

Thanet District Council

Sport Matters

Sport and Active Recreation
Strategy 2010 - 2013

January 2010

Contents

Executive summary.....	3
Foreword	4
Introduction.....	5
Vision and Themes	10
Theme 1 – Raising the profile of Sport and Active Recreation	13
Theme 2 – Increasing opportunities for sport	15
Theme 3 – Developing Healthy Lifestyles.....	17
Theme 4 – Enhancing Sports Facility Provision	18
Evaluating delivery of the Strategy	19
Contact details.....	19
Document History.....	19
Appendix 1: Summary of Local, Regional and National Policies	20
Appendix 2: Executive Summary of the Thanet Sports Facilities Improvement Plan.....	22

Executive summary

Foreword

- By the sponsoring officer or member

Introduction

Defining Sport and Active Recreation

Sport, active recreation and physical activity may mean different things to different people. For the purpose of this Strategy the following definitions apply:

Sport – means all forms of active recreation which through casual or organised participation, aimed at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competitions at all levels (Council of Europe, European Sports Charter, revised 2001).

This definition is wide and inclusive and may include informal sport which may take place in parks, on beaches and promenades, as well as in purpose built facilities or on pitches and in formal and competitive sports situations e.g. football and netball leagues, cricket, basketball and bowls. This demonstrates the relevance of sport to the whole community.

Active Recreation – this is generally considered to be unstructured activity that individuals freely pursue in their leisure time for a sense of enjoyment that also benefits their physical, social and emotional well-being. (Taken from Department of Health: At least five a week: Evidence of the impact of active recreation and its relationship to health, April 2004).

Active Living – is a way of life in which active recreation is valued and integrated into daily living, for example active transport, gardening, everyday walking, everyday cycling, DIY. (Taken from Government of Canada, 1992)

Physical Activity – is an all encompassing term that includes active living, active recreation, health related activity, exercise, play and sport.

This strategy focuses on developing and increasing opportunities for sport and active recreation as, whilst all aspects of active living are important, other council policies cover this area.

Why Sport and Active Recreation?

The importance of sport and active recreation as a means to achieve wider social, health, economic and environmental outcomes for individuals and communities has been increasingly recognised by Central Government and others over recent years. Growing research and evidence has demonstrated that sport and active recreation has the potential to:

- Provide health benefits to those who regularly participate in sport and active lifestyles and to support the Government agenda to change the health and lifestyle choices of the local population, reducing the burden on the health service
- Provide positive opportunities and diversionary activities to those young people who may otherwise become disenfranchised
- Develop community cohesion and pull together groups/communities
- Improve educational attainment providing an opportunity to contribute to a reduction in unemployment

- Deliver economic benefits to areas through increased participation in sport and related leisure activities and also through visitors attracted by high quality sporting events and facilities.

The programme of international sporting events scheduled for this country such as London 2012 Olympics, Commonwealth Games 2014 and the rugby/football/cricket world cups will give an unprecedented opportunity to increase participation for the benefit of the population.

For Thanet, sport and active recreation is not focussed solely on participation within formal indoor and outdoor sports facilities. Thanet's coastal location and its stunning natural assets of its beaches and its walking and cycling routes provide informal opportunities for local people and visitors to the area to take part in a variety of beach and water based activities, as well as informal walking and cycling.

Why a Sport and Active Recreation Strategy?

- Increase the profile of sport within the planning, policy and decision making processes of the Council;
- Provide a link with strategies of regional and national agencies relating to sport and active recreation;
- Demonstrate the benefits of sport and active recreation to broader agendas;
- Target scarce resources most effectively, in line with corporately identified priorities and act as a lever for gaining funding from external resources;
- Maximise the benefit for Thanet of London 2012 in terms of contributing to the Olympics and in developing a longer term legacy from London 2012.

This Sport and Active Recreation Strategy (hereafter the 'Strategy') has been developed to provide a clear vision and framework for the development of sports activities, facilities and services within Thanet for the next 3 years.

The Local Context

Thanet's Population

Thanet's population is estimated to be 126,900 (2001 estimates) of which 57,005 live in Margate, 39,639 in Ramsgate, 24,370 in Broadstairs and 5,886 in the Villages. Thanet's population is aging, with a larger number of people over the age of 65 (27,568) than young people under the age of 15 (25,526). The population is predominantly white British, at 97.69% of the total population. Only 0.83% describe themselves as 'Mixed', followed by 0.29% as Chinese and Indian.

The population is characterised by high levels of deprivation, which have implications for the health of the population. Unemployment is higher than the Kent or England average, at 5.5%, compared with 2.5% and 3.2% respectively (2001 figures). Levels of car ownership are lower, with almost 1/3 of households with no car.

Thanet's Health Profile

Thanet is an area of high deprivation and indicators of health are poor when compared to England. The main contributory factors for this are inward migration of vulnerable groups, child poverty, high numbers of old people and low numbers of more affluent groups. Life expectancy, although increasing, is lower than in England as a whole. Over 21,400 people are dependent on means tested benefits. Over 6,800 children live in low income households. Estimated smoking rates and death rates from smoking are both high. Early death rates from cancer are also higher than the national average. Levels of healthy eating, active recreation and adult obesity are similar to national levels.

Health inequalities do not exist uniformly throughout Thanet and are greatest in a number of wards (or part of wards), namely Beacon Road, Central Harbour, Cliftonville West, Dane Valley, Margate Central, Newington and Northwood. As a result of these facts a key local priority is to improve the health of the whole population and in particular the health of the poorest groups. This clearly has implications for this Sport and Active Recreation Strategy.

Thanet's Participation in Sport and Active Recreation

'Active People', the largest participation* survey of adults in England was conducted by Sport England. Headline figures for the 2005/06 Active People survey indicated a number of key challenges nationally but also provided localised figures for each district. The survey was repeated for 2007/08 (Active People 2**). Although the figure increased over the two surveys, Thanet still performed poorly against regional and national figures for participation as seen in the table below;

Area	2005/06 Regular Participation	2005/06 no activity	2007/08 Regular Participation	2007/08 no activity
Thanet	17.7%	55.7%	18.3%	51.3%
Kent	19.9%	51.6%	19.1%	49.2%
South East region	22.6%	46.9%	22.3%	45.3%
England	21.0%	50.6%	21.3%	48.5%

* Regular participation measured as 3 x 30 minutes moderate intensity exercise per week

** Active People 2 however used a sample size that was smaller than the first survey so some care must be taken with comparisons

Not only do fewer people than average take part regularly in sport, but over half of the population of Thanet had not taken part in exercise within the four weeks prior to the survey. This presents a large problem which will affect the health of the population and a big task in order to help change their lifestyles to achieve the recommended levels.

