Maintenance rating		
		Poor (M0)	Adequate (M1)	Good (M2)
Drainage rating	Natural Inadequate (D0)	Poor	Poor	Standard
	Natural Adequate (D1)	Poor	Standard	Good
	Pipe Drained (D2)	Standard	Standard	Good
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	Standard	Good	Good

## Shortfalls

Please note that shortfalls are expressed in match equivalent sessions rather than as pitches as it is possible that shortfalls could be accommodated in various ways (e.g. through pitch improvements) and not just by providing more pitches. For a full Glossary of terms please refer to Appendix Four.

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## PART 2: VISION

The strategy seeks to support the Council and its partners in the creation of the vision as follows:

*“An accessible, high quality and sustainable network of sports pitches and other outdoor sports facilities that supports delivery of the Deal for the Future (promoting community self-reliance, increasing the health and wellbeing of residents and communities, providing opportunities for young people and fostering belief in the Borough) through increased sports participation by all residents, at all levels of play, from grassroots to elite”*

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

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

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## PART 3: AIMS

The following overarching aims are based on the three Sport England themes (see Figure 1 below). Delivery of the Strategy is the responsibility of and relies on, the Steering Group.

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

### Aim 1

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

### Aim 2

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

### Aim 3

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

Figure 1: Sport England planning objectives - Protect, Enhance and Provide



Source: Sport England 2015

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## PART 4: SPORT SPECIFIC ISSUES SCENARIOS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations detailed herein are not solely for the Council to action, nor do they imply an expectation that the Council will, or can afford to make the necessary investments required. Rather, the purpose of the recommendations is to guide investment for any relevant bodies, including but not limited to Sport England and the NGBs for the sports the recommendations refer to.

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

### Football pitches

**Current supply of football pitch provision is insufficient with shortfalls evident at youth 9v9, mini 7v7 and mini 5v5 pitch types, though capacity exists on adult and youth 11v11 pitches.**

**When considering future demand, there will be shortfalls for all pitch types except adult pitches. However, given the nature of mini and junior leagues in the area, some of this future demand may be able to be accommodated on certified 3G pitches.**

### Summary – grass

- ◀ There are 212 pitches across 93 sites reported to be available for community use on some level, whilst 39 pitches across 28 sites are unavailable for community use.
- ◀ There are six FA or FIFA certified 3G pitches, of differing dimensions, on which competitive football matches can be played.
- ◀ Most available pitches in Wigan (44%) are adult sized which is, in part, due to youth 11v11 teams playing on adult pitches.
- ◀ The majority (62%) of pitches available for community use are rated as standard quality, with 24% rated as poor and only 30 pitches as good, equating to just 14%.
- ◀ Changing facilities are a key issue at several football sites, with many ancillary facilities requiring modernisation.
- ◀ The majority of teams in Wigan Borough play on Council managed pitches and are therefore considered to have secured tenure.
- ◀ A total of 584 teams are identified as playing matches on football pitches within Wigan Borough. Of these, 485 teams are recorded as consistently playing home matches on grass pitches during 2016/17 season.
- ◀ Team generation rates based on population indicate the likely creation of 13 youth teams. A number of teams also highlight clear plans to increase the number of teams for next season, totalling a requirement for a further 26.5 match equivalent sessions across different pitch types.
- ◀ In total, latent demand amounts to 2.5 match equivalent sessions on adult pitches, two on youth 11v11 pitches, 0.5 on youth 9v9 pitches, two on mini 7v7 and one on mini 5v5 pitches.



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- ◀ Many teams highlight a lack of accessible and affordable floodlit training facilities as a key issue. Some utilise 3G pitches whilst others make use of a number of sites, some with small sized AGPs.
- ◀ Actual spare capacity in Wigan amounts to 48.5 match equivalent sessions across all pitches types, some of which exists on pitches which are available but currently unused by clubs.
- ◀ There are 31 pitches overplayed across Wigan Borough, totalling 39.5 match equivalent sessions.

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### Scenarios – grass

- Improving pitch quality – improving poor quality pitches with secure tenure (either through increased maintenance or drainage improvements in order to increase pitch capacity) to standard quality will help to create additional capacity, reducing overplay at sites where evident.
- There are 19 poor quality pitches used by community clubs across nine sites where tenure is considered to be secure. Improving these pitches from poor to standard quality would generate a potential increase in weekly carrying capacity of 23 match equivalent sessions (MES) per week.
- Of these pitches, 13 are overplayed across four sites (Hindley Town FC, Hindsford AFC, Laithwaite Park and Oldhams Fold).

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Pitch type	Pitches	Overplay (match equivalent sessions per week)	Additional capacity created <sup>7</sup>	New carrying capacity	Result (match equivalent sessions per week)
50	Hindley Town FC	Ashton	Adult	1	-1.5	1	2	-0.5
51	Hindsford AFC	Leigh	Adult	1	-0.5	1	2	0.5
60	Laithwaite Park	Wigan Town	Adult	3	-1.5	3	6	1.5
			Mini 5v5	1	-1	2	4	1
			Mini 7v7	1	-1.5	2	4	0.5
			Youth 11v11	2	-6.5	2	4	-4.5
			Youth 9v9	3	-3	3	6	-
82	Oldhams Fold	Wigan Town	Adult	1	-1.5	1	1	-0.5

- The four sites are overplayed by a total of 17 MES per week, however, improving pitch quality from poor to standard would create sufficient additional carrying capacity to reduce overplay by 15.5 MES per week to just 1.5.
- However, much of this impact would be at Laithwaite Park where overplay would be eliminated across six pitches. Capacity increases through qualitative improvement from poor to standard would not be sufficient to completely eliminate overplay at Hindley Town FC or Oldhams Fold, whilst the two youth 11v11 pitches at Laithwaite Park would remain significantly overplayed by 4.5 MES per week. Access to capacity on other pitches or improvement from poor to good quality would be required in these cases.

<sup>7</sup> If capacity was to be increased from poor to standard (in match equivalent sessions per week)

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

- ◀ **Loss of access at school sites** – there are 54 pitches across 21 school sites<sup>8</sup> where tenure is considered unsecure and there is current community use by clubs, totalling 59.5 match MES per week.
- ◀ Loss of access to these pitches would generate a need to re-accommodate the following demand, not able to be accommodated by capacity available in future:
  - ◀ 14 adult MES per week
  - ◀ 4.5 youth 11v11 MES per week
  - ◀ 17 youth 9v9 MES per week
  - ◀ 16.5 mini 7v7 MES per week
  - ◀ 7.5 mini 7v7 MES per week
- ◀ **Loss of access to low value pitch sites** – there are nine Council/Trust managed sites with just single football pitch and no other sports pitch provision<sup>9</sup>. These sites may be considered to be of low value and as such are not preferable for investment or improvement. Where appropriate, loss of these sites to development and re-provision of playing field land as part of a broader community offer could be considered.
- ◀ Four of the nine sites (City Road Playing Fields, Kingsdown Road Playing Field, Thomas Street Recreation Ground and Watsons Field) are presently used by community clubs.
- ◀ Potential rationalisation of these sites would present a need to re-accommodate one adult MES per week and two youth 11v11 MES per week in the Ashton Area (insufficient capacity exists in this Area to accommodate these on grass pitches) and one adult MES per week in the Leigh Area.
- ◀ The BBDJFL is a large, well established league which in addition to the districts of Bolton and Bury has member teams from across other areas of Greater Manchester, such as Salford, Manchester and Chorley. Dependent on the success of the ongoing pilot and attitudes amongst clubs, it is possible that there may be an increase in the number of Wigan based clubs expressing an interest to join the BBDJFL as a result and in such case the potential impact on pitch provision should be reviewed accordingly.
- ◀ Given most grass pitches in Wigan Borough are used throughout the winter season, careful co-ordination and rotation of grass pitches is required so not to impact on planned off-season remedial works.
- ◀ This could include playing across a number of sites with staggered remedial schedules in place, or accommodating this play on certified 3G pitches which are often less used throughout the summer months.
- ◀ **Housing growth** – Using Sport England’s New Development Pitch Demand Calculator the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required ‘**If 22,500 new homes are built across Wigan Borough during the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework period to 2035**’:

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2035)	
	Match equivalent sessions per week	Pitches
Adult football	10.74	11 pitches
Youth football	20.03	20 pitches
Mini soccer	19.01	19 pitches
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.78</b>	<b>50 pitches</b>

- ◀ Using Sport England’s New Development Pitch Demand Calculator the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required ‘**If 5,250 new homes are built across Wigan Borough during the next five years to 2020/21**’:

<sup>8</sup> Not including Lowton Church of England High School where tenure is considered secure

<sup>9</sup> Not including King George V Playing Fields or Southlands Avenue Playing Fields which are protected

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2020/21)	
	Match equivalent sessions per week	Pitches
Adult football	2.51	3 pitches
Youth football	4.67	5 pitches
Mini soccer	4.44	4 pitches
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.62</b>	<b>12 pitches</b>

## Recommendations – grass

- ◀ Existing quantity of football pitches to be protected, except for where low value/single pitch sites are considered suitable and feasible to be lost for development on the condition that re-provision of playing field land elsewhere represents a preferable and greater benefit to sport.
- ◀ Seek to develop sustainable, multi-pitch football hubs including onsite 3G pitch provision to create an all-in-one football offer capable of servicing team training, short-formats and non-traditional participation and match play across grass and certified 3G pitches.
- ◀ Where pitches are overplayed and rated as standard or poor quality, prioritise investment and review maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain/improve pitch quality.
- ◀ Look to utilise actual spare capacity expressed on sites in order to cater for existing and future demand including overplay. This may require improvements to pitch quality and is explored on a site by site basis within the accompanying action plan.
- ◀ Consider potential and feasibility for asset transfer or long-term leasehold to clubs which express interest and are considered realistically able to sustain and maintain sporting provision as required, allowing for greater opportunities to access external funding streams for facility development.
- ◀ Seek to increase use of 3G pitches in order to increase capacity available to address future shortfalls and review impact on grass pitches as part of the PPS Annual Review.
- ◀ Determine sites with key qualitative issues which may benefit most from technical assessment and a composed bespoke programme of works through the FA Pitch Improvement Programme.
- ◀ Improve, provide and increase access to changing facilities which serve grass football pitches. Ensure any works ensure suitability for female and disability access to facilitate increased formats of football.
- ◀ Seek to secure community use through formal agreement and/or the planning process should there be development of new football pitch provision.
- ◀ Ensure suitable and non-hazardous line marking paint is the Borough wide standard for instatement of pitches and that no pitches are marked by burning lines into the surface using chemicals, negatively impacting on playability increasing potential to cause injury.
- ◀ Ensure adequate provision for increased demand generated by housing developments, secured through appropriately calculated developer contributions.
- ◀ The FA and County FAs to work closely with the Bolton & Bury Junior Football League and the Council to manage the impact of summer football on grass pitches and develop a planned approach to summer use and remediation of football provision.

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## 3G pitches

**Supply and demand analysis highlights that Wigan Borough has insufficient supply of full sized 3G pitches to meet current and future demand, based on the FA training model and the wide variety of football, rugby and American Football formats that also require access to 3G pitch provision.**

**This shortfall equates to five full sized 3G pitches based on present demand,**

## Summary

- There are seven full sized 3G pitches in Wigan Borough, all of which have floodlighting. All seven pitches available for community use.
- There are a further 18 small sized 3G pitches, six of which are located at a commercial small sided football centre.
- There are six full sized FA or FIFA certified 3G pitches suitable for competitive football play, with only St John Rigby College not certified. There is also one small sized pitch at Leigh Sports Village certified to host competitive match play.
- There are two 3G pitches suitable for competitive and contact rugby union activity certified as World Rugby compliant and on the RFU register of compliant pitches. Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre was previously certified but has not been retested since the December 2016 renewal date.
- There are two RFL Community Standard 3G pitches suitable for competitive and contact rugby league play.
- There are plans and aspirations for development of new 3G pitch provision, most notably the ongoing construction of a small sized 3G pitch at Ashton Leisure Centre/Cansfield High School.
- Of the seven pitches, four are rated as good quality, three as standard and none rated as poor.
- The pitch at St John Rigby College currently exceeds the recommended lifespan and resurfacing should be considered in the short-term dependant on rate of deterioration.
- There are also six sand based AGPs at school sites measuring approximately 80 metres long which do not meet minimum dimension criteria to host competitive adult/senior matches for hockey, football or either code of rugby. Where feasible and where there is no impact on hockey, these pitches could be extended and converted to 3G surfaces.
- Use of 3G pitches is significant and extends beyond football and rugby union, including rugby league, Touch Rugby and American football.
- The FA training model estimates that there is a need for 12 full sized 3G pitches to service football training needs in the Borough. There are presently seven full sized pitches, all available for community use, therefore representing a shortfall of five full sized pitches.

## Scenarios – 3G pitches<sup>10</sup>

- Moving all mini teams to play on 3G pitches** – there are currently 223 mini (5v5 and 7v7) teams playing competitive football in Wigan Borough, 84 of which already play on 3G pitches and not all of which are Borough based.
- Based on the FA model for competitive football, 11 full sized FA/FIFA certified 3G pitches (rounded up from 10.5) would be required to accommodate all mini soccer teams, inclusive of those already playing on 3G pitches. This is on the basis that both playing formats can be accommodated on one day using staggered kick off times.

<sup>10</sup> Refer to Appendix One: FA 3G Pitch Scenarios for the programming model used.

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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- ◀ Alternatively, eight pitches (rounded up from 7.22) would be required to accommodate just the mini soccer teams presently playing on grass pitches.
- ◀ **Moving Wigan Youth Football League (YFL) to full sized 3G pitches** – Wigan YFL already operates a central venue format at Lucozade Powerleague Soccerdome for mini 5v5 football on Sunday mornings between 9am-1pm.
- ◀ Using the FA model for competitive football on full sized 3G pitches, a total of two full sized 3G pitches (rounded up from 1.875) would be required to accommodate all 60 teams<sup>11</sup> playing mini 5v5 football on a continued central venue basis, inclusive of all teams and not limited to just those which are Borough based.
- ◀ **Use of 3G pitches to accommodate current and future grass pitch shortfalls** – in order to accommodate current mini soccer and youth 9v9 grass pitch shortfalls, additional capacity equivalent to a total of one full sized FA/FIFA certified 3G pitch would be required (based on all teams playing at peak times in the assessment).
- ◀ In order to accommodate all future grass pitch shortfalls, additional capacity equivalent to a total of 11 full sized FA/FIFA certified 3G pitches (rounded up from 10.38) would be required (based on all new teams playing at peak times in the assessment).
- ◀ **Transfer of football training demand** – should new 3G pitches be created, there is a likely impact on the future sustainability of hockey suitable AGPs as some football demand is likely to transfer onto 3G pitches as more are provided.
- ◀ Access to this capacity should be sought for hockey use to accommodate and facilitate participation growth including access for clubs.
- ◀ Conversion of sand based AGP's to 3G should not take place unless consultation with England Hockey identifies the AGP is not required to meet existing or future predicted demand. Wigan Borough Council should consider removing Permitted Development Rights of any new Artificial Grass Pitches to prevent inappropriate conversion that has a detrimental impact on the existing sport.
- ◀ **Development of football hubs** – the FA Parklife Programme aims to create football hub sites, each to include multiple full sized 3G pitches which support grass pitch provision also onsite, allowing for sustainable, programmed football delivery.
- ◀ The Council will be undertaking further work throughout the FA Parklife Programme process to determine optimal strategic hub sites and designs for potential Parklife hubs which may significantly change the picture for football in Wigan, including supply and demand of facilities for team training, capacity to eliminate all grass football pitch shortfalls on certified 3G pitches, as well as the usage dynamic between Council/Trust and School/Academy provision.
- ◀ The potential impact and outcomes of the FA Parklife Programme remain to be seen and have the potential to eliminate all grass and 3G pitch shortfalls for football through the delivery of one large scale portfolio investment which should be reviewed subject to delivery.

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<sup>11</sup> Based on 16/17 season demand

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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## Recommendations – 3G pitches

- ◀ Explore opportunities to create multi-pitch (potentially multi-sport) hub sites where 3G provision is able to support grass pitches as a broader, sustainable, all-in-one community offer, for example through (but not limited to) the FA Parklife Programme.
- ◀ Ensure current supply is maintained regularly and rigorously as required to ensure continued quality for use and ensure they are of sufficient quality to pass performance standing testing or certification renewal.
- ◀ Retain all certified 3G pitches on the respective sporting registers and ensure certification of each is renewed through performance standard testing so to maintain the level of 3G capacity available to accommodate demand from different sports.
- ◀ Seek to maximise use of capacity where available at weekends to accommodate match play in order to reduce grass pitch shortfalls, particularly at Robin Park Arena Sports & Tennis Centre and Howe Bridge Leisure Centre which have relatively low levels of weekend use.
- ◀ Should any new 3G pitches be built, seek to secure access through usage agreements where possible as a condition of partnership investment or planning conditions.
- ◀ Should any new 3G pitches be built, ensure they are constructed to required specifications and to meet FA, RFL and RFU recommendations rather than minimum dimensions where land footprint allows, so to maximise opportunities for use for all formats of competitive play.
- ◀ Encourage providers to have a mechanism in place which ensures the long term sustainability of provision, such as an adequate sinking fund for repairs or resurfacing formed over time.
- ◀ Through the creation of new full sized 3G pitches, consider options to deliver a wide variety of football, rugby league and rugby union opportunities, including new formats of competitive football such as central venue midweek flexi and Vets leagues, as well as walking football and female development centres.
- ◀ Should any new 3G pitches be built, consider potential to certify for competitive use by sports additional to football as part of a shared scheme, for example to reduce shortfalls for rugby union or rugby league.
- ◀ Seek World Rugby recertification of the pitch at Robin Park Arena & Tennis Centre for use for both training to reduce current levels of overplay and matches to protect pitch quality, particularly through periods of notably poor weather. Retesting also presents opportunity to achieve RFL Community Standard certification to make capacity available for rugby league use to help reduce grass pitch shortfalls.
- ◀ Should the FA Parklife Programme investment not be pursued by Wigan Council to develop new 3G pitch provision, investigate feasibility to extend and convert to 3G the small sized sand based AGPs which exist at schools and are dated, as a means to reduce current full sized 3G pitch shortfalls for football training.

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## Cricket pitches

**There is presently sufficient supply of cricket provision to accommodate peak time demand both for senior and junior cricket, notwithstanding overplay at some individual sites.**

**However, there is no actual spare capacity at senior peak time (Saturday) to accommodate future growth. Forecasted senior growth is minimal and amounts to only one team. This team could potentially be accommodated at Westleigh Methodists CC albeit in another analysis area, or could be accommodated on Sundays.**

**There is sufficient supply of provision to accommodate junior cricket both now and in the future, though there is a need to access additional capacity (either natural turf or non-turf) for junior play at some individual overplayed sites to alleviate overplay.**

## Summary

- ◀ In total, there are 15 natural turf cricket squares identified in Wigan Borough all of which are available for community use.
- ◀ The natural turf cricket squares that are available for community use are located mainly in the Wigan Town and Leigh analysis areas which host seven (47%) and six (40%) squares, respectively. The Ashton Analysis Area has the least amount of cricket provision within Wigan Borough with two (13%).
- ◀ In total, there are nine non-turf pitches (NTPs) in Wigan Borough. Of which, four are unavailable for community use with the remaining five located at community based clubs.
- ◀ Pitch quality ratings determined by non-technical quality assessments and user feedback found four natural turf cricket squares (27%) to be of good quality and nine (60%) to be of standard quality. There are two poor quality squares (13%) at Westleigh Methodist Cricket Club and Wigan Sports Club.
- ◀ Winstanley Park CC is the only cricket club in Wigan Borough which is deemed to have unsecure tenure, however, this is deemed not an issue as the Club has detailed plans to relocate.
- ◀ Golborne CC, Wigan CC and Orrell Red Triangle CC all report plans to improve quality or increase the size of ancillary provision.
- ◀ Four clubs operate as All Star Cricket Centres; these are Wigan CC, Winstanley Park CC, Orrell Red Triangle CC and Hindley St Peters CC. The majority of these (75%) are located in the Wigan Town analysis area with Hindley St Peters CC being located in the Ashton analysis area.
- ◀ The Wigan Cricket Development Group (WCDG) operates the annual WCDG T20 competition which is presently in its ninth year and has ten affiliated Wigan Borough clubs participating in it.
- ◀ There are 55 senior cricket teams and 62 junior teams playing competitive matches in Wigan Borough, totalling 118 affiliated cricket teams playing within the Borough.
- ◀ Team generation rates based on future population applied by analysis area forecast the likely creation of at least two new junior boys' teams, one in both the Leigh and Wigan Town analysis areas.
- ◀ Westleigh CC (Leigh analysis area) Spring View CC (Ashton Area) Goose Green CC and Standish CC (Wigan Town Area) both want to increase the total number of junior boys' team by one, whereas Norley Hall CC (Wigan Town Area) wants to increase the number of junior boys and senior men's teams by an additional team each.



# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

- There are four sites in Wigan Borough considered to be overplayed by a total of 89 match sessions per season.

## Scenarios

- Alleviating overplay** – overplay at Standish Cricket Club is minimal (two MES per season) and is considered sustainable, however, three other sites are overplayed.
- Of the three other overplayed sites, only Highfield CC appears to be of potentially feasible dimensions to accommodate an NTP alongside the existing square.
- Astley & Tyldesley Miners Welfare Institute – transfer of U9, U11, U13 and T20 teams to capacity available elsewhere would reduce overplay by 23 MES per season to a sustainable total of seven MES per season. NTPs at St Mary’s Catholic High School (approximately 1.2 miles drive from main site) or Bedford High School (approximately 2.2 miles drive) could provide potential secondary capacity.
- Highfield Cricket Club – transfer of U9, U11, U13 and T20 teams to capacity available elsewhere would eliminate overplay. However, all other cricket sites in the Wigan Town Area are managed by other clubs and new cricket provision would need to be developed either at Highfield Cricket Club or elsewhere for this to be an option.
- Leigh Cricket Club – transfer of U9, U11 and U13 teams to capacity available elsewhere would reduce eliminate overplay. NTPs at Bedford High School (approximately 2.2 miles drive from main site) or St Mary’s Catholic High School (3.3 miles drive) could provide potential secondary capacity.
- Housing growth** – Using Sport England’s New Development Pitch Demand Calculator the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required **‘if 22,500 new homes are built across Wigan Borough during the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework period to 2035’**:

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2035)	
	Match equivalent sessions per season	Pitches
Cricket	180.03 per season	4 pitches

- Using Sport England’s New Development Pitch Demand Calculator the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required **‘if 5,250 new homes are built across Wigan Borough during the next five years to 2020/21’**:

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2020/21)	
	Match equivalent sessions per season	Pitches
Cricket	42.01	1 pitch

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## Recommendations – cricket

- ◀ Existing quantity of cricket pitches to be protected.
- ◀ Seek to improve poor quality facilities for matches and training, such as the poor quality deteriorated net training bays at Spring View Cricket Club.
- ◀ Support clubs such as Wigan CC and Orrell Red Triangle CC with aspirations to improve and extend ancillary provision including access to external funding opportunities where possible and available.
- ◀ Maintain and improve pitch quality through rigorous and regular maintenance, remedial and preparatory work, ensuring that clubs have sufficient access to the required equipment in order to do so.
- ◀ Work with clubs and leagues towards permitting use of NTPs for matches beyond U11 age cricket and seek to make greater use of NTPs to alleviate overuse at club sites.
- ◀ Deliver the new All Stars Cricket and women & girls programmes and seek to increase junior and female participation as a result.
- ◀ Consider opportunities to increase NTP provision in parks and public spaces should recreational and short format demand by identified.
- ◀ Support the development of a new cricket ground at Winstanley Community Sports Centre for Winstanley Park CC and ensure provision offers sufficient capacity to accommodate current demand and allows for future growth.
- ◀ Continue to deliver and develop talent development pathways, including the LCB South Asian Talent Search.

