Bromsgrove District Council

Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy

An Executive Summary

December 2023

Bromsgrove District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

1 Introduction and Context

1.1. As set out in the Bromsgrove Leisure and Culture Strategy 2022-2032, Bromsgrove District Council's Vision for future provision of leisure and culture in Bromsgrove is:

Healthier and happier communities actively engaged in leisure and culture.

1.2. The Bromsgrove Leisure and Culture Strategy is an over-arching document, aligned to the Corporate Plan, comprising strategies for Parks and Open Spaces (including 4 Management Plans), Built Sports Facilities, Arts and Culture, and Playing Pitches It recognises the contribution that leisure and culture can make to the achievement of our corporate and community priorities, and specifically community health and wellbeing

Purpose of the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS)

1.3. The PPOSS informs the Bromsgrove Leisure and Culture Strategy and will guide future provision of playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities to serve existing and new communities in Bromsgrove.

Methodology for developing the PPOSS

1.4. The PPOSS has been developed using the 2013 Sport England Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance (https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport?section=assessing_needs_and_playing_pitch_strategy_guidance), and for non-pitch sports the Sport England 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG)'.

1.5. Sport England is a statutory consultee on all planning applications affecting playing fields used in the last 5 years, and a consultee on other applications: it looks to improve the quality, access, and management of sports facilities as well as investing in new facilities to meet unsatisfied demand.

1.6. The key drivers for the production of the PPOSS as advocated by Sport England are to protect, enhance and provide sports facilities, as follows:

1. **Protect:** To provide evidence to inform policy and specifically to support site allocations and development management policies which will protect sports facilities and their use by the community, irrespective of ownership;

2. **Provide:** To ensure that sports facilities are effectively managed and maintained and that the best uses are made of existing resources – whether facilities, expertise and/or personnel to improve and enhance the existing provision – particularly in the light of pressure on local authority budgets; and

3. **Enhance:** To provide evidence to help secure external funding for new facilities and enhancements (if on the infrastructure list) and Section 106 agreements. Sport England and the local authority can then use the strategies developed and the guidance provided in making key planning decisions regarding facility developments in the area.

Appendices not included as part of Stage D

1.7. Stage D of the PPOSS, provides a summary of key findings, explores specific scenarios and makes recommendations for individual sports informed by work undertaken at Stages B and C.

Stage E

1.8. Stage E of the PPOSS involves establishment of a Steering Group to oversee implementation of the recommendations, update the PPOSS when needed, and ensure ongoing dialogue with both Sport England and National Governing Bodies (NGBs) about pitch and outdoor facility provision.

Recommendations

Pitch Type/ Facility	Recommendations
3G Artificial Grass Pitches	1.1 Protect the existing stock of 3G pitches, ensuring community use is kept. 1.2 Development of 1 additional full size 3G AGP in each of SA2, SA4 and SA5 to help reduce the current deficit. Waseley Hills High (SA1), Barnsley Hall (SA5), The Victoria Ground (SA5), Bay Tree Farm (SA4), The Holloway (SA4) and Wythall Park (SA4) should all be considered as potential sites. 1.3 Development of 1 full size 3G pitch in SA3. This should be WR22 compliant and be located at Bromsgrove RFC, Five Ways Old Edwardians or Kings Norton RFC. 1.4 Further analysis at Stage E to ascertain the need for the development of a 5th additional full size 3G AGP.
Grass Football Pitches	2.1 Protect existing quantity of pitches (unless replacement provision is agreed upon and provided). 2.2 Work to reinstate currently disused Council owned football pitches into circulation to support current and future community usage. Particular focus should be on reinstating the youth 11v11 pitches at Aston Fields Recreation Ground and Sanders Park, which will have a significant impact on the reducing the predicted future shortfalls of this pitch type. 2.3 Where pitches are overplayed and/or assessed as 'Poor' or 'Standard' quality, prioritise investment and review maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain use and improve quality to a 'good' standard. 2.4 Work to accommodate future demand as well as unmet and latent demand at sites which are not operating at capacity, or at sites not currently available for community use that could become so, moving forward. There are a number of sites throughout Bromsgrove, that are available for community use, but not currently supporting any formal football activity.

