

### Strategic Context

- 3.1 This section reviews the strategic context and provides background on the national/regional picture relevant to open space, sport and recreation facilities. Whilst this review is not exhaustive it provides details on the context in which the findings of this study sit and all documents included influence the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities in the district.
- 3.2 As highlighted in section 2, this document follows the key principles of PPG17 and its Companion Guide. PPG17 reflects a recognition from the Government of the wider benefits derived from the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities, including;
- supporting an urban renaissance
  - supporting a rural renewal
  - promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion
  - health and well being
  - promoting sustainable development.
- 3.3 In addition to PPG17, there are numerous other national documents and agencies that shape the strategic context to open spaces, sport and recreation facilities across the country and as such influence the provision of facilities and the findings of this report.
- 3.4 Appendix D sets out the national strategic context, including Living Spaces: Cleaner, Safer Greener which was produced by the Office of the Duty Prime Minister (ODPM) in 2002 and led to the creation of CABI Space, a national government agency which has the overall aim “to bring excellence to the design, management and maintenance of parks and public space in towns and cities”. This study takes into account the key principles and priorities that emerge from current national documents.
- 3.5 Local strategic documents specific to one typology have been reviewed within the individual typology sections and specific strategic objectives that link into this study have been highlighted. The key principles of these documents are also summarised later in this section.

#### Regional Policy Documents

##### ***The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (formerly Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 11) June 2004***

- 3.6 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) guides the preparation of local authority development plans and local transport plans to deliver a coherent framework for regional development.
- 3.7 The overall vision for the West Midlands is to be:
- “an economically successful, outward looking and adaptable region, which is rich in culture and environment, where all people, working together are able to meet their aspirations and needs without prejudicing the quality of life for future generations”

3.8 The key challenges and outcomes for the region are highlighted as:

- providing opportunities for all to progress and improve their quality of life
- an advanced, thriving and diverse economy occupying a competitive position
- successful urban and rural renaissance
- diverse and distinctive cities, towns, sub-regions and communities
- recognition for its distinctive, high quality natural and built environment
- an efficient network of integrated sustainable transport facilities and services
- partnership working for a commonly agreed sustainable future.

3.9 Policies contained within the Regional Spatial Strategy of specific relevance to this open space, sport and recreation study include:

- **Policy QE1** - Environmental improvement is a key component of the Spatial Strategy in order to underpin the overall quality of life of all areas and support wider economic and social objectives
- **Policy QE4** - local authorities and other agencies should ***undertake assessments of local need and audits of provision***, and develop appropriate strategies for greenspace to ensure that there is adequate provision of accessible, high quality urban greenspace with an emphasis on:
  - i) significantly improve the overall quality of public space
  - ii) enhancing the setting of local residential neighbourhoods in built up areas
  - iii) increasing the overall stock of urban trees
  - iv) improved accessibility and community safety
  - v) maintaining and enhancing sports, playing fields and recreation grounds.
- **Policy T3** - Development plans and local transport plans should provide greater opportunities for walking and cycling by:
  - i) developing safe, secure, direct, convenient and attractive networks which connect town centres, local facilities, educational premises, public transport interchanges, residential and employment areas
  - ii) giving pedestrians and cyclists priority in residential areas and town centres
  - iii) providing links between smaller settlements and centres and development of greenways and quiet roads
  - v) making the most effective use of canal towpaths
  - vi) expanding 'cycle & ride' and cycle carriage on public transport
  - vii) ensuring that new developments and infrastructure proposals improve walking and cycling access.

### ***The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands – Phase 2 Revision-Preferred Option***

- 3.10 When the Secretary of State published the Regional Spatial Strategy in 2004, he recognised that, in some instances, more work was required to develop the strategy further. Phase 2 revisions to the 2004 Regional Spatial Strategy relate to housing, employment, transport and waste.
- 3.11 For Bromsgrove the proposed housing requirement is 2,100 dwellings between 2006 and 2026. This is equivalent to an annual development rate of 105 dwellings per annum.
- 3.12 Once finalised, the scale and location of house building across Bromsgrove will impact on the demand for open space, as well as impacting on amount of pressure on existing open space from development.
- 3.13 The RSS Preferred Option identifies a network of strategic town and city centres across the Region which will be the preferred location for major retail developments, uses which attract large numbers of people including major cultural, indoor sport, tourist, social, leisure and community venues and large scale office developments. None of the centres in Bromsgrove are identified as strategic centres.
- 3.14 One of the greatest challenges the Council faces is ensuring that the quality of life for existing and new communities in the area is improved. Fundamental to achieving this is the need to enhance existing infrastructure, including open space, sport and recreation infrastructure to support the scale of growth proposed.
- 3.15 The RSS seeks to improve access within and across the Region in a way that supports the Spatial Strategy, reduces the need for travel, expands travel choice, tackles congestion, improves safety and protects the environment. There will be an emphasis on improved accessibility and mobility in market towns and rural areas so that more sustainable means of travel are encouraged and local regeneration initiatives are supported.
- 3.16 The implications of population growth on the open space, sport and recreation network in Bromsgrove are highlighted throughout this report.

