

Enhancing the sports and recreation facilities within Paddock Wood will be important to the health and well-being of the growing population.

The population includes the residents of the town and surrounding villages and rural areas, as users of sports facilities come from both within and outside the town. Government policy outlines the importance of areas for multi-activity use, advocating investment in green space and green routes between focuses of activity.

Consultation with local sports and recreation groups has identified a current need for improvements in sports fields and changing facilities as well as better use of the Putlands Sports & Leisure Centre. In addition, local people have stated the need for improved indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, with activities for all age ranges.

An expanding town may create demand for a different range of sports and recreational facilities in the future, requiring existing facilities to expand or add activities. Facilities will need to be flexible, to cope with changing demand, but the current configuration of outdoor and indoor sports facilities lack the flexibility for significant expansion. More flexible use and improved upkeep of sporting facilities would come from having an indoor hub at Putlands and an outdoor sports hub at the edge of the town.

Investment in facilities should be complementary to, not competitive with, investment in the town.

“The facilities allocated for sports and recreation need to be flexible enough to cope with changing

demand”



POLICY SR1

Outdoor Sports Hub

Support will be given for proposals that seek to create a hub for outdoor team sports, with space for future expansion. Preferred location for this is Eastlands, Maidstone Road.

The total area required is around 30 hectares to provide:

- A 3G pitch (Fifa standard) with flood lights
- 5 senior football pitches – 106.0 x 70 m each plus 3 metres minimum run off
- 2 junior football pitches - 110 x 70 m each
- 2 9x9 football pitches – 79 m x 52 m each
- 3 7x7 football pitches – 61m x 43 m each
- 3 5x5 football pitches – 43 m x 33 m each
- 2 rugby pitches – 154 x 80 metres
- 3 tennis courts – LTA 36.57 x 18.29 m each
- 2 netball courts – 34.5 x 18.25 m each
- Sufficient changing and toilet facilities
- Café/bar
- Car parking

The pitch provision above is in keeping with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council projections for future housing based on allocations in 2018 (TWBC Playing Pitch Strategy, 2017-2033).

Existing outdoor sports on Putlands Field, including the athletics track, bowls club and skate park will not be relocated to the hub. The tennis courts on Memorial Field require refurbishment because they do not meet Lawn Tennis Association standards. Additional courts could be provided at the outdoor hub. A cricket pitch could be provided at the Outdoor Hub if there was demand for facilities in the future.

Policy Justification

In keeping with both national Government and local thinking on health and well-being, it is essential to enable residents and visitors to the town to participate in sport regardless of age or ability. The Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Sports & Active Recreation Strategy 2016 — 2020 states the aim to ensure the community sports infrastructure is at the forefront of planned growth. The Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Playing Pitch Strategy 2017-2033 identifies the current need for additional junior 11v11, 9v9 and 5v5 pitches in Paddock Wood.

Ideally, this site would be on the edge of town to enable use of flood lights and reduce noise disturbance for residents. The preferred site is Eastlands, Maidstone Road (see below).

With most outdoor sports facilities located at one site there would be only one building and sports area to maintain. The facility could include a café and bar to make it a meeting area and to encourage all day use. With multiple sports on one site in modern facilities, people would be able to try a range of sports. It could increase participation from residents of surrounding villages bringing more visitors to the town.

Commented [CW1]: Strategy places these at Green Lane

Land at East Lands, Paddock Wood



POLICY SR2

Indoor Sports Facilities

a) Support will be given for proposals that seek to improve and expand sports facilities, through development of the existing Putlands Sports & Leisure Centre and surrounding facilities with inclusion of:

- A swimming pool for all to use
- Expanded gym/weights area
- Increased number of exercise studios
- Trampolining
- Basketball/netball
- Badminton
- Table Tennis
- Pickle ball
- Squash
- Sessions designed for children and young people
- Athletics track
- Bowls Club
- Skate park
- Provision of a multiuse games area for young people
- Café and creche facilities will be provided for users of the centre

The sports centre must be flexible to enable other sports in the future e.g. martial arts & dance. Expansion of the skate park and athletics track would allow for the remainder of the field being transformed into a recreation park with gardens extending to incorporate the pond behind the bowls club and

outdoor facilities for young people such as a climbing wall and low ropes.

