



Watford Borough Council

Sports Facilities Strategy

Engagement and Consultation Report

Prepared by Kathryn Robson, Partnerships and Performance - November 2014

SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY

CONTENTS

1.0	PROJECT OVERVIEW	3
------------	-------------------------	----------

ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION FINDINGS

2.0	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
------------	--------------------------	----------

3.0	ENGAGEMENT EVENT	7
------------	-------------------------	----------

4.0	SURVEY FEEDBAC	10
------------	-----------------------	-----------

5.0	INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTATIONS	15
------------	-----------------------------------	-----------

6.0	ACTIONS ARISING	15
------------	------------------------	-----------

Appendix I	Sports Facilities Strategy Survey	19
-------------------	--	-----------

Appendix II:	Open invitation to Sports Facilities Strategy Event	27
---------------------	--	-----------

Appendix III:	Sports Facilities Strategy: Engagement Boards	28
----------------------	--	-----------

1.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Engagement and consultation

1.1 During autumn 2014, Watford Borough Council undertook engagement and consultation with a range of stakeholders to ascertain their views on its draft Sports Facilities Strategy 2015-2025.

The approach took three main forms:

- Engaging face to face through a specially arranged event for which invitations were sent to around 200 local sports clubs, groups and organisations as well to regional and national sports bodies (see Appendix I). An open invitation was also publicised to the Watford community (see Appendix II).
- Consulting through an online survey
- Inviting individual feedback from any club, group, organisation or individual who wished to make representations

The event

1.2 The event was held on 20 October 2014 at Watford Football Club. It ran from 6.30-9.00pm. It was arranged and managed by Watford Borough Council officers and supported by Cabinet member, Councillor Keith Crout who attended on the night and was able to provide the attendees with an overview of the importance of sport and leisure to the borough and the context for the new Sports Facilities Strategy.

1.3 45 people attended the event from a range of local sports clubs, groups and organisations. All were encouraged to participate and share their views (see format of event below) and an extremely good level of discussion and networking was achieved.

1.4 The format of the event comprised:

- **Welcome and context setting**
Councillor Keith Crout
- **Presentation on the draft Sports Facilities Strategy**
Paul Rabbitts - Environmental Services Client Manager - Parks & Streets
- **Round table discussions on issues identified in the Strategy + 'any other areas to raise'**
Facilitated tables (x 4) and feedback captured by facilitator

Table 1: Artificial Turf

Paul Rabbitts - Environmental Services Client Manager - Parks & Streets

Table 2: Sports Facilities Strategy - strategic goals

Caroline Roche - Sports Development Officer + Kathryn Robson - Partnerships & Performance

Table 3: Strategic Sports Sites (x4)

Lesley Palumbo - Head of Corporate Strategy + Client Services

Table 4: Any other areas to raise
Alan Gough - Head of Community & Customer Service

- 1.5 The roundtable discussion information boards are annexed as Appendix III.
- 1.6 An overview of the feedback from the event is detailed in section 3.0.

The survey

- 1.7 A survey to support the engagement on the draft Sports Facilities Strategy was developed in-house and made available through surveymonkey software. The survey comprised 23 questions and included both quantitative and qualitative questions.
- 1.8 The survey was in field from 1 October 2014 to 3 November 2014.

Response rate

- 1.9 49 responses were received.

Results

- 1.10 The survey results are reported in section 4.0.

Individual representations

- 1.11 Some organisations preferred to present their feedback for consideration in their own format. This is detailed in section 5.0

Comments and actions arising

- 1.12 An overview was taken of the individual comments made on the Strategy and actions arising have been documented in this section

2.0 Executive Summary

- 2.1 Overall, the engagement and consultation conducted on the draft Sports Facilities Strategy generated a high degree of endorsement for the strategy and what it is trying to achieve for the borough. This is evidenced by both the feedback from the engagement event and the online survey responses.
- 2.2 However, the engagement and consultation also identified a range of issues for consideration before the final Strategy is submitted for approval. People raised very similar issues through both the face to face engagement and the online survey, which both reinforces the importance of these areas to stakeholders and that the strategy would be strengthened by addressing the feedback as far as possible
- 2.3 Some of the issues raised are relatively straight forward, such as wording in the strategy and information that has been omitted or needs updating. Other areas raised require more in-depth consideration as they highlight where the strategy could be clearer on certain elements or where stakeholders feel issues have not been addressed. This is particularly the case in relation to the action plan as this identifies the actions emerging from the strategy and commits to delivery of outcomes.
- 2.4 **Areas of positive feedback include:**
- Artificial turf (3G) pitches: undoubtedly a need for more across the borough – the demand is there and they would facilitate better all year round use of facilities
 - Strategic goals: are the right ones to underpin improvement to sports facilities – they cover the right areas and address current issues – improving quality is vital
 - Strategic sports sites: are the right concept for Watford – bring together a better critical mass of sporting activity, which will be more influential and able to achieve greater investment and successful funding opportunities
 - Improved partnership / joint working: ensuring future success (if not survival) requires clubs / organisations to work together more effectively and this is recognised in the strategy
 - Support discussions with national / regional / county bodies: the strategy provides the framework to enable discussions to take place
- 2.4 **Areas to improve in the Strategy or that will require future consideration include:**
- Review strategic goal 3 so that it is clearer and to aid better understanding
 - Access to and from the sites (including parking/public transports) needs addressing
 - New forms of sports / activities are not sufficiently covered / too much emphasis on traditional sports – this would include how emerging sports / activities might be accommodated through the strategic sites in future
 - However, the above was counter-balanced by those who felt the new formats of sports might be promoted to the detriment of traditional formats
 - How would the competing demands for facilities on a site be managed and how would governance work – who would have the final say on areas such as bookings / managing the social elements of the site

- Not sufficient detail on how the multi-sports approach might be achieved – what does it mean exactly and how would these sports be brought together in practice
- Importance of volunteers (including coaches) not addressed – intrinsically linked to the success of the sites or else they could sit unused – possibly a key reason why some clubs are struggling
- Clarify what is meant by inclusive sports in the strategy
- Ensuring affordability for clubs - new facilities that are far more expensive will not help the majority of clubs
- Managing leases with the council
- Communication and promotion of facilities (including what is available where)
- More engagement would be needed in advance of any further planning of the sites

