PLAN FOR PLAYING PITCHES
2015 to 2018
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**Appendix 1**

Recommended standards of provision for grass pitches and guidance on hockey (separate document)

**Appendix 2**

Proposal for AGPs in Plymouth (separate document)

**Appendix 3**

Needs assessment (separate document)

**Appendix 4**

Action plan (separate document)
FOREWORD

Plymouth City Council’s vision is to ‘make Plymouth one of Europe’s finest, most vibrant waterfront cities where everyone enjoys an outstanding quality of life’.

The Council and its partners recognise the enormous contribution that playing pitches make to keeping our residents healthy, feeling good about themselves, socialising and enjoying their free time at our recreation and sporting facilities.

This plan is the product of a comprehensive assessment of the needs of Plymouth and the coordination and commitment of key stakeholders and pitch providers in the city. The plan follows the methodology published by Sport England and its production has been overseen by a steering group comprising local partners and organisations.

We are really pleased to have worked alongside key local and national partners to develop this, a comprehensive Plan for Playing Pitches and we are committed to delivering its objectives. In order to achieve this ambition, the principles contained within this plan have become part of the Plymouth Plan, which is the single strategic plan for the city.

We see playing pitches as key piece of the infrastructure required to deliver our strategic objective to ‘deliver a healthy city’ and make Plymouth a great place to live. The plan provides important evidence to support the Plymouth Plan to achieve this objective.

This plan will give us the framework for decision making regarding pitches and support the growth of Plymouth. We are grateful to all those who have contributed to this work and for their ongoing support to help us achieve these objectives.

Councillor Peter Smith,
Deputy Leader

Councillor Brian Vincent,
Cabinet Member for Streetscene
## Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Chance to Shine</td>
<td>Cricket development and educational programme aimed at schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGP</td>
<td>Artificial Grass Pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECB</td>
<td>England and Wales Cricket Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EH</td>
<td>England Hockey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA</td>
<td>Football Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoD</td>
<td>Ministry of Defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGB</td>
<td>National Governing Body of Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPF</td>
<td>National Planning Policy Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCC</td>
<td>Plymouth City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIG</td>
<td>Plan Implementation Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth Plan</td>
<td>The single strategic plan for Plymouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth Sports Board</td>
<td>A local representative group of sporting interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFU</td>
<td>Rugby Football Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHMA</td>
<td>Strategic Housing Market Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TGRs</td>
<td>Team Generation Rates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This Plan for Playing Pitches in Plymouth is based on a detailed assessment of local needs and projected future for pitch sports within and around the City.

The Plan has been developed with the help and support of a wide range of agencies, organisations and individuals and, in particular, a project steering group.

The Plan sets out a range of issues and action points to be addressed in the coming years, based around the key strategic themes of:

- Provision and Growth
- Quality
- Co-operative Approach

The Plan is a delivery plan for the policies of the Plymouth Plan and will provide evidence to support its development and implementation, thus helping to protect and improve the stock of playing pitches and exploit their sporting, health, and social value. The Plan and appendices provide a valuable evidence base for the Plymouth Plan and will help to secure external funding and development contributions for important local projects.

Plymouth Needs Summary

- We need to protect the playing field stock
- We need to find sustainable solutions to support pitches and associated facilities
- We need to increase access to quality facilities for training and match play
- We need to provide additional quality facilities in anticipation of the creation of additional sports teams and population growth
- We need to ensure the City develops capacity to support Plymouth based teams

The Big Opportunities/Challenges

- Key pitch enhancement projects including Central Park, Higher Efford, Bond Street, Staddiscombe and Manadon Football Development Centre
- Identified need for an increased number of appropriate Artificial Grass Pitches
- Increasing pressure on land from development for housing and other uses
- Increasing demand for pitches as a result of natural population growth and planned development
- Increasing pressure on budgets for pitch maintenance combined with an increasing demand for quality facilities

Key Messages

- There is currently a shortfall in the provision and quality of facilities for all four pitch sports considered in this Plan
- Plymouth City Council and its partners will engage in a co-operative approach in order to deliver the Plan for Playing Pitches
- New approaches to securing investment and delivering improvements will be developed to provide the right combination of pitches and to improve the overall quality of sports facilities
Summary Of Existing And Future Demand For Pitches

This table identifies the total demand for pitches through combining the current known club aspirations with the estimated additional teams arising from natural and planned population growth, by 2031. The detailed calculations leading to these figures can be found in the relevant sports-specific sections in the ‘Need Assessment’ (Plan for Playing Pitches: Appendix 3). Reference to pitch types/sizes is based on the relevant NGB specifications available from each NGB.

Figure ES1: Summary of pitch requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Football</th>
<th>Cricket</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current shortfall</strong></td>
<td><strong>Current shortfall</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 adult pitches</td>
<td>1 adult cricket field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 youth pitches</td>
<td>1 non-turf cricket pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 mini-soccer pitch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future requirements</strong></td>
<td><strong>Future requirement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 adult pitches</td>
<td>1 adult cricket field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 youth pitches</td>
<td>1 non-turf cricket pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 mini-soccer pitches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 adult pitches</td>
<td>2 adult cricket fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 youth pitches</td>
<td>2 non-turf cricket pitches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 mini soccer pitches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 25 pitches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rugby</th>
<th>Hockey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current shortfall</strong></td>
<td><strong>Current shortfall</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 pitches for juniors</td>
<td>1 full-size sand-based AGP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future requirements</strong></td>
<td><strong>Future requirement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 adult pitch</td>
<td>1 full-size sand-based AGP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pitch for junior use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pitch for mini rugby use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 adult pitch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 pitches for junior use</td>
<td>2 full-size sand-based AGPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 pitch for mini rugby use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: the above ‘pitches’ have been rounded upwards or downwards as appropriate.
V The following table summarises the key priorities for each sport against the three key themes:

**Figure ES2: Strategic themes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Strategic Policy</th>
<th>Provision and Growth</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Co-operative Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The City Council and its partners will seek to protect and improve the stock and capacity of playing pitch facilities for the benefit of existing and future residents.</td>
<td>The City Council and its partners will seek to improve the quality of existing playing pitches and ancillary facilities serving Plymouth’s residents, as a means to encouraging participation in sport and physical activity.</td>
<td>The City Council and its partners will engage in a co-operative and innovative approach in improving the quantity and quality of the playing pitches stock and ancillary facilities for the benefit of both existing and future residents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>Provide 2 additional cricket grounds (8-12 wickets) with grass squares, to cater for usage by league-based clubs within the City. Provide 2 additional non-turf pitches for less formal cricket opportunities within the City. Protect existing dedicated cricket venues within the City, because of the small supply.</td>
<td>Continue to maintain all cricket facilities in the City to a high standard appropriate to the level of play. Develop a programme to ensure that all established clubs have access to all appropriate training facilities.</td>
<td>Seek to provide clubs with greater security of tenure to promote long-term sustainability and encourage investment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Address the lack of spare capacity and provide pitches better suited to meeting current football demand. Ensure pitch provision meets the specific needs of football. This will be achieved by new natural turf and Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) provision.</td>
<td>Ensure pitches and associated ancillary facilities are improved to increase the user experience. Ensure AGPs have sustainable usage and business plans.</td>
<td>Seek to provide clubs with greater security of tenure to promote long-term sustainability and encourage investment. Work with the Schools in the City to open community use of school sites Work with stakeholders to agree tiered approach to maintenance of Local Authority football pitches.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Plan for Playing Pitches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provision and Growth</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Co-operative Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hockey</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide 2 additional sand AGPs (see Appendix 2) for use by clubs within the City, and seek alternative solutions to address the lack of capacity. Provide appropriate facilities for ‘informal’ hockey activities across the City.</td>
<td>Ensure AGPs have sustainable usage and business plans. Ensure AGPs are maintained at the required quality to accommodate match play.</td>
<td>Work with Schools in the City to develop hockey provision and activity on school sites Work collaboratively with the MOD to improve community access to AGP facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rugby</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance the provision of natural turf pitches and ancillary facilities to accommodate growth. Provide additional pitches on or adjoining hub sites, as appropriate, to cater for additional teams.</td>
<td>Enhance the quality of key rugby development sites that maximise the opportunities and legacy of the Rugby World Cup 2015.</td>
<td>Work collaboratively with local and national partners to prioritise sites for capital investment to maximise the opportunities of joint investment. Seek to provide clubs with greater security of tenure to promote long-term sustainability and encourage investment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 INTRODUCTION