## Rugby union pitches

**Current supply is not sufficient to cater for the level of demand expressed in Wigan at present, totalling a need for a further 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week on senior pitches. This is further exacerbated to create a future requirement for 8.5 match equivalent sessions per week anticipated for clubs aspirational and**

## Summary

- ◀ In total, there are 20 rugby union pitches in Wigan across eight sites, of which, 14 are senior sized. There are two junior sized pitches and three mini pitches. All pitches, apart from Abraham Guest Academy, are used by community clubs in some capacity. Additionally, there is a senior rugby league pitch located at Bankes Playing Fields, which is dually used for rugby union. This totals to 21 pitches used for rugby union within Wigan Borough.
- ◀ At present, there are two World Rugby compliant 3G pitches in Wigan Borough, both of which are located at Leigh Sports Village. Until December 2016 there had been a third World Rugby Compliant 3G located at Robin Park Arena Sports and Tennis Centre, however, retesting is required to renew certification and as such the pitch is currently not registered.
- ◀ Most (52%) natural turf rugby union provision is located in the Leigh Analysis Area where there are 11 pitches, all available for community use. The remaining provision is in the Wigan Town Analysis Area which has ten pitches, all available for community use. There is no natural turf rugby union provision located in the Ashton Analysis Area.
- ◀ The majority of pitches available for community use are rated as poor quality (14 pitches or 67%). There remaining seven pitches are rated as standard quality.
- ◀ Leigh RUFC has secure tenure of the two junior pitches and unsecure tenure of two senior pitches it leases from a developer. These are considered unsecure as the Club states there is a clause in the lease that the Club may be removed from the site if the land is granted permission for potential housing development.

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

## STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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- ◀ Of the six clubs in Wigan Borough, three train on match pitches with the remaining three clubs using 3G pitches.
- ◀ Ancillary facilities across Wigan Borough vary in quality with the two poorest at Wigan RUFC and Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields.
- ◀ There are six community rugby union clubs playing in Wigan, providing a total of 50 teams. There are 14 senior teams, of which, there is a single women's team. There are 15 junior boys' teams a single girls team and 20 mini squads.
- ◀ TGRs forecast, when applied on an Analysis Area basis, do not forecast any future demand, however, this does not take into consideration specific targeted development work by the RFU.
- ◀ The RFU is focused on developing junior participation within Wigan based on a model of coaching sessions delivered in schools and local communities. This is not its sole focus, as it is actively exploring opportunities to assist in the transition between junior years and senior rugby. Wigan is a strategic focus for the RFU and is being facilitated by encouraging casual play and midweek senior matches.
- ◀ There are five pitches across three sites which are overplayed totalling 5.5 match equivalent sessions.
- ◀ Leigh RUFC currently has a senior pitch and three mini pitches located at Thames Avenue. Thames Avenue, which is located away from the Clubs main pitches, has a pending planning application on it for 58 dwellings. It states it has recently obtained planning permission to develop a new site (Carr Lane) if the Thames Avenue application is confirmed. The new site would host either one senior pitch or three smaller pitches that meet RFU standard with associated levelling and drainage.
- ◀ Orrell RUFC has recently negotiated a 99 year lease and had planning application approved by Wigan Borough Council for the development of a community sports centre, to be based adjacent to Winstanley College, on a 13 acre agricultural site. The proposed community sports club is to host two rugby union pitches and a cricket square accompanied by ancillary amenities, to be developed in conjunction with Winstanley CC.

### **Scenarios**

- ◀ **Improving pitch quality** – as shown in the overleaf, improving maintenance from poor (M0) to standard (M1) or standard (M1) to good (M2) at sites with secure tenure would create additional capacity of eight match equivalent sessions (MES) per week.
- ◀ This would create an additional 5.5 match equivalent sessions per week potential spare capacity for use, as well as eliminating overplay at St Georges Playing Fields and on one pitch at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields.
- ◀ Additional capacity created would reduce overplay on the partially floodlit pitch at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields and the dual use pitch at Bankes Playing Fields by one match equivalent session per week each, however the latter would remain significantly overplayed due to the significant level of rugby league use it accommodates in addition.
- ◀ Potential improvement of maintenance by two increments (from M0 to M2) would not eliminate overplay at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields completely but would reduce overplay to 0.5 MES per week, though accompanying qualitative improvements to other pitches onsite would create sufficient capacity to suitably accommodate this demand and eliminate overplay across the site.
- ◀ Sufficient capacity to accommodate demand at Bankes Playing Fields cannot be created through qualitative improvements to the pitch maintenance (and drainage) even to the highest level (M2/D3), with an alternative solution required to provide access to additional capacity to sufficiently accommodate all rugby union, rugby league and touch demand presently expressed at this site.

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Availability for community use	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Quality rating	Number of pitches	Floodlit	Usage (MES per week)	Site capacity (MES per week)	Capacity rating (MES per week)	Improved quality	Capacity effect (MES per week)
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0/D0 (Poor)	1	Yes (Partial)	2.5	0.5	-2	M1/D0 (Poor)	-1
				Secure	Senior		1	No	0.5	0.5	-		1
				Secure	Mini	M0/D0 (Poor)	1	No	1	0.5	-0.5	M1/D0 (Poor)	0.5
111	St Georges Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Secure	Senior	M1/D1 (Standard)	1	No	1	2	1	M2/D1 (Good)	2
							1	No	2	2	-		1
							1	Yes	3	2	-1		-
154	Leigh RUFC	Leigh	Yes	Secure	Junior	M1/D0 (Poor)	1	No	1.5	1.5	-	M2/D0 (Standard)	0.5
				Secure	Junior		1	No	1.5	1.5	-		0.5
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Secure	Senior	M1/D1 <sup>12</sup> (Standard)	1	No	8.75	2	-6.75	M2/D1 (Good) <sup>13</sup>	-5.75

- Alternatively, improving both maintenance (where currently below M2) and drainage by one increment would create additional capacity of 13.25 match equivalent sessions per week across the sites shown below. This would be sufficient to eliminate overplay entirely at St Georges Playing Fields, creating additional potential capacity to accommodate any future growth. Additional capacity would be created at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields to eliminate most overplay, such that minimal resulting overplay could be accommodated by capacity created on the second adult pitch.
- Sufficient capacity to accommodate demand at Bankes Playing Fields cannot be created through qualitative improvements to the pitch maintenance (and drainage) even to the highest level (M2/D3), with an alternative solution required to provide access to additional capacity to sufficiently accommodate all rugby union, rugby league and touch demand presently expressed at this site given all pitches but the primary rugby league pitch onsite are overplayed.
- Similarly, sufficient capacity cannot be created through qualitative improvements alone eliminate overplay at Wigan RUFC. However, overplay is focused on the floodlit pitches and is largely derived from floodlit training demand. Additional floodlighting of the third, presently unlit pitch (either fully or even partially) would enable this capacity to be used to accommodate some of this floodlit training demand in order to balance capacity across the three pitches and thus the site.

Site ID	Site name	Analysis Area	Availability for community use	Security of tenure	Pitch type	Quality rating	Number of pitches	Floodlit	Usage (MES per week)	Site capacity (MES per week)	Capacity rating (MES per week)	Improved quality	Capacity effect (MES per week)
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Secure	Senior	M0/D0 (Poor)	1	Yes (Partial)	2.5	0.5	-2	M1/D1 (Standard)	-0.5
				Secure	Senior	M0/D0 (Poor)	1	No	0.5	0.5	-		1.5
				Secure	Mini	M0/D0 (Poor)	1	No	1	0.5	-0.5	M1/D1 (Standard)	1
111	St Georges Playing Fields	Leigh	Yes	Secure	Senior	M1/D1 (Standard)	1	No	1	2	1	M2/D2 (Good)	2.25
							1	No	2	2	-		1.25
							1	Yes	3	2	-1		0.25
154	Leigh RUFC	Leigh	Yes	Secure	Junior	M1/D0 (Poor)	1	No	1.5	1.5	-	M2/D1 (Good)	1.5
				Secure	Junior		1	No	1.5	1.5	-		1.5
158	Wigan RUFC	Wigan Town	Yes	Secure	Senior	M2/D1 (Good)	1	Yes	5	3	-2	M2/D2 (Good)	-1.75
							1	Yes (Partial)	3.5	3	-0.5		-0.25
							1	No	1	3	2		2.25
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Wigan Town	Yes	Secure	Senior	M1/D1 <sup>14</sup> (Standard)	1	No	8.75	2	-6.75	M2/D2 (Good)	-5.5

<sup>12</sup> This pitch is primarily a rugby league pitch and has been assessed using the RFL non-technical assessment where is received a standard quality rating. This equates to a M1/D1 (Standard) RFU rating.

<sup>13</sup> Also equivalent to a good quality assessment as per RFL non-technical criteria, both representing capacity of three match equivalent sessions per week.

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

- Creation of new rugby union pitch provision – there are plans for Orrell RUFC to create new rugby union pitch provision at the proposed new Winstanley Community Sports Centre development.
- The table below shows the likely site picture on the basis that pitches are constructed to at good (M1/D2) quality, one is fully floodlit and they accommodate the proposed levels of use reported by Orrell RUFC:

Site name	Pitch type	Quality rating	Number of pitches	Floodlit	Usage (MES per week)	Site capacity (MES per week)	Capacity rating (MES per week)
Winstanley Community Sports Centre	Senior	M1/D2 (Standard)	1	No	2.5	2.5	-
	Senior		1	Yes	2.5	2.5	-

- On the basis that the pitches accommodate match use as reported by Orrell RUFC as well as 50% of training demand presently using non-World Rugby certified 3G pitches (two MES per week, with two MES per week retained on 3G), the site would be at capacity.
- The new site will be able to accommodate all or most demand from Orrell RUFC junior and mini sections, allowing mini teams to relocate demand back within the Borough from West Lancashire and juniors to transfer demand from Bankes Playing Fields, subsequently alleviating levels of overplay there also.
- Loss of pitch provision** – the senior pitch and three mini pitches at Thames Avenue used by Leigh RUFC are to be lost to residential development. Loss would present the need to re-accommodate 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.
- There are proposals to mitigate this loss through the creation of new playing field provision adjacent to the existing junior pitches at Leigh RUFC. Creation of a new senior pitch to good (at least M2/D1) quality would provide capacity of three match equivalent sessions per week, sufficient to accommodate demand from Thames Avenue.
- Leigh RUFC does not have access to onsite floodlit pitch provision at present and accesses 3G pitches offsite for floodlit training, including a non-World Rugby certified pitch at Howe Bridge Leisure Centre. Addition of floodlighting to a proposed new senior pitch would allow for capacity available to accommodate some training demand onsite as well as cater for future growth.
- Housing growth** – Using Sport England’s New Development Pitch Demand Calculator the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required ‘**if 22,500 new homes are built across Wigan Borough during the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework period to 2035**’:

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2035)	
	Match equivalent sessions per week	Pitches
Rugby union	2.98	3 senior pitches

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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- Using Sport England's New Development Pitch Demand Calculator the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required **'If 5,250 new homes are built across Wigan Borough during the next five years to 2020/21**

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2020/21)	
	Match equivalent sessions per week	Pitches
Rugby union	0.7	1 senior pitch

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## Recommendations – rugby union

- ◀ Existing quantity of rugby union pitches to be protected or mitigated/reprovided suitably meeting National Planning Policy where proposed for or at risk of loss.
- ◀ Where viable and demand is evidenced from clubs stating that they will pay and use 3G pitches, test/register existing 3G pitches built to World Rugby compliant specifications to feature on the RFU World Rugby certified pitch register<sup>14</sup>. This includes renewal of the certification at Robin Park Sports & Tennis Centre which though has no spare capacity midweek, does so at weekends for example to accommodate mini training or match play.
- ◀ Renegotiate the lease agreement at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields due to expire in 2021 to secure long-term use of the two senior pitches. Consider potential for community asset transfer as a means of securing the entire site offer where land ownership is presently varied, should the Club express desire to do so and evidence capability to sustain the asset in future.
- ◀ Support the development of new rugby union pitches and ancillary provision at Winstanley Community Sports Centre to current RFU specifications where possible and explore opportunities to access external grant funding to assist the development of facilities.
- ◀ Similarly, support Leigh RUFC with initial plans to develop new rugby union pitch provision at Carr Lane and secure Section 106 investment as mitigation of the pitches to be lost at Thames Avenue, giving consideration to feasibility to install floodlighting as part of the pitch development.
- ◀ Explore the feasibility of installing floodlights on one or more senior rugby union pitches at both Leigh RUFC and Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields in order to assist with each clubs training demand.
- ◀ Improve pitch quality through improved and more regular maintenance and remedial, particularly at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields and St Georges Park where maintenance level improvements are able to eliminate all or the majority of overplay. This is especially required at the former where floodlit training provision (both pitch and training area) is reportedly such poor quality in winter that training is relocated offsite at cost to Aspull RFC.
- ◀ Seek to develop a wholistic strategy to addressing overplay and balancing rugby union and rugby league demand at Bankes Playing Fields in conjunction with the RFL, Council and resident clubs.
- ◀ Consider feasibility to floodlight the third pitch at Wigan RUFC so that all are then floodlit either fully or partially, in order to allow for capacity available to be used for training to balance usage across the three pitches. This would also help facilitate evening matches on Friday nights.
- ◀ Seek to improve changing provision at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields (including structural issues and hot water provision) Wigan RUFC and Leigh RUFC where quality is reported to be poor.
- ◀ As part of potential development of football hubs through the Parklife Programme, consider if appropriate any opportunities for cross-sport 3G pitch certification, including World Rugby certification for training use or mini match play.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/club-support/facilities-kit-and-equipment/artificial-surfaces/artificial-grass-pitches>

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## Rugby league

**Current supply of senior, junior and primary grass rugby league pitches is not sufficient to cater for the level of demand expressed in Wigan Borough at present. This is further exacerbated when considering anticipated future demand.**

**Causal factors of overplay include significant levels of demand for midweek training and weekend match play, limited maintenance regimes and limited carrying capacity as a result of poor quality pitches, in some cases combining factors leading to overplay of pitches.**

### Summary

- ◀ There are 88 dedicated rugby league pitches in Wigan Borough (53 senior, 16 junior and 19 primary) across 45 sites. Eight pitches are unavailable for community use.
- ◀ There are two RFL Community Standard 3G pitches in Wigan Borough at Leigh Sports Village. These pitches are accessed by Leigh East ARLFC for matches and training.
- ◀ The majority (43%) of all pitches are rated as poor quality, whilst 38% are rated as standard and 19% rated as good.
- ◀ There are plans for the creation of two new rugby league pitches. One primary pitch at the former Belle Green Primary School site for use by Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC and one senior pitch to be developed by Shevington Sports and Horticultural Club for use by Shevington Sharks ARLFC at Vicarage Lane.
- ◀ Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC highlights issues with unsecure tenure and cost of rental at Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields and is actively seeking an alternative venue from which to be based.
- ◀ Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC has aspirations for self-management of pitch provision and previously approached the Council to discuss the potential for asset transfer.
- ◀ Both Bankes Playing Fields (Orrell St James ARLFC) and Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields (Aspull New Springs Lions ARLFC) are reported to offer poor quality ancillary provision in need of improvement.
- ◀ There is a total of 158 competitive rugby league teams playing in Wigan Borough. Of the senior teams, there are two ladies' teams, whilst there are also four dedicated junior girls' teams.
- ◀ The majority of match play demand is based around the Wigan Town analysis area where there are 86 teams (55%), whilst the Ashton analysis area has the fewest teams with 24 (15%). The remaining 47 teams (30%) are based in the Leigh analysis area.
- ◀ Training throughout the season for most clubs takes place on match pitches and surrounding areas, with some use of RFL certified and non-certified 3G pitches for floodlit training throughout the winter.
- ◀ Ten sites are overplayed by a total of 56.5 match equivalent sessions per week. This is predominantly a result of high levels of training and competitive demand on match pitches, often in combination with limited capacity available due to poor quality.
- ◀ There are Borough wide shortfalls for all rugby league pitch types, both present and by 2026. Notably, the Wigan Town area presently exhibits significant levels of overplay on both senior pitches (27.75 match equivalent sessions per week) and junior (13.5 match equivalent sessions per week) pitches, further exacerbated by increases in future demand.



# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## Scenarios

- ◀ **Transfer of training from match pitches** – across all sites present training demand on match pitches totals 74.5 MES per week.
- ◀ Approximate 66.5 MES per week takes place on senior pitches. A 50% reduction of training on match pitches applied on a Borough wide level would reduce overplay by 34 MES per week, eliminating current and future shortfalls. However, this is site specific and site constraints may not allow for teams to train elsewhere onsite.
- ◀ **Loss of access to education provision** – St John Rigby College and St William’s RC Primary School are the only education sites used by community teams. Tenure for use of both sites is deemed unsecure.
- ◀ Potential loss of access to these sites who present the requirement to relocate 1.5 senior and one primary MES per week in the Wigan Town Area. This demand is not presently able to be accommodated in the Area which evidences current and future shortfalls, though Scot Lane Playing Fields has capacity of 0.5 MES per week.
- ◀ **Housing Growth** – Using Sport England’s New Development Pitch Demand Calculator the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required **‘if 22,500 new homes are built across Wigan Borough during the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework period to 2035’**:

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2035)	
	Match equivalent sessions per week	Pitches
Rugby league	8.65	9 senior pitches

- ◀ Using Sport England’s New Development Pitch Demand Calculator the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required **‘if 5,250 new homes are built across Wigan Borough during the next five years to 2020/21’**:

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2020/21)	
	Match equivalent sessions per week	Pitches
Rugby league	2.02	2 senior pitches

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## Recommendations – rugby league

- ◀ Protect quality of existing rugby league pitch provision.
- ◀ Seek increased certification of 3G pitches as RFL Community Standard compliant in order to increase floodlit capacity available to accommodate training. This could include shared schemes through the development of football hubs.
- ◀ Seek to improve pitch quality through improved and more regular maintenance and remediation.
- ◀ Work with clubs to transfer some training demand from match pitches, either to other grass training areas or RFL Community Standard 3G pitch provision, in order to reduce levels of overplay on pitches and lessen impact on maintenance works undertaken.
- ◀ Support the development of new rugby league pitch provision, for example the new Vicarage Lane site in Shevington.
- ◀ Consider opportunities for community asset transfer where rugby league clubs express desire and evidence ability to feasibly manage, sustain and improve provision, including Woodhouse Playing Fields (Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC) and Bankes Playing Fields.
- ◀ Seek to make rugby league clubs more sustainable and develop revenue generation streams which aid to do so. Consider potential for asset transfer or leasehold of facilities to clubs which are feasibly able to sustain and improve the asset and explore opportunities to access external funding to help do so should this be the case.
- ◀ Continue to develop women and girls' participation in clubs and schools so that in future whole Wigan based teams can be formed.

## Hockey pitches (AGPs)

**The current supply of hockey suitable AGPs is considered insufficient to accommodate the current level of hockey demand both at peak time, despite ability to meet midweek (including for training) requirements and anticipated future growth in participation.**

**In conclusion, there is a need to retain all three full sized hockey AGPs in the short term. Though presently unused for hockey (albeit available for community use and used for football), Standish Community High School should be retained in the short term as the site represents the only reserve capacity to accommodate Wigan HC should the AGP at The Deanery High School be condemned as unsafe for use. Further to this, it is also an option to accommodate users from Westleigh High School (undersized AGP for hockey).**

## Summary

- ◀ There are currently three full sized sand based AGPs in Wigan Borough, all of which are floodlit and available for community use. Standish Community High School is not currently used for hockey and although used for hockey, Westleigh High School is undersized for competitive play (used by Manchester HC and Leigh HC).
- ◀ Additionally, there are 13 smaller sized hockey suitable AGPs. Of which, six are of suitable size to potentially accommodate senior (and junior) hockey training but not competitive matches.
- ◀ Two full sized hockey suitable AGPs are rated as poor quality with Golborne Sports & Social Club rated as good.

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

- ◀ Pitches at both The Deanery High School and Standish Community High School are in excess of the recommended ten year lifespan and should be considered for surface replacement in coming years. Immediate consideration should be given to the refurbishment of The Deanery High School which is accessed by Wigan HC and may soon be deemed unsafe and unsuitable for competitive matches by the League.
- ◀ Both Leigh HC and Manchester HC have unsecure tenure as they annually rent the pitch at Westleigh High School, whereas, Golborne HC and Wigan HC are considered to have secured tenure.
- ◀ There are 13 hockey teams (across four community clubs) using three AGPs in Wigan Borough.
- ◀ England Hockey growth rates anticipate a 10% growth in participation across the Borough, equating to a likely increase of 17 adults and 15 juniors. Not all future demand may be realised entirely as new formalised teams playing at peak time but may instead play at non-peak times including midweek as EH develops alternative participation offers.
- ◀ There is a need to relocate one match equivalent session per week from the undersized AGP at Westleigh High School on the basis that match play at Westleigh High School ceases to be permitted by EH and the North West Hockey League. This level of demand is unable to be met in the Leigh Area at present.

## Scenarios

- ◀ **Loss of access to education sites** – six of the 13 teams (46%) currently utilise pitch provision at education sites (The Deanery C of E High School and Westleigh High School).
- ◀ Should use of these pitches be lost either due to unsecure tenure (Westleigh High School) or quality becoming unsafe for use (The Deanery C of E High School), there would be a requirement to re-accommodate peak time demand of three MES per week, one MES per week unable to be accommodated in the Leigh Area and two MEs per week potentially able to be accommodated at Standish High School.
- ◀ **Unsuitability of Westleigh High School** – the AGP does not meet EH minimum dimensions for match play and should not be used for competitive play. Should the North West Hockey League (NWHL) cease to permit use of the pitch for matches then there would be a requirement to re-accommodate 0.5 MES per week each from Leigh HC and Manchester HC in the Leigh Area, with no current capacity in the Area to do so.
- ◀ **Transfer of football training demand** – should new 3G pitches be created, there is a likely impact on the future sustainability of hockey suitable AGPs as some football demand is likely to transfer onto 3G pitches as more are provided.
- ◀ Access to this capacity should be sought for hockey use to accommodate and facilitate participation growth including access for clubs.
- ◀ Conversion of sand based AGP's to 3G should not take place unless consultation with England Hockey identifies the AGP is not required to meet existing or future predicted demand. Wigan Borough Council should consider removing Permitted Development Rights of any new Artificial Grass Pitches to prevent inappropriate conversion that has a detrimental impact on the existing sport.
- ◀ **Housing Growth** – Using Sport England's New Development Pitch Demand Calculator the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required 'if 22,500 new homes are built across Wigan Borough during the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework period to 2035':

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2035)	
	Match equivalent sessions per week	Artificial grass pitches
Hockey	1.19	No new pitches

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- Using Sport England's New Development Pitch Demand Calculator the table below indicates the number of match equivalent sessions (rounded up) that would be required **'If 5,250 new homes are built across Wigan Borough during the next five years to 2020/21:**

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2020/21)	
	Match equivalent sessions per week	Artificial grass pitches
Hockey	0.28	No new pitches

## Recommendations – hockey

- Retain all full sized hockey suitable AGPs as hockey suitable surfaces, as well as Westleigh High School unless Leigh HC and Manchester HC can be suitably and agreeably accommodate elsewhere on a full sized AGP.
- Resurface the AGP at The Deanery C of E High School as a key priority to be retained as a hockey suitable surface.
- Establish opportunities to access additional capacity for hockey should any new hockey suitable AGPs be created. Should this happen, seek to secure community use for hockey through formal usage agreements.
- Seek to maximise use of capacity freed up from anticipated transfer of football training demand to 3G pitches in order to grow hockey participation.
- Increase participation driven through community clubs and schools.
- Secure increased access to midweek and non-peak time capacity to allow for both growth in training demand and development and delivery of alternative hockey formats, such as short format matches/leagues and less formal participation based sessions.
- Maintain AGPs regularly and to the standard required to preserve quality for performance. Monitor quality and rate of natural deterioration and seek resurfacing when required so not to impact on hockey use.
- Encourage providers to put in place a mechanism for sustainability such as a sinking fund, (formed by periodically setting aside money over time ready for surface repair or replacement when required) in place to maintain AGP pitch quality in the long term.