DRAFT

3.0 Event Engagement

3.1 Following a presentation on the draft Sports Facilities Strategy, attendees at the event were invited to share their views through participation in round table discussions on four areas:

- 1 **Artificial Turf**
- 2: **Strategic goals**
- 3: **Strategic Sports Sites (x4)**
- 4: **Any other areas to raise**

Artificial Turf

- 3.2 There was general agreement that artificial turf would be well-used in Watford as they provide better 'weather proofing' than grass pitches. Many clubs experienced the cancellation of games / matches and training sessions due to water logged pitches etc. There were concerns expressed as to the affordability of the pitches in so far as the hiring price might exclude smaller clubs - with an acknowledgement that the investment required to deliver an artificial turf pitch would need to be recouped. Grass pitches are affordable and affordability appears to be a barrier to participation for some clubs / teams - even the cost of playing on grass pitch is an issue for some sports / leagues.
- 3.3 Whilst cost might be an issue, the feedback indicated that there would be demand for artificial surfaces but there was concern as to how they might accommodate all the different requirements of the clubs / organisations in the borough. They clearly need to provide a facility for more than football and ensuring fair access might also prove to be a barrier

Strategic goals

- 3.4 A number of issues were raised under this area of discussion.
- 3.5 **Strategic goal 1 (strategic sports sites):** Costs were again raised as an area of concern. The concerns reiterated the issue of whether clubs would be able to afford what was anticipated to be increased costs for hiring new artificial / 3G pitches. Current experience (e.g. Power League) indicated that there would be a significant increase in hiring cost over grass surfaces which would prove prohibitive to smaller clubs with fewer members or ones catering for young people. Cost discussions also covered issues regarding investment and funding and where this might come from. Some clubs / organisations struggle with accessing funding - either identifying opportunities or having the skills / experience to complete applications. This could prove a barrier to long-term sustainability. Attendees also questioned the level of investment required to deliver the strategic sites and the maintenance costs - who would be expected to cover these on an ongoing basis.
- 3.6 All those engaging in the discussions acknowledged the importance of the social aspect of sport participation and the need to support this through good quality facilities. Not only do good social facilities bring in additional revenue but they also support the networking that is essential to clubs thriving. Social aspects of sports clubs / organisation can be difficult to manage - membership can offer a solution - so this would need to be explored at any strategic sport site.
- 3.7 Even the more well-established clubs / groups / organisations acknowledged that encouraging membership is an ongoing challenge. All agreed poor facilities are a barrier to attracting and retaining new members (examples were given of people having to change in

cars / shower at home) and to recruiting volunteers (many youth teams are reliant on parents as there isn't a lot to attract others).

- 3.8 Therefore, the aim of the strategic goals to improve facilities in Watford was welcomed. There was general agreement that facilities are 'worn out' and many in need of refurbishment e.g. the astro turf at Woodside.
- 3.9 **Strategic goal 2 (multi-sports clubs):** The idea of multi-sport clubs raised issues as many felt they could result in a loss of identity for clubs / organisations that had been built up and worked hard for over the years. Smaller clubs questioned what would prevent larger clubs / organisations dominating the strategic sites - how would equal access be assured and who would set governance of the sites. The issue of larger clubs having more to gain from the Sports Facilities Strategy was raised and consideration of whether the strategy is more geared towards these larger clubs than the range of smaller clubs / groups - particularly those who prefer a more informal organisational structure / governance.
- 3.10 People felt there was not a great deal of detail within the strategy as to how the decision on what sports / activities would take place at which sites would be made although people did recognise that some sites already had 'specialities' e.g. cricket at Woodside / rugby at Cassiobury and River Colne. However, more information how other sports might be added – including more minority sports or emerging ones – would be of benefit.
- 3.11 **Strategic goal 3 (new forms of provision for traditional sports & peak usage):** 'Peaking' was acknowledged as a problem but there were a number of factors why this would prove hard to improve. Schools dictate participation in sports on Saturdays (i.e. young people are expected to play for their school on a Saturday) and the lack of floodlighting currently prevents evening use on many sites - with this there might be more mid-week demand. It was felt that schools could offer greater opportunities for shared facilities than at present but they are not always a cheaper alternative (costs of school hire can be high). Links to schools are important as facilities may be underused or insufficient and they could give access to youth opportunities. It was suggested that there might be value in mapping schools and layering with sports facilities to understand the extent of the Watford offer (and probably a little beyond e.g. Queens) and level of current investment.
- 3.12 New forms of traditional sports are already embraced by local clubs but it can mean current facilities are not always appropriate or meet the requirements of national bodies

Strategic sports sites

- 3.11 Overall, there was broad agreement for the concept of strategic sports sites. People thought that the geographical location made sense but there was acknowledgement that green belt and planning issues would need to be addressed if all four sites are to be delivered. Additionally, there was agreement that the concept would probably be the most effective way of ensuring the long-term quality of pitches but there were comments that this also needed to be addressed in the short.
- 3.12 Whilst the four strategic sport sites have been identified within the strategy, there were discussions as to what might happen to current facilities not referred to in the strategy as they are not located within the strategic sites. This was of particular concern to those clubs / organisations that are based / use alternative sites within the borough. This could be better expressed within the strategy.
- 3.13 Ongoing management of the sites was discussed - particularly if this was to be outsourced to a private sector company. The needs of clubs / organisations should be identified in any contract / partnering with the private sector.

- 3.14 Discussions on the sites extended to identifying and making the most of partnering opportunities - the sites alone will not address all current issues. This could be with other council's, schools, public health or involve a range of clubs / organisations coming together to meet their own and wider needs. A suggestion was made about sport specific forums so that issues could be addressed in advance of the development of any strategic sites.
- 3.15 Parking and access would be critical to the strategic sites as would storage opportunities.
- 3.16 Opportunities were identified for all four sites in terms of improving facilities, accessing funding and more collaborative working. Current successes for the multi-sports facility approach were identified e.g. West Herts Sports Clubs brings together a variety of sports and activities on one site

Any other issues

- 3.17 A number of clubs fed back specific issues they were currently experiencing and these have been passed to the relevant organisations as appropriate (e.g. SLM / Veolia).
- 3.18 It was pointed out that some sports e.g. running and martial arts had not been identified in the strategy. Martial arts as a whole is a significant area of sports activity in the borough and a suggestion was made on supporting the creation of a Martial Arts Forum for Watford, which could help raise the profile of this area and support better marketing etc. In terms of running, it was felt that this should be included given the use of outdoor areas and the potential link to facilities such as for meetings / social events.
- 3.19 Leases were raised as an issue by a number of attendees and it was felt the council could be doing more in this area to support clubs.