General

1.1 This Plan for Playing Pitches in Plymouth draws upon the issues identified within the Plymouth City Playing Pitch Needs Assessment report, which evaluated the adequacy of provision for football, cricket, rugby, and hockey. It sets out the priorities for the delivery of playing pitches in the City up to 2031. The Plan sets out how the Strategic Objectives and Policies of the Plymouth Plan will be delivered in relation to playing pitches, replacing the existing Playing Pitch Strategy (2007-2016), and sets out the strategic direction and site specific priorities for the future delivery of playing pitches across Plymouth City. Its development is in conjunction with similar strategies for the neighbouring local authorities of South Hams and West Devon, given the need to consider the travel of clubs, teams and players across local authority boundaries.

1.2 The key drivers for the production of the Plan are the:

- aspiration to understand and promote participation in pitch sports to inform and support the work, strategies and priorities of the Council as well as local sporting organisations that are active in the area;
- need to ensure that the pitch stock is effectively managed, maintained and protected;
- need to provide evidence to help secure external funding; and,
- requirement to provide evidence to inform policy in the emerging local plan, and specifically to support site allocations and development management policies.

1.3 The vision for Plymouth is:

‘To be a city that provides a good supply of well managed and maintained playing pitches and ancillary facilities, which are fit for purpose, meet identified needs and encourage residents to maintain and increase their participation in sport and active recreation’

What is a playing pitch?

1.4 A playing pitch is defined as ‘a delineated area which, together with any run off area, is of 0.2 hectares or more, and which is used for association football, American football, rugby, cricket, hockey, lacrosse, rounders, baseball, softball, Australian football, Gaelic football, shinty, hurling, polo or cycle polo. Playing pitches may have a grass surface or an artificial one.

Future roles and responsibilities in pitch provision

1.5 Important decisions have to be made, changing the way in which the City will be involved in the provision of pitch sports in the future.

1.6 The needs assessment underpinning this Plan has highlighted that quality/’playability’ issues are very apparent locally. Many clubs and teams cite major problems with access to decent facilities for training; and, match-play. This applies to all four key pitch sports, but football in particular. All four pitch sports also face existing or potential problems in securing access to facilities of any standard, as competition for land in Plymouth intensifies. Cricket and hockey, in particular, have suffered greatly in this regard over recent years.

1.7 The Council is a major provider of playing pitches in and around the City, and this will continue to be the case. However, given the current financial pressures, problems are likely to be aggravated, unless:

- Users are prepared to pay more realistic fees that better reflect the true costs of provision and maintenance; and, or
- New ways are explored and accepted in the way that provision is made and maintained.
1.8 The provisions of this Plan will therefore have major implications for local management structures/ responsibilities, and these need to be examined very carefully and solutions agreed by all relevant parties.

**Role of this Plan**

1.9 The end goal of this Plan is to deliver the overarching vision and achieve the specific aims and priorities set out on the previous page. To do this, it is essential that provision for each sport continues to evolve and improve to meet with changing needs and aspirations.

**Uses of this Plan**

1.10 This Plan, and the supporting Needs Assessment can help inform and influence:

- Sports development planning
- Planning policy, and decisions on planning applications
- Funding bids
- Decision making relating to facility and asset management
- Capital programmes and related investment
- Wider health and well-being initiatives.

**Methodology**

1.11 This Plan has been developed following guidance set out in ‘Playing Pitch Strategy’ Guidance – An Approach to Developing and Delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy’ (Sport England 2013).
Steering group

1.12 This Plan and accompanying Needs Assessment was prepared with the support of a steering group, comprised as follows:

Figure 1.1: Steering group members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position/Representing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kathryn Deeney</td>
<td>Natural Infrastructure Manager - Strategic Planning and Infrastructure - Plymouth City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Warren</td>
<td>Natural Infrastructure Officer - Strategic Planning and Infrastructure - Plymouth City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Lowry</td>
<td>Urban Designer- Strategic Planning and Infrastructure - Plymouth City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise Kelley</td>
<td>Sports Development Manager - Plymouth City Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary Parsons</td>
<td>Planning Manager- Sport England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jill Borrow</td>
<td>Active Devon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee Rider</td>
<td>Regional Facilities and Investment Manager - Football Association (FA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris French</td>
<td>County Development Manager - Devon Football Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Nicholls</td>
<td>Facilities and Investment Manager - England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon Bendle</td>
<td>Area Facilities Manager - Rugby Football Union (RFU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Reynolds</td>
<td>Relationship Manager - England Hockey (EH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Stephenson</td>
<td>Dean and Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Health - Plymouth University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caitie Parrot, Nadine Jeffrey, Tracy Wilson</td>
<td>Plymouth University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stan Cinnamond, Jamie Oxley</td>
<td>University of St. Mark and St. John (Marjon)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Political Support (in respect of championing the Plan within the local political process).

| Councillor Peter Smith    | Deputy Leader - Plymouth City Council                                                  |
| Councillor Brian Vincent  | Portfolio Holder for the Street Scene - Plymouth City Council                          |
This document

1.13 The remainder of this Plan is set out as follows:

- **Section 2** – Context for Pitch Sports in Plymouth City
- **Section 3** – Adequacy of Provision
- **Section 4** – Strategic Framework, general policies and delivery mechanisms and recommendations by sport
- **Section 5** – Delivery and Implementation

1.14 The report also includes an appendix with justified recommendations for a set of standards to cover the future provision of grass pitches within the City.
2 CONTEXT FOR PITCH SPORTS

National Level

2.1 At a national level, there are several key policies that impact upon the preparation of this Plan.

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) clearly establishes the requirement that local plans ensure that there is proper provision of community and cultural facilities to meet local needs. The NPPF’s expectations for the development of local planning policy for sport and physical activity/recreation, is set out in paragraphs 73 and 74 which require there to be a sound (i.e. up-to-date and verifiable) evidence base underpinning policy and its application.

2.3 Paragraph 73 indicates that: ‘Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. 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. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.’

2.4 Paragraph 74 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.’

2.5 Sport England has been a statutory consultee on planning applications affecting playing pitches since 1996 and has a long established policy of retention, which is the precursor to the National Planning Policy Framework guidance above. Sport England also advises that informed decisions on playing pitch matters require all local authorities to have an up to date assessment of need and a strategy emanating from this. Sport England recommend that a strategy is monitored and updated annually and refreshed every three years. This assessment will support the Council in implementing a robust strategic approach to the delivery of pitches across Plymouth. Sport England’s National Strategy – (2011/12 – 2014/15) and Youth and Community Strategy (2012 – 2017) both underpin this playing pitch assessment.