## Touch

**There is presently insufficient pitch provision to cater for demand from the two ET affiliated touch clubs in Wigan.**

**Level of use at Bankes Playing Fields (touch sessions are combined with rugby league training) is not sustainable and additional capacity is required as a whole for rugby league, rugby union and touch use onsite.**

**Since the touch pitch at Standish high School is no longer marked and maintained, there demand for a specifically marked touch pitch for use by Wigan Touch Warriors.**

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## Summary

- ◀ There are no longer any specifically marked touch pitches in Wigan Borough. A pitch previously marked at Standish High School (annexed from the main site) used by Wigan Touch Warriors is no longer marked and maintained for use.
- ◀ There are two England Touch affiliated touch clubs in the Borough; Wigan Touch Warriors which uses Shevington Recreation Ground and Orrell St James Touch based at Bankes Playing Fields.
- ◀ Regular requirements for pitch provision for touch extend to training use rather than matches. Both clubs report using 3G pitches for winter training.

### Recommendations – Touch

- ◀ Develop touch participation in the Borough through greater engagement with the two clubs and England Touch, including outreach to the potential latent market amongst rugby league and rugby union clubs.
- ◀ Engage with Wigan Touch Warriors and consider potential sites within the Wigan Town Area where a touch pitch could be formally marked to create a venue from which the club can be based in the longer term.
- ◀ Alongside the RFL and RFU, develop a wholistic solution to reducing overplay across rugby union and rugby league pitches, presently due to use from touch and both rugby codes.
- ◀ Explore potential sites suitable and available to temporarily accommodate multiple touch pitches so that Wigan Touch Warriors may be able to host a tournament in the Borough as previously desired.
- ◀ Explore potential to link with clubs to deliver community touch sessions through the Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles Trust as a way of developing touch as a sport suitable and able to engage a range of participants including older adults, women and girls.

## American football

**Overall, current demand for flag American football is able to be catered for by existing playing field provision.**

## Summary

- ◀ There are no American football clubs playing contact format competition in the Borough, though there is one flag football team, Wigan Warhawks.
- ◀ Warrington Revolution imports demand from neighbouring Warrington on occasion during the winter months to access 3G pitch provision for training at Leigh Sports Village.

### Recommendations – American football

- ◀ Develop American football participation in the Borough through greater engagement with Wigan Warhawks.
- ◀ Support the Club with access to suitable venues and ensure use of other playing pitch provision is sustainable without impacting on quality.

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## PART 5: STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

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

### Aim 1

To **protect** the existing supply of playing pitch facilities where it is needed for meeting current or future needs

#### Recommendations:

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

#### Recommendation a – Protect playing field sites through local planning policy

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

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

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

**Lapsed and disused** – playing field sites that formerly accommodated playing pitches but are no longer used for formal or informal sports use.

- ◀ **Disused** – sites that are not being used at all by any users and are not available for community hire either. Once these sites are disused for five or more years they will then be categorised as 'lapsed sites'.
- ◀ **Lapsed** - last known use was as a playing field more than five years ago. These sites fall outside of Sport England's statutory remit but still have to be assessed using the criteria in paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Sport England would nonetheless challenge a proposed loss of playing pitches/playing field which fails to meet such criteria. It should be emphasised that the lawful planning use of a lapsed site is still that of a playing field.

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

### Disused and lapsed sites in Wigan Borough

Site name	Analysis area	Sport(s)	Status (last used)	Comments
Bryn Gates Playing Fields	Ashton	Football	2011/12 <b>Lapsed site</b>	Youth 9v9 pitch located on playing fields behind allotments. No onsite changing provision.
Furlong Close Playing Fields	Ashton	Football	2013/14 <b>Disused site</b>	Previously marked with an adult football pitch and goalposts remain in place, though last recorded pitch marked was youth sized 60x40 metres.
Heath Lane	Leigh	-	2015/16 <b>Disused site</b>	Former primary school site located off Heath Lane on land south of Watson's Field. School playing field last known to be maintained circa 2000, now overgrown scrub land.
Lodge Lane Playing Fields	Leigh	Football	2010/11 <b>Lapsed site</b>	Previously marked with four football pitches of adult, youth and mini (two) sizes. No longer in use or marked and often waterlogged. One pitch still has goalposts in place but the site has no changing provision and car parking provision is poor.
Melrose Tip	Leigh	Football	2012/13 <b>Disused site</b>	Previously had one adult football pitch on a slope, reported subject to vandalism and damage. No onsite changing provision. Was allocated with the North Leigh Park residential development however the developer has since entered administration, though the Council is keen for the scheme to be delivered. Mitigation proposed to be drainage improvements at Marsh Playing Fields and new pitch provision at Howe Bridge Leisure Centre.
Moseley Common	Leigh	Football	2011/12 <b>Disused site</b>	One adult and one youth 9v9 pitch now unmarked due to no local demand, reportedly because the site drains poorly. Now retained as recreational open space and the local Friends group has recently funded the installation of 16x7 feet goalposts for recreational play. WBC reports interest from a team looking to hire the pitch for 2017/18.
Rose Bridge High School Sports Field	Wigan Town	Football Rugby league	<b>Disused site</b>	School playing field across from the main school building. Previously had three rugby league pitches marked, two with goalposts installed, however the school has ceased to use or maintain the site since circa 2012. No onsite changing provision. The school has recently signed a 125-year lease on the site from the Council.

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Site name	Analysis area	Sport(s)	Status (last used)	Comments
Seaman Way - Former Sports Club	Wigan Town	Football	<b>Lapsed site</b>	Former industry sports ground which has an adult football pitch. Also had a tennis court and bowling green which have since been lost.
Spa Road Recreation Ground	Leigh	Football	2004/5 <b>Lapsed site</b>	Youth 9v9 pitch not presently used or marked. The site neighbours Crilly Park (Atherton Laburnum Rovers FC) and the Council states it would like to retain site for community use.
St John Street	Ashton	Football	2006/7 <b>Lapsed site</b>	Large playing field which previously had one adult, one youth and one mini football pitch. Publicly accessible. Changing rooms available.

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

It is recommended that the Council allocates all disused/lapsed sites as playing field in the first instance until such time as the Council, NGB/Community group or a developer expresses an interest in the site. It is also recommended that the following priority order of options is adopted with regards to addressing disused/lapsed sites:

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

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

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



# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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Housing Growth scenarios have been provided in Part 7 to estimate the additional demand generated by housing by sport and pitch type.

**Development management** - the PPS should be used to help inform Development Management decisions that affect existing or new playing fields, pitches and ancillary facilities. All applications are assessed by the Local Planning Authority on a case by case basis taking into account site specific factors. In addition, Sport England as statutory consultee on planning applications that affect or prejudice the use of playing field will use the PPS to help assess that planning application against paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and their<sup>15</sup> Playing Fields Policy.

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

Policy Exception E1:

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

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

Policy Exception E4:

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

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

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

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

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

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<sup>15</sup><http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/planning-for-sport/development-management/planning-applications/playing-field-land/>

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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

A number of school sites are being used in Wigan Borough for competitive play, predominately for football. In all cases use of pitches has not been classified as unsecure, however, use is not necessarily formalised and further work should be carried out to ensure an appropriate Community Use Agreement (CUA) is in place (including access to changing provision where required).

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

Sport England has also produced guidance, online resources and toolkits to help open up and retain school sites for community use and can be found at: <http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/use-our-school/>

Local sports clubs should be supported by partners including the Council, NGBs or the County Sports Partnership (CSP) to achieve sustainability across a range of areas including management, membership, funding, facilities, volunteers and partnership working. For example, support club development and encourage clubs to develop evidence of business and sports development plans to generate an income through their facilities. All clubs could be encouraged to look at different management models such as registering as Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC)<sup>16</sup>. Clubs should also be encouraged to work with partners locally whether volunteer support agencies or linking with local businesses.

As well as improving the quality of well-used, local authority sites, there are a number of sites which have poor quality (or no) ancillary facilities. **The Council should further explore opportunities where security of tenure could be granted to the clubs playing on these sites (minimum 25 years as recommended by Sport England and NGBs) so the clubs are in a position to apply for external funding to improve the ancillary facilities.**

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

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

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

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/cascbenefits>

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Community asset transfer

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

The Sport England Community Sport Asset Transfer Toolkit is a bespoke, interactive web based tool that provides a step by step guide through each stage of the asset transfer process: <http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/asset-transfer/>

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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

Given the mix of provider in Wigan Borough, including for example, Parish/Town councils and private clubs, there is a need for the Council and NGBs to work with other partners to help maximise use of outdoor sports facilities and in particular grass pitches and AGPs.

In order to maximise community use of educational facilities it is recommended to establish a more coherent, structured relationship with schools. The ability to access good facilities within the local community is vital to any sports organisation, yet many clubs struggle to find good quality places to play and train. In Wigan Borough pricing policies at facilities can be barrier to access at some of the education sites but physical access and resistance from schools to open up provision is also an issue.

A number of sporting facilities are located on education sites and making these available to sports clubs can offer significant benefits to both the school/college and the local clubs. For example, Lowton Church of England High School has a partnership with local Club Leigh Genesis FC which uses the grass pitches and the two organisations are presently working towards a joint facility development in the form of a small 3G pitch the Club would use for training. Similar, the AGP at The Deanery C of E High School is a joint venture between the School and Wigan Hockey Club which acts as the anchor club user. The Council and other key partners must work with schools and colleges to develop an understanding of the issues that restrict or affect community access. Support should be provided, where appropriate, to address underlying problems.

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

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

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

As detailed earlier, Sport England has also produced guidance, online resources and toolkits to help open up and retain school sites for community use and can be found at:  
<http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/use-our-school/>

Although there are a growing number of academies and college sites in Wigan Borough, which the Council has no control over the running of, it is still important to understand the significance of such sites and attempt to work with the schools where there are opportunities for community use. In addition, the relevant NGB has a role to play in supporting the Council to deliver the strategy and communicating with schools where necessary to address shortfalls in provision, particularly for football pitches.

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## **Aim 2**

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

### **Recommendation:**

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

### **Recommendation d – Improve quality**

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

#### *The FA Pitch Improvement Programme (PIP)*

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

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

### **Addressing quality issues**

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

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

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

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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

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

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

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

In terms of ancillary facilities, poor quality refers to inappropriate size of changing rooms, no showers, no running water and old dated interior.

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

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

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

[www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/artificial-sports-surfaces/](http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/artificial-sports-surfaces/)

## Addressing overplay

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

Sport	Pitch type	Number of match equivalent sessions per week		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Football	Adult pitches	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Youth pitches	4 per week	2 per week	1 per week
	Mini pitches	6 per week	4 per week	2 per week

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Sport	Pitch type	Number of match equivalent sessions per week		
		Good quality	Standard quality	Poor quality
Rugby union <sup>17</sup>	Natural Inadequate (D0)	2 per week	1.5 per week	0.5 per week
	Natural Adequate (D1)	3 per week	2 per week	1.5 per week
	Pipe Drained (D2)	3.25 per week	2.5 per week	1.75 per week
	Pipe and Slit Drained (D3)	3.5 per week	3 per week	2 per week
Rugby league	Senior	3 per week	2 per week	1 per week
Cricket	One grass wicket	5 per season	N/A	N/A
	One synthetic wicket	60 per season		

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

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

There is also a need to balance pitch improvements alongside the transfer of play to alternative pitch sites. Therefore, work with clubs to ensure that sites are not played beyond their capacity and encourage play, where possible, to be transferred to alternative venues which are not operating at capacity.

## Increasing pitch maintenance

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

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

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

<sup>17</sup> The RFU believes that it is most appropriate to base the calculation of pitch capacity upon an assessment of the drainage system and maintenance programme afforded to a site.

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In relation to cricket, maintaining high pitch quality is the most important aspect of cricket. If the wicket is poor, it can affect the quality of the game and can, in some instances, become dangerous. The ECB recommends full technical assessments of wickets and pitches available through a Performance Quality Standard Assessment (PQS). The PQS assesses a cricket square to ascertain whether the pitch meets the Performance Quality Standards that are benchmarked by the Institute of Groundsmanship. Please note that PQS assessments are also available for other sports, whilst the LCB Groundsman's Association offers maintenance tips to local clubs as well as an onsite assessment service with subsequent report advising recommended maintenance actions.

## **Improving changing provision**

There is a need to address changing provision at some sites in the Borough, including some local authority sites. It is recommended that a holistic view is taken in regard to improvements and provision on site.

Sites which predominantly accommodate adult and/or older junior age group sports should be prioritised for improvements, whilst there is a trend for younger junior age groups (particularly for football) not to require use of changing provision, with suitable male and female toilet provision for players and spectators considered to be of greater importance. Multi-pitch football sites including Laithwaite Park and Howe Bridge Leisure Centre are reported to offer poor quality changing provision, whilst Cale Lane Playing Fields, City Road Playing Fields, Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields and Scot Lane Playing Field are considered to offer no direct accompanying changing provision at all. Other sites with poor quality changing provision include Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields (rugby union/league) and Wigan RUFC (rugby union).

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

To allow for facility developments to be programmed within a phased approach the Council should adopt a tiered approach to the management and improvement of playing pitch sites and associated facilities. Please refer to Part 7: Action Plan for the proposed hierarchy.

## **Recommendation f – Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding**

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

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

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

Please refer to Appendix Three for further funding information which includes details of the current opportunities, likely funding requirements and indicative project costs.



## **WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

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

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## **Aim 3**

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

### **Recommendations:**

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

### **Recommendation g - Rectify quantitative shortfalls in the current pitch stock**

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

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

- ◀ Improving pitch quality in order to improve the capacity of pitches to accommodate more matches.
- ◀ The re-designation of pitches for which there is an oversupply.
- ◀ Securing long term community use at school sites.
- ◀ Working with commercial and private providers to increase usage.

While maximising the use of existing pitches offers scope to address the quantitative deficiencies for most sports, new or additional pitches may be required to meet the levels of demand identified for football and rugby both now and in the future.

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

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

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

Likely future sport-by-sport demand trends

Sport	Future development trend	Strategy impact
Football	As a result of the FA Youth Development Review pitch demands are changing. This could also see changes in the seasonal demand of pitches (youth football).	Consider re-allocating leases to Community Charter Standard clubs with a large number of teams. Work with clubs to identify facility development opportunities. Work with clubs in relation to their pitch demands as a result of the FA Youth Development Review.
	Demand for senior football is likely to be sustained based on current trends and the move to small sided football. County FA focus to maintain growth of youth football through to adults.	Sustain current stock but consideration given to reconfigure pitches if required.
	An increase in women and girls football following £2.4m investment from Sport England between 2014 and 2016 to increase the number of women and girls taking part in football sessions. Additionally, one of the major goals of The FA's 'Game Changer' strategy for Women's and Girls' football (2017-2020) is to double participation from the current 6,000 teams to 12,000.	A need to provide segregated ancillary facilities and the potential need for more pitches.
Cricket	Demand is likely to remain static for grass wickets for adult participation. The ECB targets participation increases at junior level through the Allstars Cricket Programme which may have a subsequent future impact on requirement for grass and non-turf cricket provision.	Isolated pockets of demand for access to additional facilities where pitches are operating at capacity. A need to encourage greater use of non-turf wickets particularly for junior use to help meet shortfalls.
	Women's and girls' cricket is a national priority and there is a target to establish two girls' and one women's team in every local authority over the next five years.	Support clubs to ensure access to segregated changing and toilet provision and access to good quality cricket pitches to support growth.
Rugby union	Locally, the RFU wants to ensure access to pitches in Wigan Borough that satisfies existing demand and predicted growth. It is also an aim to protect and improve pitch quality, as well as ancillary facilities including changing rooms and floodlights.	Clubs are likely to field more teams in the future. It is important, therefore, to work with the clubs to maintain the current pitch stock, support facility development where appropriate and increase the number of floodlit pitches where necessary.
Rugby league	RFL is working towards growing rugby league participation including through growth at junior clubs, Play Touch RL and 9 aside RL.	Review the need for dedicated rugby league pitches in the next three years. Seek 3G pitch venues for Play Touch and grass pitches for 9 aside.

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Sport	Future development trend	Strategy impact
AGPs	<p>Demand for 3G pitches for competitive football will increase. It is likely that future demand for the use of 3G pitches to service competitive football, particularly mini and youth will result in some reduced demand for grass pitches.</p> <p>Provision of 3G pitches which are World Rugby compliant will help to reduce overplay as a result of training on rugby pitches.</p>	<p>Ensure that access to new AGP provision across the Borough is maximised and that community use agreements are in place.</p> <p>Utilise Sport England/NGB guidance on choosing the correct surface:  <a href="http://www.sportengland.org/media/30651/Selecting-the-right-artificial-surface-Rev2-2010.pdf">http://www.sportengland.org/media/30651/Selecting-the-right-artificial-surface-Rev2-2010.pdf</a></p>
Hockey	Potential increase of participation particularly junior teams.	Sinking funds in place to improve quality and ensure continued use of provision for current and future hockey demand.

### *Active Aging*

Within its Towards and Active Nation Strategy<sup>18</sup>, Sport England identifies a priority to reduce inactivity amongst particular populations, one demographic being older adults. The Strategy evidences that 42% per cent of people aged 55 and over are inactive compared to 26% of the adult population<sup>19</sup>. As such, this research shows that as people get older, they are far more likely to be inactive and do less than 30 minutes of physical activity each week. Through its Active Aging Fund opened in December 2016, Sport England is investing ten million pounds in projects and schemes to get older people more active and increase opportunity in order to reduce levels of inactivity. The investment also includes attaining learning outcomes throughout, in order to better understand how older adults can be supported in physical activity and how behavioural and lifestyle changes can be made more likely to be sustained.

Locally, GreaterSport is leading the approach to Active Aging across the Greater Manchester area, working with partners to support and deliver projects aimed at increasing activity amongst older adults. This links to the Wigan Borough Council health agenda and there is likely to be potential for the two, along with the Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles Trust and NGB partners, to deliver Active Aging based schemes in the Borough in future which would see additional requirement for sport and recreation facilities both indoors and outdoors.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/media/10629/sport-england-towards-an-active-nation.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/media/11410/active-ageing-prospectus.pdf>

## **WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

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

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

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

Some sites (or adjacent land) in Wigan Borough also have the potential to accommodate more pitches which may be a solution to meeting shortfalls identified as is further explored within the action plan.

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## PART 6: ACTION PLAN

### Introduction

The site-by-site action plan list seeks to address key issues identified in the accompanying Assessment Report. It provides recommendations based on current levels of usage, quality and future demand, as well as the potential of each site for enhancement.

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

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

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

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

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

Hub sites	Key sites	Local sites	Reserve sites
Strategically located. Priority sites for NGB.	Strategically located within the Analysis Area.	Serves the local community. Likely to include education sites.	Serves the local community.
Accommodates three or more good quality grass pitches. Including provision of at least one AGP/3G pitch. May offer potential for development as a Parklife football hub.	Accommodates two or more good quality grass pitches.	Accommodates more than one pitch.	Likely to be single-pitch site.
Single or multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision. Could also operate as a central venue.	Single or multi-sport provision.	Supports informal demand and/ or training etc.
Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns with NGB guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime either by the club or in-house maintenance contract.	Basic level of maintenance i.e. grass cutting.
Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	Good quality ancillary facility on site, with sufficient changing rooms and car parking to serve the number of pitches.	Appropriate access changing to accommodate both senior and junior use concurrently (if required).	No requirement for access changing to accommodation.

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

The financial, social and sporting benefits which can be achieved through development of hub sites are significant. Sport England provides further guidance on the development of community sports hubs at:

[http://www.sportengland.org/facilities\\_planning/planning\\_tools\\_and\\_guidance/sports\\_hubs.aspx](http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/planning_tools_and_guidance/sports_hubs.aspx)

**Where development of Hub Sites includes provision of 3G pitches for football it is recommended that further modelling/feasibility work is carried out to ensure sustainability of new 3G pitches to accommodate competitive fixtures.** However, as a priority consultation should be carried out with leagues/clubs to gauge acceptance/buy in of moving competitive play to 3G pitches in the future. In Wigan Borough, this is currently being undertaken through the Parklife Programme process which incorporates demand modelling, a degree of market testing with key local clubs and leagues, commercial planning for sustainability and other related variables.

**Key sites** although these sites are more community focused, some are still likely to service a wider Analysis Area (or slightly wider). However, there may be more of a focus on a specific sport i.e. a dedicated site.

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

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

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

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

**Reserve sites** could be used as overspill for neighbouring sites and/or for summer matches/competitions, training or informal play. They are most likely to be single-pitch sites with no ancillary facilities or school sites where there is no current demand for community use.

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## Management and development

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

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

## Action plan columns

### Partners

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

### Site hierarchy tier and priority level

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

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

Key centres are a **medium** priority and have Analysis Area importance and have been identified on the basis of the impact that the site will have on addressing the issues identified in the assessment.

**Low** priority sites generally have local specific importance and have been identified on a site by site basis as issues appertaining to individual sites but that may also contribute to addressing the issues identified in the assessment

### Costs

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

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



# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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These are based on Sport England's estimated facility costs which can be found at [www.sportengland.org/media/198443/facility-costs-4q13.pdf](http://www.sportengland.org/media/198443/facility-costs-4q13.pdf)

## Timescales

The action plan has been created to be delivered over a ten-year period. The information within the Assessment Report, Strategy and Action Plan will require updating as developments occur. The timescales relate to delivery times and are not priority based. Timescales are recommended within the following three categories:

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

## Aim

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

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## ASHTON ANALYSIS AREA

Sport	Analysis Area	Current picture	Future picture (2026) <sup>20</sup>
Football (grass pitches)	Ashton	<i>Actual spare capacity:</i> One youth 11v11 match equivalent session per week available at peak time. <i>Capacity at all other pitch formats is balanced</i>	<i>Actual spare capacity:</i> One youth 11v11 match equivalent session per week available at peak time. <i>Youth 9v9 and mini capacity at both pitch formats is balanced</i> <b>Shortfalls:</b> <b>1.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
	Wigan Borough	<i>Actual spare capacity:</i> 15.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time. 0.5 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time. <b>Shortfalls:</b> <b>Five youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>0.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>One mini 5v5 match equivalent session per week.</b>	<i>Actual spare capacity:</i> 8.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time. <b>Shortfalls:</b> <b>15 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>12 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>2.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>11 mini 5v5 match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
Football (3G pitches) <sup>21</sup>	Ashton	<b>Shortfall of two full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand</b>	<b>Shortfall of two full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand</b>
	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of five full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand</b>	<b>Shortfall of six full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand</b>
Rugby union	Ashton	Capacity is balanced.	Capacity will be balanced.
	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of 5.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 8.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>

<sup>20</sup> Future demand based on ONS calculations and club consultation which also includes any latent and displaced demand identified.

