

Part 1: Audit of Existing Provision

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**Derry City
& Strabane
District
Council**

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1. Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1** Derry City & Strabane District Council has commissioned a ‘*Condition Survey of Council Pitches and Recommendations for a Council Pitches Strategy*’. The methodology for the commission is ‘Towards a Level Playing Field; Playing Pitch Model’ developed by Sport England and the Central Council for Physical Recreation. The Playing Pitch Model requires focused research on supply, demand and quality to assess adequacy of provision for training requirements, however the consultants have addressed adequacy of provision for training given its importance in consideration of overall provision.
- 1.2** The research was carried out from January 2018 to April 2018, looking at association football, gaelic games, hockey, rugby and cricket.⁽¹⁾ The Council requires two main outputs, namely:-
- ❖ An audit of all playing pitches in the control of Derry City & Strabane District Council, including an inventory of other pitches, and;
 - ❖ A Playing Pitches Strategy that allows the Council to make informed planning decisions regarding pitch provision and assists with the targeting of financial investment and the planning of the delivery of sports development programmes.

The approach involved desk research, survey work, site inspections and liaison with key stakeholders. Supply of and demand for pitches was assessed for the Council area as a whole and where appropriate, for four defined geographical areas; (i) Derry City; (ii) Derry Rural; (iii) Strabane Town; (iv) Strabane Rural.

- 1.3** From the outset an emphasis was put on getting an accurate picture of each sport – this was achieved by obtaining a high response to the survey of sports clubs. The percentage of completed questionnaires for each sport is:-

Association football	–	77%
Gaelic Games	–	100%
Cricket	–	93%
Hockey	–	100%
Rugby	–	100%

Information on the clubs not returning a questionnaire was obtained from league representatives ensuring accurate analysis of results. Table 1.1 summarises clubs and teams by sport.

Table 1.1: Clubs and Teams by Sport

Sport	No of Clubs	Male		Female		Total	
		Teams	%	Teams	%	Teams	%

⁽¹⁾ Cricket was added to the list at the Project Initiation Meeting.

Association Football	60	316	54	25	16	341	46
Gaelic Games	20	173	30	108	67	281	38
Cricket	14	71	12	10	6	81	11
Hockey	3	0	0	13	8	13	2
Rugby	2	20	4	4	3	24	3
Totals		580	100%	160	100%	740	100%

- 1.4** A summary of players reveals there are 9,728 male participants and 2,958 female participants across the five sports. The breakdown is as follows:-

Table 1.2: Participants by Sport

Sport	Male		Female		Totals	
	Junior	Adult	Junior	Adult	Totals No	%
Association Football	3,638	1,661	351	63	5,713	45
Gaelic Games	1,991	864	1,376	550	4,781	38
Cricket	432	563	166	193	1,354	11
Hockey	61	18	120	70	269	2
Rugby	320	180	49	20	569	4
Totals	6,442	3,286	2,062	896	12,686	100%

- 1.5** At this point it's useful to compare the participation numbers for each sport with two other local authority areas⁽²⁾ having a similar population to the Derry City & Strabane area.

Council	Population	Participation					Total
		Association Football	Gaelic Games	Cricket	Hockey	Rugby	
Derry City & Strabane	150,140	5,713	4,781	1,354	269	569	12,686
Lisburn & Castlereagh	134,841	4,216	1,317	202	365	305	6,405
Causeway Coast & Glens	140,877	4,096	6,470	364	754	856	12,540

⁽²⁾ Otium Leisure Consultancy has conducted the same audit in several local authority areas. Participation numbers reflect involvement in clubs/teams.

In terms of participation *per head of total population* the Derry City & Strabane area has the highest participation rates for association football and for cricket, as shown here:-

Council Area	Association Football	Cricket
Derry City & Strabane	1:26	1:111
Lisburn & Castlereagh	1:32	1:668
Causeway Coast & Glens	1:34	1:387

Supply

- 1.6 It was considered important to prepare and present an inventory of all known pitches in all ownerships for the five sports in the Council area. The inventory and this study deals only with pitches suitable for competition at some level, therefore Multi Use Games Areas are outside the scope of this study. The summary shows there are 143 pitches suited to competition at some level across the five sports; training pitches of varying sizes are additional to this and are noted in each sport-specific section as appropriate.

Table 1.3: Summary of Full and Youth Match Pitches

Ownership	GRASS					ARTIFICIAL TURF PITCHES			TOTALS
	Assoc Football	Gaelic Games	Cricket	Hockey	Rugby	Assoc Football	Gaelic Games	Hockey (Astro)	
Council	42	3	0	n/a	1	5	1	1	53
Club/Community	9	21	18	n/a	5	0	0	0	53
Education Sector	14	3	6	n/a	7	5	0	2	37
Totals	65	27	24	n/a	13	10	1	3	143

Adequacy of Provision

- 1.7 Adequacy of provision for community use is assessed for each sport against three scenarios in accordance with the Sport England model:-

Reference	Description
Scenario 1	All pitches (in all ownerships)
Scenario 2	Pitches with secured community use and pitches used by the community, but not with secured use (excludes pitches not available to community use).

