

Northern Devon Playing Pitch Strategy

August 2017

See also:

NORTHERN DEVON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY APPENDICES

NORTHERN DEVON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY FINAL ACTION PLANS

NORTHERN DEVON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INDIVIDUAL SITE SUMMARIES

And Stage C documents for detailed NEEDS ASSESSMENTS (Parts 1 and 2)

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SECTION 1 CONTEXT

Vision and aims for the Northern Devon Playing Pitch Strategy

1.1 The Northern Devon Playing Pitch Strategy will look forward until 2031 in line with North Devon and Torridge District Councils' emerging Local Plan. The Vision is:

“To fully understand the quantity and quality of our current stock of playing pitches and changing provision to ensure that we: Protect the facilities that are used and valued by our current population; Provide new facilities in the right locations to cater for increased demand and population; and Enhance facilities to ensure that quality meets twenty-first century expectations and attracts new and existing users.”

1.2 The Strategy is being developed in line with Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance, October 2013 in order:

- To provide, protect and enhance sports pitches and recreational sites.
- To enable the effective implementation of the policies of North Devon and Torridge Local Plan, to secure new and enhanced playing pitch provision to address needs generated by development and to safeguard and enhance existing and provide new pitches and recreation assets.
- To update the current PPS previously prepared by Devon County Council.
- To determine whether there are sufficient playing pitches of sufficient quality and in the right locations to meet local demand up to 2031.
- To provide justification for or disprove the need for a new Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) as part of the new Leisure Centre Facilities in Barnstaple as part of the Tarka Tennis Centre Extension or on the school site at Pilton Community College.
- To determine the need for a new AGP in Bideford.
- To predict future use and demand for sports pitches, and associated facilities.
- To recognise and accommodate the change in demographics in planned playing pitch provision.
- To recognise the importance of health and wellbeing by the provision of playing pitches.
- To identify playing pitch delivery opportunities on a locational basis, to support on-site delivery through the planning process, off-site contributions to existing or new sites, or investment in current provision.
- To prioritise allocation and use of developer contributions based on increase in development.
- To recognise the role played by School sites in providing community access to their facilities and provide guidance on how this can be secured/safeguarded.

Strategic Context

1.3 At a national level, 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. Paragraphs 73 and 74 require there to be a sound (i.e. up-to-date and verifiable) evidence base underpinning policy and its application. Sport England is a statutory consultee on planning applications affecting playing pitches and has a long established policy of retention, which is the precursor to the National Planning Policy Framework guidance above. Sport England's Youth and Community Strategy (2012 – 2017) and its newly published Strategy 'Towards An Active Nation 2016-2021' both underpin this playing pitch assessment.

1.4 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 set out strategies guiding the provision of facilities for their sport.

1.5 Locally there are several key policy documents that will inform the direction of the Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan in addition to the Local Plan. These are:

- Green Infrastructure Study for North Devon and Torridge Councils
- North Devon Council Leisure and Health Strategy May 2013 Update
- North Devon Council Strategic Needs Assessment (ANOG) for Replacement of North Devon Leisure Centre 2016
- Torridge District Council Cultural Strategy

1.6 The North Devon and Torridge area comprises about 1,903 square kilometres and has a population of around 157,500 (Census 2011) people living in a network of historic market towns, rural settlements and coastal resorts. The sea and the moors define the limits of the area and the pattern of development shows the maritime influence and the rurality of the area. Approximately half of the population of North Devon & Torridge live in the main settlements around the Taw/Torridge estuary.

1.7 Barnstaple is the sub regional centre for northern Devon. It provides a range of strategic services and facilities, including further and higher education, the District General Hospital and comparatively major shopping facilities. Bideford has a significant complementary role and is linked to Barnstaple by the A39. These settlements together provide the economic, commercial and administrative focus for many of the strategic service needs of the wider rural area. The market and coastal towns of: Braunton, Ilfracombe, South Molton and Chulmleigh in North Devon and Northam (including Appledore and Westward Ho!), Holsworthy and Great Torrington in Torridge have a range of facilities that collectively serve wider rural populations across the rest of northern Devon.

Population Change

1.8 Analysis of the population profile provides a context for the interpretation of participation in pitch sports. According to ONS 2014-based Sub National Population Projections (May 2016), the total population of North Devon is currently 94,663 (2017); projected to increase by 5.3% to 99,710 by 2031. Torridge’s population is projected to increase by 11% over the same period from 67,186 to 74,557. These population projections take into account births and deaths and in and out migration. The main impact from the changing population on the pitch sports is a growth in the minis and junior age ranges (5-19 year age range); minimal change in the 20-34 year age range but some growth in the 35-45 year age ranges, and a larger drop off in the younger element of the vets pitch sport age range (46-54 years). Combining age ranges shows the following:

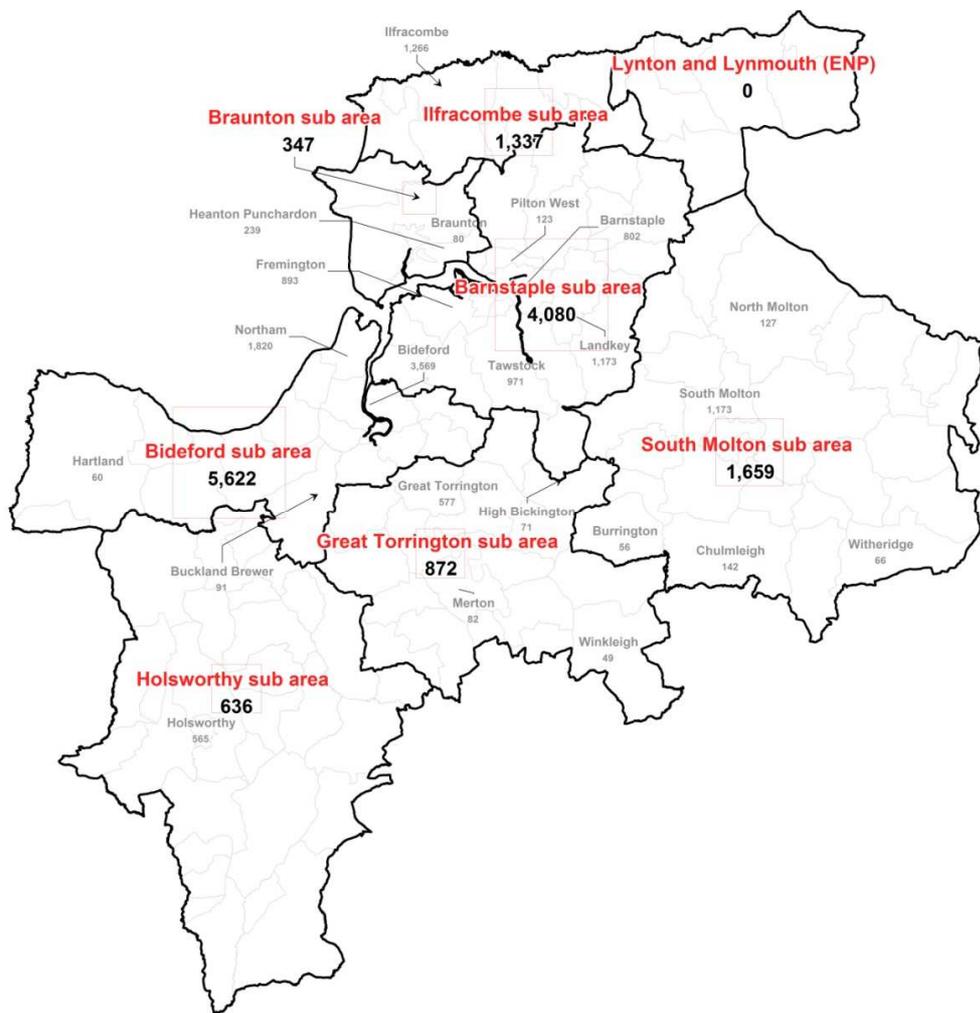
Table 1: Change in population 2017-2031 according to pitch sport playing age ranges

	Change in population 2017-2031			
	North Devon		Torridge	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Mini/Youth (5-19 years)	1107	7.30%	1254	12.10%
Adult pitch sports (20-45 years)	140	0.60%	1019	6.40%
Adult pitch sports (46-69 years)	-1439	-4.50%	-180	-0.70%
Overall ‘active participation’ age groups (5-69 years)	-193	-0.30%	2095	4.10%

1.9 The emerging Local Plan for North Devon and Torridge includes policies to deliver at

least 17,200 dwellings over the plan period 2011-2031. The planned focus for housing growth is Barnstaple and Bideford, each providing for approximately 4,100 additional dwellings over the plan period. Elsewhere significant growth is planned for Ilfracombe, Northam and South Molton. This Strategy has calculated future demand for playing pitches in the new allocated areas based on planned housing growth for the period 2016 – 2031 and using an occupancy rate of 2.2. The map below shows the outstanding commitments for this period.

Map 1: Allocated Housing Growth in northern Devon by Sub Area: Outstanding commitments (number of dwellings) 2016 - 2031



1.10 NDC and TDC currently secure developer contributions for public open space and built recreation by means of a Section 106 agreement. Draft Community Infrastructure Regulation 123 lists have been prepared to support the implementation of the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan. When in place, the Regulation 123 Lists will include specific projects of categories of infrastructure that CIL may in whole or part fund. It is anticipated that pitch based requirements will, in the majority of instances, be secured through S106 agreements necessitated by the scale and location of specific developments.

Sports Participation in North Devon and Torridge

1.11 According to Active Lives, people who live in Devon are slightly less 'inactive' and more 'active' (according to Sport England's classifications) than the level of sporting activity recorded nationally. People who live in North Devon are slightly more 'active' than the people who live in Torridge (defined as being 'active' for more than 150 minutes per week (across a range of activities including walking, cycling for travel and dance)

1.12 Before Active Lives, the most prevalent measure of sports participation in England and Wales was the Active People survey, undertaken by Sport England. The core figure for this was the percentage of adults aged 16 years and over who play for at least 30 minutes of sport at moderate intensity at least once a week. The data shows that since the first Active People Survey in 2005/06 and the latest in 2015/16, once a week sports participation decreased slightly from 34.2% to 33.6% in North Devon and decreased slightly from 28.9% to 27.3% in Torridge

1.13 In 2013/14, participation rates in North Devon increased quite dramatically to above the regional and national averages but have dropped back now to below both. Rates in Torridge have been consistently below regional and national averages in 2012/13 but are now significantly below both.

