

NORTHERN DEVON PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

REPORT BY CONSULTANTS ON AMENDMENTS FOLLOWING PERIOD OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

COMMENTS RECEIVED IN RESPECT OF NORTH DEVON

Strategy document

- 1 Site Overview for Georgeham Playing Field: downgrade Visual Quality Assessment for changing facilities from 'standard' to 'poor'. [Amended.](#)
- 2 2.2.2 Bullet Point #4 replace sentence with: 25 out of 41 changing facilities rated as good: poor changing facilities recorded at Beechfield (Fremington), Georgeham Playing Fields and Stanhope Park (Holsworthy). The former two are proposed for replacement and the latter is currently being upgraded. [Amended. New changing rooms at Georgeham also upgraded to number 1 priority in the Action Plans for the short term.](#)
- 3 2.2.5 Georgeham Parish Council believes there is space on the Playing Fields for Youth usage. [Agreed. Amended. Pitch sustains 2 Saturday sides and some casual use. Some spare capacity outside of peak time \(Saturday afternoons\) for youth use.](#)
- 4 Action Plan – some site numbers missing. Yes; numbering of sites originally followed earlier studies and some sites are no longer in use. [Missing site numbers are listed in Action Plans section \(7 in total\)](#)
- 5 5.11 Bullet 2 add sentence to the end: "It is not yet known if this would be a long term or short term solution". [Amended.](#)
- 6 Both Hockey Clubs are challenging potential team numbers as they think this is unrealistically high. [Report back to England Hockey but keep as it is, as could be achieved and need to ensure that hockey is adequately catered for in the future.](#)
- 7 Both hockey clubs say that to use Kingsley as a satellite venue for training would require additional volunteers to be viable (including coaches and refs). [Revised as follows:](#)

p37 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.](#)
- 8 2.2.7 Bullet point 5. Change second sentence to: “There are 2 other sand based AGPs (both floodlit) on independent schools in North Devon and Torridge. These are at West Buckland and Shebbear Schools, both are predominantly hockey venues and could be available subject to availability on a case by case basis.
[Have changed to:](#)
- [There are 2 other floodlit sand based AGPs at independent schools in North Devon and Torridge, at West Buckland and Shebbear Schools. Both are predominantly hockey venues and could be available for community use, subject to the requirements of the schools, on a case by case basis.](#)
- 9 2.3.2 Does this include West Buckland School? If not needs to increase to 13 grass cricket pitch sites.
[Includes WBS so 12 grass sites.](#)
- 10 2.3.5 Is West Buckland included? [Amended:](#)
- [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. \[West Buckland School cricket pitches are available for community use, subject to the requirements of the school.\]\(#\)](#)
- 11 2.4.4 Is West Buckland included? [Amended:](#)
- [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. \[\\(There are several rugby pitches at schools in North Devon and Torridge; the one pitch at South Molton Community College is accessible for community use, as are the rugby pitches at West Buckland School, subject to the school’s requirements\\)\]\(#\)](#)
- 12 2.5.2 West Buckland’s full-size floodlit hockey pitch is available subject to availability on a case by case basis. [Amended:](#)
- [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; \[the AGPs at Shebbear College and West Buckland School could be available for community use on a case by case basis, subject to the school’s requirements.\]\(#\)](#)
- 13 1.6 states a population increase of 5.3% (from 94663 to 99710 = 5739 increase). However the Map number s on page 5 shows housing number total equals 7423 in North Devon. Based on an occupancy rate of 2.2 this would equate to population increase of 16,330. Please check.

[The population increase is based on ONS projections and takes into account births and deaths and in and outmigration; the housing allocations simply multiply each new house by 2.2 to get the number of new people who will move into those houses. As we are trying to ensure there is sufficient provision for the new housing allocations, it is appropriate to use that occupancy figure. Section 1.6 reworded:](#)

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. Torrridge'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.

1.9 The emerging Local Plan for North Devon and Torrridge 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.

14 Addition of extra priority in Section 5:

Provision of additional and appropriate facilities for football and rugby in South Molton (representations from N Kingdom and NDC).

Substantial amendments

Additional section added to Strategy:

K Provision of additional and appropriate facilities for football and rugby in South Molton

Summary of Issue

5.25 Additional facilities are required to meet existing and new demand as a result of new housing development in the town and South Molton RFC and South Molton FC have each identified the need for additional pitches and facilities. South Molton Rugby Club has secured a fourth site for a junior pitch but the club has further aspirations to secure additional pitches and facilities at the new site. South Molton Football Club also requires improved changing provision and additional land for pitches; land has been identified but yet to be purchased owing to requirement for funding. South Molton College are supportive of teams and activity in the town and there is further potential to develop a sports hub jointly involving the college and local clubs.