Scenario 3 Council pitches only

1.8 Adequacy of provision across the Council area for each sport is summarised as follows, where a ‘+’ result indicates supply of pitches exceeds current demand and a ‘-’ result indicates a shortfall in supply of pitches for current demand. Scenario 1 and Scenario 3 are assessed in the sports-specific sections in this report; Scenario 1 is deemed to be unrealistic as it includes pitches in the education sector that are generally not available for community use. Similarly Scenario 3, assessed in the sports-specific sections is deemed to be unrealistic as it considers only Council-owned pitches. For these reasons Scenario 2 is summarised here as the most realistic Scenario. It is summarised for the whole Council area and, where appropriate, for each of four sub-areas:-

Table 1.4: Adequacy of Provision – Scenario 2

Sport/Category	Whole Council area	By Area			
		Derry City	Derry Rural	Strabane Town	Strabane Rural
<u>Association Football</u>					
Youth pitches (U12-U16)	+28	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Adult pitches (U17, U18, older)	+3	+2	+1	+3	-3
<u>Gaelic Games</u>					
Go Games, Youth and Adult pitches for matches and training	-8	-3	evens	-0.5	-4
<u>Cricket</u>					
Youth, Junior and Adult pitches for matches and training	+1	evens	evens	evens	+1
<u>Hockey</u>					
Mini Hockey	+1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Youth Hockey	+1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Adult Hockey	evens	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<u>Rugby</u>					
Mini Rugby	+2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Youth Rugby	evens	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Adult Rugby	-2	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

1.9 The assessment demonstrates that the provision of pitches for community use, excepting youth pitches for association football barely meets demand and in the

case of gaelic games falls well short of demand. A comparison of adequacy of provision between the Derry City & Strabane area and four other Council areas⁽³⁾ for association football presents a useful picture:-

Pitch Audit Year	Council	Adequacy of Provision in Scenario 2	Supply Total number of pitches in Scenario 2	Surplus/Supply (%)
2018	Derry City & Strabane District Council	+3	46	7%
2017	Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council	+20	49	41%
2015	Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	+10	47	21%
2013	Belfast City Council	+33	124	27%
2012	Newtownabbey Borough Council (legacy)	+21	44	48%

It's clear that, for association football (as an example) there is not the same 'buffer' of pitches as found elsewhere. The buffer is the ratio of the number of unused pitches at peak demand to the number of pitches available for competitive matches at peak demand. Councils often require a pitch surplus for the following operational reasons:-

- ❖ allows for pitches to be taken out of circulation for maintenance and to be rested.
- ❖ allows for unexpected increase in games to be accommodated, for example National cup and league competitions that do not occur on a weekly basis.
- ❖ allows for use for by schools and development squads.
- ❖ poorer quality pitches may not be playable in periods of wet weather – a pitch buffer allows matches to be moved to other better quality pitches at short notice.

Association Football – Summary

Quantity

Membership and Teams

1.10 There are 60 association football clubs in the District with the following breakdown of participants and teams:-

Table 1.5: Association Football Clubs – Profile of Membership and Teams

	Male	Female	Total Male & Female
Membership			

⁽³⁾ Otium Leisure Consultancy used the same audit process for the four Council areas presented for comparison.

Pre-Junior (6 -11 yrs)	1,999	220	2,219
Junior (12 -18 Yrs)	1,639	131	1,770
Adult	1,661	63	1,724
Total Players	5,299	414	5,713
Teams			
Small Sided Games (U7 to U11)	142	11	153
Youth (U12 to U16)	86	8	94
Adult (Inc U17 and U18)	88	6	94
Total Teams	316	25	341

- 1.11 The 5,713 participants represents 45% of the total number of participants across the five sports.

Pitches

- 1.12 Looking at competitive match pitch provision within the Council area there is a total of 65 full size grass association football pitches suitable for adult, youth and Small Sided Games matches and 8 full size 3G facilities under all ownership. In addition, there are two youth 3G pitches (Leafair, Magee University). However not all of these full and youth grass pitches are available for community use – generally secondary school pitches are not available for competitive matches. This is further discussed under Adequacy of Provision.