Pitch Type/ Facility	Recommendations
	Utilising Romsley Playing Field (SA1), Belbroughton Rec Ground (SA2), The Pheonix Group (SA4), Catshill Village Meadow (SA5) and The Ryland Centre (SA5) should be a priority.
Hockey Specific All Weather Grass Pitches	3.1 Protect all current hockey sites, including Bromsgrove Cricket, Hockey and Tennis Club, in accordance with Sport England's Playing Fields Policy, which opposes any development which would lead to the loss of a current playing pitch, land allocated for playing pitch provision or land which has previously been used as a playing field. 3.2 If the AGP at Bromsgrove Cricket Hockey and Tennis Club is lost, development of a replacement full size, floodlit hockey specific AGP is required in the SA5 sub area. 3.3 Protect Woodrush Community Sports Centre to prevent further deficit of hockey AGPs in the District and to allow for further growth or increased imported demand. 3.4 Explore the development of community use agreements with Bromsgrove School to secure the future of hockey in Bromsgrove.
Rugby Union	4.1 Improve the maintenance regime at Bromsgrove Rugby Club and prioritise GMA inspections and reports at all community club sites in the study area. 4.2 The development of a WR22 3G pitch, and its prioritisation of rugby activity should be considered to contribute toward meeting training demand from all clubs. This should be in either the SA2 or SA3 sub-area, where there is the largest deficit for current and future training facilities. Any 3G development should not be located on an existing Rugby Union site, but rather focus on multi-sport outcomes through providing for both football and rugby union demand. 4.3 Encourage all club sites to undertake Pitch Power reports to inform pitch improvement plans and provide maintenance guidance to ensure pitch quality on all sites is of the highest standard possible. 4.4 Where additional pitch provision will not be located within the housing development, developer contributions should be secured to invest in existing provision or to provide new playing pitches off-site. The table below outlines the priority sites in SA5 where developer contributions could be used to address the current and future shortfalls in provision. Priority Sites for Developer Contributions – SA5

Site	Sport	Recommendation
Garringtons	Football	Reinstate site – include youth football provision
The Meadows	Football	Reinstate site – include youth football provision
Sanders Park	Football	Reinstate site – include youth football provision

Pitch Type/ Facility	Recommendations		
	Catshill Village Meadow	Football	Grass pitch improvements
	Charford Recreation Ground	Football	Grass pitch improvements
	Stoke Prior Sport and Social Club	Football	Grass pitch improvements
	Barnsley Hall	Football / AGP	Development of 3G pitch provision in line with LFFP
	Avoncroft CC	Cricket	Development of non-turf pitch or additional grass wicket provision
	Bromsgrove Cricket Hockey and Tennis Club	Cricket	Additional grass wicket provision
	Old Halesonians Association	Rugby Union	Installation of additional floodlighting
	Five Ways Old Edwardians	Rugby Union	Installation of additional floodlighting
	Kings Norton RFC	Rugby Union	Installation of additional floodlighting
	Woodrush Rugby Club	Rugby Union	Installation of additional floodlighting
	Bromsgrove Rugby Cub	Rugby Union	Grass pitch improvements
	Bromsgrove School	Hockey	Implementation of community use agreement of 1 or more of the sand-dressed AGPs.
Cricket	5.1 Develop secure community use agreements at education sites in Bromsgrove. This would minimise the impact of team growth and the shortfall in grass wickets that is predicted by 2040. 5.2 Consider the development of additional non-turf wickets at existing club sites, prioritising Avoncroft CC and Hagley CC. However, this must not result in the loss of grass provision. 5.3 Improve existing non-turf wickets on educational sites, enabling them to safely meet junior cricket demand, therefore creating extra capacity on grass wickets for adult provision. The development of community use agreements would again be imperative for this. 5.4 Consider the development of additional grass wickets at Avoncroft CC and Bromsgrove Cricket Hockey and Tennis Club		

Pitch Type/ Facility	Recommendations
Tennis	6.1 Protect existing quantity of tennis courts and community access to them. This is particularly important at Bromsgrove Cricket Hockey and Tennis Club. Responsibility of BDC, Sports Club, Facility Owners. 6.2 Support grounds staff to review quality issues on courts to ensure appropriate quality is achieved at sites assessed as standard and sustained at sites assessed as good. Priority sites for quality reviews are Rowney Green and Sanders Park. Responsibility of LTA, BDC and Sports Clubs where appropriate. 6.3 Ensure club future demand can be accommodated on existing supply of courts. Responsibility of LTA, BDC and Sports Clubs where appropriate. 6.4 Ensure that any large housing developments provide for tennis and need is assessed by use of Sport England's ANOG Guidance. 6.5 Where developments would benefit from floodlights on site to provide additional evening capacity, work with facility owners to determine the viability of these investments.
Netball	7.1 Protect existing quantity of netball courts. Responsibility of BDC, Sports Club, Facility Owners. 7.2 Ensure club future demand can be accommodated on through existing indoor provision and supplemented through existing supply of outdoor courts, working with facility owners/managers to provide both indoor and outdoor netball. Responsibility of England Netball, BDC and Sports Clubs where appropriate. 7.3 Ensure that any large housing developments provide for netball, need should be assessed by use of Sport England's ANOG guidance 7.4 Where developments would benefit from floodlights on site to provide additional evening capacity, work with facility owners to determine the viability of these investments.
Bowls	8.1 Protect existing quantity of all facilities. Responsibility of BDC, Sports Club, Facility Owners. 8.2 Support grounds staff to review quality issues on greens to ensure appropriate quality is achieved at sites assessed as standard and sustained at sites assessed as good. Responsibility of Bowls bodies, BDC and Sports Clubs where appropriate. 8.3 Ensure club future demand can be accommodated on existing supply of greens. Responsibility of Bowls bodies, BDC and Sports Clubs where appropriate. 8.4 Work with clubs, BDC and bowls bodies to further assess the need for improved ancillary facilities at Sanders Park and Stoke Prior Green. 8.5 Work with clubs to support development and growth of the sport.