Recommended Action

- South Molton FC to secure funding to purchase land. New pitches are required and the proposed new site could provide up to 3 pitches (land off B3226) with scope to support the local running club, South Molton Strugglers.
- Construction of changing facilities/clubhouse to support the new pitches for South Molton FC.
- Review option for community agreement between South Molton RFC and South Molton Community College for use of changing facilities for new pitch adjacent to the college.
- Provision of additional facilities (additional pitches, changing facilities) to support the new pitch for South Molton RFC.
- S106 funds can be used to support delivery of these projects.

- Further discussion and development of sports hub concept, involving local pitch sports clubs, NGBs of various sports and South Molton Community College.

Strategy Appendix

Additional section added to Appendix for more detailed background information

K Provision of additional and appropriate facilities for football and rugby in South Molton

Explanation of Issue

- South Molton RFC and South Molton FC have identified the need for additional pitches and facilities. Whilst South Molton Rugby Club is split over three sites, it has secured a fourth site for a junior pitch which is now fully funded. Further aspirations to secure additional pitches and facilities at the new site are still required, but a phased approach to delivery was agreed owing to securing funding for each stage and delivering a manageable project.
- South Molton Football Club own their site, but only have one pitch and basic changing provision. Lack of pitch space can result in overplayed pitches and reduced ability for club development, even though demand is present. Land has been identified but yet to be purchased owing to requirement for funding. The football club have first refusal on the land.
- South Molton's population is scheduled to increase during the life of the Strategy by around 3,650 people (from a projected increase of 1659 dwellings) which will add further pressure to the existing provision. The requirement for football and rugby facilities is identified in the emerging North Devon and Torridge Local Plan.
- A project to develop a sports hub, adjacent to South Molton Community College, has been widely discussed within the town. The concept initially involved South Molton Rugby Club and South Molton Football Club relocation to the new sports hub site, but other clubs and groups have embraced the proposal, and come forward with their club requirements to create a multi sport site.
- The proposed hub site is located to the Southern edge of the town and spans an area of 9 hectares in size. Clubs involved in the project and potential sports include comprise South Molton FC, South Molton Rugby Club, South Molton Strugglers (running), tennis, cycling and racquet sports (in college sports hall).
- South Molton Community College has recently been rebuilt and has a sports hall, grass rugby and football pitches and a floodlit half size 3G AGP. The college is supportive of community sports use and hosts sessions by local clubs. It is keen to see practical measures in place to enable further use of its changing provision, sports facilities and car parking, subject to appropriate safeguarding measures in place and revenue to cover costs.

Action Plans updated and South Molton projects added to Executive Summary

COMMENTS RECEIVED IN RESPECT OF TORRIDGE

Strategy document

- 1 1.2 – why 2027? [Amended to 2031](#)
- 2 2.2.1 – “question” what does the no cross boundary bullet infer? Between North Devon and Torridge or outside of Northern Devon?
[Added: No cross boundary movement between authorities outside of Northern Devon.](#)
- 3 2.2.2 – Can we be a bit more detailed with “several school pitches”...[None in Torridge. \(Chulmleigh Community College junior pitch and Park School mini pitch\).](#)
[Bideford does not have a drainage issue? Agree – taken out](#)
- 4 Bullet 7 – Bideford is mentioned twice, Bideford Sports ground and then later, Bideford again - Do you mean KGV pitch? Is there a dog fouling issue at the Sports Ground as it is essentially “locked down”? but I will be happy to go with whatever the feedback is that was received.
[Text states that two separate grounds: Bideford Sports Ground; KGV Playing Fields, Bideford, and Donnacroft in Torrington.](#)
[Bideford Sports Ground – there is a public footpath that runs through the site and dog fouling is a big problem for the club so will leave statement in.](#)
- 5 2.4.4 – Was the Moreton Park site in Bideford found to be non-accessible? [Yes, there was a locked gate and no welcoming/info signs.](#)
- 6 2.6.5 – Is it worth mentioning N.Devon leisure centre losing its rink, or has this been done on purpose? (although it does then mention in 4.5.3!) [Looking here at outdoor greens only; mention in 4.5.3 because of clubs saying if they use indoor facilities.](#)
- 7 Does 4.14 allude to grass and artificial pitches? [Grass only; have clarified](#)
- 8 4.4.2 – Could Bideford College, Shebbear or Kingsley not provide? [I think options for hockey are covered under **F Protecting and developing facilities for hockey in North Devon**](#)
- 9 7.3 typo line 3. [Changed to ‘it’.](#)