4.0 SURVEY FEEDBACK

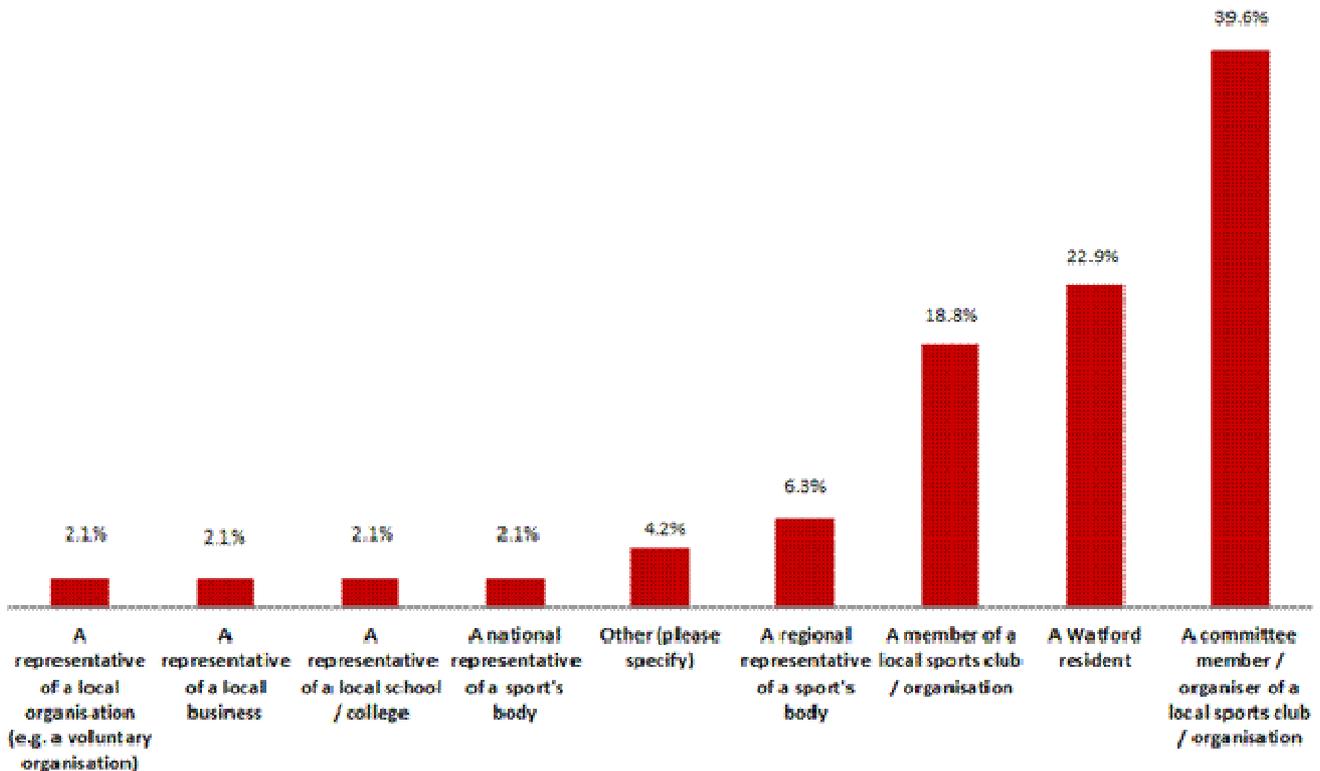
4.1 The Sports Facilities Strategy survey comprised 23 questions.

Respondents' profile

4.2 The first question in the survey asked respondents in what capacity they were answering survey. This was important as the invitation to take part in the survey extended to a range of stakeholders and, for some questions, it would be useful to understand the perspective from which people were answering.

4.3 The majority of respondents (just under 40%) were associated with a local sports club or organisation and identified themselves as involved in running the club or organisation in some capacity. The next largest category was Watford residents.

Q1: It would be helpful to understand the capacity in which you are responding to this consultation. Please select the MAIN capacity in which you are responding



Base respondents: 49

Questions 2 - 7 - additional details on capacity in which people were responding

4.4 Where relevant, respondents were then asked to provide additional information regarding the club / group / organisation they were associated with. This provides an overview of the range of sports / activities represented by the survey responses.

Sports represented include:

- Hockey
- Tennis
- Cricket
- Football

- Rugby
- Golf
- Table Tennis
- American Football
- Bowls
- Cycling
- Volleyball

4.5 In addition, a number of organisations, local schools and businesses (with a sports related interest) responded to the survey. These included: Watford Community Housing Trust, Herts FA, Herts Sports Partnership, Herts LTA and Hertfordshire Cricket League.

Strategic goals

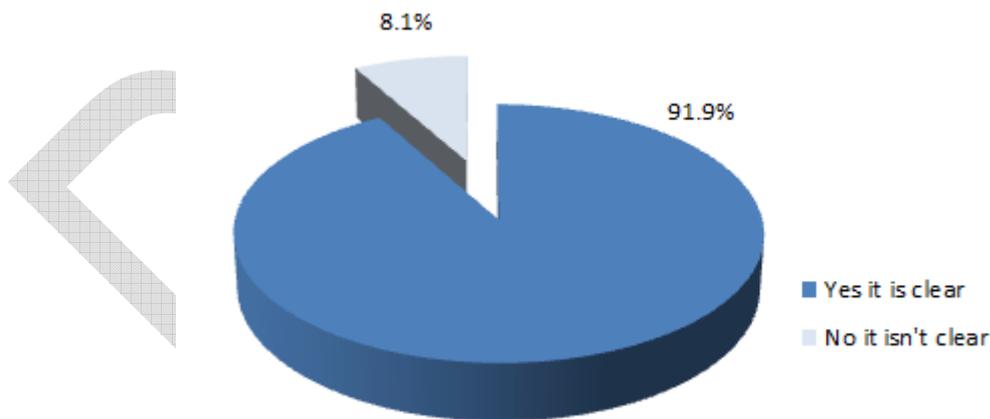
4.6 The next set of questions considered the strategic goals outlined in the Sports Facilities Strategy.