- 1.13 A summary and breakdown of current match and training facilities provision by ownership is:-

Ownership	Full and Youth Match Pitches			Training Pitches – varying sizes			
	Grass Full	3G Full	Youth 3G	Grass	AstroTurf	3G Training	Shale/ MUGA
Clubs/Community/ Other Sport	9	0	0	4	0	12	0
Secondary School	13	4	0	0	2	0	0
University	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
Council	42	4	1	6	0	4	8
Outside Council	-	-	-	0	0	2 ⁽⁴⁾	0
Total	65	8	2	10	2	19	8

- 1.14 Of the eight full size 3G pitches identified in the above table, three have been recently completed⁽⁵⁾: Brandywell Stadium (x1) and Melvin Sport Complex (x2). It is expected these will be available both for adult competitive matches, mid-week training and also for Small Sided Games. Use of 3G pitches for adult matches will

⁽⁴⁾ One of these is a full size pitch at the Vale Centre, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

⁽⁵⁾ Brandywell Stadium was opened on 20 March 2018 and Melvin Sports Complex 3G in April 2018.

help reduce the pressure on the Council’s grass pitch stock. The hire cost for an adult competitive match on a 3G pitch is set to be the same as that for a grass pitch to encourage use. The four 3G pitches under education ownership (Lisneal College, Holy Cross College, St Columb’s College and St Mary’s College) have some community use for training and SSG’s but are not currently available for competitive adult and youth matches.

Quality

- 1.15** A full report on the quality of Council-owned pitches and changing accommodation is included in an addendum to this audit report; the grass pitch quality scores are summarised below as these can be relevant for adequacy of provision modelling presented later in this section. As part of the online survey, clubs and schools were asked to rate their own club pitches as Good, Standard or Poor. A summary of the grass pitch quality ratings is:-

Summary of Quality Rating for Full Sized Grass Pitches in all Ownerships					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total number of pitches
Clubs/Community	3	2	1	3	9
Education	2	0	1	11	14
Council	37	2	3	0	42
Total	42	4	5	14	65

- 1.16** Association football clubs were asked to self-assess the overall quality of their ‘home’ pitch.

Overall Quality of your ‘home’ pitch		
Answer Option	No of Responses	% of Clubs
Good	16	35
Standard	21	46
Poor	9	20
Total Teams	35	100%

- 1.17** For the 20 Council sites that have changing accommodation, quality ratings are summarised as follows:-

Good	4
Standard	16
Poor	0

Adequacy of Provision

Matches: District-wide

- 1.18** The Sport England Playing Pitch Model quantitatively assesses adequacy of provision by comparing pitch supply to demand. Three pitch scenarios are assessed, each with the following number of pitches available for matches:-

Reference	Description	No. of grass and 3G pitches available for adult matches	No. of grass and 3G pitches available for youth matches
Scenario 1	All pitches	64 x grass 8 x 3G ⁽⁶⁾	64 x grass 10 x 3G ⁽⁷⁾
Scenario 2	Pitches with secured community use <i>and</i> pitches used by the community, but not secured (excludes pitches not available to community use).	43 x grass 4 x 3G	38 x grass 6 x 3G
Scenario 3	Council pitches only	35 x grass 4 x 3G	37 x grass 5 x 3G

- 1.19** Whilst adequacy of provision for all three scenarios is assessed, Scenario 2 is put forward as the most realistic picture of adequacy.

Youth (U12 to U16)	+ 28 pitches
Adult (U17, U18, older)	+ 3 pitches

Scenario 2 excludes education pitches (generally not available for club matches), the 7 Council pitches currently not in use plus the 2 dedicated youth pitches, so reducing the combined number of full size grass and 3G pitches available for adult games to 46.

- 1.20** Given that Councils often require a pitch surplus for operational reasons (maintenance, closure of poor quality pitches due to inclement weather, spike in demand, etc) the over-supply of 3 pitches for adult matches (or 6% of total supply) is a comparatively small buffer; four other local authorities in Northern Ireland have a combined average 34% of a buffer in pitches supply for association football.

⁽⁶⁾ Includes Brandywell Stadium and Melvin Sports Complex 3G pitches although they were not available in 2017/18 season, they will be available for the 2018 season and beyond, the other 3G pitches are: Bishop's Field (1), Holy Cross College (1), Lisneal College (1), St Columb's College(1), St Mary's College (1).

⁽⁷⁾ Leafair 3G pitch is slightly too small for adult games and is included in youth totals.

Matches: By Area

- 1.21** Four areas within the District are also assessed for adequacy of provision; here are the results:-

Area	Adequacy of Provision (Adult)
Derry City	+ 2 pitches
Derry Rural	+ 1 pitch
Strabane Town	+ 3 pitches
Strabane Rural	- 3 pitches

The analysis shows none of the areas exceeds the over-supply of 3 pitches for the District whilst Strabane Rural has a shortfall in supply.

Training: District-wide

- 1.22** An assessment of association football training needs/demand is presented in the table below. Here the total number and breakdown of association football teams in the District by age and training needs is assessed using information from the survey and employing the following observations:

- ❖ 4 x U7 to U12 SSG teams have the same pitch size requirements as one adult team i.e. equivalent to 1 adult team
- ❖ 1 x youth team (U12 to U16) training is equivalent to one adult team
- ❖ U7 to U11 SSG teams train once a week
- ❖ U11/U12 SSG and Youth teams train on average 1.5 times a week
- ❖ Adult teams require one full pitch for training and train on average 1.75 times a week.

- 1.23** Based on these observations, the total number of one-hour training slots required to satisfy association football training needs in the District is 344 x 1-hour slots as detailed in Table 1.6.