The survey also measures how often people volunteer in sport on a weekly basis, overall levels of satisfaction with levels of sporting provision in the local community, competitive sporting opportunities and those receiving structured coaching activity. These are key indicators that will help us to improve the local sporting structures and contribute to increased participation.

These results should not come as too much of a surprise, since the link between socio-economic status, age and health and sports participation is well known. It does however demonstrate the importance of this Strategy and allows us to monitor target areas/groups and direct the funding to areas that will benefit the district most.

The Sport and Active Recreation Context

In developing this strategy, the Council has taken into consideration other key strategies and documents that have been developed by other organisations at a national, regional and local level. A summary of these key documents can be found in appendix 1.

The Strategy also builds on the Council's Corporate Plan (2007 – 2011) and its Cultural Strategy (2008 - 2011), as well as a number of other sport and active recreation-related strategies and documents which have been developed by Thanet District Council in recent years.

The Structure of Sport in Thanet

Sport in Thanet is delivered through a range of organisations and venues in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

The Council has a committed 'Sports Development' team delivering a range of projects including;

Sport 4 NRG – The Sport 4 NRG programme uses sport as a tool to combat anti-social behaviour. The programme originally funded by Sport England worked closely with the youth offending service to offer opportunities for disaffected young people. The success of the project has enabled further funding to be attracted and has allowed an amendment of the objectives of the project, working with a wider base of young people to try and reduce the chances of anti-social behaviour prior to offending and offering support to them to get back into mainstream activity.

Disability Sport – a project, originally funded by Sport England and Thanet School Sports Partnership, aimed to increase sporting activities and fitness opportunities on offer to people with disabilities in Thanet. The Council is continually committed to producing equal opportunities in sport and recreation and we strongly believe that it has the power to change and improve the lives of disabled people who live within the district.

School Holiday 'Sport Matters' programme - each of the projects above contribute to the school holiday activities programme with combined events and daily sessions for specific target groups. The Sport Matters programme also includes collaborations with local clubs and facilities to offer high quality out of school activities.

Key Events - the team have worked hard to establish a range of sporting events to raise awareness of the benefits of sport and active recreation, celebrate local talent and also showcase top quality sport. This ranges from the National Beach Volleyball event in Margate to school sport festivals, club tournaments and mass participation taster events.

Strategic direction - over the past two years, work has been undertaken to establish Thanet as a sporting district and place it within the minds of local, county, regional and national organisations/ policy makers to maximise the benefits including attracting external funding, high level events, facility improvements and coach and volunteer development. This strategy focuses this work further.

Other local providers that offer sporting opportunities include;

- Voluntary Sports Clubs
- Schools and Colleges
- Leisure Trusts
- Private sector - including coaching companies, health and fitness facility providers
- Primary Care Trust
- Youth Groups

As well as working on individual targets, those mentioned above also work collaboratively through the Thanet Sports Network (TSN), a network of partners with an interest in sport and active recreation who work towards the achievement of agreed outcomes.

The benefits of the TSN include;

- Identifies local need and helps develop a local vision
- Pulls together key partners to create greater leverage in local, regional and national planning
- Provides a balance between strategy and delivery
- Reduces duplication
- Helps to attract greater levels of funding for sport and physical activity to the district
- Helps to deliver individual and collective targets

Vision and Themes

Our vision is to build active, healthy, safe and successful communities in Thanet through increased participation in sport and active recreation.

By 2013 we want to see more people in Thanet enjoying the benefits associated with a more active lifestyle.

This means:

- More people aspiring to take part in sport and active recreation
- More people actually taking part in sport and active recreation
- More people becoming involved as volunteers in sport and active recreation
- Increased satisfaction with facilities and opportunities for sport and active recreation in Thanet

We particularly want to see:

- An increase year on year of participation in sport and active recreation in Thanet (based on a baseline of the 2006 Active People Survey results) and in-line with the Kent Area Agreement 2 targets
- Increased capacity within the local community to enable the above through support of existing and creation of new sports clubs, coaches and officials and improved facilities
- Engagement of hard to reach groups such as people with a disability, women and girls, older people, people living in deprived areas and young people at risk of offending or under achieving in education.

Overarching Themes

During the consultation processes a number of complementary themes emerged that will help us to achieve this overall vision of increasing participation and the wider benefits this brings;

- Theme 1 - Raising the profile of sport and active recreation
- Theme 2 - Increasing opportunities for sport
- Theme 3 - Developing healthy lifestyles
- Theme 4 - Enhancing sports facility provision

Raising the profile of sport and active recreation

Lack of knowledge and lack of information impacts negatively on people's participation in sport and active recreation. Linked to this is the need to promote how sport and active recreation can contribute to the achievement of wider objectives both for the individual e.g. improved health and well-being and for local communities e.g. economic development, tourism, community safety and community cohesion.

A clear and consistent message of the overall importance of sport is the intention of this strategy and its actions.

Increasing opportunities for sport

Taking account of Thanet's current low participation rates in sport and active recreation there needs to be a wider base of opportunities for the local population to choose from, these need to be innovative and offer varied ways of attracting the key target groups.

Encouraging more people to participate in sport and active recreation will also require more people to be involved as volunteers and in paid positions within the sector.

This strategy will seek to identify and support local clubs wishing to develop, provide coach and volunteer education opportunities and target external funding streams to help them grow and survive in the long term.

The Strategy will also assist in supporting new and existing delivery programmes operated by both the Council and other partners aimed at those not wishing to participate in the club environment and thus targeting specific hard to reach groups.

Developing healthy lifestyles

The clear links between inactivity and ill-health shown in Thanet's poor health profile highlight that one of the over arching themes should be how to encourage people to build exercise into their daily routine. Being moderately active for just 30 minutes per day can achieve some great health benefits. A Government Report (2007) states that if this situation does not improve, then 60% of men and 40% of women will be obese by 2050.