4.7 Strategic goal 1 is set out within the strategy as:

To ensure that Watford has a network of accessible, high quality, high capacity, well maintained, well used and financially and environmentally sustainable sports facilities, capable of accommodating local demand, complemented by good quality changing and social accommodation, on a limited number of strategically located sites – known as “Strategic Sports Sites

4.8 Question 8 asked whether respondents felt this strategic goal was clear: over nine in ten people said it is clear although some respondents felt it could be improved by breaking into more than one sentence (responses to Question 9).

Q8: Strategic goal 1: Is this goal clear?



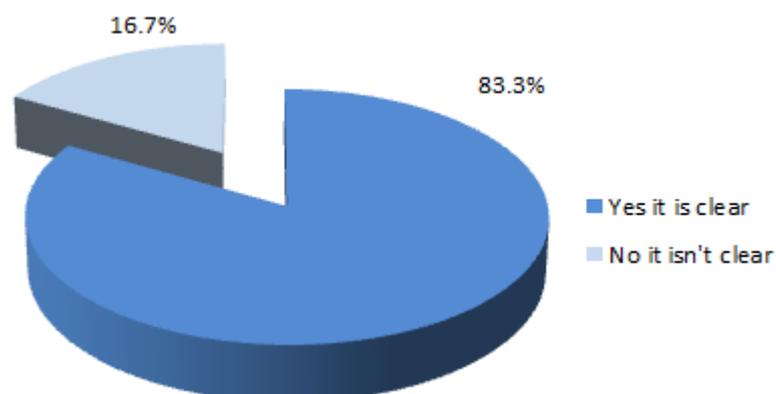
4.9 Strategic goal 2 is set out within the strategy as:

To promote the development of financially sustainable multi-sport clubs offering inclusive opportunities for players of all ages and abilities and both sexes

4.10 Question 10 asked whether respondents felt this strategic goal was clear: the majority felt it is clear but there were a number who felt it could be improved by providing greater explanation of what multi-sports clubs might entail. There was concern expressed about the loss of identity of individual sports clubs if a 'multi-sports' club approach were championed and

implemented (responses to Question 11).

Q10: Strategic goal 2: Is this goal clear?

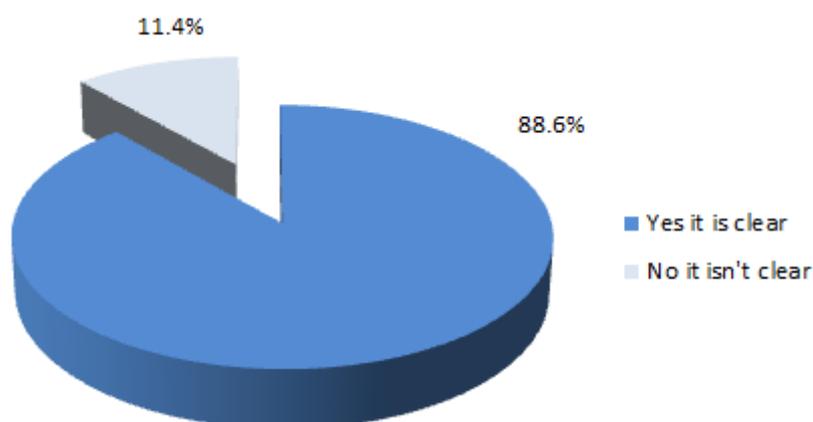


4.11 Strategic goal 3 is set out within the strategy as:

To develop new forms of provision for traditional sports in partnership with their governing bodies, in order to attract new participants and encourage past participants to return to their former sport, promote more mid-week participation and reduce the peaking of demand for pitches and other facilities at the weekend, particularly Sunday mornings

4.12 Question 12 asked whether respondents felt this strategic goal was clear: nearly nine in ten people said it was clear although some respondents felt it did cover two distinct ambitions - the introduction of different sport formats and reduction in demand at the weekend. Another comment said if participation equated to playing the sport or whether coaching / running a club might also be covered. There were comments as to Sunday morning being the time that people have free to participate in sporting activities.

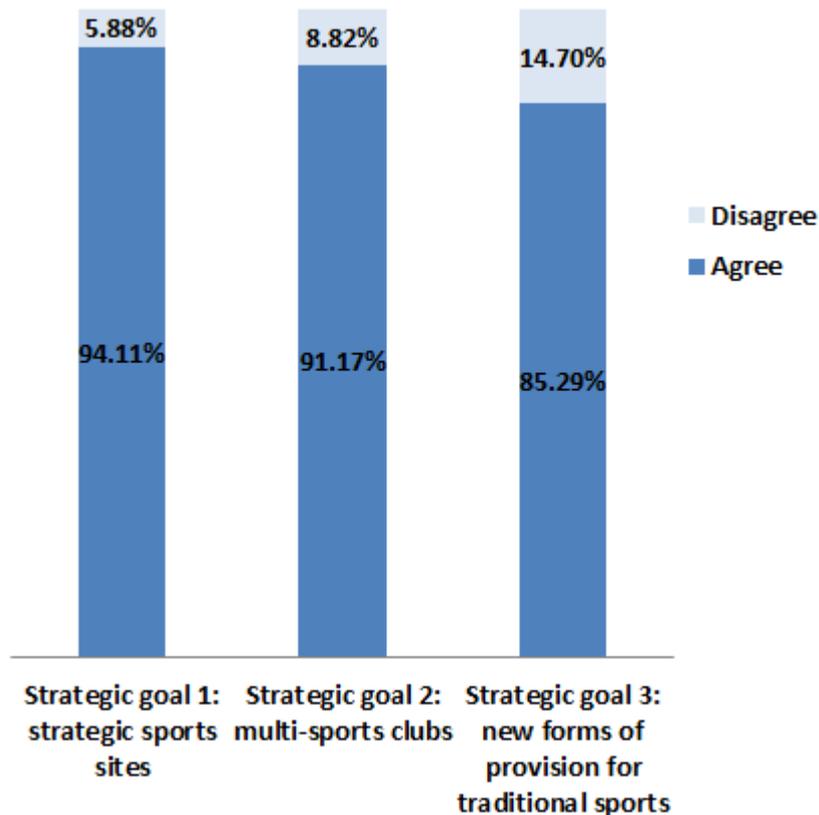
Q12: Strategic goal 3: Is this goal clear?