2.6 National Governing Body Facility Strategies: The Football Association (FA), England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), Rugby Football Union (RFU), Rugby Football League (RFL) and England Hockey all set out strategies guiding the provision of facilities for their specific sport as follows;

- The FA – National Game Strategy and the FA National Facilities strategy 2013-15
- ‘Champion Counties - ECB Strategic Plan 2014-2017’
- The RFU National Facilities Strategy

Development Plans

2.7 This Plan for Playing Pitches has been prepared to be a plan to deliver key elements of the Plymouth Plan. The Plymouth Plan is the single strategic framework for the city, setting out the vision, strategic objectives and policies to guide the changes we wish to see take place in Plymouth. It is a radical plan which brings together over 130 existing Council strategies into one place, including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the strategic elements of the Local Transport Plan, the Housing Plan, the Local Economic Strategy, the Children and Young People’s Plan, and the Local Development Framework. The Plymouth Plan is therefore the single strategy for the city, guiding the actions of the City Council and its partners.
2.8 The Plymouth Plan was formally approved by the City Council on 21 September 2015 and will now be taken through the statutory planning process with a view to its formal adoption as the development plan for Plymouth. As part of this process work is now underway on Part Two of the plan, which will set out allocations and designations of land on a proposals map. Once complete, the two parts of the Plymouth Plan will be combined into a single plan to be submitted to the Secretary of State.

2.9 Until the Plymouth Plan is formally adopted the Core Strategy and other Local Development Documents making up the Local Development Framework represent the city’s development plan – although the Plymouth Plan will have increasing weight as a material planning consideration as it moves towards adoption. The Core Strategy was formally adopted by Full Council on 23 April 2007.

2.10 The most significant adopted Area Action Plans in relation to the measures in the Plan for Playing Pitches are those covering Central Park and Devonport. The latter proposes improvements to sport and recreation facilities at both Devonport Park and Brickfields. The Central Park Area Action Plan proposes new integrated and accessible high quality sports and leisure facilities central to the City, which would stimulate interest in active recreation and help to improve participation rates within the City.

2.11 The geographical relationship of Plymouth City to neighbouring local authorities requires cross-border co-operation in the provision of pitch sports. Clubs, teams and players readily cross administrative boundaries to play their sport, and this should be reflected in the way in which planning for sport is conducted.

Population and Participation in Sport

2.12 An understanding of population trends and overall participation in sport underpins the evaluation of the adequacy of facilities for football, cricket, rugby, and hockey forming the basis of this Plan.

2.13 The most influential factor affecting potential need for sports facilities in Plymouth will be the evolving population size and composition, resulting from both natural and planned change. The following outlines the potential changes and their likely impact upon participation.

2.14 The 2011 Census estimates Plymouth’s population to be 256,400 residents. The current Office for National Statistics (ONS) population projections suggest an additional 15k people living in the City by 2031 (an increase of 5.8%) resulting from natural change in the population. However, most sports (pitch sports included) tend to be played by the younger age-groups, and if it is the case that a growing population is also an ageing population, then future natural overall growth may not in fact provide the impetus for increased participation in pitch sports in the coming years.

Planned growth

2.15 Apart from natural change, the population level is also affected by planned growth via the development of new housing allocations, in particular. In July 2013 Plymouth City Council published ‘The Plan for Homes’ which aims to significantly accelerate housing supply in the City. The Plan for Homes programme will aim to deliver 1,000 new homes each year for the next five years.

2.16 The City’s new strategic housing target will be published in the Plymouth Plan during 2015. However, the Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment (SHMNA) sets out predictions for population increases and the number of houses required up to 2031; more than 300,000 people and 22,000 more homes. The SHMNA states that Plymouth currently has a population of 256,000 which is predicted to increase to 300,000 by 2031 driven by a growth in jobs, a predicted 400 to 900 new jobs a year.

2.17 Additional incoming population generated by new housing, will therefore impact upon the demand for new sports provision, but it will also increase the needs to find additional land within and around the City to accommodate such growth.
3 ADEQUACY OF PROVISION

Population and pitch distribution

3.1 Existing and potential need for playing pitches will also be influenced by the distribution of the population throughout the City. All other things being equal, the more densely populated an area, the more potential need there will be for access to sports opportunities. The areas with the highest concentrations of population, are often those where it is difficult to find the space to provide additional facilities. The preceding map shows the overall distribution of population throughout the City, based on the 39 established neighbourhood areas. Overlain on this map is an indication of the general location and scale of pitch provision.

3.2 It can be seen that the most significant provision in terms of pitch numbers is located in areas where the population density is lower.

Figure 3.1 Provision relative to population
Plan for Playing Pitches

Pitch provision in Plymouth

3.3 The following totals all known football, cricket and rugby grass pitches in the City (including some sites just on the fringe that are important to City residents). Not all of these will be available in practice for community use. The provision of pitches is analysed in detail on a sport-by-sport basis in the Needs Assessment report.

Figure 3.2 Pitch numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adult Football</th>
<th>Youth Football (11v11)</th>
<th>Youth Football (9v9)</th>
<th>Minisoccer (7v7)</th>
<th>Minisoccer (5v5)</th>
<th>Cricket Fields</th>
<th>Adult Rugby</th>
<th>Mini Rugby</th>
<th>Total grass pitches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Football</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Various sites (especially a significant number of primary/junior schools) have grass spaces, but which are not formally marked as pitches. These (along with certain other spaces, have been ‘plotted’ in the Needs Assessment exercise for the completeness of the exercise.

3.5 Many mini-soccer and other junior/youth teams share playing surfaces with teams from older age groups.

3.6 Other than grass pitches, Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) are now accepted as essential facilities for match play for hockey, as well as for football match play and rugby training. The overall distribution and type of AGPs in the City relative to population density are shown on the following Figure. (PTO)
The rest of this section summarises the current situation for each of the four pitch sports within Plymouth, and outlines the key issues that need to be addressed.

**Football**

3.8 **Key general issues for football as identified in the Needs Assessment report**

- The Needs Assessment report highlighted that the majority of sites used for football were identified as being overused relative to notional capacity, and/or of being of unacceptable quality.
- AGPs with a suitable surface can potentially accommodate an enormous amount of match-play and training activity compared with their grass counterparts. The club questionnaire survey indicated that a very large majority of responding clubs would be prepared to play matches on AGPs, subject to cost and availability.
- The capital outlay in developing a tranche of additional AGP facilities to enable a defined amount of additional training and match-play to be transferred onto such surfaces (perhaps mini and youth activity, initially).
- Anticipated growth in the numbers of teams will only aggravate current problems of supply and quality of natural turf pitches.
Plan for Playing Pitches

General
3.9 Plymouth City Council owns the majority of adult pitches, but it can be seen that the educational sector is also a very important provider. Most of the educational sector is comprised of schools and colleges that have independent management of their facilities (even though the City Council, as education authority, owns much of the property). Certain City Council owned sites are, in fact, leased to individual clubs, and there are several leasehold arrangements currently under negotiation amongst the relevant interested parties. The majority of larger schools and colleges have some community use of their pitches, although they are not always able to confirm whether formal community use agreements exist.