Taking part in sport and active recreation is at the core of developing healthy lifestyles however other elements such as healthy eating, sensible alcohol consumption and reduction in smoking make a big contribution. This aspect of the Strategy intends to work with partners in the health sector to promote healthy lifestyles in the wider sense but with a main focus on the delivery of sport and active recreation activities.

Enhancing sports facility provision

Satisfaction with sports facilities is closely linked to participation and therefore it is vital that, to meet today's higher customer expectations, steps are taken to ensure we have the best available facilities in the district.

Local and national surveys and the consultation process have shown dissatisfaction with the existing facilities across the district as shown with figure below from the Active People survey.

Area	Satisfied 05/06	Satisfied 07/08
S.E.	71.8%	69.9%
England	69.5%	66.6%
Hastings	69.1%	63.9%
Kent	66.8%	64.1%
Shepway	61.6%	59.1%
Dover	59%	56.5%
Thanet	58.7%	60.6%

This presents the district with a challenge to try and improve perceptions of local facilities. The obvious way to do this is the provision of new facilities however this is not always the most efficient method as refurbishment can also assist the improvement of these figures.

In order to ensure that Thanet's sports facility stock is fit for purpose and designed to attract new participants into sports activities, this Strategy will use recommendations from a recent Sports Facilities Improvement Project that the Council undertook, working with Sport England and other key local partners who provide sports facilities, to help inform decisions for the future and provide identified strategic priorities for Thanet.

The project identified a vision which aims to **'broaden the range of active leisure facilities and improve existing provision to engage a wider audience through increased choice and contribute to greater participation within the local community'**.

To achieve this, the local steering group undertook a mapping exercise of all of the key sports facilities in the district to audit current provision specifically looking at quantity, quality and accessibility. It then compared it with other local, regional and national norms and also looked at future needs of the area until 2026.

The outcome is a document that takes a snapshot in time of the current facilities, provides a robust evidence base to inform planning policy through the Local Development Framework process and looks at methods of addressing needs, identifying priorities along the way.

This will help avoid inappropriate investment in facilities and make sure that there is a clear direction in place for all sectors to contribute to as well as the Council. A summary of the project findings can be found in appendix two of this Strategy or the full version can be downloaded from www.thanet.gov.uk/sport.

Theme 1 – Raising the profile of Sport and Active Recreation

Action	How delivered	Lead Officer	In partnership with	Start date	End date	Budget	Resources
1.1 - Update the current TDC website and develop a website for the Thanet Sport Network, linked to other partners to promote opportunities for sport and active recreation	Clear links to information Links to local, regional and national organisations	Sports Development Manager	Thanet Sports Network TDC Web Communications	January 2010	On-going	Existing sports development budget External funding through TSN	Thanet.gov website
1.2 - Create clear marketing literature to inform partners and local community of the sports department work	Develop clear information available for each of the key areas of work	Sports Development Manager	TDC Communications	January 2010	July 2010	Existing sports development budget	Literature stock Display stand Press
1.3 - Develop and maintain a club directory (also web-based) ensuring that key information including contacts is available and up to date	Create easy to use online function for local clubs and organisations to upload information,	Sports Development Assistant	TDC Web Communications Thanet School Sports Partnership	April 2010	September 2010	Existing sports development budget	Website
1.4 - Deliver and provide support for key sports events in Thanet	County and district events at the leisure centres, Margate Masters National Volleyball, local taster and awareness days	Sports Development Manager Sports Development Assistant	Thanet Leisureforce Thanet Sports Network, TDC Events Dept	January 2010	On-going	Existing sports development budget and external funding/ sponsorship	Facilities Sports Equipment Press

1.5 - Maintain support and operation of Thanet Sports Network ensuring partners work together to create range of initiatives	Provide admin support and maintain high profile amongst members Oversee annual action plan to help achieve targets	Sports Development Manager	TSN partners Kent County Council Sport England	January 2010	On-going	External funding Use of existing sports development budget for TSN projects	Officer time
1.6 - Establishment of an annual awards ceremony through Thanet Sports Network to recognise and reward sporting and volunteer achievements	Annual ceremony Nomination period Engagement of local sports organisations	Sports Development Manager	TSN Partners Media Partner	April 2010	On-going	Existing sports development budget TSN partner funding Local sponsorship	Facilities Officer time Press
1.7 - Create a tiered talented performer support scheme to help local performers compete at the top level and inspire other residents to get involved	Promotional material Support of local facilities	Sports Development Manager	KCC	April 2010	March 2012	Existing sports development budget	Leaflets Website

Theme 2 – Increasing opportunities for sport

Action	How delivered	Lead Officer	In partnership with	Start date	End date	Budget	Resources
2.1 - Continue to deliver successful diversionary sports activities to targeted young people through the Sport 4 NRG programme and help them make suitable lifestyle decisions	Weekly delivery programme Education and training opportunities Links with key partners	Sport 4 NRG Officer	Pipeline Youth Initiative Youth Offending team Connexions	July 2009	June 2012 (*subject to funding)	External funding already achieved through Working Neighbourhoods Fund	Staff Sports Equipment
2.2 - Continue to develop sporting opportunities for disabled people in partnership with local disability organisations	Weekly activities programme Links to local voluntary disability clubs and organisations	Disability Sports Officer	KCC Local disability organisations	October 2009	September 2010 (*subject to funding)	External funding already secured	Staff Sports Equipment
2.3 – Co-ordinate a school holiday sports programme to develop and deliver sporting activities	Easter and Summer holiday activities and events Summer holiday sports brochure Providing support to local clubs/ organizations/events	Sports Development Assistant	Local clubs School Sports Partnership KCC Engage Youth Forum	April 2010	On-going	Corporate plan funding for out of school activities External funding Existing sports development budget	Sports Equipment Summer brochure
2.4 - Provide support to local voluntary clubs to assist	Funding advice	Sports Development	KCC	January 2010	On-going	Existing sports development	Officer time