4.13 Respondents were then asked, overall, if they agreed or disagreed with the three strategic goals (**Question 13**).

There was general agreement with the goals - although less so with strategic goal 3.

Q14: And thinking about the 3 strategic goals, how far do you agree that they are the right goals to underpin the future of sports facilities in the borough?



4.14 Comments relating to the strategic goals covered a wide range of areas including:

- how the mix of traditional sports and new forms of sports could be achieved successfully
- how to ensure that multi-sports sites remain so and are not dominated by one sport and/or club
- the need for governing bodies active support and endorsement
- the delivery of the goals is underpinned by good quality, local sports coaches and people able to manage clubs and, if necessary, facilities
- governance arrangements for the sites
- the impact on other facilities not within the strategic sites
- good quality facilities are critical to attracting participants
- how will delivery be secured

Strategic sports sites

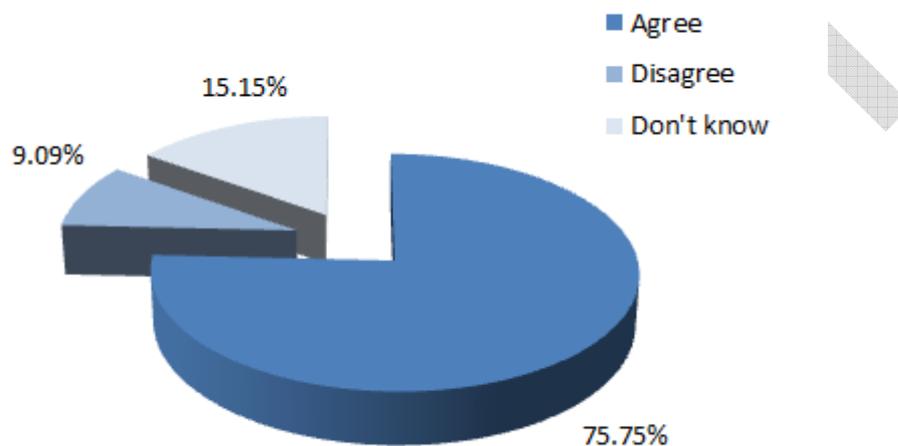
4.15 The survey invited feedback on the proposal for four strategic sports sites in Watford. These were outlined in the survey as defined in the Sports Facilities Strategy:

- **River Colne (EAST)**
(incorporating Radlett Road Playing Fields / Knutsford Playing Fields / Watford RUFC / Glen Rovers GAA / Top Golf – The Colne River Park)
- **Cassiobury site (WEST)**
(incorporating Fullarians RFC / Sun Postal FC / Watford Grammar School / Herts Bowls / West Herts Hockey)

- **Holywell (SOUTH)**
(incorporating King George V Playing Fields, W3RT/ Watford Cycle Hub / Schools / Football / Cricket)
- **Woodside (NORTH)**
(incorporating Woodside Playing Fields, Leisure Centre / SLM / WTCC / Bowls – Indoor and outdoor / Football / Cricket / Boxing / Schools)

4.16 There was general agreement with the principle of the proposed four strategic sports sites for Watford with just over three quarter of respondents saying that they agreed.

Q.16: Do you agree or disagree with the principle of the proposed four strategic sports sites in Watford?



4.17 Those that agreed with the proposal for the four strategic sites cited the following reasons (Q17)

- The sites would bring activities and facilities together to create a stronger and more resilient 'mass' – this in turn would achieve greater influence in terms of investment and funding
- The sites have capacity for future development opportunities
- The sites build on existing networks and activities
- Geographically they make sense in terms of the borough – providing access is straight forward and parking provision is addressed

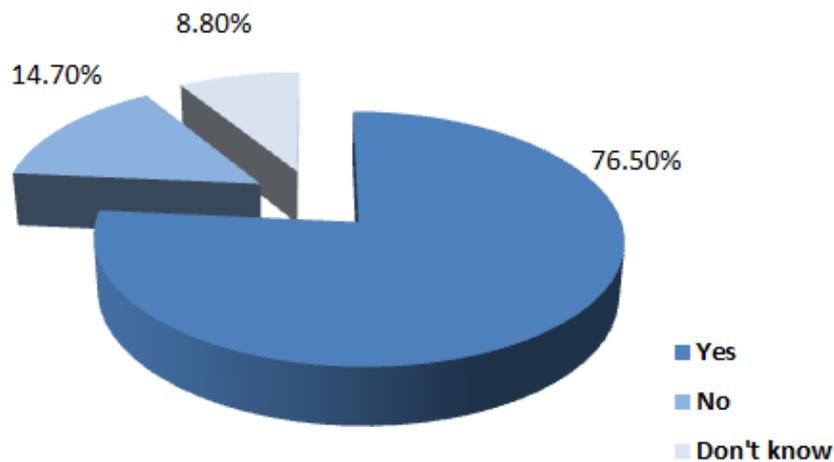
4.18 Those that did not agree with the proposal for the four strategic sites cited one main area of concern (Q18), which related to the potential loss of other facilities / amenities that are not located at these sites.

Artificial turf

4.19 The Sports Facilities Strategy identifies artificial turf as an integral to the success of its strategic goals. The survey asked people their views on artificial turf - also know as 3G pitches (third generation pitches).

4.20 Over three quarters of respondents agree that artificial turf was important to the borough and the four strategic sites

Q20: Do you think the strategy is right to identify artificial turf pitches (such as 3G) as important for the borough and, therefore, the identified strategic sites



4.21 The benefits of artificial turf / 3G overall were identified by respondents as:

4.22 Respondents also identified where there thought artificial turf / 3G would be of specific benefit to their sports club / organisation:

Final comments

4.24 The final question in the survey invited people to give their comments on the Sports Facilities Strategy overall. Twenty two comments were received.