1.14 Sport England also presents analysis of the types of people who take part in sport in any given area, relating to market segmentation groups. The dominant market groups in North Devon and Torridge are: *Philip* (Mid-life professional, sporty males with older children); *Tim* (Sporty male professionals, settling down with partner); *Elaine* (Empty Nest Career Ladies); *Roger & Joy* (Early Retirement Couples); *Elsie & Arnold* (Retirement Home Singles); and *Ralph & Phyllis* (Retired couples enjoying active and comfortable life styles). *Philip* and *Tim* are the only market groups which take part to any great extent in the pitch sports (in football). *Elsie & Arnold* and *Ralph & Phyllis* take part in bowls.

1.15 These 6 segments represent 50.8% of North Devon's population and 51.9% of Torridge's compared to less than 43% of England's population. '*Philip*' and '*Tim*' have sports participation rates above the national average and '*Elaine*' takes part on a par with the national average. '*Roger and Joy*', '*Elsie and Arnold*' and '*Ralph*' & '*Phyllis*' are less active, to varying degrees, than the national average and the dominance of these older and retired market segments reflects the demography of North Devon and Torridge.

1.16 Local trends in pitch sport participation can be summarised as follows:

- In line with national trends, there has been declining participation in adult male football with local Sunday leagues folding (reflecting national trends) and a reduction in the number of divisions in the Saturday leagues but there is still great interest and participation in the game. Informal recreation play such as veterans' football, flexi leagues, walking football and small sided provision which are being introduced to combat the decline are starting to be rolled out in the study area. There has been steady growth in youth and mini football following the FA Youth Review in 2012, with some strong junior clubs. Participation in adult female and youth female is continuing to grow at a slow rate.

- Although there has been a decline in numbers of cricket teams over the last decade or so, particularly in the more rural areas, North Devon and Torridge have a number of strong, flourishing clubs. Growth in junior cricket is steady and it is hoped to develop this further through the 'All Stars' initiative. There is a strong tradition of Sunday play (league and friendly) in the study area and a pub and club midweek league, and some grounds are hosting T20.
- Rugby participation in North Devon and Torridge – both adult and youth - appears fairly stable and the area hosts two of the biggest clubs in Devon – Barnstaple and Bideford RFCs.. Whilst focusing on maintaining its core market of 15v15 senior teams, the RFU is actively promoting its variants of the game for younger players – touch and tag rugby and '7s' and also looking to develop more recreational and social rugby during the summer.
- Since 2010/11, England Hockey has seen a 36% growth in the total number of club players, with a 80% increase in u16 at club level. A long term aspiration is to double the number of club members by 2028. Hockey participation in North Devon and Torridge is currently low, but the clubs are focusing on developing junior teams and growth is forecast. There is one full size floodlit AGP in the area in Barnstaple and both hockey clubs are based there.
- Current participation in bowls in both North Devon and Torridge represents about 1.9% of the 'bowls age' population (i.e. 45 – 80 years age band). Population projections suggest that the target age group for bowls is likely to remain about the same in North Devon and increase by 5% in Torridge over the period 2017-2031. Sport England Market Segmentation Analysis suggests that there is some latent demand for bowls in both areas.

SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND ISSUES

Please note that this section presents the current situation; the future situation is considered in Sections 4 and 5.

2.1 Overview: Playing Fields

2.1.1 This Strategy is for playing pitches and the main sports which are played on them – football, cricket, rugby and hockey. But there are other aspects to playing pitches and the land on which they lie. They may also include other facilities such as bowling greens (also considered in this strategy) and tennis courts. Many playing fields are valuable in their own right as public open space sites for informal recreation and a wealth of informal activities – kite flying, picnics, play, environmental studies, dog walking and so on. Sustaining rural pitch sites which may not be fully used for sport, but nevertheless fulfil an important function in providing local informal opportunities for sports participation and in contributing towards people’s good health and well being, is critical.

2.1.2 Moreover, playing fields are not just a resource for the sports of football, rugby, cricket and hockey. There are many other pitch sports which play on grass, including: American football, archery, athletics, baseball, Gaelic football, lacrosse and rugby league. With the exception of athletics, these sports are not well represented on playing fields in North Devon and Torridge, but it is important that they are available to meet future demand for these sports and to accommodate other opportunities.

2.1.3 In particular, playing fields offer a wonderful environment for sport for people with disabilities, being free of the restrictions of indoor facilities. Playing fields often include other facilities in addition to grass and artificial grass pitches, such as bowling greens, skateparks and tennis courts and of course changing rooms, pavilions and cafes, and these elements need to be planned for in harmony with the needs of the pitch based sports.

2.2 Findings and Issues – Football

2.2.1 The key points regarding the demand for football are:

- 112 teams recorded in North Devon – 41 adult (1 ladies), 47 youth (6 girls) and 28 mini.
- 82 teams in Torridge – 36 adult (1 ladies), 29 youth (3 girls) and 17 mini.
- Senior teams: Barnstaple Town FC, Bideford FC & Witheridge AFC. 54/58 teams in the North Devon League are based in the area; youth football is covered by the North Devon Youth League.
- Static situation in senior football, following demise of Sunday football; some growth apparent in youth and mini football. Strong youth football clubs.
- No cross boundary movement between authorities outside of Northern Devon.

2.2.2 The key points regarding the supply of grass pitches are:

- North Devon: 47 football pitches: 27 adult, 11 junior + 19 mini. 13 on school sites (6 in use); 17 managed by clubs; 17 Local Authority/Trusts .
- Torridge: 33 football pitches: 25 adult, 6 junior + 2 mini. 6 on school sites (3 in use); 14 managed by clubs; 10 Local Authority/Trusts.
- 14 out of 55 sites rated as good; scope to improve provision (slightly better standard of provision in Torridge).
- Poor sites: Landkey (Tanners Road pitch), Chulmleigh Community College junior pitch and Park School mini pitch, Dolton Playing Fields.
- 25 out of 41 changing facilities rated as good: poor changing recorded at Beechfield, Fremington and Stanhope Park, Holsworthy (former probably being replaced and latter currently being upgraded).

- Poor drainage recorded at several sites: Landkey; Tews Lane, Roundswell; Killacleave, Ilfracombe; Witheridge Playing Fields; Vinnicombe (Bridgerule) and Torrington FC.
- Pitches as part of public open space frequently record problems with litter and dog fouling, notably: Mill Road and Rock Park in Barnstaple; Hollands Park, Combe Martin; Brimlands in Ilfracombe; Bideford Sports Ground; KGV Playing Fields, Bideford, and Donnacroft in Torrington.
- A number of grounds would like improved ground facilities such as floodlighting and perimeter fencing.
- Overuse of pitches has been recorded at: Seven Brethren in Barnstaple; Beechfield, Fremington; Killacleave in Ilfracombe; Moreton Park (Bideford College); Upcott Field, Holsworthy; and Bradworthy Football Club.
- Maintenance of pitches, which in such a large rural study area is by a variety of different parish councils and other organisations, is generally recorded and regarded as satisfactory.
- Just under half - 22 out of 46 – of the clubs responding in the survey said they were not satisfied by the level of provision for football – other than quality issues at certain grounds, the main factor recorded was the lack of training facilities, particularly 3G football turf pitches.

2.2.3 In terms of pattern of play, peak day for adult football in North Devon and Torridge is Saturday afternoon and for youth, Sunday morning. The table below summarises the spare capacity for football matches during the peak period, expressed as match equivalents i.e. on adult pitches in North Devon, on a Saturday afternoon there are 3.5 match equivalent spare slots meaning that an additional 7 teams could be accommodated at that time.

2.2.4 The table shows that the existing stock in North Devon is virtually at capacity for accommodating adult and junior teams at peak time and there is some spare capacity for mini teams. In Torridge, there is limited spare capacity for adult teams at peak time but none for youth teams or mini teams (there are very few mini pitches).

Table 2: Extent of any current spare capacity for football matches during the peak period, on pitches available for use by the community expressed as match equivalents

Pitch size	No. of Pitches	Match Equivalents			
		Total Current Carrying Capacity for Community Use	Total Current Community Use	Difference	Extent of any spare capacity for community use during the peak period
North Devon					
Adult	27	59	45.5	13.5	3.5
Junior	5	9	4	5	3.5
Mini	9	36	16.5	19.5	14.5
Torridge					
Adult	25	61	35.5	25.5	6.0
Junior	3	9	10.5	-1.5	0
Mini	1	4	3.5	0.5	0

2.2.5 For North Devon, on a sub area basis, there is currently room for the following additional teams at peak times:

- Barnstaple sub area: 2 adult & 1 junior teams: 1 adult at Barnstaple Town FC; 1 adult at Bratton Fleming Sports Ground and 1 junior team at Rock Park (but if additional adult pitch is provided at Rock Park and changing facilities available at The Park School, there is room for an additional 2 adult teams here).
- Braunton sub area: 1 junior team at Lobb Field.
- Ilfracombe sub area: 2 adult teams (both at The Meadow Playing Fields, Woolacombe – it is understood they will be playing next season) plus 2 junior teams at Ilfracombe Academy's Worth Road pitch.
- South Molton sub area: 3 adult teams in South Molton area (1 team at Chittlehampton Playing Field and 2 teams at North Molton Sports and Social Club); none in Chulmleigh area. 1 junior team in Chulmleigh area at Chulmleigh Playing Fields junior pitch.
- There is room for more mini teams in all sub areas apart from Ilfracombe.
- There are an additional 6 junior pitches at schools (2 at Pilton Community College, 1 at The Park School, 1 at Chulmleigh Community College and 2 at South Molton Community College which are not currently available for community use)

2.2.6 For Torridge, on a sub area basis, there is currently room for the following additional teams at peak times:

- Bideford sub area: 4 adult teams across 4 pitches (but only 1 spare slot in Bideford itself) - one team at each of Clovelly Sports Ground, Glebe Field Parkham, Woolsey Sports Field and King George V Playing Field in Bideford. No spare capacity for junior teams or mini teams.
- Torrington sub area: 7 adult teams: 3 in Torrington itself at Donnacroft and 4 at 4 rural grounds - Clinton Hall, Merton; Dolton Playing Fields; High Bickington Playing Fields and Winkleigh Fields. (No junior or mini pitches).
- Holsworthy sub area: 1 adult team (at Vinnicombe Park, Bridgerule) (junior pitch well played). There is no spare capacity for adult or junior play in Holsworthy but a new pitch is being developed. There is limited room for mini teams in Stanhope Park, Holsworthy.

