

APPENDIX 1

CALDERDALE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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Integrity, Innovation, Inspiration

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CALDERDALE PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the Executive Summary for the Calderdale Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS), and whilst Calderdale Council has been the key driver in developing it, it is expected that plans and actions emanating from it can only be delivered in partnership with other key stakeholders such as the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and Sport England. While the Strategy is for the Borough rather than the Council, the Council has a pivotal role to play as the main provider of pitches. That said, the strategy has to be considered within the context of the reduction in funding to local authorities.

Purpose

The Strategy document provides guidance and support in order to understand and assess the need for playing pitches. It provides a strategic framework for the maintenance and improvement of existing outdoor sports pitches and ancillary facilities between 2017 and 2022. The PPS covers the following playing pitches and outdoor sports:

- ◀ Football pitches (including 3G AGPs)
- ◀ Cricket pitches
- ◀ Rugby union pitches (including 3G AGPs)
- ◀ Rugby league (including 3G AGPs)
- ◀ Hockey/artificial grass pitches (AGPs)
- ◀ Tennis
- ◀ Bowls

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Vision

A vision has been set out to provide a clear focus with desired outcomes for the Calderdale Playing Pitch Strategy:

“Provide an accessible, high quality and sustainable network of outdoor sports facilities that promote local opportunities for participation and support Calderdale to become the most active borough in the North of England by 2021.”

Headline findings

The table below highlights the quantitative headline findings from the Playing Pitch Assessment Report:

Sport	Analysis area	Current picture	Future demand (2039) ¹
Football	Calderdale	Current demand is being met	Shortfall of 3 youth 11v11 match equivalent sessions
3G AGPs	Calderdale	Shortfall of six full size 3G pitches based on FA training model (Please note that this figure differs from the figures for moving mini/youth match play to 3G).	Shortfall of six full size 3G pitches; pitch/s will require resurface and FA testing
Cricket	Calderdale	Current demand is being met although overplay is evident, particularly in Lower Valley analysis area.	Future demand can be met although overplay is evident
Rugby league	Calderdale	Current demand is being met although overplay amounts to 19 match equivalent sessions.	There is a future requirement for an increase in floodlit pitches
Rugby union	Calderdale	Current demand is being met although overplay amounts to 19 match equivalent sessions.	Requirement for an additional minimum of 4 match equivalent sessions
Hockey	Calderdale	Current demand is being met	Future demand can be met although pitches will requiring resurfacing
Tennis	Calderdale	Current demand is being met	Future demand can be met

¹ Future demand based on ONS calculations and club consultation which also includes latent and displaced demand identified.

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Sport	Analysis area	Current picture	Future demand (2039) ¹
Bowls	Calderdale	Current demand is being met	Future demand can be met

Sport by sport summaries and recommendations

Football pitches

The audit identifies a total of 209 football pitches across 91 sites in Calderdale. Of these, 187 are available, at some level, for community use. Of these, 28 are assessed as good quality, 134 as standard quality and 25 are deemed to be poor quality. There is spare capacity across all pitch types except youth 11v11, however this is minimal for youth 9v9 and mini 5v5. Training is an issue for all clubs including semi-professional club FC Halifax Town which currently trains outside of the Borough.

Spare capacity/overplay summary in Calderdale

Pitch type	Demand (match equivalent sessions)					
	Actual spare capacity ²	Overplay	Current total	Latent/displaced demand	Future demand	Total
Adult	40	12.5	27.5	1.5	1.5	24.5
Youth 11v11	4	2.5	1.5	-	4.5	3
Youth 9v9	4.5	1	3.5	-	1.5	2
Mini 7v7	14	-	14	-	-	14
Mini 5v5	8	-	8	1	6.5	0.5

Recommendations

- ✦ Protect existing quantity of pitches.
- ✦ Explore options for providing additional training facilities.
- ✦ Ensure all teams are playing on the correct pitch sizes and explore, where possible, pitch reconfiguration to increase youth 11v11 pitch stock.
- ✦ Where pitches are overplayed and assessed as poor or standard quality, prioritise investment and review maintenance regimes to ensure it is of an appropriate standard to sustain use and improve quality.
- ✦ Consider options to reduce unofficial use, i.e. consider removing goalposts between matches at high traffic sites.
- ✦ Encourage security of tenure for all clubs using educational sites through community use agreements.
- ✦ Where appropriate, develop partnerships and/or lease arrangements with large, sustainable, development minded clubs to manage their own sites.
- ✦ Ensure changing facilities remain fit for purpose and seek to improve ancillary facilities rated as poor quality.

² In match equivalent sessions

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Artificial grass pitches (AGPs)

There are three full size 3G pitches in the Borough, all of which are rated as good quality. There is one in Halifax Central analysis area, one in Lower Valley and one in Halifax North & East. **There are currently no full size 3G pitches in the Upper Valley Analysis Area.**

As the three pitches are located at education sites it is believed that school/college use takes president in the daytime and that pitches are then available in the evenings and at weekends for community use. All pitches are reported to be operating at, or close to, capacity.

Due to the nature of the Borough, and in some areas a lack of space for full size AGPs, there are a number of smaller 3G pitches which help support training demand.

Scenarios

Accommodating training demand

As there are 358 teams currently playing in Calderdale this means there is a demand for **nine full size 3G pitches** (rounded up from 8.5) based on 42 teams per pitch, i.e. 356/42. When considering future demand (based on population increases and future demand expressed by clubs), there is a demand for **nine** full size pitches (rounded up from 8.9), which means a current shortfall of six pitches.

To split this down in to individual analysis areas the total need for AGPs is greater due to 'rounding up'. The table below indicates where the most demand for 3G pitches is. The action plan provides recommendations on possible sites for additional 3G pitches.

