

**Sports Pitch Strategy Policy
and Action Plan
2025 – 2035
Executive Summary**

Contents

PART 1 - INTRODUCTION	2
PART 2 – GOVERNANCE AND METHODOLOGY	4
PART 3 – NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT	6
PART 4 – VISION, AIMS, POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS	8
4.1 VISION	8
4.2 AIMS	8
4.3 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND KEY ACTIONS	9
PART 5 - TIERED APPROACH TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES	16
PART 6 – ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY	22
PART 7 - RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	22
PART 8 – FUTURE GOVERNANCE	24
APPENDIX 1 - GLOSSARY	26
APPENDIX 2 - RECOMMENDATIONS BY SPORT	277
A2.1 Football	27
A2.2 Rugby Union	29
A2.3 Cricket	31
A2.4 Hockey	32
A2.5 Tennis	34
A2.6 Lawn Bowls	36
A2.7 Other Pitch Sports	37
APPENDIX 3 - ASSESSMENT REPORT (SUMMARY)	38

PART 1 - INTRODUCTION

CONTEXT

Glasgow's emerging Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2025 – 2035 (entitled "Active Glasgow") sets out the city's ambition to support its citizens to be physically active and to participate in sport, contributing to their improved health and wellbeing and building sustainable, cohesive communities. With a focus on accessibility and addressing inequality in the city, a key objective of Active Glasgow is to develop a clear facilities plan that supports participation in physical activity and sport.

The Sports Pitch Strategy Policy and Action Plan (SPS) for Glasgow will inform facilities planning for outdoor sport in the city over the next ten years and directly contribute to the delivery of theme / outcome No 2 of the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, "Active Communities, Places and Spaces".

PURPOSE

The PURPOSE of the Sports Pitch Strategy is to:

- ◀ Assess the adequacy of existing sports pitch provision to meet the long-term needs of each of the identified pitch sports (see PART 2 - Scope – Page 4), plus tennis and lawn bowls.
- ◀ Critically evaluate whether the content and design of existing provision, or approaches to management (e.g. booking procedures, programming, pricing) and/or maintenance (e.g. pitch surfaces, equipment, etc) are acting as barriers to participation, and to identify the need for any changes in such practices.
- ◀ Set out a Strategy which promotes equity of access, participation and skills development.
- ◀ Identify the scale of capital and revenue resource required to maintain the active pitch sport estate.
- ◀ Contribute towards the delivery of "Active Glasgow – A Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2025 – 2035" which sets out the city's ambition to support its citizens to be physically active and to participate in sport.
- ◀ Assist Glasgow City Council in the development and implementation of City Development Plan 2, particularly in relation to the protection of pitches, identifying the need for additional or improved facilities, the allocation of land for outdoor sports where provision levels are low and setting out when and how new development should make a financial contribution towards meeting the need for additional or improved facilities.

OUTPUTS

This is the Executive Summary of the Sports Pitch Strategy (SPS) which is the culmination of an extensive body of work which was undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic and resulted in the production of two forerunner documents, each of which is available to view upon request:

- SPS Assessment Report (2019-20), and
- SPS Policy and Action Plan: Final Report (2024)

1. The “*Sports Pitch Strategy Assessment Report*” (2019-20) is the culmination of an assessment of supply and demand for each of the named pitch sports. It provides the evidence base for the identification of the Key Issues, Policies and Recommendations contained within the Final Report, as below.
2. The “*Sports Pitch Strategy and Action Plan: Final Report*” (2024) commences with a review of the findings of the “*Assessment Report*” before exploring a series of scenarios / hypotheses to help inform the identification of the SPS’ overarching Vision, Aims, Policy Recommendations, and Recommendations for Action for each sport.

The SPS Final Report (2024) delivers the following OUTPUTS:

- ◀ A VISION for the future provision, improvement and prioritisation of investment in pitch sports.
- ◀ The identification of 5 core AIMS which provide the framework for the identification of policy recommendations and actions.
- ◀ The identification of POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS designed to effect change in the provision, improvement, maintenance, or rationalisation, of the playing pitch stock.
- ◀ Recommended actions for SPORT SPECIFIC improvements in provision
- ◀ An ACTION PLAN to address key issues on a Site-By-Site basis.

The Final Report contains a site-by-site **Action Plan** compiled by research consultants, Knight, Kavanah and Page (KKP). It provides an assessment of the role played by each pitch sport venue in the city and seeks to deliver on the SPS recommendation to prioritise capital investment in Strategic Hubs and Key Centres during the first 5 years of the SPS.

The *Action Plan* also provides estimates of the scale of capital investment required to deliver improvements in quantity or quality of provision at each site. Ultimately it will be for the Steering Group charged with overseeing the implementation of the SPS, to identify specific priorities for investment and a timeframe for their delivery.

The total cost of sustaining the quality of the active estate up to and including 2031 is summarised in PART 6 of this Executive Summary.

The City Council, in conjunction with Glasgow Life, will not be able to successfully deliver this Strategy alone, or by acting in isolation. Partner operators and user groups also have a vested interest in ensuring that pitch sport provision is protected and enhanced as required, and as such, the delivery of many of the actions within this document will require the support of a wide range of partner bodies including **sportscotland**, Sports Governing Bodies (SGBs), clubs, community groups and education establishments.

Finally, supply and demand can change over time. New teams emerge, grow faster than expected, or in some cases decline and simply cease to exist. New facilities will be built, others upgraded, but all facilities age and are in constant need of refresh and replacement if they are to remain effective in meeting community demand. It is recommended therefore that Glasgow Life acts as the “informed client” on behalf of GCC in tracking changes in supply and monitoring levels of demand in each of the pitch sports. Glasgow Life should aim to conduct a review of supply and demand approximately half-way through the Strategy period (circa 2030) to re-assess whether the priorities for action identified within this Strategy remain valid and relevant for the city.

PART 2 – GOVERNANCE AND METHODOLOGY

GOVERNANCE

Development of the Sports Pitch Strategy (SPS)

The Sports Pitch Strategy (SPS) has been developed by Glasgow Life in partnership with Glasgow City Council (Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability and Education Services), and **sportscotland**.

Each agency was represented on a Sports Pitch Strategy Working Group (SPSWG) which was responsible for setting the scope, objectives and expected outputs from the Strategy, and for supporting, checking and contributing to the work of research consultants, KKP, who were appointed to act as a delivery partner for the production of the “*SPS: Assessment Report*” (2019-20) and the “*SPS: Final Report*” (2024).

METHODOLOGY

This Sports Pitch Strategy (SPS) has been developed in accordance with a **sportscotland** approved methodology, namely ‘*A Guide to the Preparation of Sports Pitch Strategies*’¹ and Sport England’s Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) guidance: ‘*An approach to developing and delivering a playing pitch strategy*’.

The approved methodologies identify a 13-step approach to developing and delivering a Sports Pitch Strategy, separated into five distinct stages (Stages A-E below).

- ◀ Stage A: Prepare and tailor the approach.
- ◀ Stage B: Gather information and views on the supply of and demand for provision.
- ◀ Stage C: Assess the supply and demand information and views.
- ◀ Stage D: Develop the strategy.
- ◀ Stage E: Deliver the strategy and keep it up to date.

This SPS is the culmination of work through Stages A-D. It provides the policy context and evidence base upon which to direct future action in terms of facility provision.

SCOPE

The Strategy addresses the facility requirements for the following outdoor sports, including its para-sport equivalent where relevant:

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| ◀ Cricket | ◀ American football |
| ◀ Hockey | ◀ Baseball/softball |
| ◀ Rugby union | ◀ Gaelic football |
| ◀ Football | ◀ Lacrosse |
| ◀ Bowls | ◀ Rugby league |
| ◀ Tennis | ◀ Shinty |
| ◀ Croquet | ◀ Touch Rugby |
| ◀ Ultimate Frisbee | |

¹ <https://sportscotland.org.uk/facilities/planning/guide-to-the-preparation-of-sports-pitch-strategies/>

Please note that the facility requirements of some outdoor sports including golf, athletics and cycle sports are not included within the scope of this SPS given that demand for those sports is less easily assessed using the sports pitch methodologies referred to above. These sports will require bespoke assessments of need and will feature as part of the emerging “Active Glasgow – A Physical Activity and Sport Strategy for Glasgow”.

