

VALE OF WHITE HORSE LEISURE AND SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY 2012-2029

Consultation Analysis

Respondents

1. The consultation on the leisure and sports facilities strategy ran for 4 weeks in November and December 2012, supported by a Press Notice on 14th November. There were a total of 50 respondents to the online questionnaire. 34 respondents were individuals and 16 on behalf of organisations.
2. Hard copies of the surveys were also made available for completion but none were received back.
3. The organisations that responded were as follows:
 - Active Nation
 - Oxfordshire County Council
 - Abingdon Fencing Club
 - Didcot Cricket Club
 - Pathfinders Youth Canoe Club Abingdon
 - Grove Parish Council
 - Appleton with Eaton Tennis Club
 - Wantage Tennis Club
 - The Park Squash Club
 - Soll Leisure Group
 - Berks and Bucks FA
4. In addition there were brief written comments on the draft Strategy from Sport England, Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Sports Partnership.

Consultation Findings from the Survey

Overall

5. 82% of people agreed that sports facilities in the Vale were generally good. Those that didn't agree mainly lived in smaller settlements in the rural areas where there are fewer facilities. These people usually have to travel to Abingdon, Faringdon or Wantage. The need for extra indoor tennis courts and indoor bowls was not seen as very important, with most people having no particular view on either of those facility types.

Wantage and Grove

6. The facilities that were seen as very important for Wantage and Grove were swimming pools, sports halls, health and fitness gyms and artificial grass pitches. A teaching pool and activity hall were also seen as important.
7. The majority of people thought that new residents on the west of Didcot (Great Western Park/Valley Park) would mainly travel to Didcot for sports facilities rather than Wantage and Grove, or to Abingdon. However it was still expected that some people would travel to Wantage/Grove, to Abingdon, and also to Oxford.

Faringdon

8. Well over half the people that responded to the question about the need for an artificial grass pitch in Faringdon said they didn't know whether one was needed or not. Only 5 people said a pitch was definitely needed.

Abingdon

9. The fact there were no new sports facilities being proposed for Abingdon was generally accepted, although 7 respondents thought Abingdon did need new facilities such as: an additional skate park; extension of the existing sports centre to cater for additional fitness classes and/or martial arts, and tennis. One respondent thought a review of the current outdoor swimming facility should be undertaken and it is described in the response as being dilapidated.

Local Facilities

10. The majority of respondents thought that grass playing pitches and multi use games areas were very important local facilities, and outdoor tennis courts as important. A commitment to producing a Playing Pitch Strategy has already been made by the Vale of White Horse District Council.
11. Other facilities that people would like to see in their local area included:
 - Skate park
 - Fitness trail with running track
 - New sports not currently catered for e.g. lacrosse, handball
 - Green gym
 - Teaching pool at Wantage
 - Cycle track
 - Gymnastics facility
 - Boxing facility
 - Angling pond
 - Pitch and putt
 - Running facility (not an athletics track)
 - Indoor sports facility geared up for elderly/disabled

- Secure and floodlit MUGA
- Floodlighting of existing outdoor tennis courts
- Safe cycle paths linking villages
- Dedicated 5-6 court badminton centre
- Better access to river for recreational use

Other Consultation Responses

Oxfordshire County Council

12. Oxfordshire County Council provided a written response in addition to partial completion of the survey form. The main points from this response were:
13. It is expected that most, if not all secondary schools and a significant number of primary schools will convert to academy status, therefore the list of academy schools contained within the Strategy already requires updating and would soon become out of date again.
14. The Department for Education (DfE) encourages community use of academy facilities and as such can be written into academy funding agreements. Should an academy want to later withdraw community use, it would have to agree to the alteration to its Funding Agreement with the DfE.
15. The Strategy should actively promote the use of access and rights of way networks for sport and leisure recreation.

Sport England

16. Sport England (SE) welcomes the Strategy and recommends that it is endorsed by the Local Strategic Partnership as well as by the Council. SE also welcomes the breadth of the consultation and expects any feedback or comments will be able to influence the final Strategy.
17. The Strategy could be strengthened by more cross-reference to sports development objectives and priorities, including new activities and different sports and how these might be delivered through the facility infrastructure.
18. SE would encourage the use of the Facilities Planning Model to support further more detailed options appraisals for facilities in specific areas.
19. The final section of the Strategy could be developed further to explain more how the evidence has been used to develop the options listed. The Strategy should be clearer on how the solutions to the gaps in provision will be addressed and which partner agencies will help to deliver them. The Strategy might be clearer on when developments will happen and which projects are the priorities.

20. Sport England would wish to see a full funding appraisal including all possible sources of funding and allocations to demonstrate how specific projects will be delivered. The Strategy should include targets that are measurable, achievable and realistic in their aspiration. These should set out clearly who is responsible for delivery.
21. The Council should establish a steering group to oversee the implementation of the Strategy.

Oxfordshire Sports Partnership

22. The Sports Partnership has not taken a strategic lead in the co-ordination of facility developments countywide leaving that to the Districts as lead. Therefore the CSP has not developed any policy or strategy relating to facility development. That said the CSP do advocate an evidence based approach to facility development that contributes to the countywide vision of making our communities the highest participating in the country.