2.2.7 The preferred surface for football training and the only approved surface for football matches is a 3G football turf pitch (FTP); suitable pitches have to be accredited by the FA for matchplay and be on the FA Register. The key points regarding AGPs for football in North Devon and Torridge are:

- The only full size floodlit 3G FTP in the study area is in Torridge at Bideford College; this is not on the FA Register.
- In North Devon, there are 3 half size floodlit 3G FTPs (which can accommodate 7v7 play) at South Molton, Ilfracombe and Braunton Community Colleges, all of which are on the FA Register in North Devon.
- In Torridge, there are 2 half size floodlit 3G FTPs. The FTP at Sandymere is on the FA Register; the FTP at Great Torrington School is not on the FA Register.
- Football training also takes place on sand AGPs. There is one full size floodlit sand AGP available for community use at The Park Community School in Barnstaple (home of Taw Valley Hockey Club and North Devon Hockey Club). There is an almost full size floodlit sand AGP at Kingsley School in Bideford which has community use. There are two half size floodlit sand AGPs – at Pilton Community College (North Devon) and Holsworthy Community College (Torridge).

- There are also sand MUGAs at Chulmleigh Community College (North Devon) and Clinton Hall, Merton (Torrige). There are 2 other floodlit sand based AGPs at independent schools in North Devon and Torrige, at West Buckland and Shebbear Schools. Both are predominantly hockey venues and could be available for community use, subject to the schools' requirements, on a case by case basis.
- All the AGPs are rated as good apart from the half size sand based AGP at Holsworthy Community College and the half size 3G FTP at Great Torrington School (both rated poor; the latter is being resurfaced), and the sand MUGA in Merton (Torrige).

2.2.8 The salient points with regard to the capacity of AGPs for football training and matches are:

- Football teams are training on both 3G FTP and sand based AGPs, depending on their location and availability. All facilities, apart from the half size 3G at South Molton Community College, record less than 3 hours' spare capacity on weekday evenings. All weekday evening use is for football training, except for 4 hours hockey training on the full size sand AGP at The Park School.
- There is less use of all facilities at weekends. All AGPs have the equivalent of a day when they are not being used at weekends; the exceptions are The Park School full size sand AGP where hockey matches are played (and some football activity takes place), and Sandymere half size 3G FTP which hosts mini football matches. There is no matchplay on the full size 3G at Bideford College and it has considerable spare capacity at weekends.
- The research for the Study has identified unmet demand for 3G FTP facilities in the Barnstaple sub area, Bideford sub area and the Holsworthy sub area of Torrige.

2.3 Findings and Issues – Cricket

2.3.1 The key points regarding the demand for cricket are:

- North Devon: 11 clubs are recorded plus Brimlands & North Devon pub and club league, which together field 69 teams, 40 of which are adult.
- In North Devon, 7 out of 11 clubs run junior teams – the largest such club is North Devon CC which fields 8 junior teams.
- In Torrige, there are 8 clubs fielding 20 teams, 13 of which are adult. Two Torrige clubs run junior teams – Bideford, Littleham & Westward Ho! fields 6 teams.
- The senior league for Saturday cricket is the Devon League, to which 5 clubs in the study area belong. The Sunday league is the North Devon League which has 34 teams. A number of Sunday teams only play friendlies.
- Youth teams play in North Devon Youth League.

2.3.2 The key points regarding the supply of cricket pitches are:

- North Devon: 12 grass cricket pitch sites are recorded, 4 of which have non turf wickets (NTWs) in addition. There are seven sites solely with NTWs including: Rock Park, Barnstaple; RMB Chivenor; several schools and Brimlands in Ilfracombe, which is the only public site NTW in use.
- Torrige: There are 8 grass sites, 2 of which have NTWs as well (there are another 3 NTWs at schools). 3 grass pitches are run by Town/Parish Councils. Shebbear

College is the only school site in the study area which records community use of its cricket pitch.

- 3 cricket sites are shared with football and one with rugby (Brimlands in Ilfracombe).
- There are patently more cricket clubs and grounds in North Devon, half of which are located in the Barnstaple area.
- Cricket pitches throughout the area are generally of acceptable quality and appropriately maintained. The good quality of the grounds is reflected in the standard of play.
- In North Devon: 8 out of the 12 grass pitches were rated as good, the rest as standard. NTWs vary but those rated as poor are mostly on school sites.
- In Torridge: all grass pitches are rated as good, apart from KGV Bideford and High Bickington Playing Fields. Poor NTWs on school sites.
- Many grounds would benefit from nets and non-turf practice facilities.
- There are some strong flourishing clubs in the study area including North Devon CC, Bideford, Littleham and Westward Ho! CC and Filleigh CC.
- Bideford, Littleham and Westward Ho! CC's ground is at capacity due to its outdated ancillary facilities and a new ground is sought.

2.3.3 In North Devon, the peak time for cricket is Sunday (46% of play), with 22 % of play on Sundays and 32% midweek (Brimlands and the pub and club league). In Torridge there is only 1 midweek team (Bideford, Littleham & Westward Ho!), representing 8% of total play; 69% of play is on Sundays and 23% on Saturdays. All youth cricket is played midweek.

2.3.4 The capacity assessment for cricket is based on the quality rating for the ground: the ECB suggests that, as a guide, a 'good' or 'standard' grass wicket should be able to accommodate 5 matches per season for adults (7 matches per season for juniors). The capacity for a 'good' non-turf wicket is 60 matches per season (adults) and 80 matches for juniors. There are no 'poor' rated grass wickets in the study area (3 matches per season).

2.3.5 The situation with regard to current capacity for cricket matches can be summarised as follows:

North Devon

- In the Barnstaple sub area, three out of the five grounds (Barnstaple & Pilton CC, North Devon CC and Westleigh CC) are operating at the level the sites can sustain; Bratton Fleming CC and Newton Tracey CC have spare capacity. There is a cricket ground at The Park School which has accommodated cricket teams in the past but is currently not being used by a community team. West Buckland School cricket pitches are available for community use, subject to the requirements of the school.
- The one cricket ground in the Braunton sub area (Braunton CC) is a well used ground but because of the high number of wickets (11) has spare capacity midweek and on Sundays.
- In the Ilfracombe sub area, the only accessible ground is the non turf wicket at Brimlands which is just sustaining one team at present and has considerable spare capacity.
- There is spare capacity at peak time at all 4 sites in the South Molton sub area, other than at Filleigh CC.

Torrige

- In the Bideford sub area, Bideford, Littleham & Westward Ho! is effectively at capacity given the poor condition of ancillary facilities. King George V Playing Fields cricket pitch in Bideford has considerable spare capacity.
- The four rural grounds in the Torrington sub area all have considerable spare capacity.
- The one ground in the Holsworthy sub area at Stanhope Park has spare capacity, although the proximity to housing restricts the number of usable wickets for matchplay.
- The NTWs at grounds in North Devon and Torrige – at Barnstaple & Pilton, North Devon, Filleigh and Chulmleigh CCs- for example - do add to the grounds' capacity. The KGV NTW at King George V Playing Fields in Bideford requires replacement.

2.4 Findings and Issues – Rugby

2.4.1 In total 37 rugby teams are recorded in North Devon (8 senior, 11 youth and 18 mini teams) and 22 in Torrige (7 adult, 9 youth and 6 mini teams). In order of size the clubs are as follows: Bideford RFC – 18 teams; Barnstaple RFC – 15 teams; South Molton – 13 teams; Ilfracombe – 9 teams, and Torrington – 4 teams (2 adults, 1 Vets and 1 x u13). All clubs run juniors (just u13 at Torrington). Barnstaple and Bideford RFCs run girls teams and Bideford RFC runs a Ladies team.

2.4.2 As is common with rugby clubs throughout the country, the clubs in North Devon and Torrige often use more than one site in order to obtain the number of pitches they require. There are 3 rugby clubs in North Devon:

- Barnstaple RFC have 2 adult, 1 full size junior, 1 training pitch and 3 mini pitches and a training area at their Pottington Road site. Overuse of pitches and a lack of floodlit pitches are preventing the expansion of playing/training activities.
- South Molton RFC have 2 adult pitches on private land which they own and also use a rugby pitch at South Molton Community College. In the past they have used an additional pitch on farmer's land elsewhere. A new pitch is being constructed for the club this year.
- Ilfracombe RFC uses one pitch at Brimlands, Ilfracombe and uses the adjacent football pitch, coned, for junior play.

2.4.3 There are 2 rugby clubs in Torrige:

- Bideford RFC uses 2 pitches – one is the club's stadium pitch and the other pitch lies adjacent in King George V Playing Fields.
- Torrington RFC uses two pitches on opposite sides of the road – Donnacroft (adjacent to football pitches) and Hatchmoor (which is gated).

2.4.4 The analysis of capacity for rugby is based on maintenance and drainage. The most highly rated pitch is Bideford RFC's main ground (D2/M2 under the RFU's classification). All other pitches used by clubs are rated as D1/M1, apart from the Station Road pitch, South Molton (D0/M1). All school pitches are D0/M1, including the pitch at South Molton

Community College. (There are several rugby pitches at schools in North Devon and Torrington; the one pitch at South Molton Community College is accessible for community use, as are the rugby pitches at West Buckland School, subject to the school's requirements)

2.4.5 Issues with quality of the pitches and ancillary facilities fall into 5 categories:

- Drainage of pitches, particular identified at Barnstaple (Mill Road), South Molton (Station Road pitch) and Brimlands, Ilfracombe.
- Poor or no floodlighting of training areas/pitches: identified as a constraint to training by Barnstaple RFC, South Molton RFC, Bideford RFC (on the KGV pitch). All would like improved floodlit training areas; Bideford RFC would like a separate floodlit AGP surface on Bideford Cattle Market site.
- Changing facilities: Barnstaple RFC's facilities are inadequate if several teams are playing at home.
- Maintenance: Several clubs are heavily involved with maintenance of their pitches, which is both costly and time consuming, but essential. Bideford RFC would like a long lease on the KGV pitch so the club could assume full responsibility for maintenance (currently maintained by Council with some assistance from club).
- Public open space sites where the public has access experience constant and serious problems with dog fouling, notably at: Torrington (Donnacraft pitch), Barnstaple RFC pitches at Mill Road, King George V Playing Fields (Bideford RFC's second pitch) and Brimlands (Ilfracombe RFC).