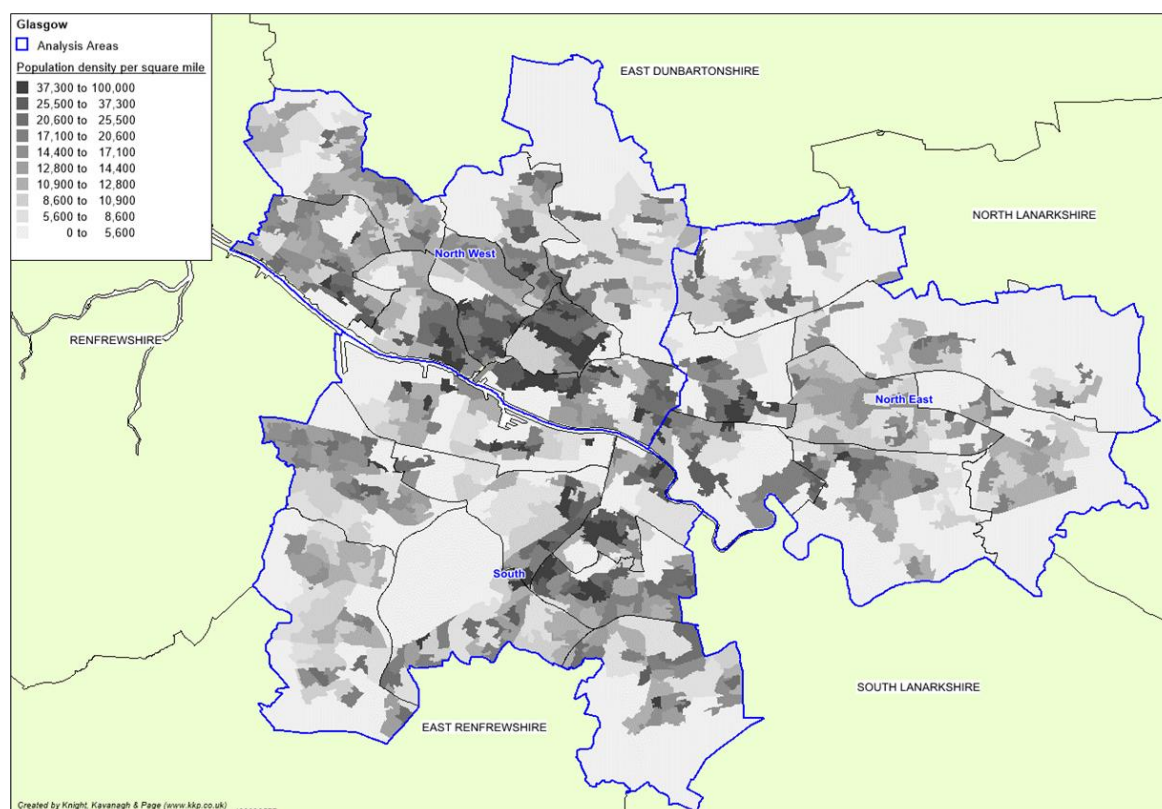
STUDY AREA

Whilst the Strategy covers the whole of the Glasgow City area – population 621,020² - the data gathered as part of the audit of supply and demand allows for sub-division for each of Glasgow’s three Health and Social Care Partnership Planning Areas: North-East, North-West and South.

◀	North-East HSCP	(population 178,069)	-	29%
◀	North-West HSCP	(population 211,909)	-	34%
◀	South HSCP	(population 231,042)	-	37%

There are also sports teams based outside the city that use pitches within Glasgow and sports teams from inside Glasgow that use facilities outside of the city. This cross-boundary movement has been taken into consideration as part of the supply and demand audit in Stages B and C of the approved methodology.

Figure 1.1: Glasgow Analysis Areas



² Data Source: Mid-2017 Population Estimates for Scottish Output Areas in Scotland, by Single Year of Age and Sex

PART 3 – NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

National and Local Policy Context

Glasgow's Sports Pitch Strategy (SPS) is set within a broader framework of national, regional, and local policies focused on increasing physical activity levels, improving health outcomes, promoting social inclusion, sustaining economic development, and ensuring environmental sustainability. Pitch sports play a central role in these efforts, offering an accessible means of improving physical, mental, and social wellbeing.

- The Scottish Government's **"Physical Activity for Health – Scotland's National Framework" (2024)** outlines a comprehensive framework aimed at enhancing physical activity levels across Scotland, leveraging evidence-based international guidance from the World Health Organization and other global entities. It emphasises the significant impact of strategies in transport, education, planning, and the environment on public health and wellbeing, alongside health and sport initiatives.

The framework serves as a reference for national and local planners, providing direction and examples of effective practices that align with international best standards. It advocates for an integrated approach, ensuring that actions to boost physical activity and sport are efficient, sustainable, and conducive to continuous improvement, in line with Best Value principles. The framework calls for collective action to foster a broader understanding of physical activity's vital role in improving health. It aims to inspire all stakeholders to contribute to a more active Scotland.

- A key guiding strategy is **"Sport for Life – A Vision for Sport in Scotland" (2025)**, which is the overarching Vision for Sport in Scotland. This envisions a more active and healthier Scotland, helping the people of Scotland get the most from the sporting system. The implementation of the (SPS) will contribute to this goal by driving a culture of active, healthy lifestyles and encouraging people in Glasgow to maximise their involvement in sport.
- This aligns directly with the **Department for Culture, Media and Sport's "Get Active" (2023)** which focuses on increasing participation, tackling inactivity, and promoting inclusivity in sport, particularly for groups like young people, women and girls, which is a common objective in the SPS. Both strategies share the objective of encouraging active community involvement in the management and delivery of facilities and services, thereby moving towards more sustainable operational models.
- Locally, **Active Glasgow (2025-2035)** plays a pivotal role in aligning the city's goals with national health and wellbeing objectives. The strategy aims to foster a citywide culture where physical activity is a cornerstone of everyday life, addressing health inequalities by ensuring equitable access to physical activity and sports opportunities. Through a collaborative approach, the strategy strives to create a more active, healthier, and inclusive Glasgow, which will be supported by the common aims within SPS.
- The **Glasgow City Council's Open Space Strategy (2020)** sets out Glasgow's need, both in terms of quantity and quality, for open spaces to support active participation in play, informal recreation and formal sport. This includes provision for formal outdoor sports, walking & cycling,

active travel, children's play and the use of outdoors for informal recreation.

The SPS represents Glasgow's assessment of need for open space to meet demand for formal outdoor sporting activities in the form of pitch sports, tennis and bowls. Once approved, it will form an integral part of Glasgow's Open Space Strategy and will have an important role in informing the development and implementation of City Development Plan 2.

This multi-layered approach ensures that the SPS is a critical component of Glasgow's broader vision for healthier communities, social equity, and sustainable public services. By aligning with national policies, it ensures that pitch sports are an integral part of Scotland's ambition for a more active, equitable, and prosperous society.

PART 4 – VISION, AIMS, POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 VISION

The purpose of a SPS is to ensure that there is an adequate supply (quantity and quality) of provision to meet the current and anticipated future needs of the pitch sports, irrespective of whether facilities are in the public sector, private schools, universities/colleges or voluntary (club) sector.

It is recommended that the following vision statement be adopted for Glasgow's SPS:

VISION

To create a network of accessible, high quality and sustainable pitch sports facilities to meet current and future local demand

4.2 AIMS

The following aims will support the delivery of the Vision for this strategy. It is recommended that they are adopted and followed by all partners and operators with an interest in pitch sport provision:

AIM 1

To **PROTECT** the existing supply of pitch sport facilities where it is needed to meet current and/or future needs.

AIM 2

To **ENHANCE** pitch and ancillary facilities through the improvement of quality and effective maintenance of sites, with a view to meeting current and/or future needs.

AIM 3

To **PROVIDE** new pitch sport facilities to meet current and/or future demand.

AIM 4

To **IMPROVE ACCESS** to pitch sport facilities for users/clubs across the city.

AIM 5

To secure adequate levels of capital and revenue **FUNDING** to deliver the Strategy.

4.3 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND KEY ACTIONS

The following policy and actions recommendations are required to help deliver the aims of the SPS:

AIM 1

To **PROTECT** the existing supply of pitch sport facilities where it is needed to meet current and/or future needs.

Policy Recommendations

- 1A Protect pitch sports facilities through local planning policy

Recommendations for Action

- 1A1 There should be a general presumption against the redevelopment, for non-sports pitch uses, of the active pitch estate.
- 1A2 Repurposing of active pitch sport facilities to an alternative land use may be justified however, if there is a demonstrable surplus of provision, and/or mitigation is provided through the provision of improved quality or capacity elsewhere within the same sector of the city.
- 1A3 City Development Plan policies should continue to provide a framework for safeguarding existing active outdoor sports provision and associated facilities necessary to meet the aims of this SPS.
- 1A4 There is a clear surplus of lawn bowls provision when benchmarked against current and projected demand. The City Council should take cognisance of the SPS in determining planning applications affecting bowling green provision, whilst safeguarding against the loss of community facilities.
- 1A5 The City Council and Glasgow Life should constitute a short-term working group to determine the optimal approach to the re-purposing of inactive provision (pitches, courts and bowling greens) under City Council/ Glasgow Life control, in support of the delivery of the aims of the SPS, Open Space Strategy (OSS) and City Development Plan
- 1A6 City Development Plan policies should refer to the SPS, and any subsequent updates, in determining planning applications affecting all sports pitch provision in the city, both active and inactive.

