



## Project Briefing

Report title	Lewisham Playing Pitch Strategy Update
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### 1. Background

- 1.1. Lewisham Council commissioned 4global Consulting to prepare a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) in 2019, to provide the Council with a clear evidence base and set of recommendations for future outdoor sports facility development across the Borough.
- 1.2. A PPS is a strategic assessment that provides analysis of supply and demand for playing pitches (grass and artificial). The strategy and the evidence base upon which it is based is delivered using national guidance and facility insight from specific Governing Bodies of Sport.
- 1.3. The assessment focused on facilities used by the following sports as they were identified as the key sports which use facilities within Lewisham.
  - Football
  - Rugby Union
  - Cricket
  - Hockey
  - Netball
  - Tennis
  - Athletics

### 2. Recommendations and progress

- 2.1. Using the evidence base and analysis that has been developed as part of the PPS, a number of recommendations were provided to ensure the advancement of outdoor sport and activity provision across Lewisham.
- 2.2. At a strategic level, the following key recommendations (see the table below) have been identified for each of the sports, as well as for general sports provision. It is pertinent to note that soon after the adoption of the PPS, the Covid-19 pandemic took hold, largely impacting progress of the recommendations.
- 2.3. During this time, the Sports and Leisure Team and Parks and Open spaces have merged. This allows for better allocation of resources to work towards the recommendations within the Playing Pitch Strategy.

### 3. Next Steps

- 3.1. We are in the process of arranging a steering group meeting to ensure the PPS is still fit for purpose/relevant. This is in relation to changes in the way sport and physical activity are viewed post pandemic.

Recommendation	Actions /Progress	RAG
<b>General Recommendations</b>		
Work with well-run sports clubs to utilise the existing volunteer network across Lewisham and providing more autonomy for clubs, allowing those organisations that have adequate governance and financial stability to develop facilities and participation	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Local Football Partnership launched in January 22 working towards providing unified voice for local clubs and their needs.</p> <p>A local Sports Club Forum is launching in April 23, allowing for regular stakeholder meetings to identify areas of support for local clubs.</p>	Green
Address the issue of poor ancillary and changing pavilion quality through the refurbishment and replacement of existing ancillary facilities, prioritising those on multi-pitch sites that are currently well used. Utilise the action plan to identify specific sites for development.	<p>Opportunities for external funding are being explored.</p> <p>Whitefoot Lane, Downham Playing Fields and Blackheath identified as key hubs for development</p>	Orange
Enhance the drainage and maintenance of pitches that are currently operating over-capacity, to increase the pitch capacity to accommodate demand of current user clubs, especially on council-maintained pitches.	<p>Annual pitch maintenance regime planned to start in May at the end of the football season.</p> <p>Enrolled on Football Foundation's grass pitch improvements programme.</p>	Green
Work with clubs based at council owned sites, to establish long-term security use agreements, ensuring that clubs and participants have security of tenure and are able to grow and develop through grant funding wider investment.	<p>Working with a host of teams based at local facilities to ensure they have all they need to develop and grow</p> <p>Future coordination to be facilitated through the Lewisham Football Partnership.</p> <p>To be explored where appropriate clubs/organisations and facilities align</p>	Orange
Work with educational establishments that provide playing pitches for use by community teams, through artificial provision, to secure formal community use of pitches and ancillary facilities through a Community Use Agreement. Where these community use agreements currently	<p>Currently working with CYP who manage bookings on educational sites to ensure community access is granted.</p> <p>Working with Contracts Manager for PFI schools to strengthen community organisation links.</p>	Green