<sup>21</sup> Based on accommodating 42 teams to one full size pitch for affiliated team training.

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Sport	Analysis Area	Current picture	Future picture (2026) <sup>22</sup>
Rugby league (senior pitches)	Ashton	Actual spare capacity of 0.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.	<b>Shortfall of one senior match equivalent session per week.</b>
	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of 27.75 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 32 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
Cricket	Ashton	Total capacity of 43 match equivalent sessions per season available,	Total capacity of 43 match equivalent sessions per season available,
	Wigan Borough	Total capacity of 41 match equivalent sessions per season available, <i>however no peak time capacity to accommodate any future senior growth on natural turf squares.</i>	Total capacity of 31 match equivalent sessions per season available, <i>however no peak time capacity to accommodate any future senior growth on natural turf squares.</i>
Hockey (Sand/water AGPs)	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of one full sized AGP with floodlighting in the Leigh Area to accommodate unsuitable use of Westleigh High School.</b> <b><i>Critical need for qualitative improvements at The Deanery C of E High School</i></b>	<b>Shortfall of one full sized AGP with floodlighting in the Leigh Area to accommodate unsuitable use of Westleigh High School.</b> <b><i>Critical need for qualitative improvements at The Deanery C of E High School</i></b>
Touch	Wigan Borough	<b>Demand for formally marked touch pitch provision in the Wigan Town Area.</b>	<b>Demand for formally marked touch pitch provision in the Wigan Town Area.</b>
American football	Wigan Borough	Level of demand is able to be met by existing playing field provision.	Level of demand is able to be met by existing playing field provision.

<sup>22</sup> Future demand based on ONS calculations and club consultation which also includes latent and displaced demand identified.

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>23</sup>	Cost <sup>24</sup>	Aim
2	AFC Hindley Juniors Football Club	Football	Sports Club	One adult, one youth 9v9 and three mini 7v7 pitches all of good quality. The youth 9v9 pitch is played to capacity whilst the adult pitch has no peak time capacity. The three mini 7v7 pitches have spare capacity, however, this is retained for summer football.  AFC Hindley Juniors has aspirations to develop additional pitch provision and is keen to explore opportunities to take on management of and develop facilities at Leyland Park.	Sustain pitch quality through continued standard and regularity of maintenance.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Medium	L	L	Protect Provide Enhance
					Consider feasibility of transferring management responsibility to the Club dependent on resources and case for sustainability.				S	M	
6	Ashton Town AFC	Football	Sport Club	Adult pitch rated as standard quality and is played to capacity. Accessed by Ashton Town FC which plays on the football pyramid (Step 7 for 2017/18). Redrow Housing purchased the site in circa 2004 and agreed to assist the Club in relocation and building a new facility within 25 years.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club FA Council	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide
					Investigate relocation options ensuring any new site meets the clubs current and future team aspirations and is able to meet National Planning Policy.				L	H	
15	Bryn Gates Playing Fields	Football (Lapsed)	Council	<b>Lapsed</b> - previously hosted a youth 9v9 pitch. No onsite provision.	Consider options for future use of the site, either to address identified grass pitch shortfalls or other uses, including rationalisation and potential options for mitigation of loss as part of a new, more attractive and sustainable community use facility.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Provide
16	Bryn St. Peters CE Primary School	Football	School	Two mini 5v5 pitches rated as standard quality. Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitches quality. Pitches are rented by Ashton Park JFC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed insecure.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.  Seek to greater secure community use if possible.	School FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect

<sup>23</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>24</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>25</sup>	Cost <sup>26</sup>	Aim	
20	Cansfield High School (Ashton Leisure Centre)	Football	School/ Trust	One youth 11v11 pitch rated as standard quality. Available for community use. School site therefore spare capacity has been capped to accommodate curriculum and extra curriculum activities. Pitches are rented by Ashton Park JFC and Town Green Athletic JFC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore tenure for the Club is deemed unsecure.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	School Trust FA	Key Centre	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide	
		3G pitch		Ashton Leisure Centre and the School are developing a small sized (79mx53m) floodlit 3G pitch. Construction began in February 2017.	Ensure development of small sized 3G pitch provision meets FA recommended dimensions and is subjected to FA/FIFA performance standard testing for certification to host competitive mini/junior 9v9 football matches.				S	L		
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L		
					Maximise use for team training and competitive matches to reduce grass pitch shortfalls for football.				S	L		
21	Cardinal Newman Playing Fields	Rugby league	Sports Club	Site is leased to Hindley ARFLC. Two senior pitches, one of which, is floodlit and standard quality with the other rated as poor quality. The standard quality pitch is played to capacity with the poor quality pitch overplayed by one match equivalent session per week. Also contains a junior pitch rated as standard quality which is overplayed by three match equivalent sessions per week and a primary pitch rated as poor quality overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council RFL	Local Site	Medium	L	L	Protect Enhance	
									Seek to reduce overplay by increasing pitch capacity through qualitative improvements.	S		L
									Explore the feasibility of acquiring more pitch space to alleviate over play on current pitch stock.	S		L
									Explore the feasibility transferring some training demand from match pitches to general grass playing field areas in order to reduce overplay on match pitches.	S		L
22	Castle Hill St Philips C of E Primary School	Football	School	Mini 7v7 pitch rated as standard quality which is unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect	

<sup>25</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>26</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>27</sup>	Cost <sup>28</sup>	Aim
34	Furlong Close Playing Fields	Football (Disused)	Council	<b>Disused</b> - previously marked with an adult football pitch and goalposts remain in place, though last recorded pitch marked was youth sized 60x40 metres.	Determine future use of the site based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to improve other playing pitch sites (quantity and/or quality).	Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Provide
47	Hindley All Saints C of E Primary School	Football	School	Two mini 7v7 pitches rated as standard quality. Pitches are unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
48	Hindley High School	Football	School	Two adult pitches rated as standard quality. Pitches are unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect
		Rugby league		Two senior rugby league pitches rated as poor quality. Pitches are unavailable for community use.					S	L	
49	Hindley St Peters Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	One good quality natural grass cricket square with 16 wickets. Does not have any actual spare capacity at during senior peak time.	Sustain square quality through continued maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
50	Hindley Town FC	Football	Sports Club	Adult pitch rated as poor quality. Issues with unauthorised use and small patches of poor drainage. Pitch is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week. The Club (Hindley Town FC) reports issues with vandalism and theft of equipment.	Improve pitch quality through better, more regular maintenance and remedial work in order to reduce levels of overplay.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Enhance
					Explore options to better secure pitches and ancillary facilities against vandalism.				M	M	
53	Holy Family Catholic Primary School Platt Bridge	Football	School	One youth 9v9 pitch rated as standard quality. Tenure deemed unsecure though considered to be played to capacity through a combination of curricular use and teams from FC Bridgewater of Worsley FC imported from Salford.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Retain spare capacity to protect pitch quality.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby league		One primary rugby league pitch rated as standard quality. Deemed to offer unsecure tenure but has no community use at present.	Sustain and improve quality for curricular and extra-curricular use.				S	L	
58	King George V Playing Fields	Football	Council	One youth 9v9 pitch rated as standard quality. Actual spare capacity at peak time of one match equivalent session. Site protected through the Fields in Trust King George V Playing Field Programme. Ashton Park Juniors FC has expressed interest in an asset transfer of the site.	Retain the site and consider potential for community asset transfer should a feasible and sustainable case be presented, in order to improve quality.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

<sup>27</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>28</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>27</sup>	Cost <sup>28</sup>	Aim
59	Kingsdown Road Playing Field	Football	Council	One adult pitch rated as standard quality. Actual spare capacity at peak time of one match equivalent session per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
66	Leyland Park	Football	Council	Three pitches rated as standard quality. Actual spare capacity of 1.5 adult match equivalent sessions at peak time per week, however, the pitches could be lost due to an ongoing road development which would affect playing field land onsite. One youth 9v9 pitch which is played to capacity at peak time. AFC Hindley Juniors has aspirations to secure long-term tenure and management of the site in order to develop and improve provision. The site has potential for development as a football hub, incorporating the main AFC Hindley Juniors Football Club site opposite.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide
					Ensure any potential loss of playing field land complies with National Planning Policy and is subsequently either protected or mitigated appropriately.				S	H	
					Explore the feasibility of transferring management responsibility to Hindley Juniors FC through either long-term lease or community asset transfer, subject to the Club evidencing it has sufficient infrastructure, resource and economic model to sustain and improve the asset.				S	L	
									S	L	
77	Miners Welfare Playing Fields	Football	Council	One adult pitch rated as standard quality with actual spare capacity at peak time of one match equivalent session per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
80	Nicol Mere Primary School	Football	School	Two mini 5v5 pitches and a mini 7v7 pitch all rated as standard quality. Pitches are unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
91	R L Hughes Primary School	Football	School	Two standard quality mini 7v7 pitches. Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Pitches are rented by Ashton Park JFC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure. Pitches are over marked with rugby league.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
		Rugby league		One primary sized rugby league pitch rated as standard quality. Available for community use but currently unused. Pitch is over marked with football.	Sustain and improve pitch quality as required.				L	L	
95	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School	Football	School	One mini 7v7 pitch rated as standard quality. Unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
103	Spring View Community Sports Association	Football	Sports Club	A youth 11v11 and a youth 9v9 pitch both of which, are standard quality. Each pitch has peak time spare capacity of one match equivalent session per week.	Sustain current levels of maintenance to ensure pitch quality.	Sports Club FA RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
		Rugby league		Two senior pitches rated as standard quality, both of which, are played to capacity. Pitches are used by Wigan Spring View ARLFC for training and competitive demand.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.				L	L	

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>27</sup>	Cost <sup>28</sup>	Aim
104	Spring View Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	A standard quality natural grass cricket square with 13 wickets. No actual spare capacity at peak period. Spring View CC reports non-turf practice nets are in need of refurbishment.	Sustain square quality through continued maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime. Explore potential funding streams to refurbish non-turf practice nets.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Low	L S	L L	Protect Enhance
108	St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School	Rugby league	School	Two poor quality senior pitches. Both pitches are available for community use but are unused. Pitches are played to capacity by school use.	Improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance for curricular use.	School RFU EH FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Provide Enhance
		AGP		Small sized (80x52m) floodlit sand filled hockey AGP rated as poor quality which is available for community use. Built in 2005 and has not been refurbished. Available for community use and predominantly used for football training by Winstanley Warriors FC and Ashtonians FC. The pitch does not meet EH minimum dimension criteria and there is no recorded community hockey use.	As a priority, resurface the AGP given poor and deteriorating quality. Further consultation required with the school and NGBs to determine most appropriate surface type given lack of demand for hockey in the Area. Consider feasibility to convert to 3G given community use is for football.				S	M	
				Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.	L				L		
115	St John Street Playing Field	Football (Lapsed)	Council	Lapsed site - previously hosting one adult, one youth and one mini football pitch. Publicly accessible. Changing rooms available.	Consider options for future use of the site, either to address identified grass pitch shortfalls or other uses, including rationalisation and potential options for mitigation of loss as part of a new, more attractive and sustainable community use facility.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Provide
116	Hindley Green CP School	Football/ Rugby league	School	Two mini 5v5, two mini 7v7 and a youth 9v9 pitch all of standard quality. Pitches are over marked with three primary rugby league pitches (used by the school) and considered played to capacity except the youth 9v9 pitch which is overplayed by 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure. Pitches are used Hindley Green FC but receive no use from community rugby league clubs.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work to better sustain dual sport use by the school. Seek to secure community use for Hindley Green FC.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Enhance Protect
117	St John's C of E Primary School	Football	School	One mini 5v5 pitch rated as standard quality. Unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
120	St Peter's C of E Primary School	Football	School	One mini 5v5 pitch rated as standard quality. Available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality as required. Explore local demand for community use, ensuring that quality is not compromised for curriculum use.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect



**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>29</sup>	Cost <sup>30</sup>	Aim
122	St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch both of which are poor quality. Available for community use and used by Ashton Town FC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure. The youth 9v9 pitch is played to capacity. Spare capacity on the mini 7v7 has been retained as it receives both community and curriculum use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
124	St. Oswald's Catholic Primary School	Football	School	A mini 5v5 and mini 7v7 pitch both of poor quality. Mini 5v5 pitch is played to capacity with the mini 7v7 pitch overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Receives community use from Ashton Park JFC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
127	The Byrchall High School	Football	School	Three standard quality adult pitches which are available for community use. Pitches are rented by Ashton Villa FC and Ashtonians FC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club's tenure is deemed unsecure. No spare capacity due to accommodating curriculum, extra curriculum and community demand.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
131	Thomas Street Recreation Ground	Football	Council	A standard quality youth 11v11 pitch which is played to capacity.	Sustain pitch quality through appropriate maintenance.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect
138	Whithill Street Playing Fields	Football	Council	Three pitches all rated as standard quality. One adult pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. One mini 7v7 pitch with actual spare capacity at peak time of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. One youth 9v9 pitch with actual spare capacity at peak time of one match equivalent session per week.	Ensure appropriate maintenance to sustain quality.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
					Look to improve pitch quality to alleviate overplay.				M	L	

<sup>29</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>30</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>31</sup>	Cost <sup>32</sup>	Aim
151	Low Bank Road	Football	Sports Club	Standard quality adult pitch which is available for community use but unused. No spare capacity due to over marking.	Ensure appropriate maintenance to sustain or improve quality.	Sports Club Football RFL	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby league		Two senior and one junior pitch all of good quality. The two senior pitches have spare capacity at senior peak period of 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Junior pitch has no actual spare capacity at peak period.	Ensure appropriate maintenance to sustain or improve pitch quality.				L	L	
				Site is leased to Ashton Bears ARLFC. Pitches have received recent RFL funding to install drainage but still subject to dog fouling and littering.	Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
					Consider solutions to reduce dog fouling and littering.				S	L	
					If pitch is unused explore reconfiguration of provision to alleviate over marking.				S	L	
167	HMP Hindley	Football	Private	Two adult football pitches rated as standard quality and is used by HMP Hindley FC. The site, apart from the football pitches, is unavailable for further community use.	Sustain and improve quality and retain for current use.	Private	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Cricket		A standalone NTP and small sized 3G pitch rated as standard quality.	Sustain and improve quality and retain for internal use.				S	L	
		3G pitch		Small sized 5v5 cage used for internal activity.	Sustain and improve quality and retain for internal use.				S	L	
170	Britannia Bridge Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 pitch rated as standard quality. Pitches are available for community use and rented by FC Britannia. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure. Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular and enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
171	Newbridge Community Centre	3G pitch	Community	Small sized (48m x 30m) floodlit 3G which is available for community use.	Sustain quality and retain for current use.	Community FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	

<sup>31</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>32</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## LEIGH ANALYSIS AREA

Sport	Analysis Area	Current picture	Future picture (2026) <sup>33</sup>
Football (grass pitches)	Leigh	<p><i>Actual spare capacity:</i> 17 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time. 4.5 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time. <i>Capacity at both mini pitch formats is balanced</i></p> <p><b>Shortfalls:</b> <b>0.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</b></p>	<p><i>Actual spare capacity:</i> 15 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time.</p> <p><b>Shortfalls:</b> <b>Three youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>5.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>One mini 7v7 match equivalent session per week.</b> <b>Six mini 5v5 match equivalent session per week.</b></p>
	Wigan Borough	<p><i>Actual spare capacity:</i> 15.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time. 0.5 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time.</p> <p><b>Shortfalls:</b> <b>Five youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>0.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>One mini 5v5 match equivalent session per week.</b></p>	<p><i>Actual spare capacity:</i> 8.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time.</p> <p><b>Shortfalls:</b> <b>15 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>12 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>2.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</b> <b>11 mini 5v5 match equivalent sessions per week.</b></p>
Football (3G pitches) <sup>34</sup>	Leigh	<b>Shortfall of one full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand</b>	<b>Shortfall of two full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand</b>
	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of five full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand</b>	<b>Shortfall of six full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand</b>

<sup>33</sup> Future demand based on ONS calculations and club consultation which also includes any latent and displaced demand identified.

<sup>34</sup> Based on accommodating 42 teams to one full size pitch for affiliated team training.

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Sport	Analysis Area	Current picture	Future picture (2026) <sup>33</sup>
Rugby union	Leigh	<b>Shortfall of one senior match equivalent session per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 2.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of 5.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 8.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
Rugby league (senior pitches)	Leigh	Actual spare capacity of four senior match equivalent sessions per week.	Actual spare capacity of four senior match equivalent sessions per week.
	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of 27.75 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 32 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
Cricket	Leigh	<b>Capacity shortfall of 17 match equivalent sessions per season.</b>	<b>Capacity shortfall of 17 match equivalent sessions per season.</b>
	Wigan Borough	Total capacity of 41 match equivalent sessions per season available, <i>however no peak time capacity to accommodate any future senior growth on natural turf squares.</i>	Total capacity of 31 match equivalent sessions per season available, <i>however no peak time capacity to accommodate any future senior growth on natural turf squares.</i>
Hockey (Sand/water AGPs)	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of one full sized AGP with floodlighting in the Leigh Area to accommodate unsuitable use of Westleigh High School. <i>Critical need for qualitative improvements at The Deanery C of E High School</i></b>	<b>Shortfall of one full sized AGP with floodlighting in the Leigh Area to accommodate unsuitable use of Westleigh High School. <i>Critical need for qualitative improvements at The Deanery C of E High School</i></b>
Touch	Wigan Borough	<b>Demand for formally marked touch pitch provision in the Wigan Town Area.</b>	<b>Demand for formally marked touch pitch provision in the Wigan Town Area.</b>
American football	Wigan Borough	Level of demand is able to be met by existing playing field provision.	Level of demand is able to be met by existing playing field provision.

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>35</sup>	Cost <sup>36</sup>	Aim
9	Astley & Tyldesley Miner's Welfare Institute	Cricket	Sports Club	A good quality natural grass cricket square with ten wickets. The pitch is overplayed by 30 match equivalent sessions per season.	Sustain square quality through continued maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Medium	L	L	Protect Provide
					Explore installation of an NTP in situ to alleviate overplay.				S	L	
10	Atherton Community School	Football	School	One adult pitch rated as standard quality. Unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA EH	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
		AGP		One smaller sized (60mx40m) floodlit sand dressed AGP rated as poor quality which is available for community use.	Resurface pitch as a priority to ensure availability for school and community use given poor and deteriorating quality.				S	M	
11	Atherton St George C of E Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch both rated as standard quality. Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitches quality. Pitches are rented by Leigh Community FC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is ensured.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
12	Bedford Hall Methodist Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch both rated as standard quality. Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Pitches are rented by Leigh Community FC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school and community use.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
13	Bedford High School	Cricket	School	A standalone NTP with no community use.	Retain as current use and explore community use aspects to reduce local shortfalls.	School ECB FA EH RFL	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Football		Three pitches all rated as standard quality. One adult pitch, one youth 11v11 pitch and one mini 7v7 pitch. Available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve quality as required and explore community use opportunities to reduce local shortfalls.				S	L	

<sup>35</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>36</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>37</sup>	Cost <sup>38</sup>	Aim
13	Bedford High School	AGP	School	Smaller sized (82mx42m) floodlit sand filled AGP rated as standard quality. Built in 2004 and has not been refurbished. Available for community use and predominantly used for football training. No recorded use from community hockey clubs for either training or match play. The pitch does not meet EH minimum dimension criteria.	Resurface pitch as a priority to ensure availability for school use given deteriorating quality. Explore feasibility of extending the AGP to meet minimum dimensions suitable for competitive hockey or football fixtures dependent on choice of surface type replacement.  Explore feasibility of 3G conversion given no foreseen impact on hockey users in the area, subject to potential extension to accommodate a full range of playing formats. Consideration should be given to other proposals for development of 3G pitch provision and hub sites in the area and strategic rationale for community use.  Encourage the provider to put in place a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.	School ECB FA EH RFL	Local Site	Medium	S	H	Protect Enhance
									S	H	
									L	L	
		L		L							
		Rugby league	Two senior pitches both rated as poor quality. Pitches are played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity. Available for community use, however, currently unused.	Sustain and improve quality as required and explore community use opportunities to reduce local shortfalls.							
14	Brunswick Park	Football	Council	Two youth 11v11 pitches rated as standard quality. Pitches have actual spare capacity at peak period of two match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain quality through appropriate maintenance.  Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
									S	L	
17	Butler Park	Football	Sports Club	Two pitches both rated as good quality. One adult pitch with actual spare capacity at peak period of one match equivalent session per week. One mini 7v7 pitch with no actual spare capacity at peak period. Site is used by Atherton Town FC which is one promotion short of joining the football pyramid at Step 7.	Ensure appropriate maintenance to sustain pitch quality.  Ensure ancillary facilities and playing provision is suitable for Step 7 football.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
									S	S/M	
23	Central Park Playing Fields	Football	Council	One standard quality mini 7v7 pitch which is available for community but currently unused.	Consider options for future use of the site, either to address identified grass pitch shortfalls or other uses, including rationalisation and potential options for mitigation of loss as part of a new, more attractive and sustainable community use facility.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Provide
24	City Road Playing Fields	Football	Council	One adult pitch rated as standard quality. Actual spare capacity at peak period of one match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.  Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
									S	L	

<sup>37</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>38</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>37</sup>	Cost <sup>38</sup>	Aim
27	Crilly Park	Football	Council	One adult pitch rated as standard quality. The pitch has actual spare capacity at peak period of one match equivalent session per week. Site is used by Atherton Labernum Rovers FC which plays at Step 6 in the football pyramid.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
					Ensure facilities are suitable to allow the Club to progress through the football pyramid.				S	M	
28	Devonshire Road Playing Fields	Football	Council	Two pitches both rated as standard quality. One adult pitch and one youth11v11 pitch. Each pitch has actual spare capacity of one match equivalent session per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
30	Douglas Park	Football	Council	Two adult pitches rated as standard quality. Pitches have actual spare capacity at peak period of two match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
32	Ellesmere Street Playing Fields	Football (Disused)	Council	<b>Disused</b> - one standard quality youth 9v9 pitch which is available for community but currently unused.	Consider options for future use of the site, either to address identified grass pitch shortfalls or other uses, including rationalisation and potential options for mitigation of loss as part of a new, more attractive and sustainable community use facility.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Provide