AIM 2

To **ENHANCE** pitch and ancillary facilities through the improvement of quality and the effective maintenance of sites, with a view to meeting current and/or future needs.

Policy Recommendations

- 2A Improve and maintain the quality of sports pitches and ancillary facilities
- 2B Prioritise the enhancement of quality at strategically significant sites that will make greatest impact in meeting policy aims. (See “hierarchy of provision” in PART 5)

Recommendations for Action

- 2A1. The SPS should prioritise the improvement of poor-quality pitch provision (both natural grass and artificial grass) to support greater levels of use.
- 2A2. Industry standard maintenance regimes, comprising both routine and periodic activities, should be adopted for all pitch and court surfaces within the Glasgow Life / GCC estate, and be conducted by suitably experienced personnel using specialist equipment.
- 2A3. Without an appropriate supply of fit for purpose ancillary facilities, even good quality pitches may be underutilised. A priority for this Strategy will be the enhancement of changing accommodation at strategic sites to maximise accessibility to the available supply of pitches.
- 2A4. All pitch sport operators should ensure that natural grass pitches, courts or greens are not overplayed beyond their capacity, unless this can be managed without sacrificing pitch quality by adopting more intensive maintenance regimes.

AIM 3

To **PROVIDE** new pitch sports facilities to meet current and / or future demand.

Policy Recommendations

- 3A Rectify quantitative shortfalls in the current pitch stock.
- 3B Identify other opportunities to increase the overall pitch stock to accommodate both current and future demand.

Recommended Actions

- 3A1 For most sports, the future demand for provision can be met by maximising use of existing provision, delivered by a combination of targeted investment in facilities to increase capacity and other management / operational measures designed to improve community accessibility.
- 3A2 Additional pitch capacity is likely to be required to meet current and/or projected shortfalls in rugby, hockey (water-based or its future equivalent), cricket and potentially tennis.
- 3A3 Glasgow Life should establish sport-specific working groups in partnership with each of the relevant Sports Governing Bodies (SGB) to identify the optimum approach to address any current and/or projected shortfalls in capacity in Glasgow.
- 3A4 Subject to confirmation of community demand, prioritise the installation of floodlighting at strategically significant school-based full-size pitches to increase capacity for winter training and all-year round use.
- 3A5 Some existing strategically significant active sites in Glasgow offer the potential to accommodate greater pitch capacity through the conversion of natural grass to synthetic grass (eg Glasgow Green Football Centre, Crownpoint Sports Complex, Toryglen Football Centre)
- 3A6 Targeted facility adaptations at selected strategic pitch sport hubs to assist progressive clubs to continue their progression through the performance pyramid (eg team shelters, spectator provision).
- 3A7 Selective re-designation of existing pitches to meet deficiencies at other age groups in the same sport (eg youth), or in other sports.
- 3B1 Where the City Council is considering new-build schools in response to changes in demographics and/or housing growth, there will be an opportunity to deliver outdoor sports facilities that not only meet the statutory requirements for an active school population but also support any current or latent demand from the pitch sport community at large.
- 3B2 Should any schools become redundant over the lifetime of the Strategy, there may be an opportunity to retain their playing fields for community use or allow for their redevelopment for another land use / purpose, so long as compensatory finance is provided to invest in enhanced pitch capacity or quality at a strategic location elsewhere within the same sector of the city.

- 3B3 For sports where there is no clear surplus of provision (all sports except lawn bowls) the supply of inactive pitches can offer opportunities for redevelopment for another land use purpose on the proviso that investment is delivered into compensatory pitch capacity and/or quality at strategic locations elsewhere within the same sector of the city.
- 3B4 To deliver an Open Space Strategy that balances the needs of the SPS as well as other open space functions, it is recommended that GCC and Glasgow Life constitute a short-term working group to determine the optimal approach to the re-purposing of inactive pitches in support of the delivery of the OSS, SPS and City Development Plan.
- 3B5 Where third sector organisations successfully demonstrate their ability to manage and maintain pitch sport facilities over the long-term, a formal lease arrangement will allow clubs / voluntary sector organisations to seek funding support to upgrade and/or extend the quality and/or capacity of pitch sport provision from local, regional and national sources

AIM 4

To **IMPROVE ACCESS** to pitch sport facilities for users/clubs across the city.

Policy Recommendations

- 4A. Maximise use of active provision
- 4B. Identify and support approaches which assist the growth and empowerment of key partner clubs

Recommended Actions

- 4A1 Glasgow Life should continually monitor levels of demand across the city and identify any issues or gaps that emerge.
- 4A2 All operators of pitch sport facilities should seek to maximise use of available time and space (capacity) within the active estate to meet current and/or future demand for training, match-play, sports development and casual use.
- 4A3 Glasgow Life and GCC should conduct a review their approaches to programming of the active estate with a view to increasing the allocation of time to key partner clubs in support of their training, match-play or sports development needs.
- 4A4 Initiate discussions with GCC and Amey 3ED to explore the feasibility of identifying a selected number of strategically located schools that can act as match-play hubs, where clubs can access a full-size 3G pitch out-with the existing contractually agreed staffed hours at an affordable price point, that balances out customer expectations and operator overheads.
- 4A5 Glasgow Life and GCC Education Services to work to simplify booking procedures for community use of public sector provision.
- 4A6 Look to adopt a simplified, co-ordinated and consistently applied pricing structure for both Glasgow Life and GCC Education Services venues.
- 4A7 All relevant partners (Sports Governing Bodies, Glasgow Life, private institutions) should explore the potential for the adoption of Community Use Agreements designed to secure regular and consistent access by community clubs to pitch sport facilities managed by private schools and universities.
- 4A8 Adapt provision - where appropriate and feasible – in support of efforts to increase levels of participation by women, girls and people from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- 4A9 In conjunction with Sports Governing Bodies, explore the potential for flexible kick-off times to spread demand for match-play across the peak period.

- 4B1 GCC to provide a suitable resource to support the successful transfer of public sector pitch sport assets to clubs and other third-party operators.
- 4B2 GCC to ensure that asset transfers are based on lease agreements containing terms and conditions that enshrine the following elements:
- GCC to monitor the performance of bodies to whom assets are transferred to ensure compliance with Lease Terms and Conditions
 - a commitment to ongoing community accessibility to the active pitch sport estate
 - the sharing of user information with Glasgow Life to assist Glasgow Life's role in overseeing supply and demand in the city
- 4B3 Glasgow Life to continue to monitor levels of demand across the city and identify any accessibility related issues that emerge
- 4B4 Glasgow Life to explore the feasibility of delivering targeted facility improvements at strategic pitch sport hubs in support of progressive clubs seeking to further their development through the performance pyramid (eg dug-outs, provision for spectators, enhanced perimeter enclosure etc). GCC and Glasgow Life should provide appropriate levels of support to assist clubs / organisations seeking to adopt asset management responsibilities, subject to relevant terms and conditions which shall include an evidential commitment to the continuance of community accessibility.

AIM 5

To secure adequate levels of capital and revenue FUNDING to deliver the Strategy.

Policy Recommendations

- 5A Maximise opportunities to generate capital funding for investment in new (provide) or upgraded (enhance) provision.
- 5B Secure adequate levels of revenue funding to effectively maintain the active estate.

Recommended Actions

- 5A/B The city should aim to maximise current and future funding streams, including any potential compensation from the loss of sports facilities which are not strategically required for sports or other open space uses, to deliver the levels of investment required to improve the quantity and/or quality of provision where required, and in support of ongoing maintenance and regular refresh of the active estate.

PART 5 - TIERED APPROACH TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES

Pitch sport venues can vary in terms of their significance in meeting community demand due to a facility related reasons such as size or scale (pitches and ancillaries), quality (level of maintenance), surface type (natural grass, artificial surfaces), or location (in relation to demand), or due to operational practices such as pricing, booking methods, or security of tenure. This variance is most easily described as a “hierarchy of provision”. Strategically significant sites will offer greater capacity for use than smaller sites whose potential to accommodate demand is more limited.

All pitch and court sites in Glasgow have been categorised either as “Hub Sites”, “Key Centres” or “Local Sites” based on an assessment of these key characteristics:

- ▶ **Hub Sites:** Strategic locations of city-wide importance, to which users are willing to travel to access the range and high quality of facilities offered. Likely to be multi-sport or multi-pitch venues e.g., Toryglen RTC, Glasgow Green Football Centre, Scotstoun Campus.
- ▶ **Key Centres:** more community focused sites but still likely to act an area focus for participation. Likely to be multi-sport or multi-pitch venues e.g., Greenfield Recreation Ground, Glasgow Club Milton, Crownpoint Sports Park, Nethercraigs Sports Complex, Stepford Road Sports Complex.
- ▶ **Local Sites:** smaller venues that serve the local community. Typically, they comprise one or two facilities servicing a single sport, or GCC Primary or Secondary School sites that are not widely used by the community.