### ***The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands – Phase 3 Revision***

- 3.17 Phase 3 revisions look at critical rural services, recreational provision, regionally significant environmental issues and the development of a framework for provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Council should use the findings of this study to influence their involvement in the phase 3 revisions regarding recreation provision.

### ***Sign Up For Sport: A Regional Plan for Sport in the West Midlands 2004-2008, Sport England***

- 3.18 Sport England as the national agency driving sports development, takes a strategic lead on the provision of sport.

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3.19 Sign Up For Sport is a plan for sport and physical activity in the region. Its formulation has involved national, regional and local consultations with key stakeholders, agencies and organisations across the private, public and voluntary sectors that fully understand the strategic issues and local needs of the region. It has been facilitated by Sport England under the guidance of the new West Midlands Sports Board.

3.20 The aim of the plan is:

”to significantly increase participation in sport within all age and social groups, leading to improvements in health and other social and economic benefits and providing the basis for progression into higher levels of performance for those with talent and the desire to progress”.

3.21 The plan has seven main outcomes:

- increase participation in club and community sport
- improve levels of sport performance
- widen access to sport
- improve the health and well being of people through sport
- create safer and stronger communities through sport
- improve education through PE and sport
- benefit the economy through sport.

### ***Regional Sports Facilities Framework for the West Midlands***

3.22 The Regional Facilities Framework identifies the priorities for the future investment in sport and active recreation facilities. It considers the period up to 2021 and assesses the impact of population change, and the facility requirements that will be needed if the targets for participation in sport and active recreation are to be met and support is to be given to the highest levels of elite sport.

3.23 The vision for the strategy builds upon ‘Sign up for Sport’ and states that:

“By 2021 the West Midlands will have active healthy people enjoying a range of sport and recreation opportunities, in high quality facilities, in a high quality environment. People take part in activity from their earliest years right through to very old age, and have the opportunities to excel in which ever sport they choose. The facilities providing for sport and active recreation are good quality and well maintained, with a range of providers involved. Everyone having access to at least three quality assured facilities within 20 minutes travel from their home, which in rural areas may be by car.”

3.24 The framework sets out a series of key priorities for the region. None of these relate specifically to Bromsgrove. The report also considers the key issues for the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Community Sports Partnership (CSP), of which Bromsgrove is a key partner. Key issues highlighted for Bromsgrove include:

- there is general concern over the ageing facility stock in Herefordshire and Worcestershire

- the strategy suggests that consideration should be given to additional sports hall space across the CSP area
- there is a need for additional specialist indoor bowls centres within the CSP area.

### **Local strategic documents**

- 3.25 Local strategic documents have been reviewed within the individual typology sections, and specific strategic objectives that link into this study have been highlighted. However, the key principles of each document have been set out in Table 3.1 overleaf alongside the relevance of this study to the assessment of local needs.