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>39</sup>	Cost <sup>40</sup>	Aim
33	Fred Longworth High School	Football	School	Two adult, two mini 5v5, two mini 7v7 and two youth 9v9 pitches all of which are of poor quality. Mini pitches are marked inside one adult and one youth 9v9 pitch. Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Pitches are rented by Hindsford Juniors FC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure.	Sustain and improve pitches quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	School FA EH ECB	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Explore reconfiguration of pitches to alleviate over play and over marking.				S	L	
		AGP		Small sized (82mx52m) sand filled AGP with floodlighting. Built in 2005 and rated as poor quality having not been resurfaced since. Available for community use and predominantly used for football training by Hindsford Juniors FC, Leigh Folds FC, and Astley & Tyldesley JFC. No recorded use from community hockey clubs for either training or match play. The pitch does not meet EH minimum dimension criteria.	Resurface pitch as a priority to ensure availability for school use given poor and deteriorating quality. Explore feasibility of extending the AGP to meet minimum dimensions suitable for competitive hockey or football fixtures dependent on choice of surface type replacement.				S	H	
				Explore feasibility of 3G conversion given no foreseen impact on hockey users in the area, subject to potential extension to accommodate a full range of playing formats. Consideration should be given to other proposals for development of 3G pitch provision and hub sites in the area and strategic rationale for community use.	S				H		
				Encourage the provider to put in place a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.	L				L		
Cricket	A standard quality standalone NTP unavailable for community use.	Retain as current use.	L	L							
35	Garrett Hall Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 pitch rated as standard quality. Not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
36	Gilded Hollins Community School	Football	School	One mini 7v7 pitch rated as standard quality. Not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
37	Gin Pit Village Playing Fields	Football	Council	Two adult pitches, one youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch all of which are standard quality. The two adult pitches are overplayed by 3.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Youth 9v9 pitch is overplayed by three match equivalent session per week. Mini 7v7 pitch is played to capacity. Spare capacity on the mini 5v5 retained for ensure pitch quality.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Provide
					Alleviate overplay through quality improvements or the transfer of demand to sites with actual spare capacity.				S	L	
					Explore opportunities for the Club to access more pitch provision to alleviate over play on current pitch stock.				S	L	

<sup>39</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>40</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above



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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>39</sup>	Cost <sup>40</sup>	Aim
38	Golborne High School	Football	School	Two adult pitches, one youth 11v11, two youth 9v9 and a mini 7v7 pitch all of poor quality and available for community use. Both the youth 11v11 and two youth 9v9 pitches are overplayed by one match equivalent session per week. Remaining pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Site suffers from unauthorized access from motorbikes and quads affecting pitch quality. Golborne Sports Junior FC uses the pitches as part of an informal agreement with the School. The Club has previously applied for funding to fence pitches off to stop unauthorized use.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school and community use.	School FA EH RFL	Key Centre	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Alleviate overplay through quality improvements.				S	L	
					Explore formalising an agreement between the School and Club with a usage agreement.				S	L	
					Explore funding options to fence off pitches in order to limit unauthorised access.				S	M	
		AGP		Small sized (60mx40m) floodlit sand filled AGP rated as standard quality available for community use.	Ensure quality is sustained in order to retain current usage.				S	L	
					Ensure a sinking fund is in place for long-term sustainability.				L	L	
				Rugby league	One senior pitch rated as poor quality dual use with football. Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.				Improve pitch quality for school use as required.	S	
	Explore reconfiguration of pitches to alleviate over marking.	S	L								
39	Golborne Parkside Sport & Community	Football	Sports Club	One adult pitch rated as poor quality. Actual spare capacity retained to protect pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club FA RFL	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Retain spare capacity until pitch quality improves.				S	L	
		Rugby league		One senior pitch rated as poor quality which is played to capacity. One senior pitch rated as standard quality with actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. One junior pitch rated as poor quality which is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Site is used by Golborne Parkside ARLFC.	Improve poor quality pitches through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work.				S	L	
					Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work				L	L	

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>41</sup>	Cost <sup>42</sup>	Aim
40	Golborne Sports and Social Club	Cricket	Sport Club	Standard quality natural grass cricket square with 16 wickets. The pitch has no actual spare capacity available at peak time. Site has poor quality changing facilities which do not meet the needs for all sporting branches of the sports and social club.	Sustain square quality through continued maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime.	Sports Club ECB FA EH	Key Centre	Medium	L	L	Protect Enhance Provide
					Seek funding streams to improve the quality of changing facilities.				S	M	
		Football		One adult and one mini 7v7 pitch both rated as standard quality. The adult pitch is played to capacity and the mini 7v7 pitch has no spare capacity at peak period. Site has poor quality changing facilities which do not meet the needs for all sporting branches of the sports and social club. Golborne Sports and Social Club has aspirations to develop a full size floodlit 3G onsite.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.				L	L	
					Seek funding streams to improve the quality of changing facilities.				S	M	
					Explore the feasibility on creating a full size 3G.				S	L	
		AGP		Full sized floodlit sand dressed AGP rated as good quality. Refurbished in 2015. Accessed primarily by Golborne HC. Site has poor quality changing facilities which do not meet the needs for all sporting branches of the sports and social club.	Sustain quality and protect pitch as a hockey suitable surface.				L	L	
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	
Seek funding streams to improve the quality of changing facilities.	S	M									
41	Hawkhurst Park	Football	Council	One mini 7v7 pitch rated as poor quality. Actual spare capacity discounted to protect pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
43	Hesketh Meadow Playing Fields	Football	Council	Two adult pitches, two mini 7v7, one youth 11v11 and one youth 9v9 pitch all of standard quality. Youth 11v11 pitch is overplayed by two match equivalent sessions per week and the youth 9v9 pitch is played to capacity. Two adult pitches have actual spare capacity of two match equivalent sessions per week. The two mini 7v7 pitches have no actual spare capacity at peak time.  The site is affected by proposed plans for the High Speed Two (HS2) rail scheme which if it goes ahead would affect the playing field.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Key Centre	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Alleviate overplay through quality improvements or the transfer of demand to sites with actual spare capacity.				S	L	
					Explore reconfiguration of pitches to meet actual demand.				S	L	
					Ascertain potential future impact on playing field provision should the HS2 scheme be delivered and ensure that any loss is able to meet National Planning Policy.				L	L	

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51	Hindsford AFC	Football	Sports Club	One poor quality adult pitch rated as poor which is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Site is leased to Hindsford AFC which plays at Step 7 of the football pyramid. Leaseholder (Tarleton Estates) is proposing development in the South of Atherton area and has discussed with the Club regarding the potential improvement of football pitch and ancillary facilities at the main Hindsford AFC site as well as improvement and development of more football pitches at Hindsbrook Brook.	Improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club Football RFL	Local Site	Medium	L	L	Protect Provide Enhance
					Ensure ancillary facilities and playing provision is suitable for Step 7 football.				S	L	
		Consider feasibility of the site to accommodate more football pitches on residual land around the presently marked pitch. Seek to fully understand development proposals and potential investment available through possible residential development in the area. Seek to maximise usage to reduce shortfalls and improve pitch quality.		S-M	L						
		Small sized medium pile floodlit 3G rated as standard quality.		L	L						
	3G pitch			Ensure quality is sustained in order to retain current usage.				L	L		
				Ensure sinking funds are in place for long-term sustainability.				L	L		
52	Holy Family Catholic Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 rated as standard quality. Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Pitch is rented by FC Bridgewater of Worsley There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
		Rugby league		One primary sized pitch rated as standard quality. Available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.				L	L	
54	Howe Bridge Leisure Centre	Football	Council/Trust	One adult pitch rated as good quality which has actual spare capacity of one match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain pitch quality through continued standard and regularity of maintenance.	Council/Trust FA RFL	Hub Site	High	L	L	Protect Enhance
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
		3G pitch		Floodlit FIFA certified full size 3G pitch rated as good quality.	Sustain pitch quality through continued standard and regularity of maintenance.				L	L	
				Ensure testing of the pitch every two years so that it remains on the FIFA register.	Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				S	L	
				Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L		
55	Howe Bridge New Pitches	Football		Four adult pitches and four youth 9v9 pitches all of which are rated as good quality. Adult pitches have actual spare capacity of 3.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Youth 9v9 pitches have actual spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain pitch quality through continued standard and regularity of maintenance.				L	L	
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	

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<sup>44</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

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61	Leigh Street Playing Fields	Football	Council	Two adult pitches both rated as standard quality. Pitches have actual spare capacity of 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of use.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
62	Leigh Cricket Club	Football	Sport Club	A good quality natural grass cricket square with 15 wickets. The pitch is overplayed by 33 match equivalent sessions per season.	Sustain square quality through continued maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Provide
					Explore installation of an NTP in situ to alleviate overplay.				S	L	
65	Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC	Rugby league	Sport Club	One senior pitch rated as good quality. No actual spare capacity at senior peak period.	Sustain pitch quality through continued standard and regularity of maintenance.	Sports Club RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
69	Lowton Church of England High School	AGP	School	Small sized (80mx52m) floodlit sand filled AGP rated as standard quality. Available for community use and predominately used by Leigh Genesis FC for training.  Three adult and one youth 9v9 pitch all of good quality. No actual spare capacity at peak period on any pitch. Leigh Genesis FC has a 25 community use agreement in place for the use of the pitches and relevant ancillary facilities.  The School and Leigh Genesis FC have aspirations to develop a small sized floodlit 3G in partnership with the Club to use for training. The proposed 3G is proposed to be located on the footprint of poor quality school tennis courts.	Ensure quality is sustained and improved in order to retain current usage.	School Sports Club FA EH	Key Centre	Medium	S	L	Protect Provide
		Football			Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	
					Sustain pitch quality through continued standard and regularity of maintenance.				L	L	
					Explore potential funding streams for the conversion of poor quality tennis courts to 3G.				S	L	
70	Lowton St Marys C of E School	Football	School	One mini 7v7 pitch rated as poor quality. Not available for community use.  Small sized standard quality 3G which is not floodlit and is not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA EH	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
		3G			Ensure quality is sustained and improved in order to retain current usage.				S	L	
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	
72	Marsh Playing Fields	Football	Council	Two standard quality adult pitches which have actual spare capacity at peak period of one match equivalent session per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
		Rugby league		One poor quality senior pitch which is available for community use but currently unused. Actual spare capacity of one match equivalent session at peak period per week.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.				L	L	
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites.				S	L	

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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>45</sup>	Cost <sup>46</sup>	Aim
74	Meadowbank Primary School Nursery Education Centre	Football	School	One standard quality youth 9v9 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
79	Newton Westpark Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 7v7 which is unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
89	Pennington Football Club	Football	Sport Club	Two adult, one youth 9v9 and a mini 7v7 pitch all rated as standard quality. Actual spare capacity of two match equivalent sessions at peak period per week on the two adult pitches. No actual spare capacity at peak period on the mini 7v7 pitch and minimal spare capacity retained to ensure pitch quality on the youth 9v9 pitch. The Club reports vandalism and theft of equipment at the site. The Club is one promotion short of joining the football pyramid.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
					Explore the feasibility of improving security on site to reduce vandalism and theft of equipment.				M	L	
					Ensure facilities are suitable to allow the Club to progress through the football pyramid.				S	M	
90	Queensway Playing Fields	Football	Council	One youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch both of standard quality. No actual spare capacity at peak time on either pitch.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
100	Siddow Park	Football	Council	One standard quality adult pitch which has no actual spare capacity at peak period. Pitch suffers from poor drainage and limited maintenance.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
109	St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 7v7 pitch which is available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
110	St Georges C of E Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 7v7 pitch which is available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
111	St Georges Playing Fields	Football	Sports Club	Two good quality adult pitches with actual spare capacity of one match equivalent session at peak period per week.	Sustain pitch quality through continued standard and regularity of maintenance.	Sports Club FA RFU	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby union		Three senior pitches all of standard quality (M1/D1), one of which is fully floodlit and used for training. Floodlit senior pitch is over played by one match equivalent session per week. One of the remaining senior pitches is played to capacity with the remaining one not having any actual spare capacity at peak period. Pipe and slit drainage system installed in 2001, is still effective; but is over ten years old. Owned by Tyldesley RUFC.	Sustain and look to improve pitch quality through higher standard and regularity of maintenance.				L	L	
					Regularly inspect drainage system to ensure it remains effective and replace when necessary.				M	M	

<sup>45</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>46</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>43</sup>	Cost <sup>44</sup>	Aim
118	St Luke's C of E Primary School	Football	School	One poor quality mini 7v7 pitch. Available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
		Rugby league		One primary sized pitch rated as standard quality. Available for community use but currently unused.							
119	St Mary's Catholic High School	Cricket	School	A standard quality standalone NTP with no community use.	Retain for school use.	School ECB FA EH	Key Centre	Medium	L	L	Protect
		Football		One adult and one youth 11v11 pitch both of standard quality. Available for community use but currently unused.	Explore community use aspects to reduce local shortfalls.				M	L	
				Small sized (82mx52m) sand filled AGP with floodlighting. Built in 2005 and rated as poor quality having not been resurfaced since. Available for community use and predominantly used for football training by Astley & Tyldesley JFC and Pennington FC. No recorded use from community hockey clubs for either training or match play. The pitch does not meet EH minimum dimension criteria.	Sustain and improve quality as required and explore community use opportunities and reduce local shortfalls.				S	L	
				Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.	S				M		
				Explore feasibility of 3G conversion given no foreseen impact on hockey users in the area, subject to potential extension to accommodate a full range of playing formats. Consideration should be given to other proposals for development of 3G pitch provision and hub sites in the area and strategic rationale for community use.	L				L		
		Rugby league		Two poor quality senior pitches. Pitches are played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity. Available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.				S	L	
123	St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School	Football	School	One mini 5v5 pitch rated as standard quality. Not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
130	The Ley Recreation Ground	Football	Council	Two youth 9v9 pitches both rated as standard quality. Available community but currently unused. Actual spare capacity of two match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
					Explore reconfiguration of pitches to alleviate over play on other pitch types.				S	L	
132	Watsons Field	Football	Council	One adult pitch rated as standard quality which has actual spare capacity of one match equivalent session per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>43</sup>	Cost <sup>44</sup>	Aim
133	Westleigh Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	A standard quality natural grass cricket square with nine grass wickets accompanied by an NTP. The pitch does not have any actual spare capacity available at peak period.	Sustain square quality through continued maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
134	Westleigh High School	AGP	School	Small sized (81mx52m) sand filled AGP with floodlighting. Built in 2005 and rated as standard quality having not been resurfaced since. Available for community use and used from community hockey clubs Leigh HC and Manchester HC. The pitch does not meet EH minimum dimension criteria.	Resurface pitch as a priority to ensure availability for school use given poor and deteriorating quality.	School EH FA	Key Centre	High	S	M	Protect Enhance
					Explore feasibility of extending the AGP to meet minimum dimensions suitable for competitive hockey				S	L	
					If extension is not feasible. Explore feasibility of 3G conversion given no foreseen impact on hockey users in the area, subject to potential extension to accommodate a full range of playing formats. Consideration should be given to other proposals for development of 3G pitch provision and hub sites in the area and strategic rationale for community use.				S	L	
					Encourage the provider to put in place a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	
135	Westleigh High School Playing Fields	Football	School	One standard quality youth 11v11 pitch. Available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve quality as required and explore community use opportunities to reduce local shortfalls.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby league		One senior pitch rated as poor quality. Available for community use but currently unused. Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.	Sustain and improve quality as required and explore community use opportunities to reduce local shortfalls.				S	L	
136	Westleigh Methodist Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	A poor quality natural cricket square with 14 grass wickets. Westleigh Methodist CC reports unauthorised access from neighbouring horses caused significant amounts of damage to the square leaving it unplayable. The Club is trying to make the square playable for the 2018 season.	Improve square quality through an enhance maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Medium	M	L	Protect Enhance
					Assist the Club in obtaining reparation for the damage cause to the square.				M	L	
137	Westleigh St Paul's C of E Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 pitch rated as standard quality which is not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect
		Rugby league		One standard quality primary pitch which is not available for community use							
150	Atherton Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	A good quality natural grass cricket square with 16 wickets accompanied by an NTP. The pitch does not have any actual spare capacity available at peak time.	Sustain square quality through an enhance maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
152	Leigh Road Playing Fields	Rugby league	Council/ Sports Club	One senior pitch and one junior pitch both of poor quality. Senior pitch is played to capacity through training demand. Junior pitch was previously overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week but is no longer used as Atherton Dragons ARLFC has since folded. No ancillary facilities on site.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council RFL	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>43</sup>	Cost <sup>44</sup>	Aim
153	Sutton Park	Rugby league	Sports Club	Three senior pitches all rated as good quality one of which is floodlit. Three good quality junior pitches and four standard quality mini pitches. Floodlit senior pitch has actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions at senior peak period per week. The remaining two senior pitches have a total of two match equivalent sessions available at senior peak period per week. The three junior pitches have actual spare capacity of one match equivalent sessions available at junior/primary peak period per week. The four mini pitches have a total of 1.5 match equivalent sessions available at junior/primary peak period per week. Site is leased to Leigh Miners Rangers ARLFC (Junior section). Ancillary facilities have recently been refurbished. The Club has aspirations to further extend clubhouse facilities. Additionally, the Club cannot afford regular sustained upkeep of the drainage system or verti draining.	Sustain good quality pitches through continued standard and regularity of maintenance.	Sports Club RFL	Key Centre	Medium	L	L	Protect Enhance
					Sustain and improve standard pitch quality pitches, through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work.				S	L	
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
					Explore funding options to assist the Club in extending ancillary facilities.				S	M	
					Support the Club in the upkeep of drainage system.				S/M	L	
154	Leigh RUFC	Rugby union	Sports Club	Two senior pitches and two junior pitches all of poor quality (M1/D0) One senior pitch has spare capacity discounted due to its poor quality with all remaining pitches being played to capacity. The two senior pitches are leased from a developer and have unsecure tenure as they could potentially be developed whereas the two junior pitches are secure as they are freehold. Pitches receive maintenance by Leigh RUFC; however, pitches drain poorly due to the soil having high clay context. Site has issues with dog fouling and unauthorised access. Poor quality changing rooms which do not meet RFU specifications. All the Clubs training demand is located away from the site on AGPs. The Club has aspirations to return some of this demand back to Leigh RUFC to reduce expenditure.	Increase levels of maintenance to improve pitch quality and reduce overplay.	Sport Club RFU Council	Local Site	High	L	L	Protect Provide Enhance
					Explore potential of installing drainage systems on pitches to increase capacity and to reduce overplay.				S	M	
					Explore potential of installing floodlights on senior pitches to allow for training demand, however, only if pitch quality improves to sustain an increase in usage.				S	M	
					Explore options to reduce dog fouling and unauthorised access.				S	L	
					Explore funding streams for the improvement of onsite changing facilities.				S	M	
169	Thames Avenue	Rugby union	Sports Club	One poor quality senior pitch and three poor quality mini pitches located on Thames Avenue. All pitches have spare capacity retained due to quality. Pitches are local to but away from the main Leigh RUFC. Planning permission pending for residential development which would result in loss of the playing field. Permission has however already been granted for the creation of new playing field provision off Carr Lane adjacent to the existing junior pitches at Leigh RUFC. This site proposed as mitigation for the loss of Thames Avenue is planned to accommodate either one senior pitch or three	Subject to securing planning approval, mitigate proposed loss of playing field land through re-provision off Carr Lane, ensuring that any development is able to meet all Planning Policy requirements.	Council RFU Sports Club	Local Site	High	S-M	M	Provide
	NEW		Carr Lane		N/A						



**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>43</sup>	Cost <sup>44</sup>	Aim
				smaller pitches, to meet RFU specifications with associated leveling and drainage.	Consider feasibility of installing floodlighting so that the Club is able to accommodate a proportion of training onsite.						
163	Leigh Sports Village (LSV)	Football / rugby league	Council/ LSV Trust	Floodlit stadium pitch rated as good quality. Dual use stadium pitch for rugby league and football and as such receives year-round use. Regular increased use not recommended.	Continue to maintain, prepare and remediate the pitch to a standard in order to accommodate year-round performance level sport, including international level matches.	Council LSV Trust FA RFU RFL Sports Club	Hub Site	High	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby league		Two good quality senior pitches, one of which is a dual use stadium pitch also used for football therefore capacity to be retained to protect quality for elite level performance. The remaining pitch is used by Leigh Centurions and considered to be played to capacity.	Sustain quality of pitches through regular enhance maintenance and remedial work.				L	L	
		3G pitch		Two floodlit full size good quality 3G pitches and four standard quality smaller sized floodlit 3G pitches. The two full sized 3G pitches are FIFA, World Rugby and RFL for Community Standard certification and have limited spare capacity. Used by both community and professional clubs. FIFA certification needs renewal by 22/2/18 and World Rugby certification needs renewal by 15/12/17. Leigh East ARLFC has a 20 year license agreement for allocated use of the pitches.	Sustain 3G pitch quality through continued rigorous and regular maintenance. Make qualitative improvements if required in order to meet performance standard testing criteria. Ensure retesting for the pitches for FIFA, World Rugby and RFL for Community Standards certifications by late 2017. Look to complete these together to minimise costs implications. Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability.				L	L	
64	Leigh Harriers Athletics Stadium	Football	Sports Club	Two adult pitches rated as good quality. Dual pitches which accommodate rugby league. Pitches are played to capacity with both football and rugby league demand.	Continue to maintain, prepare and remediate the pitches to a high standard.				L	L	
		Rugby league		Two senior rugby league pitches rated as good quality. Dual pitches which accommodates football. Pitches are played to capacity with both football and rugby league demand.	Continue to maintain, prepare and remediate the pitches to a high standard.				L	L	
164	Bee Fold Lane Playing	Football	Council	Four youth 11v11 pitches all rated as standard quality. Available for community use but currently unused. Actual spare capacity at peak period of four match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
					Look to reconfigure layout to alleviate over play on other pitch types.				S	L	
166	Atherton Collieries FC	Football	Sports Club	One good quality adult pitch which has actual spare capacity at peak period of one match equivalent session per week. Site is used by Atherton Colliers FC which plays in Step 5 of the football pyramid.	Sustain good quality pitch through continued standard and regularity of maintenance.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>43</sup>	Cost <sup>44</sup>	Aim
					Ensure facilities are suitable to allow the Club to progress through the football pyramid.				S	M	

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>47</sup>	Cost <sup>48</sup>	Aim
168	Hindsford Brook	Football	Sports Club	One standard quality adult pitch which has actual spare capacity of one match equivalent session at peak period per week. Leaseholder (Tarleton Estates) is proposing development in the South of Atherton area and has discussed with the Club regarding the potential improvement of football pitch and ancillary facilities at the main Hindsford AFC site as well as improvement and development of more football pitches at Hindsbrook Brook	Consider feasibility of the site to accommodate more football pitches on residual land around the presently marked pitch. Seek to fully understand development proposals and potential investment available through possible residential development in the area. Seek to maximise usage to reduce shortfalls and improve pitch quality.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Low	S-M	L	Protect Enhance
157	Hope Park (Printshop Lane Playing Field)	Rugby league	School	One poor quality junior pitch. Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity.	Improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school use.	School RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
-	Melrose Tip	Football (Disused)	Council	<b>Disused</b> - Previously had one adult football pitch on a slope, reported subject to vandalism and damage. No onsite changing provision. Was allocated with the North Leigh Park residential development however the developer has since entered administration, though the Council is keen for the scheme to be delivered.	Seek to pick up the development again in order to complete residential development of the site, with the delivery of planned drainage improvements at Marsh Playing Fields and new pitch provision at Howe Bridge Leisure Centre as proposed mitigation, or any variation thereof	Council FA	Reserve Site	Medium	S-M	M-H	Provide
-	Heath Lane	Disused site	Council	<b>Disused</b> - Former primary school site located off Heath Lane on land south of Watson's Field. School playing field last known to be maintained circa 2000, now overgrown scrub land.	Determine future use of the site based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to improve other playing pitch sites (quantity and/or quality).	Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Provide
-	Lodge Lane Playing Fields	Football (Lapsed)	Council	<b>Lapsed</b> - Previously marked with four football pitches of adult, youth and mini (two) sizes. No longer in use or marked and often waterlogged. One pitch still has goalposts in place but the site has no changing provision and car parking provision is poor.	Determine future use of the site based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to improve other playing pitch sites (quantity and/or quality).	Council FA	Reserve Site	Low	S	L	Provide

<sup>47</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>48</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>49</sup>	Cost <sup>50</sup>	Aim
-	Moseley Common	Football (Disused)	Council	<b>Disused</b> - One adult and one youth 9v9 pitch now unmarked due to no local demand, reportedly because the site drains poorly. Now retained as recreational open space and the local Friends group has recently funded the installation of 16x7 feet goalposts for recreational play. WBC reports interest from a team looking to hire the pitch for 2017/18.	Determine future use of the site based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to improve other playing pitch sites (quantity and/or quality).	Council FA	Reserve Site	Low	S	L	Provide Protect
-	Spa Road Recreation Ground	Football (Lapsed)	Council	<b>Lapsed</b> - Youth 9v9 pitch not presently used or marked. The site neighbours Crilly Park (Atherton Laburnum Rovers FC) and the Council states it would like to retain site for community use.	Determine future use of the site based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to improve other playing pitch sites (quantity and/or quality).	Council FA	Reserve Site	Low	S	L	Provide

<sup>49</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>50</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

## WIGAN TOWN ANALYSIS AREA

Sport	Analysis Area	Current picture	Future picture (2026) <sup>51</sup>
Football (grass pitches)	Wigan Town	<p><b>Shortfalls:</b></p> <p>1.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>Five youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>4.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>0.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>One mini 5v5 match equivalent session per week.</p>	<p><b>Shortfalls:</b></p> <p>Five adult match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>13 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>6.5 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>1.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>Five mini 5v5 match equivalent session per week.</p>
	Wigan Borough	<p><i>Actual spare capacity:</i></p> <p>15.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time.</p> <p>0.5 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time.</p> <p><b>Shortfalls:</b></p> <p>Five youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>0.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>One mini 5v5 match equivalent session per week.</p>	<p><i>Actual spare capacity:</i></p> <p>8.5 adult match equivalent sessions per week available at peak time.</p> <p><b>Shortfalls:</b></p> <p>15 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>12 youth 9v9 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>2.5 mini 7v7 match equivalent sessions per week.</p> <p>11 mini 5v5 match equivalent sessions per week.</p>
Football (3G pitches) <sup>52</sup>	Wigan Town	Shortfall of two full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand	Shortfall of two full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand
	Wigan Borough	Shortfall of five full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand	Shortfall of six full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated team training demand

<sup>51</sup> Future demand based on ONS calculations and club consultation which also includes any latent and displaced demand identified.