them in delivering high quality opportunities	Promotion of the national 'Clubmark' accreditation scheme	Manager Sports Development Assistant	Thanet School Sports Partnership Sport England			budget External funding	Leaflets Website
2.5 - Consistent and comprehensive programme of generic and specific coach education courses run in the district	Lobby national governing bodies of sport Work with KCC 'Sport Ed' programme Incentive schemes	Sports Development Manager	KCC Sports Coach UK Local NGBs	April 2010	On-going	Existing sports development budget External funding	Leaflets Website
2.6 - Create clubs and leagues forum linked to TSN to increase interaction with local voluntary sports sector	Engage with local clubs/leagues Arrange first few with view to handing over to voluntary sector	Sports Development Manager Sports Development Assistant	Local leagues Local clubs KCC	September 2010	August 2011	Small budget to get started	Facility Electronic communication Leaflets Press
2.7 - Use London 2012 imaginatively to increase the number of people taking part in sport and sports volunteering	Support local and county 2012 working groups Work in partnership with Street Games to benefit from Inspire Mark Olympic themed events Sports Volunteering Programme in-line with existing volunteer organisations	Cultural Services Manager Sports Development Manager Sports Development Assistant	LOCOG / DCMS Sport England KCC	July 2010	March 2013	KCC Second Homes funding Existing sports development budget	Leaflets Press

Theme 3 – Developing Healthy Lifestyles

Action	How delivered	Lead Officer	In partnership with	Start date	End date	Budget	Resources
3.1 - Work with Thanet Leisureforce to provide a comprehensive range of activities with our leisure centres	Family friendly environment Varied activities Flexible pricing scheme Exercise Referral Scheme	Sports Development Manager	Thanet Leisureforce Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT	January 2010	December 2012	TLF management fee Existing sports development budget External funding	Sports Coaches Equipment Leaflets Website Press
3.2 – Deliver National Free Swimming Programme in local authority owned pools	Programmed sessions of free swimming for 16 yrs and under and 60 yrs and over	Cultural Services Manager	DCMS Amateur Swimming Association Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT Thanet Leisureforce	April 2009	31 st March 2011	External funding from DCMS, PCT and ASA	Increased staff at Leisure centre Leaflets Website
3.3 Work with Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT to identify projects to help prevent health inequalities	Targeted interventions to minority groups and focusing on different inequalities	Sports Development Manager	Thanet Leisureforce Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT	April 2010	On-Going	Existing sports development budget and External funding	Sports Coaches, Equipment, Leaflets, Website, Press

Theme 4 – Enhancing Sports Facility Provision

Action	How delivered	Lead Officer	In partnership with	Start date	End date	Budget	Resources
4.1 – Promote recommendations from the Sports Facilities Improvement project and work with partners to improve satisfaction with local venues	Publish plan Undertake evaluation and refresh of details annually	Sports Development Manager Cultural Services Manager	KCC Sport England Local providers NGBs	January 2010	December 2012	External funding Private sector investment Developer contributions	Officer time Website
4.2 - Support voluntary sports clubs in undertaking their own facility/grounds maintenance and pitch marking requirements	Support clubs in understanding process Work on suitable lease agreements	Sports Development Manager	TDC Estates, Legal and Parks dept Local clubs / organisations	January 2010	December 2012	Internal budgets from various departments	Leases Sports Facilities
4.3 – Continue to inspect and maintain Council owned facilities	Periodic inspections Repairs as required External funding achieved where possible	Sports Development Manager	Thanet Leisureforce	January 2010	On-going	Games Centre repairs and maintenance	Facilities
4.3 - Create a fast feedback system to report issues and undertake annual consultation with users of Council sports facilities	Online system Annual meetings with key organisations	Sports Development Manager	TDC Parks and IT dept Thanet Leisureforce, Local leagues/ organisations	September 2010	On-going	Existing sports development	Website IT

Evaluating delivery of the Strategy

Thanet District Council recognises the importance of setting challenging but realistic targets, monitoring progress and finally reviewing their outcomes and continued relevance in order to measure the performance of this Strategy.

An effective monitoring and review framework will be established to enable the progress of the strategy to be put in place.

This will encompass the following elements:

The actions within the Strategy will form key targets of individual's work programmes. These are reviewed as part of the Council's Performance Appraisal System each year.

The Service Plan for Environmental Services will also incorporate specific objectives and targets arising from this Strategy. This Service Plan is monitored on a monthly basis by Senior Managers and Members. The Service Plan also links with the Council's Corporate Plan and the EKLSP's Strategies and those aims and objectives arising from these plans are monitored regularly.

Finally there will be an annual review of the Strategy each year, forming part of Sports Development's Annual Report which will be widely communicated to partners informing them of progress.

A major review of the Strategy will be planned for the end of 2012 as part of the preparation for developing a new 5 year strategy for 2013.

Contact details

Sports Development
Thanet District Council
Po Box 9
Cecil Street
Margate
Kent
CT9 1XZ
leisure.services@thanet.gov.uk
01843 577367
www.thanet.gov.uk/sport

Document History

Version	Date	Agreed by	Minute ref
SAR01	2/12/09		

Appendix 1: Summary of Local, Regional and National Policies

National

GAME PLAN was a strategy for delivering the Government's sport and active recreation objectives to 'significantly increase levels of sport and active recreation, with the target of 70% of the population being physically active by 2020'.

SPORT ENGLAND'S STRATEGY 2008 - 2011 'GROW, SUSTAIN, EXCEL' is a fundamental shift in focus and direction for Sport England. It aims to address fundamental challenges facing sport, and particularly community sport, by focussing on the creation of a world leading community sports system with 3 clear outcomes. Sport England is committed to delivering:

- Grow: increasing regular participation with 1 million people doing more sport by 2012-13;
- Sustain: sustaining current participants in sport by ensuring a high quality experience and by taking action to reduce the drop-off in sports participation between 16 – 18 in at least 5 sports by 25% by 2012-13;
- Excel: well defined, appropriate talent support systems for each sport resulting in more talented performers moving on to elite programmes and success;

The Strategy provides a clear remit for Sport England to focus exclusively on sport and provides a clear distinction with the active recreation agenda being driven by a number of Government departments, including Health and Transport.

CHOOSING HEALTH AND CHOOSING ACTIVITY (2004) - these Department of Health documents stressed the importance of increasing levels of active recreation as a way of improving all round health and described the problems of active recreation being part of our everyday lives declining. They advised areas in relation to children and young people, active communities, workplaces, health care systems and consumer society.