Table 5.1 Hierarchy of Provision – illustrative content

Criteria	Hub sites	Key centres	Local sites
Site location	Strategic locations. Priority sites for addressing shortfalls.	Strategically located within the analysis area.	Serves the local community.
Content of Provision	Accommodates 3 or more grass pitches, including a full-size Artificial Grass Pitch.	Accommodates 2 or more grass pitches, and may include artificial grass provision	Accommodates 1 or more pitches.
Type of sport	Single or multi-sport. Acts as hub for sports development activity.	Single or multi-sport.	Single or multi-sport.
Management	Generally public sites where management control remains with the local authority.	Generally public sites - directly managed or via lease agreement, or under private education or sports club control.	Management control could be private education / private sports club or local authority, and/or with an appropriate club on a lease arrangement.

Maintenance regime	Maintenance regime aligns with SGB guidelines.	Maintenance regime aligns with SGB guidelines.	Standard maintenance regime either by the club or maintenance contract.
Ancillary facilities	Good quality facilities, with adequate changing / showering / car parking. Investment may be required to complement pitches available and maximise accessibility for target groups	Good quality facilities, with adequate changing / showering and car parking. Investment may be required to complement pitches available and maximise accessibility for target groups	Significant variation in the quantity and quality of provision available, but usually of an adequate nature.

The above stratification or hierarchy of provision is of relevance when determining where best to focus scarce resources to make greatest impact in addressing Policy Aims and Recommendations for Action. A tiered approach to the improvement and management of sports pitch sites and associated facilities will be followed to ensure that the recommendations of this Strategy are felt most quickly and with greatest impact (see also PART 5 of the accompanying Final Report (2024)).

PART 6 – ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Glasgow City Council's commitment to environmental sustainability is evidenced by the city's Climate Plan, which aims for the city to be Net Zero Carbon by 2030. Key components include reducing harmful emissions, reversing biodiversity decline and encouraging active lifestyles.

The Council's aspirations are supported by a series of linked strategies, including the [Carbon Management Plan 2023-2030](#) and the [Glasgow Climate Adaptation Plan 2022-2030](#).

Key Policies

1. Net Zero Carbon by 2030:

The primary goal is to eliminate carbon emissions by 2030 through reducing emissions directly and adapting to climate change.

2. Glasgow's Climate Plan and associated Climate Adaption Plan 2022-30:

The plan outlines 59 actions to achieve climate ambitions, focusing on emissions reduction, biodiversity, and climate resilience. A multi-stakeholder group helps to drive implementation, with themed hubs focusing on green infrastructure, private sector, housing and city greening.

3. Promotion of the Circular Economy:

Encouraging the reuse, repair, and recycling of resources to minimise waste and create a more sustainable, circular economy. The vision for the new **Resource and Recycling Strategy** is to "...empower Glasgow to become a zero-waste city". The implementation of the new strategy requires everyone - residents, businesses and public services - to contribute towards minimising waste, and where it is unavoidable, to increase re-use of materials and to increase the quantity and quality of materials collected for recycling.

Physical Activity and Sport

The recently adopted Physical Activity and Sport Strategy (PASS) highlights the benefits of physical activity and sport in helping people to live healthier, longer, and happier lives. An active lifestyle lowers the risk of disease, boosts mental and physical well-being, and helps close the gap in life expectancy between different communities. An active society also strengthens our neighbourhoods, promotes community cohesion, and helps address inequalities in education, employment, the environment and the economy.

Both the Physical Activity and Sports Strategy and this Sports Pitch Strategy (SPS) have been developed to align with, and offer support to, a range of strategies both locally and nationally, including the city's climate agenda and efforts to promote the circular economy. They include a commitment to the integration of environmental protection principles into the provision of physical activity and sport, ensuring that the city's facilities and programmes are designed to minimise environmental impact and contribute to the health and sustainability of our natural surroundings.

Sports Pitch Strategy

This Sports Pitch Strategy (SPS) has illustrated the significant role played by artificial turf surfaces in supporting current and future levels of demand for pitch sport participation, particularly in sports such as football, hockey and tennis. The advantages of artificial grass surfaces in support of outdoor sport include:

- consistency of playability in most weather conditions, that cannot be matched by either red ash (blaes) or natural grass
- artificial surfaces provide a higher playing capacity for a smaller land take
- synthetic grass is more easily (and cost effectively) maintained than other surfaces

Given that the primary aim of the SPS is to ensure that there are sufficient facilities of appropriate quality to support pitch sport demand, the continuing use of artificial turf will be essential to provide adequate levels of playing capacity. Against this background, it is vital that all providers and operators of artificial turf facilities adopt the principles of waste reduction and recycling as part of their policy and practice to contribute to the city's wider aspirations for carbon-reduction, and the creation of a more sustainable and circular economy.

Glasgow Life is already making significant strides in this regard as evidenced by the adoption of sustainability principles in the delivery of its synthetic turf maintenance and replacement programmes.

Firstly, all Glasgow Life managed procurement exercises inviting contractor submissions for new build or refurbishment of artificial turf surfaces, require contractors to submit details of their operational practices as they relate to the promotion of environmental sustainability. This is assessed as part of a quality evaluation.

Secondly, Glasgow Life is committed to reducing the amount of plastic and rubberised materials that are removed from its ageing pitch stock and deposited to landfill. Its year-on-year synthetic surfaces refresh programme includes a requirement for all end-of-life synthetic turf and associated performance infills (typically sand and SBR rubber), to be uplifted and transported to the specialist recycling plant in Grangemouth where the component parts are separated, cleaned and recycled. End-of-life synthetic carpet is subsequently melted, moulded and cooled in the factory to form a new product – infill retention boards - which are subsequently returned to site and installed around the base of pitch-side perimeter fencing as a means of minimising infill migration from the newly laid pitch surface into adjacent open space and water courses. The washed sand and rubber is re-sold back into the market, acting once again as a performance infill as part of a newly certified playing surface. This approach to the recycling of artificial turf and its component parts seeks to minimise the potential environmental impact arising from end-of-life plastic, rubber and sand, and represents an excellent example of the circular economy at the individual facility level.

Education Services, together with its PPP partner Amey 3ED, is also a significant operator of artificial turf pitches in the city supporting both school and community use. The SPS' recommendation to establish a SPS Steering Group (see Section 8 – Governance) tasked with delivering and reporting on the recommendations of the SPS, offers tremendous potential for collaborative effort and shared learning between GCC, Glasgow Life and key sporting stakeholders on the design, procurement, construction, maintenance and eventual replacement of artificial turf, in ways that support the city's wider sustainability agenda.

Recommendation No 1

It is recommended that all providers and operators of artificial turf facilities adopt the principles of waste reduction and recycling as part of their policy and practice to assist the city's aspiration for a more sustainable and circular economy.

The future use of SBR Rubber as a performance infill material

Whilst there is a clear health benefit associated with the use of artificial turf in supporting outdoor sports participation, Glasgow City Council should be mindful of a growth in concern over the potential adverse environmental and/or public health impact of the use of SBR rubber as an infill medium in third generation (3G) artificial turf pitches.

The European Commission has confirmed, that from October 2031, rubber crumb (SBR) will no longer be purchasable within the EU, so any new 3G pitches built beyond that date will require to utilise a non-rubber infill medium. This decision has resulted in a growth in research/testing of alternative, biodegradable infills acting as a performance layer within artificial turf sports pitches. The type of infill products now being developed by the manufacturers of artificial turf systems include granulated cork, olive pips, corn or wood derivatives, some of which are sourced primarily from warm-weather climates in southern Europe or Latin America.

In recognition that further research is needed to understand the performance characteristics and maintenance implications of using biodegradable infills in a UK climatic context, the Football Association and Rugby Football Union are jointly funding a 3 -year research exercise currently ongoing at a site in Yorkshire which involves a range of alternative infills being tested from a playing and maintenance perspective. The results of this research exercise are not expected until the end of 2026, but this study will prove to be highly informative in identifying biodegradable infills that offer the best balance of characteristics over time in terms of playability and maintenance and provide clients / operators with greater confidence over their use.

At the time of writing, no such ban on the use of SBR rubber has emerged from the UK Government, and the legality of the use of SBR rubber infill in 3G pitches remains a viable option for suppliers, contractors and operators. However, given the it is important that providers and operators continue to monitor the legislative context and policy guidance currently available within the UK, to ensure that they are aligned with best practice. Current policy guidance is best illustrated by the joint position statement compiled by a consortium of UK wide Sports Governing Bodies and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and published by the Sports and Play Construction Association. See attached link.

