

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Subject: The Plymouth Sports Facility Strategy (concentrating on the North of Plymouth)

Committee: Budshead, Honicknowle and Southway Area Committee

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Executive Summary:

1 The Plymouth Sports Facility Strategy

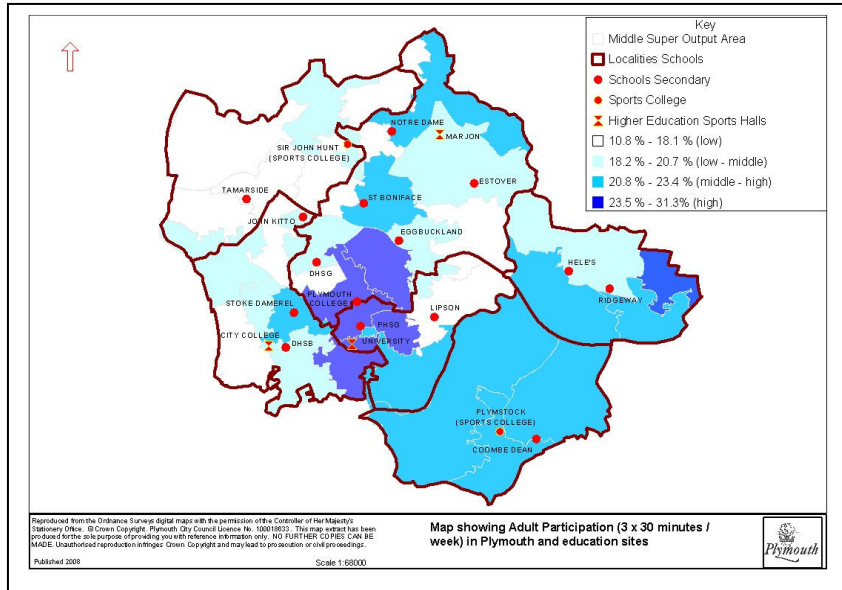
- 1.1 According to recent surveys, over half of Plymouth residents do not participate in any type of fitness or sporting activity and – despite recently recorded increases – only just under one quarter take part on a regular and sustained basis (at least three times a week for 30 minutes). There is also wide variation in participation rates and opportunities to take part in sport and fitness across the city. Involvement in sport and fitness is usually regarded as a matter of personal preference, but many people may be discouraged because of lack of opportunities or barriers to taking part and those who do start to get fit or learn a new sport may not continue to realise their full potential.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Sports Facilities Strategy is to understand where we need to improve and develop the range and quality of sporting facilities and opportunities in Plymouth. In this, it particularly supports the delivery of Corporate Improvement Priority (CIP) 6 of ‘providing more and better culture and leisure activities’ and also (CIP) 4 of ‘reducing inequalities’.
- 1.3 The new opportunities it creates will enable increased physical activity and participation rates (targets for which are set out within the Local Area Agreement) and progression through to higher standards of performance.
- 1.4 A specific aim of this Strategy has been to present much of the information visually. Demographic characteristics, indices of deprivation, participation rates and the location and distribution of facilities and their catchment areas have been mapped.

For example:

Example 1

The Sport England Active People Survey 1 allowed the mapping (Map 1) of levels of a population’s fitness or sporting activity on a regular and sustained basis. The deeper the colour the higher the level of activity. The positioning of Plymouth’s secondary schools is also shown.