LONDON 2012 - The London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics provides a huge opportunity to build on sporting participation and successes, for Thanet's sports facilities to play a part, for attracting new volunteers and for building a legacy for the future. The Council has already been successful in Margate Beach and Marlowe Academy Athletics Track being included within the London Olympic Organising Committee's (LOCOG) brochure for attracting foreign teams as part of their pre-Games training.

Regional

MOVE IT! A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON ACTIVE RECREATION IN THE SOUTH EAST - this document provides a rationale to be used by agencies to work together to ensure a co-ordinated approach to increasing active recreation across the South East Region, in line with the recommendations of Mission Possible, Sport England South East's Strategy and Choosing Health.

The Strategic Framework for Sport – Kent and Medway Sports Board is currently being reviewed and updated with a view to providing a strategic vision and direction for sport in the lead up to 2012 and aiming to maximise the legacy for sport from the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games.

The Framework sets the context for sport in the county and provides a series of recommendations on a number of themes.

As part of the **Kent Agreement 2** (Local Area Agreement), the Kent Partnership has prioritised a number of national indicators, which either directly or indirectly relate to sport. The key National Indicator for sport in KA2 is NI8 "Adult Participation in Sport & Active Recreation", which has a target of increasing adult participation by 2.2% over the life of the agreement from 20.5% to 22.7%. All districts are committed to ensuring this is achieved and this will play a role in deciding the outcomes of this plan.

Other related indicators include NI6 "Participation in Regular Volunteering" and NI110 "Young People's Participation in Positive Activities".

Local

The new **Sustainable Community Strategy** released by East Kent Local Strategic Partnership included some references relevant to this plan. Under its 'stronger and healthier communities' theme it highlights providing adequate leisure opportunities as key to achieving this. It states EKLSPP will facilitate investment in East Kent places of leisure including sports facilities by encouraging responsive planning policy, favourable business rates and public-private partnerships.

Thanet District Council's **Corporate Plan** has six themes including Thanet's Economy, Beautiful Thanet, Safe Neighbourhoods, Healthy Communities, Modern Council and Quality Housing.

A number of actions relate to this strategy including; 'developing a targeted programme for improving play facilities and events across the district', 'improving our swimming pools and associated leisure facilities' and 'reviewing accessible leisure space to ensure that it meets the needs of the local community and implementing a three year programme to increase participation in sport across the district.

Thanet's Cultural Strategy 2007 – 2012 - by 2012 Thanet will be recognised as an area that has changed its fortunes, thanks to a thriving and sustainable cultural community and economy. One of the 5 overarching themes within the Cultural Strategy relates to the 'Encouraging participation in sport and leisure, with a second theme of 'Making the most of the coastal and natural environment'. Within the former theme improvements to Thanet's existing built leisure facilities are identified as the priority area, within the latter the importance to Thanet of its beaches and bays as a major attraction to visits are recognised.

Other plans or documents that this strategy will interlink with include; Play Strategy for Children and Young People (2007), Thanet Youth Strategy (2008), Thanet Health and Well-Being Strategy (under development), PPG17 Open Spaces Audit (2006), Strategic Review of Indoor Sports Facilities (2004) and the Sports Facilities Improvement Plan (see summary in appendix two).

Appendix 2: Executive Summary of the Thanet Sports Facilities Improvement Plan

Introduction – vision, purpose

One of the five themes in the Council's corporate plan reflects the wish for Thanet to be a healthy community and recognises the need to focus on healthy living through encouraging and enabling people across all sections of the community to make healthier lifestyle choices in relation to sport, leisure, recreation, travel and work.

The Council was approached by Sport England in 2007 to take part in a new pilot programme to help local authorities bring together key partners and strategically plan for sport and active recreation facilities.

The plan has been developed by a steering group consisting of officers from Thanet District Council, Kent County Council, and Sport England, who also provided support through consultants Genesis/Leisure and the Environment.

The vision is;

'To broaden the range of active leisure facilities and improve existing provision to engage a wider audience through increased choice and contribute to greater participation within the local community.'

The plan considers indoor and outdoor sports facilities across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

It is envisaged that this document will be used to help guide decisions on future developments for sport facilities in the district. It makes a number of recommendations and suggests priorities for action. It will also be used to inform the emerging Local Development Framework process in the district.

About Thanet

Thanet is characterised by the following:

- Older than average and ageing population, however young people in the district make up just under 1/3rd of the population
- Significant deprivation
- Relatively high unemployment and poorly qualified population
- Lower than average life expectancy and high incidence of certain illnesses
- Fairly stable population due to planning policies and plans for housing growth

Participation in sport in Thanet's adult population was shown to be extremely low when compared to other local, regional and national figures through the 2006 Active People Survey. Lower socio-economic groups tend not to take part in sport as frequently and there are clear trends between increased age and low participation.

When you compare the overall take up of sport for young people against national figures in the PE and School Sport survey, Thanet scores poorly as shown in 2008 by the 6% difference in pupils doing at least 2 hours PE and school sport. This is further highlighted by the 9% difference in pupils participating in community sport with a school link.

There are a number of other factors that contribute to participation levels such as gender, ethnicity and satisfaction with sports facilities. The Active People survey highlighted that satisfaction was particularly low within the district.

Current/future levels of each facility type

The plan looks at the current levels of provision for each of the indoor and outdoor facility types and also considers quality, accessibility and the levels of demand by the local population. This was done using information from the previous studies such as the 'The Strategic Review of Indoor Sports Facilities 2004' and 'PPG17 open spaces and recreation audit 2006' and updated using local knowledge and Sport England's Active Places database and strategic planning tools.

Athletics Tracks – Thanet has one, high quality track and field facility based at the Marlowe Academy, Ramsgate. The district compares equally well with local areas and slightly better on regional and national figures in terms of the amount of facility per 1000 population. The facility is accessible from all parts of the district within a 20 minute drive and being close to Westwood has good public transport links. Participation in athletics in Thanet is well below that of county and national averages. Thus the track has spare capacity for use and supply meets demand now, a position that is unlikely to change by 2026. Focus should therefore be on maintaining the facility in good condition and supporting programmes to increase usage.