[\(https://sapca.org.uk/guide/position-statement-on-3g-pitches/\)](https://sapca.org.uk/guide/position-statement-on-3g-pitches/).

Glasgow Life's ongoing programme of artificial turf replacement has, for several years now, included cost options for the use of both rubber crumb (SBR), and alternative sustainable infills, thereby allowing a choice to be made depending upon cost and delivery timeframes. Until very recently, the cost variance between biodegradable and SBR rubber infills has been significant (SBR being cheaper), and examples of UK installations that include biodegradable infills few and far between. However, as production volumes of biodegradable infills increase, the cost variance is narrowing, and the knowledge base of the practical implications of maintaining alternative infills improves with each new installation in Europe and the UK.

As part of its 2024-2026 synthetic turf refresh programme, Glasgow Life has, for the first time, resurfaced two 5-a-side courts at Glasgow Green Football Centre using a corn based, biodegradable infill. Playing and maintenance characteristics are being monitored over the first 12 months of operation, with a report on findings due in March 2026. In the meantime, Glasgow Life continues to monitor the guidance issued at a national and UK level by agencies involved in this field of work, including **sportscotland**, Sport England, the SFA / FA, as well as internationally accredited research consultancies, to ensure that it is operating with due diligence and in accordance with established best practice.

Recommendations overleaf.....

Recommendation 2a

All providers and operators should continue to monitor the legislative context and policy guidance currently available within the UK over the use of SBR rubber as a performance infill.

Recommendation 2b

All providers and operators should seek specialist advice when identifying client / employer's requirements for the provision and/or replacement of 3G synthetic turf surfaces and include cost options for the use of biodegradable infill whenever inviting tender submissions for new-build or replacement provision.

PART 7 - RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Cost Implications

Sport and physical activity can have a profound effect on peoples' lives, and play a crucial role in improving community cohesion, educational attainment and self-confidence. This is ever more evident in the advent of Covid-19 and a further focus on being fit and active.

Delivery of this Sports Pitch Strategy will require investment to improve quantity and quality where appropriate, together with ongoing investment in the maintenance and refurbishment of active pitch sport provision if it is to ensure that facilities remain effective in meeting community demand. This will require a regular stream of capital (and revenue) investment up to 2035 and beyond.

As part of its feedback to the City Council on the content of CDP Supplementary Guidance (SG) 6 (Green Belt and Green Network) as part of the development plan, Glasgow Life has provided the City Council with a projection of the cost implications of delivering this SPS over the next 10 years. It is based on a review of national and local sources of cost related information, including Glasgow Life's annual programme of investment in playing surfaces, floodlighting, and ancillary accommodation. Where required, other sources of information have been used to fill any gaps in knowledge, including (i) design consultancies, (ii) installation and maintenance contractors, (iii) **sportscotland**, and (iv) Sport England.

In conducting this assessment of the cost implications of the SPS, Glasgow Life has included the costs associated with the following:

- the provision of new, enhanced or refreshed facilities up to during the first 5 years of the SPS, as identified within KKP's site-by-site Action Plan
- the costs involved in maintaining and refreshing the existing active pitch sport estate to a standard that supports ongoing community use over the first five years of the SPS. This includes the costs associated with the resurfacing of all City Council / Glasgow Life operated synthetic grass pitches and courts whose surfaces are due to reach the end of their useful life by 2031.

The culmination of this cost exercise is illustrated in the table below:

Capital and Revenue Implications of delivering the SPS

TIMEFRAME	North-East (£)	North-West (£)	South (£)	Total (£)
Short Term (1-2 yrs)	4,525,489	3,532,626	6,101,781	14,159,896
Medium Term (3-5 yrs)	5,825,916	6,558,935	7,403,785	19,788,636
Long Term (6 yrs +)	6,041,415	5,926,607	6,772,364	18,740,386
	£16,392,820	£16,018,168	20,277,930	52,688,918

(Note: Costs are based on 2024/25 prices and so do not account for compound inflationary pressure)

In overall terms, it is estimated that almost £53 million worth of capital and revenue investment will be required over the lifetime of the Strategy to ensure that the existing active estate remains effective in meeting community demand up to 2031. This figure has been used in calculating appropriate developer contribution rates for outdoor sport within Supplementary Guidance 6 - Green Belt and Green Network.

7.2 Funding Opportunities

The city should aim to maximise current and future funding streams, including any potential compensation from the loss of sports facilities which are not strategically required for sports or other open space uses, to deliver the levels of investment required to improve the quantity and/or quality of provision and in support of ongoing maintenance and regular refresh of the active estate.

The resource implications of delivering on the SPS pose a significant challenge to all operators of pitch sport facilities. Against a backdrop of local authority finance reducing year on year and following an unprecedented period of revenue loss (Covid-19), a range of capital and revenue funding streams will need to be accessed, including:

1. Ensuring that the revenue settlements agreed with both Glasgow Life and GCC Education Services are used efficiently and in accordance with the priorities identified in the SPS.
2. GCC's Capital Programme
3. Maximising the timeous use of receipts generated via the implementation of City Development Plan policies, including
 - a) Developer Contributions generated via the implementation of SG6 and those collected via previous development plan policy approaches
 - b) compensatory sums generated from planning applications which result in (a) the loss of active pitch sport provision, or (b) the release for development of a selected number of inactive pitches in those sports that do not show evidence of having a surplus of provision.
4. Reinvestment of generated income – all operators, including Glasgow Life, GCC, PMGC bodies
5. Maximising funding opportunities associated with co-location of sports pitch provision alongside other services and/or operators, eg Schools / Universities, Community Hubs, sports clubs.
6. Sports Lottery Funding / **sportscotland's** Sports Facility Fund
7. UK Government funding streams - eg DCMS Grassroots Football Initiative
8. Sport Governing Bodies (eg Tennis Scotland / LTA, SFA)
9. Health Agencies
10. Charitable Trusts
11. Private Sector (where appropriate) - eg emerging sports such as Padel Tennis.

Although not all investment in new or upgraded provision will be made by the City Council directly, it is important that it seeks to lead a strategic and co-ordinated approach to facility development involving key partners, including Glasgow Life, SGBs, PMGC partners, sports clubs and the private / commercial sector, to address community needs whilst avoiding unnecessary duplication of provision.

PART 8 – FUTURE GOVERNANCE

8.1 Adoption of the Sports Pitch Strategy

The Draft Strategy comprising a Final Report and Executive Summary was concluded in early February 2025.

Before presenting the City Council with the opportunity to consider, approve and formally adopt this Sports Pitch Strategy, key stakeholders and partner agencies were consulted on the content of the Draft Strategy. This included:

- i. key funders and contributors to the SPS, notably GCC NRS Planning and **sportscotland** - both of whom contributed to the delivery of the Strategy both financially and with officer support to overarching Steering Group – and GCC Education Services.
- ii. other GCC Service Areas, notably Property Services, NRS Parks Development and GCC Financial Services
- iii. the Governing Bodies of Sport impacted by the SPS

The initial feedback received from both GCC Planning and **sportscotland** (early March 2025) served to highlight the importance of consistency of messaging across both documents in relation to the adequacy of existing provision, as it is the baseline position in each sport that provides the context for determining responses to planning applications affecting active or inactive provision. Revisions were subsequently made to the Draft Strategy before being re-issued to both organisations for further review.

Revised drafts of the Final Report and Executive Summary were issued to the **Sport Governing Bodies** representing each of the core sports – football, rugby union, hockey, tennis, lawn bowls, cricket and shinty – in early May 2025, seeking their comment, feedback and ultimately approval. Responses were received from SGB's representing the sports of Rugby Union, Hockey and Tennis, between 23rd and 30th May 2025.

Following a review of SGB responses, a revised Final Report and Executive Summary was presented to, and approved by, the **Glasgow Life Board** on 18th June 2025.

8.2 Implementation and Monitoring of the Sports Pitch Strategy

The delivery of the Sports Pitch Strategy will require the oversight of a new **SPS Steering Group** comprising representatives from key stakeholders and partner agencies.

The purpose of the Steering Group will be to:

- ◀ adopt responsibility for the identification and delivery of priorities for action.
- ◀ monitor, evaluate and report on the outcomes of the SPS, as required by GCC and the Glasgow Life Board.
- ◀ ensure that the SPS is kept up to date and refreshed up to 2035.

More widely, the Steering Group will act as a champion for playing pitch provision, promote the value and importance of the SPS, and promote the delivery of the SPS with links with the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, the City's Open Space Strategy and City Development Plan.

The overarching Steering Group will be assisted by the work of a series of **sport specific sub-groups** whose role it will be to progress those actions that will assist the implementation of the sport-related recommendations contained within the SPS, and monitor, evaluate and report on the success (or otherwise) of those actions.