	No. of Male Teams	No. of Female Teams	All teams	Adult team equivalents ⁽⁸⁾	Average No. of 1-hour training sessions per week per team	Total No. of 1-hour training slots needed (rounded up)
Small Sided Games (U7 to U11)	142	11	153	38.25	1	39
Youth (U12 to U16)	86	8	94	94	1.5	141
Adult (Inc U17 and U18)	88	6	94	94	1.75	165

⁽⁸⁾ The following is assumed: 4 x U7 to U10 SSG teams require the same size training pitch as one adult team, 2 x U11, U12 SSG teams require the same size training pitch as one adult team, 1 x U13 to U18 teams requires the same size training pitch as one adult team.

Total Teams	316	25	341	226.25		344 x 1-hour slots
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1.24 As calculated, the 316 association football teams in the District require at least 344 x 1-hour training slots. Currently there are an estimated 309 x 1-hour slots available, that is an undersupply of 35 x 1-hour slots. If the training on AstroTurf is discounted due to unsuitability for the modern game, this increases the short fall to 57 x 1-hour slots. Currently the following venues outside the Council are used for training: Vale Centre, Greysteel in Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council and Gortin OwenKillew 3G in Fermanagh & Omagh District Council.

1.25 Whilst it is noted that some small MUGAs are used for training, these are not included in the above assessment as they are not considered suitable training facilities for the rigours of the modern game.

Small Sided Games (SSG)

1.26 Currently there are two providers of Small Sided Games in the Council area; the IFA’s Foyle Games Development Centre and the Derry & District Youth League. Across five age groups there is a total of 130 teams, requiring 28 one-hour full size 3G pitch slots for matches and 39 one-hour slots for training. The following points are noted in relation to provision for SSG’s in the Council area:-

- ❖ Both providers note difficulties in booking venues for this age group, both must use school and private providers
- ❖ Fixtures on occasions vary from week to week as providers cannot always block book venues
- ❖ Both providers cater for the same age groups but on different days
- ❖ Venues are not easily accessible for parents to spectate
- ❖ The lack of suitable venues is constraining growth of SSG’s compared to other Councils
- ❖ A number of clubs travel outside the Council to attend the Harry Gregg SSG’s initiative held at Ulster University Coleraine – here one central hub provides games for all age groups on Saturday mornings from 9am to 1pm from September to April.
- ❖ Both providers are looking to use the new 3G pitch developments at Brandywell Stadium and Melvin Sports Complex.

Gaelic Games – Summary

Quantity

Membership and Teams

1.27 There are 20 gaelic games clubs in the District with the following breakdown of participants and teams:-

Table 1.7: Gaelic Games Clubs – Profile of Membership and Teams

	Male	Female	Total Male And Female / Teams
Membership			
Pre-Junior (6 -11 yrs)	1055	680	1735
Junior (12 -18 Yrs)	936	696	1632
Adult	864	550	1414
Total Players	2855	1926	4781
Teams			
Go Games (U7 to U11)	60	36	96
Youth (U12 to U18)	79	58	137
Adult	34	14	48
Total Teams	173	108	281

1.28 The 4,781 participants represents 38% of the total number of participants across the five sports.

Pitches

1.29 Gaelic games are traditionally played on a grass pitch which at full regulation size is 145m x 90m. With recent developments in artificial turf pitch (ATP) technology synthetic pitches suited to gaelic games are beginning to appear although ATP's are more suited to gaelic football than to hurling or camogie. The majority of gaelic clubs own their pitch/pitches and premises, however due to the large numbers of teams per club they often make use of community and Council pitch facilities both for training and occasionally for competitive matches.

1.30 A summary and breakdown of current match and training facilities by ownership is:-

Gaelic Games Pitches used for matches and training					
Ownership	Full Grass	Full 3G	Training Grass	Training 3G	MUGA + Astro turf
Clubs/County Board	21	0	8	2	0
Education	3	0	0	1	1
Derry City & Strabane District Council	3	1	3	2	4
Total	27	1	11	5	5

Quality

1.31 As part of the online survey, clubs and schools were asked to rate their own club pitches whilst the Council's pitches were inspected by the consultants. A summary of grass pitch quality ratings is:-

Summary of Quality Ratings for Gaelic Pitches (Grass and 3G)					
Ownership	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown	Total number of pitches
Clubs/Community	18	5	6	2	31
Education	-	-	-	3	3
CC&G	6	0	1	0	7
Total	24	5	7	5	41

1.32 Just under 60% of the pitches are rated as ‘Good’ whilst seven pitches are rated as ‘Poor’ of which six are in club/community ownership including one at Clan na Gael GAC and one at Owen Roe O’Neill’s GAC, both rated poor due to drainage problems and over-use.

Adequacy of Provision

District-wide

1.33 The Sport England Playing Pitch Model quantitatively assesses adequacy of provision by comparing pitch supply to demand. Three pitch scenarios are assessed. Given the profile of gaelic games it is assumed that all adult, youth and Go Games are played on full size pitches – youth pitches are not considered in this modelling as they are generally not used in the delivery of competitive games.