Bowling Greens/Rinks – There are 15 outdoor bowling greens across the district supplying on average 6 rinks per green. Accessibility is good given the spread of facilities. Clubs in the district are reporting difficulties in attracting new members and many are operating under capacity however participation figures for bowls show that Thanet is slightly above the county and national average. PPG17 noted that there were potentially too many greens within the district when compared to demand and there should be a reduction in at least two greens. Rather than reduce the number of greens, the Council has worked with a number of the clubs to undertake full self-repairing leases for the facilities. This has been very effective for the clubs who are now operating independently of the Council. It is also a way of maintaining the greens for bowls use as the future demand may increase based on the ageing population characteristic.

The district has one good quality indoor bowls centre providing 8 rinks. The centre is accessible by car to the whole population within 20 minutes, is near the coast and close to a number of retirement developments suggesting good accessibility. It is well used by local clubs.

Thanet is a bit above average for indoor bowls provision based on the facilities per 1000 figure. Whilst the Thanet supply is slightly above the national average, it is noted that the supply of centres nationally is below what is required to meet participation figures in the sport. As a result a comparison between supply and demand indicates that the district is actually short of one rink. As with outdoor bowls, the fact that Thanet's population will increase in age over the period until 2026, suggests the need to maintain at least the current level of provision. Sport England's tools suggest the possible need for one or two extra rinks by 2026 which doesn't justify a new facility but may highlight the need to increase capacity at the current venue. This, of course would also need to be backed up by local user figures for the centre at the time of consideration.

Golf – There are 6 standard golf courses in Thanet over five sites and with a total of 81 holes. Added to this there is a range of par three or pitch and putt courses and two driving range facilities. Sport England figures indicate that the district is slightly below the national and county average in terms of the number of holes per 1000 population for standard golf courses whereas we are above average for par 3 courses and about equal for driving ranges. Local clubs are reporting lower membership numbers and the participation figures for golf in Thanet support this as they are below the national average. This suggests that current capacity satisfies demand. Assuming the small increase in population and if we were to aim for national average participation, one new standard golf course would be required. Justification is also made to enable the removal of the disused pitch and putt at Hartsdown Park and re-designate for other sporting use.

Health and Fitness – There is a range of opportunities available for health and fitness within the district. Gym facilities are available within the private sector, public sector and some limited options within schools. There are 12 health and fitness centres with a total of 464 stations, of which 3 centres (105 stations) are in pay and play use, the majority (3 centres - 292 stations) run commercially on a membership basis, and 6 centres on education sites, of which most are privately available (5 centres, 54 stations). The centres are based in each of the main towns with just under 70% of population able to access a gym within a 20 minute walk. The supply is currently lower than county and national averages. To bring the current level up to these standards Thanet would require 606 – 681 stations. Looking at 2026 the number of stations required would increase to 635 – 714. The report uses a figure advised from the Fitness Industry Association (FIA) that 12% of the population currently have a health and fitness membership. In Thanet this would equate to 15,408 memberships. Current figures from local health and fitness centres in Thanet are approximately 7000 indicating below average usage. Lower income groups tend to be less likely to buy a standard fitness membership and therefore concessional memberships and pay and play opportunities should be encouraged where possible.

The plan recognises that the new development at Hartsdown Leisure Centre will reduce this gap and that the onset of smaller facilities within local schools can address the need further. It also recommends the need to have gyms within both the commercial and public sector in order to meet the various needs of the population. A priority is also to focus on achieving 'Inclusive Fitness Initiative' status in at least one local authority centre to provide facilities suitable for disabled people.

Multi-Use Games Areas – These facilities are particularly aimed at young people in order to offer free, good quality areas for sport and to assist diversionary programmes. Although not strictly multi use, the basketball courts in the area have been used in these calculations. Thanet currently has 12 MUGAs (1 per 10,700 people) positioned in local parks, schools and youth centres. There are two more currently planned. Where they are on school sites (3 in total) they are not freely available to use and are generally limited to club hire. Three of the sites are also only basketball courts rather than fully fledged MUGAs. The document suggests positioning should be factored around wards with the highest density of young people. The current spread of MUGAs mirrors this as eight of the top ten wards have at least one facility. Whilst there is no recognized standard for MUGAs other areas have used similar methods of placing them in areas of the highest density of young people and have worked on a basis of about 1 per 8000 population. This would require 16 MUGAs and could therefore justify installation of a further four sites. Priority would go to the two wards without a facility and that have a high density of young people e.g. St Peters and Eastcliff. Refurbishment of the basketball courts and the lower quality MUGA at Dane Valley would also be recommended.

Netball was also considered in this section. There are no stand alone courts in the district. Whilst many schools have the capability of providing netball on their playgrounds it focused on Hartsdown Technology School which has been the home of the Thanet Adult Netball league since 2002. Following improvements which the league contributed to financially, there are 6 outdoor, floodlit courts. The league has circa 40 competing teams, a number that has stayed fairly constant since its inception. Participation in netball in Thanet is on par with county and national averages. It is also a particular focus of the area in order to support increased participation amongst females. A standard of one court per 7500 people is suggested to help maintain and encourage further participation in the sport which equates to 17 courts. Recommendations are to support one centralized venue, ideally at Hartsdown College and satisfy the further court requirements through school sites.

Outdoor Grass Pitches – This section covers senior, junior and mini football pitches, senior cricket and senior rugby. It also considers changing room provision where applicable.

For football pitches, PPG17 figures were used with more recent changes confirmed by a local audit. PPG17 also undertook quality scoring and summarised the pitches as good standard. Conversely users rated them as average especially commenting on poor changing facilities.

PPG17 concluded that there were sufficient mini soccer pitches, insufficient junior pitches and a slight over supply of senior pitches. Comprehensive demand data on football was available courtesy of Kent Football Association. This supplied more up to date team figures than PPG17 and therefore allowed further recommendations to be made. The most significant change is the increased requirement for junior football pitches but participation in senior football has also increased slightly leaving a small deficit in pitches. As a result recommendations focus on increasing community use on school pitches, looking for new venues that can provide pitch areas and converting other pitch types that are under used. This has already happened at Hartsdown Park with removal of the cricket wicket and with a further option of using the derelict pitch and putt course nearby. Population changes over time are unlikely to change the requirements. Recommendations are also made for improving changing provision by submitting external funding bids and using developer contributions

Cricket was also assessed using figures and quality ratings from the PPG17 audit although they were slightly amended based on recent changes. There are now 11 pitches in the district ranging in quality but generally rated as average. Pitches at the three club sites are better quality as are the pavilions. Changing provision at local authority sites is the same as football with improvements needed. School pitches were not considered due to limited community use and lower quality standards. PPG17 concluded that current supply meets demand. Participation figures indicate that Thanet is slightly below county and national figures and local user figures have actually indicated a decline in use. This has led to the removal of two pitches since PPG17 was undertaken at Jackey Bakers recreation ground and Hartsdown Park.