One existing sport specific forum – the Football Stakeholder's Steering Group - has been operating for the last 18 months, with the objective of setting targets and actions associated with the delivery of a city-wide Football Action Plan which is reflective of the recommendations contained in this SPS. The Group currently comprises representation from Glasgow Life, GCC Education Services and the Scottish Football Association, but there are plans to include representation from the grouping of PMGC partners currently seeking long lease arrangements for the management of playing field sites formerly operated by Glasgow Life.

It is recommended that additional sports specific forums be established by Glasgow Life to provide oversight of efforts to implement the recommendations contained within the SPS, with each sport specific forum being accountable to the SPS Steering Group, providing progress reports as required.

APPENDIX 1 - GLOSSARY

ABBREVIATIONS

3G	Third Generation (artificial turf)
AGP	Artificial Grass Pitch
BAFA	British American Football Association
BC	Bowls Club
BS	Bowls Scotland
BSUK	Baseball / Softball UK
CC	Cricket Club
CDP	City Development Plan
CS	Cricket Scotland
FC	Football club
FE	Further Education
GCC	Glasgow City Council
GL	Glasgow Life
GSRDT	Glasgow Sport Rugby Development Team
HE	Higher Education
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LS	Lacrosse Scotland
MES	Match Equivalent Sessions
NPF	National Planning Framework
NS	Netball Scotland
NTP	Non turf pitch
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RUFC	Rugby union football club
SFA	Scottish Football Association
SGB	Sports Governing Body
SH	Scottish Hockey
SR	Scottish Rugby
SRU	Scottish Rugby Union
SPS	Sports Pitch Strategy
SPSPIP	Sports Pitch Strategy Policy and Implementation Plan
SS	sport scotland
STP	Synthetic Turf Pitch
SWFL	Scottish Women Football League
SWPL	Scottish Women Premier League
TGR	Team generation rate
TS	Tennis Scotland
UKU	UK Ultimate
WR	World Rugby

APPENDIX 2 – RECOMMENDATIONS BY SPORT

A2.1 Football

Overview

The initial findings of the SPS suggested that there is an adequate supply of natural grass and 3G provision within the city to accommodate current and future demand. The prime focus for the Strategy would be to maximise use of the existing active estate, particularly third generation (3G) artificial turf pitches, which offer the capacity to accommodate any future growth in latent demand.

The growth in football demand post Covid-19, particularly amongst young people, women and girls, has meant that the pressure for use of pitch sport facilities operated by Glasgow Life, and at venues that are the subject of a long-term lease from Glasgow City Council, is becoming increasingly acute. Whilst not yet at a tipping point, there is an urgent need to focus attention on maximising use of under-utilised provision within the GCC Education estate, otherwise additional (new) provision will be required to support the current upward trend in participation.

Scenario Testing Conclusions

1. It is increasingly unlikely that future football **training demand** can be accommodated solely on Glasgow Life's network of 21 x full-size 3G pitches (2020). Access to other pitch capacity is required.
2. The existing supply of full-size 3G pitches managed by Glasgow Life is unable to accommodate all **match play** demand currently played on Glasgow Life's natural grass and 3G estate. An additional supply of up to 27 x No full-size 3G pitches would be required to accommodate all match-play demand currently played on natural grass, hence it is considered unrealistic to have an objective of transferring all competitive match-play demand on to 3G pitches. Not only is the delivery and maintenance of 48 full-size 3G pitches a huge financial commitment, but there is also no evidence of there being enough midweek demand for training and casual use to fill the available capacity that 48 x No 3G pitches would provide.
3. The retention of a strategic network of natural grass pitches is essential during the lifetime of this Strategy. Only when the 3G estate supports a greater proportion of community demand might it be possible to consider a reduction in the supply of the least active grass football pitches.

Football Recommendations

1. Protect the current, active stock of football pitches (natural grass and 3G).
2. All pitch sport operators to ensure that active football provision is effectively maintained and refreshed to ensure long-term sustainability.
3. Aim to maximise utilisation of the existing Glasgow Life and GCC football estate by addressing the following actions:
 - Improve poor quality 3G pitches at the following venues: Ibrox Community Complex, John Paul Academy, Merrylee and Wallacewell Primaries.

- Improve and adapt ancillary facilities to fully utilise the active estate where there is evidence of demand to justify investment, eg:
 - i. the creation of additional changing capacity at venues where there is currently insufficient provision to allow for concurrent peak time use of pitches (Nethercraigs, Drumoyne, Glasgow Club Milton, Caldercuilt Playing Fields, Lochend Community High School, Glasgow Green Football Centre and Lourdes Secondary).
 - ii. adapting built accommodation to ensure that provision is attractive to support the growth in women and girls' participation.
 - Where there is evidence of a growth in training demand, install floodlighting at one or more of the full-size 3G pitches within the GCC education estate.
 - Explore the potential to increase capacity for training and match-play by reviewing operational practices. To include:
 - i. a review of how changing accommodation is allocated in support of pitch bookings
 - ii. increase locker capacities to allow changing rooms to be used more intensively
 - iii. increase the number of hourly booking slots on full-size 3G pitches by 33% by re-lining to provide 4 x 7-a-side sized pitch quadrants for training and casual use.
 - Explore the potential to transfer more match play demand on to 3G pitches, particularly at GCC education sites.
4. Investigate the feasibility of a co-ordinated booking system and linked pricing structure for Glasgow Life and Education Services provision, designed to maximise access and affordability.
 5. In conjunction with the Scottish Football Association (SFA), explore the feasibility of more flexible kick-off times for specific leagues to spread demand across a wider peak period.
 6. Targeted investment in one or more strategic venues will assist key clubs to continue progression through the competitive pyramid by being able to demonstrate compliance with the relevant ground eligibility criteria.
 7. Given the importance of sustaining quality through effective maintenance and refurbishment, all partners and operators should seek to secure adequate revenue and capital funding streams. This includes any monies generated from the release of inactive pitches.
 8. Ensure strategic natural grass pitches are maintained appropriately, and use is maximised.
 9. Where grass pitches are overplayed and/or assessed as poor quality, prioritise investment and revise maintenance regimes to ensure that pitches are capable of sustained regular use.
 10. Continue to support community led approaches to management and ownership.
 11. In conjunction with the SFA, **sportscotland** and other key partners, seek to ensure that any new 3G pitches built within the private sector have community use agreements in place.

Scottish Football Association: The Scottish Football Association did not take up the opportunity to comment on the Final Report and Executive Summary.

A2.2 Rugby Union

Overview

In overall terms, current demand for senior rugby union pitches slightly exceeds available supply by the equivalent of 3.25 Match Equivalent Sessions (MES) per week, increasing to 9.75 MES per week after taking account of future demand and latent demand aspirations from existing clubs. Although this level of surplus demand could be accommodated through increased use of rugby pitches managed by private schools, this is discounted due to unsecure tenure.

There is a need to improve rugby pitch capacity in the North-East Analysis Area based on current and projected levels of sports development activity and school-based rugby union.

Both the SRU and several rugby clubs highlight the need for greater access to World Rugby (WR) compliant 3G provision to support the demand for winter training, match-play to a lesser extent, and sports development initiatives designed to increase participation, particularly for women and girls.

Rugby Recommendations

1. Protect the existing quantity of rugby union pitches.
2. Ensure that all existing World Rugby (WR) compliant 3G pitches currently used for rugby union, remain WR certified.
3. Improve the quality of rugby pitches at Barachnie Park to better support anticipated future growth in demand in the North-East. Improvements in the quality of ancillary provision should be considered once there is evidence of a growth in demand.
4. Glasgow Life and Scottish Rugby to establish a joint working group to consider the SPS recommendations and identify a series of priority actions for supporting rugby development, including:
 - establish if there is a case for a regular block booking of a WR compliant 3G pitch in one or both of the North-West and South sectors of the city to alleviate overplay on existing club-based grass pitches, rectify shortfalls in provision, and support rugby union development.
 - Explore the feasibility of improving pitch quality at Hughenden (Hillhead Sports Club) to alleviate overplay and help rectify the shortfall in provision.
 - Liaise with Cartha QP RFC to establish the club's interest in transferring some training demand off site, including the use of existing WR compliant 3G pitch provision, to alleviate overplay and rectify shortfalls in provision.
 - Partner agencies to explore the potential of securing Community Use Access Agreements for use of existing (or new) rugby provision at private educational sites to rectify shortfalls in provision and create additional capacity for future growth in community participation.
 - An opportunity exists to explore the potential to reconfigure the football pitches (currently closed) at Nether Pollok Playing Fields³ to rugby union, subject to a feasibility assessment

³ The site is closed and controlled Pollok and Corrour on behalf of the Trustees of Pollok Park. Therefore, numerous stakeholders would need to be involved in establishing the feasibility of such a proposal

and the agreement of the Trustees of Pollok Park and their agents, Pollok and Corrour.