Reference	Description	No. of Full Grass +3G	No. of Training Grass
Scenario 1	All pitches	28	10
Scenario 2	Pitches with secured community use <i>and</i> pitches used by the community, but not secured (excludes pitches not available to community use).	23 x Grass	8
Scenario 3	Council pitches only	3 x Grass 1x 3G	1

1.34 Whilst adequacy of provision for all three scenarios is assessed, Scenario 2 is put forward as the most realistic picture of adequacy.

Go Games Youth and Adult matches and training - 8 pitches

It is important to note the following comments when considering the result for Scenario 2:-

- ❖ Based on the club survey, Scenario 2 assumes that gaelic pitch capacity is 5 games per week PLUS 16 x 1-hour training slots, that is, total usage of

approximately 30 hours per week – this is dependent on weather and pitch maintenance.

- ❖ Scenario 2 does not include the use of 3G facilities for matches and training.
- ❖ Scenario 2 is set to model *current* pitch supply and demand. The adequacy of provision results indicate supply is not meeting demand for training and match needs. This suggests that clubs are delivering matches and training ‘under pressure’ which is likely to impact on current participation rates and future growth. The pressure on current pitch supply may become more of an issue as the large number of youth (male and female) teams filter through to adult levels - present provision would struggle to support any projected growth.

By Area

1.35 Four areas within the District are also assessed for adequacy of provision, as follows:-

Area	Adequacy of Provision (Adult)
Derry City	- 3 pitches
Derry Rural	Evens
Strabane Town	- 0.5 pitches
Strabane Rural	- 4 pitches

Remembering that this analysis considers the provision of full size and training size grass pitches it’s clear that a shortfall in provision is experienced in all areas but is most acute in Derry City and Strabane Rural. It’s useful to reflect on the number of teams in each area and the number of pitches in each area:-

Gaelic Games – Distribution of Teams by Area		
Area	All Teams (adult & youth)	%
Derry City	38	40%
Derry Rural	17	18%
Strabane Town	10	10%
Strabane Rural	31	32%
Totals	96	100%

Supply of Grass Pitches per Area (Scenario 2)				
	Council		Club	
	Full	Training	Full	Training
Derry City	3	1	4	0
Derry Rural	0	0	5	2

Strabane Town	0	0	2	1
Strabane Rural	0	0	9	4

Commentary

- 1.36** All but three of the gaelic games clubs in the Council area operate their own pitches and changing accommodation. The foregoing assessment of supply/demand along with consultation and survey work informs a number of key points.
- 1.37** Looking at *adequacy of provision* Scenario 2 is viewed as the most realistic picture given it includes only grass pitches that are available for community use. It shows the following for matches and training for all age groups: -

Derry City	Derry Rural	Strabane Town	Strabane Rural
-3 pitches	+0 pitches	-0.5 pitches	-4 pitches
Supply not meeting demand	Supply meeting demand	Supply just meeting demand	Supply not meeting demand

- 1.38** An analysis of the adequacy of provision by area demonstrates the shortfall of pitches is most significant in Derry City & Strabane Rural. This analysis does include the use of the new multi-sports 3G pitch at Melvin Sports Complex – use of this pitch is likely to relieve training pressure on club pitches and matches in the early part of the season (February, March and early April).
- 1.39** Most gaelic games clubs have at least 2 grass pitches: one full size and one training size. Three clubs have 3G training pitches which accommodate the clubs’ winter and preseason training and are also available for use by other clubs/other sports. Three clubs do not have their own facilities; Culmore GAC is a new club in Derry City and currently makes use of Thornhill College, this is unlikely to be a long-term solution for the club. Strabane Hurling club draws on members from Strabane Town and the surrounding areas – the catchment for hurling clubs in this area is wider than gaelic football clubs. Strabane Hurling Club has agreed use of Sigerson GAC pitches but notes difficulty in securing training venues – the club aspires to develop their own pitch. Council facilities are used by some gaelic games clubs for training sessions, e.g., Sean Dolans GAC has bookings on the 3G pitch at Bishops Field, Derry City.
- 1.40** It is known there is currently funding earmarked from Ulster GAA and Central GAA Council for large scale promotion and development of gaelic games in both Derry City and Belfast City. Further development of gaelic games in Derry City can only be supported with pitch and changing accommodation investment.
- 1.41** With the 20 clubs fielding 281 teams each club has an average of 14 teams. Whilst gaelic games generally is thought of as operating during the summer months in

practice the season commences with pre-season training from January to March with competitions running through to October. Each week during the competition season a total of 100 Go Game/youth/adult matches are played; with 23 full pitches available this points to 5 matches taking place on each pitch. Training needs add significantly to the use of pitches as the same stock of pitches is used for matches and training. Survey results show that the average weekly use (matches and training) of each clubs' main pitch is 24 hours.