Pitch Quality
3.10 This reflects very much a mixed picture. The best situation occurs in the club-managed facilities. The education sector seems to perform well, benefiting in recent years from a major re-building programme. Many of the school facilities are becoming subject to heavy use by community teams, in addition to immediate curriculum requirements. The City Council faces challenging financial circumstances, impacting on its ability to manage its stock of playing pitches as well as it would like.

3.11 Pitch capacity is significantly influenced by quality issues, including at several large Council facilities, where fewer games can be sustained than would otherwise be possible due to the pitch surface, maintenance, and drainage.

Demand
3.12 Football is the most popular pitch sport in Plymouth. In total there are 387 teams playing – 138 adult male, 13 adult females, 134 youth males, 22 youth females, 80 mixed mini-soccer. These figures are ‘snapshot’ in time, and will in any event change over the course of time. They take into account, as far as possible, clubs and teams that have a strong affinity with Plymouth City based on their membership, but which may play just outside the City. This will be the case, for example, with Plymouth University teams.

3.13 Trends in football participation tend to ebb and flow, and can be influenced by demographics, sports development campaigns, and international success, amongst other factors.

Origin of players
3.14 The following images show the degree to which membership of teams playing for ‘Plymouth-based’ teams are distributed across the sub-region; and, how membership is also distributed across the City.
Figure 3.4: Distribution of football players

Adult Players

Youth
Migration of teams and players

3.15 There is much 'cross-border travel' by a significant portion of the overall total of affiliated players in order to use home grounds in Plymouth. It is interesting to note that the concentrations of adult and youth players differ, insofar as the former is focused more on the west of the City (and in some of the more deprived areas), whilst the latter seems low in those parts of the City most associated with the naval activity and higher education student populations.

3.16 There are some notable examples of teams travelling across the city boundaries to use home grounds in adjacent local authority areas. The most notable of these relate to the large Staddiscombe Playing Field complex, which is owned and managed by the City Council, but is located in South Hams. Amongst others, many intramural teams from Plymouth University use this site. The club survey has also indicated that several clubs rely on facilities outside the area for training (to be considered at relevant points elsewhere in this section).

Pattern of play and capacity

3.17 For adults the peak-times of play are Saturday PM and Sunday AM in almost equal proportions, although midweek fixtures form a very significant component of overall demand. Youth 11 v 11 and 9 v 9 football is played almost exclusively on Saturday mornings, as is most mini-soccer. The relatively large mid-week component for adult teams is in part due to BUCS fixtures, but also due to the Devon Wednesday League.

The future

3.18 If it is assumed that planned development in the Plymouth area might increase the population by a further 25,000 by 2031, it is estimated that this could lead to an additional. The Needs Assessment estimated that the combined effect of the natural change in population and the impact of planned new growth could lead by 2031 to an additional:

- 21.5 adult football teams (10.75 match equivalents per week)
- 45.8 male and female youth football teams (22.9 match equivalents per week)
- 13.6 mini-soccer teams (6.8 match equivalents per week)

3.19 When adding the above to the stated aims of clubs to field more teams, the total increased future demand will be:

- 28.5 adult teams (14.25 matches per week- 7 pitches)
- 53.8 youth teams (26.9 matches per week- 14 pitches)
- 16.6 mini soccer teams (8.3 matches per week- 4 pitches)
- 1 disability team (0.5 matches per week)

3.20 The above scenarios would potentially have a major impact on the ability of the pitch stock to absorb additional demand. The situation is especially serious with youth pitches. The Needs Assessment has identified that a considerable amount of youth match play takes place on adult size pitches- presumably on ‘over marked’ pitches in most cases. The re-marking of some of the latter would help to reduce the notional under-provision of youth pitches at peak demand times. However, not all the requirements of youth teams could be met in this way, and certainly not without increasing wear and tear on an already largely low-quality pitch stock. Additional natural and artificial turf pitches will therefore be required to meet these needs.

3.21 The Needs Assessment also identified several current projects, providing additional pitches helping to meet the above additional projected need. This includes projects at Bond Street; Manadon Football Development Centre; part of the former Civil Service Sports and Social Club; and, Higher Efford. In net terms these projects will deliver an additional 7 junior/youth football
and 4 mini-soccer pitches. This would leave a requirement for an additional 7 adult pitches; and, 7 junior/youth pitches. There is some capacity to lay out additional pitches at various sites if the need arises (considered in Section 5).

**Cricket**

**Key issues for cricket as identified in the Needs Assessment report**

- The Civil Service CC (now combined with Roborough CC and playing outside the city in that locality) would very much like to return to a venue within the City. Their relocation back into their natural city catchment could also kick-start and increase levels of participation.
- There is a requirement for additional grounds with grass squares to meet existing and future needs.
- There is felt to be a need for more opportunities to play casual ‘pay-as-you-play’ cricket in the City, which could be provided on non-turf wickets in parks and playing fields.
- Additional school-based venues that could serve as a basis for school/community/club-based facilities. The new facilities at Tor Bridge High School are now becoming very well used. The study has identified several state-school sites with artificial wickets, and one-or two schools with notions of developing better school/club links.
- Certain clubs are seeking to obtain greater security of tenure to allow them to develop further. Their security is the foundation for ensuring the survival of community cricket in the city.

**General**

3.22 There are 11 sites containing facilities for cricket in Plymouth, most of the cricket venues are located on education sites. This figure includes all known public, private, school and other pitches whether or not they are in secured community use. There are three club-managed sites in the City.

3.23 Few of the sites are in practice not shared with other uses and/or sports. Of the facilities currently available for community use, only two sites are spaces largely dedicated for cricket. Sites that have in recent years been lost to use for cricket locally, are at (the above mentioned) Civil Service Sports Ground, Peverell Park, and at Manadon.

**Quality**

3.24 Facilities at club-based sites are generally of ‘good’ quality in overall terms, although some problems are experienced. For example, respondent local cricket clubs experienced cancelled/postponed matches last season, due to weather conditions. In addition, where pitches are located on public spaces there is problem with changing facilities, dog-fouling, and damaged playing surfaces.

**Demand**

3.25 The total number of regular teams being fielded by each of the existing well established local clubs is as follows:

**Figure 3.5: Cricket teams in Plymouth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult Male and Female Teams</th>
<th>Junior Teams</th>
<th>Ladies Teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.26 The above figure also includes an allowance (of 6 teams) for those playing in casual mid week competition.

3.27 Cricket in Plymouth is very club-based and the teams playing are part of well-established clubs. There does not appear to be much casual play, although at least two of the clubs would appear to play ‘friendly’ fixtures from time-to-time.
**Trends in participation**

3.28 The key trends over the last three years amongst the three established local clubs has been an overall lack of change in the number of teams in each age-group, albeit that the Plymouth and District League (P and D League) has suffered - this seems to have been offset by a growth in ‘T20’ activity. The loss of the Civil Service Sports Club teams, due to the closure and redevelopment of the ground, has also contributed to stasis in participation in cricket within Plymouth. The club has now merged with Roborough CC, and plays outside the area, at both Roborough, and Buckfastleigh.

3.29 The ECB’s ‘Chance to Shine’ development programme is now operating in Devon, and may in time have some impact on the numbers of young people interested in playing the game. Chance to Shine may be used to support the development of a new junior section in the Civil Service and Roborough Club, should the club find a new facility within the city. Chance to Shine has already been used to support Plymouth CC and Plympton CC for over 6 years.

3.30 The P and D League is still fully functional and providing cricket for upwards of 14 teams. These teams predominantly play on club and school pitches. They also play on pitches outside of the City boundary in the South Hams and West Devon. Teams that enter are a mixture of club and social / nomadic teams. There are fewer club teams entering due to the increased popularity of T20 competitions.