(Note: Nether Pollok PF also offers the potential for re-purposing provision in support of one or more of the “other” sports, such as Shinty, Gaelic Football, or American Football, for which supply is currently reliant on Peterson Park and to a lesser extent, Nethercraigs).

5. Whenever 3G pitches are scheduled for refresh, it is recommended that the relevant rugby union stakeholders be consulted on the need (or otherwise) for additional WR complaint provision.
6. Continue to foster strong relationships between rugby clubs and schools through curricular / extra-curricular activity to increase levels of mini and junior rugby participation, including the encouragement of girls to take up the sport.

Scottish Rugby Feedback

In welcoming the scope and quality of the Sports Pitch Strategy, Scottish Rugby identified areas where further collaboration with Glasgow Life and local clubs will be essential to ensure the successful development of rugby playing environments:

1. **Access to facilities:** The SRU acknowledged that some rugby pitches are over-used in comparison to their theoretical playing capacity and that the Strategy identifies potential solutions to securing access to other off-site provision. The SRU is mindful that the costs associated with paying for access to facilities operated by others can be problematic. It is also concerned that rugby club committee volunteers are often already over-stretched with their existing club commitments to contribute to consultation exercises designed to explore potential facility access solutions. Against this background, the SRU is keen to act as a de-facto representative through which communication with individual clubs can be channelled, whilst also supporting clubs in their Club Development Planning to be able to provide input to future facility strategy engagements.
2. Scottish Rugby welcomes the acknowledgement of a growth in interest in rugby union amongst **women and girls** which is expected to place increasing pressure on existing capacity for training, match-play and a need for access to quality changing facilities. This reflects the findings of the SRU’s own review of demand, as evidenced in the national Rugby Development Strategies, West Area Strategy and Glasgow North workstream. Since 2021/22, there has been a 50% rise in scheduled female fixtures in Glasgow. It is recognised that all partners have a role to play in helping to crystalize interest into sustained participation, initially by making best use of existing provision, and where necessary, work towards increasing the quantity and quality of provision in areas of significant new demand.
3. **Alignment of priorities:** Scottish Rugby is keen to ensure that its development and financial support is aligned with local needs and would be fully supportive of joint investment ventures to improve access to facilities to support rugby, particularly at clubs. Scottish Rugby is fully supportive of the establishment of a Joint Working Group for Rugby to ensure a co-ordinated approach to facility planning. This will be an ideal forum to bring key stakeholders together and identify how best to deliver on the priorities identified in the SPS and new emerging priorities for investment in facilities.

A2.3 Cricket

Overview

Almost all cricket provision is located at sports clubs or private schools. Public sector provision plays a minimal role in the overall supply of facilities.

For senior cricket, there is a shortfall of 49 Match Equivalent Sessions (MES) per season across Glasgow, increasing to 65 MES when accounting for future demand. For junior cricket, there is a shortfall of 49 MES per season, increasing to 57 MES when accounting for future demand.

Spare capacity of 54 MES per season across Glasgow is discounted due to unsecure tenure.

Cricket Recommendations

1. Protect existing quantity of cricket squares.
2. Clubs supporting levels of overplay equal to or less than 10 MES per season (eg West of Scotland and Glasgow Academicals) should ensure that intensive maintenance regimes are in place to sustain surface quality.
3. Clydesdale Cricket and Hockey Club should explore the feasibility of installing a non-turf pitch (NTP) to lessen the impact of overplay on surface quality and rectify shortfalls in provision.
4. Glasgow Life and Cricket Scotland to establish a joint working group to consider the outputs and recommendations from this Strategy and identify a series of priority actions for supporting cricket development. To include:
 - Partners to work with clubs and their ground-staff to seek to improve surface quality from “standard” to “good”, or from “poor” to “standard” (refer to Main Report for full definition of terms), to rectify shortfalls in provision.
 - Explore the feasibility of improving the provision of ancillary provision at Bellahouston Park in support of Glasgow’s sole, publicly operated grass square.
 - Partners to explore the feasibility of establishing Community Use Agreements to ensure regular access to cricket facilities within the private education sector. This will provide current and emerging clubs with a degree of certainty that regular access will not be discontinued without good reason and provide clubs with the confidence to invest time and effort into stimulating sports participation. This may also help to rectify shortfalls in provision.
 - All operators and partners to support participation initiatives such as women and girls’ Softball cricket, Disability Cricket, All Stars, Wee Bash, Tape Ball and “Cric HIIT.”

Cricket Scotland

Cricket Scotland did not take up the opportunity to comment on the Final Report and Executive Summary.

A2.4 Hockey

Overview

There is an adequate number of sand-based Artificial Grass Pitches to cater for current and future demand at the introductory / developmental level of the sport, but an inadequate supply of pitches designed to cater for higher grades of play / competition (ie water-based pitches or their future equivalent).

The inadequacy of provision of hockey pitches suitable for higher levels of play restricts the sport's ability to develop and improve playing standards, attract commercial investment and drive participation growth.

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) and worldwide design of hockey fields are currently moving from sand-dressed and water-based pitches to a hybrid sustainable surface. This eco-friendly surface negates the need for water and therefore offers a more affordable running cost of performance fields.

Hockey Recommendations

1. Protect existing quantity of hockey suitable Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs).
2. All facility operators to ensure that hockey provision is effectively maintained and refreshed to continue to meet customer expectations and ensure long-term sustainability.
3. Glasgow Life, in conjunction with Scottish Hockey and the hockey community, should explore the feasibility of extending the opening hours at Glasgow Green National Hockey Centre to provide additional match play and training capacity on two water-based pitches.
4. Subject to demand, additional training capacity could be created through the installation of floodlights at Bellahouston Academy.
5. Subject to demand, explore the feasibility of providing affordable community access to the sand-based AGPs at John Paul II and St Saviours Primaries for match-play on a Saturday afternoon, to meet any future shortfalls.
6. Glasgow Life and Scottish Hockey to establish a joint working group to consider the SPS recommendations and identify a series of priority actions. To include:
 - In conjunction with private educational operators, explore the feasibility of securing Community Use Access Agreements at private education sites to provide hockey teams with greater security of pitch access.
 - Identify priority locations for upgrading ageing hockey pitches in need of refresh (sand-based and water-based), including the need (or otherwise) for the installation of more eco-friendly non-infill surfaces in support of the improvement of performance standards.

Scottish Hockey

Scottish Hockey welcomed the Strategy's recommendation that all operators ensure that field hockey facilities are effectively maintained and refreshed to ensure long-term sustainability and protection.

The biggest facility related issue facing the sport from a Governing Body perspective was a perceived lack of provision designed to support play at the higher level of the game, as this restricts the governing body's

ability to develop and improve the quality of the sport. Scottish Hockey welcomed the Strategy's acknowledgement of a deficiency of "water-based" provision and emphasised the importance of efforts to increase the provision of performance standard fields to improve the standard of the sport in Scotland.

Against this backdrop, Scottish Hockey welcomed approaches which sought to secure greater community access to existing performance fields in the city, including the "water-based" provision at the Glasgow Green National Hockey Centre and those pitches operated by private education partners.

Scottish Hockey also highlighted potential changes in the design of "performance" fields worldwide. The International Hockey Federation (FIH) is currently working in conjunction with artificial turf manufacturers and facility operators to explore the feasibility of moving away from sand-dressed and water-based pitches to a hybrid sustainable surface. This eco-friendly approach would negate the need for water, offers a more affordable running cost of performance fields, and would ultimately contribute to the city's net zero ambitions.

Finally Scottish Hockey is keen to strengthen partnership approaches to the planning, delivery and operation of hockey provision in the city. This will be facilitated via the establishment of a sport-specific working group following adoption of the Sports Pitch Strategy.

A2.5 Tennis

Overview

The Assessment Report of the SPS highlighted that tennis provision in the city was highly concentrated in the North-West and South Analysis Areas. It also suggested that 10 out of the 12 of the city's club sites were considered to have sufficient court supply to accommodate both current and projected future demand; Mount Vernon TC (North-East) and Woodend Bowling and TC (North- West) being the exceptions. All existing publicly operated (non-club based) courts were deemed to have spare capacity.

We know that tennis was one of several sports that saw a growth in demand during the Covid-19 pandemic because it could be played outdoors in a socially distanced manner. Tennis Scotland reports a 42% increase in registered players nationally between 2019 (57,000) and 2024 (81,000), and this trend for a growth is corroborated by a sample of club membership levels on the south-side of the city.