Following comments from Holsworthy Town Council

- 10 2.2.1 I feel that included in the Senior Teams should be included in the Senior Teams (*stet*) as they have just recently been promoted to the SW Women’s League. [We cannot find any reference to a Holsworthy Women’s team playing in this league](#)
- 11 2.2.6 Last bullet point change to ‘there is limited room for mini teams in Stanhope Park’ this is because there has recently been an increase in younger age groups taking part in football [Amended](#)

- 12 2.3.1 Holsworthy Cricket Club are a member of the North Devon Cricket League and play in that league. Holsworthy Youth Academy play in the N D Youth League **Noted, clubs not listed.**
- 13 2.3.5 (page 14 paragraph 2) Re Holsworthy ‘spare capacity’ the Square can accommodate more wickets but wickets cut to the edges of the Square are difficult to use due to the Bowling Club and residential housing each side, son there are only about 6 useable wickets at most
- Reworded: 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. Have altered Site Summary and clarified in Action Guide**
- 14 3.1.4 Paragraph 4 in Holsworthy we are currently drawing in girls to play Youth Cricket and it seems that there is a desire for women’s cricket. But women do play cricket in the ND league so mixed cricket is provided, but no solely women’s teams at present. **Noted, no amendments**
- 15 4.2.2 In Holsworthy the ‘All Stars’ children’s programme has been successful and will be monitored over to next few years to see if the initial up take is continued **Noted, no amendments**
- 16 4.2.4 bullet point 3 The capacity of wickets here depends on weather/volunteers/mechanical breakdowns of machinery etc. So, yes 5 matches per wicket per season but not always achievable at some clubs. **Noted, no amendments**
- 17 4.2.5 there is definitely a need for non turf training nets to encourage young people and to allow for development within the clubs without impacting on the wicket. **Noted, no amendments: already an action in Action Guide**
- 18 6.7 B Key Priorities for Football. – There is a need to provide a MUGA in Stanhope Park in Holsworthy on a pre-existing site formally used for a Tennis Court. This would provide an all weather surface for different activities including informal football skill games, basketball, tag rugby, walking football, basketball etc **Not adding as key priority but have added to Action Guide under TO.09 Stanhope Park**

5. Tarmac area formally used as tennis court not currently in use.	4. Support for upgrade of tarmac tennis court area to all weather MUGA for range of sporting activities	Priority 2	Medium term	Town Council, TDC	Medium cost
--	---	-------------------	-------------	-------------------	-------------

- 19 7.5 Regarding the Working Group Holsworthy Town Council would like to be part of this. The Council has been very proactive in seeking Developer Contributions and funding for and delivery of new Sports provision and it would be helpful on the group to have an organisation who is operating a rural isolated area and which is expecting a large increase In housing over the life of the Plan. **It would be most welcome to have the Town Council involved,**
- 20 Funding Page 40: Including in the discussion about funding should be not only finding the funds to create new pitches etc but a recognition that the maintenance of these can be costly. To assist with this cost any developer contributions must include a sum for ongoing maintenance over a period of years.

This is mentioned under 3.1.4: issues and Challenges for the Strategy: 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.....

Have also changed funding para 7.8 to: 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.

- 21 Buckland Brewer PC wrote in, so 6.4 now reads: 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)
- 22 Holsworthy Bowls Club asked if they had been contacted in the study – Yes, they did respond to the survey:
- Concerned that no local trends for bowls so have added the following to 1.16 after football, cricket, rugby and hockey

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.

- Bowls added in to list of sports in 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.
- Makes point about clubs doing own maintenance means good value for money for local authorities. Have altered para 2.6.3 to: 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.
- Car parking poor (have added to Site Summary)
- Importance/value of short mat bowls to support bowling out of season....so have added new para under 4.5 Bowls:

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.

Strategy Appendices

- 1 Holsworthy AGP: Suggest “School do not have funds to refurbish and are currently seeking help and advice to obtain these”.

Amended: added in to Action Guide

- 2 1.7 – D – Typo Amended

- 3 Section D Page 12: Can we amend “Parish Councils” to District & Parish please - agreed no action

- 4 and “run by” needs to be “managed” as a couple have been leased out on peppercorn rents etc. Amended

- 5 1.32 can this not be just Bideford Youth specific please. Have deleted ref to BY

- 6 Appendix 2: Typo Amended

- 7 Pages 15-17; After the tables, it would be useful to have another row which states something like; “meaning there will be X number of pitches required (inc. 3G Match Play) by 2031.