3.31 Amongst the well-established clubs there do not appear to be serious plans to play additional teams, with the exception of women’s cricket, where both Plymouth and Plympton CCs have expressed a wish to attract more lady players/teams. However, emerging evidence from similar strategies being developed in neighbouring local authorities suggests that there are several clubs located just outside Plymouth whose memberships are flourishing, which suggests that some of these clubs may in part be attracting players from Plymouth. Based on the club questionnaire survey, it would appear that the majority of players affiliated to city-based clubs come from within Plymouth.

**Pattern of play and capacity**

3.32 The figure represents a general estimate of when teams are likely to play.

**Other cricket activity**

3.33 The majority of clubs do train – in summer on their home ground (although not all clubs have nets). In winter, clubs train in local school sports halls.

**Figure 3.6: Patterns of play in cricket**

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<th>4</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior Male/ Female mw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Junior Male/ Female Sun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Junior Male/ Female Sat</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Male/ Female mw</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult Male/ Female Sun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult Male/ Female Sat</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3.34 There appears to be little by way of casual/informal cricket match play in the City. Other significant organized cricket activity in the City involves MoD/naval teams, taking place on MoD facilities 'behind the wire' and unavailable for community use. These facilities and activity are not therefore of relevance to this study.

3.35 The only other significant cricket activity in the City therefore involves the education sector. Plymouth University and Marjon run their own teams (a combined total of three). The times and venues for this play do not tend to impact on the actual availability of pitches for other community teams at times of peak demand.

3.36 Plymouth College clearly have cricket as a central part of their PE curriculum, given the facilities available at Dalgeney. Other (state) school sites have some facilities and activity, of which the most significant and impressive is at Tor Bridge High School. Some state schools have artificial wickets which will be used for school-based activity, but which also have existing or potential community use.

3.37 Demand for formal cricket pitches is much less evident from the state education sector than for football. Whilst many primary schools play cricket and have cricket teams, this is primarily kwik cricket played indoors or on the playground. The Chance to Shine Programme, which seeks to bring cricket back into primary schools and to create strong links between schools and clubs has however been generally successful in Devon and may have contributed to the small increase in junior cricket participation.

displaced, unmet and latent demand

3.38 There is overt evidence of unmet demand from existing clubs within the city. However, Plympton CC and Plymouth CC both have to use second grounds to meet the needs of all their teams. In addition, Plymstock CC have suggested a desire for a second ground. The loss of the Plymouth Civil Service Sports Club, and the colocation of the Civil Service Cricket Club at Roborough Cricket Club outside the City suggests that there is some forced migration of players living within the City to an external ‘home’ venue. Additional school-club links using school-based facilities (such as those at Tor Bridge School) could help to foster greater awareness of and interest in cricket amongst young people.

3.39 Of the existing established clubs (Plymouth, Plympton, and Plymstock) the Plan should work to establish security of tenure, and explore asset transfer in the case of Deans Cross, and Harewood Park. Their security will help to ensure the survival of community cricket in the city.

the future

3.40 The Needs Assessment identified that natural population change is only likely to account for a very modest rise in the number of teams by 2031- no change in adult teams, but 2 additional junior teams (1 home-match equivalent per week). If the Civil Service club were to find a new home perhaps 2 to 3 adult teams and a range of junior teams, would be a reasonable expectation.

3.41 However, if it is assumed that planned development in the Plymouth area increases the population by a further 25,000 by 2031, it is estimated that this (combined to the impact of natural population change) could lead to an additional:

- 2.59 adult teams (1.3 match equivalents per week); and,
- 3.25 Junior teams (1.6 match equivalents per week).

3.42 This, combined with the desired relocation of the Civil Service Club back into the City would lead to a need for two additional cricket grounds, with grass squares, within the City to cater for league cricket. The potential for the re-use of Peverel Park (Central Park) as a cricket ground has strong support from the sporting and local communities and should be investigated as a means of meeting this demand.
Key issues for rugby as identified in the Needs Assessment report

a The quality of certain rugby pitches in the city is of a low standard, and this is aggravated by over-play through matches and training. The most notable of these are Horsham Playing Field, King George V Playing Field, and Stonehouse.

b Certain clubs (such as OPM and Devonport High School Old Boys) would like a greater sense of security on their home site, so as to be able to further develop their facilities.

c Ensuring access to an appropriate AGP surface in the east/south-east of Plymouth

d Anticipated changes in population are also likely to increase pressure on the existing pitch stock- further reducing quality through additional over-use. Additional pitches may be required.

General

3.43 There are 20 sites containing facilities for rugby in the Plymouth area. This figure includes all known public, private, school and other pitches whether or not they are in secured community use.

3.44 There are five club-managed sites. Most of these sites will be secured on a leasehold basis, from land owners, such as the City Council. There are 5 sites owned and managed by the City Council, and a further 10 sites in the education sector. Only some of these education sites would appear to be actively promoted for community use.

3.45 Several sites are in fact shared with other pitch sports, especially on education sites. Council sites will also in theory be available for use by the wider community, and will therefore entertain a significant element of informal sports and recreational use.

Quality

3.46 Most of the facilities assessed were rated either average or poor, although the Brickfields stadium pitch was rated as being of good quality. There is considered to be ‘overplay’ on certain sites – where the combined effect of both match play and training is too much for pitches to absorb without undue wear and tear. The sites where there are particular problems resulting from poor quality and/or over-used pitches include Horsham Playing Field, King George V Playing Field, and Stonehouse.

Demand

3.47 The total number of teams being fielded by each of the existing local teams is as follows:

![Table 3.7: Rugby teams in Plymouth](image)

3.48 As is the picture nationally, rugby in Plymouth tends to be characterized by an ethos of club self-provision and management, with clubs largely assuming (or wishing to assume) responsibility for their own facilities. There are also rugby clubs in Plymouth that rely on council provision- notably the University of Plymouth club. Certain clubs that play their home fixtures on pitches outside the city have been included in this study, because of the strong affinity their players will have with the City. (University of Plymouth and Plymouth Arguaum are two such clubs).
Trends in Participation

3.49 In the Devon-wide club questionnaire survey conducted as part of the joint survey covering Plymouth, South Hams, and West Devon local authorities, only three teams from Plymouth responded in time for inclusion in this Plan. However, the response rate for the three local authority areas as a whole suggested most respondents felt membership levels had remained largely static or grown slowly.

3.50 Of the three Plymouth community clubs that responded to the questionnaire survey, the responses mirrored the general pattern for the wider response rate. However, the RFU believe that there are opportunities for growth at:

- Stonehouse Creek – General numbers in junior section
- King George V – potential growth in u13 to u18 male teams if ancillary facilities were improved.

3.51 The figure represents a general estimate of when teams are likely to play. These patterns of play generally reflect those nationally. The relatively large adult/colt midweek fixtures is due to BUCS fixtures.

Training and other activity

3.52 It is estimated that all clubs are likely to hold regular training sessions, taking place largely during the mid-week evening periods. Some clubs train solely on their home grounds (using either pitch space, or else land specifically available for training purposes). Portable training floodlights will be available in some cases where permanent floodlighting is not available. Other clubs and teams will use facilities off-site, such as AGPs and sports halls for indoor training.