2.4.6 Peak time for adult men's rugby is Saturday afternoon, whilst minis and midis tend to play on Sunday mornings. Rugby union has a strong culture of training on floodlit natural grass pitches on weekday evenings and of course these pitches are also used for matches at weekends. An analysis for rugby shows the following:

- Barnstaple RFC's pitches are overplayed, according to the PPS methodology. There may be a little spare capacity for junior and minis play, depending on age ranges and fixtures patterns.
- Ilfracombe RFC has no spare capacity for adult play but a little for junior and mini play.
- South Molton RFC has insufficient capacity at its 2 adult pitches and use of school pitch; the pitches are slightly overplayed. The club would like a hub for junior rugby with suitable artificial surface (a new pitch is currently being constructed).
- Bideford RFC's two pitches are sustaining adult, 6 youth and 5 mini teams and are both being overplayed and being used beyond reasonable capacity.
- Torrington RFC's 2 pitches have spare capacity for more adult, youth and mini play.

2.5 Findings and Issues - Hockey

2.5.1 There are currently two England Hockey affiliated clubs based in North Devon at The Park Community School, both of which have seen a slight decline in membership from the 2015/16 season. North Devon Hockey Club runs 2 senior teams in The GoCrea8 Hockey League (from 35 members). It has 7 junior members but no junior teams. Tav Valley Ladies Hockey Club runs 2 senior ladies teams in the West Club Women's Hockey League, from 19 members. It has no junior teams although it has 58 junior members and runs training sessions.

2.5.2 Key points with regard to hockey AGPs in North Devon and Torridge are:

- There is only one full size floodlit sand AGP available for community use, at The Park Community School in Barnstaple. This is the home of Taw Valley Hockey Club and North Devon Hockey Club and is rated as a good pitch.
- There are 3 other floodlit sand based AGPs on independent schools in North Devon and Torridge. The Kingsley School Bideford pitch is slightly under full size but has community use; the AGPs at Shebbear College and West Buckland School could be available for community use on a case by case basis, subject to the schools' requirements.
- There are two half size floodlit sand AGPs – at Pilton Community College (North Devon) and Holsworthy Community College (Torridge). There are sand MUGAs at Chulmleigh Community College (North Devon) and Merton (Torridge). There is no recorded hockey use of these sites for training or informal play.
- The nearest floodlit full size sand based AGPs to North Devon and Torridge are Exe Valley Leisure Centre, Tiverton and Budehaven Community College in Cornwall.

2.5.3 There is enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet current demand for hockey. The Park School can, at present, accommodate the requirements of both hockey clubs.

2.6 Findings and Issues - Bowls

2.6.1 Current participation in bowls in North Devon and Torridge represents about 1.9% of the 'Bowls age' population (i.e. 45 – 80 age band). Information received from responding clubs indicates a club membership in North Devon & Torridge over 650 (no figures for South Molton, Bradworthy, Barnstaple Rock Park or Barnstaple Bowling Clubs); of which 63% are men. . A very low number are under 18 years old. Overall, membership trends are static at best and the difficulty in attracting new members remains.

2.6.2 There are 14 greens in the study area – 9 in North Devon and 5 in Torridge, each providing either 6 or 7 rinks apart from Braunton which has a separate practice green. There were no visual issues apparent and all greens are considered to be of good quality.

2.6.3 All greens are maintained by their clubs, usually on a voluntary basis, although specialist contractors are used when needed (and affordable). The fact that the costs of maintenance are largely provided by volunteers means that in many cases bowls clubs provide a net revenue income for local authorities.

2.6.4 Consequently, greens are rated highly; issues concerned improvements centre around improvements to fencing and paths. Club houses are a valued and important part of a clubs existence and development generally concerned enhancing club houses rather than playing facilities.

2.6.5 There are 4 rink indoor bowls facilities at North Devon Leisure Centre and the Kingsley Bowling Centre, Westward Ho!. There is also a 2 rink indoor facility at Easewell Golf Course, Mortehoe.

2.6.6 All clubs run a full programme of matches, leagues and competitions to varying degrees. Nearly all clubs have either a set aside rink or can cater for public use. There is spare capacity at most greens.

SECTION 3 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

3.1 General Issues

3.1.1 This section sets out a strategic framework for the future delivery of facilities for pitch sports in North Devon and Torridge. It seeks to deliver on the aspirations of the local sporting community and to respond to the issues identified through the assessment of local playing pitch provision.

3.1.2 The context for planning for the pitch sports has changed markedly in recent years, both nationally and in the study area. North Devon and Torridge illustrate well many of the issues now arising in essentially rural local authorities, where sporting activity (and investment) is increasingly concentrated in urban settlements, where the bulk of new housing is projected to be built. Whilst the development of hub and multi pitch sport sites is to be welcomed, more remote rural playing fields are experiencing a decline in the number of teams playing on them, and several look increasingly vulnerable as sports facilities, although they will continue to have a role and be safeguarded as public open space.

3.1.3 The Strategy therefore needs to provide a framework for ensuring the development, and sustainability of, larger urban pitch sport sites, which are capable of providing a range of opportunities for all members of the community, whilst also protecting the network of smaller, single pitch sport sites in rural areas which help to sustain the very fabric of village life.

3.1.4 Some of the challenges and issues which the Strategy must address include:

- The general decline in the number of 11v11 adult teams in football – seen in both the Saturday and Sunday leagues. This is impacting on the usage of many rural football grounds in North Devon and Torridge – where once they accommodated two or more teams at the weekend, this is now down to use by one team.
- Although junior football remains strong, there has been a general decline in the number of teams run in smaller settlements – junior football is increasingly concentrated within larger settlements which have the age profile and numbers to field a range of junior teams.
- A similar, less marked, decline in league cricket, although cricket in North Devon and Torridge has bucked the national trend with a robust friendly league structure in operation on Sundays.
- Football, cricket and rugby are still overwhelmingly male sports. If women and girls are to be attracted in any large numbers, changing facilities will need to both accommodate, and be attractive to them, as well as meeting the needs of people with disabilities.
- 3G football turf pitches are already used and desired for football training and increasingly promoted and required for matchplay, particularly for juniors and minis. It can be difficult to assess the impact of 3G surfaces on matchplay, and the need going forward for grass pitches, if new full size 3G facilities are provided. Usage of these facilities – and sand based artificial grass pitches – for training are very sensitive to pricing and (perceived) accessibility. Moreover, new 3G facilities can affect the viability of existing sand based AGPs. Rugby is also embracing the emergence of World Play surfaces for matchplay.

- In North Devon and Torridge, almost all artificial turf pitches and a significant proportion of grass football pitches are on school sites (and in particular provide essential overflow and back up facilities). The movement towards academies within the education sector has resulted in a situation where schools now have autonomy over their pitches, with varying approaches to embracing community access. Securing and increasing community use of school facilities through appropriate pricing and accessibility should be a major priority, but there is a lack of co-ordinating agencies and agreed approaches which can help to drive this process.
- Local authorities, including town and parish councils are experiencing severe budgetary and financial constraints, with less money available for managing and maintaining grass and artificial turf pitches. It is a constant challenge to source funds to support the high costs of maintaining grounds, replacing equipment and delivering a high quality service. Support for the voluntary sector in relation to the management and maintenance of facilities and membership activity is increasingly important to ensure a thriving club sector and good quality facilities.
- Future funding of sports pitch provision and improvement is likely to be predominantly through S106 agreements and CIL but the Steering Group also needs to think of innovative ways to link existing community assets/groups in to the development of new identified projects to ensure they are sustainable and embedded within their local communities. Where possible and feasible, opportunities for multi-use of changing rooms and pavilions (such as workshops, small offices or playgroups) should be explored.
- There is now a growing appreciation of the problems of obesity and poor health allied to a lack of exercise and how the provision and use of sports pitches and associated facilities may link in to wider health and community development agendas. Considerable investment is now being made into health which may be a way forward in securing funding for pitch improvements.
- There is a need to consider how we best support and protect single rural pitch sites given the relatively high maintenance cost for smaller parish councils. Moreover, in many areas, their role for formal sport is declining and if they are to remain as 'sports facilities' then usage has to be increased. They can still perform important 'village playing field' functions as public open space, but their loss to the pitch sports should be avoided wherever possible.
- Within some sports, the informal offer (e.g. Last Man Standing in cricket, Rush Hockey) is increasingly important in maintaining use. Playing fields can also be used for sports such as rounders, archery and athletics and providing opportunities to increase/introduce summer sports to support year round activity will also help to improve viability.
- Across all playing pitch sites – new and existing and grass and artificial – it is critical for sustainability that: high quality standards, ancillary facilities and intensification of use such as floodlighting can be easily achieved; the management infrastructure is in place to develop maximise usage; outdoor and indoor facilities are co-located to encourage cross-participation; winter pitches are used in the summer and vice versa wherever possible, and new facilities are energy efficient, can be maintained effectively and have adequate sinking funds for replacement.
- The playing pitch resource needs to be managed flexibly in order to respond to changing patterns of participation. Ideally, in any new grass provision, an area of flat land should be provided which can be marked appropriately, as age ranges

change. There may be scope for local clubs, teams and leagues to work together to review and reschedule football kick-off times to avoid the Saturday afternoon peak-time capacity problem. Facilities should be developed in line with appropriate national governing body and Sport England standards relating to ancillary facilities, natural and artificial grass pitches etc.

- This strategy seeks to bring together key partners in the delivery of playing fields and to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and effectively aligned to maximise the value of assets to the community. This includes the voluntary, educational, public and commercial sectors.

3.2 Strategic Themes

3.2.1 Based on the Needs Assessments and identification of key issues and findings, this framework for future delivery is supported by six strategic themes. These are presented in more detail within the Action Plan by Theme section and also underpin the Site Specific Recommendations in the Action Plan. They reflect Sport England's Playing Pitch Methodology's priority themes of PROTECT, ENHANCE, PROVIDE.