- 1.42 When asked about synthetic surfaces especially thinking of 3G and AstroTurf, the clubs responded as follows:-

	Training			Matches		
	Not favourable	Neutral	Favourable	Not favourable	Neutral	Favourable
AstroTurf	30	45	20	55	25	10
3G	0	50	45	45	20	30

The result shows 3G is generally accepted for training and much preferred to AstroTurf, whilst only 30% of respondents accept 3G for matches. It is also noted that the acceptance of 3G pitches for training may relate largely to the pre-season period (January to March) when clubs' grass pitches are less able to accommodate demand due to weather conditions and dark evenings.

Cricket – Summary

Quantity

Membership and Teams

- 1.43 There are 14 cricket clubs in the District with the following breakdown of participants and teams:-

	Male	Female	Total Male and Female / Teams
Membership			
Pre-Junior (6 -11 yrs)	186	70	256
Junior (12 -18 Yrs)	246	96	342
Adult	563	193	756
Total Players	995	359	1,354
Teams			
Youth (U7 to U10)	3	1	4
Junior (U11,U13,U15)	29	2	31
Adult	39	7	46

Total Teams	71	10	81
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- 1.44** The 1,354 participants represents 11% of the total number of participants across the five sports.

Pitches/Cricket Squares

- 1.45** A summary and breakdown of current match and training facilities by ownership and quality is:-

Cricket Squares used for matches and training – quantity and quality					
Ownership	No of cricket squares	Good	Standard	Poor	Unknown
Clubs	18	7	8	2	1
Education	6	-	-	-	6
Total	24	7	8	2	7

Adequacy of Provision

District-wide

- 1.46** Three pitch scenarios are assessed – the same stock of pitches is used both for matches and training, therefore training needs are incorporated in the assessment.

Reference	Description	No of full size grass pitches
Scenario 1	All pitches	24
Scenario 2	Pitches with secured community use <i>and</i> pitches used by the community, but not secured (excludes pitches not available to community use).	18
Scenario 3	Council pitches only	0

- 1.47** Whilst adequacy of provision for all three scenarios is assessed, Scenario 2 is put forward as the most realistic picture of adequacy.

**Youth, Junior and Adult
matches and training**

+ 1 pitch

- 1.48** Based on PPM quantitative analysis, the results for Scenario 2 show that supply is just meeting demand for competitive games and training for all age groups with a small surplus of one pitch. It is important to note the following additional comments when considering the results for Scenario 2:-

- ❖ Scenario 2 is set to model *current* pitch supply and demand. The adequacy of provision results indicate supply is only just meeting demand.
- ❖ Scenario 2 assumes that cricket pitch capacity is 5 games on a weekly basis plus 10 hours of training. Most of the clubs play in the North West Cricket League in which up to 30% of teams are based outside the Council area. The demand for pitches for games on occasions will therefore be reduced for away matches as these will be based outside the Council area.
- ❖ Scenario 2 demonstrates cricket provision is being well used with little pitch capacity to encourage growth – some clubs with a large number of teams and just one pitch, note on occasions, difficulty with accommodating both matches and training effectively. The following was recorded by three clubs in the online club survey:-
 - “We don't have access to a 2nd pitch.”
 - “The pitch owner sometimes doesn't allow us to play.”
 - “Localised flooding has impacted on both pitches causing the pitch unplayable for much of last season and the beginning of this 2018 season.”
- ❖ Scheduling of more adult games mid-week would perhaps allow for an increased number of matches to be accommodated, however given that adult matches can last more than 4 hours this may not always be an option.

By Area

- 1.49** Four areas within the District are also assessed for adequacy of provision, as follows:-

Area	Adequacy of Provision (Adult)
Derry City	Evens
Derry Rural	Evens
Strabane Town	Evens
Strabane Rural	+ 1 pitch

Whilst this demonstrates only a small surplus, cricket does not require a ‘buffer’ of pitches in the same way as other field sports, although several clubs aspire to extending training areas and/or developing a second pitch.

Commentary

- 1.50** The foregoing assessment of supply/demand along with consultation and survey work informs a number of key points:-

- ❖ Looking at *adequacy of provision* Scenario 2 is viewed as the most realistic picture given it includes only pitches that are available for community use. It shows the following for matches and training: -

All teams + 1 Supply just meeting demand

- ❖ These results demonstrate a sport in general using pitch resources to the maximum for matches and training – there is little spare pitch capacity to sustain significant growth. Just four of the clubs have a second pitch: Ardmore CC, Bready CC, Donemana CC and Killyclooney CC.
- ❖ Participation in cricket is predominantly male at youth and junior levels, however seven clubs report having an adult female team. About half of the clubs expect female membership to grow in the next 5 years. Cricket Ireland, whilst having a clear female development pathway acknowledges there is a huge potential for more female participation.