3.53 There is rugby activity played ‘behind the wire’ by MoD teams. There is also some school rugby, evidenced by the marking out of grass pitches. Both Plymouth University and Marjons run their own teams (as noted earlier). The times and venues for this play do not tend to impact on the actual availability of pitches for other community teams at times of peak demand.

Figure 3.8: Patterns of play in rugby
Plan for Playing Pitches

Displaced, unmet and latent demand

3.54 There is little evidence of unmet demand within Plymouth from existing clubs. There is ‘displaced’ demand for rugby in the sense that certain university and community club teams (with members largely drawn from the City) play on external sites, such as at Staddiscombe and Roborough. However, this is not felt to be a significant issue.

The future

3.55 The Needs Assessment identified that natural population change allied to the aspirations of local clubs, might give rise to a modest increase in the number of teams by 2031:

1. 1 adult team (0.5 home-match equivalents);
2. 1 youth rugby team (0.5 home-match equivalents); and,
3. mini rugby (1.5 home match equivalents).

3.56 If it is assumed that planned development in the Plymouth area might increase the population by a further 25,000 by 2031, it is estimated that this could lead to an additional:

- 3.3 adult male and female rugby teams (1.65 match equivalents per week);
- 1.4 male and female youth rugby teams (0.7 match equivalents per week); and,
- 2.3 mini-rugby teams (1.15 match equivalents per week).

3.57 However, when combined with potential increases in local teams (in particular junior/youth sections) as suggested by the RFU this could result in the following overall increases in teams:

- 4.3 adult male and female rugby teams (2.15 match equivalents per week - 1 pitch);
- 11.4 male and female junior rugby teams (5.7 match equivalents per week - 3 pitches); and,
- 5.3 mini-rugby teams (3.15 match equivalents per week - 1 pitch).

3.58 This will require additional provision to accommodate such increases. The most significant club sites for rugby within and bordering the city (at King George V Playing Field, Horsham, and Stonehouse Creek), have little or no capacity for the marking out of additional pitches (which would be the optimal means of additional grass provision).

Hockey

3.59 Key issues facing hockey as identified in the Needs Assessment report

- There is, potentially, an extinction threat facing local hockey - not through lack of demand, but because it is being ‘squeezed out’.

- The likely loss of the facility at Manadon needs to be compensated; and, in addition, there is a need for at least one additional pitch with community use for hockey to meet growing demand, allow the clubs to flourish and for clubs to train and play at the same site. This points to a need for a venue dedicated primarily to hockey.

- Ideally, a double-pitch site is required, as a focus for hockey development work.

- If a double site is not a possibility, there is a need to identify possible sites for additional single full-size sand AGPs that are accredited for hockey match-play.
General

3.60 Hockey is almost exclusively played on sand and water-based Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs) and grass pitches are largely obsolete for competitive forms of the game. Guidance on AGPs (Sport England 2010) indicates the following surfaces to be suitable for hockey.

3.61 There are 5 full-sized pitches with England Hockey approved surfaces for hockey in Plymouth.

3.62 However, of these pitches, Bull Point has limited access to the community on a long-term secured basis. It is primarily for service personnel. The pitch at Manadon is of very poor quality and urgently requires replacement. It is likely that any replacement will be for a football-friendly ‘third generation’ (3G) surface that cannot be used for competitive hockey (as supported by Actions within this Strategy). The present surface only supports junior hockey training and is not marked for matches. Until February 2014 a pitch was in use at the MoD’s Stonehouse Barracks, but this is no longer available and is now a car park. Until May 2014 there were two sand-based AGPs at the University of St Mark and St John, but one of these has been converted to a 3G. Therefore there are currently three AGPs in Plymouth capable of supporting community match play in hockey.

Quality

3.63 With the exception of one pitch of poor quality, the England Hockey accredited facilities in the city are generally considered to be of an acceptable standard, although an ageing stock that will need overhaul at some point.

3.64 Hockey pitches, due to their relative scarcity compared with grass pitches, tend to have a wider user catchment. Other than those listed above there are up to six sand England Hockey currently accredited AGPs within a 30 minute drive-time from Plymouth, although in practice those in Tavistock, Totnes and Liskeard are really too far to travel. The situation with regard to their suitability for hockey is appended; again, the difficulties Plymouth hockey clubs have had in the past and continue to have in accessing suitable facilities is very apparent.

Demand and trends

3.65 There are currently ten England Hockey affiliated hockey clubs in the city. There are 17 men’s and 14 ladies’ teams and 41 junior teams which equates to 611 senior members (16 years +) and 406 junior players.

3.66 There are different trends amongst the clubs – 6 clubs record growing membership; 3 have declining numbers and one has stayed about the same. Overall the number of participants in Plymouth totalled 927 in 2011/12; dropped to 852 in 2012/13 and then rose to 1017 in 2013/14 – an increase of 9.7% on the 2011/12 total. It should also be noted that even if the number of member’s changes, the number of teams can stay the same.

Pattern of play and capacity

3.67 With the exclusion of the Manadon pitch (potentially to be re-surfaced to 3G) there are 9 hockey clubs (72 teams) having to accommodate training and matches on just 3 pitches.

3.68 There needed to be considerable movement for the start of 2014/15 season due to the loss of pitches towards the end of the previous season. The loss of the Stonehouse pitch meant that two teams were without a home pitch. Some clubs have continued to experience problems in finding a new venue for this season with a resultant disruption for the clubs. The result is that two clubs – OPM and Mannnamead Ladies - play and train on different pitches – a situation which is far from ideal. In addition, there are 3 junior only clubs (Plymouth Hockey, Lipson Lions and Devonport Dragons) which all play in the Friday night junior league at Marjon and train at other pitches.
Increasing team numbers in Plymouth means league games on Saturdays are squeezed into a few pitches between 9am and 5pm start times. During the week there is also competition between hockey and football for access to sand-based AGPs, which can be used for football training.

**Other Uses of the Pitches**

Educational use of AGPs takes place outside of peak hours (evenings and weekends) and there is therefore no impact upon the availability of the facilities for community hockey (as the artificial surface means that AGPs are not impacted upon by levels of use in the same way as are grass pitches). University and Marjon hockey teams, play fixtures on Wednesday afternoons. Marjon fixtures can be accommodated on their home pitch, but there can be difficulties in finding locations for matches for University of Plymouth BUCS teams on Wednesday afternoons.

**The future**

The Needs Assessment identified that natural population change in itself would probably have a negligible effect upon the number of teams playing hockey. However, several clubs have strong aspirations to run additional teams:

- Clubs wishing to run more Ladies’ teams: Mannamead, Plym Valley, Plymouth Hockey Club, Plymouth Marjon and Marjon
- Clubs wishing to run more Men’s teams: PGSOB, Plymouth Hockey Club, Plymouth Marjon Hockey Club, Devonport Services, University of Plymouth, Marjon
- Clubs wishing to run more junior boys’ teams: Lipson Lions, PGSOB, Plymouth Hockey Club, Plymouth Marjon
- Clubs wishing to run more junior girls’ teams: Lipson Lions, Plym Valley, Plymouth Hockey Club, Plymouth Marjon.

If it is assumed that planned development in the Plymouth area might increase the population by a further 25,000 by 2031, it is estimated that this could lead to even more hockey teams:

- 3.0 adult teams (1.5 match equivalents per week); and,
- 4.0 mixed junior teams (2.0 match equivalents).

The combined effects of both natural and population change will therefore put even greater, and unsustainable pressure on the existing hockey pitch stock.