exist, work with education establishments and users to ensure that requirements for community use are being enforced		
<b>Football recommendations</b>		
Protect all grass pitches for future football use and develop further capacity through improved maintenance and the development of 3G AGP provision, to ensure there is spare capacity for football over the lifetime of the strategy	Working with Football Foundation on their grass pitch improvements programme.  Currently working to ensure football bookings are as widely spread across the borough as possible through the adoption of a facilities booking platform	
Ensure sites that have community use available also have security of tenure to protect the future provision of football, allowing clubs based on council sites to apply for grants and investments from various governing bodies.	Working to establish formal agreements for clubs based at local facilities	
Reconfigure a number of adult pitches to youth 11v11 to address the deficit of youth 11v11 provision and meet the growing demand for this pitch typology.	Pitches being/reconfigured at Downham Playing Fields, Bellingham Healthy Lifestyles Centre and The Bridge.  Ongoing in relation to demand	
Lewisham currently has very little community available AGP provision within the study area. Identify at least 2 sites, one being in the north, to develop full sized 3G AGP provision, to meet the growing demand for this pitch type and meet the needs of local clubs and residents	Currently working with the Football Foundation to explore options for 3G pitch installation at Whitefoot Lane. Sites in the north of the borough under consideration	
Increase the level of maintenance at sites identified as being close to the poor rating, in order to mitigate the risk of pitches falling into disuse and lowering the carrying capacity of pitch provision in the borough	Pitch maintenance regime under constant review	
Identify MUGA/small-sided sites, particularly in the north of the borough, that could be converted or used for football via changing the surface to a 3G surface type. Develop a network of high-quality facilities that can be used for small-sided provision and meet the strategic objectives of LB Lewisham, The Football Foundation, the FA and Sport England. Where high quality floodlit provision is developed, determine an access control policy that can ensure these facilities remain sustainable while	Currently through to the second round of Football Foundation's Playzones programme which aims to develop small-sided game/muga facilities across London. Currently conducting desktop exercise to review demand.  Lewisham Homes and other stakeholders engaged in identifying viable facilities	

having low barriers to entry. It should be noted that any resurfacing of sites should work alongside England Hockey so Hockey does not lose a supply of available pitches.			
Focus on the development of ancillary facilities located at Blackheath in terms of changing room provision. This should be in conjunction with the London Marathon Charitable Trust and the Football Foundation.	Review of funding opportunities for this site to be conducted in Summer 23.		
<b><u>Cricket recommendations</u></b>			
There are currently no 'good' rated pitches within the study area. Further investment and improved maintenance programmes are needed, especially on council owned pitches, to improve this quality rating of both the pitches and outfield. This is relevant for both the north and south sub areas, especially with the increased planned development to the north of the study area.	Working with Parks team to improve playing surfaces to the grass pitches in Mayow Park as well as working to maintain the synthetic pitches in Foster, Mountsfield, Deptford Park and Hilly Fields.		
Work with the key stakeholder to invest in non-turf pitch provision, to meet the growing demand for informal cricket and service clubs with training and matchplay facilities. Focus on sites in the north of the borough, where population increase is projected to be the most significant.	We are currently working with the ECB to install more non turf cricket pitches in the borough potential sites include Blackheath, Warren Avenue Playing Fields.		
Invest in ancillary facilities and the use of better security systems in order to decrease the amount of anti-social behaviour.	Working with Parks officers to identify areas of need		
<b><u>Rugby recommendations</u></b>			
Continue maintenance regimes for education sites as there is expected to be growth in the women's and girls' demand which is in line with the RFU projections			
Collaborate with other sports such as rugby league or Gaelic Football to facilitate the use of unused rugby sites within the borough.			

<b>Hockey recommendations</b>			
Ensure long term community use agreements are in place, especially at educational sites, to further develop hockey within the area. This will allow for allow for great club growth and facility development.	Working with St Dunstan's and Kings College to ensure facilities are accessible to community		
Safeguard sand based AGP provision for future use and not allow the conversion from sand based to 3G AGP's to occur unless offset with new development. England hockey should be consulted for any potential of resurfacing at a site. If resurfacing does occur at a site then the loss of a hockey pitch should be mitigated at a similar facility so the supply does not decrease.	No developments planned currently  To be considered through relationships with current host venues.		
<b>Netball recommendations</b>			
Establish long term community use agreements with educational sites and netball clubs, as well as continued maintenance improvements to surfaces.	Working to establish formal agreements for clubs based at local facilities		
<b>Tennis recommendations</b>			
Utilise an excellent working relationship with the LTA, developed through previous capital investment projects, to invest in further local authority facilities, focussing on poor quality facilities that service the north of the borough	Phase 2 of the investment programme underway to upgrade the courts at Chinbrook Meadows, Ladywell Fields (Catford Bridge), Telegraph Hill and Hillyfields. This will see further investment in 4 more park sites		
Work in conjunction with the FA and Football Foundation when applying for new 3G surfaces and sites as Tennis courts can be added onto such applications and better serve a wider aspect of the community.	Not possible on current Working to establish formal agreements for clubs based at local facilities Tennis development programme due to space restrictions.  To be considered for future renovations projects		
<b>Athletics recommendations</b>			
Protect the existing synthetic athletics facility at Ladywell Park and continue to work with the resident club to increase usage throughout peak and off-peak times.	Ongoing  Working with resident athletics clubs to support growth.		