Hockey – Summary

Quantity

Membership and Teams

- 1.51** There are 4 hockey clubs in the District with the following breakdown of participants and teams:-

Table 1.9 Hockey Clubs – Profile of Membership and Teams

	Male	Female	Total Male And Female / Teams
<u>Membership</u>			
Pre-Junior (6 -11 yrs)	44	65	109
Junior (12 -18 Yrs)	17	55	72
Adult	18	70	88
Total Players	79	190	269
<u>Teams</u>			
Mini (U9, U11, U13)	1	9	10
Youth (U15)	0	2	2
Adult	0	5	5
Total Teams	1	16	17

- 1.52** The 269 participants represent 2% of the total number of participants across the five sports.

Pitches

- 1.53** Club hockey is now played exclusively on artificial turf pitches (ATP's), either sand filled/dressed or water 'AstroTurf'; 3G surfaces are not suited to hockey. It is the case that school's hockey often uses the shale pitches still found on many school sites, however these are not recognised for competitive play by the Ulster Hockey Union. A summary and breakdown of current match and training facilities by ownership is:-

Hockey Pitches used for matches and training		
Ownership	Astroturf pitch	Shale
DC&SDC	1	2
Education	2	3
Total	3	5

The AstroTurf pitches are all sand filled/dressed; there are no water-based hockey pitches in the Derry and Strabane area. The two education site pitches are at Foyle College and at Castleterg High School.

Quality

- 1.54** Both of the school AstroTurf pitches are rated 'Good'. The Council's full-size AstroTurf pitch at Foyle Arena/St Columb's Park is rated 'Standard'. Priorians Hockey Club rated the Council pitch as 'Poor', noting the surface is in need of a new carpe, dugouts are damaged and often there is excess sand and leaf litter on the pitch. The club also notes that the Ulster Hockey Union has had occasion to inspect the pitch recently over concerns about its suitability for adult competitive matches.

Adequacy of Provision

- 1.55** In accordance with the Sport England model for adequacy of provision the pitch supply for each of three scenarios for adult, youth and mini competitive hockey games is:-

Pitch Site	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
	Astroturf	Astroturf	Astroturf
Council	1	1	1
Education	2	1	0
Totals	3	2	1

- 1.56** Based on the quantitative analysis, Scenario 2 is put forward as the most realistic picture of adequacy of provision for hockey as follows:-

Mini + 1 pitch

Youth + 1 pitch
Adult evens

- ❖ Scenario 2 is set to model *current* pitch supply and demand. The adequacy of provision results indicate supply is meeting demand for mini and youth and no surplus for adult.
- ❖ Scenario 2 assumes that hockey pitch capacity is 3 games on a Saturday afternoon and 80% of games are played then. A lower pitch capacity i.e. a third game from 4.00pm to 6.00pm cannot be played will result in that supply cannot meet demand.
- ❖ Scenario 2 assumes that U15 games are played both mid-week and on Sundays as per Ulster Hockey fixtures – given that there are just two U15 teams supply meets demand.
- ❖ It is known that both AstroTurf pitches in Scenario 2 are also used for other sports training e.g. Castledearg High School pitch is used for association football, gaelic and rugby club training. This may reduce the availability for hockey training and matches if hockey is not given priority. St Columb's AstroTurf pitch is also used extensively for association football training.

Community Impact

1.57 The following points summarise the impact of provision for hockey in the Derry and Strabane area:-

- ❖ It is noted there is only one Council owned synthetic AstroTurf hockey pitch; adequacy of provision therefore relies on the use of Castledearg High School synthetic hockey pitch – Derg Valley Junior and Senior clubs are based here. Hockey is a minority sport in the Council area, however all four clubs aspire to grow their membership. Participation is mostly female but three of the clubs hope to grow male participation.
- ❖ The condition of the playing surface at the St Columb's AstroTurf pitch at Foyle Arena is a concern to both Priorians HC and Foyle HC. Priorians HC note that Ulster Hockey has inspected the Foyle Arena pitch and advised the club to seek an alternative home base due to the condition of the hockey facilities there.
- ❖ Schools hockey is an important factor in the development of club hockey. Each of the four clubs has a link with a local hockey playing post primary school from which it draws players. This school-club link in hockey is found elsewhere throughout the Province. This link alongside the unsuitability of shale pitches for hockey training or matches has led increasingly to hockey playing post primary schools looking to develop on-site AstroTurf pitches. Through consultation it's noted that the recently opened Foyle

College has a full-size synthetic AstroTurf pitch – the college has a community use policy. In addition, Strabane Academy is currently undergoing redevelopment with a new school build under construction at the Derry Road site in Strabane town – an AstroTurf hockey pitch is included in Phase 1 of the build.

- ❖ As the Council thinks about future facility provision for hockey, the growth in the popularity of 3G pitches for large ball sports (mostly for training) needs to be considered. AstroTurf pitches came to be regarded as multi-sport, however the advent of 3G technology for ATP’s has resulted in AstroTurf pitches being replaced by 3G pitches which are more suited to large ball sports. The development of Melvin 3G multi-sport pitch may free up extra slots for hockey training and matches at Castlederg High School.