**AGPs**

As has been emphasized in this Plan, AGPs are used by different pitch sports for both training and match play. It is therefore important to consider their provision, as they are extremely valuable for playing sport and there is clearly intense local competition to play on the AGPs located in and around the City. AGPs with a suitable surface can potentially accommodate an enormous amount of match-play and training activity compared with their grass counterparts. The Action Plan contained in this document (Section 5) contains proposals relating specifically to the provision of AGPs. Appendix 2 gives some additional information and guidance on AGPs in Plymouth with a view to highlighting and prioritising the proposals for AGP provision in Plymouth in the future.
Cross-border issues

3.76 There are various cross boundary movements within the four main pitch sports between South Hams and West Devon and Plymouth local authorities. In addition, American football is played at Staddiscombe on the pitches there which are leased to Plymouth University. Another example is the use of the AGP at Saltmills in Cornwall by Plymouth teams.

3.77 These will require attention through cross-border co-operation between the three local authorities (perhaps involving a formal duty to cooperate) as well as other relevant partners. The main issues are summarised below. Co-operation should also extend to Cornwall.

Football

3.78 The key points are:

- A number of Plymouth based football teams are playing in South Hams. Excluding ‘closed’ sites (namely Staddiscombe Playing Fields), this demand can be accommodated within the South Hams without displacing South Hams teams or raising issues of capacity.

- Between 5% and 10% of football players playing for teams based in Plymouth come from South Hams, particularly the Ivybridge area.

- There are sites within the Plymouth fringe in South Hams which have some spare capacity to accommodate additional teams – including Lee Moor Recreation Ground, Wembury Recreation Ground and Yealmpton Athletic Ground. However, these are mainly one pitch sites and there is not enough capacity to meet demand from a club running several teams; more a case of spare slots where teams could be fitted in.

- AGPs (one full size and one half size) at Ivybridge Community College are used by Plymouth Argyle Youth FC for training.

- Plymouth Argyle Youth FC also train on grass pitches at Crowndale and Langsford Park in Tavistock (West Devon).

3.79 The provision of additional 3g football turf pitches within Plymouth and the remarking of pitches to accommodate more of Plymouth’s demand for junior football could:

- decrease demand for junior pitches within the South Hams fringe (notably Plymouth Argaum’s youth pitches and Frankfort Park, Brixton)

- free up time (and potentially reduce income) on Ivybridge Community College’s AGPs (if Plymouth Argyle Youth teams move to use facilities in the city).

- mean that Plymouth Argyle Youth teams move back to Plymouth for training/matches rather than using pitches at Crowndale and Langsford Park in Tavistock. However, this is a very important income stream for these sites.

- meet some demand for football training and possibly youth games from football teams in the South Hams/West Devon areas bordering Plymouth

3.80 Conversely, if more pitches are provided in Ivybridge, it is possible that teams – particularly juniors – who become based there could result in a slightly reduced demand for Plymouth pitches.
Cricket

3.81 The principal focus for cricket is on providing a new home for the Plymouth Civil Service Club, which is currently playing at Roborough in the South Hams. Once this ground is secured, improvements are required to Roborough Sports Ground to meet demand from Plymouth and Roborough CC 3rd and 4th XIs, and to secure this ground as a second base for the cricket club.

3.82 Other established clubs with good reputations and facilities attract players from wide area, notably Cornwood Cricket Club, which attract players from Plymouth.

3.83 There is evidence that other clubs with good quality grounds in the Yealmpton/Wembury area attract players from Plymouth.

3.84 Improvements are required to Stonehouse Creek, Horsham and King George V Playing Fields, particularly additional floodlighting, to enable training to be moved off main pitches. This will possibly free up some capacity to meet growing demand in the area, including the South Hams.

3.85 The provision of a World Rugby compliant AGP in the Horsham/Elburton/Staddiscombe area is also an aspiration and in order to progress this and other potential developments at the ground, the possibility of asset transfer to the club based at KGV should be explored. This facility may also meet some demand from South Hams.

3.86 Plymouth Argaum RFC lies to the north of the city in the South Hams, and is potentially an important site for both football and rugby. Pitches here require improvement and there is spare capacity.

Hockey

3.87 The provision of additional sand AGPs for hockey in the city may also attract players from the South Hams, notably Ivybridge where the junior hockey club trains on a 3g pitch.

3.88 Note: Residential development at Sherford will directly generate demand for a range of football pitches (including smaller football turf pitches), a cricket pitch, at least one rugby pitch and a floodlit sand AGP.

Summary of existing and future requirements for pitches

3.89 The total requirements for additional pitches, calculated by adding known club aspirations to the estimated additional teams arising from natural and planned population growth, is shown in figure ES1.
4  STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

General

4.1  This section sets out a strategic framework for the future delivery of facilities for pitch sports in Plymouth. The framework for the Plan seeks to deliver the three key playing pitch policies of the Plymouth Plan (Policy 14). The policies are based around three themes:

- 1 Provision and Growth
- 2 Quality
- 3 Co-operative Approach

4.2  These three policies are, in turn, supported by corresponding sports-specific priorities and other supporting objectives. The initials given to the various priorities and sports will help to show how they relate specific actions identified in the Action Plan.
Figure 4.1: Overall policies and sports-specific priorities

**Overall Strategic Policy 1 – Provision and Growth (P&G)**

The City Council and its partners will seek to protect and increase the stock and capacity of playing pitch facilities for the benefit of existing and future residents.

**Sports specific priorities:**

**Cricket (C)**

Provide 2 additional cricket grounds, with grass squares (8-12 wickets), to cater for usage by league-based clubs within the City.

Provide 2 additional non-turf pitches for less formal cricket opportunities within the City. This can be achieved through provision of new facilities in parks and playing fields.

Protect existing dedicated cricket venues within the City, because of the small supply, and their importance to the future of cricket, locally.

**Football (F)**

Provide three additional full-size (or equivalent half-size) Football Association compliant 3G AGPs in Plymouth. See Appendix 2 for further information.

Address the lack of spare capacity and provide pitches better suited to meeting current football demand.

Ensure pitch provision meets the specific needs of football with new projected demand created through predicted population increase.

**Hockey (H)**

Provide two additional England Hockey compliant sand AGPs within the City. See Appendix 2 for further information.

Address the lack of spare capacity for hockey by prioritising hockey usage on sand AGP’s and working with local providers to address football demand on FA compliant AGP’s.

Ensure pitch provision meets the demands from an increase in population. Especially allowing for an increase in teams which will need additional provision for match play.

Provide appropriate facilities for ‘informal’ hockey activities across the City, such as ‘pay and play’ and Rush Hockey.

**Rugby (R)**

Provide one additional Rugby Football Union compliant AGP within the City. See Appendix 2 for further information.

Enhance the provision of natural turf pitches and ancillary facilities (changing rooms and floodlighting) to facilitate growth of participants aged 14-24 years old, especially within the south east and east of the City.

Provide additional pitches on or adjoining hub venue sites, as appropriate, to cater for additional teams where evidence suggests they will be generated through population change.

**General (G)**

Ensure that this Plan is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. When initial priority actions are implemented, other priorities and actions are then identified through the rolling out of an Action Plan on a staged basis.
Strategic Policy 2. Quality (Q)
The City Council and its partners will seek to improve the quality of existing playing pitches and ancillary facilities serving Plymouth’s residents, as a means to encouraging participation in sport and physical activity.

Sports specific priorities:

Cricket (C)
Continue to maintain, with others, all cricket facilities in the City to a high standard appropriate to the level of play, in line with existing ECB guidance.
Develop a programme to ensure that all established clubs have access to all appropriate training facilities such as nets and artificial wickets.