**Table 3.1 – Local Strategic Context – Implications for this open space, sport and recreation facility assessment**

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, recreation and sport needs assessment
<p><b>Bromsgrove Local Plan</b></p>	<p>Policy DS2 states that area designated as Green Belt will be protected from development except in special circumstances for the development of essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation and cemeteries.</p> <p>Policy DS9 identifies that development proposals in Landscape Protection Areas (LPAs) will be evaluated against their potential impact on the landscape, ecology or individual site. Permission will only be given where the impact on the landscape or ecological site will be negligible.</p> <p>Policy DS11 refers to planning obligations and states that the Council will seek agreement with developers to meet their reasonable costs to the community through planning obligations or unilateral undertakings to provide for on or off site educational, community or recreational facilities and compensation to mitigate any loss to environmental or community resources.</p> <p>Policy DS13 identifies that the Council is responsible for future developments to be sustainable and states that areas of essential character and environmental assets will be protected, including the green belt, undeveloped areas of countryside, areas of wildlife and ecological value and land of recreation and amenity value.</p> <p>Policy S28 refers to community facilities and states that new or enhanced community facilities will be supported.</p> <p>Policy S29 states that the Council will seek to ensure access for the disabled new buildings available for public use.</p> <p>Policy S31 protects school sports facilities from development stating that development proposals at educational sites which result in the loss of open space and/or sports facilities will not be permitted.</p> <p>Policy S32 refers to sports pitches of all ownership and identifies that proposals leading to the loss of private playing fields, school playing fields and other public or private sports facilities will not be permitted unless:</p>	<p>This study will provide evidence required to support and update the policies and standards set out in the local plan.</p> <p>The study will also inform key decisions made for site by site planning applications.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is sufficient provision of playing fields (Council standard)</li> <li>• there is alternative local provision</li> <li>• there is an alternative replacement site that could be provided in a suitable location</li> <li>• the scheme would lead to an improvement in the facilities available (elsewhere) on site.</li> </ul> <p>Policy S35 identifies a number of conservation areas that will be considered for designation.</p> <p>Policy S35A states that the Council will seek to preserve and enhance the appearance of conservation areas, further identifying that they will seek to retain and enhance open spaces, important views, trees and other features of importance.</p> <p>Policy S36 indicates that development proposals in or adjacent to areas of conservation will have to show they have taken into account and are compatible with the character of the area.</p> <p>Policy S45 states that the Council will seek to secure improvements to the environmental quality of conservation areas.</p> <p>Policy S48 protects historic parks and gardens from development, stating that any development that will have an adverse effect on the character of and setting of historic parks and gardens will not be permitted.</p> <p>Policies C9 and C10 protect SSSI's, NNR's, SWR's and LNR's from development. Any proposal which would destroy or adversely affect any of these sites will not be permitted.</p> <p>Policy C10A further states that the Council will seek to minimise the affects of development proposals on features of nature conservation.</p> <p>Policy C12 protects major wildlife corners from development.</p>	

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Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, recreation and sport needs assessment
	<p>Policy C18 refers to woodland and states that the Council will seek to retain and enhance existing woodland.</p> <p>Policy TR16 identifies that the Council will pursue opportunities to improve/provide cycle facilities in the District and to develop a network of cycle routes. For new developments, the Council will expect developers to provide cycle parking facilities and cycle paths.</p> <p>Policy RAT1 refers to development in the Green Belt for outdoor sport or recreation stating it will be directed to areas of low quality agricultural land.</p> <p>Policy RAT2 supports the development of outdoor sport and recreation facilities in the Green Belt as long as: the development is within a reasonable walking distance of public transport, there is adequate car parking, the development does not have an adverse impact on ecological or environmental interests or an unrelieved concentration of pitches is created.</p> <p>RAT3 states that the Council will support proposals for new and improved indoor sports facilities within or adjacent to existing settlements where there is demand and a number of criteria are met.</p> <p>Policy RAT4 covers the retention of open space, stating that the Council will seek to retain and enhance all public and privately owned open space of recreational and amenity value.</p> <p>Policy RAT5 states that the Council will seek the provision of play space across the district in accordance with its standards of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.2 hectares per 1000 population of sports pitches</li> <li>• 0.2 – 0.3 hectares per 1000 population of equipped play areas.</li> </ul>	

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	<p>Policy RAT6 refers to open space within housing developments and identifies that a housing development of over 0.4 hectares or above will be required to meet the minimum standard for children’s play space. Other types of open space should relate to the scale of the development.</p> <p>Policy RAT7 outlines the Council’s sports hall standard which states that 1 sports hall for each community of between 10,000 and 20,000 population should be provided where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development is located outside the Green Belt or within/adjacent to Hagley, Rubery or Wythall</li> <li>• the site is safely accessible by public and private transport</li> <li>• there would be adequate provision of parking.</li> </ul> <p>Policy RAT8 states that the Council will seek the provision of dual use school sports facilities where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the proposed scheme can meet demand</li> <li>• there is adequate car parking</li> <li>• the site is accessible by public and private transport</li> <li>• external floodlighting and increased vehicle movement do not affect residential areas.</li> </ul> <p>Policy RAT9 protects allotment sites from development indicating that development will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that demand does not justify retention or adequate replacement allotments are provided.</p> <p>Policy RAT11 recognises informal recreation opportunities at a number of sites in Bromsgrove.</p> <p>Policy RAT21 states that the development of golf courses will be considered against a number of criteria.</p>	