4.25 Again, there was general approval for the strategy and its ambitions for Watford. The following areas were raised:

Areas strategy should consider addressing;

- access to the sites, transport and parking
- better communications and promotion so that people are aware of what is going on and where
- what will happen to other sites not on the strategic sites identified
- future proofing the strategy so that new / emerging sports can be accommodated if and when necessary
- ensuring new facilities do not 'price' out either clubs or individuals
- further engagement needed as plans emerge
- timescales for the action plan
- how can investment be realised both for the sites and for clubs looking for funding
- clearer explanation of link to green belt / planning policies for the borough

- reliance of clubs / organisations on volunteers including for coaching and how this might be supported through the strategic sites

5.0 INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 A comprehensive representation was received from Sports England, which assessed the Strategy in detail and raised a number of points for consideration before the draft is finalised.
- 5.2 Individual feedback was also received from Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT) in conjunction with Watford Cycle Hub. This feedback presented consideration for future options at the Holywell site and is being taken forward as part of the next phase of action planning when more site specific discussions take place.

6.0 ACTIONS ARISING

- 6.1 From the feedback received, the following table has been collated to highlight some of the areas raised through the consultation and engagement and the actions arising.

DRAFT

Overview of consultation and engagement feedback on draft Strategy: November 2014

Issue raised		Consideration	Action
1	WHGC has over 750 members with over 6000 visitors and is not mentioned	Inclusion of the WHGC in the SFS in relevant sections.	Done
2	Herts Bowls Club: has indoor and outdoor bowls facilities	Amend SFS to show this	Done
3	Explore including bowls in long term action plan	Added in to support bowls across the Borough at strategic sites as well as at Satellite sites	Done
4	3G costings	Amend figure in SFS for cost of 3G	Done
5	Price of pitch hire	Amend figure in SFS to reflect most up to date price	Done
6	Sun Postal grass football pitch is floodlit	Amend text in SFS to reflect this	Done
7	Cycling provision needs further exploration	Cycling is considered within the SFS and new opportunities are identified for broadening appeal through the BMX work. Further work will be needed to explore this area further as part of the more detailed action planning.	Continue to liaise with Watford Cycle Hub to explore future opportunities.
8	Strategic sites acting as a hub supported by 'spokes' – other facilities	How to identify and reference additional sports facilities not within the strategic sports sites areas.	These are referenced as 'satellites' and acknowledgement made as to developing action plans for key satellite sites.
9	Reference to funding needed	Include a 'Funding' section to the SFA	Done
10	Promotion of new sites to ensure success	How to ensure people know sites exist and what facilities they offer.	To be considered within future action planning as sites come forward and plans develop.
11	Parking / access issues	Need to consider this as part of the planning for the new strategic sites	Parking will be a key feature of any masterplan developed for the strategic sites as will accessibility overall (also recognised in the Equality Impact Analysis on the SFS)

Issue raised	Consideration	Action
12	Sports management's importance to the delivery of good quality sports activities	Important to ensure improved facilities are supported by effective sports management and development.
13	Affordability of new facilities – concern new facilities would mean higher costs to clubs	How can sites be profitable whilst ensuring cost is not a barrier.
14	Need for on-going engagement as SFS is delivered	The SFS generated a good level of feedback and engagement and began to build the relationships that will be important to the effective delivery of the Strategy.
15	Funding opportunities – including joint bids	How can these be identified and support given to applications.
16	Importance of leases to clubs (particularly in relation to bidding for funding)	The length and timing of releases was raised as an issue by clubs in terms of their future planning.
17	Link to Green Belt	Three of the four strategic sites have some overlap with the borough's Green Belt. This might limit what could be achieved at the sites in terms of reconfiguration of facilities etc.
		Whilst sports development is not within the scope of the SFS, the council ensures that the necessary liaison and synergy is in place and the sports development team is an active member of the SFS project team.
		Also raised within Equality Impact Analysis. At this stage it is impossible to assess this area but it has been noted as a consideration for future planning.
		Watford BC to ensure engagement is an on-going process and key areas are identified for engagement as the Strategy is delivered.
		Watford BC is exploring ways to ensure Watford is making the most of funding opportunities available and will share this in the new year.
		Watford BC to follow up where this has been highlighted
		Local Plan Part 2 is looking at Green Belt issues and there is effective liaison between Planning Policy and the SFS project team to ensure issues are highlighted and awareness raised.

Appendix I: Sports Facilities Strategy Survey

Watford BC: Sports Facilities Strategy: 2014

Share your views on the draft Sports Facilities Strategy for Watford 2015-2...

Watford Borough Council welcomes your views on the draft Sports Facilities Strategy for Watford 2015-2025.

Over the last few months, we have been developing the draft strategy and have already engaged with a number of local sports clubs and organisations on its emerging findings and recommendations.

Now we want to hear what you think.

Please take some time to complete this survey - it should take about 10 - 15 minutes.

You will need to have read the draft strategy to answer the survey. You can find a copy [here](#)

The consultation will be open until **27 October 2014**

If you have any questions on the strategy or on the consultation please contact Kathryn Robson on kathryn.robson@watford.gov.uk

Share your views on the draft Sports Facilities Strategy for Watford 2015-2...

As well as this survey, we are holding a **special engagement event** for people to find out more about the Strategy and share their views:

- **Date: 20 October 2014**
- **Time: 6.30pm to 9.00pm**
- **Venue: Elton John Suite, Watford Football Club**

If you are interested in attending or would like further information please contact:

Kathryn Robson on: 01923 278077 or email kathryn.robson@watford.gov.uk

It would be helpful to understand the capacity in which you are responding to this consultation. **Please select the MAIN capacity in which you are responding**

Watford BC: Sports Facilities Strategy: 2014

1. I am:

- A Watford resident
- A member of a local sports club / organisation
- A committee member / organiser of a local sports club / organisation
- A representative of a local organisation (e.g. a voluntary organisation)
- A representative of a local business
- Other (please specify)
- A representative of a local school / college
- A regional representative of a sport's body
- A national representative of a sport's body
- A councillor

2. Please let us know which sports club / organisation, etc you belong to. If you belong to more than one, please write in all that apply

Club / organisation 1:

Club / organisation 2:

Club / organisation 3:

Club / organisation 4:

Club / organisation 5:

3. Please let us know with which local organisation you are associated.

4. Please let us know with which business you are associated.

5. Please let us know with which school / college you are associated.

6. Please let us know with which regional sports body you are associated.

Watford BC: Sports Facilities Strategy: 2014

7. Please let us know with which national sports body you are associated.

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic goals

The draft strategy proposes **three** strategic goals - [see pages 25 & 26](#).