- ST1** Protecting existing playing field sites and ensuring all playing field land is used effectively and sustainably, whilst recognizing the value of playing fields for public informal open space.
- ST2** Ensuring that enhanced and new facilities are provided to meet existing demand and projected demand from increases in population and participation.
- ST3** Providing a range of appropriate facilities for both competition and training which enable pitch sport participants to improve and progress.
- ST4** Enhancing existing facilities to ensure they are fit for purpose and of high quality in order to retain existing levels of participation, improve the playing experience and encourage growth in participation.
- ST5** Improving access and accessibility to pitch sport sites, in order to encourage greater participation by all sectors of the community.
- ST6** Working in partnership to enable effective and greater use of existing playing field sites and the sharing of skills, expertise, resources and facilities.

SECTION 4:

ENSURING THAT SUFFICIENT PITCH SPORT FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED AND AVAILABLE TO MEET DEMAND IN NORTHERN DEVON FROM INCREASES IN POPULATION AND PARTICIPATION TO 2031

See Strategy Appendix 2 for supporting information

Following on from the key findings and issues highlighted by the Needs Assessment and the above scenarios it is important to consider some of the options for addressing key issues in more depth. Sections 4, 5 and 6 present a number of priority sites and locations for discussion before the final Strategy is agreed.

4.1 Football

4.1.1 For the future, trends in football appear as follows:

- Since the introduction of The FA Youth Review in 2012 youth male and mini soccer has continued to grow, albeit slowly, which is supported by new formats in mini soccer (5v5 , 7v7 and 9v9).
- Adult male provision is a big area of concern nationally and locally with teams decreasing season after season; this has seen the Sunday League fold.
- Adult female and youth female continues to grow at slow rate. The FA launched a Girls Mini Soccer programme in December 2016, which will help drive provision, where there is currently a gap in the market.
- Disability provision is stable and a county wide league currently takes places throughout the season, playing on 3G FTPs (Barnstaple Youth FC play in this league).

4.1.2 The Needs Assessment has taken into account population growth from new housing (including housing projections which have not been assigned to specific settlements), together with trends in participation, latent and unmet demand and the aspirations of clubs to develop new teams. These aspirations have been considered conservatively; some of them are dependent upon access to more/better pitches and changing facilities, but others will depend on the availability of support personnel especially coaches. Some of them can be considered as thwarted or unmet demand in that the teams would run if there were pitches available; in practice this is difficult to disaggregate from future aspirations.

- In North Devon, this suggests that clubs would like to run in total around an additional 3 men's teams, 1 women's teams, 4 youth boys, 2 youth girls and 2 minis.
- In Torridge, this suggests that clubs would like to run in total around an additional 2 men's teams, 1 women's teams, 2 youth boys, 2 youth girls and 2 minis.

4.1.3 Strategy Appendix 2 sets out a number of tables which present the number of additional football teams to be accommodated in North Devon and Torridge to the end of the plan period (2031). In summary, it has been calculated that the following teams will be formed:

North Devon: 9.9 men's teams, 1.4 ladies' teams, 12.1 youth male teams, 5.9 youth female teams, 10.3 mini teams

Torrige: 10.2 men’s teams, 1.2 ladies’ teams, 9.4 youth male teams, 5.7 youth female teams, 8.7 mini teams

4.1.4 The study has calculated that the number of additional grass football pitches required to meet demand to 2031 is as follows:

Table 3: Minimum number of additional grass football pitches required to meet demand to 2031 in northern Devon

Type of Pitch	Number
North Devon	
Adult pitches	5
Youth pitches (of varying sizes: 11v11 & 9v9)	7
Mini pitches (7v7 & 5v5)	3
Torrige	
Adult pitches	6
Youth pitches (of varying sizes: 11v11 & 9v9)	6
Mini pitches (7v7 & 5v5)	3

4.1.5 As set out in Strategy Appendix 2, there are proposals already in the pipeline for additional pitches. It should be highlighted that meeting demand may not always require the provision of new pitches on new land. Other options are explored in the Action Plans and may include the following:

- Increasing the capacity of existing pitches by improvements to pitch quality and/or changing facilities (although this does not solve the problem of peak time demand).
- Securing access to existing pitches which currently do not have community use (e.g. on school sites).
- Marking out pitches on currently unused areas of existing playing field sites.
- Providing artificial grass pitches either for training and/or matchplay – such surfaces can accommodate much greater intensity of use and ease pressure on grass pitches.
- Better scheduling of matches and flexibility in kick-off times (e.g. playing of two matches on a Saturday).

4.1.6 However, as presented earlier in this section there is very little spare capacity within existing provision for any growth in the number of teams to be accommodated, except for within the town of Great Torrington for adult play and for mini teams in some areas. In particular, Bideford and Ilfracombe have no practical spare capacity at all for growth whilst Barnstaple has very little, and there are large numbers of new houses planned for these settlements. It is therefore suggested that the increase in teams will largely need to be met through new provision. The key sites are discussed in Section 5 and presented in Section 8: Action Plans.

4.1.7 It should also be noted that in projecting need to 2031 means that it may not be possible to identify precise locations for new grass and/or artificial grass pitches. The provision of additional pitches can remain an aspiration, to be brought forward once suitable and sustainable sites are identified.

4.2 Cricket

4.2.1 Demand for cricket in North Devon and Torridge can best be described as steady, with some buoyant clubs in the Barnstaple and Bideford sub areas and some growth in junior teams. Most of the more rural grounds are now most likely to be sustaining just one adult team with considerable spare capacity. 5 years ago the North Devon Cricket League (Sunday) had 45 teams; it now has 36 teams, which nevertheless represents an increase from 32 teams in the previous season.

4.2.2 Devon Cricket Board are focusing upon a strategy of retaining existing players and supporting increased participation where opportunities arise, particularly through growing more informal formats of the game and T20. They are seeking to address many of the issues currently facing cricket, including the ageing volunteer base and to support clubs to become more sustainable. Several clubs may experience growth in junior cricket due to the emerging 'All Stars' programme for 5-8 year olds; in contrast, adult participation has been much more mixed.

4.2.3 The total number of new cricket teams predicted to be generated through population growth, trends in participation, latent/unmet/displaced demand and aspirations in North Devon and Torridge is shown in detail in Strategy Appendix 2, and is summarised as

North Devon: 9 men's teams, 0.4 ladies' teams and 8.1 youth teams

Torridge: 5 men's teams, 1 ladies' teams and 5.6 youth teams

4.2.4 In cricket, as with football, a calculation has to be made as to how many pitches are required to accommodate the above numbers of new teams. This needs to take the following into account:

- Matches cannot take place with less than whole teams;, therefore each total of teams has been rounded as appropriate.
- Teams do not play at home every week. Match equivalent sessions have been estimated on the basis of home/away fortnightly for senior league cricket teams and less often for friendly, ladies' and youth teams.
- The variation in capacity according to the quality of the pitch. It is assumed that pitches will be 'good' i.e. capable of accommodating 5 matches per season per grass wicket for adults and 7 matches per season per grass wicket for youth. (Non turf wickets can accommodate up to 60 adult matches per season).
- The pattern of play (i.e. fixture times): demand for pitch space for cricket will depend on the type of team (e.g. league or friendly, youth or adult) and whether they play on Saturdays, Sundays and/or midweek. In North Devon and Torridge, Sunday play is the most popular but there is also play on Saturdays and Midweek which means there is not the peaking problem which is encountered in football.

4.2.5 As with football there are various ways of providing increased capacity: by reinstating pitches that have been used in the past; providing non-turf training nets to take pressure off squares; improving quality to sustain more play (this does not address peak time issues) and securing community use of (usually non-turf) cricket pitches on school sites.

4.2.6 The number of new teams being projected would suggest the need for access to two new cricket pitches in North Devon and one in Torridge.

4.2.7 Access to at least one new cricket pitch facility will be required in the Barnstaple sub area. This demand could be met by enhancing the existing cricket pitch at The Park School, Barnstaple (with appropriate community access secured) and may also involve installing a grass square and upgrading the changing pavilion. An additional new cricket pitch may be

required in North Devon depending on how demand develops geographically; the most likely location given existing demand is Ilfracombe.

4.2.8 Within the Bideford sub area, the need has already been established for a replacement facility with enhanced facilities for Bideford, Littleham and Westward Ho! CC. Access to an additional cricket pitch is likely to be required; this could, ideally, be addressed through the provision of a double cricket pitch site.

4.3 Rugby

4.3.1 The main characteristics for rugby in North Devon is a steady demand, with established clubs looking to maintain their adult sides, and introduce more juniors and female teams.

4.3.2 The total number of new rugby teams predicted to be generated through population growth, trends in participation, latent/unmet/displaced demand and aspirations in North Devon and Torridge is shown in detail in Strategy Appendix 2, and is summarized as:

North Devon: 2.4 men's teams, 1 ladies' teams, 5.6 youth teams and 4.6 mini teams

Torridge: 1.4 men's teams, 0.2 ladies' teams, 4.3 youth teams and 2.2 mini teams

4.3.3 As with football and cricket, a calculation has to be made as to how many pitches are required to accommodate the above numbers of new teams. This needs to take the following into account:

- Matches cannot take place with less than whole teams; therefore each total of teams has been rounded as appropriate.
- Teams do not play at home every week. Match equivalent sessions have been estimated on the basis of home/away fortnightly for adult and Colts and older youth teams and less for younger youth and minis. Mini matches are often played en bloc on a fortnightly home/away basis.
- Training on grass pitches is a key component of demand for rugby pitch space. 90 minutes of training is 1 match equivalent.
- The variation in capacity according to the quality of the pitch. It is assumed that pitches will be 'good' (at least D1/M2) i.e. capable of accommodating at least 3 matches per week.
- The pattern of play (i.e. fixture times) and peak time. All men's adult rugby is played on Saturday afternoons; youth and mini/midi play is on Sunday mornings. Ladies' teams are usually Sunday afternoon.
- That whole pitches only are allotted to each sub area.
- New teams are generated within existing clubs and play wherever possible on their home grounds. In the survey, clubs said additional teams will be playing on their existing home pitch(es).

4.3.4 Nevertheless, the above increase in the number of new teams would suggest the need for a minimum of a further 3 rugby pitches in North Devon and 2 rugby pitches in Torridge to accommodate adult, youth and mini teams.

4.3.5 In North Devon, the lack of capacity at South Molton RFC is being addressed by the new pitch development (which thus comprises one of the three pitches predicted as required in North Devon). Barnstaple is likely to require an additional pitch given the demand arising through the new housing developments in the sub area. No site has been identified for this at present (although space could be available at Rock Park, depending on future demand for football). A related issue concerns the future of Bridge Fields in respect

of long-term redevelopment; it may be that land needs to be identified within the Barnstaple area as replacement for all this pitch area.