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<b>Document reviewed</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Links to open space, recreation and sport needs assessment</b>
<b>Local Development Framework (LDF) – Core Strategy Newsletter</b>	<p>The Core Strategy newsletter identifies the initial response received from consultation regarding the Core Strategy.</p> <p>The key issues and responses given of relevance to this study included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• housing and employment growth – many residents stated that new housing and employment growth should be concentrated in Bromsgrove Town</li> <li>• rural life – the location of services in key settlements and improving transport links were supported</li> <li>• learning, leisure and improving health – residents identified the need to protect strategic parks and parks located in areas of deprivation. Meeting the needs of a variety of people through the provision of different types and sizes of open spaces was viewed as important</li> <li>• natural environment – protection of the natural environment was viewed as essential</li> <li>• Getting around – the majority of support was given to improving access to everyday facilities.</li> </ul>	<p>The key findings of this open space, sport and recreation assessment will guide and provide the evidence for the policies that will be included within the core strategy.</p> <p>The information collected will also inform decision making based on the policies set.</p>
<b>Statement of Community Involvement</b>	<p>The Statement of Community Involvement identifies how the public can get involved in consultation with regards to the planning system.</p>	<p>The Statement of Community Involvement was considered during the preparation of this sport and recreation assessment and all relevant groups were provided with the opportunity to contribute.</p>
<b>Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report</b>	<p>The report sets out the context, objectives and outlines the baseline for the scope of the sustainability appraisal.</p> <p>The key sustainability issues for the District include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a rising older population</li> <li>• barriers to housing and services in the rural area</li> </ul>	<p>Key sustainability issues and objectives raised in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report were taken into account as part of this study.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• large identified greenfield sites for future development</li> <li>• local facilities to meet the needs of the population.</li> </ul> <p>The objectives of the report of relevance to this study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an improvement in the health and well being of the population</li> <li>• quality education opportunities for all</li> <li>• reduce and prevent crime</li> <li>• accessible services and opportunities for leisure and recreation</li> <li>• conserve and enhance the District’s biodiversity</li> <li>• protect the countryside and Green Belt.</li> </ul>	

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<p><b>Bromsgrove Community Plan 2003 – 2013</b></p>	<p>The Community Plan is a ten year strategy that seeks to address issues for residents, visitors and the business community in Bromsgrove.</p> <p>The five themes of the strategy and the aims of the themes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider your environment – increase the use of sustainable transport, improve access to open spaces and the countryside and protect the countryside and Green Belt</li> <li>• develop and prosper – provide a blueprint for Bromsgrove</li> <li>• feel safe – reduce crime and improve quality of life</li> <li>• health and social well being – promote a healthier lifestyle</li> <li>• learn and grow – increase participation in lifelong learning and increase opportunities for leisure and recreation.</li> </ul>	<p>The correct and appropriate provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities can contribute to achieving the five themes of the Community Plan.</p>
<p><b>Sustainable Community Strategy 2007 – 2010</b></p>	<p>The vision of the strategy is, “<i>we will make Bromsgrove District a better place to live, work and visit by driving forward change</i>”.</p> <p>The eight priorities of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fear of crime</li> <li>• environment</li> <li>• town centre regeneration</li> <li>• Longbridge regeneration</li> <li>• health and wellbeing</li> <li>• children and young people</li> <li>• older people</li> <li>• housing.</li> </ul>	<p>The eight priorities of the strategy have been considered in the development of this open space, sport and recreation assessment.</p>

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<p><b>Community Safety Strategy 2005 - 2008</b></p>	<p>The key priorities of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• keeping Bromsgrove safe</li> <li>• keeping communities feeling safe</li> <li>• achieving greener and safer public spaces</li> <li>• realising the potential of young people.</li> </ul>	<p>The sufficient provision of high quality open space, sport and recreation facilities can contribute to community safety and provide many opportunities for local residents, including young people.</p>