<sup>52</sup> Based on accommodating 42 teams to one full size pitch for affiliated team training.

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

Sport	Analysis Area	Current picture	Future picture (2026) <sup>53</sup>
Rugby union	Wigan Town	<b>Shortfall of 4.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of six senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of 5.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 8.5 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
Rugby league (senior pitches)	Wigan Town	<b>Shortfall of 32.25 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 35 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of 27.75 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>	<b>Shortfall of 32 senior match equivalent sessions per week.</b>
Cricket	Wigan Town	Total capacity of 15 match equivalent sessions per season available,	Total capacity of five match equivalent sessions per season available,
	Wigan Borough	Total capacity of 41 match equivalent sessions per season available, <i>however no peak time capacity to accommodate any future senior growth on natural turf squares.</i>	Total capacity of 31 match equivalent sessions per season available, <i>however no peak time capacity to accommodate any future senior growth on natural turf squares.</i>
Hockey (Sand/water AGPs)	Wigan Borough	<b>Shortfall of one full sized AGP with floodlighting in the Leigh Area to accommodate unsuitable use of Westleigh High School.</b> <b><i>Critical need for qualitative improvements at The Deanery C of E High School</i></b>	<b>Shortfall of one full sized AGP with floodlighting in the Leigh Area to accommodate unsuitable use of Westleigh High School.</b> <b><i>Critical need for qualitative improvements at The Deanery C of E High School</i></b>
Touch	Wigan Borough	<b>Demand for formally marked touch pitch provision in the Wigan Town Area.</b>	<b>Demand for formally marked touch pitch provision in the Wigan Town Area.</b>
American football	Wigan Borough	Level of demand is able to be met by existing playing field provision.	Level of demand is able to be met by existing playing field provision.

<sup>53</sup> Future demand based on ONS calculations and club consultation which also includes any latent and displaced demand identified.

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>54</sup>	Cost <sup>55</sup>	Aim
1	Abraham Guest Academy	3G pitch	School	Floodlit full size 3G pitch rated as good quality. Built in 2010 and refurbished in 2016. FA certified which needs renewal 4/9/19.	Sustain 3G pitch quality through continued rigorous and regular maintenance. Make qualitative improvements if required in order to meet performance standard testing criteria.	School FA RFU RFL	Key Centre	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Retest to remain FA Certified every two years.				S	L	
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	
		One poor quality senior pitch. Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity. Available for community use but currently unused.		Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	S				L		
		One poor quality (M0/D0) senior pitch. Currently unused by community clubs. Used for curriculum and extra curriculum activities. Pitch has combination goalposts and is also subsequently also used for football.		Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required. Explore reconfiguration of pitches to alleviate overplay.	S				L		
Football	Two standard quality adult pitches one of which is over marked with rugby union. Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Pitches are rented by Highfield Grange FC, Wigan Junior Latics FC and Shevington FC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club's tenure is deemed unsecure.	Sustain and improve quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	L	L							
3	Alexandra Park Playing Fields	Football	Council	One standard quality mini 7v7 pitch with spare capacity of one match equivalent session per week. Available for community use however it is currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect
4	Ashfield Park	Football	Council	Two adult pitches and two youth 11v11 pitches all are standard quality. The adult pitches have actual spare capacity of one match equivalent sessions at peak period. The youth 11v11 pitches have actual spare capacity of one match equivalent sessions at peak period. All pitches suffer from dog fouling and limited maintenance. Nominated Asset of Community Value (ACV).	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
					Explore possible solution to decrease dog fouling on the pitches.				M	L	

<sup>54</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>55</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>56</sup>	Cost <sup>57</sup>	Aim
5	Ashton Athletic FC	Football	Club	Two adult pitches and one youth 9v9 pitch all of standard quality and one poor quality mini 7v7 pitch. Both adult pitches are over marked by the youth 9v9 and are overplayed by 2.5 match equivalent sessions per week. The mini 7v7 pitch is played to capacity. Club plays at Step 5 of the football pyramid.	Ensure appropriate maintenance to sustain pitch quality.	Club FA	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Look to improve pitch quality through an enhanced and dedicated maintenance regime to alleviate overplay.				S	L	
					Ensure ancillary facilities and playing provision is suitable for Step 7 football.				S	L	
7	Aspull Church Primary School	Football	School	One mini 7v7 pitch rated as standard quality. Unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

<sup>56</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>57</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above



**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>58</sup>	Cost <sup>59</sup>	Aim
8	Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields	Football	Council	Two adult pitches, one youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch all of standard quality. The two adult pitches have actual spare capacity at peak period of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. The mini 7v7 pitch has no actual spare capacity at peak period whereas the youth 9v9 pitch is played to capacity.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council Sports Club FA RFL RFU	Key Centre	High	S	L	Protect Enhance Provide
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
					One poor quality senior pitch which is over played by two match equivalent sessions per week. Dual use pitch with rugby union. Accessed by Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC who rents the use of the pitch and ancillary facilities from the Aspull RFC. Anecdotal evidence identifies issues with rental costs charged by the rugby union club, perceived by Aspull New Spring Lions ARLFC to be unaffordable. Poor quality ancillary facilities.				Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	S	
		Explore reconfiguration of pitch type to alleviate dual use.		S					L		
		Further consult with Aspull New Spring Lions and Aspull RFC regarding rental costs and access to provision.		S					L		
		Explore funding streams for the improvement of onsite ancillary facilities.		S/M					M		
		Explore relocating Aspull New Spring Lions to another site with dedicated rugby league provision.		S					L		
		Two senior pitches and one mini pitch all rated as poor quality (M0/D0). One senior pitch is dual use with rugby league and is over played by two match equivalent sessions per week. The remaining senior pitch is played to capacity and is partially floodlit. Mini pitch is over played by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Aspull RFC has secure tenure of Aspull Civic Centre Playing Fields as it owns its mini pitch, training area and ancillary facilities and has a long-term lease on the two senior pitches on site ending in 2021. Club states it does not currently have the correct equipment to carry out effective maintenance. Pitches drain poorly and are uneven. Issues with dog fouling and unauthorised usage.		Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.					S	M	
				Explore reconfiguration of pitch type to alleviate dual use.	S				L		
				Further consult with Aspull RFC and Aspull New Spring Lions rental costs and access to provision.	S				L		
				Explore funding streams for the improvement of onsite ancillary facilities.	S/M				M		
				Assist Aspull RFC in obtaining effective maintenance equipment.	S				L		
				Explore the feasibility of installing purpose built drainage to improve pitches quality.	S				L		
				Ensure lease of the site is renegotiated to the agreement of both parties.	M				L		
				Explore potential options to reduce dog fouling and unauthorised usage.	S				L		
Explore funding streams to fully floodlit one senior pitch.	S		M								

<sup>58</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>59</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>60</sup>	Cost <sup>61</sup>	Aim
18	Cale Lane Playing Fields	Football	Council	One youth 11v11 and one youth 9v9 pitch both of standard quality. The youth 11v11 pitch is over played by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week whereas; the youth 9v9 pitch has no actual spare capacity at peak period. There are no changing facilities on site.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
19	Canon Sharples School	Football	School	One mini 7v7 pitch rated as standard quality. Available for community but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
25	Clarington Grove Playing Fields	Rugby league	Sports Club	Two senior pitches, one of which is floodlit, and one primary pitch, all of standard quality. Primary pitch is played to capacity. The floodlit senior pitch is over played by four match equivalent sessions per week with the remaining senior pitch over played by 6.75 match equivalent sessions per week. Wigan St Patrick's ARLFC uses the pitches heavily for both competitive and training demand. The Club ideally wants separate changing rooms for male and female.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club RFL	Key Centre	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Seek to reduce overplay by increasing pitch capacity through qualitative improvements.				M	L	
					Explore the feasibility of acquiring more pitch space to alleviate over play on current pitch stock.				S	L	
					Explore the feasibility transferring some training demand from match pitches to general grass playing field areas or RFL Community Standard 3G pitch provision in order to reduce overplay on match pitches.				S	L	
					Assist the Club in obtaining funding to create dedicated male and female changing rooms.				S	M	
31	DW Stadium	Football	Sports Club	One floodlit adult pitch rated as good quality. Dual use pitch with rugby league. Professional club site with no external community use.	No action required.	Sports Club FA RFL	-	-	L	L	Protect
		Rugby league		One floodlit senior pitch rated as good quality. Dual use pitch with football. Professional club site with no external community use.							

<sup>60</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>61</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>62</sup>	Cost <sup>63</sup>	Aim
42	Hawkley Hall High School	Football	School	One youth 11v11 rated as standard quality. Actual spare capacity discounted due to over marking. Available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA EH RFL	Key Centre	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
		AGP		Small sized (70mx40m) sand filled AGP with floodlighting. Built in 2005 and rated as poor quality having not been resurfaced since. Available for community use and predominantly used for football training by Hawkley FC, Highfield Grange FC. No recorded use from community hockey clubs for either training or match play. The pitch does not meet EH minimum dimension criteria.	As a priority, resurface the AGP for school use given poor and deteriorating quality. Further consultation required with the school to determine most appropriate surface type to service school requirements.				S	M	
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	
		Rugby league		One junior pitch rated as poor quality. Pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity. Available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.				S	L	
45	Highfield Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	A standard quality natural grass cricket square with 10 wickets. The pitch is overplayed by 24 match equivalent sessions per season. Used by Highfield CC.	Sustain square quality through an enhance maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime. Explore installation of an NTP in situ to alleviate overplay.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Low	L S	L L	Protect Enhance
46	Highfield St Matthews Primary School	Football	School	One mini 7v7 pitch rated as standard quality and is not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
56	Ince C of E Primary School	Football	School	One mini 5v5 pitch rated as standard quality and is not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

<sup>62</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>63</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>64</sup>	Cost <sup>65</sup>	Aim
57	Ince Rose Bridge Sports and Community Club	Rugby league	Sports Club	One senior and one primary pitch both are floodlit and of standard quality. The senior pitch is over played by five match equivalent sessions per week and the primary pitch is over played by two match equivalent sessions per week. Pitches are used for both competitive and training demand. Site is leased to Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club RFL	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Seek to reduce overplay by increasing pitch capacity through qualitative improvements.				S	L	
					Explore the feasibility of acquiring more pitch space to alleviate over play on current pitch stock.				S	L	
					Explore the feasibility transferring some training demand from match pitches to general grass playing field areas or RFL Community Standard 3G pitch provision in order to reduce overplay on match pitches.				S	L	
60	Laithwaite Park	Football	Sports Club	Three adult pitches, two youth 11v11, three youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch. All pitches are of poor quality. Adult pitches are over played by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Youth 11v11 pitches are over played by 6.5 match equivalent sessions per week, 9v9 pitches are over played by three match equivalent sessions per week, the mini 7v7 pitch is over played by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week and the mini 5v5 pitch is over played by one match equivalent session per week. The site has poor quality ancillary facilities. Issues with unauthorised use, poor drainage, littering and dog fouling on all pitches. Investment is being sought to improve pitch quality and to fence off the pitches. Wigan Football Association and Cherrybrook FC have recently renegotiated long-term lease of the site. Wigan Football Association and Cherrybrook FC have aspirations to develop a full size 3G pitch once pitches have been fenced off and secured from unauthorised access.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club Council FA	Key Centre	Medium	M	L	Protect Enhance Provide
					Explore potential of installing drainage systems on pitches to increase capacity and to reduce overplay.				S	L	
					Explore potential funding streams to improve ancillary facilities quality.				S	L	
					Assist the Club in using the investment from Wigan Deal to fence and secure the pitches.				S	M	
					Assist the Club in pursuing appropriate investment opportunities to improve the quality of the pitches.				M	M	

<sup>64</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>65</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>66</sup>	Cost <sup>67</sup>	Aim
67	Little Lane Playing Field	Football (3G)	Sports Club	Three adult pitches, one youth 9v9 and one mini 5v5 pitch all of good quality. No pitch has actual spare capacity at peak period. Winstanley Warriors FC secured long term leasehold of Little Lane Playing Fields in 2017, enabling the Club to successfully obtain external funding from the Football Foundation for the creation of a youth 9v9 sized 3G pitch onsite. The pitch is currently under construction. The Club also has plans for a second phase of development, to include new storage facilities and improvements to the modular changing facilities. The Club has a team which is just one promotion short of joining the football pyramid.	Sustain pitch quality through continued standard and regularity of maintenance.	Sports Club FA	Key Centre	Low	L	L	Protect Provide
					Explore potential revenue streams to assist the Club in its second phase of developing ancillary facilities.				S	L	
					Ensure development of small sized 3G pitch provision meets FA recommended dimensions and is subjected to FA/FIFA performance standard testing for certification to host competitive mini / junior 9v9 football matches.				S	L	
					Maximise use for team training and competitive matches to reduce grass pitch shortfalls for football.				M	L	
					Ensure ground grading is suitable for step pyramid football if teams were to be promoted.				S	L/M	
71	Lucozade Powerleague Soccerdome (Wigan)	Football	Commercial Management	Six small sized floodlit 3G pitches rated as standard quality. Central venue for the Wigan and District Youth Football League.	Sustain, look to improve quality when required and retain for current use.	Commercial FA	Local Site	Medium	L	L	Protect
73	Marcus Bridge Primary School	Football	School	One mini 7v7 pitch rated as standard quality. Not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
		Rugby league		One primary pitch rated as standard quality. Not available for community use.							
76	Millbrook Primary School	Football	School	One mini 7v7 pitch rated as standard quality. Not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
81	Norley Hall Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	A standard quality natural grass cricket square with 13 wickets. The pitch has does not have any actual spare capacity at peak time.	Sustain square quality through continued maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
82	Oldhams Fold	Football	Sports Club	One adult pitch rated as poor quality which is overplayed by 1.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
83	Orrell Holgate Primary School	AGP	School	Smaller sized (35mx34m) floodlit sand filled AGP rated as standard quality. Not available for community use.	Ensure quality is improved in order to retain current usage.	School EH	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	
84	Orrell Lamberhead Green Community Primary School	Football	School	Two mini 7v7 pitches rated as standard quality. Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Pitches are rented by Highfield Grange FC therefore tenure is deemed unsecure.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school and community use.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

<sup>66</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>67</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>66</sup>	Cost <sup>67</sup>	Aim
85	Orrell Newfold Community Primary School	Football	School	One youth 9v9 pitch rated as standard quality which is available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve quality as required and explore community use opportunities to reduce local shortfalls.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
86	Orrell Red Triangle Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	A standard quality natural grass cricket square with 17 wickets accompanied by a NTP. The pitch is overplayed by 21 match equivalent sessions per season. Orrell Red Triangle CC is trying to raise money to extend clubhouse facilities.	Sustain square quality through continued maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
					Increase utilisation of NTP to alleviate over play.				S	L	
88	Parsons Meadow Playing Fields	Football	Council	Three standard quality adult pitches which have actual spare capacity of 2.5 match equivalent session per week. Pitches suffer from limited maintenance with one of these pitches also suffering drainage issues.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA RFL	Key Centre	Medium	L	L	Protect Enhance
					Retain actual spare capacity until higher levels of maintenance are sustained.				S	L	
					Explore potential funding for the improvement of pitch drainage.				S	M	
		Rugby league		Two senior poor quality pitches. One senior pitch is played to capacity with the other over played by two match equivalent sessions per week. Additionally, there are three poor quality junior pitches. These pitches are over played by three, 5.5 and four match equivalent sessions per week. Pitches are of poor quality mainly due to public access and dog fouling since the site is open to public entry. Wigan St Jude's ARLFC licenses the site on an annual basis. The Club has aspirations to fence the pitches off to stop this from occurring.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.				S	L	
					Seek to reduce overplay by increasing pitch capacity through qualitative improvements.				S	L	
					Explore the feasibility of acquiring more pitch space to alleviate over play on current pitch stock.				S	L	
					Explore the feasibility transferring some training demand from match pitches to general grass playing field areas or RFL Community Standard 3G pitch provision in order to reduce overplay on match pitches.				S	L	
		3G pitch		Floodlit smaller sized 3G rated as standard quality. Available for community use.	Explore the feasibility of securing pitches to reduce issues such as dog fouling.				S	L/M	
					Sustain current quality and retain current use.				L	L	

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>68</sup>	Cost <sup>69</sup>	Aim
92	Robin Park Arena Sports and Tennis Centre	Football/ Rugby league	Council/Trust/ Commercial	One standard quality pitch, dually used for both adult football and senior rugby league. Available for community use but played to capacity through use by Wigan Athletic FC youth teams. Occasional use by Wigan Warriors RLFC academy and reserve teams. The pitch forms the infield of the surrounding athletics track and is also used for athletics field events.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work.	Council/Trust FA RFL RFU	Hub Site	High	L	L	Protect Enhance
		3G pitch		One full sized floodlit 3G accompanied by four smaller sized floodlit 3G cages, all of which are standard quality. Small sized 3G pitches were resurfaced in 2014. The full sized 3G pitch previous held World Rugby certification which expired on 5/12/16, however it currently remains FIFA certified to host competitive football.	Sustain 3G pitch quality through continued rigorous and regular maintenance. Make qualitative improvements if required in order to meet performance standard testing criteria.				S	L	
				Makes greater use of the FIFA certified full sized 3G pitch to host competitive football matches in order to reduce grass pitch shortfalls.					S	L	
				Ensure retesting of the pitch by 5/12/17 so that it remains on the FIFA register.					S	L	
				Retest the full sized 3G pitch for World Rugby certification and submit pass evidence to RFL for Community Standard certification, in order to increase capacity available for rugby union and rugby league use and relieve levels of overplay.					S	L	
				Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.					L	L	
94	Rose Bridge Sports & Community Centre	AGP	School	Two smaller sized sand dressed AGPs rated as poor quality.	As a priority, resurface the AGP for school use given poor and deteriorating quality. Further consultation required with the school to determine most appropriate surface type to service school requirements.	School EH FA RFL	Local Site	Low	S	M	Protect Enhance
				Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.	L				L		
		Football		One adult pitch rated as standard quality. Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school and community use.				S	L	
		Rugby league		One senior pitch rated as poor quality. The pitch is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity. Available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school and community use.				S	L	

<sup>68</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>69</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>68</sup>	Cost <sup>69</sup>	Aim
96	Scot Lane Playing Fields	Football	Council	Four adult pitches all rated as standard quality. Actual spare capacity retained to protect pitch quality. Issues with poor drainage, dog fouling and littering on the pitches.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA RFL	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby league		One senior pitch and one junior pitch both rated as poor quality. Senior pitch has actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week whereas the junior pitch is played to capacity. Issues with poor drainage, dog fouling and littering on the pitches.	Improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work.				S	L	
					Explore potential of installing drainage systems on pitches to increase capacity and pitch quality.				S	M	
					Explore options of protecting pitches to decrease dog fouling and littering.				S	L	
97	Shevington Community Primary School (Closed)	Football	School	The School has recently closed with proposals to develop the site under way. The Council is currently exploring the best options for the future of the site. Previously hosted one standard quality mini 7v7 football pitch and one standard quality primary rugby league pitch.	Mitigate any potential loss of sporting provision to equal or better quantity / quality.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Low	S	L - M	Protect
		Rugby league									
98	Shevington High School	Football	School	One adult pitch, one youth 9v9 and two mini 7v7 pitches all of standard quality. The two mini 7v7 pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Adult pitch is over played by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week and the youth 9v9 pitch is over played by one match equivalent session per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school and community use.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby league		One poor quality senior pitch which is played to capacity through curriculum and extra curriculum activity. Available for community use but currently unused.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school and community use.				S	L	
		3G pitch		School is seeking external funding from the Football Foundation to create a new 60mx40m 3G pitch with floodlighting.	Ensure development of small sized 3G pitch provision meets FA recommended dimensions.				S	M	
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	
					Maximise use ensuring it is readily available for both school and community use.				S	L	
99	Shevington Recreation Ground	Football	Parish Council	One poor quality adult pitch with actual spare capacity retained to protect pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Parish Council FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Provide
		Touch		Site is accessed by Wigan Warriors Touch for training sessions. Pitch is marked out by cones.	Explore the potential of reconfiguration of provision to accommodate touch rugby demand.				S	L	