There are eight Rugby Union pitches in the district of which three are local authority and five are on school sites. There is one club in the area, based at St Peters Recreation ground. These pitches are rated as good standard and are supported by an excellent clubhouse that the rugby club own. Current and future demand is well accommodated. The St Peters site would benefit from improved parking facilities that would also support use at the tennis club. Recommendations are therefore made to support both clubs in a joint venture.

Sports Halls – There are a range of sports halls across the district within local authority sports centres or schools. Two local authority pay and play halls provide 16 courts, 8 halls on school sites provide some community use (total of 36 courts), 2 halls on school sites provide no community use (8 courts) and a variety of smaller and ancillary halls also exist but are limited in their use. 87% of the population can access at least one hall within a 20 minute walk. The villages and some areas of Broadstairs are outside of a walking catchment which could be rectified by increasing community use at certain school sites. All residents can access at least two halls within a 20 minute drive. Quality ranges with Ramsgate sports centre and a few school sites providing new and up to date halls whereas Hartsdown and some school halls are over 20 years old.

Overall capacity of sports halls in Thanet is easily sufficient to meet demand from residents in the district, and there is no need for additional halls for this reason, but only if half of the anticipated usage of school halls is made. Clearly school halls are crucial in part to meeting demand in the district. Provided this is achieved justification can be made to reduce the level of local authority courts. This is the case with Hartsdown Leisure Centre, largely thanks to the addition of sports halls at King Ethelbert School and Ursuline College, which will allow a focus on offering a bigger range of sports activities in the leisure centre complex. During the proposed project, 6 courts will be lost but the remaining four will be completely refurbished increasing their appeal.

There are a number of sports in the district such as indoor cricket, gymnastics, table tennis, boxing and martial arts that are already using or would benefit from specific venues. These specialist sports facilities are important as they contribute to the range of community sport facilities available. The sports generally do not suit general sports hall use given the specialist equipment or set-up required. Those already provided are generally on local authority or school sites although some are privately rented buildings. Where the need occurs to provide these (based on participation figures), further research would need to be carried out with the clubs and national governing bodies of sport to determine if the demand is sustainable. One such case is Gymnastics where participation has

recently taken place in general sports halls. Court time and space has limited membership and a permanent venue would greatly improve participation. The plan recognises that these facilities can deliver a benefit to the community across a range of agendas and recommends that future planning applications consider this value.

Swimming Pools – The district has 9 pools in various forms. Two of them are local authority pools and are available on a pay and play basis. Three of the school pools are available for club/group use, two school pools offer no public access and the remaining two pools are run commercially within private health clubs. When compared to county and national figures the Thanet supply is low. The quality of the pools varies. The two Council pools are more than 20 years old reducing their attractiveness and capacity. Hartsdown was refurbished within the last 10 years however Ramsgate Pool is near the end of its serviceable life. The school pools also range in quality with some only being suitable for use during warmer months. The commercial pools are high quality.

Overall capacity of swimming pools in Thanet and demand for swimming from residents in the district is broadly in balance. Local authority pools do not provide enough capacity for demand and therefore there is a reliance on the commercial and school pools. Recommendations are to support increased community use of the school pools where possible.

Accessibility is considered reasonable with 74% of people able to walk within 20 minutes but some demand cannot be met because residents live outside these catchments. However, these tend to be the village locations where residents are more likely to have access to a car. There are no high enough local concentrations of demand in the district to justify an additional pool for this reason alone. Removal of the main pools in favour of a central pool would further reduce this accessibility.

Some pools operate above comfortable usage levels, particularly the public pool at Hartsdown, and the commercial pools. Conversely, Ramsgate Pool is old and unattractive, and supports relatively little use. Refurbishment or (more likely) renewal is justified in this area. This would reduce the usage of other pools to more comfortable levels of use.

The plan looks at a report done by Sport England which states that by 2019, taking on board the overall impact of additional but older people and older facilities, the recommendation is to maintain the current supply, but satisfy the need for newer pools to be built to replace those currently existing and which will increasingly become unfit for purpose.

Synthetic Turf Pitches – There are two full sized, floodlit pitches in the district located at Jackey Bakers Recreation ground and St Lawrence College, both in Ramsgate. They are 2nd generation surfaces suitable predominantly for hockey and football use. They are both available on a pay and play basis. St Lawrence College is in good condition and used mainly by schools/clubs. The local authority pitch at Jackey Bakers is mainly used by the local community and is in need of refurbishment as it has suffered from a lot of vandalism being in an open area. Fewer than 40% of the population can access a STP within a 20 minute walk which indicates the poor spread of facilities with no pitch in Margate or Broadstairs.

The current supply is below county and national averages. If national averages were assumed then it would work out at 1 pitch per 25,000 people. This would result in the requirement of five pitches and indicate a deficit of three pitches. However the district also has two three-quarter size pitches located at Chatham House School and Minster Recreation ground and a new 8 pitch 5-a-side facility at Margate FC which will serve some of this need. Two proposals are currently being considered to construct full size, 2nd generation pitches at St Georges School, Broadstairs and Ursuline College, Westgate. These projects would both reduce the deficit and also solve access issues with a better spread across the district. Priority could then be with replacing the current facility at Jackey Bakers with a full size 3rd generation pitch suitable predominately for football.

Tennis – There are currently no indoor tennis courts in the district meaning Thanet falls short of local, county and national supply figures. None of the local population can access an indoor court

within a 20 minute drive as the closest centres are in Deal and Canterbury. Using the participation figures from the Active People 2006 survey, 1.5% of the population had played tennis in the last 4 weeks or just 0.70% had played once a week. Bringing this figure up to county average would justify a 2.5 court facility. A 3-court hall is the standard format and therefore this would be recommended.