Rugby – Summary

Quantity

Membership and Teams

- 1.58** There are two rugby clubs in the Council area with the following breakdown of participants and teams:-

Table 1.10 : Rugby Clubs – Profile of Membership and Teams based in DC&SDC			
	Male	Female	Total Male And Female / Teams
<u>Membership</u>			
Pre-Junior (6 -11 yrs)	190	40	230
Junior (12 -18 Yrs)	130	9	139
Adult	180	20	200
Total Players	500	69	569
<u>Teams</u>			
Mini (U7 to U12)	10	3	13
Youth (U13 to U18)	4	0	4
Adult	7	1	8
Total Teams	21	4	25

- 1.59** The 569 participants represent 4% of the total number of participants across the five sports.

Pitches

- 1.60** Rugby is played on a natural grass pitch which is typically 120m (including in-goal areas) by 70m. There are two rugby clubs in the Council area: Derry City Rugby Football Club (RFC) and Strabane RFC; a third club, YMCA RFC, folded a few years ago. Strabane RFC does not own pitch facilities; currently the club plays home senior matches at Strabane Academy school pitch and Finn Valley pitch in County Donegal. The club also uses Spamount Council pitches for underage tournaments. There are no full-size grass pitches dedicated to rugby under Council ownership. A summary and breakdown of current rugby pitches used for matches and training is:-

Summary of Rugby Pitches used for matches and training			
Ownership	Full Grass / 3G	Youth Grass	Training (AstroTurf, 3G)
Clubs	5	2	0
Education	7	4	1 x AstroTurf
DC&SDC	1	0	1 x 3G training
Total	13	6	2

The recently developed 3G multi-sports pitch at Melvin Sports Complex can accommodate rugby raining and matches if it has been specified in accordance with IRFU guidelines for artificial turf pitches.

Quality

- 1.61** Of the 7 pitches in club ownership, the clubs themselves rate 2 as ‘Good’, 1 as ‘Standard’ and 3 as ‘Poor’ with the quality of the remaining pitch unknown. Whilst 6 of the 10 education sector pitches are rated as ‘Good’ they are generally not made available for community use (Strabane RFC uses the pitch at Strabane Academy on occasion).

Adequacy of Provision

- 1.62** In accordance with the Sport England model for adequacy of provision the pitch supply for each of three scenarios for adult, youth and mini games is:-

Pitch Site	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Clubs	Full Grass	Full Grass	Full Grass
All	5	3	0
Education			
Secondary	7	0	0
Council			
DC&SDC	0	0	0

Totals	12	3	0
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1.63 Based on the quantitative analysis, Scenario 2 is put forward as the most realistic picture of adequacy of provision for rugby as follows:-

Mini **+ 2 pitch**
Youth **evens**
Adult **- 2 pitches**

The results for Scenario 2 show that supply is meeting demand for competitive games for mini and youth age groups but there is a shortfall of 2 pitches in supply for adult games. It is important to note the following additional comments when considering the results for Scenario 2:-

- ❖ Scenario 2 is set to model *current* pitch supply and demand. The adequacy of provision results indicate supply is not meeting demand for adult male competitive games – currently Strabane RFC does not have a home pitch and play their matches at Strabane Academy and Finn Valley in County Donegal.
- ❖ Scenario 2 assumes that rugby pitch capacity is two games on a Saturday, a youth match in the morning and an adult game in the afternoon. A lower pitch capacity will reduce the modelled surplus.
- ❖ Scenario 2 does not include use of 3G facilities for adult or youth matches as these were not recorded as used in the club survey. 3G pitches are not widely accepted yet for matches.
- ❖ Scenario 2 as presented does not account for training which also takes place on most rugby pitches in addition to matches. Derry City RFC report that the club growth is being constrained by the lack of training pitch facilities. Strabane RFC is homeless using a number of different venues to deliver training.

Community Impact

1.64 Both clubs highlight the need for additional rugby pitches. Strabane RFC's preference is for the Council to provide/lease a pitch to the club whilst City of Derry RFC has a vision to develop a major rugby/multi-sports complex at its Judges Road site. Key summary points for rugby are:-

- ❖ Rugby clubs tend to train and play matches on club pitches where changing accommodation and social facilities are also available. With just two clubs, rugby is a minority sport in the Council area, however a total of 25 teams are fielded across the two clubs involving 569 players from 6 years of age through to adult; only 69 players are female. City of Derry RFC has an adult female team. As with association football the under-representation of

female players presents an opportunity for future sports development programmes. Both clubs embrace and view an increase in female participation as an area for growth.

- ❖ Strabane RFC does not have a home ground and delivers matches and training across a number of venues including: Strabane Academy, Finn Valley Grounds (Co. Donegal), Strabane Cricket Club, Spamount Playing Fields, Meadows Playing Field, Castlederg High School and others.
- ❖ There are no dedicated Council owned grass rugby pitches, however the recently developed 3G multi-sports pitch at Melvin Sports Complex is expected to be suitable for rugby training and matches.