These goals are a vital part of the strategy and so it is important that they are explained clearly and in a way that supports your understanding of what they mean for sports facilities in Watford. Please tell us what you think of the strategic goals.

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic goals

8. Strategic goal 1: strategic sports sites

To ensure that Watford has a network of accessible, high quality, high capacity, well maintained, well used and financially and environmentally sustainable sports facilities, capable of accommodating local demand, complemented by good quality changing and social accommodation, on a limited number of strategically located sites – known as “Strategic Sports Sites”.

Is this goal clear?

- Yes it is clear
 No it isn't clear

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic goals

9. If Strategic goal 1 isn't clear, please let us know how we can improve the way it is explained.

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic goals

Watford BC: Sports Facilities Strategy: 2014

10. Strategic goal 2: multi-sports clubs

To promote the development of financially sustainable multi-sport clubs offering inclusive opportunities for players of all ages and abilities and both sexes

Is this goal clear?

- Yes it is clear
- No it isn't clear

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic goals

11. If Strategic goal 2 isn't clear, please let us know how we can improve the way it is explained.

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic goals

12. Strategic goal 3: new forms of provision for traditional sports

To develop new forms of provision for traditional sports in partnership with their governing bodies, in order to attract new participants and encourage past participants to return to their former sport, promote more mid-week participation and reduce the peaking of demand for pitches and other facilities at the weekend, particularly Sunday mornings

Is this goal clear?

- Yes it is clear
- No it isn't clear

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic goals

Watford BC: Sports Facilities Strategy: 2014

13. If Strategic goal 3 isn't clear, please let us know how we can improve the way it is explained.

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic goals

14. And thinking about the 3 strategic goals, how far do you agree that they are the right goals to underpin the future of sports facilities in the borough? Please answer for each goal.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Strategic goal 1: strategic sports sites	<input type="radio"/>				
Strategic goal 2: multi-sports clubs	<input type="radio"/>				
Strategic goal 3: new forms of provision for traditional sports	<input type="radio"/>				

15. If you have any comments you would like us to consider about the strategic goals, please let us know below:

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic sites

Strategic goal 1 proposes 'strategic sports sites' for Watford. The strategy then identifies these as:

1. River Colne (EAST)

(incorporating Radlett Road Playing Fields / Knutsford Playing Fields / Watford RUFC / Glen Rovers GAA / Top Golf – The Colne River Park)

2. Cassiobury site (WEST),

(incorporating Fulleriens RFC / Sun Postal FC / Watford Grammar School / Herts Bowls / West Herts Hockey)

Watford BC: Sports Facilities Strategy: 2014

3. Holywell (SOUTH) and

(incorporating King George V Playing Fields, W3RT/ Watford Cycle Hub / Schools / Football / Cricket)

4. Woodside (NORTH).

(incorporating Woodside Playing Fields, Leisure Centre / SLM / WTCC / Bowls – Indoor and outdoor / Football / Cricket / Boxing / Schools)

16. Do you agree or disagree with the principle of the proposed four strategic sports sites in Watford?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic sites

17. Why do you agree with the proposal for four strategic sports sites?

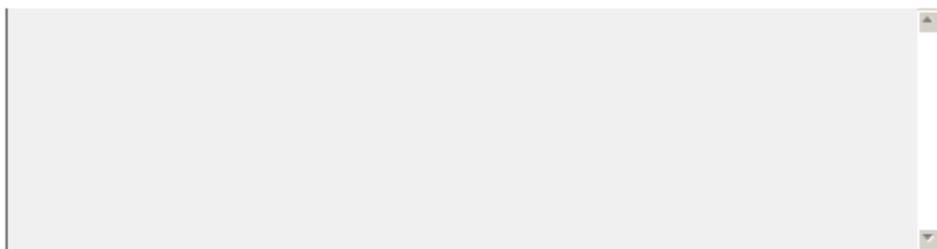
Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic sites

18. Why do you disagree with the proposal for four strategic sports sites?

Sports Facilities Strategy: Strategic sites

Watford BC: Sports Facilities Strategy: 2014

19. Is there any additional information about the four strategic sports sites that you think would be helpful to include in the strategy?



3G and 4G pitches

The strategy refers to 3G artificial turf pitches [see page 17](#) and identifies these as part of future provision within the borough.

Essentially 3G pitches come with sand and rubber particle carpets which simulate the bounce of a natural turf surface. The pile height varies depending on the type of activity it is being installed for.

You might also have heard of 4G or even 5G pitches (the G stands for 'generation').

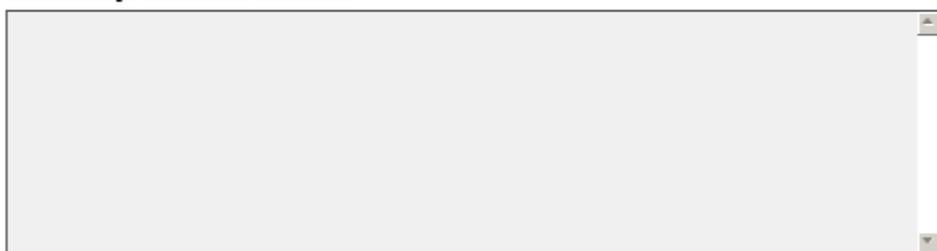
The differences between 3G, 4G and 5G pitches are subtle. 4G pitches have no particles but a rubber shock pad underlay. 5G pitches have fully rubber particles to provide the correct bounce the artificial surface needs. There is already research and development underway by manufacturers in the sixth generation of surface!

20. Do you think the strategy is right to identify artificial turf pitches (such as 3G) as important for the borough and, therefore, the identified strategic sites.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

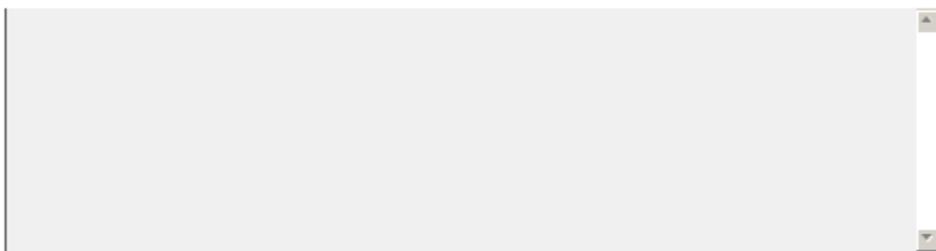
3G and 4G pitches

21. Overall what do you think the benefits of artificial turf pitches would be to sports facilities provision in Watford?