Policy Justification

It is important to encourage healthy lifestyles across all age groups. Consultation with residents of Paddock Wood has identified limitations in indoor sports and exercise facilities and limited facilities for young people within the town. Residents surveyed proposed a range of facilities which they wanted to see provided including a swimming pool and improved gym and exercise class provision. Young people were actively engaged in the consultation and proposed changes which could improve youth participation in sport.

The Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Sports & Active Recreation Strategy 2016 — 2020 aims to increase participation in sports and active recreation to increase the number of residents enjoying active and healthy lifestyles. The Tunbridge Wells Borough Indoor/Built Facility Needs Assessment 2017-2033 has identified that Paddock Wood has a 'sizeable population, large state-funded school but no community swimming pool', with much of Paddock Wood outside the standard of 15 minutes to travel to a local authority pool. The borough states that existing provision meets demand but pressure on existing facilities will be increased with population increases. Paddock Wood is likely to see significant population increase with the planned developments of 1000 homes and likely further increases in the future.

The athletics track in Paddock Wood was reported by the Borough to have been the likely cause of Borough participation in track & field sports (Tunbridge Wells Borough Indoor/Built Facility Needs Assessment 2017-2033). This is the only synthetic track in the Borough, but it is limited by not having six lanes all round. Future development of the track with club house provision at Putlands Leisure Centre, creates the opportunity for this to become the athletics hub for the Borough. Expansion of this facility should not impact on the trees surrounding the track.

POLICY SR3

Informal Recreation & Leisure

a) New developments should provide for a clear network of well-designed social and civic spaces that can help support the cultural, social and sporting life of the town.

- Large hall to accommodate local music and drama groups, family events and dances with bar and catering facilities
- Meeting space for small and large groups and activities
- A Youth Hub
- Art gallery space

b) Spaces that create a focus for community activities within green spaces will be supported, including:

- Enhancement and retention of existing green spaces for recreation incorporating indoor and outdoor facilities
- Provision of open green space in keeping with the surrounding area in all new development
- Provision of play areas for all age groups including adolescents in new developments
- Provision of space for outdoor community activities, with barbeque and seating facilities

Space will need to be flexible to accommodate the needs of the changing and growing population in Paddock Wood and the surrounding area.

Policy Justification

This policy is in line with Section 8 of the NPPF and TWBC's Sports & Recreation Strategy (2016), as it aims to create new social and civic spaces that will encourage intergenerational social cohesion. Such spaces provide opportunities for people to relax and enjoy outdoor life, resulting in improved physical and mental health and a reduction in isolation, especially in the elderly and young parents.

Climate Change

Green spaces provide recreational opportunities, health benefits, sustainable transport options, biodiversity, ecosystem services and assist with climate change adaptation. New housing development gives the opportunity to create new green space for the benefit of new and existing residents. The fact that water is likely to become increasingly scarce in Kent during the summer months, with south east England tending towards semi-arid climate, should be considered when designing new planting schemes, so that species are selected appropriately.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's Open Space Study 2018 shows that residents of Paddock Wood have limited access to accessible natural green space within two and five kilometres of town. In addition, there is poor supply of youth play space, which could be supplied in parks and recreation grounds by expanding existing and adding facilities. Access to open space and play areas for all children in the northwest area of the town are limited. The Borough document emphasises the importance of the amenity space in this area.

POLICY SR4

Enhanced Disabled Access

a) All new sporting and recreational proposals in Paddock Wood must cater for the needs of people with a disability in accordance with the policies of this neighbourhood plan.

b) The impact of any sporting and recreational proposal upon the needs of people with a disability, along with any required enhancement measures, should be specified in a Design & Access Statement, submitted with the planning application.

Policy Justification

Government guidance on accessible facilities aims to guide development of facilities catering for the needs of people with a range of disabilities including sensory, physical and psychological or learning difficulties. In order to promote social inclusion for those with special needs, all facilities should be developed to ensure accessibility for all. Providing the opportunity for all people to access sports will improve the health and well-being of the local community.

It is important to facilitate easy movement of people around the town, through strong walking and cycling routes. In addition, all routes around the town should ensure accessibility for all.