In conjunction with **sportscotland**, the UK Government, the LTA / Tennis Scotland and a series of key local partner organisations, the city has responded to the emergence of latent demand in tennis by supporting the construction of 10 additional all-weather courts at three locations in the city, Garrowhill Park (North-East), Maryhill Park (North-West) and Newlands Park (South). In each case, new courts have been delivered by upgrading a series of former inactive blaes tennis courts.

Padel Tennis has also emerged as one of the fastest growing sports in the UK.

Tennis Recommendations

1. Sustain current levels of active provision.
2. There should be a general presumption in favour of the protection and redevelopment of inactive tennis courts, either as new or upgraded provision to meet emerging pockets of latent demand, or alternatively, release for development for another land use provided that new or upgraded provision is provided elsewhere within the same sector of the city to maintain overall playing capacity.
3. Subject to demonstrable evidence of sustainable latent demand, all partners to offer support, where possible, for initiatives designed to improve the quantity and/or quality of tennis provision in the city (courts, lighting and ancillary provision).
4. Where levels of club membership are putting increased pressure on available playing capacity (Mount Vernon and Woodend TCs highlighted in the Assessment Report), explore the feasibility of establishing club access agreements for use of Glasgow Life operated tennis court venues in proximity to club sites.
5. The city should encourage the development of Padel Tennis by supporting proposals that are able to demonstrate a deliverable and sustainable business case.

Tennis Scotland

Tennis Scotland welcomed the emergence of Glasgow's SPS and helpfully provided club membership data which evidenced a growth in demand at affiliated clubs following the Covid-19 pandemic (2019 – 2024), both in Glasgow and nationally. This data helped to corroborate the Strategy's conclusion that tennis provision in the city is currently at capacity and that a presumption of protection should be adopted.

Where levels of club membership are putting increased pressure on available club court capacity, Tennis Scotland is supportive of the Strategy's recommendation that Glasgow Life and Tennis Scotland explore the feasibility of establishing club access agreements to utilise spare capacity at Glasgow Life operated tennis court venues across the city.

Finally, Tennis Scotland is very supportive of efforts to create new provision to support the emergence of Padel Tennis, a sport which has long been a popular sport in Europe but has only recently emerged as one of the fastest growing sports in the UK. The smaller, enclosed court size of Padel means that it has the potential to attract a whole new audience to racquet sports, with significant potential for cross-over with tennis.

A2.6 Lawn Bowls

Overview

There is sufficient supply of bowling greens to meet current and future demand and no evidence to suggest a need for new bowling green provision in Glasgow

The average level of club membership is 77, which is below the threshold identified by Bowls Scotland as being “sustainable” (80). 40% of clubs have 60 members or less.

The main issue facing clubs is to retain existing and attract new members. There is a clear need for the sport to increase participation.

All publicly operated bowling greens have spare capacity to accommodate higher levels of use. Many greens exhibit low levels of use.

Bowling Recommendations

1. Assist clubs in improving the quality of bowling green and ancillary provision by highlighting potential capital funding sources, eg:
 - a) National Lottery / **sportscotland** funding streams
 - b) Funding leveraged from the partial release of on-site provision at multi-green sites, for which there is no longer a demand, and used, in full, to upgrade the quality of the remaining on-site supply and/or supporting infrastructure (eg club houses) where appropriate.
2. The future role of inactive / surplus lawn bowls provision within the GCC / Glasgow Life estate should be assessed by the proposed short-term Working Group identified within AIM1 (1A4) of PART 4 of the SPS – “Vision, Aims, Policies and Recommendations”.
3. It is recommended that Glasgow Life ceases maintenance / management of those greens identified as inactive or surplus with a view to potential re-development as an alternative form of recreational greenspace or open space.
4. Whilst it is recognised that the city’s priority for use of land last used as bowling greens will be to address the priorities identified within the city’s Open Space Strategy, it is recommended that where there is a clear need for quality improvement on active bowls sites in GCC ownership, inactive GCC greens could be released for re-development as an alternative land use subject to compensatory finance being made available for re-investment in GCC lawn bowls provision elsewhere.
5. Glasgow Life and other relevant stakeholders (**sportscotland** and Bowls Scotland) to use the bespoke mapping tools provided to assess the impact of proposals that will result in the rationalisation or reduction in the supply of bowling greens / ancillary facilities and identify any future requirements for investment in quality.

Bowls Scotland

Bowls Scotland was undergoing a change in CEO at the time of the consultation exercise and did apologise not being able to provide feedback within the timeframes stipulated, however there was a commitment to future engagement with Glasgow Life as part of a bowls-specific Joint Working Group, once the Strategy is finalised and adopted.

A2.7 Other Pitch Sports

Overview

The limited scale of provision for each of the other pitch sports in Glasgow is in part a reflection of the scale of current demand, but as a result, each sport tends to be heavily reliant on retaining access to one or two prime locations.

The key issue for both Glasgow Tigers (**American Football**) and Greater Glasgow Giants (**Australian Rules Football**) is to retain the ability to play on the grass pitches at Nethercraigs Sports Complex, a venue that is expected to transfer from Glasgow Life / GCC to Pollok Utd via the PMGC Initiative. Similarly, the sports of **Shinty and Gaelic** Football are almost wholly based at Peterson Park Playing Fields, as is **Baseball** at Tollcross Park, and **Croquet** at Knightswood Park.

The relative lack of alternative venues at which to play does make these sports vulnerable to potential changes in the management approach or operational status of key venues. It is incumbent upon operators of venues where other sports are played to be aware of the role that their facility plays in sustaining participation.

Other Sports Recommendations

1. Retain and protect existing active provision for each of the **other sports**.
2. Where significant changes are proposed which will impact upon facility access, either in terms of asset management responsibility (eg PMGC) or operational parameters, it is essential that all partners (SGBs, clubs, GCC, Glasgow Life) are engaged in the identification of solutions which will ensure that the sport is able to remain active and thrive in the city.
3. Look to improve the quality of both pitches and ancillary provision at Peterson Park Sports Ground to better accommodate demand from **Shinty and Gaelic** Football.
4. Glasgow Life's recent closure of Nether Pollok Playing Fields as an operational site provides an opportunity for one or more of the **other sports** to enter dialogue with Pollok and Corrour over the feasibility of re-establishing Nether Pollok Playing Fields as a Sport Hub site.
5. Explore the feasibility of establishing ancillary facilities at Tollcross Park in support of the development of the activities of the Glasgow **Baseball** Association.
6. Continue to support the sport of **Croquet** by improving the green surfaces at Knightswood Park through enhanced levels of maintenance, and by providing continued access to the adjacent pavilion for support services (eg WCs).

APPENDIX 3 - ASSESSMENT REPORT (SUMMARY)

The SPS Assessment Report (audit of supply and demand) provides the evidence base for the identification of Key Issues, Policies and Recommendations contained within the “*Sports Pitch Strategy Policy and Action Plan (2024)*”. The complete version of the Assessment Report can be made available upon request, but a summary of the outputs for each sport is shown below:

Table 2.1: Quantitative Overview of Supply and Demand

KEY:	Blue	-	Surplus provision (clear excess)
	Green	-	Adequate provision (spare capacity)
	Amber	-	Provision is operating at capacity
	Red	-	Shortfall of provision (deficiency)

Sport	Current demand (2019)		Future demand (2034)
	Pitch type	Current capacity in MES ^[1]	Future capacity in MES
Football (grass)	Adult	Spare capacity of 16	Shortfall of 1.5
	Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 6.5	Shortfall of 6.5
	Mini 7v7	Spare capacity of 1	Shortfall of 12
	Mini 5v5	Spare capacity of 2	At capacity
	Mini 4v4	At capacity	Shortfall of 8
Football (3G)	Full size floodlit	Adequate provision (quality + accessibility need to improve)	Potential shortfall if current levels of growth continue, and quality + accessibility of existing provision does not improve
Rugby Union	Senior	Shortfall of 3.25	Shortfall of 9.75
Cricket	Senior	Shortfall of 49	Shortfall of 65
	Junior	Shortfall of 49	Shortfall of 57
Hockey (sand-based)	Full size, floodlit	Adequate provision	Adequate provision
Hockey (water-based)	Full-Size, floodlit	At capacity (accessibility needs to improve)	Shortfall in provision
Tennis courts	Club	Adequate provision (except for Woodend + Mt Vernon TC's)	At capacity (Monitor levels of latent demand)
	Public	Adequate provision (Monitor levels of latent demand)	At capacity (Monitor levels of latent demand)
Bowls Greens	Club	Surplus provision but poor quality may limit access at some sites	Surplus provision but poor quality may limit access at some sites
	Public	Surplus provision but poor quality may limit access at some sites	Surplus provision but poor quality may limit access at some sites
Other Sports	Pitches	Adequate provision	Adequate provision

The above findings informed the identification of a series of scenarios, which in turn have informed the policies, recommendations and actions contained within this Strategy.

^[1] MES – match equivalent sessions per week (or per season for cricket)