4.3.6 In Torrridge, Bideford RFC requires an additional pitch to meet demand for training and matchplay.

4.4 Hockey

4.4.1 Whilst recognizing the importance of maintaining the current club and match structure, England Hockey is actively promoting new initiatives like Pay & Play, Rush Hockey or Back to Hockey sessions and other informal hockey activities that may engage new participants and increase participation in the sport. Currently, there is no informal hockey offer within the two districts. Both hockey clubs in North Devon wish to run more teams

4.4.2 There are currently no hockey teams in Torrridge, but the North Devon TGRs have been applied to the expected population growth in Torrridge. Demand generated by people moving into new housing in the districts, together with changes in participation trends, latent and unmet demand and the aspirations of clubs suggests that an additional 2 men's, 2 ladies and 3 youth teams will be created by 2031 across North Devon and 1 men's, 1 ladies and 1 junior teams in Torrridge (although these will only be able to play in North Devon at present).

4.4.3 Any expansion in the demand for hockey training and matchplay facilities can only be met through freeing up spare capacity at the sand based AGP at The Park Community School, at the expense of football. To accommodate the expected growth in hockey, it is estimated that 4.5 hours' worth of Saturday football and 3 hours of midweek football needs to be transferred to another site.

4.4.4 As this is the only full size AGP in Barnstaple it attracts considerable football training activity. It has no spare capacity on midweek evenings, with 10 hours of 14 'peak time' hours allocated for football, and 4 for hockey. It is also used for football for 3 hours on Saturdays, with hockey matches scheduled for 4 hours.

4.4.5 In summary, 6 new adult hockey teams and four new youth teams are predicted to be generated in hockey. The main adult teams will play on a fortnightly home/away basis. This equates to three matches per weekend, although it is possible that one or two teams may be vet's teams which would play less frequently. Depending on the age range, youth teams play less frequently but at least one match per weekend would be played.

4.4.6 This would suggest that three more matches per weekend (2 adult and 1 youth) as a minimum would be forthcoming from development to 2031. A hockey match lasts around 90 minutes; these matches cannot currently be accommodated on the Park Community School AGP, with the current level of football use. Growth in the training requirements and the informal offer for hockey will also be restricted through the lack of spare capacity on weekday evenings.

4.4.7 However, at present there are few alternative venues for football training in the area – only the half size sand AGP at Pilton Community College which similarly has little spare capacity midweek evenings. The provision of a 3G FTP in Barnstaple will cater for this demand.

4.5 Bowls

4.5.1 Population projections suggest that target age group for bowls is likely to change by -1% or +5% (North Devon – Torrridge) over the period 2017-2031. Sport England Market Segmentation Analysis suggests that there is some latent demand for bowls in North Devon and Torrridge, with a respective, estimated 194 and 142 adult who would currently like to

participate or participate more in Bowls. This does not, however, represent a high latent demand for bowls, and despite an ageing population, relatively few new bowlers coming through from population growth. However, there may be a larger number generated through new housing, but these will still be able to be accommodated in existing clubs.

4.5.2 There is no evidence based upon current participation that there is demand for additional facilities. While some greens operate a busy programme of fixtures, most clubs have capacity for additional members, and the flexibility of fixtures means that there is scope to accommodate more teams on existing greens. Generally accepted guidance suggests that a standard bowling green requires in the order of 60 members to make it viable. The two largest clubs have around 100 members each but 3 out of the 9 clubs responding had fewer than 60 members. It is vital for sustainability and the economic viability of all clubs that membership increases and if numbers do not pick up substantially, some clubs will look increasingly vulnerable.

4.5.3 No demand was expressed by the clubs covered in the survey for additional indoor bowls provision in the area. No clubs specifically mentioned that their members made use of the indoor bowling facilities at either the North Devon Leisure Centre (which is due to close as part of the site's redevelopment), Kingsley Indoor Bowls Club or at Easewell Golf Club (Mortehoe) during the winter months.

4.5.4 However, there were numerous accounts of short mat bowls being played in a variety of indoor facilities in the area, most frequently in bowling clubs' club houses. Short mat bowls can support a club during the out-of-season period and help to ensure it remains viable.

SECTION 5: PRIORITY PROJECTS IN NORTH DEVON AND TORRIDGE (NOT in Priority Order)

A: Provision of 3G FTP in Barnstaple (See Appendix 3A for Explanation of the Issue)

Summary of Issue

5.1 There is no full size 3G Football Turf Pitch serving the Barnstaple Area and evidence gathered in the study supports the demand for such a facility to accommodate training and matchplay in football and potentially rugby. The nearest full size 3G FTP is at Bideford College but this is not accredited for matchplay by the FA. The provision of a 3G FTP in Barnstaple will also assist provision for hockey in North Devon by enabling some football training activity to be transferred from The Park School artificial grass pitch to the new 3G facility.

Recommended Action

5.2 Provision of full size FA accredited 3G FTP in Barnstaple. Possible sites:

- Seven Brethren, leaving one full size grass adult pitch
- Alternative sites, such as:
 - at Westacott (Policy BAR01) (subject to appropriate levels and drainage)
 - or
 - PETROC

B: Provision of additional and appropriate facilities for football in Barnstaple (See Appendix 3B for Explanation of the Issue)

Summary of Issue

5.3 The total number of additional teams expected in 2031 in the Barnstaple sub area, taking into account aspirations, latent demand and trends in participation is: 5.8 senior teams, 1.2 women's teams, 5.9 junior boys' teams, 2.5 girls' teams and 4.4 mini teams. Existing marked out facilities have very little spare capacity to meet current demand and meeting future demand will require new provision.

Recommended Action

5.4 *Barnstaple and Pilton*

- An adult pitch could be reinstated at Rock Park and it is hoped that adult teams will return to Rock Park now that the future availability of The Park School changing rooms has been resolved.
- Integrate The Park School more with Rock Park and develop greater community use for football. The School already accommodates most of Eastside Youth FC and is keen to maintain and develop this.
- Up to 3 adult teams and 1-2 junior teams generated from new housing and other changes in participation could be accommodated from existing pitch stock as

above, if suitable access to both pitches and changing facilities can be negotiated.

- A 3G FTP provided in Barnstaple could, in theory, be the home ground for up to 6 adult Saturday teams and up to 10 junior/mini teams (see 5A)

5.5 *Landkey and Swimbridge*

- Improve Tanners Road pitch at Landkey which is poor in order to increase capacity to accommodate more Eastside Youth FC teams. Ideally club need a (minimum of) an adult and a 9v9 pitch on one site. (2-3 new teams (of mixed ages) are projected from development in Landkey area).
- Provision of a playing field in Swimbridge could help meet demand from development in Landkey area – suggest 1 adult pitch.

5.6 *Tawstock, Roundswell and Sticklepath*

- Provision of additional pitch space in Sticklepath/Roundswell area is required to accommodate demand from new housing, preferably an area capable of accommodating two adult pitches which can be remarked as larger junior and/or mini pitches as appropriate. This could be provided as part of the Larkbeare development or the extension to Old Torrington Road.
- Provision of area of land in Tawstock village, capable of accommodating 1 x 9v9 pitch.
- 5.7 For Fremington, see Priority D

C Provision of additional and appropriate facilities for rugby in Barnstaple *(See Appendix 3C for Explanation of the Issue)*

Summary of Issue

5.8 In rugby, training as well as matchplay usually takes place on the pitches and this must be fully taken into account in any assessment of usage and capacity. All pitches at Barnstaple RFC's home ground, including those with unsecured tenure at Bridge Fields, are overplayed and the lack of floodlighting facilities particularly restricts the expansion of playing/training activities.

Recommended Action

5.9 As follows:

- Obtain security of tenure for the Bridge Fields site.
- Floodlighting of Pitch 2 to ease accommodation of training needs
- Provision of 3G FTP in Barnstaple which will help to meet training needs
- Changing facilities require enhancement/enlargement to accommodate more teams
- Provision of additional rugby pitch(es) in Barnstaple to meet growth in demand from new housing. Explore opportunities for access to rugby pitches at The

Park School and Pilton Community College. Consider provision of rugby pitch at Rock Park.

D Provision of additional and appropriate facilities for football in Fremington *(See Appendix 3D for Explanation of the Issue)*

Summary of Issue

5.10 The only adult pitch in Fremington - at Beechfield - is being overplayed, supporting 2 adult and 5+ youth sides from Fremington Youth FC. There is no room for expansion or to accommodate teams generated from new housing. The Youth FC also uses junior pitches at Sticklepath Primary School which has no community use agreement.

Recommended Action

5.11 As follows:

- The new full size pitch at Fremington Camp may enable some youth matches to be played on Sunday mornings.
- There is land potentially available to the west of Fremington camp which was used as pitches in the past. The Parish Council are assisting Fremington Youth FC to negotiate with the landowner who is happy to lease the land to the club. It appears that this could accommodate enough pitches to provide the hub site the Youth FC urgently require. It is not yet known if this would be a long term or a short term solution.
- Construction of changing rooms at Beechfield to support sustainability of site.
- If land potentially available to the west of Fremington camp does not come forward, new pitches will be required in Fremington to meet demand generated from new housing (land capable of accommodating 1 senior, 1 junior and 1 mini pitch; ideally 2 adult pitches which can be remarked).

E Provision of additional and appropriate facilities for football, rugby and cricket in Ilfracombe *(See Appendix 3E for Explanation of the Issue)*

Summary of Issues

5.11 The total number of additional football teams expected in 2031 in the Ilfracombe sub area, taking into account aspirations, latent demand and trends in participation is: 1.9 senior teams, 0.1 women's teams, 2.2 junior boys' teams, 0.7 girls' teams and 2.2 mini teams. There is no spare capacity at peak time in Ilfracombe itself; existing pitches are being overplayed and there is no room to accommodate growth. There is a junior pitch on school land which is currently not being used.

5.12 Ilfracombe RFC is based at Brimlands (it leases the site from NDC) and has one full size rugby pitch. It also uses the football pitch, which is marked out with cones for rugby minis/youth on Sunday mornings. The cricket club plays on the non turf wicket at Brimlands (there is no grass pitch) and has submitted plans for the site. There are no other facilities for cricket in Ilfracombe currently in use.