Analysis Area	No. of teams (b)	3G pitch requirement (b/42)	Rounded up	Current number of 3Gs	Shortfall
Halifax Central	49	1.2	2	1	1
Halifax North & East	64	1.5	2	1	1
Lower Valley	172	4.1	4	1	3
Upper Valley	73	1.7	2	-	2
Total:	358	8.5	10	3	7

The table above indicates that the greatest need for 3G pitches is the Lower Valley Analysis Area with four. There is also a shortfall of 3G pitches in the Upper Valley Analysis Area where there is currently no provision of full size 3G pitches.

Recommendations

- ◆ Protect current stock of 3G pitches.
- ◆ Identify feasible sites to increase provision of full size 3G pitches, particularly in the Upper Valley Analysis Area, to meet training and competitive demand.
- ◆ Encourage providers to have a sinking fund in place to ensure the long-term sustainability of pitches.
- ◆ Ensure pitches currently on the FA register are re-tested every three years to sustain FA approval.

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- ◀ If it is not feasible to increase stock of full size 3G pitches, consider increase in smaller sized 3G pitches in order to reduce training shortfalls.

Cricket pitches

There are 31 grass cricket squares in Calderdale located across 31 sites. All of the squares are available for community use. All pitches are good quality except for two (Hebden Bridge CC and Shelf CC which are standard). There are 13 sites that display overplay of more than five matches per season. The sites of most concern are Northowram Fields CC and Lightcliffe CC where a second ground would help to accommodate overplay. Shelf CC has no security of tenure and is negotiating a new lease.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect existing quantity of cricket squares.
- ◀ Ensure security of tenure for all clubs
- ◀ Explore options for access to an additional pitch to support overplay at Lightcliffe CC and Northowram Fields CC

Rugby union pitches

Within Calderdale there are 14 sites containing 28 senior and two mini rugby union pitches. Of these, 26 senior and all mini pitches are available for community use. 11 are assessed as standard quality and 17 are assessed as poor quality. Halifax Vandals and Old Crossleyans do not have access to floodlit pitches at their respective home venues.

Ten pitches are over played in Calderdale, all of which are senior size, amounting to 19 match equivalent sessions.

Recommendations

- ◀ Improve pitch quality
- ◀ Explore community use aspects at currently unused educational sites.
- ◀ Explore options to remove training from match pitches
- ◀ Consider potential sites for provision of World Rugby compliant 3G pitches

Rugby league pitches

There are 25 dedicated rugby league pitches in Calderdale (24 senior and one junior) across 18 sites. 56% of rugby league pitches in Calderdale are rated as standard quality, with 20% as poor and 24% as good quality. Access to education facilities and security of tenure is an issue for clubs.

Three analysis areas (Halifax Central, Halifax North & East and Lower Valley) have total shortfalls of 23 match equivalent sessions with the highest (10) in the Lower Valley Analysis Area. Training on match pitches remains the main cause of overplay. Training is an issue for all clubs including semi-professional club Halifax RLFC which currently trains outside of the Borough.

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Recommendations

- ◀ Improve pitch quality
- ◀ Explore options for providing training away from match pitches and make clubs aware that this option is needed in order to preserve pitch quality.
- ◀ Ensure security of tenure where possible

Hockey

There are five full size sand based AGPs suitable for hockey in Calderdale. Four are rated as standard and one as good quality. There is one club in the Borough; Halifax Hockey Club and there are sufficient pitches at the home ground to accommodate current and future demand, however increased access to the pitches may be required if the Club grows.

Recommendations

- ◀ Protect at least two sand-based AGPs for continued hockey use at Halifax Hockey Club.
- ◀ Ensure sinking funds are in place for long-term sustainability.

Tennis

There are 94 tennis courts identified across 32 sites. Of these 54 are available for community use. The general quality of courts on public local authority sites is poor; there are 20 courts deemed unplayable. Clubs report a need for additional floodlighting to help with winter training. The majority of private clubs do not offer pay and play.

Recommendations

- ◀ Consider quality over quantity, particularly on local authority sites and explore options to provide a hub site approach to provision.
- ◀ Improve court quality where possible
- ◀ Work with clubs to access funding for additional floodlighting
- ◀ Encourage clubs to provide pay and play where possible as a source of additional income to aid sustainability.

Bowls

There are 40 bowling greens identified across 35 sites. All are considered available for community use. It is generally considered that greens at council sites are poorer quality than those at private or club managed sites. Many of the greens in Calderdale are over the 60 member threshold demonstrating that bowls is thriving in many parts of the Borough.

Recommendations

- ◀ Explore options for clubs to take on their own additional maintenance at council owned sites in order to improve quality.
- ◀ Consider options for club mergers where two smaller clubs are located near to each other in order to ensure long term sustainability of bowls in each analysis area.

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Objectives and recommendations

The three main themes of the strategy reflect priorities emanating from Sport England's planning objectives for sport; Protect, Enhance and Provide:

Aim 1

To **protect** the existing supply of outdoor facilities where they are needed for meeting current and future needs

Recommendations:

- a. Ensure, through the use of the Playing Pitch Strategy, that playing pitches are protected through the implementation of local planning policy.
- b. Secure tenure and access to sites through a range of solutions and partnership agreements.
- c. Maximise community use of education facilities where there is a need to do so.

Aim 2

To **enhance** playing pitches through improving quality and management of sites

Recommendation:

- d. Improve quality
- e. Adopt a tiered approach (hierarchy of provision) to the management and improvement of sites.
- f. Work in partnership with stakeholders to secure funding

Aim 3

To **provide** new provision where there is current or future demand to do so

Recommendations:

- g. Identify opportunities to add to the overall stock to accommodate both current and future demand
- h. Rectify shortfalls through the current pitch stock