The Lawn Tennis Association recommends one indoor court per 200 players. Using the highest participation figure, this equates to 1926 people. A court per 200 players would result in a current requirement for just under 10 indoor courts. Looking ahead to 2026 this would increase to just over 10 courts. Whilst these recommendations are deemed excessive, the figures highlight that Thanet is deficient in terms of indoor tennis provision and further work is recommended with the Kent LTA and local clubs/users to determine if a development is required.

The District currently has 45 outdoor tennis courts, spread over 12 sites. This does not include school sites that often provide courts over the summer months. 12 of the courts are high quality macadam, floodlit facilities at Margate Tennis Club and Broadstairs and St Peters Tennis Club and both are owned by the local authority but leased to the clubs. The remaining courts are parish council or local authority owned. Two sites (6 courts) are managed by other sports clubs on a pay and play basis during the summer season and one site (4 courts) is run as a year round concession. They are generally lower quality with all being basic, un-coated courts and stop netting in various conditions. The courts at the Warre Recreation ground, Ramsgate are completely derelict and two courts at Memorial Recreation ground, Broadstairs are unplayable. This leaves a total 39 playable courts and equates to 0.30 courts per 1000 people.

As above, tennis participation in Thanet was measured at 1.5% in the 2006 Active People Survey. This is the equivalent of 1926 residents playing over a 4 week period. Assuming half of the people play doubles and half singles this would add up to 722 games in a 4 week period. Each court has capacity for 90 one and a half hour matches over the 4 weeks which means the district has 3510 match slots. Even taking the national and LTA participation figure of 2.0% into consideration or discounting the club courts would still result in a large surplus of match slots in the district.

It is therefore recommended that a reduction in court numbers could be made with a priority of focusing on better quality facilities at the remaining sites. Issues to consider on making the decision on which courts could be disposed of are location, quality and catchment areas. Other options would be keeping the remaining number of courts but focusing on improving the quality of a smaller number and keeping the other courts in average condition.

Urban Sports / Skateparks – These facilities again tend to be targeted at younger people. There are currently two local authority owned outdoor skateparks which offer free to use facilities. One park is better suited to bikes with the other more suitable for small wheels such as skateboarding and roller blading. Both skateparks are in need of some investment on top of the annual day to day maintenance. The district is also very fortunate to have one of the only ‘purpose-built’ indoor skateparks in Kent. It provides high quality skate opportunities on a pay and play basis. Similar to MUGAs there is no national standard for provision of skateparks. There have been two expressions of interest by local groups to improve outdoor facilities in the district. It is recommended the Council support these groups through provision of suitable land to use however it is envisaged that external grant funding will be required in order to move these plans forward.

It has also been highlighted locally that provision for the use of off-road motorbikes might contribute to a reduction in illegal use of these vehicles in current open spaces around the district. Initial plans are being considered for an area in Dane Valley/St Peters to be converted for this purpose however noise issues may prevent this. At the same time the local cycling club has indicated that there is a lack of areas suitable for BMX cycling. The same area of land, if not suitable for motorbikes, could be used for provision of BMX.

Water/Beach Sports – This was an important consideration given the natural environment of the district and the targets within local policy to embrace the coastline. The district has a number of

sports clubs covering life-saving, fishing, sailing, jet-skiing, yachting, windsurfing, water skiing and surfing. There are 15 launch sites around the coast providing specific facilities for all of the above water sports. The plan recommends working with local clubs to ensure that the sports and ancillary facilities are accessible to all. The district also hosts a range of beach related events throughout the year. One example is the national beach volleyball tour which attracts thousands of visitors each summer to Margate Main Sands. Demand has increased from the event and a local club is being established. Early proposals are being put together for the installation of a permanent beach volleyball court at the venue supported by the national governing body, Volleyball England and Kent County Council.

Priorities for future provision

One of the final chapters in the plan looks at the mapping above and suggests priorities for action. The number one priority is the replacement pool at Ramsgate. This supports targets in the Corporate Plan supported by the fact that swimming is the most popular sporting activity as shown by 'Active People' and 'Taking Part' survey data. It is also popular amongst the older population and with population characteristics growing older demand is likely to increase.

An increase in junior pitches is required but some of this could be serviced by increased community use on school sites. Ancillary provision (e.g. changing rooms) supporting the grass pitches is also a key area of focus given the large weekly participation numbers in the relevant sports and the poor quality scores in the PPG17 audit.

Suitable sites for specialist sports facilities would also be a priority especially indoor tennis, beach volleyball and gymnastics. Maintenance of the Indoor Cricket School at the Marlowe Academy and improvements to the ancillary provision to support this and the new athletics track are also considered important.

Setting local standards to assist local development framework

In order to achieve contributions towards community infrastructure such as sports facilities, it will be necessary for the policy background to this to be set out in the LDF Core Strategy and other documents. It is strongly advised that as the LDF proceeds, positive policies for sports facility provision be set out, based on the recommendations for current and future provision highlighted in this study, which incorporate the following:

- The development of **planning standards** in accordance with the guidance set out in PPG17, which include advice on the quantity, quality and accessibility of sports facilities.
- **Quantity** - Recommended quantity standards which are derived from the future assessments set out in the plan. These can be found in the main document.

Delivery of the recommendations

Considering the requirements highlighted in the facility mapping, a number of suggestions are made in the plan on the course of action to take. Key points include;

- Investment in existing facilities – quality improvements
- Development of new facility provision – new provision
- Development of multi -sport hubs
- Sports clubs security of tenure/leasing sites

The funding of additional sports facilities has historically been a role for local authorities. Circumstances have changed in recent years with a drop in Council resources, and consideration of alternative procurement methods is now important, particularly in the delivery of larger schemes. The Building Schools for the Future programme has provided an ideal opportunity to improve both educational and community access to high quality facilities. Some other methods include;

- Planning framework – it is recognised in the developing LDF process that developer contributions can play a role in improving community facilities
- Asset disposal – sale of existing sites no longer required can contribute to improvement or replacement of facilities
- Partnerships – working with national governing bodies and external funding partners to meet local demand from sports clubs
- Negotiate increased accessibility/availability to existing facilities e.g. schools

Monitoring and review

The figures in the plan will be re-assessed annually by the Sports Facilities Working Group with any notable changes/developments also being recorded and fed into the Sport England database. Consultation will remain through local governing bodies of sport and Thanet Sports Network.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format such as Braille, audio or large print, or in another language please call
01843 577165