Comments

23. Specific comments and detailed responses can be found in the table below, along with Nortoft's reply and any suggested change to the strategy.

Comment	Response	Change to strategy
<p>Active Nation (current operators of White Horse Leisure & Tennis Centre, Abingdon)</p> <p>The Strategy is a very comprehensive piece of work, although some of the data included may need clarifying (such as the number of fitness stations at the White Horse Leisure & Tennis Centre). The report says there are 54 stations but there are 74.</p> <p>We have slight concerns that the new leisure facility in north east Didcot may have a detrimental effect of the usage of the White Horse Leisure & Tennis Centre.</p> <p>A key element to increasing participation is for operators to understand the current barriers to participation, such as time, cost, no-one to go with etc. This should feature as a key element of the forthcoming leisure management procurement.</p> <p>As of today (17/12/12) Sport England will have announced the NGB funding for the period 2013-17. It would be good if the Vale of White Horse could benefit from initiatives/programmes that</p>	<p>The number of fitness stations came from the Active Places website which will now need updating.</p> <p>This new facility is needed for the new development in Didcot and its surrounds, and the growth in the population as a result. Existing residents that live nearer to Didcot may use the new facility as a result, this is accepted.</p> <p>Noted, this strategy does not deal with the procurement of leisure facilities but the comment has been passed to the Leisure Services Manager at VoWHDC.</p> <p>Agreed, this is for the NGBs and clubs to follow and should be included in the Sports Development Strategy.</p>	<p>The figure will be amended</p> <p>No change required</p> <p>No change required</p> <p>No change required</p>

<p>are part of key Whole Sports Plans locally.</p> <p>More sports which are not currently catered for, such as Lacrosse, Handball etc. Also, more provision of disability sports to capitalise on the success of the Paralympic Games 2012.</p>	<p>Many sports can use multi-purpose facilities such as sports halls and swimming pools. Provision for disabled users are a integral part of all sports facility provision.</p> <p>Grass pitch based sports will be addressed later in 2013 as part of the playing pitch strategy review.</p>	<p>No specific change required</p>
<p>Anonymous individual</p> <p>By concentrating on areas of housing growth it ignores those places that have poor facilities historically.</p> <p>By analysing facilities within a certain drive time it underplays the problems people without cars of accessing facilities and should look at public transport links too.</p>	<p>Facilities need to be located in the most sustainable locations and that service the largest number of people, this is why historically smaller settlements don't have lots of facilities.</p> <p>It is recognised that access to facilities for those in the rural areas find access to facilities difficult and this has been flagged in the strategy.</p>	<p>No specific change needed</p> <p>This issue is already covered within the strategy</p>
<p>Anonymous individual</p> <p>There are four main population centres in the Vale: Abingdon, Botley, Faringdon, Wantage & Grove. We currently have nothing in Botley. And this questionnaire only asked about facilities in the other three.</p>	<p>The consultation asked about existing facilities in those four main population centres, therefore no specific question was asked about Botley. This was covered in a later question about facilities in your local area.</p>	<p>No change required</p>
<p>Resident of Wantage (Anonymous)</p> <p>Wantage needs its own facilities to cope with all the new housing extra housing that's coming.</p>	<p>New facilities are planned for Wantage.</p>	<p>No change required</p>

<p>Resident of Watchfield (Anonymous)</p> <p>There is no mention of facilities provided in Watchfield/Shrivenham, despite the fact it identifies football locally as being under the national average for participation!</p> <p>There is no mention of any large scale housing development in Watchfield/Shrivenham, so the needs of our villages are not represented. Clearly this fatally flaws the report as it assumes the only large housing development will be as per local plan when we know this won't be the case, i.e.156 houses already approved locally plus 65 refurbished MoD properties.</p> <p>It makes no sense to provide all provision in Faringdon but far more sense to spread the facilities across the two communities to increase participation levels. It makes little difference to those in smaller village if they have to travel to Watchfield/Shrivenham or Faringdon as they will almost certainly be travelling by car or using route 66 bus.</p> <p>There is no mention of Watchfield pavilion, Shrivenham rec or facilities provided by Shrivenham Royals. The report generally ignores all provision by parish councils in its calculations. If all facilities are provided in Faringdon this will destroy local football clubs, as they won't be able to compete with clubs linked to an ATP in Faringdon. It will land the parish councils with</p>	<p>This strategy does not deal with pitch sports as a full review is needed.</p> <p>Any increase in population as a result of these houses are already included within the demographic forecasting which forms the basis for this Strategy. The impact at a local level may need to be considered further in relation to village halls/community halls etc. The development of 156 houses is not a significant figure in terms of sports facility provision (approx 4000 new houses would equate to a requirement for a new sports hall)</p> <p>Facilities are provided in the most sustainable location. Access to those MOD facilities in Shrivenham would be welcomed.</p> <p>This strategy does not deal with pitch sports as a full review is needed.</p> <p>The use of AGPs for football tends to be additional to existing football club activity, and also helps them by providing an all weather training base. This is particularly the case with minis and junior teams who are tend to be catered for locally.</p>	<p>No change required</p> <p>No change required</p> <p>Noted in report</p> <p>No change required</p>
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<p>long term liabilities with no income from paying customers, as they have all gone to the proposed ATP in Faringdon.</p>		
<p>Kingfisher and Pathfinder Youth Canoe Club</p> <p>Kingfisher and Pathfinder Youth Canoe Clubs have been using council land for their activities for approximately 30 years. The land is at present rented to the army and we have been unable to get any formal security of tenure.</p>	<p>Access to facilities for water sports should be explored further but this is out of the scope of the strategy.</p>	<p>No change required</p>
<p>Anonymous individual</p> <p>Stop centralising everything. Villagers have a need and a right to leisure facilities. You are alienating large sections of the Vale and not contributing to their health or well-being.</p>	<p>Facilities are developed in the most sustainable locations for the widest number of people as well as a number of other factors such as land availability, development costs etc. This strategy deals with large facilities in the main which would not be sustainable in small communities.</p> <p>The larger sports facilities should be considered as part of a wider community facilities network which also includes village and community halls amongst other local provision.</p>	<p>No change required</p>
<p>Anonymous individual</p> <p>It is a pity that schools are excluded as pressure on school land in the past has led to a reduction in available facilities.</p>	<p>Due to the lack of secure community use at school facilities these are sometimes excluded as they are not available to the community. This point is covered in the strategy.</p>	<p>No change required</p>
<p>Resident of Abingdon (Anonymous)</p> <p>It does not seem to address equality issues so will be of limited value.</p>	<p>Sports facilities need to comply with DDA requirements and any new facilities would be built with accessibility in mind as a requirement.</p>	<p>No specific change needed</p>