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<p><b>Blueprint for Bromsgrove - a Local Agenda 21 Action Plan for the District</b></p>	<p>The aim of the strategy is, <i>“to ensure sustainable development, balancing the social, economic and environmental needs of the District”</i>.</p> <p>The strategy focuses on a number of themes and each theme includes various objectives. Those themes and their objectives of relevance to this study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• community involvement – increasing community participation and involvement in Bromsgrove</li> <li>• planning and the built environment – protect and enhance natural heritage</li> <li>• open space, countryside and wildlife – actively looking for new play areas, ensuring allotment land remains in leisure use, developing management plans for all recreational areas and identifying brownfield sites with potential amenity value</li> <li>• health – encouraging healthy lifestyles and the use of District leisure facilities</li> <li>• community safety.</li> </ul>	<p>Effective and appropriate provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities can generate significant wider benefits which will contribute to the achievement of the key objectives of the Local Agenda 21 Action Plan. Appropriate provision of open spaces will encourage participation and a healthy lifestyle.</p>
<p><b>Sanders Park Management and Development Plan 2004 – 2009</b></p>	<p>The vision of the strategy is, <i>“to provide a park of the highest quality for the enjoyment of the community of Bromsgrove town and District to visitors in the area.”</i></p> <p>The aims of the strategy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that Sanders Park is welcoming and accessible to all possible users</li> <li>• ensure the safety of all staff and users of the park</li> <li>• maintain the highest standards of maintenance</li> <li>• adopt environmental management principles and reduce the impact on the environment</li> </ul>	<p>The aims of the Sanders Park Management and Development Plan have been considered in the development of this open space, recreation and sport local needs assessment.</p> <p>This assessment will facilitate the improvement of existing parks and open spaces through the planning system.</p> <p>The aims of the plan will inform the key priorities derived from this</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• promote biodiversity</li><li>• maintain the quality of management</li><li>• encourage community involvement in the park</li><li>• promote the park to all potential users</li><li>• provide a responsive, flexible and high quality management service.</li></ul>	study.

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<p><b>Sanders Park User Survey 2004</b></p>	<p>Over 61% of respondents to the survey visit the park weekly or more than often.</p> <p>The majority of users travel for 20 minutes by either foot or by car to access Sanders Park.</p> <p>The main reasons given for visiting the park were for events, activities and to visit a play area.</p> <p>Over 97% of users consider Sanders Park to be fairly safe or very safe.</p> <p>Sanders Park being too far away from a number of residents was a key barrier to access.</p> <p>The overall quality of parks and open spaces in Bromsgrove scored 7 out of 10, with Sanders Park receiving an average score of 7.8.</p> <p>The top five improvements requested at the park were seating, refreshments, toilets, events and improvements to the play area.</p> <p>78% of respondents considered Sanders Park to bring them health benefits.</p>	<p>Results from the Sanders Parks Users Survey have been considered in the development of local standards and throughout the report.</p>
<p><b>Worcestershire Play Strategy 2007 – 2010</b></p>	<p>The strategy identifies the importance of play and highlights the elements needed to ensure comprehensive play opportunities are provided for children and young people living in Worcestershire.</p> <p>The values underpinning the strategy, of relevance to this study, are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to contribute to the five outcomes for children and young people: being healthy; staying safe; enjoying and achieving; making a positive contribution; achieving economic well being</li> </ul>	<p>This assessment will investigate local community need in terms of provision for children and young people and will provide information relating to current views and aspirations for children’s play facilities.</p> <p>The findings will be considered in the context of the play strategy. Although this study considers only the provision of equipped play</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to recognise the importance of play for children and their families both in its own right and in relation to wider agendas such as health, social inclusion and community safety</li> <li>• to be prepared to offer challenge, whilst managing risk</li> <li>• to acknowledge that every child needs and has the right to play and that play is an essential part of growing up</li> <li>• to provide facilities and services that meet all children’s needs, encouraging social inclusion and embracing people with disabilities</li> <li>• to ensure that children and young people have safe and easy access to a range of play opportunities within a reasonable distance of their homes</li> <li>• to extend the choice and control that children have over play opportunities. To recognise a child’s need to push boundaries, to be independent and have self esteem</li> <li>• to use play positively to foster respect for and amongst children and young people</li> <li>• to strive to achieve the best quality possible for the greatest number of people.</li> </ul> <p>The four outcomes of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children and young people to have increased opportunity to access and enjoy a variety of play</li> <li>• increased inclusive play opportunities</li> <li>• a greater understanding of the importance of play</li> <li>• children and young people are involved in the design and delivery of play.</li> </ul>	<p>areas, it will be important this is evaluated in the wider context of play opportunities.</p> <p>Site visits will provide an indication of the quality of existing facilities and identify potential areas for improvement.</p> <p>The completion of the Children and Young People Survey will generate a greater understanding of the aspirations of children and young people and contribute to the provision of facilities that best meet local need.</p>