Recommended Action

5.13 Football

- Maintain community access to school playing fields. Help support and investigate opportunities for youth football club to achieve security of tenure of Killacleave. If club could lease facilities it could seek funding to improve changing facilities.
- The 7v7 3G AGP at Ilfracombe Academy is little used on Sundays but otherwise full with football teams and rugby club training. Explore potential for the this FTP to accommodate mini matches.
- Secure and encourage community use of 9v9 pitch adjacent to 3G FTP on Worth Road, which has a CUA and the maintenance of which is part of a S106 Agreement. If some junior teams currently using Killacleave could move to this pitch, the adult pitches at Killacleave might then be able to accommodate demand from new housing.
- In Ilfracombe, 1 senior team, 1 junior team and 1 mini team are projected from new housing alone.
- Depending on the resolution of the above factors, a minimum of one adult pitch, one junior and one mini pitch will be required in Ilfracombe to meet demand generated by the proposed new housing within the Southern Extension. It is currently proposed that the new primary school will accommodate two adult football pitches which would meet this requirement providing there is enough room to realign and remark smaller pitches as appropriate.

5.14 Rugby and cricket

- Building capacity for the rugby club: if the above proposals can be achieved, the football pitch at Brimlands could be remarked as a rugby pitch and continue to meet demand for rugby as the club grows.
- The future of cricket at Brimlands: if the cricket club grows further and requires a grass pitch it will need to find an alternative site. It is recommended that provision for cricket be built into pitch provision within the Southern Extension, as a shared facility with football pitches, possibly within the primary school.

F Protecting and developing facilities for hockey in North Devon

(See Appendix 3F for Explanation of the Issue)

Summary of Issue

5.15 Hockey activity in North Devon and Torridge starts from a low base. There are two clubs, running 4 teams between them (North Devon HC: 2 men's and Taw Valley Ladies HC: 2 ladies). Although there are juniors in the squads there are, as yet, no junior teams. Part of the reason for this may be because there is only one full size floodlit sand based AGP in the district suitable for matchplay, at The Park School in Barnstaple. This facility has very little capacity to accommodate growth in demand for hockey training or matchplay.

Recommended Action

5.16 As follows:

- To protect provision for hockey in North Devon at The Park School, Barnstaple and to ensure increased access for both training and matchplay as demand increases.
- North Devon HC is being encouraged to run a Sunday morning junior session at Kingsley School to develop the junior hockey at their club. Possible venue for hockey training also.
- If a 3G FTP were to be provided in Barnstaple, an appropriate level of football usage can be strategically transferred from the sand based AGP at The Park School. This will free up enough space to accommodate hockey development to meet the estimated growth levels that are predicted by 2031.
- It is thus recommended that the business case for the 3G FTP to be provided in Barnstaple includes transferring up to 4.5 hours' worth of football from The Park School on Saturdays to accommodate future needs for hockey matches and up to 3 hours' worth of football on weekday evenings to accommodate increased training time for adult and junior hockey.

G Demand for additional 3G provision in Bideford

(See Appendix 3G for Explanation of the Issue

Summary of Issue

5.17 There is a 3G FTP in Torridge at Bideford College which is virtually full with football training but, because it is not FA accredited, cannot host matchplay. Other training facilities in the area comprise a half size 3G FTP which is FA accredited at Sandymere (which is fully used by Bideford Blues and Appledore Youth FC) and a sand based AGP at Kingsley School, which may accommodate some football training next season. Any substantial growth in demand for training on 3G AGPs however will require new provision. There is a relatively large projected increase in the number of teams which will be generated from new housing in Bideford which will require training facilities, in addition to teams which cannot access such facilities at present.

Recommended Action

5.18 As follows:

- If Bideford College AGP could be used as a match play venue up to 6 adult teams and 10 junior/mini teams could be based here for matchplay, depending on age ranges and fixtures lists, which would meet much.
- The study concludes that if Bideford College accommodates matchplay, the priority need will be for additional training needs for football and rugby, which could be accommodated on a 9v9 3G FTP with suitable surface (i.e. not full size), possibly on the Cattle Market site.
- However, unless Bideford College is able to fund the FA accreditation of its 3G FTP for matchplay, the identified demand for both training and matchplay going forward is for the provision of a new full size 3G FTP in Bideford (site to be agreed). (The Council will not financially support the FA accreditation because of apparent reduced accessibility to the local community due to considered high charges.)

- Further discussion is required concerning the requirements of the rugby club re: the artificial grass surface.
- Demand for football matchplay could also be met by additional grass pitch provision (see Priority I); but the combination of both training and matchplay needs supports the provision of 3G football turf facilities.
- The priority is for the 3G FTP at Bideford College to be accredited for matchplay to make the most of this facility and meet demand for adult, junior and mini matches in the town.

H Meeting the needs of Bideford RFC and other sports using King George V Playing Fields (See Appendix 3H for Explanation of the Issue)

Summary of Issue

5.19 King George V Playing Fields is a public recreation space in the town centre, currently catering for rugby, cricket and football. Both Bideford RFC's two rugby pitches – the stadium pitch lies adjacent to KGV and the second pitch within the park itself - are operating beyond reasonable capacity and the club requires additional training and matchplay facilities. The cricket pitch has considerable spare capacity and facilities are acknowledged as requiring upgrading. The junior football pitch on the cricket outfield is overused, sustaining Bideford Youth AFC.

Recommended Action

5.20 There are several possible options for King George V Playing Fields, Bideford and they are presented in the following format for ease:

A *King George V Playing Fields, Bideford: if site continues as at present with one 'outside' rugby pitch, one junior football pitch, one cricket pitch in top part of site and one adult football pitch below.*

- The rugby club will be unable to expand and existing two rugby pitches will continue to be overplayed.
- (Provision of half size 3G AGP on Cattle Market site – see 6.7) will assist rugby club with training needs).
- Cricket pitch and youth football pitch could remain.
- The Junior football pitch is not ideal as a venue for Bideford AFC Youth, which is split between 3 sites; this pitch is overplayed. The club could be moved to another site (see below).
- The cricket pitch currently an inadequate facility and needs considerable investment.
- If a suitable alternative home pitch can be found for the cricket club (with financial assistance and possibly involving amalgamation with another club), this could potentially enhance their standard of play.
- If the cricket club and youth football club can be found satisfactory, alternative venues, that part of KGV Playing Fields could be re-designed to cater for Skate Park and other amenities.
- S106 monies can be utilised to re-configure facilities and area as necessary.

B *King George V Playing Fields, Bideford: remodelling to accommodate second 'outside' rugby pitch*

- Cricket pitch and junior football pitch will need to be moved and both clubs appropriately and carefully relocated.
- The youth football club could transfer some use to the adult pitch at KGV, but a preferred option would be to relocate the club to a hub site at new pitches on Winsford development.
- Cricket pitch to be found suitable appropriate home ground as above
- This will enable this part of King George V Playing Fields to be remodelled and improved.
- The rugby club will have sufficient pitches (3) to meet demand for matchplay and a half size 3G FTP (see 6.7) will meet their training needs.
- Works can start very soon with both Bideford RFC and TDC committing funds
- The first 'outside' rugby pitch could have floodlights to backlight the second 'outside' rugby pitch.

I **Provision of adequate and appropriate facilities for football in Bideford and Northam** *(See Appendix 31 for Explanation of the Issue)*

Summary of Issue

5.21 The total number of additional teams expected in 2031 in the Bideford sub area, taking into account aspirations, latent demand and trends in participation is: 7.4 senior teams, 1.2 women's teams, 6.2 junior boys' teams, 2.5 girls' teams and 5.7 mini teams. Existing pitches cannot accommodate current demand, with youth FC teams notably split between three sites. There is insufficient capacity at present to accommodate expected growth in the number of teams in Bideford and Northam to 2031.

Recommended Action

5.22 As follows:

- If Bideford College 3G FTP was available for matchplay, it could accommodate some of the demand projected from new housing and provide a hub site for Bideford AFC Youth (if the club were happy to be based there).
- However, depending on what happens at KGV, additional pitches for junior and mini teams would still be required in Bideford to meet expected future demand – a minimum of one adult, and one junior 9v9 pitch and two mini pitches (which could be a hub site for Bideford AFC). Land is proposed at Winsford as part of new development to accommodate 2 adult pitches; the land area should be large enough to accommodate one adult, one junior 9v9 and 2 mini pitches as required.
- Improvement of pitch at Moreton Park may mean more junior matches could be accommodated, but this is not an optimum venue for the Youth FC as there is currently only one pitch and no security of tenure. It could possibly accommodate a senior team.
- If an additional full size 3G FTP was provided, most expected growth in demand in matchplay and training could be accommodated (5G)
- In addition, new pitches are required to meet the projected increase in demand in Northam – a minimum of one adult and one junior 9v9 pitch.

J New ground for Bideford, Littleham & Westward Ho! CC

(See Appendix 31 for Explanation of the Issue

Summary of Issue

5.23 Bideford, Littleham and Westward Ho! CC is a long established cricket club, running a range of teams and hosting senior and junior representative matches. The ground's ancillary facilities are poor and there are insurance risks through balls being hit onto adjacent properties. It is a priority for Devon Cricket and the club to relocate to a new site and provide new, enhanced, high quality replacement facilities to accommodate the full range of activities.

Recommended Action

5.24 As follows:

- Provision of new site for Bideford, Littleham and Westward Ho! to meet needs of the club and some demand projected from new housing. This would be a replacement facility.
- New housing in the Bideford sub area suggests the need for an additional cricket pitch in Bideford to 2031. Ideally to provide a 2 cricket pitch site in the Bideford Area to allow for growth in number of teams from new housing etc.
- This could be addressed by the provision of a double cricket pitch site – one pitch as a replacement for B, L & WHo! CC and one to meet future demand.

SECTION 6: OTHER PRIORITIES: DISTRICT WIDE AND BY SPORT

A DISTRICT WIDE

A number of district wide, non sport specific issues have arisen and these are addressed within the Action Plans.

Securing community use of school facilities

6.1 Action Plans have considered and addressed the following, including:

- How to secure community use at school sites – for both grass and artificial grass provision. Where possible, community use should be secured through funding agreements, when capital investments are made.
- Ensuring reasonable pitch and changing facility hire charges.
- Making the most of opportunities for joint provision/development e.g. Pollyfield Playing Field, East the Water, where the club are looking to provide a pitch which will also benefit the adjacent primary school.