Map 1

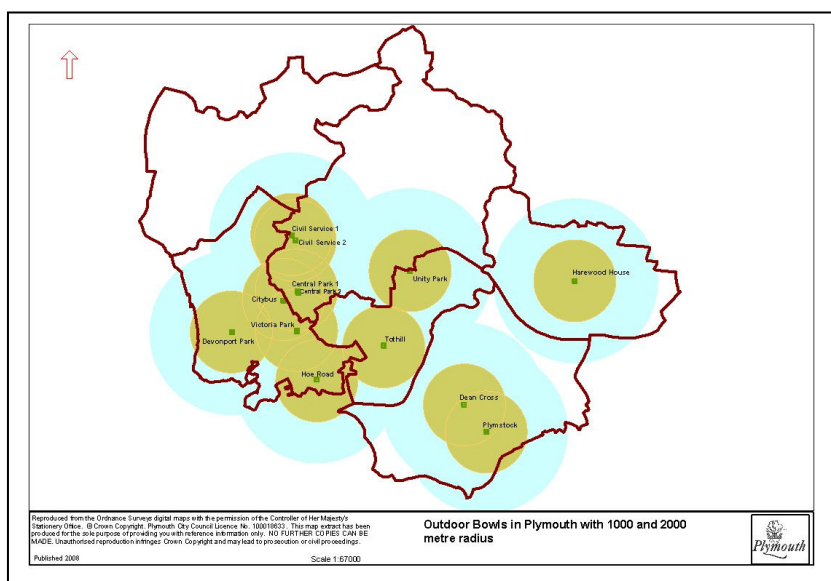


This research for the Strategy shows that generally, participation in sport is higher in the east of Plymouth than the west – although the picture in the centre of the city is complex. The analysis also suggests correlations between rates of participation and other indices; for example, there appears to be a relatively strong correlation between neighbourhoods exhibiting relatively low rates of participation and high indices of deprivation.

Example 2

Major types of facilities were also mapped and compared against Plymouth's 'Locality' areas with catchments shown with a straight line 1000 and 2000 metre radii. Map 2 shows the positioning of the outdoor bowling greens.

Map 2



Although this example only describes one type of facility (outdoor bowls) it clearly shows areas of Plymouth with an inequality of access. Unsurprisingly the analysis suggests that there is also a strong correlation between easy access to sports facilities and rates of participation.

2 Challenges in Facility Provision for the Strategy to address

- 2.1 There is already a well established network of public, commercial and education based sports facilities within Plymouth. Nevertheless, as the Strategy sets out within its detailed facility analysis, challenges remain, including:
- Several facilities which are in need of upgrading (notably on school sites) and replacement (the Mayflower Centre, Central Park Swimming Pools). Indoor sports halls which are not able to accommodate a range of sports due to inadequate sizing and ancillary facilities
 - Although a completely even distribution of indoor, outdoor and specialist facilities throughout the city is not practicable, **certain areas are a long way from any kind of sport or fitness facility, impacting on people's ability to take part**
 - **Wide variations in ease of accessibility and transport to different facilities**, particularly for those whose mobility and ability to access opportunities is restricted (e.g. by cost, time).
 - A lack of a recognised 'network of provision' whereby a range of sports can progress from basic entry level facilities to higher quality venues capable of accommodating competitive, coaching and training events at various levels restricting club and sports development
 - Limited access for the community to take part in sport during the day in term time due to the location of the majority of the city's stock of sports facilities on education sites

3 Opportunities within Plymouth

- 3.1 The draft Strategy makes reference to a number of key opportunities arising for transforming sports facility provision within the city, most critically:
- 3.2 Building Schools for the Future: Mapping school sports provision (see Map 1) for the Strategy has demonstrated how pivotal facilities at secondary schools are to the development of sporting opportunity in Plymouth, particularly within lower participant and deprived neighbourhoods. As well as creating a sound basis for young people to begin their lifelong involvement in active recreation, facilities on education sites are a model for future sustainable sports facility provision. Providing access to the community is guaranteed, they can have a huge impact on education, community participation and the sports development continuum of 'grow, sustain, and excel'.
- 3.3 The BSF programme for Plymouth brings with it great opportunities for establishing a new network of city-wide leisure facilities. This will be achieved through a co-ordinated approach to the management of the facilities and a city wide sports development vision, which will significantly impact on the corporate objectives of widening leisure opportunities.

- 3.4 **New Funding Opportunities:** Whilst many sports aspire to having dedicated provision (particularly indoor sports), the delivery of this vision is unrealistic. Opportunities however may exist, through the delivery of the Whole Sport Plans and increased revenue funding given to Governing Bodies by Sport England, for the co-commissioning of new facilities.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 Initial consultation for the strategy embraced key partners – Sport England, the Community Sports Network, Children's Services, Plymouth Schools, Plymouth University, UCP Marjons, Plymouth Sports Forum, the Primary Care Trust, National Governing Bodies, Children and Young People's Services, Health, Community Safety, sports clubs and the commercial sector, sports development officers, sports facility managers (both public and commercial) and various user groups including young people, older people and people with disabilities and their parents and carers.
- 4.2 The second phase of consultation was with the same group of stakeholders to establish that the Strategy has been written in accord with their initial comments. This second phase also included an invitation to the public to determine whether there was agreement with the principles and vision laid down in the document and to seek further views and possible actions on how sports facilities and new opportunities in Plymouth, could be developed. The second phase runs for 12 weeks and this consultation period ends on 22 January 2010.