<p>Anonymous Individual</p> <p>Ensure that Grove gets the facilities required for the population and that the south Vale gets facilities rather than Abingdon.</p>	<p>Sports facilities for the growth of Grove (Airfield) have been looked at in detail and planned in from the outset.</p>	<p>No change required</p>
<p>Park Squash Club</p> <p>An increase in trails/cycle only roads linking the areas and therefore the various leisure complexes would be a major benefit to health and also assist in achieving one of the aims of the wider sustainability strategy, ie the reduction of traffic on the roads. If more people could cycle safely between venues, there would be fewer cars. Also, cycle only ways would promote road cyclists to enjoy training runs in greater safety and this would assist the motorist who possibly has issues with a group of cyclists obstructing the road. It is a win:win all round.</p>	<p>The importance of cycling in the Vale is acknowledged in the Strategy but is outside its scope. However safe cycling routes could be considered as part of the GI strategy and also in association with sustainable transport initiatives.</p>	<p>No change required</p>
<p>Anonymous individual</p> <p>I couldn't see anything about sailing provision - the locality has at least three sailing clubs and rowing clubs and my personal experience is that Farmoor (just outside the Vale?) is very teaching / racing oriented.</p>	<p>Countryside and water sports cannot be given set provision standards but should be treated positively in planning policies.</p>	<p>Strengthen policy statements to support countryside and water sports.</p>
<p>Anonymous Individual</p> <p>The council needs to underwrite investment costs if investments are to be made by private</p>	<p>Development costs for facilities are complicated and are dealt with on a case by case basis. Where appropriate, funding from various</p>	<p>No specific change required</p>

<p>companies operating council facilities. This means that investments can be written off over 14 years (their probable life) rather than 7 years which makes them financially not viable. The underwriting can normally be spread jointly with the national governing body for sport (tennis and badminton in particular).</p> <p>Would like a dedicated 5-6 badminton court centre probably in combination with an existing centre.</p>	<p>sources (including NGBs) will be sought.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Badminton Performance Centre is based at Abingdon and no additional specialist badminton facility is required.</p>	<p>No change required</p>
<p>AP Thompson Services Ltd</p> <p>I believe that 5 a side, flood lit pitches are great for exercise as well generating income. They can be used by a wide age range and as well as encouraging exercise they also encourage team sport. Although a full sized AGP would be used I believe pound for pound a series of 5-a-side is better for the community.</p>	<p>Small sided football boxes are currently provided at Tilsley Park. The demand for this type of pitch needs to be investigated further as this strategy concentrates on full size pitches.</p>	<p>No specific change required</p>
<p>Anonymous Individual</p> <p>Better access to the river for recreational use</p>	<p>This is outside of the scope of the strategy</p>	<p>No change required</p>
<p>Oxfordshire County Council</p> <p>List of academy schools needs updating</p>	<p>Update list</p>	<p>Update list</p>
<p>Sport England</p> <p>Sports development links and cross-references could be strengthened</p> <p>Phasing, prioritisation, partnerships and funding</p>	<p>Vale Officers to consider how the feedback from the sports development strategy can be used to provide this cross-reference</p> <p>Given the long term nature of this strategy it was agreed that it</p>	<p>Cross-references to be added</p> <p>Add partnership notes to</p>

opportunities	should not attempt to identify specific funding programmes that may be relevant at the present time. Similarly the partnerships will need to be developed in more detail over time although the key partners may be possible to identify for some of the facilities nowl	project lists.
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