Management and maintenance of facilities

6.2 The Strategy draws attention to the impact which a decline in maintenance budgets may have. The Action Plans call for support for town and parish councils and clubs through technical support and other means.

6.3 The voluntary sector makes an extremely important contribution to pitch maintenance on club sites. The contribution by volunteers enables clubs to reduce maintenance costs vastly when compared to council and school managed facilities.

Protection of rural sites

6.4 Some single pitch sites in rural areas are increasingly vulnerable as sports sites but are very important as public open space. Pitches previously existing at Abbotsham Village Playing Field and Blackhouse Field, Buckland Brewer have been lost. (Buckland Brewer PC have recently acquired land which they are developing as a sport and amenities field)

6.5 Because of their low use, the following sites have been marked as 'vulnerable' in the Action Plans: Glebe Field, Parkham (just one team); Woolsery Sports & Community Hall (one team); Dolton Playing Field – not in use; High Bickington Playing Fields – 1 football team and occasional cricket; Petrockstowe CC – one team; Vinnicombe Bridgerule, one team.

Tackling dog fouling of public pitches (enhancement of pitches)

6.6 Dog fouling on public open space sites is a health hazard and can affect the playing experience. Particularly vulnerable sites are identified in the Action Plans. Possible measures to address this include:

- Education
- Notices
- Barriers/fencing around key site
- Public space Protection Orders

Enhancing facilities at existing playing pitch sites

6.7 A number of grounds and clubs require enhancement to their natural turf pitches and ancillary facilities to increase capacity and the playing experience. These are addressed in the Action Plans and include:

Cricket grounds:

- Sight screens: Westleigh CC; Filleigh CC
- All weather practice nets: Newton Tracey CC; Braunton CC; Stanhope Park, Holsworthy
- Fencing: Westleigh CC

Football:

- Floodlighting: Hartland FC; Marshford FC, Appledore
- Fencing/netting: Pollyfield, East-the-Water; Lobb Field, Braunton
- Paths: Lobb Field, Braunton
- Halwill FC: Club would like to improve drainage, spectator area and have floodlights.
- Shebbear FC: Club would like floodlights and perimeter fencing close to housing.

B KEY PRIORITIES FOR FOOTBALL

- Install a full-size 3G FTP in Barnstaple.
- Achieving improvements to grounds and changing facilities to increase capacity
- The provision of new pitches in Barnstaple.
- Securing access to education pitches in Ilfracombe.
- Youth football pitches – addressing shortfalls in Barnstaple, Fremington and Landkey in particular.
- The provision of new pitches in Bideford and surrounding area to meet demand and address capacity issues and overuse of e.g. Moreton Park (Bideford AFC Youth) and KGV junior pitch.
- Addressing 3G provision in Bideford.
- Increasing the use of Braunton, South Molton and Torrington half size 3G FTPs.
- To encourage and secure community use of football pitches at certain schools, notably South Molton and Chulmleigh Community Colleges.
- Implementation of new multi pitch football club site for South Molton FC.

C KEY PRIORITIES FOR CRICKET

- To provide a replacement facility with enhanced facilities for Bideford, Littleham and Westward Ho! Identification of possible sites.
- Ensuring that clubs have appropriate practice nets and training facilities.
- Developing interest in cricket amongst 5-8 year olds through the 'All Stars' programme. This may lead on to increased demand for cricket pitches, particularly on school sites (including NTWs).
- Explore possibilities for creating an optimum location for Victoria Park CC (currently playing at King George V Playing Field in Bideford).
- Meeting the need for access to an additional cricket pitch in the Barnstaple area by 2031.
- Addressing the underuse of some village grounds (although accepted that this can be cyclical).

- Upgrading of changing at grounds such as at Filleigh, Westleigh and Newton Tracey which detract from the good quality pitch facilities.
- Future community use of The Park School cricket pitch in Barnstaple (enhancement measures may require upgrade of NTW, installation of grass square and improved changing facilities).
- Watching brief kept on quality of NTWs especially on school sites, many of which are poor. T20 will be actively promoted in 2020 and may result in increased demand for these facilities.

D KEY PRIORITIES FOR RUGBY

- To address shortfall in provision and enhancement of facilities for Barnstaple RFC, including floodlighting of 2nd pitch; security of tenure of Bridge Field and training needs. Potential replacement facilities if Bridge Field and/or whole site is lost if area redeveloped.
- To address shortfall in provision for Bideford RFC and to provide access to suitable training facilities.
- To support the provision of good quality floodlighting to support training for rugby where appropriate at different sites.
- To support provision of additional pitch for South Molton RFC (starting now)
- To increase activity and use of Torrington RFC pitches.
- Building in capacity to Ilfracombe RFC at Brimlands, to ensure that rugby will be able to expand as juniors develop up through the age bands. This includes safeguarding land alongside the main pitch.

E KEY PRIORITIES FOR HOCKEY

- To protect provision for hockey in North Devon at The Park School, Barnstaple and to ensure increased access for both training and matchplay as demand increases.
- To develop outreach club and community based hockey sessions on the new floodlit AGP at Kingsley School, Bideford. It is recognised that this will require additional volunteers from the clubs involved.

F KEY PRIORITIES FOR BOWLS

- Support for increasing membership.
- Support for provision for short mat bowls.
- Support increased usage of 2-rink facility at Easewell Golf Club (Mortehoe), including funding to improve this facility/surface if required.

SECTION 7 DELIVERING THE STRATEGY AND KEEPING IT UP TO DATE

Delivery

- 7.1 The principles and findings of the Playing Pitch Strategy can be applied to support a variety of different outcomes, including:
- Sports development planning.
 - Informing planning policy and planning applications.
 - Supporting funding bids.
 - Facilitating decision making relating to facility and asset management.
 - Informing capital programmes and related investment.
 - Informing the role of playing pitch provision and participation in pitch sports on public health and contributing towards the achievement of wider aims and objectives.
- 7.2 The Strategy will be delivered after its adoption following a period of public consultation.

Monitoring

- 7.3 The evolving context of participation in sport and active recreation means that monitoring and review of the strategy is as important as the initial preparation of the document to ensure it remains sufficiently robust to fulfil the above roles. Reflecting the importance of this phase of work, monitoring of the strategy 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).
- 7.5 The ongoing monitoring of the strategy will be led by North Devon Council and Torridge District Council and it is anticipated that it will constitute:
- establishing a working group that meets annually to review progress by all key partners on the strategy delivery and to discuss any issues arising; and
 - setting up some method of electronic forum which will enable issues to be fed in to a central database. Local authority officers/NGBs can review and disseminate these issues to the steering group and/or discuss with key partners as appropriate;
 - 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.
- 7.6 The Working Group will be committed to keeping the strategy 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 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.

7.7 The Working Group should initially (within three months) meet to agree which of the actions should be taken forward in the short term (1-2 years); medium term (3-5 years) and longer term (5-10 years), and also agree who the main partners should be in taking the relevant actions forward. It is recommended that the Group should meet annually thereafter to review progress by all key partners on the strategy delivery and to discuss any issues arising.

Funding

7.8 The expectation is that some of the potential initiatives identified in this strategy and action plan will be funded wholly or partly by 'developer contributions' in the form of Section 106 agreements and/or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). It is recognised that maintenance of new pitches can be costly and any developer contributions should include a sum for ongoing maintenance over a period of years. Projects involving education sites might also be funded through separate national capital funds. Other potential funding sources are identified briefly below.

7.9 Sport England and National Governing Bodies (NGBs) capital funds. These can make a major contribution to key local capital projects. Resulting from changing national Government and Sport England priorities, the objectives of these funding schemes are changing. The identification of projects through the playing pitch strategy process (in collaboration with Sport England and the NGBs) should help increase prospects for the funding of some key projects.

7.10 Active Devon, Sport England and various NGB county and regional offices can advise on specific funding opportunities available specifically for pitch sports locally. The National Lottery has a website allowing potential applicants to search for sources of external funding based on the nature of the project. <http://www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk/funding-finder>

7.12 There may also be an opportunity to exploit other funding sources depending on a given project's nature and size. The most important of these are listed below. Some of these will be more sport-related than others, but they are all listed to reflect the links between sport and improvements in health and general life quality.

- *Aviva Community Fund Competition – open for wide variety of projects*
- *Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales: Invest Programme – this funding is intended for longer-term core or direct delivery funding for charities supporting people experiencing multiple disadvantage at a critical point in their lives*
- *People's Postcode Trust: Small Grants Programme – includes supporting groups helping to prevent poverty; healthy living initiatives; and upholding human rights for some of society's most vulnerable groups*
- *Sport England Small Grants - £300 to £10,000 focussed on increasing participation, and especially within younger age groups or those with disabilities.*

SECTION 8: ACTION PLANS

8.1 Introduction

Section 8 sets out action plans as follows, and is contained within an accompanying word document:

8A Action Plans by Site: North Devon

8B Action Plans by Site: Torridge

8C Action Plan by Strategic Themes (General, District Wide)

8.2 Actions are given priorities and relevant potential delivery partners are highlighted. Progress towards delivering against the action plans and the potential for additional actions will be considered at annual meetings of the Playing Pitch Strategy Working Group as detailed in Section 9.

8.3 Indicative time frames and/or priorities are given as follows (although it is recognised that many actions will run concurrently and/or take advantage of opportunities arising):

- 1 Ongoing and very important; to be addressed in short term (within 2 years)
- 2 Important: to be addressed in medium term (3-5 years)
- 3 During the remainder of the life of the Strategy (6 – 10 years)

8.4 Priority Projects are denoted accordingly

8.5 Partners to deliver action and other acronyms used are as follows:

(3G) FTP	Football Turf Pitch	NTW	Non Turf Wicket
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch	PC	Parish Council
ECB	England Cricket Board/ Devon Cricket Board	RFU	Rugby Football Union
EH	England Hockey	AD	Active Devon
FA	Football Association/Devon FA	SE	Sport England
FF	Football Foundation	NDC	North Devon Council
MUGA	Multi Use Games Area	TDC	Torridge District Council
NGBs	National Governing Bodies	TC	Town Council
Comm. Org.	Community Organisation	CUA	Community Use Agreement

Timescale

S - Short (1-2 years); M - Medium (3 - 5 years) and L - Long (5+ years) O - Ongoing

Cost Estimates

L – Low (<£50k); M – Medium (£50k-250k) and H - High (£250k+)