Numbers of pitches (with all the different scenarios and considerations which may apply) are set out in Section 4 of the Strategy. This is a background section. Have amended words below title to read:

APPENDIX 2: ENSURING PROVISION AND AVAILABILITY OF APPROPRIATE FACILITIES TO MEET DEMAND TO 2031 IN NORTH DEVON AND TORRIDGE

Information to support main Strategy document Section 4 which considers number of pitches required.

- 8 One query from Planning Officer is that if Torridge requires 6 new pitches up to 2031, should Bideford ATP become a match play site does that mean that 1/6 has been provided? I note that it affects requirements for another 3G but in terms of pitch availability this is a very good point.

As with a grass pitch, an AGP can only host one match at a time. However, because it can accommodate matchplay and training sessions throughout its opening hours, an AGP has the potential to contribute significantly to meeting the shortfall of matchplay need in the area, particularly as it is less weather dependent than a grass pitch.

- 9 Page 25: Bullets 5&6 should be a little clearer in terms of the present and by 2031.

Amended:

- As a guide the FA suggest that 1 full size FTP could potentially accommodate this training demand from 42 teams (Ratio of 1:42). There are 47 teams in the Bideford sub area at present.
- Analysis of demand for matchplay suggests that around 3 full size 3G FTPs would be required in Bideford to accommodate all teams for matches by 2031. At present the FA target is 50% of all junior and mini matches by 2020.

The analysis in Section 1.24 above finds that just under 2 full size 3G FTPs will be required in the Bideford sub area to meet this demand to 2020.

- 10 Bullet 7: in it says 2017 on the cover but may be worth putting (2018) at the end?
Amended: 2018/19
- 11 Page 25: Can we take out reference to the sports ground MUGA in point 8. Deleted
- 12 Page 26: Bideford RFC; could we just add the word “grass” into the last line.
Amended
- 13 Page 26: Bullet 2: Please remove sub bullet referring to TDC funds Deleted
- 14 Page 27: Table, again it would be useful to see visually how many pitches this would require See 7 above
- 15 Page 27: Worth adding the words “at present” to end of last bullet point? Amended
- 16 Page 2 of Key Messages (Does the rugby club issue in Barnstaple re: possible loss of site need to be included here?) Not highlighted by NDC so will leave

Action Plans

- 1 TOBI.02/2: issues with size – Not much can be done ? reworded: Pitch is below full size (91.4 x 55m) which may affect suitability for matchplay; issue around community access at weekends.
- 2 TOBI05/2: Changing room facilities have now been rectified H&S wise. Words ‘health and safety’ taken out.
- 3 TOBI.14: Wouldn’t class as a priority 1, should be dropped to 2. Amended to 2, medium term
- 4 TOBI 15: Plans to create 5 new Youth teams including Girls in 2017/2018 – Priority 1 Good development of youth football in a tough area. . Added in Plans to create new youth teams including girls in 2017/18 and changed priority to 1 short term
- 5 MISSING SITE REFS Because no sites identified. However TOBI.13, TOHO.04 and TOHO.08 are missing because they were sites which we started numbering from our own records at the start of the work but no longer exist. I’ve added a note explaining that numbers are missing.
- 6 TOGT.05 Needs to be a priority 1 due to the nature of the FA’s stipulations regarding their grant allocation and the participatory rates at the site. Likewise the surfacing requires urgent attention as the leisure contract arrangements between multiple agencies are drawing to an end. TDC has identified this as a need and has included it within its capital programme at some point. It is already Priority 1.
- 7 TOGT.05 States pitch is used by one Saturday team whereas page 5 of the appendices states “no use.” Page 5 of appendices states: Spare capacity in week and at weekends
- 8 TOGT.06: Typo column 4 Amended
- 9 TOGT 10: 4: Change to LA Environmental team please (No wardens any more) Amended, and for another site in Torridge
- 10 TOHO 05/01: Typo – column 5 “footbal” Amended

- 11 TOHO 05 – Surprised no mention of artificial surface diminishing? – as in first line above, under appendices – which is a priority in respect of a lack of artificial pitches in the surrounding hub, alluded to in TOHO 11.

Amended:

<p>2. Half size 61 x 50m floodlit sand AGP: Size and poor condition of AGP restricts community use, although seems well used in week but not at weekends. College says that there is scope to increase size and therefore use, but does not have funds to refurbish and is currently seeking help and advice.</p>	<p>1. Advice and support for College in upgrading/resurfacing AGP as appropriate. Requires further investigation.</p>	<p>Priority 1</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>TDC, College, NGBs</p>	<p>M</p>
---	---	--------------------------	--------------------	---------------------------	----------