**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>68</sup>	Cost <sup>69</sup>	Aim
101	Southlands Avenue Playing Fields	Football	Council	One adult pitch rated as poor quality, presently unused by community clubs. Actual spare capacity discounted to protect pitch quality. Nominated Asset of Community Value (ACV). Current proposals for development including some loss of playing field land, including a small car park on approximately 20% of the site and the remainder to be converted into a multi-purpose park with children's play space, space for activities and planting. Subject of a specific consultation by neighborhood forum Standish Voice.	Establish preferred future use for the site and ensure that should any playing field land be lost that development is able to evidence ability to meet National Planning Policy.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
105	St Aidan's RC School	Football	School	Two standard quality mini 7v7 pitches. Available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
106	St Catherine's Playing Fields	Football	Council	Two standard quality adult pitches which have actual spare capacity of two match equivalent sessions at peak period per week. Issues with dog fouling.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
					Explore options to combat the issue of dog fouling.				S	L	
107	St David Haigh and Aspull C of E Primary	Football	School	One standard quality mini 5v5 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
112	St James' C of E Primary	Football	School	One poor quality mini 7v7 pitch. Pitch receives both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Pitches are rented by Hawkley FC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	School FA	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
113	St John Fisher Catholic High School	AGP	School	One poor quality floodlit community available small sized (56mx35m) sand filled AGP.	Ensure quality is improved in order to retain current usage.	School EH	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>70</sup>	Cost <sup>71</sup>	Aim
114	St John Rigby College	Football	College	One adult, one youth 11v11, two youth 9v9, one mini 7v7 and one mini 5v5 pitch all of which are of poor quality. Adult pitch is dual use with rugby league and is over played by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. All remaining pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore spare capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality. Pitches used by Wigan Athletic FC. There is no formal usage agreement in place therefore club tenure is deemed unsecure.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	College FA RFL RFU	Key Centre	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Explore reconfiguration of pitches to alleviate over marking.				S	L	
					Rugby league				One senior pitch rated as poor quality. Available for community use and rented by Shevington Sharks ARLFC. Pitch is overplayed by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	
		Explore reconfiguration of pitches to alleviate over marking.		S					L		
		Rugby union		One senior pitch rated as poor quality (M0/D0) The pitch is a school senior rugby union pitch which receives basic levels of maintenance and drains poorly. Used by Orrell RUFC. The College has aspirations to expand the building which could potentially result in the loss of rugby union provision.					Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	S	
				If senior pitch is lost due to development mitigate the loss of provision to equal or better quantity / quality.	S				L		
				3G pitch	Full size standard quality floodlit 3G pitch. Built in 2006 and has not been refurbished since. Used heavily for football, rugby union and rugby league. Club accessing the pitch report issues regarding quality. The pitch does not have any sporting certification.				As a priority, explore funding options to refurbish the pitch and look at the feasibility of installing the correct criteria to make the surface suitable to host both competitive matches and training demand for football, rugby union and rugby league.	S	
		Upon refurbishment test full sized 3G pitch for applicable; FA / FIFA certification, World Rugby certification and / or RFL for Community Standard certification, in order to increase capacity available for football, rugby union and rugby league use and relieve levels of overplay.			S				L		
		Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability.			L				L		

<sup>70</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>71</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>72</sup>	Cost <sup>73</sup>	Aim
121	St Peters Catholic High School	Football	School	One standard quality youth 11v11 pitch. Available for community use but currently unused.	Sustain and improve pitch quality as required and explore community use opportunities to reduce local shortfalls.	School FA RFL	Key Centre	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby league		One senior and one junior pitch both of poor quality. Not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.				S	L	
		3G pitch		One standard quality full size floodlit 3G, Refurbished in 2010. FA certified. Used for football, rugby union and rugby league training.	Ensure testing of the full size pitch every three years so that it remains on the FA register.				S	L	
					Ensure appropriate levels of maintenance to sustain pitch quality.				S	L	
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	
					Upon refurbishing the pitch look at the feasibility of installing the correct criteria to make the surface suitable to host both competitive matches and training demand for football, rugby union and rugby league.				M	H	
					Once refurbished test the full sized 3G pitch for applicable; FA / FIFA certification, World Rugby certification and / or RFL for Community Standard certification, in order to increase capacity available for football, rugby union and rugby league use and relieve levels of overplay.				M	L	
125	Standish Community High School	Football	School	One standard quality youth 11v11 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA EH	Key Centre	Low			Protect Enhance
		AGP		Full sized sand filled AGP with floodlighting. Built in 2005 and rated as poor quality having not been resurfaced since. Available for community use and predominantly used for football training by Standish Panthers Juniors FC. No recorded use from community hockey clubs for either training or match play.	As a priority, resurface the AGP for school use given poor and deteriorating quality. Further consultation required with the school to determine most appropriate surface type to service school requirements.				S	M	
		Rugby league		One senior rugby league pitch rated as poor quality. Not available for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.				L	L	

<sup>72</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>73</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>74</sup>	Cost <sup>75</sup>	Aim
126	Standish Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	A standard quality natural grass cricket square with nine grass wickets accompanied by an NTP. The pitch is over played by two match equivalent sessions per week. Standish CC reports applying for planning permission to make improvements to ancillary facilities, however, it is still awaiting a response. Nominated Asset of Community Value (ACV).	Sustain square quality through continued maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Increase utilisation of NTP to alleviate over play.				S/M	L	
					Assist the Club in making improvements to ancillary facilities.				S	M	
128	The Convent Playing Fields	Football	Sports Club	One adult and one mini 7v7 pitch both of poor quality. Adult pitch is played to capacity whereas the mini 7v7 pitch has actual spare capacity discounted to protect pitch quality.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
129	The Deanery C of E High School	AGP	School	Full sized sand filled AGP with floodlighting. Built in 1999 and rated as poor quality having not been resurfaced since. Accessed by Wigan HC. AGP is part of a joint ownership agreement with Wigan Sports Club, which includes Wigan HC. Both the School and the Sports Club have agreed times of usage with remaining unused hours available to let through the School. Surface is close to being condemned and deemed unsuitable for competitive hockey fixtures.	As a priority, explore funding options to refurbish the pitch.	School EH Sports Club	Key Centre	High	S	M	Protect Enhance
					Encourage the provider to establish a mechanism for long-term sustainability such as a sinking fund.				L	L	
					Ensure pitch remains as a hockey suitable surface.				L	L	
139	Wigan Rovers	Football	Sports Club	One standard quality adult pitch. Actual spare capacity of one match equivalent session per week.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
140	Wigan Sports Club	Cricket	Sports Club	Poor quality natural grass cricket square with 14 wickets. No spare capacity at peak period. Wigan CC reports the square to be good quality whereas the outfield is poor quality as it drains poorly. The Club is looking to make improvements to its ancillary facilities. Poor quality practice nets. Anecdotal evidence suggest the Club is carrying out its own maintenance work regarding the poor quality outfield drainage.	Assist the Club in the improvement of outfield drainage to ensure it meets relevant requirements.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
					Sustain square quality through appropriate maintenance.				S	L	
					Assist the Club in obtaining funding for the refurbishment of the practice nets.				S	L	
					Assist the Club in obtaining funding for ancillary improvements.				S/M	L/M	
141	Wigan St Andrew's C of E Junior and Infant School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 5v5 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitch quality for school use as required.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect

<sup>74</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>75</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>76</sup>	Cost <sup>77</sup>	Aim
142	Wigan St Cuthbert's ARLFC	Football	Sports Club	One standard quality adult pitch. Available for community use. No actual spare capacity at peak period	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club FA RFL	Key Centre	Low	S	L	Protect
		Rugby league		Three senior and two junior pitches all of which are standard quality. The three senior pitches have actual spare capacity of 1.25 match equivalent sessions at senior peak period per week, whereas, the two junior pitches have no actual spare capacity.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.				S	L	
					Utilise actual spare capacity via the transfer of demand from overplayed sites or through future demand.				S	L	
143	Wigan Youth Zone	3G pitch	Community Organisation	Four smaller sized (37mx18m) floodlit 3G pitches all rated as standard quality. Available for community use.	Sustain current quality and retain current use.	Community Organisation	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
144	William Fosters Playing Field	Football	Council	Two standard quality adult pitches. Actual spare capacity of 0.5 match equivalent sessions at peak period per week. Wigan Cosmos FC has a lease of the site.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Council FA RFL	Key Centre	Low	L	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby league		One senior pitch rated as poor quality, the pitch is played to capacity through training demand.	Improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.				S	L	
					Explore reconfiguration of pitches based on demand.				S	L	
145	Winstanley College Sports Centre	Football	School	Two standard quality adult pitches. Pitches receive both community and curriculum use therefore capacity has been retained to protect pitch quality.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.	School FA RFU RFL	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect Enhance
		Rugby union		One senior pitch rated as standard quality has an M0/D2 rating. School based senior rugby union pitch which receives basic levels of maintenance but has recently installed drainage system (2014). Used by Orrell RUFC.	Improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school and community use.				S	L	
		Rugby league		One standard quality senior pitch. Unavailable for community use and only use for curriculum and extra curriculum activities.	Retain the pitch quality through on-going maintenance. Explore local demand for community use, ensuring that quality is not compromised for curriculum use.				L	L	
147	Winstanley Park Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	A standard quality natural grass cricket square with eight wickets accompanied by an NTP. The pitch does not have actual spare capacity at peak time. Winstanley Park CC currently has unsecure tenure at Winstanley Park Cricket Club as the private landowner wants to repurpose the site.	Support the Club with plans to develop new, self-managed sports provision at the proposed Winstanley Community Sports Centre site. Ensure new cricket provision provides sufficient capacity to accommodate current levels of demand and some future growth.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Medium	S-M	L	Provide
148	Wood Fold Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 7v7 pitch which is unavailable for community use.	Sustain and improve pitches quality for school use as required.	School FA RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
		Rugby league		One standard quality primary pitch which is unavailable for community use.							

<sup>76</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>77</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>76</sup>	Cost <sup>77</sup>	Aim
149	Woodhouse Playing Field	Football	Council	One standard quality youth 9v9 pitch. Capacity has been capped as pitches are used for curriculum and extra curriculum activity by St John Fisher Catholic High School. Site is open access.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school and community use.	Council School FA RFL	Local Site	Medium	S	L	Protect Enhance
				Explore the feasibility of transferring management responsibility to Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC through either long-term lease or community asset transfer, subject to the Club evidencing it has sufficient infrastructure, resource and economic model to sustain and improve the asset ensuring provision remains accessible for St John Fisher Catholic High School.	S				L		
		Rugby league		Two poor quality senior pitches. Capacity has been capped as pitches are used for curriculum and extra curriculum activity by St John Fisher Catholic High School. Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC has aspirations for a potential asset transfer of the site.	Improve pitch quality through better and more regular maintenance and remedial work to better sustain levels of school and community use.				S	L	
				Explore the feasibility of transferring management responsibility to Wigan Bulldogs ARLFC through either long-term lease or community asset transfer, subject to the Club evidencing it has sufficient infrastructure, resource and economic model to sustain and improve the asset ensuring provision remains accessible for St John Fisher Catholic High School.	S				L		
155	Wigan Warriors Co-operative Community Stadium	Rugby league	Sports Club	One good quality senior pitch. Private training site used by Wigan Warriors. Over played by 3.5 match equivalent sessions per week.	Sustain quality and retain as current use.	Sports Club RFL	Local Site	Low	S	L	Protect
158	Wigan Rugby Union Football Club	Rugby union	Sports Club	Three good quality (M2/D1) senior pitches, of which one and a half are floodlit and used for training. Fully floodlit pitch is over played by two match equivalent sessions per week. Partially floodlit pitch is over played by 0.5 match equivalent sessions per week. The remaining pitch has no spare capacity at peak period. Pipe and slit drainage system which is over ten years old is still effective; however, Wigan RUFC reports standing surface water when it rains heavily. Each pitch receives a good level of dedicated maintenance. Used by Wigan RUFC. Poor quality changing rooms which do not meet RFU specifications.	Sustain pitch quality through regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.	Sports Club RFU	Local Site	High	L	L	Protect Enhance
					Regularly inspect drainage system to ensure it remains effective and replace when necessary.				M	M	
					Explore funding streams for the improvement of onsite changing facilities.				S	M	
					Explore funding streams for additional floodlighting for non-floodlit pitch.				S	M	
					Explore the feasibility transferring some training demand from match pitches to general grass playing field areas or World Rugby 3G pitch provision in order to reduce overplay on match pitches.				S	L	

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>76</sup>	Cost <sup>77</sup>	Aim
159	Wigan Athletic FC Training Ground	Football	Sports Club	Five adult and three mini 7v7 pitches all of good quality. Private training facility used by Wigan Athletic FC. Considered to be played to capacity.	Retain as current use, no actions required.	Sports Club FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect Provide
		3G pitch		Wigan Athletic FC has planning permission to create a full size 3G and indoor small sized 3G but believes the location is less preferable and is keen to explore potential for investment to secure access or create new provision to meet this requirement at other sites.	Explore potential funding streams to create new 3G provision.				S	H	
					Assist the Club in explore potential other sites to locate 3G provision which may have wider community use and still meet its requirements.				S	L	
161	Banks Playing Fields	Football	Sports Club	One youth 11v11, one youth 9v9 and one mini 7v7 pitch all of standard quality. Youth 11v11 pitch is played to capacity, whereas, the remaining pitches have no spare capacity at peak period. Wigan Junior Latics FC has since recently negotiated long-term sub-lease of the football pitches from Orrell St James ARLFC for the next 28 years.	Sustain and improve pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Consider potential to undertake FA PIP assessment and support the Club with access to maintenance equipment in order to put in place a programme of works to improve pitch quality.	Sports Club FA RFL RFU	Key Centre	Medium	L	L	Protect Enhance Provide
		Rugby league (Rugby Union)		Three senior and one primary pitch. Two senior pitches are floodlit and of good quality. The remaining standard quality senior league pitch is also dually used for rugby union and touch rugby. Used by Orrell St James (RUFC). The primary pitch is good quality and played to capacity. Standard quality senior pitch is over played by 6.75 match equivalent sessions per week; one floodlit senior pitch is over played by 3.5 match equivalent sessions per week with the remaining good quality senior pitch over played by 4.5 match equivalent sessions per week. Orrell St James ARLFC leases the pitches and has aspirations to increase quantity and quality of changing provision onsite and to explore opportunities for asset transfer. However, there are plans for the creation of a new link road which intersects the site, resulting in a net loss of playing field land on the Western part where pitches used for rugby league and union are situated. Proposals are for new playing field land to be created to the South of the site in order to mitigate this loss, though further details are not yet confirmed.	Ensure any loss of playing field land is mitigated appropriately and is able to meet all Planning Policy requirements.				L-M	H	
					Sustain pitch quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work.				L	L	
					Seek to reduce overplay by increasing standard quality pitch capacity through qualitative improvements.				S	L	
					Explore the feasibility of acquiring more pitch space to alleviate over play on current pitch stock.				S	L	
					Explore the feasibility transferring some training demand from match pitches to general grass playing field areas or RFL Community Standard 3G pitch provision in order to reduce overplay on match pitches.				S	L	
					Explore the feasibility of transferring management responsibility to Orrell St James ARLFC through either long-term lease or community asset transfer, subject to the Club evidencing it has sufficient infrastructure, resource and economic model to sustain and improve the asset.				S	L	
					Assist the Club in obtaining funding to make qualitative improvements to onsite changing provision.				M	M	
					If demand increases look to create a dedicated rugby union pitch, helping alleviate over play and over marking.				S	L	

**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN**

Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>78</sup>	Cost <sup>79</sup>	Aim
161	Bankes Playing Fields	Touch	Sports Club	Dual use pitch is also used for rugby league and rugby union. Used by Orrell St James touch team.	Sustain current quality and retain current use. If demand increases look to create a dedicated touch rugby pitch, helping alleviate over play and over marking.	Sports Club FA RFL RFU	Key Centre	Medium	S S	L L	Protect Enhance Provide
162	Goose Green Cricket Club	Cricket	Sports Club	A standard quality natural grass cricket square with seven wickets. The pitch does not have any actual spare capacity at peak time. Goose Green CC is in the process of having a single fixed practice bay installed. The Club has aspirations for purposed built ancillary facilities.	Sustain square quality through continued maintenance, remedial and preparatory regime. Ensure practice bays are installed to alleviate demand from the grass square. Explore the aspirations of the Club to develop purpose built ancillary facilities.	Sports Club ECB	Local Site	Low	L S L	L L L	Protect
165	Worsley Mesnes Primary School	Football	School	One standard quality mini 7v7 pitch. It is unavailable for community use.	Retain the pitch quality through on-going maintenance. Explore local demand for community use, ensuring that quality is not compromised for curriculum use.	School FA	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
172	St Williams R C Primary School	Rugby league	School	One standard quality primary pitch. Rented by Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC and tenure is deemed unsecure. Spare capacity retained to protect pitch quality.	Sustain and improve quality through more regular enhanced maintenance and remedial work. Ensure community use is secured.	School RFL	Local Site	Low	L	L	Protect
NEW	Hemsfield Road (former Belle Green Primary School)	Rugby league	Council	Playing field land retained following the closure of the former Belle Green Primary School which was demolished and developed for housing. Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC is to have exclusive annual license for use of the site once the pitch has been brought back into use.	Establish formal primary pitch provision to provide additional capacity for use by Ince Rose Bridge ARLFC and reduce Area shortfalls.	Council	Local Site	Low	S	L	Enhance
NEW	Vicarage Lane	Football & Rugby league	Community Association	Shevington Sports and Horticultural Club has recently obtained a 30-year lease from Shevington Parish Council for a piece of land know as Vicarage Lane, with financial assistance by Sport England and Wigan Borough Council. The piece of land is to be developed to include a dedicated rugby league pitch, two dedicated adult football pitches and allotments in order to serve the three branches; Shevington Sharks ARLFC, Shevington FC and Shevington Horticultural and Allotments Society. Work is to start on the pitches in 2017 and will take approximately two years to complete. The site does not currently host any ancillary facilities and as such the Club is exploring potential funding streams to provide them.	Support the two sports clubs and community association in developing new provision including pitch and ancillary facilities to meet current NGB specifications where possible. Explore opportunities to access external funding to assist in the development of the new site. Ensure new provision provides sufficient capacity to accommodate current levels of demand and allow for some future growth.	Community Association Sports Clubs RFL FA	Local Site	Medium	S	M-H	Provide

<sup>78</sup> (S) -Short (1-2 years); (M) - Medium (3-5 years); (L) - Long (6+ years)

<sup>79</sup> (L) -Low - less than £50k; (M) -Medium - £50k-£250k; (H) -High £250k and above



**WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY  
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Site ID	Site	Sport	Management	Current status	Recommended actions	Lead Partners	Site hierarchy tier	Priority	Timescales <sup>78</sup>	Cost <sup>79</sup>	Aim
NEW	Winstanley Community Sports Centre	Rugby union Cricket	Sports Club	Winstanley Park CC and Orrell RUFC have together negotiated a 99 year lease and secured planning permission for the development of a community sports centre, to be based adjacent to Winstanley College on a 13 acre agricultural site. Proposals include the creation of two rugby union pitches and an exclusive cricket square, accompanied by shared ancillary facilities. The development has support from both the RFU and ECB.	Support the two sports clubs in developing new provision including pitch and ancillary facilities to meet current NGB specifications where possible. Explore opportunities to access external funding to assist in the development of the new site. Ensure new provision provides sufficient capacity to accommodate current levels of demand and allow for some future growth.	Sports Clubs RFU ECB	Local Site	Medium	S-M	H	Provide
-	Rose Bridge High School Sports Field	Football Rugby league (Disused)	Council	<b>Disused</b> - School playing field across from the main school building. Previously had three rugby league pitches marked, two with goalposts installed, however the school has ceased to use or maintain the site since circa 2012. No onsite changing provision. The school has recently signed a 125-year lease on the site from the Council.	Determine future use of the site based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to improve other playing pitch sites (quantity and/or quality).	Council FA RFL	Reserve Site	Low	S	L	Protect
-	Seaman Way – Former Sports Club	Football (Lapsed)	Council	<b>Lapsed</b> - Former industry sports ground which has an adult football pitch. Also had a tennis court and bowling green which have since been lost.	Determine future use of the site based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to improve other playing pitch sites (quantity and/or quality).	Council FA	Reserve Site	Low	S	L	Provide
-	Coronation Park	Rugby league (Disused)	Council	<b>Disused pitch</b> - Previously an adult football pitch circa 2005, now has rugby posts 70 metres apart, equivalent to a junior pitch but not formally marked. No onsite changing provision. Adjacent to St Anne's C of E Junior & Infant School which reports that it does not use the playing field. Anecdotal reports of use for rugby league training though unofficially used and not formally hired through the Council pitch hire system.	Determine future use of the site based on the following priority order of options: 1) Retain/allocate site as strategic reserve. 2) Explore feasibility to bring back into use. 3) Use as open space to meet local needs. 4) Redevelop site and use developer contributions to improve other playing pitch sites (quantity and/or quality).	Council RFL FA	Reserve Site	Low	S	L	Provide

# WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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## PART 7: HOUSING GROWTH SCENARIOS

The PPS provides an estimate of demand for pitch sport based on population forecasts and club consultation to 2026 (in line with the Local Plan period). This future demand is translated into teams likely to be generated, rather than actual pitch provision required. The Playing Pitch New Development Calculator adds to this, updating the likely demand generated for pitch sports based on housing increases and converts the demand into match equivalent sessions and the number of pitches required. This is achieved via team generation rates (TGRs) in the Assessment Report to determine how many new teams would be generated from an increase in population derived from housing growth and gives the associated costs of supplying the increased pitch provision.

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

The indicative figures are based on the assumption that population growth will average 2.44 per dwelling. The indicative figures will be applied to two exclusive scenarios, based on the population figures contained within the draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) and Wigan Borough Council housing trajectory figures. The scenarios are as follows:

- ◀ **Scenario One:** Draft GMSF housing requirement of 22,500 forecasted to 2035.
- ◀ **Scenario Two:** Wigan Borough Council five year housing requirement (2016/17-2020/21) as per Objectively Assessed Need (OAN).

Please note that the scenarios can be updated as required over the Local Plan and GMSF period throughout the lifespan of the PPS to reflect population projections and change in the average household size.

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

### ***Scenario 1: Likely demand generated for pitch sports from housing growth requirement over the draft GMSF period (2035)***

The estimated additional population derived from housing growth by 2035 is 54,900 (22,500 dwellings). This equates to 61.42 match equivalent sessions per week for grass pitch sports, 1.19 on AGPs for hockey and 180.03 per season for cricket.

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Table 7.1: Likely demand for grass pitch sports generated from housing growth (2035)

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2035)	
	Match equivalent sessions (MES) per week <sup>80</sup>	Pitches
Adult football	10.74	11 pitches
Youth football	20.03	20 pitches
Mini soccer	19.01	19 pitches
Rugby union	2.98	3 senior pitches
Rugby league	8.65	9 senior pitches
Hockey	1.19	No new pitches
Cricket	180.03 per season	4 pitches

To accommodate all of this demand, the capital cost is estimated at £4,750,038<sup>81</sup> and the total life cycle cost (per annum) is £1,047,202.<sup>82</sup>

### **Scenario 2: Likely demand generated for pitch sports from housing growth over the next five years (2016/17-2020/21)**

The Borough's expected housing increase over the next five years equates to 5,250 new dwellings (2016/17-2020/21) based on housing supply data from Wigan Borough's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The forecast is made up of residential schemes which are under construction, sites with planning permission where work hasn't yet started as well as additional sites which have the potential to accommodate residential development over the next five years.

The estimated additional population of growth 12,810 over five years equates to 14.33 match equivalent sessions per week for grass pitch sports, 0.28 on AGPs for hockey and 42.01 per season for cricket.

Table 7.2: Likely demand for grass pitch sports from housing growth in the next five years

Pitch Sport	Estimated demand by sport (2020/21)	
	Match equivalent sessions (MES) per week	Pitches
Adult football	2.51	3 pitches
Youth football	4.67	5 pitches
Mini soccer	4.44	4 pitches
Rugby union	0.7	1 senior pitch
Rugby league	2.02	2 senior pitches
Hockey	0.28	No new pitches
Cricket	42.01	1 pitch

Should new pitches be required to accommodate all of this demand, the capital cost is estimated at £1,108,342<sup>23</sup> and the total life cycle cost (per annum) is £244,347<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>80</sup> As per the PPS Guidance, demand for cricket is considered in terms of match equivalent sessions per season rather than per week.

<sup>81</sup> Capital cost is based on 2016 second quarter calculations.

