

## Appendix 3 – Summary of Sport by Sport findings and Recommendations

While there are numerous recommendations for each sport and pitch type, the strategy's main headlines are set out below to provide a "snapshot" of the strategy's findings for pitch provision in the Borough.

### Football:

- There are a number of grass pitches where improvements in drainage and quality could improve resilience and reliability during wet periods of the season.
- Supply currently meets demand although there is increasing reliance on unsecure community use pitches. The strategy should seek to ensure that best use is made of secure sites and teams do not have to rely on long-term use of unsecure sites.
- There is a lack of full size 3G pitches with secure community use which could support match play, with all secure community use 3G pitches being small or half size.
- There is an equivalent to around 17 full size grass pitches of potential capacity on secure community use sites which is currently unused. Almost all of this unused capacity is on pitches which are used for matches already with only 1 or 2 pitches not currently used for matches at all. Therefore, while this capacity is unused, most of it is not surplus and should not be lost or removed from supply, but is "capacity headroom" which is likely to be required to accommodate future demand to 2021 and beyond.
- Demand is projected to increase by 2021. Assuming that unused capacity on existing secure sites can be used, moving teams away from unsecure to secure community use sites and taking into account future demand from an increase in the number of teams, an additional 12.5 full size grass pitches would be needed to accommodate additional match play (if 3G pitches do not feature as part of the solution for future provision).
- 4-5 additional full size floodlit 3G pitches with secure community use are needed by 2021 if all clubs are to have an opportunity to train on a 3G surface. This will provide additional supply / capacity for matches at weekends which will, in turn, reduce the capacity required for additional grass pitches if 3G provision is delivered.

### Hockey:

- Supply currently meets demand from Swindon's two clubs, albeit on unsecure community use AGPs. This presents a risk to certainty of future use which should be addressed by provision of secure community use floodlit pitches.
- One pitch currently used by one hockey club is of poor quality.
- Demand is projected to increase by 2021, equating to a need for at least 2 full size secure community use pitches with floodlighting to accommodate match day play on Saturdays and Sundays. Training needs can easily fit within this level of provision. One additional pitch may be needed subject to demand being demonstrated "on the ground".

### Cricket:

- Taking current demand into account and comparing to supply, there are 72 match equivalents of unused capacity on secure use grass pitches<sup>1</sup> (equating to 8 pitches of good quality) and -17 on secure use artificial pitches (meaning that artificial pitch capacity is currently overused).
- Demand is projected to increase by 2021. Growth in cricket is likely to manifest in informal versions of the game and junior and women's cricket. Future provision will need to recognise and cater for this growth appropriately.
- Figures estimate that, taking into account existing unused capacity which could practically be used by teams, a desire to move use away from unsecure to secure sites and the demand for additional new capacity, an equivalent need will exist for additional capacity providing an equivalent of 34 good quality grass pitches (i.e. wickets / strips) and 8 good quality artificial pitches, which could be provided through a

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this strategy a cricket "pitch" is a "wicket" or the strip of playing surface on which the batting takes place and comprises two sets of stumps and bails (one at each end). A "square" is the area within which one or more pitches are laid and set out. The "ground" comprises the pitches (and therefore the square), "infield" and "outfield" where bowling and fielding takes place and ancillary facilities such as the pavilion.

combination of: improving the quality of standard and poor quality pitches; securing community use on current unsecure sites; new additional pitches at existing grounds where capacity would be practically usable; and / or, new additional grounds in sub-areas / locations where the demand is likely to occur.

### **Rugby Union:**

- There are currently significant levels of overplay on secure community use pitches used by the two clubs with their own home ground. Some of this over-play can be overcome by improvements to existing pitches, but not all.
- One club is without a permanent home ground on a secure community use site.
- Demand is projected to increase by 2021. Taking into account overplay at existing sites, a desire to move use away from unsecure to secure sites and the demand for additional new capacity, this translates into an equivalent need for additional capacity of 14 good quality full size grass pitches, which could be provided through a combination of: improving the quality and / or maintenance regimes of existing pitches; providing floodlighting to increase evening training capacity; securing community use on current unsecure sites; new additional pitches at existing club grounds where feasible; a rugby focused 3G pitch; and / or, a longer-term (beyond the strategy period) rugby hub / cluster site.

### **Other Sports:**

- Both American Football and Rugby League share use of rugby union pitches and do not have a permanent sole use ground. Remedying this position would help to relieve some of the over-play at one of the rugby clubs.
- Softball's needs are well catered for at their current site, but a permanent home for sole use for softball in the summer months would prevent any potential conflict with use of a ground for cricket if softball numbers grow.

### **General:**

- The current supply of playing pitches should be protected from loss.
- The provision of any new grass or artificial pitch will need to demonstrate long-term cost viability prior to delivery and should be made available for secure community use where possible.
- A "plan, deliver, monitor, manage" approach should be taken to the provision of new pitches and the management and any necessary "re-packaging" of existing supply. Provision of additional pitches / capacity should be made in response to demonstrable demand "on the ground".
- As the strategy development has progressed, some pitches have been subject to possible transfer from Swindon Borough Council to newly formed Parish Councils. The Assessment Report and this strategy have sought to recognise the most up-to-date position on the possible transfer but further work or plans for delivery will need to reflect the implications on pitch supply and demand of any such transfers should they take place during 2017.
- Provision standards are no longer supported by Sport England. Where a baseline of provision in relation to the number of pitches is required for new development proposals, the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator should be used as a starting point. It is important to note that provision figures generated by the calculator provide a guide only and **should not be relied upon in isolation** outside of the strategy recommendations for each sport and specific sites, pitches or sub-areas within the Borough.