5 Key Comments

All research and responses to consultation will be considered in the final drafting of the Sports Facility Strategy. The key findings and comments, received to date, reflecting provision in the North of Plymouth include:

5.1 Indoor Sport Halls

- Better, secured access to existing facilities and/or access to new provision for competition and specialist development are required in a number of sports, notably badminton, netball, basketball and volleyball.
- Replacement of Mayflower Leisure Centre indoor courts by 12 court hall at The Life Centre and development of a network of provision of satellite sports halls based around the Life Centre hub
- Deficiency in indoor sports space – additional provision either sports hall or flexible covered space to serve the north west of Plymouth, Lipson/Laira and Efford and Plympton
- Poor quality indoor sports halls - Preferably replacement or major enhancement; improved ancillary provision such as changing facilities at various school sites (Priority: Stoke Damerel School sports hall; Tamarside Community College sports hall; Lipson Community College sports hall)
- Smaller community halls – improved access where detailed locality/neighbourhood analysis suggests shortfalls

5.2 Provision for Swimming

- PCC contribution to community access to UCP Marjon to serve North East of the City

- Provision of a site to be identified in the North West of the City (possibility John Kitto School, but subject to further detailed analysis)

5.3 Synthetic Surfaces

- Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs) to serve Tamarside and Whitleigh school sites.

5.4 Provision for Tennis

- Need for improvements to existing, and new provision of public outdoor tennis courts. including North of A38/Derriford area and within the North West locality

5.5 Bowls

- Consideration to be given to new provision in the North West of the City

5.6 Outdoor and Adventure Sports and the Natural Environment

- Parts of the city which are deficient in indoor provision, (such as St Budeaux, Ernesettle, Whitleigh,) (being on the fringes of the built up area) are close to countryside and water resources, and advantage should be taken of this proximity by extending means of access such as footpaths, cycleways, slipways and launching areas

5.7 Health and Fitness

- Unmet demand; desire to create network of health and fitness facilities throughout city, linking in to wide variety of health resources (GP Referrals etc)
- To consider new provision at all schools where no provision at present (e.g Tamarside Community College) and the extension of some existing facilities, to encourage wider community use.
- Development of community gyms and use of community halls and local resources for a range of health and fitness activities.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Whilst being focused on delivering corporate objectives, the proposals and policies emanating from the Strategy need to be realistic about the opportunities to enhance and improve facilities. In view of the investment the Council is making to The Life Centre, the enhancement of facilities at UCP Marjon and new and regenerated school provision through the BSF programme, it is widely accepted that there is unlikely to be additional large scale capital development funded by the Council during the period 2009 – 2020.

6.2 This is reflected in the Strategy's emphasis on providing a framework for use by the key partners – the City Council (especially Culture, Sport and Leisure, Children's Services and Development), the Community Sports Network, the Primary Care Trust, national governing bodies and other partners in children and young people's services, health, community safety, sports clubs and the commercial sector - to inform and guide discussions about facility need and investment.

- 6.3 The strategy describes the importance of accessibility to facilities and opportunities, to encourage as many people as possible to take part in sport and fitness activities. Wherever possible, to provide sports and leisure facilities in combination with other 'essential community facilities' that can be used for a number of purposes. The obvious location is on school sites within Plymouth but there will be other sectors such as retail and employment locations where such facilities can be of benefit with Investment in priority areas to address major deficiencies and to maximise overall increases in participation amongst target groups
- 6.4 The strategy more importantly for this report will set out where the facility deficiencies are in Plymouth and show where provision is most needed for a variety of sports and target groups and to provide a framework for facility improvements and new developments for the next 10 to 15 years.
- 6.5 The support and commitment of local people, their elected representatives and the City Council's many partners are therefore sought, so that funding to deliver the improvements and new facilities Plymouth's residents, workers, students and visitors require can be attracted and the potential for the North, and in deed the whole of Plymouth, as a vibrant City of Sport can be fully realised.