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<b>Worcestershire Playing Pitch Strategy 2002</b>	<p>The ratio of pitches to adults in Bromsgrove is 1:1165. This is significantly below the national average.</p> <p>Within the District there area 106 ha of sports pitches of which 93% are available for community use.</p> <p>Only 44% of pitches within Bromsgrove have changing facilities and no sites have female changing facilities.</p> <p>Within Bromsgrove there is a shortfall of 13.6 junior football pitches, 8.5 junior rugby pitches and 4.9 hockey pitches. Based on future population projections, there will also be a small shortfall of cricket pitches (0.4) by 2009.</p> <p>The strategy recommended the development of changing facilities at the following sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aston Fields Recreation Ground</li> <li>• Boleyn Road, Frankley</li> <li>• Braces Lane Recreation Ground</li> <li>• Brook Road, Rubery</li> <li>• King George V Recreation Ground</li> <li>• Market Street Recreation Ground</li> <li>• New Inns Lane, Rubery</li> <li>• Sanders Park.</li> </ul>	<p>The Playing Pitch Strategy element of this assessment will update the findings of the Worcestershire Playing Pitch Strategy for Bromsgrove.</p>
<b>Worcestershire Local Area Agreement</b>	<p>The Local Area Agreement seeks to enhance partnership working between central Government and local bodies that provide services in the area.</p> <p>The objectives of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communities that are safe and feel safe</li> <li>• a better environment for today and tomorrow</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• economic success that is shared by all</li><li>• improving health and wellbeing</li><li>• meeting the needs of children and young people</li><li>• stronger communities.</li></ul>	

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<p><b>Worcestershire Countryside Access and Recreation Strategy</b></p>	<p>The vision of the strategy is, <i>“to develop a countryside recreation culture in Worcestershire which residents and visitors alike benefit from the opportunity to access a range of high quality countryside recreation.”</i></p> <p>The objectives of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure opportunity is available for all sections of the community to enjoy the countryside</li> <li>• secure and promote opportunities for countryside access</li> <li>• encourage and enable local communities to become involved in and take action to share and increase the benefits of countryside recreation opportunities</li> <li>• to manage and promote responsible land uses</li> <li>• make use of recreational opportunities whilst protecting and enhancing the environmental qualities of the countryside.</li> <li>• to provide a wide range of high quality facilities to ensure the demands of users are catered for to help them enjoy recreational opportunities</li> <li>• continue to promote the health and well being qualities associated with countryside recreation</li> <li>• promote alternative forms of transport to access the countryside.</li> </ul>	<p>The objectives of the Worcestershire Countryside Access and Recreation Strategy will inform this open space, recreation and sport local needs assessment.</p> <p>Access to informal countryside will be considered as part of this assessment.</p>
<p><b>North Midlands Facility Plan 2005/08</b></p>	<p>The plan identifies the overall facility investment within the North Midlands Rugby Football Union area.</p> <p>The purpose of the plan is, <i>“to ensure, where possible, a clear local infrastructure for rugby union which allows the game to be played, where playing includes training, coaching, officiating and competitive play, on a regular basis by any person who wishes to take part”.</i></p>	<p>The priorities of the North Midlands Facility Plan will be considered in the development of the Playing Pitch Strategy.</p>

**SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, recreation and sport needs assessment
<p><b>The Worcestershire Cricket Board – Strategic Plan for Cricket</b></p>	<p>The aim of the plan is, “<i>to provide a high quality ‘joined up’ service that supports and enhances the continued delivery of all cricketing activity within the county of Worcestershire whilst balancing the national requirement against local need</i>”.</p> <p>The six core values of the plan are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• excellence – striving for excellence and continuous improvement</li> <li>• customer first – effective communication with customers and partners</li> <li>• enjoyment – an entertaining, safe, enjoyable and exciting cricket environment</li> <li>• respect – respect to all involved in the game and uphold the spirit of cricket</li> <li>• teamwork – working together to deliver aims and objectives</li> <li>• dynamism – being innovative and creative to improve all programmes delivered.</li> </ul> <p>Bromsgrove District is classified in the East Worcestershire sub region. Bromsgrove CC, Five Ways Old Edwardians CC, Barnt Green CC and Wythall CC are identified as focus clubs.</p> <p>Alvechurch and Hopwood CC, Avoncroft CC and Hagley CC are identified as affiliated clubs with a junior section.</p> <p>The plan identifies a number of key strategic priorities for 2007 – 2010:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• affiliated clubs – to increase the number of affiliated clubs to 84 by 2010 and to promote, educate and deliver a service to clubs through the 4 tier Affiliated Clubs Benefit Package</li> </ul>	<p>The six core values of the plan will be considered as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy.</p>

**SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, recreation and sport needs assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• affiliated clubs with junior sections – increase the number of affiliated clubs with junior sections entering core data on the County Board Management System to 11 by 2010, work with key partners to identify priorities for development, increase the number of affiliated clubs with junior sections with Clubmark Accreditation to 11 by 2010 and to encourage the sharing of best practice between clubs through District Development Groups</li> <li>• focus club community clusters – increase the number of Focus Clubs to 28 by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010, ensure all 28 clubs are Clubmark Accredited, ensure all clubs enter data onto the CBMS, support Focus Clubs to retain and recruit volunteers, to provide support and resources to deliver ECB minimum quality standards and to encourage the sharing of best practice between District Development Groups</li> <li>• affiliated leagues plan – introduce an Affiliated Leagues Committee by April 2008, disperse all ECB guidance through committee to ensure clarity in delivery and work with the leagues to collate membership figures from clubs as part of affiliation</li> <li>• cricket for people with disabilities – work with partners to develop opportunities for people with disabilities, identify Focus Clubs for people with disabilities, develop opportunities for SEN schools to develop Table Cricket, identify a clear player pathway for talented players for people with disabilities</li> <li>• school and competition development – continue to provide appropriate competition opportunities, develop and increase entries into inter school competitions and utilise the Chance to Shine programme to increase the number of schools entering competitions</li> </ul>	

**SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

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Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, recreation and sport needs assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talented player development pathways – to provide the best player pathway possible to ensure an equal opportunity is extended to all, to promote player pathways, to continue to deliver the quality District programme to 112 young cricketers and to continue to deliver a quality county age group programmes</li> <li>• women and girls development plan – to increase participation at grass roots, ensure all five clubs are entering senior ECB organised womens competitions, ensure all female cricketers receive opportunities to play at the appropriate level of competition, introduce a girls under 13 and under 15 hard ball league in 2008 and ensure 8 clubs enter by 2010 and to provide the best player pathway possible.</li> </ul>	

### **Summary and conclusions**

- 3.26 The provision of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities contributes to the achievement of wider governmental objectives such as social and community cohesion, urban renaissance and promoting a healthy and enjoyable life. Any development of open spaces (ie provision of either new or enhancement of existing spaces) should take into account bio-diversity and nature conservation opportunities and develop an increasing environmental awareness, as well as facilitating the increase needed in participation in sport and active recreation.
- 3.27 The effective provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities offers multiple benefits to local residents. As well as providing a visual amenity, open spaces can also be central to the local community and provide an alternative opportunity to participate in physical activity. The provision of open spaces can therefore contribute towards the achievement of regional and local priorities.
- 3.28 Many organisations are willing to work in partnership together to manage and develop existing open spaces and share similar aims and objectives eg protecting, enhancing and maximising usage and nature conservation value of open spaces. The importance of enhancing biodiversity across the region as well as maintaining and improving the green network is a key feature of many regional strategies.
- 3.29 Points emerging from the strategic review that are integral to the development of this open space, sport and recreation assessment in Bromsgrove are as follows:
- the natural environment is a key feature of Bromsgrove, providing many recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. The protection and enhancement of the environment is a key aim for the Council
  - Sanders Park is a strategic park within Bromsgrove and should be protected and enhanced through the management and development plan. Increasing access to this high quality site should be a key aspiration
  - housing developments and geographical allocations driven by national planning policies and employment land allocations will have a direct impact on open space, sport and recreation provision and sustainability. Population growth will place increasing demands on existing open spaces as well as generating higher needs for recreational open space provision
  - the increased focus on improving the health of local residents will raise the profile of open space, sport and recreation facilities. Open space can provide alternative opportunities for physical activity.
- 3.30 In summary, this review of strategic documents highlights the local importance of maintaining and improving open space sites within Bromsgrove. This local needs study and resulting strategy will contribute to achieving the wider aims of a number of local and national agencies.