Football (F)
Ensure pitches and associated ancillary facilities are improved to increase the user experience. ‘Priority sites’ should be identified by relevant parties (including local football league officers).
Ensure selected club sites can accommodate the club being promoted to the next level of football in the FA Club Pyramid (i.e. Step 6 level football to Step 5 level football), where resources realistically permit.

Hockey (H)
Ensure England Hockey capacity guidelines (suggesting no AGP should be considered able to sustain more than 4 league matches on any one day) are followed.

Rugby (R)
Enhance the quality of key rugby development sites (identified in the Action Plan) that maximise the opportunities and legacy of the Rugby World Cup 2015.
Provide fit for purpose facilities at existing sites to enable enhanced provision and growth. Targeted locations – North, South West and South East Plymouth.

General (G)
The City Council and its partners will seek to support and promote sustainable facilities and club development. This will be achieved through effective management, the maximisation of resources and support for clubs across the City.
Ensure AGPs have sustainable usage and business plans to incorporate pitch furniture, provision for maintenance and a robust sinking fund for future refurbishment. AGPs should satisfy the appropriate NGB performance criteria relating to the facility in question.
Strategic Policy 3. – A Co-operative approach (Co)

The City Council and its partners will engage in a co-operative and innovative approach in improving the quantity and quality of the playing pitches stock and ancillary facilities for the benefit of both existing and future residents.

Sports specific priorities:

**Cricket (C)**
Seek opportunities to provide informal and training facilities on sites with other primary uses.

**Football (F)**
Work with stakeholders to agree tiered approach to maintenance of Local Authority football pitches.

**Hockey (H)**
Seek hockey representation on Facility Management Groups where they exist.
Work collaboratively with existing providers to improve community access to AGP facilities for community hockey clubs

**Rugby (R)**
Work collaboratively with local and national partners to prioritise sites for capital investment to maximise the opportunities of joint investment.

**General (G)**
Seek to provide clubs with greater security of tenure to promote long-term sustainability and encourage investment. In particular, investigate opportunities for Community Asset Transfer to established clubs.

Work with the ‘Access to Schools’ project to open community use of school sites

Improve dialogue (including regular fora) for the City Council and its partners to meet to consider progress on the implementation of the Plan and action plan, and to further consider innovative ways in which general and sports specific priorities can be achieved.

The City Council and appropriate partners will work with South Hams District, Devon County, and Cornwall Councils to address the ‘cross-border’ nature of many of the issues facing pitch sports locally, so that new opportunities can be planned efficiently.
5 DELIVERY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Action Plan

5.1 The action plan (Appendix 4) translates the sports specific and other priorities identified in Section 4 into a series of recommendations. The actions that are considered a priority (1 to 5 years) are outlined in detail whereas the long-term potential projects, which are not considered to be immediate priorities, can be drawn upon as and when the immediate priorities within the action plan are addressed. The actions will be reviewed on an on-going basis.

5.2 The actions are categorized as follows:
- **Priority 1** Short term: 0 - 2 years
- **Priority 2** Medium term: 2 - 5 years
- **Priority 3** Long term: 5 years +

5.3 In practice, additional sites and opportunities will emerge that may not be addressed by the site-specific actions offered in this first draft of the action plan. It will be important to exploit new (and sometimes unforeseen) opportunities, where they are consistent with the overall strategic policies of the Plan, and do not conflict with the achievement of the first phase of site-specific and other generic actions identified below. The City Council and its partners will come to an informed view on emerging opportunities through drawing on a variety of sources which may include the current Plan; the long term list; the underlying needs assessments; and, other factual information deemed to be relevant.

Implementation

5.4 Given the potential level of funding required, it is likely that investment will only be achieved through a combination of opportunities and funding sources as well as partnership opportunities.

5.5 Local authority finances are currently under pressure and previous major national funding programmes are no longer available. Some funding opportunities, however, still remain; for example, individual school capital grants have replaced BSF and Sport England now has more clearly defined capital available through its Places People Play Legacy funding programme. While the education capital funding programmes will continue to change over time, there will still be a need for investment to take place on school sites during the Plan period and opportunities for joint projects may arise.

5.6 The City Council and its partners will seek to use assets innovatively and work on a multi-agency approach to address the facility requirements in the Plan.

5.7 The main funding delivery mechanisms for the City Council and others in delivering the Plan are:
- Section 106 developer contributions and potentially the Community Infrastructure Levy to meet the needs arising from new development. (See Appendix 1)
- Capital Grant funding: From schools and national agencies such as Sport England, including its Iconic Facilities, Improvement Fund and Inspired Facilities programmes as well as Protection of Playing Fields Funds.
- National Governing Body (NGB) support
- Council funding: capital funding allocated to deliver facilities within the council’s ownership, and potentially the use of capital receipts from the sale of existing assets.

Education and Further Education sector

New facilities

5.8 In addition to the policies outlined earlier in this Plan, the following should be considered when providing any new facilities.
Plan for Playing Pitches

5.9 Location - When planning new facilities, the existing sporting infrastructure should be taken into account. In particular, club bases for cricket and rugby should be retained and the provision of single pitch sites with limited facilities should be avoided.

5.10 Quality - Any new pitch provision should meet with the design and quality standards guidance provided by Sport England and/or the relevant NGB.

5.11 Sport England’s web site www.sportengland.org contains a range of current guidance documents which provide detailed specifications and information regarding the design of sporting and ancillary facilities.

5.12 This provides a link to the NGB’s supported by Sport England, and to the guidance on the respective NGB websites: www.sportengland.org/our-work/national-work/national-governing-bodies/sports-we-invest-in

Monitoring and Review

5.13 The evolving context of participation in sport and active recreation means that monitoring and review of the Plan is as important as the initial preparation of the document to ensure if remains sufficiently robust to fulfil the above roles.

5.14 Reflecting the importance of this phase of work, monitoring of the Plan represents Step 10 of the approach to the production of a playing pitch strategy set out in the guidance for the delivery of a playing pitch Strategy (Sport England 2013).

5.15 The steering group are therefore committed to keeping the Plan alive through:

- Monitoring the delivery of the recommendations and actions and identifying any changes that are required to the priority afforded to each action
- Recording changes to the pitch stock in the city area and evaluating the impact of this on the supply and demand information
- Assessing the impact of changes to participation, including changing trends and the development of new formats of the game as well as affiliation data for each of the National Governing Bodies of Sport
- Assessing the impact of demographic changes and new population estimates / housing growth
- Ongoing consultation to understand the evolving needs of clubs and governing bodies, and any requirements for major facilities in the area
- Analysis of funding sources and new funding opportunities for the provision/improvement of sports facilities
- Reviewing growth of emerging sports, their participation rates, facilities available for them and likely facilities necessary for their support and development.

5.16 The ongoing monitoring of the Plan will be led by Plymouth City Council and it is anticipated that it will constitute:

- Support for the creation of sport specific forums to discuss issues arising and to lead the delivery of the Plan in conjunction with key partners
- Establishment of a working group that meets twice annually to review progress by all key partners on the Plan delivery and to discuss any issues arising
- a full annual steering group meeting, or individual annual meetings with National Governing Bodies of Sport to inform and discuss the annual progress summary and agree next steps

5.17 The steering group will also be responsible for agreement of the scope and requirements for a full update of this playing pitch Needs Assessment and Plan every 3 years.