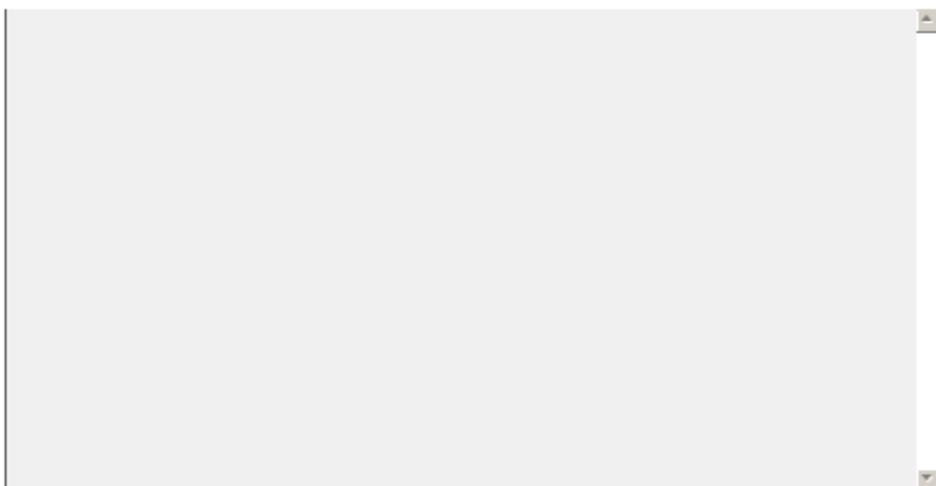
Watford BC: Sports Facilities Strategy: 2014

22. If you do belong to, or are part of, a sports club or organisation, what benefits might there be for the club/organisation if there was an increase in artificial turf provision in Watford?



23. And finally, we would like to know your views on the Sports Facilities Strategy overall. You might want to consider:

- **Whether the strategy clearly explains the future direction for sports facilities in the borough**
- **Whether the action plan explains how the strategy will be delivered**
- **If there is anything that needs to be made clearer**
- **If there is anything missing**
- **Your views overall**



NEWS RELEASE

Angela Farrance - Communications Officer

Tel: 01923 278252 email: angela.farrance@watford.gov.uk



For immediate release

14 October 2015

The future of sport in Watford

Watford Borough Council wants to hear what you think about sports facilities in the town.

Any interested resident, sports club or organisation is invited to come along to a special event at Watford Football Club on Monday 20 October from 6.30pm.

You can also get involved by completing a short online survey https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SFS_2014

Together with our partners in Watford, we have drafted a sports facilities strategy, which we would like your views on. It sets out our goals for sporting provision in the town over the next ten years.

These include ensuring Watford has a number of high capacity, environmentally sustainable and well maintained sports facilities with good quality changing and social accommodation. As part of this, we will aim to develop more mid-week participation; reducing pressure on pitches and facilities at weekends.

We want to promote the development of financially secure multi-sport clubs offering sporting opportunities for players of all ages, abilities and for both sexes.

Working with sports governing bodies and clubs, we will work to attract new participants as well as encouraging past players back into their sports.

This is your chance to get involved and tell us your ideas about how to improve participation in sport in Watford.

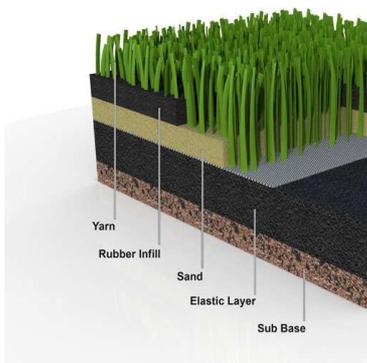
The event will take place in the Elton John Suite, with refreshments from 6.30pm-8.45pm. Please contact Kathryn Robson to reserve a space; by email at kathryn.robson@watford.gov.uk or on tel: 01923 278077.

Sports Facilities Strategy for Watford

Discussion Topic 1

Artificial Turf

Artificial turf sports pitches are becoming increasingly popular. The most modern of these are known as 3rd or 4th generation pitches. They come in a various length of pile and are filled with sand and rubber.



These latest generation of artificial pitches offer improved durability, allowing even greater hours of play with the added advantages of improved comfort and safety.

Sports Facilities Strategy for Watford

Discussion Topic 2

Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal 1

High quality sports facilities focused on strategic sites

To ensure that Watford has a network of accessible, high quality, high capacity, well-maintained, well used and financially and environmentally sustainable sports facilities. These need to be capable of accommodating local demand, complemented by good quality changing and social accommodation, on a limited number of strategically located sites

Strategic Goal 2

Clubs with a multi-sport offer to appeal to the whole community

To promote the development of financially sustainable multi-sport clubs offering inclusive opportunities for players of all ages and abilities and both sexes

Strategic Goal 3

New forms of provision for traditional sports & more mid-week participation

To develop new forms of provision for traditional sports, in partnership with their governing bodies. in order to attract new participants and encourage past participants to return to their former sport. Additionally, this will involve promoting more mid-week participation and reducing the peaking of demand for pitches and other facilities at the weekend, particularly Sunday mornings



Sports Facilities Strategy for Watford

Discussion Topic 3

Strategic Sports Sites

- 1. River Colne (EAST)**
(incorporating Radlett Road Playing Fields / Knutsford Playing Fields / Watford RUFC / Glen Rovers GAA / Top Golf – The Colne River Park)

 - 2. Cassiobury site (WEST)**
(incorporating Fullerians RFC / Sun Postal FC / Watford Grammar School / Herts Bowls / West Herts Hockey)

 - 3. Holywell (SOUTH)**
(incorporating King George V Playing Fields, W3RT/ Watford Cycle Hub / Schools / Football / Cricket)

 - 4. Woodside (NORTH)**
(incorporating Woodside Playing Fields, Leisure Centre / SLM / WTCC / Bowls – Indoor and outdoor / Football / Cricket / Boxing / Schools)
-



Sports Facilities Strategy for Watford

Discussion Topic 4

Any other issues?

Are there any other issues you would like us to consider or feedback you would like to give

DRAFT