<sup>82</sup> Sport England Life Cycle Costs Natural Turf Pitches and Artificial Surfaces April 2012

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## ***Conclusions***

The tables above show that over the next five years, and up to 2035, demand will be generated for each pitch sport to a lesser or greater extent. This position is indicative and does not provide information on where the housing is likely to be located, how many dwellings will actually be provided or which existing playing fields the additional demand is likely to migrate to.

Experience shows that only housing sites with 600 dwellings or more are likely to generate demand in their own right; however, the cumulative impact of housing across the local authority clearly shows that there will be significant demand generated during the Local Plan period and/or GMSF in the next five years.

The Council could consider using CIL (if adopted) to obtain contributions to priority sites, or pooling S106 contributions from major housing schemes to invest in priority sites. In either case, the preceding Action Plan and future consultation with NGBs should inform the playing fields that most require investment.

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

### ***Delivery***

The Playing Pitch Strategy seeks to provide guidance for maintenance/management decisions and investment made across Wigan Borough in the years up to 2026. By addressing the issues identified in the Assessment Report and using the strategic framework presented in this Strategy, the current and future sporting and recreational needs of Wigan Borough can be satisfied. The Strategy identifies where there is a deficiency in provision and identifies how best to resolve this in the future.

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

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

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

To help ensure the PPS is well used it should be regarded as the key document within the study area guiding the improvement and protection of playing pitch provision. It needs to be the document people regularly turn to for information on the how the current demand is met and what actions are required to improve the situation and meet future demand. In order for this to be achieved the steering group need to have a clear understanding of how the PPS can be applied and therefore delivered.

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

### ***Monitoring and updating***

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

As a guide, if no review and subsequent update has been carried out within three years of the PPS being signed off by the steering group, then Sport England and the NGBs would consider the PPS and the information on which it is based to be out of date.

## WIGAN BOROUGH PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

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

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

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

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

Once the PPS is complete the role of the steering group should evolve so that it:

- ◀ Acts as a focal point for promoting the value and importance of the PPS and 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:
  - ◀ Provide a short annual progress and update paper;
  - ◀ Provide a partial review focussing on particular sport, pitch type and/or sub area; or
  - ◀ Lead a full review and update of the PPS document (including the supply and demand information and assessment details).

Alongside the regular steering group meetings a good way to keep the strategy up to date and maintain relationships may be to hold annual sport specific meetings with the pitch sport NGBs and other relevant parties. These meetings could look to update the key supply and demand information, if necessary amend the assessment work, track progress with implementing the recommendations and action plan and highlight any new issues and opportunities.

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These meetings could be timed to fit with the annual affiliation process undertaken by the NGBs which would help to capture any changes in the number and nature of sports clubs in the area. Other information that is already collected on a regular basis such as pitch booking records for local authority and other sites could be fed into these meetings. The NGBs will also be able to indicate any further performance quality assessments that have been undertaken within the study area. Discussion with the league secretaries may also indicate annual league meetings which it may be useful to attend to pick up any specific issues and/or enable a review of the relevant club details to be undertaken.

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


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

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## Checklist

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

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

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



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## APPENDIX ONE: INCREASING FOOTBALL USE OF 3G PITCHES

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

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

How many full sized floodlit 3G AGPs may be required to meet demand within Wigan Borough if:

- ◀ All teams playing competitive football had access to a full size floodlit 3G AGP to train on once a week?
- ◀ All matches for teams currently playing competitive football on Wigan Borough Council/Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles Trust managed natural grass pitches in Wigan Borough were played on full size floodlit 3G AGPs?

The answers to these questions are set out below and are based on full sized floodlit 3G AGPs which have full community use during peak periods<sup>83</sup>. However, the results should be viewed as providing an indication of the 'full size pitch equivalents' that may be demanded. In practice, the most appropriate ways of meeting any such increase in demand will vary depending on the nature of the local area. For example, in some areas new full size floodlit AGPs may be appropriate, whereas in others small sided provision to cater for increased training use, or securing greater community use/hours of existing provision may be the best way forward.

Given the above, what the answers may mean for the Wigan Borough area, taking into account the wider findings from the Assessment stage of developing the PPS, is also presented below. These details have been used to help inform the development of the PPS's recommendations and the action plan in Part 6.

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<sup>83</sup> Weekdays 17:00 - 21:00 (or 19:00 on Fridays) and 09:00 - 17:00 on weekends.

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## Scenario results

### *i. If all teams playing competitive football had access to a full size floodlit 3G AGP to train on once a week.*

- ◀ As a guide, the FA suggests that one full size floodlit 3G AGP could potentially accommodate this training demand from 42 teams (Ratio of 1:4284).
- ◀ It is considered that there are currently 584 Wigan Borough based teams which require access to train once per week on floodlit 3G surface.

Analysis area	Current number of teams	Current requirement	Current number of available 3G pitches	Current shortfall	Future number of teams <sup>85</sup>	Future shortfall
Ashton	107	2.54 - 2	0	2	107	2
Leigh	204	4.85 - 4	3	1	210	2
Wigan Town	273	6.5 – 6	4	2	280	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>6</b>

- ◀ Using the FA's 1:42 ratio suggests that 12 full sized floodlit 3G AGPs would be required to meet this increased training use within the Borough.
- ◀ At present, there are seven available full sized 3G pitches across the Borough. Therefore, there is a requirement an additional five full sized 3G pitches with floodlighting to meet affiliated football training demand.
- ◀ Future demand indicates an increase of 13 new teams, creating a subsequent total of 597 teams (assuming all were to train and play in Wigan Borough) by 2026.
- ◀ This would increase the future requirement to 13 full sized floodlit 3G pitches to accommodate affiliated training demand and in turn the shortfall from five to six through increased demand in the Leigh Area. Neither current or future requirements are able to be met by existing full sized 3G pitch supply.

### *ii. If all matches for teams playing competitive football on Council/Trust managed natural grass pitches were played on full sized floodlit 3G AGPs.*

- ◀ The FA is keen to work with local authorities (LAs) to understand the potential demand for full size floodlit 3G AGPs should all competitive matches, currently played on LA managed natural grass pitches, be transferred to one.
- ◀ Table A.1 takes information from the Assessment stage of this PPS to present the number of teams playing on LA/Trust managed natural grass pitches (not including school sites or sites leased to clubs) and the relevant peak periods.

<sup>84</sup> The FA developed the training ratio following their facilities strategy vision to provide all affiliated clubs with access to a 3G AGP for training. An original ratio of 1:56 was based on a full size pitch providing 56 slots per week (Mon-Thurs 6-9pm, Fri 6-8pm). The ratio was subsequently revised to 1:42. This was due to evidence of a number of local authority areas reaching the perceived required number of 3G AGP facilities based on the 1:56 ratio yet still evidencing latent demand. Further FA analysis of 3G AGP facility usage also showed that many affiliated teams seek more than one slot for training and that significant amounts of non FA affiliated and recreational demand also use 3G AGPs during the peak time, creating a need for further 3G AGP provision.

<sup>85</sup> Based on increased demand forecasted from team generation rates

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Table A.1: Number of teams playing on LA/Trust managed natural grass pitches

Pitch type	Pitch size	Peak period	Number of teams
Adult	11v11	Sunday AM	30
Youth	11v11	Saturday AM	27
Youth	9v9	Saturday AM	17
Youth	7v7	N/A	-
Mini	7v7	Saturday AM	8
Mini	5v5	Saturday AM	-
<b>Total</b>			<b>82</b>

- ◀ The FA suggests an approach (see below) for estimating the number of full size floodlit 3G AGPs that teams may demand for competitive matches. Table A.2 presents the results of this approach for the teams set out in Table A.1.

Table A.2: Number of 3G AGPs that may be required

Format	Number of teams per time (x)	Number of matches at PEAK TIME (y)= x/2	3G units per match (z)	Total units required formats (A)=(y)*(z)	3G pitches required B= (A)/64
5v5	0	0	4	0	0
7v7	8	4	8	32	0.5
9v9	17	8.5	10	85	1.328125
11v11 (Youth)	27	13.5	32	432	6.75
11v11 (Adult)	30	15	32	480	7.5

- ◀ Transferring all matches for teams currently playing competitive football on Council/Trust managed natural grass pitches may equate to a demand for nine full sized floodlit 3G AGPs (rounded up from 8.58) for all the different formats of the game.
- ◀ In order to accommodate just mini soccer (both formats) and youth 9v9 football on Saturday mornings there would be a need for two full sized pitches (rounded up from 1.83) in Wigan Borough. This could also accommodate a proportion of adult demand on Sunday mornings, equating to eight teams or four match equivalent sessions per week (27% of adult play presently using Council/Trust managed grass pitches).
- ◀ However, no mini 5v5 play takes place on Council/Trust managed pitches as most is already played on a central venue basis at commercial small sided soccer centre Lucozade Powerleague Soccerdome. In practice, there is greater demand for 5v5 football, explored as a scenario within Part Four.
- ◀ The FA approach for estimating the number of full size floodlit 3G AGPs that teams may demand for competitive matches is based on:
  - ◀ A team playing a 'home' match every other week - therefore dividing the number of teams by two with the result rounded up to provide a figure for the number of matches a week during the peak period (Table A.2 Column y).
  - ◀ A 3G AGP being available for 4 hours<sup>86</sup> a day during the peak period (e.g. 10am to 2pm). Therefore, all demand being programmed over the four hour period.

<sup>86</sup> The rationale for 4 hours is based on a standard approach for match programming nationally and the ability to facilitate 2 adult games.

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

Table A.3: FA set units of a full size 3G AGP per match for each format

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

### Current supply

- ◀ There are seven full sized 3G pitches in Wigan Borough, all of which, have floodlighting and are available for community use.
- ◀ Six of the seven full sized 3G pitches are presently either FIFA or FA certified for competitive use and listed on the FA 3G Football Turf Pitch Register, representing 86% of full sized 3G pitch supply.
- ◀ Only the full sized 3G pitch at St John Rigby College is not certified for competitive football use.
- ◀ There are a further 23 small sized 3G pitches, all are available for community use except Lowton C of E School and HMP Hindley, though community use of some small sized pitches is limited as they primarily function as commercial football centres.
- ◀ Just one small sized 3G pitch at Leigh Sports Village (LSV) features on the FA register and can be used for competitive matches.

### Scenario ii Conclusion

Based on a requirement for nine FA/FIFA certified full sized pitches to accommodate all competitive football demand from Council/Trust managed grass pitch sites, there is shortfall of three certified pitches. Though certification of the only uncertified pitch at St John Rigby College would reduce this shortfall to two pitches, there would remain a requirement for new provision.

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## APPENDIX TWO: SPORTING CONTEXT

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

### National context

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### ***National Planning Policy Framework***

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

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

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

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

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

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

### ***The FA National Game Strategy (2015 – 2019)***

The Football Association's (FA) National Game Strategy provides a strategic framework that sets out key priorities, expenditure proposals and targets for the national game (i.e., football) over a four year period. The main issues facing grassroots football are identified as:

- ◀ Sustain and Increase Participation.
- ◀ Ensure access to education sites to accommodate the game.
- ◀ Help players to be the best that they can be and provide opportunities for them to progress from grassroots to elite.
- ◀ Recruit, retain and develop a network of qualified referees
- ◀ Support clubs, leagues and other competition providers to develop a safe, inclusive and positive football experience for everyone.
- ◀ Support Clubs and Leagues to become sustainable businesses, understanding and serving the needs of players and customers.
- ◀ Improve grass pitches through the pitch improvement programme to improve existing facilities and changing rooms.
- ◀ Deliver new and improved facilities including new Football Turf Pitches.
- ◀ Work with priority Local Authorities enabling 50% of mini-soccer and youth matched to be played on high quality artificial grass pitches.

### **England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Cricket Unleashed 5 Year Plan**

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

The plan sets out five important headline elements and each of their key focuses, these are:

- ◀ **More Play** – make the game more accessible and inspire the next generation of players, coaches, officials and volunteers. Focus on:
  - ◀ *Clubs and leagues*
  - ◀ *Kids*
  - ◀ *Communities*
  - ◀ *Casual*
- ◀ **Great Teams** – deliver winning teams who inspire and excite through on-field performance and off-field behaviour. Focus on:
  - ◀ *Pathway*
  - ◀ *Support*
  - ◀ *Elite Teams*
  - ◀ *England Teams*

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- ◀ **Inspired Fans** – put the fan at the heart of our game to improve and personalise the cricket experience for all. Focus on:
  - ◀ *Fan focus*
  - ◀ *New audiences*
  - ◀ *Global stage*
  - ◀ *Broadcast and digital*
- ◀ **Good Governance and Social Responsibility** – make decisions in the best interests of the game and use the power of cricket to make a positive difference. Focus on:
  - ◀ *Integrity*
  - ◀ *Community programmes*
  - ◀ *Our environments*
  - ◀ *One plan*
- ◀ **Strong Finance and Operations** – increase the game's revenues, invest our resources wisely and administer responsibly to secure the growth of the game. Focus on:
  - ◀ *People*
  - ◀ *Revenue and reach*
  - ◀ *Insight*
  - ◀ *Operations*

### ***The Rugby Football Union National Facilities Strategy (2013-2017)***

The RFU National Facility Strategy 2013-2017 provides a framework for development of high-quality, well-managed facilities that will help to strengthen member clubs and grow the game in communities around them. In conjunction with partners, this strategy will assist and support clubs and other organisations, so that they can continue to provide quality opportunities for all sections of the community to enjoy the game. It sets out the broad facility needs of the sport and identifies investment priorities to the game and its key partners. It identifies that with 1.5 million players there is a continuing need to invest in community club facilities in order to:

- ◀ Create a platform for growth in club rugby participation and membership, especially with a view to exploiting the opportunities afforded by RWC 2015.
- ◀ Ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of rugby clubs, through supporting not only their playing activity but also their capacity to generate revenue through a diverse range of activities and partnerships.

In summary, the priorities for investment which have met the needs of the game for the Previous period remain valid:

- ◀ Increase the provision of changing rooms and clubhouses that can sustain concurrent adult and junior male and female activity at clubs
- ◀ Improve the quality and quantity of natural turf pitches and floodlighting
- ◀ Increase the provision of artificial grass pitches that deliver wider game development

It is also a high priority for the RFU to target investment in the following:

- ◀ Upgrade and transform social, community and catering facilities, which can support the generation of additional revenues
- ◀ Facility upgrades, which result in an increase in energy-efficiency, in order to reduce the running costs of clubs
- ◀ Pitch furniture, including rugby posts and pads, pitch side spectator rails and grounds maintenance equipment

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## ***England Hockey Strategy***

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

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

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

The 3 main objectives of the facilities strategy are:

### **1. PROTECT: To conserve the existing hockey provision**

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

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

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

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

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

## ***The Rugby Football League Facility Strategy***

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

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

The RFL Facilities Trust website [www.rffacilitiestrust.co.uk](http://www.rffacilitiestrust.co.uk) provides further information on:

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



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

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

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## APPENDIX THREE: FUNDING PLAN

### Funding opportunities<sup>87</sup>

In order to deliver much of the Action Plan, it is recognised that external partner funding will need to be sought. Although seeking developer contributions in applicable situations and other local funding/community schemes could go some way towards meeting deficiencies and/or improving provision, other potential/match sources of funding should be investigated. Below is a list of current funding sources that are relevant for community improvement projects involving sports facilities.

Awarding body	Description
Big Lottery Fund <a href="http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/">http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/</a>	Big invests in community groups and to projects that improve health, education and the environment. For example, Awards for All which is for small Lottery grants of between £300 and £10,000.
Sport England The current funding streams will change throughout 2016/17 so refer to the website for the latest information: <a href="http://funding.sportengland.org/funding/our-different-funds/">http://funding.sportengland.org/funding/our-different-funds/</a>	Sport England is keen to marry funding with other organisations that provide financial support to create and strengthen the best sports projects. Applicants are encouraged to maximise the levels of other sources of funding, and projects that secure higher levels of partnership funding are more likely to be successful.
Football Foundation <a href="http://www.footballfoundation.org.uk/funding-schemes/">http://www.footballfoundation.org.uk/funding-schemes/</a>	This trust provides financial help for football at all levels, from national stadia and FA Premier League clubs down to grass-roots local development.
Rugby Football Foundation <a href="http://www.rugbyfootballfoundation.org/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=article&amp;id=14&amp;Itemid=113">http://www.rugbyfootballfoundation.org/index.php?option=com_content&amp;view=article&amp;id=14&amp;Itemid=113</a>	The Grant Match Scheme in particular provides easy-to-access grant funding for playing projects that contribute to the recruitment and retention of community rugby players. Grants are available on a 'match funding' 50:50 basis to support a proposed project. Projects eligible for funding include: 1. Pitch Facilities – Playing surface improvement, pitch improvement, rugby posts, floodlights. 2. Club House Facilities – Changing rooms, shower facilities, washroom/lavatory, and measures to facilitate segregation (e.g. women, juniors). 3. Equipment – Large capital equipment, pitch maintenance capital equipment (e.g. mowers). Other loan schemes are also available.
The England and Wales Cricket Trust <a href="https://www.ecb.co.uk/be-involved/club-support/club-funding">https://www.ecb.co.uk/be-involved/club-support/club-funding</a>	Interest Free Loan Scheme provides finance to clubs for capital projects and the Small Grant Scheme is also open to applications from affiliated cricket clubs.
EU Life Fund <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/environment/funding/intro_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/environment/funding/intro_en.htm</a>	LIFE is the EU's financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU.
National Hockey Foundation <a href="http://www.thenationalhockeyfoundation.com/">http://www.thenationalhockeyfoundation.com/</a>	The Foundation primarily makes grants to a wide range of organisations that meet one of the areas of focus: Young people and hockey, Enabling the development of hockey at youth or community level.

<sup>87</sup> Up to date as of April 2017.

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## Protecting Playing Fields

Sport England's Strategy: Towards an Active Nation (2016-2021) will simplify the funding reducing the number of investment programmes from 30 to 7:

- ◀ Tackling Inactivity
- ◀ Children and Young People
- ◀ Volunteering
- ◀ Taking sport and activity into the mass market
- ◀ Supporting sports core markets
- ◀ Local delivery
- ◀ Creating welcoming sports facilities

The current funding streams listed below will remain operational during 2016/17 but will be phased out and replaced by one or more of the seven listed above.

It launched Protecting Playing Fields (PPF) as part of its Places People Play Olympic legacy mass participation programme and is investing £10 million of National Lottery funding in community sports projects.

The programme is being delivered via five funding rounds (with up to £2 million being awarded to projects in each round). Its focus is on protecting and improving playing fields and developing community sport. It will fund capital projects that create, develop and improve playing fields for sporting and community use and offer long term protection of the site for sport. Projects are likely to involve the construction of new pitches or improvement of existing ones that need levelling or drainage works.

Sport England's Community Asset Fund<sup>88</sup> programme will be delivered via funding rounds and replaced its previous Inspired Facilities Fund. The Community Asset Fund opened in late January 2017 with an annual budget of £15 million, anticipating funding applications to range anywhere from £1000 to £150,000.

A key difference of the new programme is that it not only aims to support improvement of facilities within traditional sports clubs and recreational or sporting environments, but seeks explore new ways to invest in communities where improvement of facilities can offer wider benefit for not just sporting groups but other physical activities and local organisations which use or could use the site. The change in approach reflects the Towards an Active Nation Strategy and a contribution to delivering the five outcomes: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and economic development.

The four main aims of the Community Asset Fund programme are:

- ◀ Improve and protect existing sports facilities that support the needs of local communities
- ◀ Invest in new and different places that meet the needs of local communities, which include our target audiences
- ◀ Ensure our capital investment reaches organisations who have not accessed our funding before
- ◀ Create a more resilient, sustainable, less grant dependent sport sector

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<sup>88</sup> <https://www.sportengland.org/media/11425/community-asset-fund-guide-january-2017.pdf>

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## Strategic Facilities Fund

Facilities are fundamental in providing more people with the opportunity to play sport. The supply of the right facilities in the right areas is key to getting more people to play sport. Sport England recognises the considerable financial pressures that local authorities are currently under and the need to strategically review and rationalise leisure stock so that cost effective and financially sustainable provision is available in the long-term. Sport England has a key role to play in the sector, from influencing the local strategic planning and review of sports facility provision to investing in major capital projects of strategic importance.

The Strategic Facilities Fund will direct capital investment into a number of key local authority projects that are identified through a strategic needs assessment and that have maximum impact on growing and sustaining community sport participation. These projects will be promoted as best practice in the delivery of quality and affordable facilities, whilst demonstrating long-term operational efficiencies. The fund will support projects that bring together multiple partners, including input from the public and private sectors and national governing bodies of sport (NGBs). The fund is also designed to encourage applicants and their partners to invest further capital and revenue funding to ensure sustainability. Sport England has allocated a budget of circa £30m of Lottery funding to award through this fund (2013-17).

Key features which applications must demonstrate are:

- ◀ A robust needs and evidence base which illustrates the need for the project and the proposed facility mix
- ◀ Strong partnerships which will last beyond the initial development of the project and underpin the long-term sustainability of the facility
- ◀ Multi-sport provision and activity that demonstrates delivery against NGB local priorities
- ◀ A robust project plan from inception to completion with achievable milestones and timescales.

Lottery applications will be invited on a solicited-only basis and grants of between £500,000 and £2,000,000 will be considered.

The Strategic Facilities Fund will prioritise projects that:

- ◀ Are large-scale capital developments identified as part of a local authority sports facility strategic needs assessment/rationalisation programme and that will drive a significant increase in community sports participation
- ◀ Demonstrate consultation/support from two or more NGBs and delivery against their local priorities
- ◀ Are multi-sport facilities providing opportunities to drive high participant numbers
- ◀ Are a mix of facility provision (indoor and/or outdoor) to encourage regular and sustained use by a large number of people
- ◀ Offer an enhancement, through modernisation, to existing provision and/or new build facilities
- ◀ Have a long-term sustainable business plan attracting public and private investment
- ◀ Show quality in design, but are fit for purpose to serve the community need
- ◀ Have effective and efficient operating models, combined with a commitment to development programmes which will increase participation and provide talent pathways.

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Projects will need to demonstrate how the grant will deliver against Sport England's strategic priorities. The funding available is for the development of the capital infrastructure, which can contribute to the costs of new build, modernisation or refurbishment and purchasing of major fixed equipment as part of the facility development.

## **Funder's requirements**

Below is a list of funding requirements that can typically be expected to be provided as part of a funding bid, some of which will fall directly out of the Playing Pitch Strategy:

- ◀ Identify need (i.e., why the Project is needed) and how the Project will address it.
- ◀ Articulate what difference the Project will make.
- ◀ Identify benefits, value for money and/or added value.
- ◀ Provide baseline information (i.e., the current situation).
- ◀ Articulate how the Project is consistent with local, regional and national policy.
- ◀ Financial need and project cost.
- ◀ Funding profile (i.e., Who's providing what? Unit and overall costs).
- ◀ Technical information and requirements (e.g., planning permission).
- ◀ Targets, outputs and/or outcomes (i.e., the situation after the Project/what the Project will achieve)
- ◀ Evidence of support from partners and stakeholders.
- ◀ Background/essential documentation (e.g., community use agreement).
- ◀ Assessment of risk.

## **Indicative costs**

The indicative costs of implementing key elements of the Action Plan can be found on the Sport England website:

<https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/cost-guidance/>

The costs are for the development of community sports facilities and are based on providing good quality sports facility based on the last quarter. The Facilities Costs are updated on the Sport England website every quarter. These rounded costs are based on schemes most recently funded through the Lottery (and therefore based on economies of scale), updated to reflect current forecast price indices provided by the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS), prepared by Technical Team Lead of Sport England.

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## APPENDIX FOUR: GLOSSARY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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